



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Asmat A. Sheikh^{1*}, Uzma Sadiq², Nazia Suleman³, Safia Siddiqui⁴, Sabahat Parveen⁵

1 The Women University Multan, Pakistan, asmatrixwan@gmail.com

2 University of Education DG Khan Campus, Pakistan, uzmasadiq@yahoo.com

**3 COMSATS University Islamabad, Vehari Campus Pakistan,
naziasuleman@ciitvehari.edu.pk**

4 The Islamia University Bahawalpur, Pakistan, safiabwp@yahoo.com

**5 University of Education Faisalabad Campus, Pakistan,
sabahatmushtaq@hotmail.com**

Abstract

The inclusion of literature in the educational curriculum is helpful for the students to learn English as a Second/ Foreign language. The exercises and activities that are based on the literary texts help the teachers in bringing about changes in conventional setup of ELT classes in Pakistan. This paper aims to help language teachers develop a thoughtful and principled approach to using literature in the language classroom. At the same time, this research aims to provide teachers with the tools for developing their own classroom materials and for using these materials in a way that is relevant to their learners’ needs. It highlights the effectiveness and importance of teaching English language through literature in an interesting and innovative manner. This paper explores to the text of ‘Good Bye Mr. Chips’, a famous novel by James Hilton (1934) which has been a permanent component of the Intermediate Syllabus in Punjab for almost last five decades. For the analysis of data, insights are taken from the works of Dubin & Olshtain (1977), Collie & Slater (1987) and Robinette. B. W (1978). The future researchers can exploit similar literary texts following the same frameworks for language teaching purposes.

Keywords: ELT, language skills, English literature, Pakistani ELT classroom, innovation



Introduction

The Dirty Picture (2011), a Bollywood film is selected for analysis to reveal that the women are exploited by patriarchy through inculcating in them the misconception of their agency and power. No doubt, the films circulate ideas through stories and imageries; the question is either the films are unveiling reality or propagating certain ideologies? Apparently, the film portrays Silk (the heroine) as a rebellious, independent and confident woman who breaks normative structures and chains of society and asserts her agency in doing whatever she wants but in reality becomes a sexual object that has been displayed on the screen to fulfill the patriarchal hunger. Bose (2014) argues that when compared with her female contemporaries in terms of her performance style, consistent box-office success, and choice of unconventional roles that have narratively reduced the male hero to formality, Balan's (the actress) stardom is an intriguing anomaly. Story of ‘The Dirty Picture’ is mainly based on the life of ‘Silk Smitha’, a South Indian actress noted for her bold erotic roles and on some of her other contemporaries as well. The film under study was directed by Milan Luthria and co-produced by Ekta Kapoor and Shobha Kapoor. Feminist Stylistics (1995), Semiotic Theory (1983) and Male Gaze Theory (1975) and Feminist Film Theory (1999) have been used as theoretical frameworks for the analysis which assist the study to uncover the ways patriarchy is used to represent women. Media influences are important in modern society, with people being bombarded by messages and images from the movies, television, magazines, news, billboards and other forms of advertising. In views of Kellner, 2001; Berger; 2008 & Dutt, 2014; films and other media productions play an important part in building the perceptions of and about different groups of society. Berger (2008) is of the view that while watching a film the spectators are consciously or unconsciously observing the portrayals of certain type of individuals and the society that they dwell in. Hence the representation of women in films also affects the people's perception about them. Media are mainly controlled by men and their dominance is evident in the film industry as well (Dutt, 2014). Women have made tremendous strides in different aspects of life and in giving an equal footing to men since the women liberation movement in 1960. However, in popular culture and especially in media very few of these efforts have been successful.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant for both researchers and female readers as it uncovers the ways patriarchy uses (discourse and visuals) to objectify and dehumanize the women in the present day society. Contrary to traditional patriarchal systems which view women as normative mothers and wives in the ‘ideal family’, this research unfolds how the modern woman is being dominated and stereotyped by the modern patriarchal systems. Moreover, the research is significant as it contributes to further academic researches related to women representations in contemporary films and provides them with up to date data.

Research Questions

The research questions which lead the study are:

1. How do the patriarchal attitudes sexually objectify women as shown in the movie?
2. How does the sexual objectification of ‘Silk’, as shown in the movie, transform her character?
3. Does ‘Silk’ use her sexual objectification as a power enabling strategy within male dominated scenario? If so, is she able to gain a sound sense of identity and success?



Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to reveal that some patriarchal standpoints depicted in the film lead to the conclusion that ‘The Dirty Picture’ is actually a patriarchal text. More specifically, the objectives of this research are as follow:

1. To reveal the evidences of sexual objectification of women in the film.
2. To study the detrimental effects of sexual objectification of women as presented through the heroine ‘Silk’.
3. To enable women frame their own distinct canons as readers and writers.

Literature Review

A media critical theorist Kellner (2001) states that television, film, radio and other products of media culture provide materials out of which we forge our very identities, our sense of selfhood; our notion of what it means to be male or female. As the media have the power to construct and distort the realities (Kellner, 2001 & Brewer, 2009) so feminists also jump into this domain to safeguard their rights and hence open the door for feminist film theory. Kuhn (1994) highlights how Hollywood films use women as visual accessories to satisfy male gaze. Women have been stereotyped by media as Brewer (2009) explores this issue in her thesis by employing the stereotype theory. She states that women were portrayed as overtly feminine, were frequently brutalized and tortured and were supposed to be asexual. The popular culture especially films provides the standard about what women should and should not be. She makes it explicit that irrespective of the media organizers’ claims that the representation of women on screen has been changed; such representations are still biased and prejudiced towards women. Lowe (2007) also sought to gauge the degree of improvement in the nature of representation in the media by focusing on the portrayal of gender and body image in media. The results revealed that the visual portrayal and discursive treatment of body size and weight, appearance, and attractiveness has indeed broadened to include less of the ‘ideal’ body image and very few stereotypical and sexist tendencies. Men as well as women were subjected to both positive and negative references to body images, but generally, fuller, curvier figures were championed and underweight unhealthy bodies were condemned.

In a study based on women-centric Hindi films Sarkar (2012) argues that emotionally and economically independent representations of women in Hindi films promote social change in the women’s treatment in Indian society, wherein women are subordinated and marginalized by patriarchy. Therefore, by unveiling the evils like domestic violence and other abuses etc. the study reveals these problems and encourages women to talk about such injustices in public. Kipnis (2007) and Williams (2014), the two feminist pornography scholars, have used psychoanalytic approaches to examine the representation of sexuality in cinema. Williams (2014) inspired heavily from Mulvey’s (1975) argument that cinematic representations of women are fabricated to display the female body for the sake of male spectator’s pleasure opines that the goal of pornography is to make the invisible visible and that pornography talks to a male audience.

With the help of theoretical frameworks as semiotics and psychoanalysis, feminist critics also tried to understand the all-pervasive power of patriarchal imagery in the film industry. These theoretical discourses have been attested in analyzing the ways in which sexual difference is encoded in classical narrative. The semiotic theory is very productive theoretical discourse to unfold the implied meanings of women representation in media products. At the same time,



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

American philosopher Pierce (1974) focused on studying visual image in particular, through semiotics. Berger (2008) makes it clear that the collection of various signs makes an image. Each sign in this collection has numerous levels of meaning in it that interact to each other.

Tere (2012) suggests that agency to dismantle the existing power structure as well as the ability to negotiate their own position within this structure should be possessed by women characters. It is the need of time that cinema should seek to redefine images of women as objects of male gaze. The only purpose of cinema is not to entertain. It must struggle for social change through entertainment. Cinema should not stick to the “formula film” as a media product, identified to accelerate the process of modernity; it should promote more progressive representations of women. Justice to women and their role in the society would be done by such portrayals.

In the remaining section, the researcher will discuss standpoints about the film under study and pen that how other researchers view this movie. Mainly there are two perspectives about the study; one is on the side that film is entertainment, sexual entertainment at the expense of women nudity, while others claims that it shows the agency of woman. According to Sen (2011) the director’s approach in this film (*Dirty Picture*) is to entertain and amuse the public that makes it a masala movie not a great film with a specific leading character. Whereas Kamath (2014) is of the view that the film will run successfully as the heroine puts up slutty clothes, dances with naked heavy thighs and speaks old fashioned dirty dialogues that make the spectators stick to the screen.

The above literature aptly demonstrates that women have been hugely objectified as objects of male gaze. The chosen film in this regard will further unravel this practice of female bodily objectification and its derogatory influences on women as presented through the cinematic medium.

Methodology

The study is based on linguistic and visual analyses of the film ‘The Dirty Picture’ (2011). Along with the evaluation of language and visuals of the film, sound effects have also been examined to give the logical evidences. Qualitative and descriptive method is employed for the analysis as it helps the researchers to get an in-depth understanding of human behavior. It also leads to find out the reasons that govern such behavior. Insights from Feminist Film Theory (1999), Semiotic Theory (1983), and Male Gaze Theory (1975) and Feminist Stylistics (1995) have been used as theoretical frameworks for the analysis. Handpicked/purposive random sampling is used to select the film scenes for linguistic and visual analyses.

Theoretical Background

In this section, the researcher briefly discusses the theoretical frameworks used to analyze the selected data.

Semiotic Theory (1983)

Semiotics a theory of production and interpretation of meaning makes it evident that the nature of acts and objects construct meaning which function as ‘signs’ in relation to other signs. Saussure (1983) in his pioneering work in semiotics claimed that language is a system of signs that has a form (word or image) known as signifier (denotations) and an associated idea or concept known as signified (connotations). In filmic semiotics, signs include clothes, language, color, body language etc. So ‘*The Dirty Picture*’ has been analyzed by using the above mentioned theoretical frameworks to uncover the patriarchal structures working behind the screen.



Male Gaze Theory (1975)

Mulvey (1975), a British feminist film theorist in her groundbreaking article, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” states that the gender inequality is constructed for the pleasure of the male viewer and it is a controlling force in cinema. She gives the idea of active male gaze through which sexist and dominant ideologies communicate in the filmic text. Women are constantly gazed upon for the pleasure of male spectators (Mulvey, 1975). This theory can be viewed in three ways from a feminist perspective:

The spectator’s gaze: the audience looking at the subject on the screen. **The male gaze:** the male viewing the female. **The female gaze:** and finally women look at other women. Thus three levels of the cinematic gaze objectify the female character and make her into a spectacle. Ruminatively, it can be said that the Male Gaze Theory (1975), is where women are viewed from a heterosexual man in the media, and that these women are portrayed as passive objects for male pleasure.

Feminist Film Theory (1999)

Feminist film theory (1999) is theoretical film criticism derived from feminist politics and Feminist Theory (1983) that condemns the classical cinema for portraying woman in stereotypical roles. The exploration of how films make meaning for their audiences from the perspective of feminist politics is the purpose of this theory. Its goal is to adequately represent female subjectivity and female desire on the silver screen.

Sara Mills’ Model (1995) of Feminist Stylistic Analyses

Sara Mills’ model (1995) of feminist stylistics is universally acknowledged. Feminist Stylistics carries out the analysis of literary and cultural texts from a feminist perspective. Mills (1995) calls it ‘a form of politically motivated stylistics whose aim is to develop an awareness of the way gender is handled in texts’ (p.1). Its goal is to expose the figurative and symbolic use of language that subordinates and dehumanizes women and keeps them in permanent slavery. Mills makes it clear that there are conscious linguistic choices in literary and cultural texts as they are in pornography. Mills’ reference to pornography is significant. In Dirty Picture, the linguistic choices are used to represent woman in a specific way. These choices are made at following three levels:

Word level:

On this level, the lexical items are analyzed from feminist perspective. It investigates the writer’s selection and employment of specific words for females. For example, kitchen vocabulary, knitting vocabulary, sex-specific pronouns etc.

- **Phrase/sentence level:**

On the second level, it is observed that the writer is trying to expose the negative connotation associated with language or rebut the pre-suppositions and interferences of the ready-made phrases.

- **Discourse level:**

At this level the focus is on large-scale structures of discourse. The content is seen “as something which is the negotiation of textual elements and codes and forces outside the text which influence both the way that the text is constructed and the way we decipher what is written.”(Mills, 1995, p.123)



Data Analysis

In ‘The Dirty Picture’ the actors’ language, expressions, clothing, postures, and visuals, sounds, camera angles and background setting, all are the signs which carry certain meanings and implications. *The Dirty Picture* with the help of these semiotic aids tries to change the perception of social reality.

The producer of this film a female Ekta Kapoor, attempts to deconstruct the stereotypical image of women in the patriarchal society that perceives women as sign in semiotic system with numerous negative connotations attached to this sign. In the very beginning, it is displayed that ‘Silk’, the protagonist of this film breaks the chains of traditional upbringing standards and leaves her home to become a film star instead of a bride. She violates the norms of marriage and family that make women dependent on men, as Bronte (2001) in her novel “Jane Eyre” scrutinizes normative kinship pattern and raises question of how and why a woman’s social identity is constituted with in familial relationships. But Ekta Kapoor herself denies Silk’s sedition and agitation of familial relationship in the end of the film by Silk’s letter. The last scenes illustrate that ‘Silk’ wants a man who loves her, not her body. All such references and Silk’s desire to see her mother imply that woman cannot endure without man and familial relations are much important for her survival.

Language is powerful medium through which one can control and construct the people’s ideology. The asymmetrical-gendered language present in the film reinforces the male as powerful and female as weaker gender. ‘The Dirty Picture’ is replete with sexist language which represents the stereotypes for both man and woman. In this film woman is represented as a ‘feeble’, ‘unintelligent’, ‘dependent’, ‘polluted’, ‘marginalized’, ‘easily assailable’, ‘sexual object’ and ‘saleable commodity/article’ through the use of words, phrases and sentences having negative connotation as discussed below.

Analysis at Word Level

Masalah مصالحة (Spice)	Gandagi (Dirt/Filth)	Ghatiya (Cheap).	Amaarat (Richness).	Battery
Devil	Bizarre	Destitute	Vamp	Victim

Table.1 Obscene Words used for female in *Dirty Picture*

These obscene words with certain negative connotations are used for ‘Silk’ (heroine of the film). Words like chastity, purity, virginity, prostitute and whore are never used for men because these words are norm for women. In fact, the structure of language is patriarchal and the words which are attached with men in this film represent man as physically ‘strong’, ‘powerful’, ‘independent’, ‘respectable’, ‘intelligent’ and ‘valiant’, e.g, *Bhagwan* بهگوان (*god*) and *Saadho* سادھو (*pious/gentle*). These are some instances of sexism in language that reinforce the idea that ‘The Dirty Picture’ in real is a patriarchal text. Man like “Suriya Nath” (male protagonist) has the power to do everything and no one speaks against him as it is the accepted social norm that men are never impure or wrong. e.g.



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

SURIYA: میں چاہتا ہوں مجھ سے جتنوں کا بھلا ہو اتنا اچھا ہے (I want as many as possible to benefit from me).

SYLVIA GANESH: Excellent Sir.....! کیا بات ہے آپ کی (Expression of appraisal)

SURIYA: ہم رواج بدل دیں گے (We will change the trend).

Analysis at Phrase/Sentence Level

- ‘Dirt like Silk’. (سلک جیسی گندی)
- ‘Boarding Pass’. (ہوائی جہاز میں سفر کرنے کا اجازت نامہ)
- Plastic ka cover. (پلاسٹک کا کور)
- Dirt/filth I mean you. (گندگی یعنی تم)

IBRAHAM: ‘Silk Short hand for SEX’.

SOORIYA: You are our ‘dirty secret’.

SOORIYA: You are not from amongst us/ You are not one of us. (تم ہم میں سے نہیں ہو)

SOORIYA: Let the popcorn fly! No matter how high it goes, it **has to fall down** into the pan. (اڑنے دو پوپ کارن جتنا بھی اڑے گا گرنا تو اسے واپس کڑا ہی میں ہی ہوتا ہے)

SOORIYA: Public is only concerned with ‘articles’ not the shop. (عوام سامان دیکھتی ہے دکان (نہیں))



Figure 1

Analysis at the Discourse Level

‘The Dirty Picture’ represents woman as sexual object and source of pleasure for men. Woman is valued for her attractiveness and sexiness of her body. When she loses her beauty, patriarchal society considers her worthless whereas man is always praiseworthy because of his manliness. The dialogue between ‘Suriya’ and ‘Naila’, a journalist, shows male mentality. ‘Suriya’ in his new film, takes ‘Silk’ as heroine and decreases previous heroine’s status to mother who is still younger than Suriya.

NAILA: She was a heroine yesterday; today she has been made a mother.

کل تک تو وہ ہیروئن تھی آج اسے ماں بنا ڈالا

SURIYA: A young girl is to be tasted not to be wasted and a heroine’s life is short/little; party (enjoyment) for five years, later support, left, right or centre.

جوانی چکھنے کی ہوتی ہے ضائع کرنے کی نہیں اور ہیروئن کی زندگی چھوٹی ہوتی ہے پانچ سال کی پارٹی اس کے بعد سپورٹ کبھی بائیں کبھی دائیں اور کبھی درمیان



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film 'The Dirty Picture': A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

IBRAHAM: Youth is to be tasted not to be wasted and a heroine's life is short. Party for five years after that support, sometime left, or right or center.

اس فلم کو چلانے کے لئے چالو یا گھٹیا کرتب بازی کی ضرورت نہیں پڑے گی آپ کو۔ مصالحہ ڈالو ابراہیم

SURIYA: Include SEX! Include one or two songs of Silk! A successful film is one that contains right quantity of 'MASALA' (Spice).

حوس(سیکس) ڈالو، سلک کا اک گانا ڈالو، دو گانے ڈالو، کامیاب فلم وہی ہوتی ہے جس میں مصالحہ صحیح ہو۔

NAILA: I still did not think what title should I give to Silk? Bizarre or destitute. Vamp or just a victim!

میں نے ابھی سوچا نہیں، یہی کہ سلک کو میں کیا نام دوں بازاری یا بے غیرت، ویمپ یا وکٹم

SILK: People are known by their work but I am recognized by my bad deeds. People called me vulgar, cheap, sexy, and dirty.

کچھ لوگوں کا نام ان کے کام سے ہوتا ہے میرا بدنام ہو کے ہوا ہے، بے ہودہ، گھٹیا، شہوت انگیز، گندی اور کیا کیا بولا میرے بارے میں

SILK: Although I was used like a boarding pass for the takeoff of their film yet I am called vulgar!

اپنی فلم کی اونچی اڑان کروانے کے لئے مجھے بورڈنگ پاس کی طرح استعمال کیا پھر بھی بیہودہ میں ہوں

SURIYA KANTH: Girls like Silk are only suitable for bed not for home.

سلک جیسی لڑکیاں گھر میں نہیں بستر میں اچھی لگتی ہیں

SILK: Silk is made to please/entertain.

سلک بنی ہے مزا دینے کے لئے

SILK: Bring me two cups of Silk Coffee! Coffee brand of my name is quite popular here!

دو سلک کافی لانا یہاں میرے نام کی کافی چلتی ہے

Women are used in this film for the sake of selling commodity as one of 'Silk's dialogue in the film is "Films run only because of one reason: Entertainment, Entertainment, and Entertainment. And I am Entertainment". In the very initial scenes of film, when 'Silk' goes to cinema, a man offers her twenty rupees for one night, that implies that every Tom, Dick or Harry has a right to buy woman with some money. The film exposes the bitter social reality that women are just reduced to objects of bliss for men.

Film is the fullest source of **visual semiotics and visuals** are seminal for conveying implied meanings. The concept of visual is associated with gaze. Mulvey (1975) gives the feminist framework to analyse the visuals of films and argued that pleasure of looking developed in mainstream male dominated cinema that asserts that men have power of gaze while women are object of gaze. Lacan (1981) connects the whole issue of gaze to the foundation of psycho-analysis. He argues that politics of pleasure of gaze becomes essential to how we view and make sense of the visuals. Visuals affect people differently because they have no fixed meanings in them. The naked images of women when seen through masculine perspective become a means to sexual gratification.

SILK: Don't gaze me like that. I feel like an oven is staring at marinated chicken.

ایسے مت دیکھو، لگتا ہے مصالحوں میں لتھڑی ہوئی پکنے کے لئے تیار مرغی کو تندور دیکھ رہا ہے

The visual when 'Silk' dances with whip have different connotations, it gives sadistic pleasure to men, but from female's perspective this visual is masochistic (See Figure 1 in Appendix on page: 17).

SILVA GANESH: Madam, your whole body should provide maximum visual appeal of sex.

میڈم آپ کے سر سے پیر تک صرف شہوت انگیزی ٹپکنا چاہیے اور کچھ نہیں



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

SILVA GANESH: Madam, make this scene sexy. Make it hot to the extent where public/viewers go mad.

میڈم شہوت انگیز بنا دیں اس سین کو اتنا گرم کر دیں کہ عوام پاگل ہو جائے

Moreover, the scene, when ‘Silk’ is winning award and challenging the patriarchal society, may be analysed as feminist because here the woman revolts against men and challenges their power, e.g.,

SILK: How can such people give interview for me (speak in my favor) who are ashamed of giving me birth?

وہ لوگ میرے لئے کیا انٹرویو دیں گے جو مجھے پیدا کر کے شرمندہ ہیں

Many other clips like Silk’s laughing style (Figure 2 in Appendix), provocative postures (Figure 3 in Appendix), her expression, nude dresses, dances (Figure 4 in Appendix), macho-postures streets and cinema all have some psycho analytical effect to their spectators. Black and dark colours are prominent (Figure 5 in Appendix) in the film and connotation of black colour is uncivilized, barbarous, obscenity, dirt and callousness which again have the hidden undesirable associations for women. Nevertheless, the focal point in the visuals is female body (See the image below) and these visuals are produced to satisfy the lust of male gaze.



Figure 2

As the recipient of male gaze is female’s body so body parts of ‘Silk’ are itemized by camera (Figure 6 in Appendix) and shown closely in order to give excessive amusement to male. Sounds and voices are also powerful issues in film industry because they are closely tied to the social and cultural formation of subjectivity. ‘The Dirty Picture’ is almost replete with different types of sounds and voices. The irregular asymmetric sounds are produced when the bold scenes which are deviated from fixed norms of society are displayed. Noisy sounds mount when something happens against the tradition and the set standards of society.

Media representation of women has many underlying ideological assumptions in this film. Actually representation is the way in which meaning is somehow given to the things that are depicted. Media hegemony is the main source which gives woman the meaning of sexual object. In this film ‘Silk’ is almost naked and ‘Surya’ is fully clothed (Figure 7 in Appendix)



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

underlying ideology is that the patriarchal society wants to see women in this form to drop her dress, her dignity and status. Men want to get satisfaction by representing them as seductress and a gender obsessed with sexuality. Another proposition suggested by this film is that women can easily sell their bodies for money and fame that is shallow and temporary. Silk gets wealth and fame after utilizing her sexual potential (Figure 8 in Appendix). As the media representations are also very important in building public opinion, so through different visual and aural techniques, the patriarchy prevalent in this film not only tries to dehumanize woman by dropping her from the status of humanity but also humiliates her publically.

Only feminist perspective in the ‘The Dirty Picture’ is that ‘Silk’ deconstructs the stereotypical image of a traditional normative woman. ‘Silk’ challenges the power and structures of society who try to fix meanings for women. ‘Silk’ deconstructs the typical image of women by violating the norms of family and marriage. She makes relation with two brothers and publicly exposes her love. She never bothers what people say. These are some actions which a stereotypical or normative woman can never do.

The end of the film, when ‘Silk’, the heroine commits suicide (See in the picture below)



Figure 3

which is not justified from feminist perspective. It suggests that despite of women’s great struggle and confidence the ultimate result of her life is failure and if she tries to live independently, she cannot even survive. The end of film implies that women cannot produce the parallel literary canon which beat the male canon. The feminist should create equivalent canon which explicitly and logically proves female independence.

Conclusions

The analysis through logical evidences reveals that ‘The Dirty Picture’ gives the image of a woman who becomes a victim of identity crisis as her apparent agency and power fails to provide her with social respect and acceptance. She commits suicide by the end of the film which shows a great psychological pressure denial and lack of acceptance by the same people who actively reduced her to the level of a body, objectified her as a sex object and used her as a commodity. This brings out the harsh reality that women in patriarchal societies are hugely venerable entities and can be easily exploited especially with the use of media. Silk’s yearning for a traditional and common life of a woman bound within the protective boundaries her home negates the glamorous modern life and the fake illusion of freedom associated with it.



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film ‘The Dirty Picture’: A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

It presents a fragile and normative woman in the disguise of a bold, independent and rebellious Silk. The movie is what is said by the actor Emraan Hashmi, ‘*Entertainment, Entertainment and Entertainment*’. It is the source of entertainment for men, where woman exists merely as a sexual commodity and an object for male gaze. The portrayal of woman is quite different from the image of man. Strong, revered and ageless image of man is produced both through visuals and language whereas woman is portrayed as weak, evil and indecisive being who longs for men’s love even when she is self-made and defiant.

In short, ‘Dirty Picture’ degrades woman by representing her as a sexual commodity and deteriorates her image in the society through visuals of nudity. The use of language, visuals, sounds and styles in this film mainly construct, shape and constitute the patriarchal ideology that is overtly against feminism. Rowena (2012) believes that Silk’s image as an object of sex, as a use and throw woman is no more giving her power or privilege in real life. It might have opened for her a door of seclusion and marginalization that is shut with her suicide only. Perhaps this all is due to the masculine cultural hegemony of media that needs to be challenged.

Future Implications

The researchers in future can undertake comparative study to get an in-depth analysis of the status of women in Pakistan and the status of women in Hindi cinema or Hollywood cinema. Additionally, it would certainly be fascinating to investigate audience perception by being present on the sets of such films, interviewing male and female directors, technicians and cast can enable the researchers to comprehend better the on-screen portrayals of women. It would allow them to decode the immediate significance and motives behind such portrayals more efficiently, rather than just having to concentrate on screen portrayal. For illustration: the researcher can go to the sets of films to gauge the significant difference in the treatment and representations of women on and also behind the camera. An analysis of different mediums would also enable future researchers to compare whether the findings from this study are consistent throughout the media. Also, a more detailed discourse analysis may produce further interesting findings. Finally, the analyses would be beneficial for both female readers and researchers as it shows how patriarchy works to objectify, belittle and demean women in modern era. So, in order to get reverend place and dominant position in the film industry women have to frame their own distinct canons.

References

- Barley, S. R. (1983). Semiotics and the study of occupational and organizational cultures. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 393-413.
- Berger (2008) *Seeing Is Believing: An Introduction to Visual Communication*. 3rd Ed. New York: McGraw Hill
- Bose, N. (2014). ‘Bollywood’s fourth Khan’: deconstructing the ‘hatke’ stardom of Vidya Balan in popular Hindi cinema. *Celebrity Studies*, 5(4), 394-409.
- Brewer, C. (2009). The stereotypic portrayal of women in slasher films: then versus now.
- Dutt, R. (2014). Behind the curtain: women’s representations in contemporary Hollywood. *London: LSE*.
- Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics* (Vol. 217). Indiana University Press.
- Frye, M. (1983). *The politics of reality: Essays in feminist theory*. Crossing Press feminist series.



An Exploration of Patriarchal Underpinnings in Bollywood Film 'The Dirty Picture': A Linguistic and Semiotic Study

Revista Publicando, 5 No 18. (3). 2018, 551-563. ISSN 1390-9304

- Kamath, S. (2016, July 29) The Dirty Picture - Only surface level dirty. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/features/cinema/the-dirty-picture-only-surface-level-dirty/article2683969.ece>
- Kellner, D. (2001). *Grand theft 2000: Media spectacle and a stolen election*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Kuhn, A. (1994). *Women's pictures: Feminism and cinema*. Verso.
- Lacan, J. (1998). *The four fundamental concepts of psycho-analysis* (Vol. 11). WW Norton & Company.
- Lowe, M. R. (2007). Research into the representation of gender and body image in the press. *Master's thesis, The University of Leeds* Retrieved from http://ics.leeds.ac.uk/pg_study/mashowcase/mlowe.pdf.
- Marks, L. U., & Polan, D. (2000). *The skin of the film: Intercultural cinema, embodiment, and the senses*. Duke University Press.
- Mills, S. (1995). *Feminist stylistics*. London: Routledge.
- Mulvey, L. (1989). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. In *Visual and other pleasures* (pp. 14-26). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Rowena, J. (2015, December). The 'Dirt' in The Dirty Picture: Caste, Gender, and Silk Smitha. Web.
- Peirce, C. S. (1974). *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Vol. 5). Harvard University Press.
- http://www.academia.edu/3041539/Encyclopedia_Entry_Topics_in_Feminist_Film_Theory
- Sen, R. (2011, December 02). The Dirty Picture is Vidya Balan's show all the way. Retrieved from <https://www.questia.com/library/communication/media-studies/film>
- Sarkar, S. (2012). An analysis of Hindi women-centric films in India.
- Saussure, F. D. (1983). *Course in General Linguistics*. 1916. *Trans. Roy Harris*. London: Duckworth.
- Tere, N. S. (2012). Gender reflections in mainstream Hindi cinema. *Global Media Journal*, 3(1), 1-9.
- Thornham, S. (Ed.). (1999). *Feminist film theory: A reader*. NYU Press.
- Williams, L. (2014). Pornography, porno, porn: Thoughts on a weedy field. *Porn Studies*, 1(1-2), 24-40.
- Zoheb, H. (2011, December 16) Sexuality and The Dirty Picture. Retrieved from <http://www.criticaltwenties.in/philosophyreligionculture/sexuality-and-the-dirty-picture>



Appendix

Images from Bollywood film 'The Dirty Picture'



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8