



CHANGING IMAGE OF WOMEN IN INDIAN CINEMA

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few decades, there has been a huge shift in Indian cinema in the way women are portrayed in films. In the 60 years since independence, Indian cinema has gone through many changes, and the portrayal of women in different images is worth watching. Gender stereotypes and beauty stories about femininity such as caring, emotional, domestic, sensitive, passive, soft, have changed and have been replaced by a strong, mother-centered view of courageous women, brave, adventurous, mentally strong, leader, self-aware, visionary, dignified, kind, peaceful women. However female-oriented movies frame different dimensions of women's role in the development of the society, sometime it becomes a rebellion against the orthodox society. Thus film plays a vital role in social transformation.

Key Words: *Bollywood, Indian cinema, Women, Stereotypes, Women-Centric.*

INTRODUCTION:

Film is considered an important art form, a popular source of entertainment, and a great way to educate the public. It becomes not a form of entertainment or pastime, but a beautiful and attractive symbol for social change. Over the past few decades, there has been a huge shift in Indian cinema in the way women are portrayed in films. In the 60 years since independence, Indian cinema has gone through many changes, from classic films to "Bollywood-style" remakes of great Hollywood films. Women in the Indian film industry have played an important role in the success of any filmmaker. But at the same time, their roles have changed; from being dependent on male colleagues to being independent in driving stories. Movies now show independent, self-confident and active women. Indian films are often accused of being sexist, banning women from appearing in films or as saccharine. However,

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there are also some special signs that show the power of women. Gender stereotypes and beauty stories about femininity such as caring, caring, emotional, domestic, sensitive, passive, soft, soft have changed and have been replaced by a strong, mother-centered view of flesh and courageous women, brave, adventurous, mentally strong, leader, self-aware, visionary, dignified, kind, peaceful.

Early Indian Hindi Cinema:

Before 1931, Bollywood films had no sound. The first Bollywood film was released in 1913 under the title Raja Harishchandra, directed by Dadasaheb Phalke. Ardeshir Irani first introduced his voice in the film Alam Ara in 1931, which became a huge commercial success. At that time, Bollywood was producing an average of 200 black and white films a year. Bollywood's first color film was Kisan Kanya, directed by Ardeshir Irani, in 1937, but it was not as successful as commercial talkies. In the 1940s, Bollywood films suffered greatly from the violence of World War II, the independence movement, and the partition of India and Pakistan. Color film did not become commercially popular until the 1950s. This period also marked the beginning of a new era in Indian cinema; the movies did not have static dialogues and songs, they had beautiful songs and music, some of which are timeless. Many of the songs from the 1950s are still sung by people, even the new generation. This period also witnessed the rise of great Bollywood actors and actresses like Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand, Raj Kapoor Nargis, Nutan, Meena Kumari, Madhubala and others. The 1960s saw the emergence of dance music for foreign songs and films. Stars like Rajesh Khanna and Dharmendra were very popular during this period. At that time, India was rural but rich and cultural.

Changing roles of Female Characters in Hindi Films:

The film shows the social, cultural, norms and morals of Indian society. The audience can easily connect to characters whose lives on screen remind them of themselves. Some of the films from this period include "Kaagaz Ke Phool", "Mother India", "Pakeezah ", "Half Ticket" and "Padosan". In the golden age of the Bollywood film industry, there were many movies that were so popular that they will be remembered in the future. This was also the period when women took on important roles in films and played a heavy role in selling films in the market. In Indian films, women play an important roles as male actors. Some examples include Mehboob's 1957 production 'Mother India'. The film was shot ten years after India gained independence from British rule. Director Mehboob tried to combine social norms with traditional values in this movie.

As movies become brighter and more technological, the hero takes center stage, while the heroine still remains an important part of the appeal. Their presence does nothing to support the story. The more India becomes international, the more Bollywood movies come back.



Some of the hit films of the post- independence era of the 1990s brilliantly demonstrated the desire for a traditional lifestyle where women stayed at home and men earned the bread. The change in the image does not happen immediately, it happens gradually. The debate about whether movies reflect life or life as a movie can also be examined in this context. Although there are many women working in urban and rural areas, movies tend to ignore the facts. Judging by the images of women in popular films, her era seems to have come to a halt. The characters haven't changed much, although the behavior is more subtle. The roles given to female characters are still stereotyped.

Here is a list of a few Indian movies that have portrayed strong female characters throughout the ages.

1) English Vinglish -

We see role models everywhere, but never in the housewives and mothers around us. Sridevi's portrayal of a destructive housewife changed that. Shashi is a non-English speaking woman and mother who asks important questions about the value and skills of the domestic worker.

2) Rani in "The Queen" -

Rani is a woman with poor English skills who goes to Europe alone on her birthday and manages her life after being placed at the altar. After she regained her composure, she started to give it to her evil fiancée. Does anyone need any more proof that marriage isn't just about women?

3) Meera in NH10 -

The incredible and horrifying story of rape, murder and misogyny NH10 explores the dark and terrifying world that Meera goes through. Anushka Sharma plays the character of a woman who fights for justice and defends herself in the most difficult situations, who does not shy away even once in her life because she is a woman.

4) Piku in Piku -

The idea that women could take care of their parents, get married and live in their own homes became the norm in Piku. The film has its own role models, from the feminist father played by Amitabh Bachchan to the liberated Piku played by Deepika Padukone.

5) Bindu in Manthan -

Smita Patil's iconic portrayal of Bindu as the female lead. Bringing together village women to form a local dairy organization is the driving force behind the film. Inspired by true events,

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the film tells the true story of the revolution that made India the world's largest milk producer.

6) Aditi in Astitva -

Tabu's character Aditi, who is shy, neglected and marginalized by her husband and children, begins her journey of self-discovery and leaves this family. Astitva looks at Indian families with new eyes, questioning society's double standards between women's behavior and men's behavior.

7) Shivani in "Mardani-

Rani Mukerji" played many roles in her life. However, the image of the police searching for a person suspected of child trafficking is striking. Mardani is a lone wolf who leads the gang single-handedly, which is a very inspiring story.

CONCLUSION:

Every film has a unique message and secret that is revealed through action or dialogue. Therefore, the meaning of the film is conveyed very well through visuals, sounds, and dialogue/language. All of the women's portrayed in the films mentioned above are more artistic and carry a strong message of women's empowerment. However, women-oriented films show the role of women in society from different angles and sometimes become a betrayal of orthodox society. Therefore, film plays an important role in social change.

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