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An Analysis of the Passivity of Female Characters through the Generations in *Kabir Singh* by Sandeep R Vanga and *Rehnaa Hai Tere Dil Mein* by Gautham V. Menon

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ABSTRACT: This research paper aims to analyze the passive role that female characters have played through various generations, especially in the context of Popular Hindi Cinema.

For this purpose, the origin of Indian Cinema, the place of female characters in the plots has been analyzed. The research paper has been restricted particularly to two films namely, *Kabir Singh* by Sandeep R. Vanga and *Rehnaa Hai Tere Dil Mein* by Gautham V. Menon. The paper aims to prove by an in-depth analysis as to how the female characters also have a passive unimportant and dull role in the central plot of the films since time immemorial.

KEYWORDS: Passivity, Patriarchy, Feminism, Women-Empowerment, Cinema,

I. INTRODUCTION: EVOLUTION OF INDIAN CINEMA

Cinema provides us with entertainment and amusement as well as a respite from stressful workdays. Cinema also informs people about the realities of society and relevant issues.

The public's awareness of social injustices and stigma were raised through purposeful cinemas. In earlier times, films played a fundamental role in people's lives.

It is a method of communication that imparts moral values, educates society, and provides them with facts and information.

Through fiction or stories based on real events, cinema connects diverse cultures and reflects society. It keeps us up to date with what is going on in the community and.

On the other hand, Cinema also depicts violence, sexual content, and objectifies women and children. Certain films denigrate individuals and segments of the community by perpetuating erroneous notions and stereotypes.

Indian cinema, also known as Bollywood, since its inception in the early 1900s, has come a long way. The silent era of Indian cinema, which began in 1913 with the release of *Raja Harishchandra*, India's first full-length feature film, can be traced back to the development of Indian cinema. During the quiet period, Indian film was heavily influenced by Hollywood films, and many Indian filmmakers emulated Hollywood's style of filmmaking. However, Indian filmmakers soon began to develop their own unique style of filmmaking that was distinct from Hollywood.

The 1930s and 1940s saw the emergence of Indian cinema's golden age, with the release of classic films such as *Devdas* (1935), *Kismet* (1943), and *Mughal-e- Azam* (1960). These films were characterized by their elaborate sets, melodious music, and larger-than-life characters.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Indian cinema underwent a major transformation with the emergence of a new breed of filmmakers who sought to break away from the traditional formulaic films of the past. These filmmakers,

known as the "New Wave" or "Parallel Cinema" movement, focused on social issues and realism in their films. Some of the notable films of this era include Satyajit's *Pather Panchali* (1955) and Mrinal Sen's *Bhuvan Shome* (1969).

The "Masala" film style, which combined action, romance, and drama, emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. These films were characterized by their over-the-top action sequences, catchy songs, and larger-than-life heroes. Some of the notable films of this era include *Sholay* (1975), *Deewar* (1975), and *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995).

In the 1990s and 2000s, Indian cinema underwent another major transformation with the emergence of a new breed of

filmmakers who sought to break away from the traditional Bollywood formula. These filmmakers, known as the “New Age” or “Indie” filmmakers, focused on more realistic and nuanced storytelling. Some of the notable films of this era include *Satya* (1998), *Dil Chahta Hai* (2001), and *Gangs of Wasseypur* (2012).

Millions of people all over the world watch Bollywood films, making Indian cinema today a global phenomenon. Indian filmmakers are constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible in cinema, and the future of Indian cinema looks bright.

Bollywood, the Indian film industry, and patriarchy go back as far as Bollywood itself. Although there are unquestionably a few Bollywood films that also promote feminism, the number of such films is incredibly low, it is no longer a secret that Bollywood promotes and influences patriarchy. To comprehend patriarchy, one must first comprehend its true meaning—that is, what it is. Patriarchy is a hypothetical social system in which the father or a male elder holds absolute authority over the family group; in a council, for example, one or more men hold absolute power over the community.

II. THE DRAMATIC ARCH OF KABIR SINGH

Indian filmmaker and screenwriter Sandeep Reddy Vanga is best known for his work in Hindi and Telugu films. Vanga made its debut in the big Telugu hit *Arjun Reddy* starring Vijay Deverakonda in 2017. The remake, starring Shahid Kapoor in the 2019 Hindi film *Kabir Singh*, went on to become one of the highest-grossing Hindi films of all time.

Anger management issues plague senior medical student Kabir Rajdheer Singh at Delhi Medical College. He is very possessive of a junior student named Preeti Sikka and falls in love with her. Preeti’s family is against their affair. Kabir’s explosive conflict with Preeti and her family creates further tensions. Out of impulsive behavior, Kabir injects himself with drugs and remains unconscious for two days. When Kabir awakens and discovers that Preeti has gotten married. After losing Preeti, he turns into a womanizer and an alcohol. The movie revolves around their romance and the story culminates with their reconciliation.

As we have seen in the movie, in the start there is a scene in which Kabir slaps his love and kisses her without her permission out of genuine rage.

There is one scene in which he violently chases his maid. The audience has branded the movie as a misogynistic one because of the movie’s tagging line, “Wo meri Bandi Hai.”

Firstly, let us admit that this movie is anti-feminist. Getting back to the point, in the whole movie Preeti is shown to have no personality. Her personality, thoughts, behavior is not highlighted at all. I feel like she is the side role even if fifty-percent of the movie revolves around her.

The protagonist of the movie is a more recent Devdas washout in affection, with extra displeasure. The executives’ issues, who chugs down bottles at the drop of a hat.

He spreads so much toxicity, it overshadows what little personality the other characters might have.

III. THE THEMATIC TRAJECTORY OF REHNA HAI TERE DIL MEIN

Vasudeva Menon is an Indian movie chief, screenwriter, maker, and entertainer who overwhelmingly works in Tamil entertainment world. Additionally, he has directed films in Telugu and Hindi that were shot simultaneously with or were remakes of his own Tamil films.

Thanga Meengal (2013) won the Public Film Grant for Best Element Film in Tamil.

Maddy tries to woo his love interest, Reena, by impersonating Rajeev and pretending to be him. He is, however, unprepared for the time when the truth will emerge.

Madhav fell in love at first sight with Reena. He finds out from her friend Shruti that she is to be married to Rajiv and woes Raina and both fall in love. When the real Rajiv arrives, Reena gets shocked that Maddy was posing as his imposter. When Rajiv and Maddy come face to face, Maddy realizes that Rajiv is his college rival, and the war continues.

Dia and K Madhavan made their Hindi film debuts in *Rehna Hai Tere Dil Mein*, which had a novel and innovative plot for its time.

We will need to set better examples and make meaningful films that make stalking a crime rather than a charming act of pursuing your love interest if we want society to unlearn the older patterns of masculinity and patriarchy.

Dia also talked about the film’s glorification of stalking, saying, “Not only does Maddy’s character stalk Reena, but he also lied to her. Of course, she ends her connection with him after she discovers the truth, only to discover that he is sincerely

sorry, and loves and cares for her. But there is no excuse for stalking in this world, lying is bad, and stalking is far worse. I guess as a society, we do not see stalking as a dreadful thing. Our films are responsible for propagating the idea that lying is the correct thing to do," added the actor.

There can be factors such as casting new lead roles (no committed fan following, Dia and Madhavan both were new in Bollywood industry during 2001), lack of high voltage promotion of the movie (this days promotion of movie happens on TV serials and comedy shows which were not then before a decade), highly impractical romance (how can a girl roam with a boy for 5 days without coming to know his ACTUAL identity) etc.

At the point when she shot the film herself, Dia Mirza believed that *Rehnaa Hai Tere Dil Mein* idea was misogynist and celebrated easygoing badgering "individuals were composing, thinking, and making misogynist films. While the film showed a lot of angles to the story and dressed the toxic character by highlighting his back story and what not, it justifies why Kabir Singh behaved in an aggressive entitled fashion and was made a hero throughout the fact of the character is loved.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the analysis of the passivity of female characters in "*Kabir Singh*" and "*Rehnaa Hai Tere Dil Mein*" reveals thought-provoking insights into the portrayal of women in Indian cinema. Both films present female characters who, to varying degrees, exhibit passivity and submissiveness in their relationships with the male protagonists. This passivity is often depicted through their limited agency, lack of independent decision-making, and dependence on the male characters for validation and fulfillment. While it is important to acknowledge that these films represent fictional narratives and not a reflection of reality, their portrayal of passive female characters raises questions about gender dynamics and the reinforcement of traditional gender roles in Indian society. The perpetuation of such characterizations in popular cinema can potentially shape societal perceptions and expectations, contributing to the normalization of gender inequalities. It is crucial for filmmakers and audiences alike to critically engage with these representations and strive for more nuanced and empowering portrayals of women in Indian cinema. By challenging the passivity of female characters and providing them with agency, diverse narratives can be created that celebrate the strength, independence, and complexity of women. Furthermore, an inclusive approach to storytelling can pave the way for more inclusive and equitable social progress, fostering a society where women are seen as active participants in shaping their own lives and relationships. As we move forward, it is essential for filmmakers, writers, and society at large to recognize the potential influence of media in shaping perceptions and attitudes. By promoting narratives that challenge traditional gender norms and offer diverse and empowering representations, Indian cinema can play a significant role in driving positive social change and fostering a more inclusive and egalitarian society.

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