





# **Objectification of Women's Body in Select Bollywood Lyrics**

Dissertation

Submitted to the Department of English,

School of Languages,

Doon University, Dehradun in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the award of the degree

of

B.A.(Honours) in English

By

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## Declaration

I, hereby, declare that the dissertation titled, 'Objectification of Women's Body in Select Bollywood Lyrics' submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of B.A. Honours in English is based on my original research conducted under the supervision of Dr. Chetana Pokhriyal, and that any work conducted by earlier researchers and referred in this study has been duly acknowledged on the relevant pages of the dissertation.

I further declare that the work reported in this dissertation has not been submitted either in part or in full for the award of any other degree or diploma of this University or of any other University.

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## Certificate

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled 'Objectification of Women's Body Select in Bollywood Lyrics' by Ms. Divya Dhangwal has been done under my supervision. It is also certified that the work in this Dissertation embodies original research and hard work of the candidate.

The assistance and support received during the course of investigation and all the sources of literature have been fully acknowledged.

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## **Abstract**

This paper attempts to examine the terms in which the female bodies are represented in Bollywood songs. Entertainment Industry is a well-liked type of mass media that people think is entertaining. The audience can jump to a world that is ascetically distinct from the real world through this experience, allowing them to escape from the monotony of ordinary routine. Songs are a prevalent form of art that seem to be essential in sustaining prevailing cultural norms, creating images, and influencing public opinion. As women make up a significant portion of the population of the nation, it is crucial to look into this topic because it can help us identify the prejudices that are still prevalent in our culture. Highlighting the relationship between the act of representation in some of the popular Hindi songs and the way they impact on the audience, this study discusses how the entire existence of female identity is reduced to an object of pleasures. Nevertheless, I contend that using Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze, objectification of the female body as sites of entertainment has a metapatriarchal function within it. Through displaying a

few lyrics from recently released item songs, this paper discusses “the way(s) the unconscious of patriarchal society has structured the film form” (Mulvey803). Moreover, in contrast to Roger’s standards who conceptualized and categorises sexist lyrical aspects from a predominantly female perspective, this study also deals with the concept of biased lyrics as the usage of insulting phrases in a track that can be directed for both female and male.

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## Chapter One-Introduction

### Introduction to Bollywood

One of the most transforming forms of art in Indian is cinema, particularly Bollywood, which has the enchantment to take us to another place and time. With only the release of its first film, the Indian film industry took off and rapidly expanded, incorporating many of the distinctive features of Hindi cinema, like playback songs, dancing performers, and hugely well-liked movie CDs. Actors frequently participate in the simultaneous production of three to six films each year, occasionally venturing into India's numerous regional film industries. Hindi songs are frequently dubbed into other India languages for a pan-India distribution due to the language richness in India. Providing subtitles for the most widely spoken languages, Bollywood has more recently recognised their appeal to non-Hindi speakers on a worldwide scale.

Lowering of a person, with humanity, to the status of a thing comes under objectification. Females are being sexually objectified, which is why they are treated more like objects than like people. Objectification regarding attractiveness and appearance is when someone considered as a tool or as something to be used or as a sexual object. "Objectification Theory postulated that women are sexually objectified and treated as an object to be valued for its use by the male gender and the media" (Fredrickson and Roberts 1970). Bollywood item songs are songs with explicit lyrics that feature a woman dressed provocatively and used as a sex object by numerous guys. Bollywood films rely heavily on their musical score because the songs convey one-third of the tale. It is not uncommon for Indian songs to use vulgar language and depict women as objects, and as item songs and rap music become more popular in Indian movies, this problem is only escalating. Eve-teasing and the sexual objectification of women have often been encouraged by Bollywood songs and films. In their songs, commercials, TV shows, and films, not only India but other nations also support the practise of objectifying women. Even while audience in India give items songs a lot of praise, the country's treatment of women remains

appalling. Despite the fact that item songs and Bollywood films storyline are unrelated, due to their widespread appeal, they have still been forced into existence. Rap and item songs have received far too little research attention in India. In order to enhance the situation of women in the nation, there is a tremendous need to critically study these songs.

### Significance over Youth

Moreover, youth are greatly influenced by music, movies, and marketing. Young girls and boys in their early years sometimes look up to actors as role models and blindly imitate them. These young people attempt to emulate their role models when they hear songs and see movies that feature women being treated as objects or being eve-teased. Women have now been utilised in advertising to draw in customers and promote items. Most individuals rely on the media to form their opinions, according to evidence presented by academics who have studied the subject (Shade, 1995). Female bodies are objectified more frequently than male bodies, as seen by songs like "JAADU TERI NAZAR," "PINKY," and others. It is "reported that women who watch females as sex object internalize to varying degrees an outsider view and begin to self-objectify by treating themselves as an object to be looked at and evaluated on the basis of appearance" (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997). Thus, according to researchers, women who engage in selfobjectification to an extreme degree are more prone to have unpleasant psychological effects like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. 60 percent of music videos, according to researchers, feature sexual themes or urges (Gruber and Grube, 2000). People's perceptions of sex and sexual conduct are affected by sexually objectified depictions of women in commercials. The media frequently associates a woman's physical attractiveness with her sensuality and value by portraying a narrow and unreachable ideal of beauty for women. More body shame and self-objectification have been found to be strongly correlated with sexual victimisation events as recounted by women. "Researches have shown that exposure to sexually objectifying media is related to greater importance of physical beauty and appearance in defining an individual's own self-worth as well as in defining the value of females in general among African American adolescent girls" (Gordon, 2008). Media often portrays a narrow and

standard of female's physical beauty and relates this standard with a female's existing value. In the media, Asian American women are frequently represented as being sexually servile, innocent, and exotic.

In addition, women in lower socioeconomic classes are frequently seen as filthy, excessively sexy, untamed, unrefined, and deserving of sexual abuse and violence. Also, not to the exact level as men, but women also objectify other women. "Societal pressures for thinness, belief that smoking is a good method to control weight, and exposure to tobacco advertisements that promote women's" (Swim et al., 2001) cigarette use to attain sexiness and thinness have been shown to increase the odds of being a smoker among undergraduate women. Research shows that women who self-reported more sexist events which included experiences of sexual objectification in a daily diary had more feelings of anger and depression rather than non-sexual videos. Dehumanising one's own body is a common approach for female artists to show themselves as a result of societal and industry expectations. Due to its huge appeal for expressing a wide range of thoughts, feelings, and emotions, musical videos have significantly increased and developed. This has led to the apparent success of musicians and new trends. Though, there is growing worry regarding music's harmful effects on how women are viewed in society and its misogynistic victimization of women. Women are constantly being bombarded by pictures of what it means to be a female, what it means to appear like a woman, and how it means to balance a woman's life.

#### Depiction of Songs in Media

Sexuality in tracks has become more intense and obvious. As a reaction, there is a growing amount of research on the matter of how females are shown and objectified in the music. Sexual objectification has been defined as the feeling of a body valued primarily for utilising by others. Several albums with scantily dressed female roaming around to be eye catcher or appeal to males can be found in almost every musical genre. This demonstrates how women are currently commodified in general world with the use of entertainment genre including albums, television, and radio, with a motive of being shown as thing to be enjoyed. The predominance of hypersexualized presentations and false images of female in mainstream albums, which are intricately intertwined to the societal concepts of manhood, have been highlighted by

studies showing that it contains sexualized portrayals of women with dubious goals and effects. This theory is backed by information that gender is created in our culture in a substantial way by music, especially popular music. In this approach, whenever a song is played frequently, it immediately grabs attention and interest before becoming common and accepted, and whatever the song symbolizes eventually becomes permissible. As per previous findings that looked at stereotypical portrayals of females in albums or tracks, males are typically portrayed as authoritative and domineering, while females are more often portrayed as objectified victims of circumstance and weaker vessels. The majority of music videos present a specific image of a rich man who has power over women. This is illustrated in a way that makes it appear as if though, owning and controlling women are incapable of independent thought. Therefore, in order to sell their videos and inadvertently promote a slender body image in women, the majority of music video clips now employ sexy imagery of women. Women's photos are leveraged for commercial purposes, with directors of videos finding that they may increase sales by using women's images in their texts. These images tend to be of skinny or partially-naked women, which are used to draw viewers or readers. As a matter of fact, over time, the sexual messages that frequently appear in musical videos leave a lasting imprint and influence the immediate condition of the individual by arousing them, inhibiting their impulses, or triggering their thoughts. Numerous studies have been undertaken utilising both qualitative and quantitative techniques on the objectification of women in society as a result of the entertainment industry, particularly music videos. Despite the large number of research, there are few reviews of the literature on how women are portrayed in music videos. It was advised that additional attempts would be made to analyse research that mainly talks about the projection and objection of females in music videos. Evidence has been presented that suggests researchers should pay greater attention to music videos' sexual content as it grows more intense and prevalent. The literature on the portrayal of females in albums represents an important turning point in the progression of the field and is therefore worth reviewing. Subsequent investigators in this area will benefit from the findings of this study because it aims to foreknowledge of how women are portrayed in the media, particularly in

Bollywood videos, and because it makes a contribution to gender and feminine literature through analysis and research. Likewise, it provides an opportunity to successfully implemented the creative body of research that has been created using a range of selection, individuals, and methodologies.

### Objective

The aim of this dissertation is to showcase the objectification of women and their agency being snatched away through songs that have become and undeniable part of our pop- culture. The paper will look into Bollywood lyrics and how they have been detrimental in representation of women's agency as well as their bodies.

### Research Methodology

Directly or indirectly, songs have always been a part of our daily lives, and which is why they never fail to impact on one's perception. This dissertation is an example of qualitative research and aims to highlight the level of objectification faced by women through lyrics and their representation in Bollywood movies.

This dissertation is divided into three chapter; The first chapter, introduces the role of media and Bollywood in the creation of discourse and its stabilization. As pop-culture holds a very significant role in the minds of people and thus influence them to a great extent.

The second chapter is analytical in nature as it looks at the Bollywood lyrics along with a translated version of the song and how it normalizes stereotypes against women and take away their agency. This chapter also discusses on emerging themes by analysing lyrics on bases of Roger's standards on sexist lyrics.

The third chapter concludes the dissertation by summing up all the observation and the results accumulated through the process of the research along with a scope for further studies.

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## Chapter Two- Analysis

All religions, nations, and people use film and cinema as a common means of communication. It is one of the many diverse sources of popular amusement. It demonstrates individual aspirations and narratives, social issues, and creativity. Unfortunately, there are still issues with how gender roles are represented in movies. Through gender stereotyping and a lack of female empowerment, the cinema plays a significant part in forming concepts about gender and reinforcing the notions of male domination and patriarchal society. A song can reveal almost everything about the makeup of a culture at a given time, from social norms and beliefs to general sentiments. Studies show that listening to violent music can lead to the development of hostile cognition. In a similar view, it has been established those female listeners are encouraged to accept unfairness by songs that praise the sexual subjugation of women.

The Bollywood industry has a great impact on the majority of the population in India because it has been around since the 1930s and is the primary source of public entertainment. With the advent of unlimited internet access and unrestricted use of renowned media channels with endless entertainment alternatives, its psycho-social and instructional impact is immense and growing swiftly. This nation is of more than four billion people, personal preferences are sharpened and given greater autonomy with the widespread usage of gadgets among those with the lowest incomes or even those living in the poorest conditions. “Bollywood handles item songs with special consideration because some of them account for up to 30% and 50% of a movie's total costs” (Ganti 349). The manner of depicting the prominent female actress has a deep yet logical history in India.

### Laura Mulvey's Male Gaze

The objectification of female bodies in Hindi item songs is a topic that is frequently discussed. However, taking into consideration Laura Mulvey's theory in media studies, female bodies are not only considered as a site of sex fulfilment for male gaze but are also monetized into a product exchange value within neoliberal capitalist system, which highlights the cultural inflection of such overly sexualized movements in item songs perceived by onlookers, especially the viewers in rural areas who are traditionally raised

within a more constrained, confined society structure. Using Laura Mulvey's concept of the male gaze, it can be contended that the practise of using women's bodies as objects of amusement serves a metapatriarchal purpose. This practise not only contributes to India's long history of gender victimisation but also gives it a unique twist by selling or purchasing the victim's labour or body within the neo-liberal capitalist system. It's interesting to consider why no item number in a Bollywood film features a man as the main performer. In its socio-cultural interpretation, the term or genre "item song," as it is used in Bollywood films, has a gendered implication. The word item has a similar cultural significance to the English word "thing" when used in a sentence. Because the principal actor (always a woman) is viewed as an object in play, the adjective "item," which is used to describe the song's quality or content, has a sexist connotation in its usage and interpretation. One anticipates encountering material with "sensuous, overly sexualized performances" and bare, poorly dressed female bodies (Jain,16).

#### Demonstration OF Lead Actor

Understanding how the female body is made into an asset within the neo-liberal capitalist system is important because it demonstrates how the producer, who is usually a man, makes money by paying the artist (the female), who then make herself as a commodity on the open market of digital media consumption.

In item songs, the form of presentation, which depicts white women as a concupiscent persona, representing untamed sexuality and bodily pleasures, constantly takes the anticipation of the majority of viewers as merely delivering entertainment into considerations. A special preference is given to white women and/or bodies when choosing dancers for leading roles in these item songs. It highlights the inherent fears of Indian, which "run deep in the Indian imagination," that are patriarchal and racist (Delaney n. p.). Eroticism is a tradition in Indian culture that is neither new nor foreign. Yet, there are explanations for why many of the well-known item song dancers, such as Sunny Leone or Nora Fatehi, are foreigners of Indian ancestry. These item songs include exposing some body areas that are actually otherwise, socio - culturally covered.

#### Essence of Patriarchy



It's noteworthy to observe that patriarchal forces are present in the ways that the female body is portrayed in visual media both at the beginning of a song's creation and when it first becomes popular. The person behind the camera who records the audio-visual dance at the initial stage of shooting is frequently a man, and so are the producers and directors and many other crew members who sit and edit the recorded song to make it ideal for final release. The primary objective of those item songs is to draw in male spectators and viewers.

The way the principal female actress is "modelled" in item songs—often accompanied by a group of male performers—illustrates the passivity of female artists since their labour/bodies are considered as commodities, and the patriarchal gaze transforms the female identity into an object that actually belong to men and an agency of gratification. This process is referred to as "the restoration of patriarchal power, reconstructed less through the family and the state than through the 'unseen hand' of corporate capital" (Diamond, et al.3). In neo-liberal capitalism, performance serves the purpose of turning the female body and labour into a product that can be sold and made infinitely profitable in the digital consumerism market.

The sequences from the songs clearly indicate how female bodies are shown in item songs using varied angle-shots, like in the item song 'Ek Do Teen' from the movie *Baaghi 2* (Dir. by Ahmed Khan, 2018) showing Jacqueline Fernandez as the leading performer. they show the men opening her outerwear and she is surrounded by a bunch of males (only). There are also several scenes in which the specific body parts are targeted or highlighted. There is a similar concept among films, despite the fact that they were made in various years, in various contexts, on various subjects, and by various directors. Representational motif and technique stay constant. It is also very apparent that certain parts that are normally unseen to individuals in social or public environments are seen via or defined by the female body. The creators of these tracks are fully aware that the attention of the millions of spectators cannot be captured if the artist wears clothing that is consistent with how people are used to perceiving women clothed in society, or, in other words, if enough of the body is revealed. Fewer view also means less

money. Thus, the female persona is defamiliarized, if not defamed, in the public consciousness by showing bare bodies and by seeing the unseen.

The entire being of that particular woman in performance is characteristically condensed and turned into a sexualized message. This is how female bodies are represented in a patriarchal language of pleasure-giving things.

Typically, the entire being of that particular woman in performance is condensed and turned into a sexualized connotation. This is how female bodies are represented in a patriarchal language of pleasure-giving things. The way the female bodies are treated in albums can be viewed as a method of bringing home the fantasies or obsessions of the men. Most significantly, these item songs allow people to publicly or collectively indulge in such obsessions or fantasies.

#### Comparison with Different Songs and Generalised Adaptation

When compared to other sad or romantic songs in a Bollywood film, the item songs get a considerably more engaged response from online viewers. Investigating the gender gap in item songs and other sad/romantic songs in Bollywood movies, as well as the ratio of male to female spectators, might be intriguing research. However, an official record shows that the item song "O Saki Saki" from the 2019 movie *Batla House* has received views about 35 times more (565+ millions to date) than the depressingly romantic song 'Rula Diya,' both of which were uploaded on YouTube in the month of July 2019.

Considering such a significant audience response via the mirror of affect psychology, the influence of its perceived feeling regarding a woman as a sexual object has a harmful and punitive effect on the educational development of the viewers, especially youth folks. Due to the absence of appropriate constitutive elements in their ideas regarding female existence or female bodies, their sense of respect for women or the female body would be hindered. This gives the debate and the additional perspective that these depictions do not simply present women as sexualized bodies or commodities. They also interfere with the collective imagination of a group of young folks who are growing up quickly in a technologically advanced society of mass media where everything is readily available to them without any instruction or appropriate manual.

The restricted socially acceptable venues for sex education, limited chance to know the opposite gender, and the limited space of other sexually related debate are only a few examples of this absence of adequate constituent elements. A large portion of internet viewers—particularly young people—are influenced by this to adopt these item tunes and have sex-related thoughts based on images. Thus, the creator of these item songs quickly gains mainstream acceptance upon its launch. Furthermore, studies have shown the importance of such performative act on the premise that such eroticized and overly sexualized projections of female bodies in item songs have potential capacity to create a place to empower women. “This is in contrast to just considering these item songs as objectification of female bodies in patriarchal society or as devaluation of feminine subjectivities” (Shah and Cory,83). The audience must be actively self-aware and have a clear knowledge of the songs' content in order for the item songs to "subvert the (heterosexual) male gaze...by producing a showcase of female sexuality" (Shah and Cory, 84). But this exposes the precarious circumstances of a substantial portion of rural digital viewers, who typically do not view but absorb the materials, and whose only goal is to be entertained rather than to understand the meaning of those songs.

Thus, songs and music should be seen as resonances of socio-cultural rhythms as well as enjoyable creative forms (Cook, 1998). Sexist media, particularly sexist music, is also accountable for the increasement in sexual crimes in India, including rape and acid attacks. According to statistics, India reported 106 rape crimes in 2016 (The Quint, 2018), more than 500 acid attacks in 2015 (Islam, 2016), and 259 stalking instances in the first half of 2017 (Gender Matters, 2018). Music is strongly linked to culture, polity, and social class. From this standpoint view, music not only reflects the power dynamics that are now existent across many social divisions but also plays a vital role in shaping multiple identities, influencing sentiments, and changing social norms.

#### Analysis Based on Roger’s Standards

Dowd (2007) asserts that “[music] can be strongly linked to themes like subcultures, the reproduction of inequality, globalisation, identity development, and social movements”. The data for the current study

was made up of sexist Bollywood songs that were downloaded from youtube.com. If songs satisfied all or some of Rogers' stated standards for sexist lyrics, they were declared to be sexist (2013).

According to Rogers (2013), sexist tracks are those that "make reference to women in a way that generalises, stereotypes, degrades, demoralises, objectifies, or threatens bodily or sexual damage" and she identified 9 elements that are present in biased tracks.

1. The projection of female in stereotypical gender rules
2. The use of language that denigrates female
3. Focusing too much on a female's beauty while evaluating her existence
4. Object references using feminine pronouns
5. Stereotypical representations of women
6. Representations of women as sex objects
7. Labelling females as "sex workers"
8. The sexism of coerced sexual behaviour
9. The exaltation of female violence.

In contrast to Rogers (2013), who conceptualised and categorises sexist lyrical aspects from a predominantly female perspective, this study deals with the concept of biased lyrics as the usage of insulting phrases in a track that can be directed for both female and male. The assessment of track lyrics is based on Rogers, but in contrast to Rogers' classification, which has a biased perspective on sexism, the idea is that sexist songs can be used to stereotype and discriminate against people of all sexes.

Nine Bollywood songs were chosen based on the aforementioned factors, and as they have been generally launched between 2011 – 2018.

SR.NO.	SONG	LYRICIST	ALBUM/MOVIE	YEAR	SINGER
1.	Na ja na ja	Don Jaan, Manav Sangha	Na ja na ja	2017	Pav Dharia
2.	Agal bagal	Pritam Phata poster Chakraborty	nikla hero	2013	Mikka Singh

- |    |                    |                |               |      |                       |                                     |
|----|--------------------|----------------|---------------|------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. | Gandi baat         | Anupam         | R... Rajkumar | 2013 | Kaipana               |                                     |
|    |                    | Amod           |               |      |                       | Patowary, Mika<br>Singh             |
| 4. | Lak 28 Kudi da     | Diljit Dosanjh | The lion of   | 2011 | Diljit Dosanjh        |                                     |
|    |                    |                | Punjab        |      |                       | Honey Singh                         |
| 5. | Mera intkam        | Gaurav         | Shaadi Mein   | 2017 | Krishna Beura dekhegi | Krishna                             |
|    | Bansal Zaroor Aana |                |               |      |                       |                                     |
| 6. | Jaguar             | Jaani          | Jaguar        | 2015 | Roger David           |                                     |
|    |                    |                |               |      |                       | (Bohemia), Sukhe<br>Muzical Doctorz |
| 7. | Mein tera Raabta   |                |               | 2017 | Arijit Singh, Meet    |                                     |
|    | boyfriend          |                | Rakesh Kumar  |      |                       | Bros Anjjan,<br>Neha Kakkar         |
|    |                    | (Kumaae)       |               |      |                       |                                     |
| 8. | Aashiq surrender   | Shabbir        | Badrinath Ki  | 2017 | Amaal Mallik,         |                                     |
|    | hua                | Ahmed          | Dulhania      |      |                       | Shreya Ghoshal                      |
| 9. | Coca cola          | Tonny Kakkar   | Coca cola tu  | 2018 | Tony Kakkar           |                                     |

Inclusion of these songs is not done on the basis of their popularity but most of these songs were quite popular among viewers.

Majority of the chosen songs are well-known and beloved by millions of people, indicating that they may have profound social effects. However, it is possible that the true level of prominence of these songs is higher than that indicated by the source.

#### Discussion on Emerging Themes

The next stage here is to find emerging themes after sampling songs that were sexist.

#### Glorification of unrequited love

1. Inability to accept denial or ignorance.

“Tere kolon haan kara ke chadni” (Dharia 02:00)

(I would not give up until I make you say yes)

Tu ne English me jab humko danta to ashiiq surrender hua.” (Ahmed 01:00)

(When you scolded me in English, your lover surrendered)

2. Belief that ‘No’ is basically a ‘Yes’.

Tu ne bhav nhi diya re. (Amod 0:40)

(You did not give me any importance)

Mainu Bhi pasand tu karti zarur (Dharia 0:35)

(I am sure you like me too)

Main tera boy-friend tu meri girl-friend Tu mainu kehendi na na.” (Kumar 01:06)

(I am your boyfriend; you are my girlfriend but you keep saying no to me)

3. Following to make uncomfortable

“Tera picha krun to rokne ka nhi

(Don’t stop me if I stalk you)

Tera rasta jo rokun tokne ka nhi (0:34)

(Don’t interrupt when I block your way)

Beedi peeke nukkad pe wait tera kiya re” (Amod 0:25)

(I waited for you on the corner, smoking cigarettes)

Ruk te ja meri gal te sun le, o mainu kehendi na na na na (01:40)

([I ask her to] stop and listen to me but she keeps saying no)

4. Retribution

“thukra ke mera pyar mera inteqam dekhegi

(Now that you have discarded my love, you will see my revenge)

Duniya shikast teri sare aam dekhegi.” (Bansal 01:25)

(The world will see your defeat)

## Stereotypical portrayal

### 1. Snobbishness towards 'female roles'

“Rotian pakain nal mere gane gayin” (Sangha 02:11)

(You will spend rest of your life making breads and will sing my songs [being remorseful for rejecting me])

### 2. Objectification

“Thande ki bottle...tujhe ghat ghat main pee lun” (Kakkar 0:23)

(You are a cold drink; I will gulp you)

### 3. Presenting females as materialistic

“Neeli neeli ankhion me Dilli wala kajra, mainu invite kerda (01:53)

(Delhi's kohl in your blue eyes invites me)

Nakhra high rate kudi da (01:48)

(Her tantrums are high-fi)

Att tera nakhra tera hi kusoor

(Your tantrum is none of your fault)

Kudi kendi pehle Jaguar Le lo, fir jinna marzi pyar lelo” (Sangha0:12)

(My girlfriend says first buy me a jaguar [luxury car], then

take as much love from me as you want)

### 4. Pointing out on male as niggling stalkers

“Beedi peeke nukkad pe wait tera kiya re, Khali peeli 18 cup chai bhi to piya re

(I waited for you on the corner, smoking cigarettes and

drank 18 cups of tea for no reason)

Main vella baitha derda” (Amod 0:29)

(I sit aimlessly)

## Multiple notion for judging male and females

### 1. Focus on physical appearance of women

“Lak 28 kudi da, 47 weight kudi da (0:23)

(The girl’s waist is 28 and her weight is 47)

Dikhne me thi tu kadak

(You looked hot)

Sohni model lagdi

(She looks like a beautiful model)

Moti da vyah hogya” (Dosanjh 01:03)

(Even the corpulent girl got married)

## 2. Rendering money as a major aspect of male desirability

“Take you to Paris, Take you to London” (Jaani 01:28)

(As) long as you (are) with me, you will live in abundance.

Almost every song that was sampled contained some variations. Intriguingly, men were consistently portrayed in these songs as unrequited lovers, with the women they were meant to be in love with showing no sign of interest or desire to return their affection. A comprehensive examination of a few songs showed that the refusal to accept rejection or show interest is most often depicted as ‘robust’ and ‘macho’. Perhaps there are many lines that emphasised and claimed ‘heroism’, in trying to convince a woman even though of her blatant lack of interest or acceptance. These songs not only celebrate rejection denial, but they also see rejection as a test for a one-sided lover's stubbornness, making him even more determined to ‘obtain his object of want.’

A patriarchal attitude that is strongly ingrained in Indian culture, the underlying theme also has resonance with the notion of masculine elitism. Culturally speaking, getting ignored by a female is seen as a hazard to his manhood, and males are taught to battle it rather than to accept it. Verse like "Mainu bhi pasand tu karti zarur" illustrates the idea that "No" is basically a "Yes" (I am sure you also like me). The idea that rejection, especially when it comes from a female, is viewed as an indication of underlying love which seems to have become normalised by this motif, which was also consistently present across the majority of the songs that were picked. Though more upsetting is how these tracks support this fallacious



notion and then portray rejection as a 'tool' used by women to gauge their lover's sincerity and perseverance. Consequently, every time a Bollywood track depicts the heroine giving in to the hero's persistence (which almost often entails stalking) after she rejects him at first, it promotes the idea that "no is basically a yes" and raises the propensity of "romantic ignorance" among the audience. Whereas the first and second sub - themes are more subject to some limitations as they are based on level of perception, the final two are more action or behaviour-based. In essence, the succeeding motifs of stalking and retaliation might be considered as deriving from or following the previous two. The act of stalking is eventually justified by opposing rejection and interpreting it as unspoken love. A one-sided admirer who believes that ignorance is truly compassion in disguise justifies stalking as an effort to bring out the restrained desire. Moreover, lyrics like "Tera picha krun to rokne ka nhi" ("Don't stop me if I follow you") and "Tera rasta jo rokun tokne ka nhi" ("Don't interrupt me if I block your way") not only condone following but also give the impression that an admirer has a right to stalk his professed "beloved" if necessary. The most unstable kind of one-sided love is revenge, which is the final subtheme. Stalking is an invasion of privacy, but when combined with resentment at being rejected, it may take on a far grimmer aspect. It is horrifying and disturbing that this concept is present in popular tracks like "Thukra ki mera pyar mera inteqam dekhegi" ("Now that you have rejected my love, you will see my retribution") since it may inspire viewers to exact revenge by hurting their romantic partner physically or mentally. "Social cognitive theory describes that representing a forbidden behaviour as rewarding through media enhances its possibility of being learned and expressed by the audience" (Bandura's 2001). According to this approach, viewers emulate or replicate the behaviour displayed in the media. Therefore, exaggerated depictions of retribution in popular Bollywood songs might inspire individuals to act out in a vindictive manner and even to perform horrific activities like threatening, stalking, acid attacks, and rape, among other atrocious behaviours.

Songs, as 'cultural artifacts', have the authority to sway an audience's actions and attitudes. The existing analysis supports the same perspective and argues that sexist and prejudiced lyrical content is what causes gender-based power structures to develop in all social and cultural contexts. Recurring motifs

make it abundantly evident how sexist songs contribute to the societal genderization of the idea of passionate love, (Lewis, 1960). These songs depict love as a struggle to dominate and control women who reject males rather than as an attempt to earn their affection and fellowship. Thus, the romanticization of scorned love runs the risk of fostering a culture where a lady's autonomy and authority are threatened by romanticising behaviours like stalking and where the balance of power favours males over women.

The second overarching element that developed was misogyny or hatred of women. The results of the analysis showed that various forms of misogyny were evident in the lyrics of most of the other sexist songs. Preparing food is seen as an indication of living a mocking existence, which gives an insight into how historically assigned duties for women are purposefully stereotyped as "poor" and "less valuable" in order to maintain male dominance. Such contempt and sexism are harmful because they uphold patriarchal ideals, assist in maintaining the division of labour between men and women, and perpetuate gender inequality by giving males more authority and privileges. The objectification of women was another kind of misogyny that was on display. Women were often described as soulless items, and one's presence was relegated to being grasped by men. These tracks illustrate the widespread acceptance of women being objectified and how it is simple for it to reach a worldwide audience through popular Bollywood chart-toppers.

Misogyny's third subtheme, where in females were presented as inciting male, to creep up on them, was that of women being held accountable for 'inviting' males. The apparent use of the word "Invite" conveys the idea that while males are free to casually abdicate their responsibilities, women should be held accountable if they are stalked. These kinds of lyrics not only advocate innocent blaming, which is yet another disgusting trait of misogyny, but also legitimise behaviours like stalking. The power of songs to generate and perpetuate stereotypes was the next concept to emerge, and it was referred to as stereotypical representation. Findings shows that these biased songs frequently use sexist stereotypes in their lyrics and draw erroneous conclusions about male and female, which serves as a folk stimulant for expanding the gap in gender that is already in existence. "If people are often confronted by the media and told throughout daily life that the sexes are so different, then it is easy to believe that the differences are

real and lead to inevitable inequality' Rogers (2013), when outlining the function of tracks is fostering gender biased. So much so that even their refusal was depicted as "just another tantrum," women were stereotyped in many of the songs as temper throwers. These tracks portray a distorted and erroneous image of femininity and are described as a woman's defining quality. Women were typically portrayed as materialistic and demanding in lyrics. In contrast to the portrayal of men as sincere lovers who are willing to relinquish all for their partner, such tracks portray women as cunning brain-washer who lure males in solely just in about selfish interests.

This is neither to suggest, that biased songs just caricature females; they also represent males as apathetic individuals who have solemnly purpose to torment and creep up on females who are not even interested in them. The fact that sexist songs categorize all men and portray masculinity negatively, which is itself sexist, and does not negate the reality that they aim to portray stalking as romantic and macho. "Such gender-based stereotyping can be detrimental for the society because frequent exposure to this kind of content can lead to stereotype priming, or the activation of related stereotypes" (Cobb & Boettcher, 2007), which may then result in harmful explicit behaviours like gender inequality and gender-based conflict, and others. Furthermore, embracing stereotypes is another effect of mainstreaming sexism. Thus, this can be supported with "Interpellation hypothesis, which proposes that when a group is continuously stereotyped and labelled, its members begin to internalize those stereotypes and end up becoming what they are labelled as" Althusser's (1971). Therefore, the transmission of unfavourable sexist norms might also result in unfavourable behavioural changes. This means that a large portion of the responsibility for the massively growing gender disparity and the development of a culture that uses gender heuristics should be placed on lyrics that stereotype individuals based on their gender. Lastly, inequality over the criteria used to compare men and women's worth also appeared as a key subject. Sexist songs frequently emphasised a woman's physical attributes or outer look as a major factor in determining her appeal, whereas a man's attractiveness was typically correlated with his riches or level of prosperity.

Moreover, from a feminist aspect, such distinctions have their origins in our society's patriarchal culture, which consciously labels having economic independence and prominence as male obligations as

to enforce male domination. Furthermore, in this century where mostly females are just as financially and economically successful and liberated as men, there is no need for them to rely on their sexuality in order to secure their financial future. However, spreading these gendered standards of desirable behaviour neither overlooks that women have a same social position yet encourages the growth of sexual disparities. “Moreover, such differentiations are problematic because over-emphasis on physical beauty and creation of unrealistic beauty standards can produce body image issues (Richins, 1991) which may consequently deflate women’s self-esteem and confidence” (Grabe & Ward, 2008). Akin to this, emphasising wealth as the only factor in men's desirability may distort our nation's youth by sending the erroneous message that more mindset, values, and more, personal qualities are neglected incise of a man to be endearing.

#### Bollywood Success: Based on Item Songs

The majority of these female actresses have fiercely independent and prosperous lives; as a result, they see this whole industry as a means to facilitate themselves and their freedom, even though it reinforces sexist notions and awakens male fantasies. This is an intriguing subject that deserves consideration.

Despite the underlying sexism and sexualization of women (to market products and films). The leading female artists, who would probably view these item numbers as a regular part of their employment and an easy and quick route to earn, instead of the drawn-out schedules of films, profit on postfeminist, capitalist conceptions of female achievement and individual choice. Nearly all of Bollywood's top female A-list artists, including Rekha, Madhuri, Aishwarya, Priyanka, Katrina, and Kareena, have carried out a number of item numbers.

Though by examining the all-time hit item tracks *Shiela Ki Jawani* (*Tees Maar Khan*, 2010) and *Chikni Chameli* (*Agneepath*, 2012), it asserts that both songs represent female as sexually liberated. They do set with broader sociocultural practises in urban India, including the young urban women's changing lifestyles, experienced femininities, and the new generation of prominent Indian female actresses who execute these songs without any inhibitions.

#### Item Song 1: Sheila ki Jawani

The heroine or female lead would be too virginal, pure, and chaste to partake in such vulgarised bodily motions as hip-swinging and pelvic gyrations in the past. The vamp, who would perform such dance routines in clubs or discos. The distinction between good and terrible women is becoming hazier with the introduction of item numbers because leading ladies perform these numbers not only in movies but also at weddings and other public events. The advent of item songs in Hindi movies can be seen in the context of post-feminist discourse as a move toward young female actresses who do not see the discourse in item songs as humiliating or sexualizing. Instead, some women view such song performances—and especially the song—as empowering phenomenon. *Shila ki Jawani* (the peak of Shila's youth) is a song in which Shila thoroughly embraces and enjoys her sexuality while remaining in control despite being objectified. She also successfully resists the male gaze while simultaneously enjoying her own sexual power. It's essentially a narcissistic strategy whereby ladies get pleasure and delight simply by admiring their own body. As she, *The Rowdy Rani* (2016) writes, these songs are shocking in part because they shatter taboos surrounding female sexuality.

Whether complaints about objectification of women were sincere or emanated from ingrained patriarchal ideas about what constitutes a "good" woman is difficult to determine. It reminded of the toecurling discomfort we experience when one of these seductive performance pieces airs during family TV time as I saw the fairly close female chest-and-hip thrusting that was on display. But why is watching these women unsettling? Do we squirm the same way when we see John Abraham in swimming bottoms in the movie *Dostana*? She is depicted as enjoying male attention, but she would resist it—that is, she has control over the male gaze—and she would triumph over men in this game. To the utmost, she plays the seductress, awakening men and stealing their attention, then leaving their wishes unmet.

When the hero arrives on the scene and notices a group of men admiring the item girl, he yells: “*Saala aankhon se baladkar karta hai.... iski,*” which roughly translates as He rapes with his eyes. The word rape in this case is an obvious allusion to the carnal urges that males have for her semi-naked body. When he says that he has been wanting for her to give him a lover's glance for years and that he would like to take her away from this misery, he makes the claim that he is actually yearning for her love and not

desire. She does not want a heterosexual relationship, despite the fact that males are depicted yearning after her because she is attractive, hot, and sexualized by the camera angles that highlight her body parts. Her wantonness is played up in the song, yet she knows when to stop and how to take advantage of the attention of men, despite being sexualized as the target of masculine imagination and desire. She is, in a nutshell, is the ideal of the modern woman who is in charge of her body, an independent and strong embodiment of the feminist ideology of individual rights and female success. She may occasionally toy with the thought of finding a man who can give all of these things (vehicle, bungalow, money, etc.), wavering between maintaining her independence and giving up to a man for all of these luxuries, not just for love. However, despite her continuous search for the patriarchal Mr. Right, she ultimately rejects his advances because she values her independence too much to sacrifice it for the comfort and luxury that a patriarchal marriage may provide. The myth of romantic love has long been disproved by feminists as a crippling phenomenon that sweeps women off their feet and ultimately compels them to submit to patriarchy.

#### Item Song 2: Chikni Chameli

The movie narrative is structured along themes that are consistent with the patriarchal subconscious of society. The narrative movie establishes a masculine gaze. The reifying gaze never bears the woman; rather, the woman is always its object. The crimson silk fabric that flows seductively over the item girl's body to begin the song both hides and reveals the contours of her body. The men who are surrounding her and those viewing her on the big screen are both more intrigued by this method of displaying the body. Her alluring power is further increased by the silk's crimson colour. The males are anticipating what will happen next as they wait with baited breath. And after the material is taken off, the camera zooms in on the woman's waist to list her bodily parts. Men seated in the audience watching the song on the screen lend reinforcement to the male look behind the camera. The item girl is seen to be tied down with a bottle of wine, but all the guys in the song are depicted as fully dressed, demonstrating more misogyny in the portrayal. The item song serves as a famous example of the sexist saying, "Wine, women, and song," which reduces women to objects by connecting them with sensuality and sexual pleasures. In Hindi, the

adverb *chikni* means "sexy," which reflects the essence of the entire item number. All the men in the group begin dancing with the item girl as soon as she begins to move vivaciously. When referring to the method of dismembering the female body, there are two main outcomes. The body is first reduced to its constituent elements and depersonalised. Second, the scene cannot be adequately focalized from the viewpoint of the female protagonist because she is not depicted as a unified conscious physical being; her experience is left out of the text. Therefore, fragmentation is linked to male focalization since the female is viewed by men as an object or group of objects. The item song uses this fragmentation strategy as well, objectifying various feminine body parts. The song's first lines are very revealing:

“Bichoo meray naina, baari zahareeli ankh  
 maaray Kamsin kamariya saali ik thumke se  
 lakh maaray” (Bhattacharya 0:55)

The specific bodily parts, *naina* (eyes) and *kamar* (waist), are objectified and each has a unique role to play in catching the male's attention, as demonstrated. Ironically enough, the song's lyrics also imply that she is skilled and ardent in sex:

“Ghaat ghaat ghoomi hoon mian, and that bhooke sheron se  
 khailoon gi main.” (Bhattacharya 3:16)

In this song, as in the other, she plays the seductress to the hilt, but she is fully in control of her sexuality and boasts of her sexual prowess (*hatheli pe angaare le loon gi main*): she can manage these men because she is not a helpless object in the game of seduction. She is portrayed holding two bottles of wine in her hands like a warrior rather than as an objectified figure, giving the impression that she is in charge. She also exudes poise and control, leading guys on while being aware of her sexuality and ready to hit them with the same bottle weapons, she is holding in her hands to fend off unwanted approaches. When viewed from this viewpoint, she also appears to be someone who makes people dance to her music and is prepared to strike anyone who attempts to cross the parameters she has set.

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### Chapter Three- CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper has been to investigate how sexist tracks could impact attitudes and practices of numbers of people. Applying Rogers' criteria to examine nine specifically chosen sexist Bollywood tracks and two item numbers, found that these songs share a lot more in common than just their main issue, which is sexism. Such songs could legitimise and "protagonist" revenge and stalking in the context of love, as well as encourage denial and wrong interpretations of refusal. These lyrical elements may

strengthen men's exaggerated sense of entitlement, in line with the media effects theory, by making them believing rejection as an insult to their advantages as men. Additionally, portraying such behaviour as valiant and heroic may help to normalise crimes like stalking and rape. Sexist lyrics have also been shown to contain misogyny, which takes the form of victimisation of female's bodies, and demeaning of feminine roles.

Finally, this paper highlights how sexist songs' overemphasis on women's physical attributes may, on the one hand, cause young women to have body image problems, and, on the other, sexualize females and present them as things that maybe had by successful and wealthy men. It has been discovered that these depictions made erroneous assumptions, about men by stereotypes them, even though they present a faulty image of women and femininity. The present study draws attention to the frequently neglected possible adverse impact of sexist songs. The study emphasises the dangers that sexist songs provide to society by taking into account how powerfully music shapes public opinion and governs attitude formation. The current study can be used as an empirical foundation for future research by social scientists and other researchers. However, the depictions of two item numbers are highly ambiguous and politically motivated to redefine Indian femininities. Similar to the female actors who portray them, the ladies in the item songs subvert traditional Indian femininities by being independent and powerful while also being sexualized and objectified to draw viewers and increase ticket sales. They thus serve as both subjects and objects of media discourses on the new woman in the "modern-colonial." (Giraldo, 2016) As a result, in the global "modern-colonial" capitalist and consumer society, they are both subjects and objects of media discourses on the new woman. In these item songs, a woman may be a whore or a prostitute, but she still has influence and power over men, in contrast to the subordinate and submissive wife and sister. The whore is also sexually and monetarily emancipated and independent, unlike the wife and sister.

However, 'traditional feminists' are voicing concerns about the fact that inside neo-liberal,

capitalist regimes, discourses of individual success and empowerment have replaced institutional and structural gender equality. Rather than just simply viewing these item songs as objectification of female bodies in patriarchal society or as a devaluation of feminine subjectivities, studies have highlighted the importance of this performative act on the theory that such eroticized and overly sexualized projections of female bodies in item songs have the ability to empower women (Shah and Cory 83). The viewer must be actively self-aware and have a clear knowledge of the songs' content in order for the item songs to "subvert the (heterosexual) male gaze...by producing a spectacle of female sexuality" (Shah and Cory 84). However, this highlights the difficult circumstances faced by a large segment of rural digital viewers, who typically do not watch but instead consume the materials, and whose primary goal is to be entertained rather than to interpret the significance of those songs. Hence, the overt misogyny in Bollywood music has gone unmentioned in popular culture. Akshara, a non-profit organisation with headquarters in Mumbai, is making an effort to alter the current situation. This group has launched a campaign called #GaanaRewrite to promote gender parity. They chose a few particularly well-known and controversial Bollywood songs to rewrite from the viewpoint of women. In December, Akshara Centre announced the "Gaana (Song) Rewrite" competition, which challenges participants to rewrite the lyrics to any Bollywood song they believe to be sexist. The group said that in order to lobby for change, it might then speak with the movie industry. Snehal Velkar, a coordinator at Mumbai's Akshara Centre, the centre for Bollywood, said that her organisation works on gender awareness, young women often bring up the subject of being harassed by men singing improper Bollywood songs. "Bollywood music is fun to sing and dance to, but if you listen very carefully, you'll see that many of the lyrics objectify and degrade women. As a result, violence against women and sexual harassment become more common. In light of recent stories about violent crimes against women, Bollywood has heavily criticised from women's rights organisations and a number of artists for its sexist themes and for glorifying violence towards women.

Gaana Rewrite

A survey that was conducted by the charity ActionAid UK found that nearly two – fifths Indian women have encountered some form of public harassment, which can vary from wolf-whistling, taunting, and staring to being followed, groped, or raped. Javed Akhtar and Prasoon Joshi, both well-known Hindi film lyricists, have criticised their contemporaries for penning crude and irresponsible lyrics and blamed viewers for supporting such music.

Here are some winning lyrics with translation from the competition organised by Akshara Centre's "Gaana (Song) Rewrite".

Original song: Laila ho Laila	Remix: Lailo ho Laila
	Naari oh naari
Laila main laila aisi hoon Laila	Aaj ki naari
Har koi chahe mujhse milna akela	Duniya badal de
Jisko bhi dekhu duniya bhula doon	Aisi yeh naari
Majnu bana du aisi main laila	Mardo se kandha ahhaaa
Ho ye kaise hain lamhe	Milakar chalaye... ahhaaa
Jo itne haseen hain	Baba ki lathi
Meri aankhe mujhse	Yeh banker dikhaye
Ye kya kehrahi hain	(Woman I'm a woman)
(Laila I'm Laila, I'm the kind of Laila)	(I'm a woman of new world)
(To whom everyone wants to meet alone)	(One who can change the world)
(Whomever I see I become his [I forget the whole world for a guy that comes along])	(I'm a woman of that kind)
	(Shoulder to shoulder with a man)
(I make a majnu out of him, I'm that kind of	(What is this that my eyes are telling me).
laila)	(Javed Akhtar)
(What are these moments which are so	(Would walk together)
beautiful)	(Would become father's support)

(She'll show and prove this to whole world)	(Akshara)
Tu cheez badi hai mast mast	Mein ladki badi hu sakt, sakt
Original song: Tu Cheez Badi Hai Mast Tu cheez badi hai mast mast	Remix: Tu Cheez Badi Hai Mast, Mast Mein ladki badi hu sakt, sakt
Bol jara tu jaane mehboobi,	Sun le jara tu meri jubaani
Mujhme aisi kya hai khoobi,	Mili mujhe bhi jeene ki aazhadi
Tu ek resham ki dor dor,	Mein ek jwaala ki aag, aag
Teri chaal pe ashqi mor mor	Jal jaayega agar aaya paas
Teri julf ghani chit chor chor	Chal haath badhayein saath saath
Ghan ghor ghata mad mast mast	Aur todein yeh haalat aaj
Tu cheez badi hai mast mast	Mein ladki badi hun sakt sakt
(You are a wonderful thing)	(I'm the girl who is strong-strong)
(You are a wonderful thing)	(I'm the girl who is strong-strong)
(Tell me, O love)	(Now you listen to my words)
(What's so special about me?)	(I also have the right to live)
(You are a thread made of silk)	(I'm the fire)
(Lover's strut behind you when you walk)	(It will burn you, if you come near me)
(Your thick tresses, sweetheart, are like the dark clouds above)	(Let's stand together against obstacles)
(This heart of mine is drowned in the depth of your eyes)	(And break this disparity today)
(Become my loved one, you are a wonderful thing).	(I'm the girl who is strong-strong).
(Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan)	(Akshara)

### Limitations and Scope for Further Studies

The study has significant limitations despite its applicability and relevance. Songs have not been grouped according to their genres, which may have facilitated comparisons. Therefore, by contrasting other Bollywood song genres, future researchers can draw more insightful conclusions, extend this investigation to a larger sample of music.

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