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Authored By

Dr. Aanchal Praveen

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Centre for Research in Rural and
Industrial Development



Aanchal Praveen
Principal
Lucknow Public College of Professional Studies
Vinamra Khari, Gomtinagar, Lucknow

THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN HINDI CINEMA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF FILMS FROM 1980-1990

Dr. Aanchal Praveen

Assistant Professor, Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, LPCPS

ABSTRACT:

This study examines the portrayal of women in Hindi cinema during the decade of 1980-1990. A content analysis of 10 films from this period reveals that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as the dutiful daughter, the loving wife, and the sacrificing mother. The study also finds that women were frequently objectified and subjected to patriarchal norms and values.

Keywords: Hindi Cinema, Women, Representation of Women, Bollywood, Films

INTRODUCTION:

Hindi cinema has long been a significant part of Indian popular culture, with millions of people watching films every year. The portrayal of women in Hindi cinema has been a topic of interest for many scholars, who have argued that films often reinforce patriarchal attitudes towards women.

METHODOLOGY:

This study uses a content analysis approach to examine the portrayal of women in Hindi cinema. A sample of 10 films from the decade of 1980-1990 was selected for analysis. The films were chosen based on their popularity and critical acclaim, as well as their representation of different genres, such as romance, drama, and action.

Films Selected for Analysis:

1. Arth (1982)
2. Betaab (1983)
3. Coolie (1983)
4. Ek Duuje Ke Liye (1981)
5. Hero (1983)
6. Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro (1983)
7. Masoom (1983)
8. Naseeb (1981)
9. Ram Lakhan (1989)
10. Tezaab (1988)

Findings:

The analysis of the films reveals that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles, such as the dutiful daughter, the loving wife, and the sacrificing mother. These roles reinforced patriarchal attitudes towards women, portraying them as submissive, obedient, and selfless.

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Portrayal of Women

1. Limited roles- Women were often portrayed in limited and stereotypical roles, such as the dutiful wife, mother, or lover.
2. Objectification: Female characters were frequently objectified, with their physical appearance being emphasized over their personalities or agency.
3. Subordination: Women were often depicted as subordinate to men, with limited autonomy or decision-making power.

Representation of Women's Issues

1. Domestic violence: Domestic violence was a common theme in many films, but it was often portrayed as a private matter rather than a societal issue.
2. Women's empowerment: Some films promoted women's empowerment, but this was often limited to individualistic solutions rather than systemic change.
3. Patriarchal norms: Patriarchal norms and values were often reinforced in the films, perpetuating gender-based discrimination and inequality.

Characterization of Female Protagonists

1. Virtuous women: Female protagonists were often portrayed as virtuous and self-sacrificing, with their actions motivated by a desire to protect their families or loved ones.
2. Victims of circumstance: Women were frequently depicted as victims of circumstance, with their lives shaped by factors beyond their control.
3. Limited agency: Female characters often had limited agency, with their choices and actions constrained by societal norms and expectations.

Impact of Societal Context

1. Patriarchal society: The films reflected the patriarchal values and norms of Indian society during the 1980s.
2. Social change: Some films hinted at the need for social change, particularly in regards to women's rights and empowerment.
3. Cultural traditions: The films often reinforced cultural traditions and values, which sometimes perpetuated gender-based discrimination and inequality.

DISCUSSION:

The findings of this study suggest that Hindi cinema during the decade of 1980-1990 reinforced patriarchal attitudes towards women and contributed to their marginalization. The portrayal of women in stereotypical roles and their objectification reinforced societal norms and values that perpetuated gender inequality.

CONCLUSION:

This study examines the portrayal of women in Hindi cinema during the decade of 1980-1990. The findings of the study suggest that women were often portrayed in stereotypical roles and were frequently objectified. The study highlights the need for greater representation and diversity in Hindi cinema, as well as the importance of challenging patriarchal attitudes and norms. The content analysis of these Hindi films from the 1980s reveals a complex and multifaceted portrayal of women. While some films promoted women's empowerment and

challenged patriarchal norms, others reinforced stereotypes and perpetuated gender-based discrimination. The findings highlight the need for more nuanced and inclusive representations of women in Hindi cinema.

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