

Original Article

Lyrics that Honor Women Empowerment

Dolly Chhabda¹ & Hina H. Khan²

¹Research Scholar, PGTD of Psychology,
RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

²Assistant Professor, PGTD of Psychology,
RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

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Corresponding Author:
Dolly Chhabda

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Abstract:

Women empowerment has become exceptionally prominent in the last few decades, and as a result has produced many songs that acknowledge the struggles that women experience in modern society and the way women are empowering themselves through education, skill development, cinema and music industry, etc., thereby raising their voices against the evils of patriarchy, dowry, rape, domestic violence including others. It must be noted here that, while we are busy trying to empower women in the field of society, economy, politics, we ignore how important it is to empower them psychologically. This study examines how psychological women empowerment is gaining importance in today's world by exploring the lyrics of some Hindi songs. These songs portray women as strong, bold and independent who can be a bread winner for the family while protecting herself on her own. Women are being empowered physically, socially and psychologically. The pity part is over and a new picture of empowerment has begun.

This study would spread awareness among women living in the hitherto untouched areas to make them realize the strength women have these days and to collectively make efforts in the direction of women empowerment.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Lyrics, Hindi Songs, Psychological Empowerment.

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Hindi Songs' Impact on Society:

The modern music industry is regarded as the most significant social instrument since it has the ability to touch

people wherever it can be reached, which is now far and wide, through the words of songs. Hindi songs in general have played a significant role in assisting the campaign for

women's emancipation by highlighting the mistreatment and marginalisation of women in society. If Hindi music can be a potent force for transformation, it can also be a potent force for psychological empowerment. It is without a doubt the most effective media for promoting women's equality and the position of women. However, the media can often support preconceived notions about how women should behave in society. The news of the struggles and atrocities suffered by women has always cast a shadow over them and their contributions to society. In a changing world, it is essential that Hindi songs give a fair picture of women's varied lives and contributions to society. Songs can have a profound psychological impact on listeners, and songs that represent women as autonomous and strong can help women feel more empowered.

Women Empowerment:

As it is rightly said that, the progress of community is measured by the degree of progress women have achieved, it becomes indispensable to empower women for the overall progress of the community.

Given the variety of perspectives expressed in debates of women's empowerment, it is crucial to have a comprehensive view of this issue. Options, choice, control, and power are the four overlapping concepts that are most frequently used to define empowerment. These most frequently allude to women's capacity to influence outcomes that are

significant to themselves and their families. The capacity to "influence one's own well-being" and "make strategic life choices" is frequently mentioned in some form. Changing the power relations that limit women's options and autonomy and negatively impact their health and wellbeing is what G. Sen (1993) defined as empowerment. According to Batliwala (1994), "how much influence people have over external activities that matter to their welfare" is the key to understanding this concept. It is "a process whereby women become able to organise themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right to make choices and to control resources which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination," according to Keller and Mbwewe (1991), as cited in Rowlands (1995). An aspect connected to the idea of self-efficacy is also commonly mentioned in definitions of empowerment.

Many definitions include the idea that women should be able to define self-interest and choice and believe that they have the ability and the right to do so (A. Sen 1999; G. Sen 1993, Kabeer 2001; Rowlands 1995, Chen 1992). By challenging the established quo and going one step farther, Kabeer (2001) describes this process as "thinking outside the system."

Need of Women Empowerment:

Almost every country, no matter how progressive, has a history of ill-treating women. Women from all over the world have

been rebellious to reach the status they have today. While the western countries are still making progress, third world countries like India still lack behind in Women Empowerment.

In India, women empowerment is needed more than ever. India is amongst the countries which is still striving for the status of women. There are various reasons for this, there are cases of dowry, domestic violence, honour killings, discrimination against women, etc hurting the dignity of women immensely.

Therefore, it must be understood that it is high time to give women more power—not just in terms of education, but also in terms of society, physical health, and psychological well-being. Self-efficacy, self-esteem, self-confidence, self-determination, self-awareness, and positive thinking are all components of psychological empowerment, which ultimately results in the happiness and wellness of women. A psychologically strong woman can improve her self-image and overcome stigma.

It is important to remember that women who are psychologically empowered automatically become empowered in other areas as well. This is due to the fact that when women begin to believe in themselves, which occurs when they are psychologically sound, they gain an understanding of who they are, become aware of what is undesirable about their circumstances and how they could be in a better situation, and become aware of what is within their reach

and what they could do to improve themselves.

As a result, psychological empowerment of women may function as a magic bean that unlocks a wide range of opportunities. Therefore, if we want to empower women fully, this is what we should focus on.

As Albert Einstein has rightly said, “The woman who follows the crowd will usually go no further than the crowd. The woman who walks alone is likely to find herself in places no one has been before,” let us be the helping hand and let the women pick if they want to stroll alone or with the group.

Discussion:

The scope of this study is to assess how lyrics of the sampled songs are used to protest against increasing gender-based violence and other societal ills that have persisted in our society for ages, such as dowry, rape, patriarchy, and gender discrimination. Songs create a cohesive narrative of the challenges that women face in our society as well as the manifestation of the ways in which they are empowering themselves to fight against these evils. According to research, social problems appear to be ingrained in Indian society. The narrative characteristic of the songs give women power, courage and a medium in the subversion of the status quo. Further it is concluded that lyrics of Hindi songs promoting women empowerment, although sparse, are used

not only as a protest against the brutality of social evils like dowry, patriarchy, discrimination but also as a resilience strategy to salve wounds, motivate women, and nurture a spirit of empowerment for survival with dignity.

To this end, some very popular songs are analysed in recent years to argue that these songs position women as bold, financially and socially independent, warriors and protectors of their own body and identity. They also resonate with the wider socio-cultural practices in India: the changing lifestyles, practiced and lived femininities of the young women. The songs are:

Song I- Rupaiyya from Satyamev Jayate:

Written by Swanand Kirkire and composed by Ram Sampath, Rupaiyya attacks the evil of dowry. Sona Mohapatra's commanding vocals serve as a final reminder to the world that women are not something to be bought and sold. They can accomplish everything they set their hearts on, and their future holds more than simply marriage. As the lines go,

“Babul pyare sajna sakha re
Suno o meri maiyya
Bojh nahi main kisi ke sar ka
Naa majhdhar mein naiyya
Patwar banoongi, leharon se ladungi
Arey mujhe kya bechega rupaiya
Ho arey mujhe kya bechega rupaiya..”

Translated as:

O dear father, o beloved, friend,
Listen o my mother,

I am not a burden on anyone's head,
Nor is my boat in the midstream.
I'll be the oar, I'll fight the waves,
How can money sell me,
O, how could money ever sell me..

Song II- Bekhauff from Satyamev Jayate:

Satyamev Jayate shed attention on a number of social ills, such as the ongoing rise in rape cases and a system that appears to reward offenders more than the survivors. Bekhauf, a novel by Svati Chakravarty, is about the strength of women who maintain their spirits despite great odds. The lyrics goes like;

“Deewarein oonchi hai, galiyaan hai tang
Lambi dagar hai par himmat hai sang
Paavo pe chhaale hain, saansein buland
Ladne chali hoon azadi ki jung
Bekhauf azaad hai jeena mujhe
Bekhauf azaad hai rehna mujhe...”

Translated as:

The walls are high and streets are narrow,
The path is long but I've courage with me,
There are blisters on my feet,
I've started to fight the fight of freedom.
I've to live fearless, free.
I've to live fearless, free...

Song III- Mardaani Anthem Lyrics from Mardaani:

Salim-Sulaiman composed the Mardaani Anthem song for the Hindi film Mardaani (2014), which was sung by Sunidhi Chauhan and Vijay Prakash with lyrics written by Kausar Munir.

And the lyrics goes like,

“Aaj se ab se
Aan meri main tumko na choone dung
Jaan ko chaahe chhalni kar do
Maan ko na choone dung
Choo ke dekho dil mera
Tumhe dil mein apne bhar lungi,
Par chhed ke dekho tum mujhko
Main tumko nahi chhodungi..”

Translated as:

From today, now onwards,
I'll not let you touch my respectability.
Even if you kill me,
I'll not let you touch my
respectfulness/dignity..
Try and touch my heart,
and I'll fill you inside my heart,
but try and tease me,
and I'll not leave you..

In the above songs, women's empowerment in physical, social and psychological dimensions is portrayed. Physical empowerment is portrayed in the lyrics of the song Mardani anthem from the movie Mardani which depicts women as physically strong that she can defeat anyone against her when it comes to her dignity and as the one who would walk side by side if respected and would retaliate if disrespected;

Social empowerment in the song Ruppaiya from the Series Satyamev Jayate wherein the lyrics portray anti-dowry thoughts and courage of woman;

Psychological empowerment is portrayed in Bekhauf from Satyamev Jayate depicting women as courageous that she will survive all the adversities.

Limitations:

The study is limited to some Hindi songs only. Also, it is limited to Indian Cinema only.

Implications:

Lyrics of other songs from Indian cinema as well as songs from foreign cinema can be promoted to encourage women empowerment and motivate women to take the lead in all spheres of excellence.

Conclusion:

Women empowerment is the past, present, and future. Many women are waking up to the fact that they will no longer sit back and feel pity for their issues, rather they will fight them with all their spirit. For this reason, it is important for women to know their own worth and their importance. Above songs' lyrics emphasized the importance of realization of strength of women in order to empower them in all the arenas. It is therefore important to spread the message and encourage people to wake up to the myriad societal ills against women that have existed in society and the manner that women are currently battling them as warriors. In order to promote women's empowerment, this issue needs to be brought to the media's and music's attention more frequently.

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