Social Science and Humanities Journal
Everant Journal
ISSN: 2456-2653
https://sshjournal.com/
Impact Factor: 2024: 6.576
2023: 5.731
Volume 09 Issue 07 July 2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.18535/sshj.v9i07.1953

The Celluloid State: Gender, Ideological Interpellation, and Epistemic Violence in Contemporary Indian Cinema

Dr Priyanka K.[1] | Dr. Madhu Bala (Ph.D)[2]

[1]Assistant Professor Department of Humanities and Liberal Arts, SoLAM DIT University, Dehradun
[2]Department of Sociology

Received 15-06-2025
Revised 29-06-2025
Accepted 18-07-2025
Published 22-07-2025

Abstract:

In the contemporary global landscape, cinema transcends its status as a mere instrument of entertainment to function as a hegemonic cultural apparatus that configures collective imaginaries, mediates dominant ideologies, and authorizes specific epistemologies of vision, identity, and truth. Within the Indian socio-political milieu—marked by entanglements of statecraft, religious nationalism, neoliberal capitalism, and entrenched social stratification—cinematic discourse emerges as a potent site where gendered, caste-inflected, and communal subjectivities are not only represented but actively produced, regulated, and naturalized. Here, filmic representations do not simply reflect societal norms; they operate performatively, reifying ideological constructs and participating in the ongoing (re)production of hierarchical power relations.

Through a close reading of selected cinematic texts across both mainstream and regional cinemas, this paper interrogates how the celluloid medium orchestrates a politics of visibility and erasure that sustains patriarchal, casteist, heteronormative, and communal logics under the guise of entertainment, nationalism, or cultural authenticity. It interrogates the gendered gaze and representational strategies that cast female, Dalit, and queer bodies as sites of containment, symbolic excess, or political silencing—thereby contributing to their epistemic marginalization within the national imaginary. Drawing on Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses, Spivak's theorization of epistemic violence, and Foucault's notion of power/knowledge, the study interrogates how mainstream and regional cinematic texts participate in the disciplining of female, Dalit, and queer bodies—rendering them hyper-visible, fetishized, or entirely erased within dominant cultural imaginaries.

At the same time, the study engages with counter-cinematic impulses that fracture the monologic authority of dominant discourse, revealing fissures through which subaltern narratives assert agency and contest ideological fixities. By foregrounding cinema not merely as a cultural product but as a discursive battlefield, this paper argues that Indian cinema must be re-read as a site where power is aestheticized, resisted, and reconfigured—where the politics of seeing becomes inseparable from the politics of knowing and being. Ultimately, the paper calls for a re-theorization of cinematic spectatorship and authorship within the contemporary Indian mediascape, recognizing the celluloid as both an archive of epistemic violence and a terrain of critical intervention.

Keywords: Ideology, Violence, Power, Knowledge, Interpellation, mediascape, State

Introduction:

Before delving into the specific contours of gender bias within Indian journalism and media, it is imperative to first interrogate how dominant ideologies operate in service of entrenched power structures. As ideological state apparatuses, media institutions play a central role in legitimizing hegemonic worldviews—those that privilege the interests of dominant social, political, and economic classes. These ideologies, often aligned with capitalist, patriarchal, and upper-caste norms, perpetuate the status quo by naturalizing consumerism, individualism, and the nuclear family as cultural ideals.

Media narratives—through constant repetition and normalized tropes—shape collective perceptions of what constitutes the "normal," the "deviant," and the "desirable." As Althusser aptly notes, "It is characteristic of ideology to impose self-evident truths as self-evident truths." In this context, media discourses do not merely reflect social realities but actively participate in their construction, regulation, and reproduction—particularly along lines of gender, caste, class, and religion.

Positioned at the intersection of cultural production and state ideology, cinematic narratives often serve to interpellate subjects into normative roles while simultaneously enacting forms of epistemic violence through erasure, stereotyping, and silencing. Within this framework, the present study interrogates the representational politics of contemporary Indian cinema by identifying how visual and narrative strategies sustain or contest hegemonic structures. Accordingly, the research is guided by the following objectives:

1) To critically examine how contemporary Indian cinema reinforces or subverts dominant ideologies through the representation of gendered, caste-based, and classed identities.
2) To analyze the mechanisms of ideological interpellation in cinematic narratives, focusing on how Indian films position viewers within hegemonic frameworks of nationhood, masculinity, and social order.
3) To investigate the ways in which cinema contributes to epistemic violence by erasing, marginalizing, or homogenizing subaltern voices—particularly those of women, Dalits, and queer communities.
4) To explore counter-cinematic strategies and subversive visual aesthetics that resist dominant representational paradigms and reconfigure alternative epistemologies within Indian film culture.

Indian cinema, broadly encompassing Bollywood and a range of regional film industries across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, West Bengal, and Assam, functions as a significant site of cultural production and ideological dissemination. While regional industries account for a larger share of annual film output, Bollywood continues to dominate the global representation of Indian cinema. Since the 1950s, Bollywood has undergone considerable evolution in terms of cinematic form, narrative techniques, and technological advancements. However, its approach to gender representation has remained deeply embedded in patriarchal and heteronormative frameworks.

In its early decades, the industry offered minimal space for women as actors, directors, producers, or screenwriters. Female characters were primarily constructed in relation to male protagonists—most often as wives, mothers, or romantic interests—whose narrative function was limited to supporting the emotional or moral arc of the male lead. These depictions were aligned with traditional gender roles, reinforcing the dominant ideology that valorized feminine passivity, virtue, and domesticity. The visual economy of such films positioned women as aesthetic supplements—objects of beauty rather than agents of action or transformation.

While the latter decades of Indian cinema introduced women in seemingly unconventional roles—such as the knife-thrower in *Zanjeer* or the

tanga-driver in *Sholay*—these portrayals largely remained superficial and failed to disrupt entrenched gender norms. The presence of women in non-domestic occupations was often framed as novelty, and such characters were seldom given narrative autonomy. Even critically acclaimed films like *Mother India* have been critiqued for their essentialist portrayal of female sacrifice, wherein the protagonist's agency is framed not as self-determined but as a moral obligation rooted in familial and nationalistic imperatives.

Parallel trends can be observed in Indian television, particularly in soap operas, which continue to reproduce rigid gender binaries. Male characters are typically constructed as rational, assertive, and economically productive, whereas female characters are confined to domestic roles, portrayed as nurturing, emotional, and subservient. These narratives rarely offer space for non-conforming identities or alternative familial structures. Deviations from gender norms—whether in behavior, dress, or occupational choice—are often stigmatized or cast as moral failure, thereby reinforcing hegemonic ideals of masculinity and femininity.

These representational patterns are not isolated instances but are indicative of a larger ideological framework that governs mainstream Indian media. Drawing from Althusser's theory of ideological state apparatuses, it can be argued that cinema and television function as institutions that interpellate individuals into specific gender roles, thereby legitimizing existing power structures. The repetitive nature of these portrayals contributes to the naturalization of patriarchal norms, shaping public consciousness and delimiting the scope of gendered agency.

Women's Participation in Indian Cinema: On-Screen Presence and Behind-the-Scenes Disparities:

Despite the visible presence of women as performers in Indian cinema, their substantive participation—both in terms of on-screen representation and behind-the-scenes creative authority—remains significantly limited. Quantitative and qualitative studies consistently reveal a stark gender imbalance in speaking roles, character depth, and narrative centrality. Indian cinema ranks among the lowest globally in this regard, with only 25% of speaking roles attributed to female characters**,** many of which lack narrative complexity or independent agency.

The marginalization of women is even more pronounced off-screen. Although Indian film history includes pioneering women such as Devika Rani and Jaddan Bai—trailblazers in production during the early twentieth century—female representation in core creative roles continues to fall below international averages. Currently, women constitute only 9% of directors**,** 12% of screenwriters, and 15% of producers in the Indian film industry. These figures reflect systemic barriers to entry and progression in a male-dominated cinematic ecosystem, where access to networks, funding, and visibility remains unevenly distributed.

This underrepresentation directly impacts the portrayal of women on screen. Empirical studies suggest that films helmed by women—whether as directors or screenwriters—tend to feature more female characters, richer narrative roles, and a departure from stereotypical tropes. The gender of the storyteller significantly shapes the discursive construction of gender within the cinematic text. Moreover, patterns of hiring reflect broader socio-professional dynamics; as in many other industries, women in leadership positions are more likely to recruit and collaborate with other women, thereby fostering spaces for more inclusive creative production.

These disparities point to a broader structural exclusion within the Indian film industry, where patriarchal norms and gendered labour divisions continue to shape not only who gets represented, but also who gets to represent. The low participation of women in key decision-making roles underscores the need to interrogate cinema not merely as an art form, but as an institutional site of power where gendered hierarchies are produced, maintained, and

occasionally disrupted. In this context, Judith Butler's formulation of gender as a performative construct is especially illuminating. She argues:

the effect of gender is produced through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. This formulation moves the conception of gender off the ground of a substantial model of identity to one that requires a conception of gender as a constituted social temporality (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 191).

Applied to Indian cinema, this perspective allows for a critical reading of how women's bodies are not merely portrayed, but are meticulously choreographed to perform normative femininity. These performative scripts, authored largely by male creators, reinforce existing gender ideologies and delimit the scope of female agency both within the narrative and the industry at large.

Discourse, Gender, and Cinematic Regulation in Indian Cinema:

Cinema, as a discursive and ideological apparatus, plays a formative role in producing and legitimizing cultural meanings, identities, and hierarchies. It not only reflects but actively participates in the constitution of social reality by regulating how bodies, desires, and roles are seen, interpreted, and internalized. Within this structure, gender emerges not as a pre-given essence but as a socially constituted performance—a stylized repetition of norms and signs that produces the illusion of a coherent, natural identity. This performative aspect of gender, as theorized by Judith Butler, is crucial to understanding the role of Indian cinema in shaping normative frameworks of femininity and masculinity.

Butler (1997) argues that *"the power of discourse to repeat, revise, and disseminate cultural meanings constitutes and regulates the forms of life it governs, making alternative cultural configurations difficult and fraught"* (p. 41). Discourse, therefore, does not merely describe reality; it produces it, authoring the subjectivities and lifeworlds it purports to represent. In Indian cinema, this production occurs through the continuous deployment of narrative, visual, and affective codes that delineate acceptable modes of being—especially for women. The repetition of tropes such as the self-sacrificing mother (*Mother India*, 1957), the devoted wife (*Vivah*, 2006), the domestic peacemaker (*Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham*, 2001), or the morally redemptive love interest (*Tamasha*, 2015) signals a broader discursive strategy wherein femininity is defined through relationality and moral virtue, never as autonomous subjectivity.

The gendered self in Indian cinema is thus an effect of power, constructed through stylized corporeality, camera gaze, narrative containment, and sonic cues. The sari-clad woman with downcast eyes, the ever-smiling mother figure, or the silent sufferer—these are not mere representations but performative acts that inscribe gender onto the body, rendering it intelligible within a heteropatriarchal framework. Even in films that gesture toward progressive ideals, such as *Chak De! India* (2007) or *English Vinglish* (2012), female empowerment is frequently mediated through familial validation or the approval of a benevolent male figure, reinforcing a model of conditional agency. This ideological pattern extends into regional cinemas as well. In *Asuran* (2019), gendered violence is intimately tied to caste and class, yet the woman remains within the moral universe of domestic sacrifice. Similarly, in *Ustad Hotel* (2012), the female protagonist is largely silent, her presence absorbed into the affective and culinary arcs of the male characters. Even in progressive Bengali films like *Charulata* (1964), female desire is explored but ultimately recontained within patriarchal guilt and restraint.

Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal* (2023) emerges as a paradigmatic instance of contemporary Indian cinema's complicity in reasserting dominant masculinist ideologies under the guise of aesthetic radicalism. Situated within a broader discourse of post-feminist backlash, the film functions as a cultural artefact that not only

reproduces but also fetishizes hegemonic masculinity, mapping its psychic injuries onto the bodies of women through meticulously choreographed violence and affective excess. Within the frame of the celluloid state, *Animal* serves as an apparatus that legitimizes patriarchal desire, discipline, and domination under the alibi of cinematic craft. The film's narrative infrastructure pivots around a hyper-aggressive male protagonist whose emotional lexicon is encoded in violence, surveillance, and control—rendering the female subject epistemically void and narratively disposable. The aestheticization of brutality is not incidental; it is structural, and thus ideological. Rannvijay's self-fashioning as a tragic anti-hero is mediated through acts of coercion that are neither problematized nor critically distanced by the cinematic apparatus. Rather, they are offered to the viewer as legible signs of authenticity, passion, and masculine emotional truth.

This marks a strategic return to what Louis Althusser identifies as ideological interpellation—the hailing of individuals into fixed subject positions by dominant ideological state apparatuses, of which cinema is a central player. In *Animal*, viewers are not merely invited to observe; they are interpolated into a moral schema wherein violence becomes an ontological expression of love, and female agency is not just denied, but symbolically punished. The camera does not challenge Rannvijay's worldview—it colludes with it.

What is particularly insidious is how the film resists political critique under the guise of formalist purity. Vanga's rhetoric—that cinema should be evaluated through its technique, not its ideology—is itself ideological. It is a calculated attempt to delegitimize feminist critique by portraying it as reductive, puritanical, or emotionally reactive. This evasion of ethics through the valorization of craft represents a form of epistemic violence, in Gayatri Spivak's terms—a violence that erases alternative ways of knowing, feeling, and being, particularly those articulated from gendered, subaltern, or dissenting positions. Moreover, *Animal* must be read as an exemplar of what might be termed affective authoritarianism: the mobilization of emotion—specifically wounded male sentimentality—as a justification for social and symbolic domination. The film aestheticizes masculine grief, filial trauma, and romantic longing, but weaponizes these affective registers against female characters, who are rendered either mute, compliant, or emotionally expendable. This recursive pattern of gendered objectification aligns with the logic of the celluloid state, wherein cinema mirrors the coercive mechanisms of state ideology by naturalizing hierarchies of power through narrative form.

In a moment when Indian cinema is grappling with calls for inclusivity, feminist ethics, and epistemic plurality, *Animal* emerges as a cinematic rupture that disavows these imperatives. It operates as a form of aestheticized reactionism—a cinema that doesn't simply ignore feminist critique but actively constructs itself in defiance of it. The film's structure, tone, and representational choices collectively constitute a cinematic regime that punishes dissent, reterritorializes patriarchal normativity, and forecloses the emergence of alternative gendered imaginaries. Thus, *Animal* does not merely represent a narrative of toxic masculinity; it enacts a cinematic modality of masculine sovereignty, shielding itself behind a facade of technical bravado. In doing so, it exemplifies how Indian popular cinema remains a potent ideological state apparatus—one capable of scripting desire, regulating subjectivity, and reinforcing systemic silences through its affective economies and visual grammars.

However, Butler's framework also illuminates the potential for subversion inherent within the act of repetition itself. Because performativity is never complete or original, it always harbors the possibility of slippage—moments where dominant norms can be exposed, parodied, or ruptured. It is in this space that feminist and subversive Indian cinema intervenes. Films such as *Lipstick Under My Burkha* (2016), *Parched* (2015), *Soni* (2018),

and *The Great Indian Kitchen* (2021) destabilize hegemonic femininities by foregrounding women's affective labor, sexual agency, silenced rage, and resistance to domestic confinement. These narratives do not simply include women; they center their gaze, their embodiment, and their epistemic dissent.

In *Thappad* (2020), for instance, a single act of violence becomes the site through which the protagonist re-evaluates the everyday microaggressions of marriage, invoking a feminist ethics that challenges the cultural romanticization of forgiveness. *Darlings* (2022) complicates the victim/perpetrator binary, placing a woman in the position of strategic resistance and ironic inversion. Similarly, *Bulbbul* (2020) reclaims the mythic and the gothic to rewrite female trauma as spectral justice, using genre aesthetics to critique historical silencing. These films not only disrupt the hegemonic image regime but also construct counter-discourses that reimagine womanhood beyond patriarchal legibility. They make visible the invisible labor, desires, and fractures of women's lives, inviting new ways of seeing and knowing that resist the closure of dominant cinema. By mobilizing alternative performativities and aesthetics, these cinematic texts gesture toward what Butler would call an opening in the discourse—a site where gender is not merely reiterated but contested, re-signified, and reimagined.

In recent years, Indian cinema has witnessed a visible surge in films that are marketed under the banner of "women empowerment." While on the surface this signals a progressive turn, a closer critical engagement reveals how many of these texts often fall into the trap of hollow feminism—a performative mode of gender politics that adopts the aesthetics of empowerment without offering any meaningful structural critique. These films employ feminist vocabulary and iconography, yet leave untouched the deeper scaffolding of patriarchy that operates both within the narrative and the industry itself.

Rather than disrupting hegemonic cinematic discourse, such films often repackage normative gender roles within more palatable, marketable, and neoliberal frames. *Pink* (2016), for instance, is often lauded for foregrounding the discourse of consent in Indian mainstream cinema. However, its emancipatory potential is significantly undermined by its reliance on a male savior figure—Amitabh Bachchan's character—whose authoritative voice becomes the moral arbiter of truth and justice. The young women in the film are not agents of their own liberation but subjects spoken for and defended by patriarchal authority. In this formulation, patriarchal power is not dismantled but re-legitimized as the very condition of female justice.

Similarly, *Gulaab Gang* (2014), while invoking the aesthetics of radical resistance, ultimately veers into a hyper-stylized spectacle that reduces systemic gender violence to choreographed revenge fantasy. Its protagonists are stripped of social specificity and historical weight, becoming mythic figures rather than grounded agents of change. The film substitutes rigorous political engagement with emotional excess and exaggerated heroism, thereby diluting the critical edge it purports to wield.

Veere Di Wedding (2018) marks a different kind of failure—one shaped by the logic of neoliberal postfeminism. Here, female agency is framed as personal choice, consumer freedom, and sexual expression within a privileged, urban, upper-class setting. Empowerment is divorced from collective struggle or intersectional critique; it becomes a commodity to be consumed rather than a structure to be transformed. This brand of cinema aligns comfortably with capitalist ideologies, reducing feminism to an individual lifestyle ethos accessible only to those already shielded by class, caste, and urban privilege.

These examples illustrate how the cinema of "empowerment" often becomes a disciplinary discourse—a performance of progressive values that paradoxically reinscribes the very ideologies it claims to resist. The supposed challenge to

patriarchal order is contained within narrative structures that affirm it. What appears as feminist resistance is often a sophisticated form of ideological interpellation, wherein viewers are invited to identify with a symbolic feminism that has been stripped of its radical political content. In doing so, these films enact a subtle but potent form of epistemic violence—not by excluding women, but by scripting their inclusion in ways that reproduce dominant ideologies. They create the illusion of progress while maintaining the grammar of patriarchal narration. Female characters may occupy the center of the frame, but the terms of their representation remain deeply inflected by masculinist aesthetics, capitalist desire, and narrative containment. This genre of "faux-feminist" cinema thus functions as a cultural apparatus of the celluloid state—a mechanism through which dissent is simulated, critique is aestheticized, and ideological equilibrium is preserved under the veneer of transformation.

Despite the visual prominence of female performers in Indian cinema, women's participation remains structurally marginal across the industry. On screen, women continue to occupy a disproportionately small share of speaking roles or named characters. A 2014 global study by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media revealed that only 25% of speaking roles in Indian films are assigned to women, situating India near the bottom globally in terms of representational gender parity (Geena Davis Institute, 2014). Behind the scenes, the disparity is even more pronounced. While the contributions of early pioneers such as Devika Rani and Jaddan Bai, and contemporary figures like Farah Khan, mark important milestones, structural inclusion of women in creative leadership roles remains abysmally low. According to Oxfam India (2017), women constitute only 9% of directors, 12% of writers, and 15% of producers in the Indian film industry—figures that underscore systemic barriers and lag behind international benchmarks.

These numbers are not merely reflective of occupational demographics; they have profound implications for representation itself. Research shows that films involving women in key creative roles—particularly as writers and directors—tend to offer more substantial and diverse portrayals of female characters (UNESCO, 2014). The gender of the storyteller profoundly influences not only whose stories get told, but how they are framed, embodied, and valued. Moreover, as in other industries, women in leadership positions are statistically more likely to hire and mentor other women, facilitating a more inclusive creative ecosystem (Smith, Choueiti, & Pieper, 2014).

Thus, women's underrepresentation in Indian cinema is not merely a quantitative imbalance—it is a structural issue that intersects with questions of authorship, epistemic agency, and cultural legitimacy.

Conclusion: Recalibrating the Optics of Resistance in the Celluloid State:

Cinema in India, as this inquiry has argued, functions not merely as a mirror of societal values but as a constitutive ideological apparatus—a celluloid state that governs through affect, spectacle, and repetition. Far from being politically inert, it participates in the production of dominant social imaginaries, encoding normative assumptions about gender, caste, class, and nationhood through aesthetic and narrative choices that often escape critical interrogation under the guise of entertainment.

Films like *Animal* and *Kabir Singh* exemplify how masculinist subjectivity is aestheticized through narrative centrality and legitimized through emotional opacity and stylized violence. Simultaneously, purportedly "progressive" texts such as *Pink*, *Veere Di Wedding*, and *Gulaab Gang* often replicate the same ideological grammar they claim to resist, substituting the radical potential of feminist cinema with market-sanctioned, neoliberal iterations of empowerment that are more palatable than transformative.

At stake is not merely the visibility of women on screen, but the deeper epistemological architectures that determine whose knowledge,

voice, and agency are rendered narratable. Through what Gayatri Spivak would call *epistemic violence*, the cinematic apparatus delegitimizes subaltern knowledge systems by reinscribing gendered hierarchies within a visual economy that privileges patriarchal desire, capitalist rationality, and heteronormative logic. In this schema, even dissent is curated, aestheticized, and depoliticized—absorbed into the ideological bloodstream of the dominant order.

Cinema thus becomes both a battleground and a blueprint: a site where subjectivities are not only represented but discursively engineered. It interpolates the spectator into roles of complicity, desire, or dissent, and in doing so, reveals the subtle but forceful operations of hegemonic ideology masquerading as cultural common sense. The celluloid state, in this formulation, is not simply a metaphor but a regime—one that scripts affective attachments, moral codes, and ontological boundaries through images, dialogues, and silences.

Therefore, any meaningful engagement with gender in Indian cinema must move beyond counting female characters or celebrating superficial representations. It must interrogate the aesthetic regimes and narrative epistemologies through which gendered power circulates and sedimentizes. A genuinely radical cinematic politics would not only diversify representation but disrupt the very narrative structures and visual economies that sustain patriarchy, casteism, and epistemic exclusion.

The task ahead lies in cultivating a critical cinematic literacy that is intersectional, decolonial, and ideologically alert—one that does not merely ask *who is visible*, but probes *how visibility is produced, for whom, and at what cost*. Only through such rigorous, politically situated critique can we begin to dismantle the celluloid state's hold on our ways of seeing, feeling, and knowing.

Bibliography:

1. Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. Translated by Ben Brewster, Monthly Review Press, 1971.
2. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretationof Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 271–313.
3. Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge, 1990.
4. Mulvey, Laura. "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1975, pp. 6–18.
5. hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. South End Press, 1984.
6. Gill, Rosalind. *Gender and the Media*. Polity Press, 2007.
7. McRobbie, Angela. *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change*. SAGE, 2009.
8. Banaji, Shakuntala. *Reading Bollywood: The Young Audience and Hindi Films*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
9. Vasudevan, Ravi S. *The Melodramatic Public: Film Form and Spectatorship in Indian Cinema*. Permanent Black, 2010.
10. Rajadhyaksha, Ashish, and Paul Willemen. *Encyclopedia of Indian Cinema*. Routledge, 1999.
11. Dwyer, Rachel. *Bollywood's India: Hindi Cinema as a Guide to Contemporary India*. Reaktion Books, 2014.
12. Gokulsing, K. Moti, and Wimal Dissanayake. *Indian Popular Cinema: A Narrative of Cultural Change*. Trentham Books, 2004.
13. Gopal, Sangita, and Sujata Moorti, editors. *Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance*. University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
14. Mishra, Vijay. *Bollywood Cinema: Temples of Desire*. Routledge, 2002.

15. Chakravarty, Sumita S. *National Identity in Indian Popular Cinema, 1947–1987*. University of Texas Press, 1993.
16. Nandy, Ashis. *The Secret Politics of Our Desires: Innocence, Culpability and Indian Popular Cinema*. Zed Books, 1998.
17. Mehta, Rini Bhattacharya. *Unruly Cinema: History, Politics and Bollywood*. University of Illinois Press, 2020.
18. Datta, Sangeeta. "Globalisation and Representations of Women in Indian Cinema." *Social Scientist*, vol. 28, no. 3/4, 2000, pp. 71–82.
19. Bhattacharya, Debjani. *Epistemic Violence and the Cinema of India*. Journal of South Asian Cinema, vol. 10, no. 2, 2019, pp. 88–105.
20. Kapur, Jyotsna. *Coining for Capital: Movies, Marketing, and the Transformation of Childhood*. Rutgers University Press, 2005.
21. Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Routledge, 2004.
22. Roy, Anjali Gera. *Bhangra Moves: From Ludhiana to London and Beyond*. Ashgate, 2010. (For diasporic gendered performances in cinema)
23. Trinh T. Minh-ha. *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism*. Indiana University Press, 1989.
24. Bandyopadhyay, Debashree. "Gender, Nation and Popular Hindi Cinema: Globalization and Beyond." *South Asian Popular Culture*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2008, pp. 103–117.
25. Uberoi, Patricia. *Freedom and Destiny: Gender, Family, and Popular Culture in India*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
26. Rai, Amit S. *Untimely Bollywood: Globalization and India's New Media Assemblage*. Duke University Press, 2009.
27. Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media. (2014). *Gender bias without borders: An investigation of female characters in popular films across 11 countries*. https://seejane.org
28. Oxfam India. (2017). *Gender inequality in film industries of India*. https://www.oxfamindia.org/research/gender-inequality-indian-film-industry
29. UNESCO. (2014). *Gender equality: Heritage and creativity*. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000222796
30. Smith, S. L., Choueiti, M., & Pieper, K. (2014). *Inequality in 700 popular films: Examining portrayals of gender, race, & LGBT status from 2007 to 2014*. USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. https://annenberg.usc.edu/research/aii