

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the basis of this research. It consists of the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, and closes with significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Film posters once utilized as the main backbone of exposure of any films overall including Bollywood (Goswami, 2017, p. 78). Bollywood films have made considerable progress from broadly recognizable brush strokes with a striking hues and typography to current computerized prints on reflexive sheets. A film poster isn't only some other poster; it's an impression of evolving times (Goswami, 2017, p. 79). An investigation of the posters of Bollywood films can assist with seeing some significant and fascinating information of various times.

Film producers had their specific priorities for poster design. They wanted the poster to act as a safety net. It had to offer value for money by appearing to be all things to all people (Qureshi, 2013). The film needed to oblige whatever number various sections of society as could be allowed by giving humour, sentiment, activity and drama on one banner as a guarantee of the different fixings in the film. Reorder procedures got predominant during the 1970s when posters started to look like montages to solidify each feature from the film as found in the film *Amar Akbar Anthony* (1977). This inevitably made the posters seem cluttered, as did showing the main character in different guises. Yet, the

enticement of variety was deemed to make it appeal to many different markets simultaneously (V.S, Balagopal, et al, 2019).

Films are cultural artefacts created by specific cultures. They reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. Global commercial film has been widely dominated by Hollywood as the system of the US entertainment industry (De Zoysa & Newman 2002: 189). Hollywood has shaped the cinema industries around the world in most cases to fit into its mold. Many films with settings outside the United States must have a taste of America in one way or the other. Hollywood serves to extol the virtues of the American way of life, promotes major industrial products and builds and reinforces a positive national image.” Hollywood has succeeded in selling America to the world by- as Bi (2012) pointed out “Hollywood movies seek to build a national image characterized by freedom, equality, prosperity and other positive aspects. Concepts such as “freedom” and “equality” are reinforced through storylines.”

Indian film industry has always presented Western theorists and commentators an anomalous case in point, which both defies assumptions of cultural contradictions between the East and the West, as well as complicates the opposition between First World and Third World cinema (Tyrrell, 1999/2015). Bollywood is international (in its production, distribution, and reception strategies), commercial (in its profit-oriented approach and aims for box office success), as well as deeply ideological and nationalistic (Jin & Su, 2020). Bollywood has been implicated in the project of nation building and is deeply nationalists in its ethos and sentimentality (Jin & Su, 2020). But in the same

breath, it is the window to the world offering its audience alternative visions drawn mainly from the West. In the songs and dance sequences, which are imperative to the Indian film's narrative as spaces for fantasy and escape, it is not considered improbable by audiences when lead characters are transported from dusty Indian villages to pristine Swiss Alps undergoing a complete transformation from costume to demeanour as they approximate a Westernized sensibility. Hence, given Bollywood's unique approach to the West, Bollywood can be read both as defending itself and Indian values against the West, and as a dangerous courier of Western values to the Indian audience (Tyrrell, p.398).

Hollywood has brought a new trend in the costume and settings of such films. Indian movie producers have received the Hollywood business achievement recipe; predicated on the subjects of sex, activity, delight and independence to recapture business accomplishment for their movies, whose previous topics of soft romantic tales and family shows have lost their intrigue to the crowd (Natarajan, 2014). Burrowes (2011) stated that "the success of American film has led to other nations fearing that their own cultural identity would be tainted, altered somehow by this Hollywood influence." The Film Federation of India, a regulatory body that directs film content, whines that the films made in the New Bollywood are too westernized and that they are corrupting and decreasing India's actual cultural identity. Hindi films today become adulterated and unrestrained. The current Bollywood formula has some cause for concern due to the transplantation of Western ideas that has led to extreme vulgarity with high sexual innuendo and unnecessary violence in films today (Menon, 2013).

Though Bollywood's box office returns are substantially less compared to Hollywood, it wins in terms of total footfall, registering nearly 3 billion ticket sales as opposed to Hollywood's 1.2 billion (Jones & Toma, 2017). Its collection in overseas market is rising dramatically and the films are top box office openers in diasporic nations such as U.S.A., U.K., Middle-East, Australia. That being said, filmmakers have to change their business strategy to satisfy the global consumers (local and diaspora). Diasporic consumers are seemingly tired of the outdated India's typical shallow and weak themes, such as arranged marriage and/or elopement. They want more variety as what they have seen on world-wide known Hollywood hits films. Thus, modern Bollywood has spread its wings wider with various genres to action thriller, horror, comedy, drama and even constantly mimics American norms but mines Indian culture for the success it enjoys among its diasporic networks.

For cultural critics such as Homi K. Bhabha, modernity allows local and/or minority populations to resist the pressures of a dominant culture while also eluding the dangers of marginalization by creating an entirely new entity, a hybrid culture that differentiates itself from the other traditions pulling at it while still fulfilling the needs of the alienated (see Araeen, 2000, pp. 9-17; Karim, 1998, p. 6; Khan, 2002; Kraidy, 1999). As far as Indian film, these estranged people can be effortlessly found during a time that has dispersed individuals from the South Asian diaspora around the world, endeavouring to accommodate the qualities implanted in Indian culture with the practices found in their new homes.

Hence, in this analysis the researcher has selected nine film posters of box-office hits Bollywood films from the 90s, 00s, to 10s, of which it contains three of each decade. The movies include; *Hum Aapke Hain Koun* (1994), *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995), *Pardes* (1997), *Khushi* (2003), *Bachna Ae Haseeno* (2008), *Dostana* (2008), *Bang Bang* (2014), *Ki & Ks* (2016), *Befikre* (2016).

By analysing these posters, the researcher found that Kress and Van Leeuwen's social semiotic analysis is a proper way to identify the symbolic meaning from the signs or codes used in an image in each poster. It can also explain how films poster is historically linked with a nation's sociocultural for the time being.

After reading the signs in each poster, it is useful to to examine questions of hybridity to by Homi K. Bhabha's hybrid theory. Hybridity happens when a person is caught between two different things, often two different cultures, which lead him/her to a "double vision" or "double consciousness" and finally a merged or even a lost identity. Subsequently, it can be used to to explain the popularity of mainstream Hindi cinema from the selected posters with the South Asian origin or diaspora, which allow them to maintain a commitment to traditional values while acknowledging the importance of an westernized global culture in their lives.

Therefore based on the explanation above, the researcher proposes to conduct a research on the transition of Bollywood film posters (from the early 1990's to 2010's) under Western influence.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the explanation of the background, the problems of the study are formulated as follow:

1. How is the transition of Bollywood film posters from the 1990s, 2000s, to 2010s?
2. How much scope does Westernization have on Bollywood films (1990s-2010s) as represented from the posters?

1.3 Objectives of the study

Based on the research statement, this particular study aimed at analyzing:

1. The transition of Bollywood film movies from the 1990s, 2000s, to 2010s.
2. The scope of Westernization in Bollywood films (1990s-2010s) as represented from the posters.

1.4 Significance of the study

The findings of this study will contribute to the benefit of society especially Indian film consumers considering how Western influence unconsciously plays that huge part `determining the values that are put in Indian films which are represented in the posters. Thus, consumers will be able to comprehend the big changes that Indian cinema undertook in the last few decades to follow the diaspora audiences demand in terms of modern touch and portrayal in
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