FIXING NEW CODES; INDIAN PRIME TIME SOAPS AND THE NEW-FANGLED WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

In India, a country with different languages, diverse culture, religion and tradition, television plays an important role in entertaining, informing and educating the people of every section of the country. At present, a large number of television channels are being produced in almost every language to fulfil the quest of the people and attract large chunks of audience through soap operas or mega serials. These segments are the major source of income for television channels and have proved more consistent and effective in drawing sustainable viewer interest. The review-based study of related literature shows that there is a trajectory in the phase of development of Indian Television in the context of politics of representation of women. The present paper explores the unfolding facts about the history of soap operas in Indian Television in the context of erecting and transmitting new women codes in prime-time soap shows.

Keywords: *Culture, Media, codes, Soap Opera, Television, Representation*

INTRODUCTION

Television emerged as an important platform for communication in mid-20th century in the United States of America, but the first digital Television was given by Pioneer Corporation in 1998. It was a big step in as technological revolution in digital communication in American households. The introduction of digital Television changed the nature, prospects, and consequences of the Television-based drama of soap operas on Television. These

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consequences are emerged as important tools for digital amusement in the households of the United States of America in the context of changing the Paradigm of the role of Television-based drama series (Feigenbuam 374). In the context of India, the intervention of Television came to India in 1959 with black and white transmission from Delhi but later than seven cities of India, namely- Mumbai, Calcutta, Srinagar, Amritsar, Chennai, and Lucknow, was covered by the transmission of broadcasting of Doordarshan under monitoring and controlled by Government of India till 1975.

During this period, television programmes of Doordarshan were categorised between fiction and non-fiction. Fictional programmes include soaps, serials, and drama, while non-fiction includes news bulletins, debates, talk shows, and reality shows on Television. Therefore, Television emerged as an important platform for amusement and information among households in India in the late 20th century (Singhal et al. 224). In the context of the concept and prospects of soap operas on Indian Television, it is realised that fiction-based programmes represent the socio-cultural practices of the community because it is well-known that soap operas may be defined as the reflection of the socio-economic, cultural, and psychological behaviour of the real life of the people on reel life. In other words, soap operas are based on a series of dramas on the consequences of the reflection of real life with its emerging prospects and challenges in society. In the context of television history of India, the first soap operas were broadcasted in onwards 1980s due to the influences of western soap operas on Television (Munshi 22).

There are speculations on the relationship between soap operas and melodrama because it is well known that soap operas are based on opened-based narratives, descriptions, and stories about real life on reel life as dramatic melodrama. Therefore, it can be mentioned that soap opera is based on the anthropological reflection of the socio-cultural practices of people as well as give a real image of a fiction-based story about occurring incident in society. In the context of India, the nature and concept of soap operas are different from the western world because there is a different culture of socioeconomic and cultural practices in Indian society. In these consequences, soap opera gives an understanding of the society of India (Gledhill 115). Therefore, soap opera gives an understanding of the phenomena of society in the context of a gender perspective and feminist approach under the aspect of the ethnographic approach because soap operas show the role of culture in the formation of socioeconomic and psychological behaviour of society.

In the context of the beginning of the 21st century, it is found that the concept and prospects of Indian Television changed and improved due to the introduction of digital channels and the increasing role of series-based drama on Indian digital channels because increasing the role of digital channels enhanced the competition between digital channels about showing the real life of the socio-cultural practices of the middle-class families of India on reel life. These

consequences fill the gap between real life and reel life because fiction-based TV serials attract the audience in night show programmes of soap operas in India (Geragthy 313).

In the context of India, the first television drama was "*Hum Log.*" This television drama was considered as first soap opera with 154 episodes as well as the longest-running serial in the history of Indian Television in the late twentieth century. This soap opera was based on the struggle of middle-class families as well as the aspirations of the middle-class families of India for their adjustment to emerging challenges of life. In other words, this soap opera was the revolution in Television-based drama of the soap opera based on the real-life story of middle-class families on the reel life of Television. It also led to the role of women characters in the first soap operas on Indian Television (Sahu 217).

In the context of the representation of women in soap operas in Indian Television, it is found that there is a crucial and key role of the character of women in the drama of Indian Television because it is found that the role of women characteristic positively changed the perception and portrayal about women in the society of India. In these consequences, it is also important to discuss that modern show of soap operas is being positively influenced by feminism because the aspect of feminism better advocates the role of women's character in real life based on the experiences of real life (Ahamed 4).

It is well known that there is a cordial connection between soap operas and the representation of Indian culture in the aspect of the feminist approach because it is well known that television serial "*Ramayan*" was the most popular television serial based on the epic of Ramayan in the significant role of Mother "*Sita.*" Therefore, the role of the "*Sita*" was considered the lead role for aspiration for Indian women regarding the follow the principles of "*Ramayan*" in Indian society (Allen 115).

In the context of increasing the role of soap operas in Television in third world countries, it is found that India is the world's largest market for television serials compared to other third world countries like Brazil and Mexico because it is found that Indian soap operas are based on the fiction-based drama of the society of India. In these consequences, Indian soap operas are successful in attracting viewers before Television compared to third-world countries in the context of the globalisation of television drama (Brown 162).

Literature Review

Based on the above concise description of the concept and evolution of soap operas in Indian Television in the context of the 21st century, it can be concluded that the soul of the soap operas is based on the role of women characteristics in the context of politics and debate about the aspect of the feminism in India. In these consequences, there is a need for depth and critical analysis of the review of literature in the context of the role of representation of

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women in prime-time soaps in Indian Television in the changing Paradigm of globalisation. Therefore, the review of literature is categorised into the following sections according to the nature and theme of the study:

    i. Evolution and history of the representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in World Television

    ii. Evolution and history of the representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in Indian Television.

    iii. Changing Paradigm of representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in Television in the 21st century.

The above three sections of the review of literature are based on the systematic review of related literature about prospects, concepts, and evolution of prime-time soaps in Indian Television.

i. Evolution and history of the representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in World Television

In the context of the United States of America, there is a rich history of soap operas in Television of the United States of America because soap operas show the socio-cultural practices of the society of the United States of America. It is well known that soap operas programmes are extremely popular in Television of United States of America. Of these consequences, *"Guiding Light"* was a popular soap opera drama on Television of America because this show presents the phenomena of real-life struggle on a television programme (Ford 2). The first soap opera show was broadcasted on on13th September 1977 on ABC in the United States of America. This was a revolutionary moment in the history of television drama because it was not only limited to the United States of America but also diffused across the world. The economic and aesthetic legitimacy of soap operas programme of television shows in the United States of America because it was based on the occurring incident and story of United States of America as well as encouraged and inspired to world televisions regarding show the struggle, amusement, and real-life story of the society on reel life of television programme (Scardaville 370).

It is realised that soap operas show is based on the significant role of the women characters in soap opera shows in the United States of America because it is well known that American society was so sincere and aware of feminism and gender-based debate in the socio-economic and cultural development. In these consequences, American soap operas show gives space to the role of women characteristics in the TV series drama because it gives more significant and realistic phenomena about the representation of women in soap operas shows in the

United States of America (Beilby et al. 388). It is well known that *"Dallas"* was the most popular television show in the television history of the United States of America because this show was based on the ethnographic presentation about socioeconomic and cultural practices of the society of the United States of America. It is well known that the ethnographic approach gives an approach to develop an understanding of the phenomena of the unit in the context of time and space context. In these consequences, this show was based on the significant role of women's characteristics as well as started a debate about feminism and the phenomena of society (Seiter 232).

An ethnographically based study about Korean soap opera shows in the United States of America. It was found that Korean soap opera shows were so popular among women in the United States of America because the lead role was characterised by women. The fiction of this show attracted women before Television because this show was based on the struggle, survival, and amusement in the context of the significant role of women characteristics on the Television of the United States of America. However, this show started a new debate about the phenomena of gender discourse under the approach of feminism (Lee and Chong 35).

ii. Evolution and history of the representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in Indian Television.

In the context of India, it is well known that there is a gender gap in the socioeconomic and cultural development of India with its long historical sequence. In these consequences, it is found that Indian television shows are based on the fiction of struggle, survival, and real-life based story of a society in the periphery of women characteristics in prime-time soaps in Indian Television. In these consequences, it is also discussed that there is a different scenario between real-life and reel-life situations because soap operas are not properly shown real-life phenomena of women's related stories in Indian Television (Somani et al. 210). Phenomena of representation of women in Indian Television are based on contemporary phenomena as well as based on the story of middle-class families in India because it is well-known that women of middle-class families are the major audience of Indian television shows. Indian soap operas are based on the significant role of Indian women in the context of phenomena of nexus of society and its intention about the representation of women in Indian Television (Kaul and Shardha 18).

In the case of India, it is well known that Indian society is based on the patriarchal based phenomena where males play a crucial role in the decision-making process about the existence and role of women in India. In these consequences, the most popular soap opera show, *"Hum Log,"* was based on the story of the struggle of women against the patriarchal system of India. This show gives an ethnographic based approach to gender discourse and debate about feminism in the segmentation of the society of India with the aspect of its

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prospects, challenges, and issues about the society of India (Das 173). In the case of prime-time soap opera shows in India, based on the seminal study about the representation of women in soap operas show in Indian Television, it is found that Indian Television represents women as the ideal role in the characteristics of lead role because the role of the women presents themselves as the ideal daughter, wife and mother in soap operas show in Indian Television. These consequences give a portrayal of the role of women in Indian television shows based on the gender discourse and nexus of feminism and development in the society of India (Chakrabarti 229).

In the case of India, it is found that Indian television soap opera shows are based on the issue of identity and socio-cultural dynamics about occurring phenomena of the society in the context of gender discourse, feminism, and its consequences on the reflection of society. In these consequences, it is also important to mention that Indian television soap opera shows are based on the phenomena of the representation of women in prime-time soaps in India television with the increasing role of digital channels in the era of 21st century in the context of globalisation (Jaggi 144).

iii. Changing Paradigm of representation of the role of women in prime-time soaps in Television in 21st centuries

In the context of the modern era of the representation of women in prime-time soaps in Television, it is found that the Paradigm of the representation of women's role is being changed with the dynamics of challenges and prospects of Television in the 21st century. It is well known that increasing the role of digital channels changed the form of Television digital channels where the audience has lots of access to tune to digital channels. These consequences, Indian television shows are transforming it and giving a key role to the representation of women characterises in Indian television shows (Zutshi and Priyanka 1). In the case of the socio, economic and cultural impact of soap opera shows on Indian Television in Aandhra Pradesh. It is found that the increasing role of digital channels is giving a key role to the characteristics of women in prime soap operas show in Indian Television. From these perspectives, it is realised that the modern audience of television show is based on women because a vast majority of soap operas show is based on the portrayal of women in an Indian television show in the 21st century (Anitha 9).

In the case of the impact of soap operas show in South India, it is found that soap operas show give significant space to the voice of minorities in the context of occurring socio-economic and cultural phenomena in the real life-based story. In these consequences, it is realised that these soap operas shows are based on the representation of women's role in the debate of gender discourse and feminism in the perspective of the development of minorities' related story and drama with changing Paradigms of socio-economic and cultural and

political phenomena of the society in the 21ˢᵗ century (Kaluvoya 2). The increasing role of satellite channels is giving a new dimension to the representation of women's characteristics in India in the 21ˢᵗ century. It is well known that Indian women are facing lots of challenges in their socio-economic, cultural, and political development in real-life phenomena. In these consequences, satellite channels are giving a key role in the presentation of the real-life story and struggles of the women in soap opera shows on Indian Television. Therefore, it can be mentioned that the era of 21ˢᵗ-century television shows is based on the representation of women in Indian television shows (Malhotra et al.,421).

In these consequences, it is realised that satellite channels like *"Star Plus," "Sony Entertainment" and "ZEE TV"* are important satellite channels, and these channels are providing a voice to the representation of women in their soap operas television shows. These consequences are successful in attracting the audience, especially middle-class women because middle-class women find their struggles and story in the soap opera shows in satellite television shows of India. In this perspective, traditional soap opera shows of *"Doordarshan"* is replaced by modern satellite channels because satellite channels positively changed the representation of women in soap operas shows on Indian Television (Laskar et al.,1).

Based on the above prescribed systematic review of literature, it can be realised that there is a significant role of soap opera shows in the debate about the politics of representation of women in prime-time soap on Indian Television. Therefore, the entire review of literature is based on the systematic review of literature in the context of retrospective to the prospective manner of study design because the review of literature gives detailed information about concepts, prospects and evolution of the soap operas shown in Television from its past to present phenomena with emerging challenges in Paradigm about politics of representation of women in prime-time soaps in Television. Therefore, there are the following summary points about the review of the literature:

i.   The context of the evolution of prime-time soap operas is based on the lead role of the women's struggle and stories regarding socio-economic and cultural phenomena in both Western and Orientalism approaches for the study of the concept and evolution of the soap operas in the periphery of the role of women.

ii. In the context of India, it is realised that there are phases that existed in the evolution and development of soap opera shows in Indian Television in the context of representation of women because it is well known that the existence of women is based on the socio-cultural and political phenomena in India. In these consequences, it is needed to explorative based investigation the study of the role of women in prime soap opera shows in Indian Television in the context of gender discourse and feministic approach.

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iii. Therefore, a review of the literature gives a realistic picture of the phenomena of study about the role of women in prime soap opera shows with its historical sequences to emerging prospects and challenges.

Discussion

It is realised that there is a need to depth analysis of the discussion of the prospects, concepts, and challenges of the politics of representation of women in prime soap shows in Indian Television with changing Paradigm of the dimension of Indian Television in the 21st century. In these consequences, the discussion part of this paper is based on the gap of a systematic review of the politics of representation of women in prime soap shows on Indian Television. Therefore, the entire discussion part of the paper is categorised into the following three sections, and each section is correlated to each other for a better understanding of the subject.

A. Phenomena of Politics of Representation of Women in Prime Soap Operas Show on Indian Television.

In the context of India, it is observed that prime-time soap shows are based on fiction-based narratives like family dramas about issues of jealousy, dowry, paramours, liaisons, and disaffection in families of India. It is also important to discuss that the socio-economic and cultural phenomena of Indian families are in the significant role of prime soap shows in Indian Television because fiction-based narratives are based on the social, cultural, and political issues about Indian families on Indian Television (Huge 130). It is well known that there is an approach of ideal status for women in the society of India, but it is also about important to discuss that there are lots of contradictions and discriminations about the existence of women in Indian families under the patriarchal-based society. However, a feminist-based study shows that prime soap opera shows give special attention role of women in fiction-based narratives in prime soap opera shows in Indian Television. In these consequences, it is realised that prime soap opera shows reflect the real-life situation of the politics of representation of women in Indian society (Rane 135).

It is also observed that middle-class families are the major audience of the prime soap opera shows of Indian Television because it is well known that fiction-based narratives are based on the struggle and lifestyle of middle-class families in the periphery of the significant role of the women's representation. In these consequences, prime-time soap opera shows are giving a space to voice and role of women in their shows because middle-class women are facing socio-economic and political discrimination and contradiction in the male-based society of India. Therefore, prime-time soap opera shows are based on the politics of representation of women in India (Raj et al. 124).

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Fiction based prime time soap operas show in "*Star Plus*" digital channel shows that there is the different role of women characters in prime-time operas shows because it is observed that prime-time soap operas show the role of the ideal mother, sister and wife with modern fashion style, but a vast majority of the audience belong to middle-class families, where they find a different scenario in prime time soap operas shows compared to the real-life situation of the lifestyle of women in middle-class families (Khan 2011 2).

B. Socio-Economic and Cultural Phenomena and Representation of women in Prime soap operas show on Indian Television

In the context of India, it is observed that there is cordial nexus between socio-economic and cultural phenomena and politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television. It is well known that Indian Television is based on amusement base fiction whereby the representation of women is considered as the key to amusement, but it is the subject of discussion under critical viewpoint because modern prime-time soap opera shows are deviated from the representation of real-life situations of women in prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television (Brundson & Lynn 2). The matter of politics of representation of women is so relevant in the fiction-based programmes of prime-time soap opera shows in the context of liberalism and individualistic approach in shows of prime-time operas show, but it is realised that there is a different scenario of politics of representation of women in middle-class families. In these consequences, it is observed that prime-time soap opera shows are not perfectly representing the characteristics of women according to the socio-economic and cultural norms of Indian society (Fazal 70).

The construction of prime-time soap opera shows is based on the construction of the contemporary role of women's representation in prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television. It is observed that socio-economic and cultural phenomena are the basic components in the construction of contemporary women in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television. Therefore, it is realised that socio-economic and cultural phenomena determine the politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television with changing Paradigms and dimensions of Indian Television in the 21st century (Ahamed & Malik 7).

In the consequences of the tradition of prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television, it is found that there is a large gap between the tradition of the lifestyle of women in prime-time soap opera shows and the real-life scenario of women in middle-class families of Indian society. In these consequences, it is realised that there is a culture of the transplanted tradition of socio-economic, cultural, and political phenomena in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television. Therefore, it is needed to redefine the prospects of socio-economic and

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cultural phenomena regarding the politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television (Moorti 15).

C. Emerging Prospects, Issues and Challenges in the representation of women in soap operas shows.

In the context of women's representation in serials of Indian Television, it is observed that there is a significant impact of the role of women characters on middle-class families because it is well known that women of middle-class families are giving acceptance to the representation of women in Indian Television. They find themselves so closely with the transplanted tradition of socio-economic and cultural phenomena of prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television because it is the result of the reflection of the struggle and story of middle-class families of India (Kumar 40). In the consequences of politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows in the context of emerging prospects, issues, and challenges, it is realised that prime-time soap operas shows are following a transplanted culture in their shows, but it is observed negative influences of the tradition of prime time shows on middle-class families of India. Therefore, it is discussed that there is a need to start a positive debate about the politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television (Chugh 2).

Representation of women in Indian television serials is realised that the transplanted role of women is caused by the global culture of consumption because it is found that representation and character of women in Indian Television are leading to the tendency of consumption-based culture among women of middle-class families. Both positive and negative influences are measured in the context of the impact of prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television. These consequences are not presenting the phenomena of the story and struggle of real India in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television (Nagamallika 225). Therefore, it is needed to give space to gender, race and class in the debate of politics of representation of women in prime-time soap operas shows on Indian Television because it is observed that there are lots of discrimination and contradiction in the context of gender, race, and class in the Indian society. However, it can be discussed that prime-time soaps on Indian Television are showing transplanted tradition in the place of real-life phenomena about prospects, issues, and challenges of socio-economic, cultural, and political phenomena of the representation of women in prime-time soap operas show in Indian Television (Dines 2).

CONCLUSION

Based on the premises and discussion, it can be concluded that there is a significant role in the representation of women in prime-time soap operas shows in Indian Television because it is well known that the character of the women is based on socio-economic and cultural

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anthropological issues as well as fiction-based narratives and phenomena about struggle, amusement, and strategy of survival of middle-class families. In these consequences, it is observed that the concept, definition, and dimension of Indian Television are changing with the dynamics of the Paradigm of globalisation in the 21st century. In these consequences, it is realised that story of prime-time soap shows is based on fiction-based narratives as the lead role of the women, but the reality is based on the differences between transplanted culture in prime-time soap operas and the real-life situation of women in the society of India. These perspectives lead the mechanism of the debate on the politics of representation of women in prime-time soaps on Indian Television. Therefore, it is also observed that there is a need to explain the concept of Antonio Gramci and Stuart Hall in the context of the debate on the politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television with changing Paradigm of the old concept to the modern concept about the representation of women in Indian Television.

The three features of cultural hegemony- power, dominance, and leadership are reflected in the representation of women in prime-time soaps in Indian Television because it is well known that socioeconomic and cultural phenomena determine the framework of politics of representation of women in prime-time soap opera shows in Indian Television. In the context of India, cultural hegemony is based on the concept, prospects, and issues of the cultural landscape because culture is the agent, nature is the medium, and the cultural landscape is the end of the production. (Jones 1).

As far as Stuart Halls' concept is concerned, media texts contain a variety of message that is encoded by producers and later decoded by the audience. From these perspectives, it is realised that prime-time soaps are based on the transplanted culture, but these transplanted cultural components are decoded and explained by the audience according to their understanding of socio-economic and cultural phenomena. Additionally, it is well known that there are socioeconomic and cultural diversities among the societies of India, and these consequences are developing a cultural landscape. Consequences of the cultural landscape are being reflected by transplanted culture- the new codes in prime-time soap opera shows on Indian Television. On the whole, both concepts give an understanding of how the concept of new womanhood being created and transmitted over television in the forms of prime time soaps and the many layers attached to characters getting uncoded.

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