

Analysing the Concepts of Sexual Harassment: From Reel to Real in Hindi Cinema

Tripathy, Mitashree

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Tripathy, M. (2019). Analysing the Concepts of Sexual Harassment: From Reel to Real in Hindi Cinema. *Media Watch*, 10(1), 179-178. <https://doi.org/10.15655/mw/2019/v10i1/49568>

Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY-NC-ND Lizenz (Namensnennung-Nicht-kommerziell-Keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.de>

Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY-NC-ND Licence (Attribution-Non Commercial-NoDerivatives). For more information see: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Analysing the Concepts of Sexual Harassment: From Reel to Real in Hindi Cinema

MITASHREE TRIPATHY
Orissa Engineering College, India

Hindi cinema has been the most celebrated form of entertainment source around the world and since time immemorial. Behind the lyrics of pseudo romantic songs, dialogues, scenes of love and affection display, courtship, and so on, sexual harassment has been seen spreading its sickening aura to create some of the meanest examples in Hindi cinema. Sexual harassment has been a topic of worry and concern and has been accumulating a lot of attention in the recent decades. This paper examines in details the portrayal of sexual harassment with no regard to gender explicitly portrayed by famous actors in selected Hindi films, applying the qualitative methodology of textual analysis theory. The paper also gives some of the real life incidents of sexual harassment as experienced by celebrities mostly focusing on the recent #MeToo movement. The findings of the paper reveal that in films, the display of sexual harassment by men towards women ultimately ends up in a love story and by women towards men in quitting.

Keywords: Hindi cinema, films, sexual harassment, reel, real, #MeToo

The word 'sex' is considered as a taboo in most parts of the world like the countries of Middle East and Asia. In India too talking about sex or anything related to it aloud is generally considered bad and embarrassing. Discussions related to sex are usually done in silent or muted voice. Any act of violence, assault or torment attached with sex is hence generally not overtly expressed or discussed. One of the major reasons may be because like sex, cases of sexual harassment were never discussed and the victims did not open up much. Sexual harassment as a soul-crushing tyranny is a universal discourse and is prevalent in workplaces, families, field of media and entertainment, and society as a whole. With so much with reference to sexual harassment the comprehension about its periphery is meagre.

Hindi cinema has a maximum number of audiences since the beginning of its origin. It has always remained successful in depicting the course of society from a wide variety of realm; from mythology to family, from comedy to romance, from history to horror. Hindi cinema has always made best attempts to disclose and picture the intrinsic truth of the society and to bring to forefront the happenings dwelling within its periphery. Interestingly, the famous and most cheered songs of Hindi cinema have been seen displaying activities of sexual harassment so covertly that its existence is negligibly sighted but they have promoted instances of bold sexual harassment. While rape, sexual assault, molestation are broader heinous activities of sexual harassment, a gesture of undesired touch, hug or kiss, speech of sexual matter engrossing refusal or protest is also an act of sexual harassment in its narrower concept.

Corresponding Author: Mitashree Tripathy, Department of Humanities, Orissa Engineering College, Harirajpur, Jatni-752 050 Odisha, India.

Common terms associated with sexual harassment are eve-teasing, sexual assault, sexual violence, molestation, rape, sexual coercion, and other acts of sexual and forcible possession. Surveys reveal that women are the easiest preys of sexual harassment. However, cases of male sexual harassment have also been aroused. A very persistent proportion of films in Hindi cinema have projected sexual harassment towards women, thus overtly targeting them considering the fact that they have less power and are weaker. This very much seems running parallel in the society where the stronger sex decrees women to be compliant and meek and the men themselves to be the domineering and autocratic individuals. The films thus reinforce with the extant beliefs that women are to accept any sort of torment or violence and remain as a symbolism of immobility, static, and submissiveness.

Like films, literature too is replete with information on sexual harassment and its objectification to females. "Sexual harassment can include verbal or visual assaults, as well as cornering or unwelcome touching. Comments about someone's gender, sexuality, or sexual activity, exposing oneself, gesturing or mimicking sexual acts, exposing someone to porn, whistles, crude jokes, and unwanted tickling all fall under sexual harassment" (Iknowmine, n.d).

University of Michigan defines sexual harassment "as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" when and includes certain laws which if flouted or breached would take strict actions against the doer (SAPAC, n.d).

Skaine defines sexual harassment in both ways, simple and complicated. She claims "it is simple because it is defined as unwelcome sexual behaviour by one person against another person; if it is unwelcome, it is sexual harassment" (Skaine, 1996, p. 11).

Baker in his book *The Women's Movement against Sexual Harassment* narrates the social movements which ultimately fixed sexual harassment on the public agenda during the 70s and 80s and which completely changed the way American take female employees by introducing a series of strategies and resources. He submits "Sexual harassment was a form of violence against women that reflected and reinforced women's subordinate status in the society" (Baker, 2008, p. 44). He argues the present status of women in the society is a result of violence by men as destined upon particularly those women who are believed to be "threats to the masculinity, power, or economic status" (p.44).

Likewise, Dale adds to the already existing law against gender discrimination and harassment at work place against women. In his book he includes the new legal law by addressing a series of issues related to sexual harassment at work place. He mentions in addition to *quid pro quo* and hostile environment sexual harassment. He writes "The EEOC guidelines focus on sexuality rather than gender- in terms of job detriments resulting from unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours and other verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature and require that a totality of the circumstances be considered to determine whether particular conduct constitutes sexual harassment" (Dale, 2005, p. 5).

This paper attempts to study popular movies released in Hindi cinema. To fulfil the purpose, the paper discusses the concepts of sexual harassment depicted in Hindi films. The paper begins with the illustrations of narrower concepts of sexual harassment and emphasizes on selected songs, lyrics, scenes and dialogues of Hindi cinema mainly by the protagonists and further it delves into the broader domain of sexual harassment where some atrocious activities like rape, assault and molestation are explored. The paper also projects towards the views and real encounters of sexual harassment by popular actors in Hindi cinema.

Methodology

The paper applies textual analysis theory in films. The characters, scenes, lyrics and dialogues of popular movies are interpreted and the content, structure and functions of the interpretations are described in order to draw an inference. This segment of the paper focuses on different concepts of sexual harassment which varies from eve-teasing to serious atrocities like rape, harassment and sexual assault in selected films of Hindi cinema. Most of the movies taken into study are based on eve-teasing, and carnage and violence against women. In addition, only few movies are exemplified in which men also have been a prey to sexual harassment.

Male Sexual Harassment in Hindi Cinema

Studies reveal that while a major percentage of victims of sexual harassment are women, percentages of men victims too are no less. Paludi and Denmark affirm that “The harassment of men by women tended to incorporate sexual hostility when the women made sexist comments or putdowns, or offered unwanted sexual attention such as attempts to dates and to touch in a sexual way” (Paludi & Denmark, 2010, p. 308). This has already been mentioned by Stockdale, Wood and Batra in 1999. Hindi cinema too has attempted to showcase female harassers in movies like in the movie *Vijaypath* (1994). Interestingly Tabu is seen stalking Ajay Devgan and giving her best efforts to woo him. In one scene she is seen sitting mightily on Ajay’s bike while he is almost ready to ride. He is not very willing to take her for a ride and is seen dumping Tabu very bitterly. “*Ruk Ruk Ruk Arre Baaba Ruk, Oh My Darling Give Me A Look*” which means (Stop! please stop, and give me a look). Tabu is seen collecting and gathering a good crowd of both guys and girls and is seen running after Ajay singing a song to woo him. But Ajay seems in no mood to fall for her.

In *Sadma* (1983) though the female harasser does not really have any sexual intercourse with the victim but she surely seduces him and evinces acts of eroticism. Kamal Hassan (Somu) works in a school and is sexually desired by Silk Smitha (Soni). She invites him to have a conversation very often and whenever she does she is seen in revealing clothes much to the discomfort of Somu. She tries her best to attract Somu towards her by all means but he avoids her every time keeping in mind his ethics and his loyalty towards his boss who is the husband of Soni. On one such moment Soni invites Somu to her place and Somu only after arrival understands that his boss isn’t at home. Soni tries to sit close to him which Somu cordially avoids. She then suddenly puts her leg on the couch and reveals her leg and asks Somu to touch her thighs which is she pretends to be in pain because of a fresh injury. Somu follows the instructions hesitatingly and suddenly wakes up from his seat and says he can’t be disloyal to his boss.

Leaping to 2004 when *Aitraaz* was released and it left all its audience in shock. After *Sadma*, *Aitraaz* was first of its kind to display of acts of sexuality, desire to be assaulted and physical by a female harasser in Hindi cinema. Though the concept was a remake of Hollywood film *Disclosure* yet something like *Aitraaz* was completely new in Hindi cinema. The film screens the story of Akshay Kumar (Raj) who is promoted in his job only to fulfil the sexual needs of his boss’s wife Priyanka Chopra (Sonia). In other words Akshay was meant to be paid as her keep. There are some explicit scenes where Sonia seduces Raj and makes him fall upon her tear opens his shirt and asks him to “*Show me you are an animal*”. The flawless execution of the film attempted to change the audience’s views towards sexual harassment. While in *Sadma*, Somu was under pressure of being loyal to his employer and

also his conscience did not give him the consent to engage in such affairs with his boss's wife, in *Aitraaz* the pressure of still working in a company where the boss's wife herself holds a powerful position, detriment Raj. While Soni accepted the fact that Somu cannot be her extra marital partner, Sonia on the other hand didn't keep quiet but charged a case against him of sexual harassment. The film continues with interesting plots and ultimately shows Raj comes out clean and Sonia suicides. In both the examples the female harassers had to quit. The reason which Paludi and Denmark draw inference on "if a male is sexually harassed by his female supervisor, she is abusing the power of her position but is not using her gender privilege because she does not have it to use" (p. 308). This has already been claimed by Johnson in 1997. Hence women harassers ultimately succumb.

Female Sexual Harassment in Hindi Cinema

The current segment studies songs and their lyrics, scenes and dialogues mostly targeting women also imaging scenes where women are besieged not only from the recent movies but also from movies since time immemorial.

Shamm Dhale Khidki Tale Tum Siti Bajana Chhod Do (stop whistling beneath my window every evening) a famous song from *Albela* (1951) that features Bhagwan whistling beneath the window of Geeta Bali which she claims he does it every evening. She also questions him *Roj Roj Tum Meri Gali Mein Chakkar Kyun Ho Kaatte?* (Why do you keep prowling outside my house every day?) Not only this the entire song depicts Bhagwan trying to tease Geeta by using words which doesn't much please or appeal her or make her agree to his proposals.

A very famous movie *Paying Guest* (1957) featuring Ramesh (Dev Anand) and Shanti (Nutan) shows a very comic form of sexual harassment. Ramesh is attracted towards Shanti who is a clear straightforward lady. In one of the scenes Ramesh is seen stalking Shanti and follows her to her college premises where he sits with a binocular on a tree watching a debate contest on love versus wealth in marriage where Shanti is the winner opting for love in marriage and not wealth. The clashes of opinions with the second runner up ended up with an ugly fight making Ramesh more joyful who is still watching holding the binoculars on the tree. He understands that Shanti is the right girl for him and is later seen following her. The next scene begins with Ramesh praising Shanti for her views. He says "*Apki Jitni Bbhi Tareef Ki Jaye Wo Kam He*". (The amount of praise you deserve is less). To which Shanti replies very annoyingly "*Mujhe Nahin Sunna Koi Tareef. Jaiye Yahan Se*" (I do not want to hear any compliment. Go from here) (Vintage, 2017). Her body language clearly displays her protest against Ramesh's pursue and the conversation very evidently states that Shanti is seen not at all interested in moving ahead with the conversation. This scene further leads to the famous song *Mana Janaab Ne Pukara Nahin* where Ramesh is seen constantly following Shanti hurdling her path and trying to pester her in different ways. In one scene within the song he is seen forcefully holding the arms of Shanti without her consent and Shanti trying her best to let her hands go off his arms. Later, Shanti is seen riding a bicycle followed by Ramesh on another bicycle riding as fast as possible behind her.

Darata Main Nahin, Chaahe Ho Zamin, Chaahe Aasmaan Jahan Bhi Tu Jaayegi Main Vahan Chala Aaunga Tera Peecha Na Main Chhodunga Soniye Bhej De Chaahe Jel Mein Pyar Ke Is Khel Mein (I don't fear anyone, wherever you go whether its heaven or earth, I will follow you and keep following you even though you send me behind bars), a song from the movie *Jugnoo* (1973) featuring Dharmendra and Hema Malini (Funvills, n.d.). The song starts with a wink by Dharmendra towards Hema Malini. The entire song has been shot in air; Dharmendra in an aircraft and Hema Malini in a helicopter. Interestingly, Dharmendra

is so restless that he hires an aircraft to follow his love defining possibilities of implications by a stalker in real life. The entire lyrics of the song apparently signifies pestering, irritating and clarifying Hema Malini that Dharmendra would continue stalking her even if this puts him in jail until she accepts his proposal. A forced love really.

The above examples depict that it is usually the male protagonists desire to win the love of the female protagonists hence they keep stalking them and are seen standing beneath their windows whistling or trying to gain their confidence in them so that their romance can begin. Whether they really believe in such a strong feeling or it is just out of infatuation still remains a question until the movie progresses. However, if viewed in reality there exist a fine line of difference between wooing and a tactics to scare the one who one desires. Scaring the other party like stalking, standing beneath the windows, whistling, invading privacy is a sort of alarm to the one who is being a victim. In *Personal Health: Perspectives and Lifestyles* Floyd, Mimms and Yelding write “A person can commit harassment by stalking, a relatively recent social concern. Stalking is the intent to harass, annoy or alarm another person (...) Repeated communications at inconvenient hours that invade the privacy of another and interfere in the use and enjoyment of another’s home, private residence, or other private property” they say is stalking or sexual harassment (Floyd, Mimms, & Yelding, 2008, p. 96).

Another example is a Hindi film titled *Jawani Diwani* (1972) which stars Randhir Kapoor (Vijay) and Jaya Bhaduri (Nita) in a romantic affair. Both of them are youngsters studying in a college and madly in love with each other. Due to some conflicts in the past both the families disapprove their love and Nita is house arrested by her father. With the help of a common friend both of them plan to elope to Khandala which is owned by one of Vijay’s friend. A simple discussion brings about in a sudden change in the mood of Vijay and then starts one of the most hit songs produced during that time. The song starts with *E Aao Naa Dil he Bekarar* (Golmines, 2017) (Dear Please come over, my heart is restless and longing) with Vijay in a romantic pursuit to woo Nita while Nita replies “*Na Na Na Na*” (No No) Further the lyrics goes with “*Nahin Nahin Abhi Nahin Abhi karo Intezaar Chhodo Na*” (Do not just do not, wait, not now) by Nita saying no as she is not ready and asks Vijay to wait for the right time. The lyrics of the song and the scenes display that though Nita is deeply in love with Vijay still she is not prepared to be physical with him and she is constantly seen avoiding and being close to him.

Kehe Doon Tumhe Yaa Chup Rahoo Dil Mein Mere Aaj Kyaa He (Should I speak what is there in my heart or keep quiet) a super hit song from the film *Deewar* (1975) features Sashi Kapoor and Neetu Singh in a joyful ride. The lyrics indicate the disposition of Sashi Kapoor where he is confused whether he should speak out his heart to his beloved or stay mum. Also if she guesses what he thinks correctly then he would take her as his master. The lyrics further give a picture of Nitu Singh who speaks about what she thinks. *Socha Hain Tumne Key Chalte Hee Jaye Taro Se Aage Koyee Duniya Basaye* (I think you must have thought about just going on and on and settle down in paradise with me). Her simple and plain thoughts towards Sashi Kapoor indicates that she dreams of living happily ever and make a paradise for themselves. But Sashi Kapoor has some other intentions. The lyrics *Socha Hain Key Tumhe Rasta Bhulaye Sunee Jagah Peh Kahee Chhede Daraye* (I have thought to make you forget your path and to take you to a lonely place where I could play with you and scare you) clearly state that Sashi Kapoor has hidden intentions of taking Neetu Singh to a secluded place and harass her. Further he also intends to caress and kiss her but she does not approve the idea and is constantly seen and heard saying *Nahin re Nahin re nahin re* (No No No please).

In the examples cited above the male protagonists are shown to be in love with their female counterparts and vice-versa. In these movies love is already in air unlike the examples aforementioned where the heroes are still trying to win their ladies' love. Here, the heroes do not desire to sexually objectify their heroines but are even not guilty of their gestures of speaking their minds which in by some means act of sexual harassment. Though in *Jawani Diwani* Nita has eloped with her beau entirely with her own consent but she is not ready to be physical with Vijay. Also in *Deewar* Neetu Singh expects a clean love while Sashi Kapoor has the other -way-round thoughts in his mind which she disapproves. In both the examples the heroes are seeking for sexual advances to which the heroines do not consent. Hajdin in his book *The Law of Sexual Harassment: A Critique* asserts "the law about sexual harassment applies to acts such as requests for sexual favours and sexual advances and requests for sexual favours and sexual advances are precisely the acts of seeking consent for sexual interaction" (Hajdin, 2002, p. 50).

The scenes from the song *Koi Haseena Jab Ruth Jati To* (When a damsel gets roughened) from the blockbuster movie *Sholay* (1975) also adds to the series of sexual harassment in its narrower concept. Hema Malini is literally harassed in the song by Dharmendra who aspires her. In the song he is seen attempting to wheedle Hema but she does not seem to be impressed. He is seen almost falling up on her numerous times, holding her hands and caressing her, holding her face, putting his hands around her. Hema Malini is seen riding a horse cart and struggling hard to put away his hands from her. She is also seen using slangs to Dharmendra which clearly state she is in no mood to be touched, caressed or loved. Dharmendra is overtly expressive in molesting and groping Hema. The act of coaxing which Dharmendra displayed surely not romance when its not two way played.

While eve teasing and forcible caressing were still accepted as a comic agents induced mainly by the protagonists it was during 1980 that *Insaaf Ka Taraazu* was released showing some of the most violent scenes of rape. Jeenat Aman (Bharti) in the movie is not brutally raped but also beaten violently by Raj Babbar (Ramesh) who could not digest the fact that Bharti is getting engaged to her lover. Taking it as his humiliation Ramesh rapes her and almost beats her to death. Call it the unfulfilled love or the act of ownership over someone towards whom one is sexually attracted, Ramesh too had the strange emotional need which he needed to satisfy. Hoffman in his book claims "Although everyone has a need for love and acceptance, your being deprived of love does not give you the right to hate, take revenge, commit murder, abuse drugs, commit rape, or anything else. Unfulfilled emotional needs do not give you the right to seek their fulfilment through any means you desire any more than unfilled physical needs justify your taking any action you desire" (Hoffman, 2005, pp. 65-66).

In the film *Ek Dujhe Ke Liye* (1981) sexual harassment is displayed in a different way. Rati Agnihotri (Sapna) seems to be interested in books. She visits a library very often and this person who doesn't leave any opportunity to pester Sapna mightily tries to impress her by coming over her way every time. The tone which Sapna uses to speak to him manifests that she is not at all interested in talking to her while this person does everything to pester her and flirts with her. In one particular scene he is seen giving her a book and asking her repeatedly to find out how interesting is the book. Sapna remains stunned as in one page there is an image of a topless lady giving a pose for a photo shoot. Sapna at once throws the book to the person and asks "*Tumhari Maa Ki Hei*". The blunt question Sapna asks suggests she didn't like the demeaning act by the guy. In another scene the same guy is seen riding a bike, holding a binocular and focusing on the back portion of Sapna while she is riding a bicycle. Further in another library scene the same guy is seen making filthy conversations when Sapna asked him regarding a book "*Tees Din Mein Tamil*" (Learn Tamil

in 30 Days). Instead of giving the book she asks for, he diverts her attention towards “*Dus Din mein Garbh*” (Get Pregnant in 10 days), “*Aurat Maa Kaise Ban Sakti Hai Kitni Jaldi Ban Sakti Hei, Naa Banana Ho To kya Tarika Hei, Tamil to Sirf Madras Ki Bhasa Hei, Lekin Sex to Pure Duniya Ki Bhasa Hei*” (How can a woman become pregnant, how fast she can become pregnant, How can she prevent pregnancy, Tamil is the language of Madras but sex is the language of whole universe.) He attempts to harass her sexually by encouraging her to join into the conversation she is not interested. Out of revenge he pastes one of the pictures of Sapna on the same image which he had exposed to her. Szegal and Andras understand three levels of sexual harassment according to the sternness. They are of the view that “Unwanted sexual comments, jokes and exposure to pornographic pictures are defined as being at level 1” (Sezal & Andras, 2011, p. 139). In this level the victim is though directly targeted but there is no direct body touch. “Unwanted bodily touch, for instance of the breasts, is typical at level 2” (p. 139). This level predates on its target being partially physical. The third level is discussed in the subsequent examples.

The concept of college parties inclusive of sex commonly termed sex parties or understood as swingers was highly displayed in Hollywood movies during 1980s-1990s. Hindi cinema has also attempted to loosely appropriate and get closely adapt the same culture especially in *Maine Pyaar Kiya* (1989). A block buster hit in the history of Hindi cinema which celebrates love and friendship also displayed a small act of sexual harassment. In one scene Bhagyashree (Suman) and Salman Khan (Prem) are invited to a party organised by Seema (Pervin Dastur) and Jeevan (Monish Behl) the son and daughter of the business partner of Prem's father. Jeevan is very much attracted to Suman and in one scene he is shown dragging Suman to his bedroom upstairs in the middle of the party. The room had see through walls where at the other side of the room a couple were seen having fun time the visuals of which denoted that they were about to be physical. Jeevan almost attempted to rape Suman. The scenes reveal the indifference towards rape and assault especially in elite classes where parties end up with rape with no consent.

A series of songs and scenes in 1990-2000 overtly promoted stalking, harassing and eve teasing. In her book Kumar writes “For years street sexual harassment was termed eve teasing”. (Kumar, 2015, p. 59) Acts of ‘eve teasing’, range from sexually explicit comments and catcalls, pulling or grabbing young women, to sexual molestation in public areas” (Chakraborty, 2015, p.78). Rehana refers eve-teasing as “sexual harassment of women in public places such as the streets, public transportations, parks, beaches, and cinema halls” (Rehana, 2007, p. 170). A young person may all of a sudden very irksomely vent feelings of so called love or romance by singing a provocative song often associated with forcible content and zilch consent.

For example, the song *Premi Asshiq Aawara* from the movie *Phool aur Kante* (1991) pictures a group of girls are seen jogging and a group of rowdy boys are seen running after them. The group leader Ajay Devgan (Ajay) is seen stalking Madhu (Madhu) and harassing her to the fullest. Pulling her towards him and forcibly making her sit behind his bike. In one scene he is seen biking around Madhu, plonking her down on the bike and pushes her several times.

Aamir Khan in *Dil* (1990) is seen to do some unashamed attempt to harass stalk and engage in some really dirty and filthy jokes to Madhuri Dixit. The song “*Khambe Jaisi Khadi Hei Ladki Hei Ya Chhadi Hei*” (She is standing like a pole, is she a girl or a stick) starts by a prank played by a college guy the friend of the lead actor, when he deliberately uses the handle of the umbrella to pull Madhuri's legs so that she could fall upon Amir Khan. The whole class is seen cheering and making fun of the scene when Madhuri falls on top of Amir Khan. His dialogue “*Woh Aake Gire Humpe Beejli Ki Khambe Ki Tarah. Khuda Ki Kasam*

Current Khake Maza Aa Gaya" (She bumped over me just like an electric pole, I swear in the name of God, the current was exciting). The dialog itself denotes the dirty mind of Amir Khan. Then starts a sequence of pulling and pushing, falling over and over again, touching and hugging forcibly while a group of men relentlessly cheered and leered over the scenes.

The above examples display eve-teasing which had become a part of college life since the 1990s and the trend seems to continue till today. Rehana specifies the harassment can be either done by one person or group along with unwelcome jokes about sexuality, obscene gestures, brushing against body and many more. *Aakhen* (1993) was an epitome of comedy with double roles and the song "*Lal Dupatte Wali Tera Naam To Baata* (You girl in the red scarf what's your name)" was a hit song and in the lips of every guy who wanted to pursue a girl only the scenes to pursue were smutty. Two girls are seen stalked by two men. The scenes open with Govinda pulling the *dupatta* of Ritu Shivpuri and Chunky Pandey is seen doing some extremely lewd gestures pointing at the *kala kurta* (Black dress- 'Kurta') of Rageswari. The two so called heroes are seen literally running after the two heroines and at one point the two heroines get sandwiched between two heroes with their faces eventually crushed against the chests of the heroes. And then starts scooping and tossing pushing and forcibly pulling and fondling them from all ways.

Hindi cinema has always celebrated both male chauvinism and feminism. While it has overpowered women in numerous movies to show how bravely women fight with all odds and injustice like in *Mother India*, *Khun Bhari Maang*, *Anjaam*, *Kahani*, *Mardaani* and many more it has also glorified apartheid and displayed women to be mere commodity who are objectified and dominated and traumatised to an extent until they don't succumb.

"*Tu Kisi Aur Ki Ho Na Jana Kuch Bhi Kar Jaunga Mein Deewana Tu Haan Kar Ya Naa Kart Tu He Meri Kiran*" (Don't be the beloved of someone else or I would do something crazy; whether you agree or not, you are my Kiran) (Glamsham, n.d) from the movie *Darr* (1993) stars Sharukh Khan and Juhi Chawla. Sharukh Khan plays a psycho lover who is seen stalking and harassing Juhi the entire movie. Not only the song reflects how desperately he wants her but also suggests that her consent is not required. Whether she agrees or disagrees he is sure to achieve her.

Salmaan Khan singing in the dance number "*Tu Haan Kar Ya Naa Kar Teri Marzi Soniye Hum Tujhko Utha Ke Le Jayenge Doli Mein Utha Ke Le Jayenge*" (It is your wish whether you say yes or no, I would abduct you; on a palanquin) from the film *Jab Pyaar Kisi Se Hota He* (1998) clearly denotes the girl's wish does not matter. Even though she disagrees to fall in love with the boy he is sure to abduct her and take her away to marry her. Whatever it is her consent barely matters. In *Mohabbatein* (2001) there is a song during Holi where a group of boys are seen carrying girls on their back and the actors in lead role sing "*Ja Kudiye Jo Kar Le Gora Badan Tera Rang Diya*" Further another hero sings "*Kyun Mujhse Door Khadi Hai Dil Ke Nazdik Badi Hai Aa Lag Ja Gale Tu Kisi Bahane Se*" (Come embrace me doing some excuse). The hero asks his lady to embrace him doing some excusable gesture. Salman Khan in *Tere naam* (2003) was a badass but was a clear hearted person who sincerely loved Bhoomika Chawla. The movie depicts Salman Khan abducting Bhoomika and taking her to an abandoned place because she rejected her love proposal. Though there were no explicit scenes of sexual abuse or anything related but the way Salman tried to convince his love towards Bhoomika is purely male chauvinism. Shahid Kapoor in the movie *Phata Poster Nikla Hero* (2013) is seen running after Ileana and in a local *Mumbaiya* language Shahid is seen engaged in conversation with Ileana though in a comic sense but quite threatening. "*Khali Peeli Khali Peeli Rokne Ka Nahin Tera Peechha Karoon Toh Tokne Ka Nahin Haan Tujhpe Right Mera Tu Hai Delight Mera Tera Rasta Jo Rokoon Chaunkane Ka Nahin.*"

(Don't stop me to stalk you. I have right on you and you give me delight. Hence, when I come after you don't get scared). Dhanush in *Raanjhana* (2013) is seen constantly trying to seek Sonam Kapoor. His attempts to obtain her love and affection continue from adolescent through adulthood. In the process of pursuing her he is seen stalking, hounding, waiting for her arrival at a certain spot, doing all sorts of childish acts which at times give the impression of comedy to the audience. His so called love turns out to be obsession as in the further part of the movie Dhanush is seen ruining so many lives. Sonam Kapoor is seen simply not interested in this what she calls immature love.

Such dominance and chauvinism over women is not new to Hindi cinema as we have witness this for so long that it has now been embedded in our minds and ultimately society and people don't even find it as a curse anymore.

One of the blockbuster hits of all times *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge* (1995) starred Sharukh Khan and Kajol in the lead roles. In one of the scenes Kajol and Sharukh board a train and out of haste Kajol's suitcase falls wide open and she starts getting her scattered clothes into the suitcase. Sharukh tries every way out to talk to Kajol and continue with a chat but she clearly gives a signal that she is not interested to by putting on her reading glasses and holding a book. Then Sharukh notices he is sitting on something and much to the audience surprise it's an undergarment of Kajol to which he very overtly flaunts before her to cause much of the embarrassments. The gesture of exhibiting the under garment and that too by a very popular hero invoke sexual harassment and a very cheap one in fact.

Hasee toh Phasee (2014) the name of the movie itself idiosyncrasies the frame of mind where if a girl smiles that can make her owned by her admirer. The recent hit by Akshay Kumar in the song "*Hans Mat Pagli*" from the film *Toilet – Ek Prem Katha* (2017), Akshay Kumar is seen pursuing Bhumi Pednekar by stalking her and sitting outside her house, following her everywhere, climbing trees to secretly take snaps of her, and more of such gestures.

Findings

The paper studied about two different concepts of sexual harassment. It mainly emphasized on selected films where the heroes are seen doing gestures of sexual harassment. The places they choose to stalk and woo their heroines are streets, sometimes invading their personal space, their residents, colleges, parks or every other place where the heroines visit. The heroines ultimately fall in love with their stalker sooner or later in the movie. The act of stalking and harassing are normalised to romance or love affairs. Couples who are already in love, mainly the heroes advance towards sexual interactions and demand to be physical. Groping and coaxing are a part of romance even though the consent of the heroine isn't present. Unfulfilled love and humiliation result in rapes and assaults. Threatens, chauvinisms and dominance are common in wooing. The paper also explored the male sexual harassment by female perpetrators. Reasons mostly revolve around unfulfilled sexual desires. As Hindi cinema has a wide range of followers who religiously believe that 'reel is real' they fail to find the fine line of difference between the two. They pursue their favourite stars as their ideals and ultimately do what their ideals do.

From Reel to Real

Hindi cinema has portrayed innumerable examples of sexual harassment in diverse forms and kinds towards audience across the globe. Interestingly, the accepting mindsets of such audience has always delightfully rejoiced and encouraged since ages together, whether it

were scenes of rapes, molestation, assault or violence. The audience may not be aware what nerves those actors carry to pose something which is so not true. However, they have always entertained the audience keeping aside their problems that they generally face off-sets. It was only recently that the reel actors have opened up to speak their heart out about their traumas which they have gone through behind the screens. They understand that in reality Hindi cinema is no way beyond the clutches of sexual harassment. In the words of Swara Bhaskar now established in Hindi cinema speaks how her days were troublesome when she was just an aspirant in walking into it. She asserts that she used to receive continuous messages during her shoot which “soon escalated to requests for intense one-on-one meetings” (Safi, 2017). The director used to make sexual remarks and would always say “he needed to fall in love with my character”. One late evening he was drunk and he demanded that she must hug her “to endure the project Bhasker was forced to enlist another crew member as her chaperone” (Safi, 2017). Another eminent actor speaks about the unavailability of choices put forward to actors. Tisca Chopra says “they make situations uncomfortable and load choices in a way where if women want to get ahead, you have to do certain things” (Safi, 2017). Surprisingly, the veteran actor Alok Nath who carries a very decent role in his movies from being an ideal father to a perfect father-in-law, however, is not as decent as she seems to be. Vinta Nanda, the writer producer has revealed “being sexually assaulted by Alok Nath 19 years ago saying the lead actor of the show *Tara* and the television star of that decade not just raped her but brutalised her in her own home” (Wire, 2018). This happens not only in reel but in real too involving the celebrities.

Among the many movements which stood by women in concern with their empowerment and their freedom from being dominated or harassed, it was only recently, that, the #MeToo movement startled the entire globe. The #MeToo movement which was initiated by the actress Alyssa Milano against Harvey Weinstein gained lot of public craze and attention since its development. What started as a movement shook the entire world and men and women are seen sharing their encounters with sexual harassment in social media. However, following the worldwide resentment, the #MeToo movement still continues to expand its status and identification in India especially in Hindi cinema where only recently a former Miss Universe Tanushree Dutta from India, also an actress, alleged a veteran superstar of Bollywood, Nana Patekar to have sexually harassed her ten years ago on the film sets. Along with him there was a choreographer who supported the veteran star to continue exploiting her. Within no seconds star celebrities came up to support what the former Miss Universe had to say. When interviewed regarding the same and asked about the reasons behind not venting out then, Dutta answered “interviews and coverage were given by me 10 years ago and in these 10 years I have never stopped speaking, it affected me on so many levels, it affected me psychologically and emotionally” (Mandal 2018).

Soon after, piles of cases both new and old reopened swallowing up a number of eminent personalities from diverse backgrounds like politics, education, music, artists, advertising managers, comedians and many more. While many of them begged apologies on their treatment towards women, there were still many who declared themselves not guilty and threatened the complainants with charge sheets and legal proceedings. The condemnation in India exploded on social media just like a wild-fire and provided a vent for the victims to speak out about their experiences and abusers. The movement has since then resulted in sacking or resignation from their jobs, denunciation, criticism and separation from the staff and members of their relevant industries and resentment from their fans and public. Surely, the #MeToo Movement has opened up the dark secrets of the famous personalities and has paved ways and opportunities for the victims to speak against their abusers by providing them the courage to do so. This has in many ways given

serious blows to the ones who are accused for their actions and also provided lessons to those around. “As the #MeToo movement continues to tear down millennia of patriarchy and male entitlement as well as the institutionalised silence of sexual abuse victims, individuals and organisations around the globe are finding incredible ways to speak up” (David, 2018).

Likewise, Akshara centre is “a not-for-profit women’s organisation and a resource centre works for the empowerment of women and girls” (Akshara, n.d). The most interesting and unique aspect about the organisation is it advertise a #GannaRewrite competition where it gives an opportunity to all to rewrite songs which promotes sexual harassment. “The idea of Gaana Rewrite was to converge creativity and gender consciousness. Akshara wanted to challenge young people to think about what these popular songs promote or condone-harassment, stalking and even violence and the remix them into songs that celebrate women’s agency, freedom and equality. This is a challenge to one’s imagination and creativity whilst simultaneously raising gender conscious and awareness” (Akshara, n.d). Interestingly, people came up with their creativity and also glorified gender awareness.

Another powerful actor Radhika Apte points out “Not just women, men also go through sexual abuse” (PTI, 2017). She further suggests that people who misuse their power and exploit others must be revealed so also highly ambitious people who understand that this is the only way getting up need to realise that it’s wrong. Veteran actor Irrfan Khan also opens up regarding the much widespread issue. He claims “it has happened with me a lot of times. I have been told clearly that if I compromise I will get the job” (Staff, n.d.). Ranveer Singh has also been a victim to casting couch during the early days in Hindi cinema. He said that he had been advised to “take and touch” (Staff, n.d). It is quite evident that sexual harassment is not familiar in reel but in real including the actors who are paid on-screen but are badly abused off-screen.

Conclusion

Interestingly, in the films discussed above the regular villains or characters who generally play negative characters are not studied rather the heroes who are considered as the role models to zillions are studied and seen mistreating women. Few examples of films where women harass men are also studied but ultimately are not projected to be fierce and vicious as the patriarchal society condemns the power and position of women and hence considers them less dynamic. The lyrics of the songs, scenes and dialogues which are projected as light hearted in the movies and show the ways and means to impress the heroine mostly in public areas, the reality is stark and contrastingly different. Romance, love and courtship in films are stalking, sexual harassment and assault in the real world. Punishments, death sentences and life imprisonments are quick and prompt in cinema while in reality the convicts wander guilt free for years all together. Since generations Hindi cinema has projected movies which induce thoughts in the minds of men so much so that they are made to believe to continue wooing, stalking, being importunate, forcing attention on women. However hard the women protest, resist or express repulsion or loathing they will be bound to surrender, if not there are other violent means to satisfy the thirst of the stalkers like rapes, acid attacks, group molestation and others. Whether films enact the real world or the real world enacts the films still remains a question. Sexual harassment is an evil and is practiced in every part of the society. Although society have been since long silent towards dreadful issues like sexual harassment, Hindi cinema however in many ways attempted its best to contribute and correlate the current issues with people and in umpteen ways has remained successful. A lot of awareness programs, films and

campaigns on sexual harassment have already accumulated attention from the audience still there are many movements yet to be done against it and many films are yet to draw attention on the topic.

References

- (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2018, from <http://victimsofcrime.org/media/reporting-on-child-sexual-abuse/child-sexual-abuse-statistics>
- Aksharacentre, (n.d.). Lets Talk Gender Equality. Retrieved February 07, 2018, from <http://www.aksharacentre.org/#about>
- Arambh., Motion picture. (2017). India. Retrieved February 01, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mliGry20til>
- Baker, C. N. (2008). *The Women's Movement Against Sexual Harassment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chakraborty, K. (2018). *Young Muslim Women In India: Bollywood, Identity And Changing Youth Culture*. S.L.: Routledge
- Dale, C. V. (2005). *Sexual harassment and violence against women: developments in federal law*. New York: Nova Science.
- Dasgupta, P. (2016, July 14). These Superhit '90s Bollywood Songs Actively Promoted Harassment And Stalking. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2016/06/01/songs-which-actually-legi_n_10217822.html
- Digiaco, R. More men Report sexual harassment at work (n.d.). Retrieved January 11, 2018, from <https://www.monster.com/career-advice/article/more-men-report-sexual-harassment-atwork-hot-jobs>
- Dorais, M. (2002). *Don't Tell: The Sexual Abuse of Boys*. London: Mc-Gills Queen's University Press.
- Floyd, P. A., Mimms, S. E., & Yelding, C. (2008). *Personal health: perspectives and lifestyles*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Funvills, (n.d.). Lyrics of Tera Peechha Na Chhodunga (Jugnu) - 1973. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <http://www.lyrics.funvills.com/bollywood/1973/jugnu/tera-peecheha-na-chhodunga.html>
- Gaana Rewrite Competition – Akshara Centre. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2018, from <http://www.bing.com/cr?www.aksharacentre.org.gaana-rewrite-competition%2f&p=DevEx,5062.1>
- Ghadiyally, R. (2007). *Urban women in contemporary India: a reader*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.
- Glamsham, (n.d.). Jadoo Teri Nazar Song Lyrics of Darr : glamsham.com. Retrieved January 23, 2018, from <http://www.bing.com/crglamsham.com/music/lyrics/darr/jadoo-teri-nazar/983/1853.htm>
- H. Goldmines(2017). Motion picture. Retrieved January 17, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qK1wiGv6NQA&t=5638s>
- Hajdin, M. (2002). *The law of sexual harassment: a critique*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna Univ. Press.
- Hoffman, J. S. (2005). *The Emotional Foundations of Loving Relationships*. New York: IUniverse, Inc.
- Iknowmine, (n.d.). Rape, Sexual Assault, and Sexual Harassment. Retrieved January 10, 2018, from <https://www.iknowmine.org/for-youth/rape-assault-harrassment>

- India sexual abuse: 'Four child victims every hour'. (2017, December 01). Retrieved January 11, 2018, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-42193533>
- Kumar, P. (2015). Unveiling womens leadership: identity and meaning of leadership in India. Houndmills, Basingstoke Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan
- Mandal, M. (2018, September 29). No Publicity Or Comeback, Tanushree Is Speaking Up About Nana Patekar Again To Get Justice. Retrieved November 9, 2018, from <https://www.indiatimes.com/entertainment/no-publicity-or-comeback-tanushree-dutta-is-speaking-up-about-nana-patekar-again-to-get-justice-353907.html>
- Movies, V. Motion Picture. (2014). Retrieved February 01, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKYBy0jb1co>
- N. (n.d.). Short film on child sexual abuse turns to crowd funding. Retrieved February 02, 2018, from <http://www.newindianexpress.com/entertainment/hindi/2017/oct/23/short-film-on-child-sexual-abuse-turns-to-crowdfunding-1680593.html>
- Paludi, M. A., & Denmark, F. (2010). Victims of sexual assault and abuse: resources and responses for individuals and families. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- PTI. (2017, November 20). Radhika Apte on sexual harassment in film industry: I know a lot of men who've gone through this. Retrieved February 07, 2018, from <http://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/radhika-apte-on-sexual-harassment-in-film-industry-people-need-to-speak-up-4945914/>
- Safi, M. (2017, December 12). Bollywood sexual harassment: actors speak out on Indian cinema's open secret. Retrieved February 07, 2018, from <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/dec/13/bollywood-sexual-harassment-actors-speak-out-indian-cinema-open-secret>
- SAPAC, (n. d.). Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center. Retrieved January 10, 2018, from <https://sapac.umich.edu/article/63>
- Skaine, R. (1996). Power and gender: issues in sexual dominance and harassment. Jefferson, NC: McFarland
- Staff, SW. (n.d.). It Has Happened To Me. Irrfan Khan Opens Up About Sexual Harassment In Bollywood. Retrieved February 07, 2018, from <https://www.scoopwhoop.com/it-has-happened-to-me-irrfan-khan-open-up-about-sexual-harassment-in-bollywood/#.ag351hw84>
- Szegal, B. A., & Andras, I. (2011). Confligo: Conflict in a society in transition. Hungary: Dunaujvaros College Press.
- Vintage. SEPL (2017). Motion picture. Retrieved January 16, 2018, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SuqJrJOrSf0>
- Wire, T. (2018, October 09). 'I'm No Longer Afraid' – Vinta Nanda on Alleged Sexual Abuse by Actor Alok Nath. Retrieved November 9, 2018, from <https://thewire.in/women/vinta-nanda-alok-nath-me-too>

Mitashree Tripathy is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities at Orissa Engineering College, Bhubaneswar, India. Her areas of academic interest are: professional ethics and communication and interpersonal skills for corporate readiness.