Impact of Item Songs in Hindi Films on Psychological Well-Being of Young Women in Pakistan

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Abstract

Movies are a popular form of mass media that helps shape ideas, develop images, and reinforce dominant cultural norms. The structure of the "lyrics and dance moves" of item songs objectifies women in the most humiliating ways. In Pakistan, there is massive viewership of Hindi films. This study focuses on the impact of Hindi item songs on the psychological wellbeing of young women in Pakistan. It also investigates the perception of self among young women after watching Hindi item songs. The study used the survey method to consider 150 female participants (aged 17-30 years). The findings of the study suggest that participants of the survey admire the self-confidence of the "item girl" portrayed in item songs, and they also see her as an "independent woman". Though they do not prefer to watch item songs with family, they love to use it as a celebration song at weddings, parties and other gatherings and also like to perform on such songs compared to different songs. The study concludes that despite some otherwise conceptions, young women in Pakistan are convinced by the "depiction of confident women" in Hindi item songs. The uses and gratifications hypothesis posits that individuals consume various media types because they anticipate obtaining certain gratifications from such choices.

Keywords: Hindi Item Songs, Hindi Films, Item Girls, Psychological Wellbeing.

Introduction

Dance and film have a long history of collaboration. From the beginning, movies used dancing as a dazzling movement demonstration. The mutual commitment to movement facilitated an unplanned boundary-crossing between early dance and film. Dance-oriented songs have always been essential to Hindi films (Sahu & Abbas, 2015).

People enjoy listening to music and are influenced by it. Without music, the movie is incomplete. To keep this in mind, Bollywood films have introduced a new type of song known as an item song, which is vital for the film's success. Film directors use item songs as a marketing technique to promote their films (Indian Film Board and Association, 2013). Item songs are becoming increasingly prominent in the newest Lollywood films. Item music accompanies you whenever you need to have fun and happiness. From birthday celebrations to wedding ceremonies, from college grand parties to the thrill of first jobs, item numbers always add to the fun and drive you to enjoy the festivities even more. Pakistan's film industry currently appears to be nothing (Islam, 2013).

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The definition of "item songs" altered the function of music and the need for it. "A musical performance with little to no connection to the movie in which it appears is known as an item song. It appears in a movie where lovely dancing women are shown in skimpy attire. The movie's plot is not particularly related to these tunes. The song aims to increase the film's popularity and draw viewers in. A girl in skimpy clothing would almost always be pasteurizing herself by dancing in a way that was suggestive and sexual. An "item song's" primary purpose is to draw attention from the audience to create publicity (Barrett, 2006).

Bollywood's global reputation stems from its use of the Hindi language. Hindi movies have helped Western audiences comprehend Indian culture through their choreography, music, and dress. Hindi cinema has significantly impacted the Bollywood business, but it is not a one-way street. Women's portrayal in Hindi cinema has been underappreciated globally, particularly in Bollywood (Anujan & Karan, 2012).

The article discusses Bollywood as an accurate representation of Indian culture and society, including its songs. However, it emphasizes the importance of understanding the underlying concept of reality. Songs are crucial to Bollywood films' success and should be recognized and celebrated. Hindi cinema's commercial success stems from its musicality and captivating dance sequences (Agarwal, 2014).

Music and dance are crucial to examining women's portrayal in Indian films. This platform is ideal for international promotion and marketing. Songs in Hindi cinema contribute significantly to the growth and development of the Bollywood film industry. The most popular genre in Hindi cinema is "item songs," quickly gaining popularity (Gehlawat & Dudrah, 2017).

Item songs and numbers in Hindi cinema are often unrelated to the plot. Additionally, the artist does not contribute to the movie. This is intended to pique the interest of the audience, especially men. These performances portray women as masochists, limiting their desires. These numbers are prevalent in diasporic marriages, clubs, parties, and other entertainment settings (Jain, 2019).

The movie's starring ladies did not support an item song during its initial release. These tracks were only blessed by vamps or dancers making special appearances. Item songs have evolved to include more than just vamps. Modern actresses dance to songs designed to draw large audiences. These days, they are essential; all actresses, rising or old, perform item songs to reach new heights in their careers (Sahu & Abbas, 2015).

One aspect of the media, a significant sociocultural component, is cinema. It is thought to be among the most successful visual communication mediums available today. In these cases, the focus of the investigation is not even film; instead, it is only one aspect of a more extensive discussion concerning representation, which is the social process by which sounds, images, and signs are made to stand for anything in television or film (Slatewala, 2019).

Bollywood is the collective term for the Mumbai-based Hindi-language film industry (previously Bombay). The phrase is given to journalist Amit Khanna, who combined "Bombay" and "Hollywood" in the 1970s. As a hub for film production, Bollywood has since eclipsed Hollywood. It is currently one of the biggest worldwide. Bollywood is the largest producer of products to meet the needs of the Indian film industry, which is the largest and most popular entertainment genre in the country. It is making a growing number of films. Bollywood is the production hub for more than a hundred thousand films worldwide. Additionally, it sells the most tickets (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The marketing strategies employed to promote Bollywood and its films are increasingly complex. A growing portion of the production budget goes into promoting films. The increasing significance of the marketing plan, which is frequently lengthier and more expensive than the production, is a

complaint voiced by many Indian producers. The most profitable movies often have the finest marketing in the fiercely competitive Indian and global markets (Puvia & Vaes, 2013).

With the advent of social media and the Internet, the Bollywood marketing strategy of releasing and promoting songs and trailers ahead of their official release took on new forms. In Indian movies, product and fashion placement is employed more often than in Hollywood film marketing. The impact Bollywood has had on Indian culture cannot be overstated. The fashion and popular music industries are driven by films (Kapoor, 2018).

The music accompanying the moves is still a significant component of the movie. However, over the years, these songs' compositions have evolved. Actors and actresses these days have highly polished bodies that resemble mannequins when they are in film. The tunes accentuate their beauty as the camera pans around their sculpted features, focusing in and out of their faces. The days of close-ups highlighting eyes and the shyness accompanying every look were long gone. Close-ups nowadays entail spotting the sculpted torsos and flat abs (Slatewala, 2019).

Both behavioral and visual representations of the body—such as sexualized dancing, gestures, and male/female gaze—can lead to sexual objectification. Examples of behavioral representations of the body include remarks about exposed skin, body parts, and sexy attire. Furthermore, women who sexually objectify their bodies also promote the idea among young men that males are welcome to stare at them and pay attention to them (Zubair, 2017).

The treatment of a person as a body, or the experience of being treated as a body that is primarily introduced as an article for the amusement of men or frequently for the consumption of male looks, is known as sexual objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

In Indian cinema, an item number is a song featured in the film but mostly has no bearing on the storyline. Songs and move groupings were created in the earlier genre of Bollywood films to give the audience a break from the narrative. These days, the only goal of these item numbers is commercial, to objectify women to satiate masculine needs (Sharma & Dandona, 2021).

India is home to Bollywood, the country's largest and multilingual film industry in terms of ticket sales; for the locals, Bollywood is practically a religion. Indian entertainment industry: "With movies serving as a launching pad, India has developed an entertainment industry of considerable size, ranking first in the world for film production, being part of the top group of the cinema enthusiast nations, endowed with T.V. channels and with a music industry entire of dynamism. This also includes Indian movie theatres (Jha, 2014).

In this century, Hindi cinema has been a primary source of inspiration for Indian culture. It has influenced and conveyed the evolving realities of contemporary India to a degree that no other artistic medium could ever hope to match. Hindi cinema and entertainment are closely tied to one another. Hindi cinema undoubtedly provides a beneficial window into a culture, and studying a culture helps one understand its people's customs, behavior patterns, values, arts and crafts, and everyday activities (Gunjan, 2019).

Namibia boasts a rich cultural legacy with its many languages, festivals, culinary traditions, sculptures, music, and dance traditions. Cultural commentators frequently assert that India possesses one of the oldest musical traditions globally (Agarwal et al., 2013).

Men have dominated the storyline of movies for the most part; they are shown as the main characters and set the actions that occur in the film. Women are depicted as weak, helpless, and the objects of men's lust. Cinema develops how a woman is to be looked at in the spectacle, going well beyond simply emphasizing her desire to be observed (Booth, 2007).

The eroticized images of women in movies pleasure the male character and audience, who get a sense of sexual fulfilment from staring at these well-constructed cinematic universes, especially in

private. The camera angles have been framed from a male point of view, emphasizing the eroticized and "private" areas of the female body appropriately (Kamble & Biswal, 2022).

Research Objectives
This study focuses on the following research objectives;
- To find the impact of Hindi item songs on the psychology of young women in Pakistan
- To explore the effects of Hindi item songs on the perception of self among young Pakistani women.

Research Questions
1. What is the psychological impact of item songs on young Pakistani women?
2. How do Hindi item songs affect the perception of self among young Pakistani women?

Literature Review

In Indian cinema, an item number refers to a song featured in the film but usually has no relevance to the storyline. Songs and musical groups were created in the earlier genre of Bollywood films to give the audience a glimpse into the plot. These days, these item numbers are made purely for commercial purposes, to objectify women to satiate masculine needs (Sharma & Dubey, 2021).

On the one hand, the feminist viewpoint exalts women and advocates for gender parity. On the other hand, Bollywood, which is seen as a potent media mechanism, uses derogatory terminology to depict women who live in societies where men control. This is especially evident in the item songs (Sharma & Dandona, 2021).

A woman ought to limit herself to being a male's object of desire. Three perspectives—that of the male character, that of the camera focus, and that of the male spectator who observes the female character by acknowledging her as an object for her erotic desire—all contribute to the male look's sexual objectification (Ahmed & Wahab, 2014).

A Bollywood film's item song, also called an item number, is a catchy, energetic, and provocative musical song and dance routine with little to nothing to do with the storyline. The item girl is a dancer or actress who performs it. Her act is a show for the masculine gaze. While she is entertaining the audience, she is surrounded by groups of inebriated guys who are yelling, shouting, jeering, whistling, groping, and chasing her (Aubrey et al., 2011).

In Bollywood, the item girl is portrayed as a sexually liberated woman who is "modern". In truth, though, many would argue that her existence is sacrilegious to Indian culture, but she persists. Several factors influence the popularity and importance of item girls in India. The item girl represents how attitudes toward women's sexuality are changing in modern India (Ayushi, 2021).

In addition to being entertaining, she has established herself as a unique figure in Bollywood. The item song genre has contributed more to Bollywood's global reach than any other area of Indian cinema. Globalization describes the increasing interconnectedness of nations, cultures, and people due to worldwide trade in products and services, technical advancements, and the movement of capital, people, and information (Bernard et al., 2018).

Item songs have hypersexualized clothes and female body parts to such an extent that, consequently, we see women being morally policed for wearing certain clothes, and sexual assault and rape victims are frequently blamed for their choice of clothing. Item girls are almost always costumed in revealing clothes and then sexually objectified by the camera, lyrics, and background performers. These factors combine to form the correlation that if a woman is wearing short,

revealing clothes, she is trying to please or arouse a man and, therefore, she's "asking for it" (Khatun, 2018).

Bollywood stars significantly influence young girls' attitudes and habits around the ideal female physique. Female viewers who are regularly exposed to item songs and who do not meet the criteria of Eurocentric beauty may feel less worthy of themselves as a result of these kinds of depictions and the underrepresentation of actors with darker skin tones. Item songs continue by defining what is feminine and seductive. The song's lyrics include having light skin and a tiny waist as desirable characteristics. This exacerbates India's wider, problematic fixation with pale skin and spreads the desire for an hourglass figure, flat stomach, and other similar ideals, which negatively affects women's body image (Lau, 2010).

Proper sound and timing enhance the pleasure of item music. The musical notes and speed generate a rhythm for proactive dance actions, while the showmanship in item songs reflects the directors' desired cinematic experience. The utilization of background noise, including guys cheering on the item girl, hooting, whistling, and catcalling, as well as the item girl occasionally making sexually explicit noises and singing obscene songs, is what distinguishes item songs from other Bollywood songs (Martino et al., 2006).

Cinema allows audiences to acquire scopophilia. The movie theatre's darkness creates a sensation of isolation for the audience, while the changing light and shadow on the screen contribute to a voyeuristic experience. Pleasure is acquired from dominating performers and utilizing them as sexual objects (Mehta, 2012).

The film text is structured to appeal to the patriarchal cultural subconscious. The narrative film's gaze is masculine, with the woman as the object rather than the bearer. Item songs not only normalize the masculine gaze but also set harmful norms for femininity, sexuality, and appearance. The performance encourages voyeurism by acting as an exhibition that demands attention. The film spectator is supposed to be the genuine owner of the voyeuristic gaze, yet they deny any voyeurism (Mulvey, 1975).

In the postfeminist period of popular culture, item songs in Bollywood movies overemphasize the female body and portray women as "commodities" for consumption. Item songs represent a significant transition in Indian cinema, with a global audience and following. My work focuses on post-feminism, which addresses the media representation of women. Post-feminism is also beneficial for emphasizing the relationship between media and culture (Rad, 2016).

Stereotypical images of women in the media can perpetuate gender inequities in society, raising concerns. As a result, films are a powerful instrument for spreading ideas about traditional gender roles. This method is beneficial for analyzing item songs that objectify the female body (Zubair, 2020).

The actors that play item girls typically have light skin, a light, medium complexion, and Eurocentric or Caucasian features. They are also members of the upper-class and upper-caste communities in real life. However, the item girl is a symbol of prostitution; she is a sex worker. In India, sex labor is often performed by low-caste, low-class women who are not as fair-skinned as Bollywood actors (Ramkissoon, 2009).

Item songs are portrayed as the pinnacle of female sexual liberation in India. The item girl portrays female freedom, autonomy, and choice, inspiring young women from diverse backgrounds to express their sexuality (Raza, 2015).

Shabana Azmi also declared that the songs were devoid of Indian cinema traditions. She observed, "I have strong feelings about item numbers because they are not part of the story and were included in a film just for the goal of titillation. When a female or a leading lady says, it's fine; I want to

celebrate my sensuality" " she added, "I have no problem with it. I believe that's fantastic. But behind the pretense of 'celebrating your sexuality', what you are truly doing is yielding to the male gaze and objectifying yourselves because the business of cinema is of images". It is troublesome to display people a woman's "fragmented bits of her body, heaving bosom, swinging navel, shaking hip" because it takes away her entire sovereignty" (Hindustan Times, 2018).

People often accept lyrics as entertainment without realizing their more profound meaning. Restricting the semantic meaning of language in songs might lead to inappropriate portrayals of women. Movies featuring item songs are often remembered for their whimsical visuals rather than their plot. Foul language is frequently used for fun, but it can also be perceived as a kind of objectification against women. Item songs first emerged in the 1970s. These item numbers are typically associated with party songs in which performers expose their bodies, pierce their eyes, and attempt to eroticize others. The actresses featured in these songs appear as guests, not part of the plot. Women are often portrayed as passive recipients of the male gaze. Sensual representations of women have been accused of being misogynistic and used for sexual enjoyment (Kaur, 2011).

The word "item number" has a dubious meaning and is associated with objectifying women. Indian guys regularly use the phrase 'item' to disparage women in filmy Mumbai slang. Item songs in Hindi cinema are known for their seductive imagery, evocative vocabulary, and explicit content. Item songs often have a lead dancer who only appears in the film for the song's duration. Focusing on these songs allows us to understand better how women are portrayed. The focus is on identifying the erotic economy created by the seamless representation of bodies (Kumari & Srivastava, 2020).

In the second decade of the 2000s, item songs became increasingly action-packed. The performers continue to twist and lean. The act of revealing the female body is crucial to objectifying it. The director's perspective is typically reflected in these item songs, but the choreographers retain control over their movements and visual effects. It highlights the representation of women and gender roles in item music (Khan & Taylor, 2018).

Item songs are remembered for their popularity and catchy lyrics. Misogynistic beliefs can lead to physical and psychological harm to women. Women's acceptance of being labelled as "item girls" can undermine men's perception of women as powerful. Despite significant changes throughout time, item songs continue to represent men as active recipients and women as passive objects (Roy, 2020).

In Hindi cinema, men are often portrayed as strong warriors who protect and rescue female protagonists. Observing performers' seductive gestures appear pleasant and stress-relieving (Kumari & Srivastava, 2020).

Methodology

In this era of digital development, it has become possible for everyone to get the content of their choice; different methods are adopted, and some companies use social media or social networks. Likes are uploaded by their friends or their social media pages in groups, and this content sometimes becomes so viral that it reaches millions and billions of people in a few moments or a few days.

Social media platforms are beneficial in informing consumers to view content of their choice. According to people's desires or the information they give, they are informed about the desired content. In Pakistan, the popularity or use of Indian songs based on the same language has also proved to be a significant reason.

Considering all these things, the researcher used the survey method for this study. A sample size of 150 female respondents (ages 17 to 30 years) has been defined as the participants. A questionnaire comprising 20 closed-ended questions based on the objectives and research questions was prepared and sent online to the defined sample.

The scholar's focus is on the popular item songs of the last few years, trying to find out the younger generation's opinion about these songs and their impact on them. In the past few years, the world's most popular platforms have verified the most famous and well-known songs that have set records and gained immense popularity among the masses. These authoritative platforms have helped us decide on people's likes and dislikes about these songs and their viewing approach and duration.

Results and Findings

Results and findings of the study are shown in the form of tables given as follows;

Table 1

Statement	Very much	Often	Not very often	Rarely	Never
How much do you like watching Hindi item songs?	37 %	15 %	21 %	18 %	9 %

Table 1 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 37 % of the respondents chose "very much", 15 % "often", 21 % "not very often", 18 % "rarely" while 9 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 2

Statement	Always	Often	Not often	Rarely	Never
Do you watch Hindi item songs with your family?	5 %	2 %	9 %	28 %	57

Table 2 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 5 % of the respondents chose "always", only 2 % "often", 9 % "not often", 28 % "rarely" while 57 % of significant majority responded in favor of "never".

Table 3

Statement	Very much	Not very much	Sometimes	Rarely	Not at all
To how extent do you find Hindi item songs have cultural representation?	21 %	38 %	11 %	18 %	12 %

Table 3 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 21 % of the respondents chose "very much", 38 % "not very much", 11 % "sometimes", 18 % "rarely" while 9 % responded in favor of "not at all".

Table 4

Statement	Very often	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often do you use Hindi item songs as celebration songs (in wedding, party, gatherings etc.)?	41 %	27 %	15 %	4 %	13 %

Table 4 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 41 % of the respondents chose "very often", 27 % "not very often", 15 % "sometimes", 4 % "rarely" while 13 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 5

Statement	Very often	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you perform in family functions on Hindi item songs?	29 %	33 %	12 %	7 %	9 %

Table 5 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 29 % of the respondents chose "very often", 33 % "not very often", 12 % "sometimes", 7 % "rarely" while 9 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 6

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you follow exact choreography of item songs for your performance?	20 %	18 %	13 %	17 %	32 %

Table 6 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 20 % of the respondents chose "always", 18 % "not very often", 13 % "sometimes", 17 % "rarely" while 32 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 7

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you admire/follow dressing patterns shown in Hindi item songs?	12 %	17 %	28 %	14 %	41 %

Table 7 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 12 % of the respondents chose "always", 17 % "not very often", 28 % "sometimes", 14 % "rarely" while a significant majority 41 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 8

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you think that item songs portray an independent woman?	19 %	31 %	7 %	13 %	30 %

Table 8 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 19 % of the respondents chose "very much", 31 % "not very much", 7 % "sometimes", 13 % "rarely" while 30 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 9

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you think that item songs are more exciting to be played in weddings, parties etc. than other songs?	47 %	14 %	7 %	20 %	12 %

Table 9 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 47 % of significant majority of the respondents chose "always", 14 % "not very often", 20 % "sometimes", 20 % "rarely", while 30 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 10

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you witness any inspiration form item songs among your friends and fellows?	17 %	36 %	16 %	7 %	24 %

Table 10 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 17 % of the respondents chose "always", 36 % "not very often", 16 % "sometimes", 7 % "rarely" while 24 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 11

Statement	Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor
How do you rate the performance of item girls in these songs?	63 %	9 %	3 %	5 %	20 %

Table 11 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 63 % of the significant majority respondents chose "excellent", 9 % "very good", 3 % "good", 5 % "poor" while 20 % responded in favor of "very poor".

Table 12

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you appreciate the confidence of an item girl to perform among multiple male co performers?	41 %	16 %	19 %	8 %	16 %

Table 12 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 16 % of the respondents chose "always", 16 % "not very often", 19 % "sometimes", 8 % "rarely" while 16 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 13

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you often dance while listening to item songs?	27 %	16 %	13 %	8 %	36 %

Table 13 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 19 % of the respondents chose "always", 16 % "not very often", 13 % "sometimes", 8 % "rarely" while 36 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 14

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you like the beat of item songs?	41 %	12 %	21 %	13 %	13 %

Table 14 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 41 % (a significant number) of the respondents chose "always", 12 % "not very much", 21 % "sometimes", 13 % "rarely" while 13 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 15

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you admire the lyrics of the songs?	14 %	17 %	31 %	20 %	18 %

Table 15 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 14 % of the respondents chose "always", 17 % "not very often", 31 % "sometimes", 20 % "rarely" while 18 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 16

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you think that item songs portray a self-sufficient woman?	39 %	18 %	12 %	9 %	22 %

Table 16 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 39 % of the respondents chose "always", 18 % "not very often", 12 % "sometimes", 9 % "rarely" while 22 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 17

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you inspire to achieve that level of confidence shown in item songs on part of female performer?	7 %	19 %	16 %	23 %	35 %

Table 17 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 7 % of the respondents chose "always", 19 % "not very often", 16 % "sometimes", 23 % "rarely" while 35 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 18

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you feel frustrated by listening to item songs?	12 %	48 %	2 %	3 %	35 %

Table 18 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 12 % of the respondents chose "always", a significant 48 % opted for "not very often", only 2 % "sometimes", 3 % "rarely" while 35 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 19

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you feel lack of confidence after watching item songs?	33 %	19 %	6 %	5 %	37 %

Table 19 show the values of responses in percentages recorded against the given statement. 33 % of the respondents chose "always", 19 % "not very often", only 6 % "sometimes", 5 % "rarely" while considerable 37 % responded in favor of "never".

Table 20

Statement	Always	Not very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you like the overall look of item girls in item songs?	38 %	17 %	19 %	12 %	15 %

Table 20 shows the response values in percentages recorded against the given statement. A considerable 38 % of the respondents chose "always", 17 % "not very often", 19 % "sometimes", 12 % "rarely", while 15 % responded in favor of "never".

Discussion

Everyone appreciates Item Songs for pleasure and fun, but they never realize their display on the screen. It is not about criticizing men or women but about accusing our mindset, which needs to be changed (Sharma & Dandona, 2021). Item songs have taken a critical position within the Hindi film industry. Though initially, it was included for marketing (Puvia & Vaes, 2013), now such songs have become very popular for blockbuster movies. Findings of the current study show that a significant majority of 52 % like watching Hindi item songs, however, a prominent majority of 57% do not prefer to watch it with family. 62% of participants consider Hindi item songs as celebration or party songs. 51% like to use similar choreography for their performance at weddings, party functions, etc.

Additionally, 47% "always" think that item songs are a good choice over other songs to be played in celebrations such as weddings. One aspect of the media, a significant sociocultural component, is cinema. It is thought to be among the most successful visual communication mediums available today (Slatewala, 2019). 32% of the respondents consider item songs to depict cultural aspects, and 57% think that "item girl" portrays a confident woman.

Similarly, 63% of significant respondents find the performance of the "item girls" as "excellent", while 5% and 20% consider it "poor" and "very poor", respectively. 41% also admire her confidence in performing among multiple male performers. 41% like the musical beats of the item songs. 33% reveal that they "always", while 6% "sometimes" feel a lack of confidence after

watching the performance of "Item Girl". The music accompanying the moves is still a significant component of the movie. However, over the years, these songs' compositions have evolved. Actors and actresses these days have highly polished bodies that resemble mannequins when they are in film (Slatewala, 2019). On the other hand, 38% "always" like the overall look of the "item girl", and 19% "sometimes" like her look.

'Item' songs have long been objected to and outraged by women as they feature skimpy outfits, seductive choreography, raunchy lyrics and sensual camera angles. However, they are undeniably popular in a country where most of the audience is male.

Once upon a time, a popular soundtrack was essential for a movie to make good money, which drew people to the cinema. In the age of YouTube and Instagram, songs have become even more profitable.

Conclusion

Item songs have a significant impact on young Pakistani women. As suggested by the results and findings, a defined sample of the study admired the performer's performance, look, and confidence level, i.e., "item girl". It is a significant observation that young women in Pakistan are taking inspiration of confidence from "item songs/item girls". It defines their perception of self when they lack confidence compared with "item girl". Similarly, performing among multiple male co-performers is also taken as a high level of confidence shown on the part of the sole female performer, "item girl". The findings of the study also highlight the perception of female Pakistani viewers who witness Hindi item songs as a representation of cultural aspects of the sub-continent. In addition to that, a considerable majority do not like to watch item songs with family but prefer to take them as a celebration song and want to perform at weddings, parties and other related events. Such values of contrasting views observed in the study suggest that Hindi item songs significantly impact the psychological well-being of young Pakistani female viewers with considerable implications for the perception of self. Since Hindi item songs inspire confidence and independence, young female viewers in Pakistan need to reconsider the concept of independent and confident women. No wonder item song is a successful formula in Indian film. In Indian male colloquialism, 'item' is used to refer to a sexually attractive woman. The influence of these songs has crossed the border. It is now showing its influence among the Pakistani public, and music and dance are part of the culture of India. A religious culture seems very attractive to the new generation in our society. The choice of words in their daily life, posture, clothing, and make-up fashions seem to be directly influenced by the item song.

Uses and Gratification Theory justify that people seek media for enjoyment, knowledge, or social contact. The viewer's intentions and interpretation of media determine its consequences. Media consumption depends on human preferences, which might affect its effect.

Suggestions

Some ways to protect Muslim women from Hindi item numbers while promoting respect and cultural and religious values:

- Promote Media Literacy: Teach women, families, and communities about item music and the difference between entertainment and reality. Encourage critical thought about how such songs represent women.
- Family Discussions: Discuss item music, its effects, and the significance of respecting women in all media with your family.

- Strengthen Religious Education: Teach modesty, respect for women, and gender equality in religious education programs to build moral and ethical values early on.
- Engage with Islamic academics: Work with scholars and community leaders to help manage media influences while upholding Islamic gender respect and modesty.
- Create Safe Spaces for Expression: Allow women to express themselves creatively within their religious and cultural norms, providing healthy alternatives to mainstream media.
- Encourage Faith-Based Entertainment: Promote films, music, and programs that promote modesty, respect, and positive portrayals of women that reflect Islamic values.

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