

A STUDY ON REPRESENTATION OF SPORTS WOMEN IN INDIAN CINEMA

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Abstract

Cinema is meant and believed to entertain, to take the viewer to an entirely different world from the actual one, an entity which affords to make a get away from the daily grind of life. Cinema is a preferred media of mass intake which performs a key role in embellishment of opinions, constructing pix and building up dominant cultural values. This research deals with representations of sports women in mainstream Indian films. It is suitable to study this issue because women are a major of the country's population and hence their portrayal on display screen is important in regulating the progression of already existing stereotypes in the society.

The paper begins with a discussion on the sector of feminist film criticism and how mainstream Hindi Cinema has limited itself to described sketches of womanhood. It also undertakes glimpses from popular women oriented sports movies to examine the process of stereotyping. A section is devoted to discussion on cutting-edge realistic brand of cinema and its knowledge of girls. In end, a debate ensues on whether or not mainstream Hindi cinema has been a hit in portraying Indian sports women of various shades in a society ruled by various means of patriarchal values.

We now see the impact of a second era of younger women growing up with a much higher chance of developing an hobby in sport, and woman sporting celebrities presenting position fashions who are the final space with non-sport celebrities and their male opposite numbers.

The links among women's study and Indian Cinema are obtrusive. After the women's movement, this study has allied with almost each field to provide an alternative perspective of understanding and reality. It also evaluated the stereotyping of the sports women in Indian Cinema.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of media in identification of gender is a trending issue and is been in discussion all over. They have become an integral part to the subject of media research. The reason is the recognition and diversity of media as a source of mass intake and its impact on constructing thoughts and debate. The media scene in India has extended in the recent times as there may be an abundant media choice to the audiences. Media systems have undergone a huge overseas exchange with privatization and globalization. For this reason, it has an effect on how the media scrutinizes and covers a problem; gender being a critical one. Women are one of the primary clients of mass media and as a result the way they are or they will be may be represented in media is a major concern.

Bollywood has tried to take up this topic on several occasions and made some memorable movies on the sportswomen of our country. Many biographical movies like **Mary kom**, **Chak de India**, **Dil bole haddipa**, **Dangal** and many more have always inspire us and thereby making us realize the importance of mankind and value of living.

In this research, there has been an attempt to examine the relationship between the representation of sports women and popular Hindi cinema. Cinema in India is in itself a various strand of expression incorporating mainstream cinema, that engages with social problems, middle cinema and regional language cinema. The explorations in this research are constrained to mainstream Hindi cinema popularly known as Bollywood.

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Indian women have been slowly but steadily building their reputation as skilled sportsperson on the national and international platform and bringing medals to our country. The interest in films taken with the aid of feminists stems from concern of the under-representation and misrepresentation of women in Indian cinema. The feminist ask to cinema some pertinent questions like how women are represented, importance of women and their role played, how their problems are dealt with in cinema, what feminism implies to movie-makers.

Certain underlying aspects of a popular medium can only be brought to surface by criticism, scrutiny and introspection and feminists have attempted to do it with cinema as well as with other fields of study and practice.

Leading Sports Women's Caricature

Anything that men can do, women can do higher. Be it working for a living or gambling a game, ladies can do higher. There are such a lot of living examples of women sportspersons who stimulated our Bollywood movies. Those films not only aspires ladies to take sports activities, however also give thought to men folk as well. Even though there exists a frame of feminist movie making in Hindi cinema, the female lead of Hindi films has extra or much less performed described roles. Similarly, it applies to the representation of women in sports in Indian Cinema. Women in sports are defined differently. It has been argued with reference to literary women that there is a basic contradiction in the idea of women in sports. She is required to be both heroic and exemplary in some way. Women in sports have been in the crossroads of changes. Men have their own biases and tendency towards women. For them women and athlete are opposite and participation in sports is against the gender.

Aim of the project

The aim of the project is to study the space given to sports women in Indian cinema. To understand the impact of such characters on the general audience. To understand the impact of this kind of representation on the upcoming sports women.

Objectives

- Portrayal of sports women in Indian cinema.
- To understand how this cinema motivates the women to follow their dreams and passion.
- Understanding the impact of such cinema on the general audience.

Hypothesis: The main purpose of this discussion is to look deep into the minds of the population to understand, what they think about the representation, portrayal, impact of sports women in Indian cinema. Different people have different attitude towards the same situation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leading up to the early 2000s, feminist researchers identified numerous representational practices through which the sports media ignored trivialized and sexualized sportswomen. At that time, a distillation of the research into a set of six unwritten media 'rules' concluded that, at best, the traditional media approached women's sport ambivalently within an either or discourse of pretty or powerful that constructed femininity and athleticism as incompatible

According to **Jayne Caudwell** in her research she found "sport film is taken as a social and cultural space where women's bodies are made publicly in/visible. Two films—*Girl fight* and *Bend it Like Beckham*—provide the focus for critical discussion. Moreover, a queer-feminist analysis explores the links between participation in boxing and football, and women's sexuality as represented in the films. Sexualities are considered in a critique of the erasure of the lesbian sport [film] star. Sexual subjectivity is also discussed in relation to the heterosexual heroic and to patriarchy. In this way she interrogate heterosexuality. She also consider links between ethnicity, women's bodies, and sexuality. In the final instance, she show that the films work to reproduce heterosexual hegemony and depict heteronormative assimilation."

In the movie *bend it like Beckham* Mary Ann Chacko observes "Bend It Like Beckham revolves around a middle-class, Indo-British, Sikh girl and her struggle to beat the odds to play professional football. Analyzing the film using postcolonial theories of diaspora helps reveal the limitations of an understanding of "culture" as homogenous and static. Implications for multicultural classrooms are discussed."

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Katherina **lindner** in her paper on - **Female athleticism on the cinema screen** says that “Situating in relation to critical feminist concerns about sport and cinema, this article presents a survey of depictions of female athleticism in contemporary film. With particular focus on the potentially “troubling” figure of the female athlete within the hetero-normative context of cinematic representation, it explores the ways in which gendered identities are reconstituted within and through depictions of female athleticism. The overview is based on a comparative content analysis of male and female sports films that accounts for patterns with regard to genre, type of athletic activity pursued, and athletic context, as well as race, class, age, and sexuality of athletic protagonists. The outcomes of this study suggest that while normative notions of gender (as well as race, class, and sexuality) are generally reinforced, cinematic depictions of female athleticism open up possibilities for articulations of bodily and narrative agency and present a challenge to common-sense understandings of the gendered body, what it looks like, and what it is capable of.”

According to **Dawn heniken**, he says “While a wide range of research documents how media continue to devalue female athletes, negatively affecting female body image and perceptions of female athletic ability, new media technologies are allowing athletes to potentially challenge these representations. This essay focuses on @SoccerGrlProbs, the Twitter handle of an anonymous group of soccer players, and their interaction with over 180,000 followers. Examining how @SoccerGrlProbs constructs female athletic identity, it considers how this identity is taken up by girls and young women in their own self-constructions as athletes. It argues that @SoccerGrlProbs enables young female athletes to negotiate the conflicting demands of emphasized femininity and athleticism by inspiring self-constructions that allow them to claim athletic “somebodiness” while simultaneously subverting sports discourses emphasizing self-mastery and female athletes' (hetero) sexual attractiveness.”

The concept of sports films in popular Hindi cinema underwent a tremendous transformation in the last decade and a half, thanks to *Lagaan* (2002) and *Chak De! India*(2007). According to *Hindustan Times- Cheers for Chak De! India*, which may be predictable but compels you to root for a team of losers whom only an earth-angel can save from disastrous defeat. Written by Jaideep Saini and directed by Shimit Amin, this inspirational effort echoes Hollywood's *Hardball*, *The Replacements*, and *Escape to Victory* whose influence has already been evidenced in *Lagaan*.

I doubt there is any Indian who won't say, *Chak De! India* as soon as you utter the phrase, "sports films". Sure, the name Shah Rukh Khan and some of the characters spring to memory before the syllables hockey come to mind. A quote from *moviefone's* blog (<http://blog.moviefone.com>), applies here more than ever - "What is it about portraying coaches under pressure that brings out the best in actors?" That besides, *Chak De! Bring's* together everything that a sport means to a player. And of course, it is a film that makes my 9-year old "see" hockey instead of just knowing a line in social science, which goes, "India's national game is hockey."

One among such inspirational movies was *Dangal*, starring Amir Khan, Fatima Sana Saikh, Sanya Malhotra which is a biography on the struggle of a female wrestler. The movie very well depicted the struggle to achieve the goals. In spite of being from a rural area with not much support the girl had achieved what she aimed for. The film inspires new India to focus on success. While the government is striving hard to save the girl child this film effectively reiterates the need to treat girls at par with boys. A country where most of the population lives in rural areas, it becomes very difficult for girls to choose a profession dominated by male. Females are no less than man and given opportunity can excel in any field. The film shows the true rural mentality. *Dangal* is far more than just a movie- it can be termed as a call for change in the Indian society towards the female gender.

An Olympic medal saw Sakshi Malik become the logo ambassador for the woman baby marketing campaign in Haryana where sex ratio crossed 900 women to a thousand boys for the first time in a decade. Similarly, put up-*Dangal* a change on the floor can be visible with trends including parents turning into aware about the game and nurturing dreams in their daughters achieving what the Phogat sisters controlled. In Jammu, 37-year-old Ritika Salathia, the primary girl to represent Jammu & Kashmir in wrestling, has visible a surge inside the hobby in wrestling after *Dangal* among women and has been working overtime in her training camp.

The manner, wherein Hindi movies have managed to ring a bell between messaging and amusement without trading the essentials of the universe that it operates within, indicates that the time is ripe for a biopic of Sania Mirza, Sakshi Malik, Vijender Singh and P. Gopichand to call some. The issues undertaken by using young aspirants and the hardships of Ranji players as mentioned in Akash Chopra's book suddenly or the tales in Shamyas Dasgupta's *Bhiwani Junction- The Untold tale of Boxing in India* that display how younger boys liable to selecting a lifestyles of crime rather opted for boxing thanks to Vijender Singh's bronze medal in Beijing Olympics or the singular tale of Tajamul Islam, an 8-yr-antique female from the rugged village in terror inflicted Bandipora district in J&k, who won the gold medal at the sector Kickboxing Championship in the sub-junior category are high-quality movies waiting to be made.

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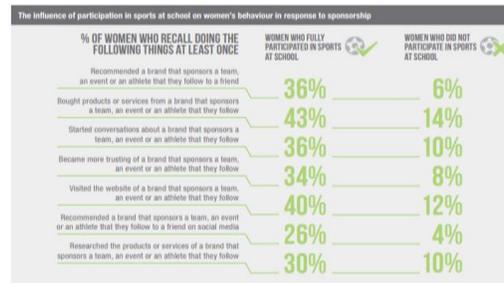
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Change in scenario

How crucial the participation of women in sports? In school it has been in changing their level of interest as sports fanatics and the probabilities of them taking element in recreation of their adult existence. Foundational studies in 2014 shows that this variation in participation tiers has had a profound impact on how sponsorship adjustments girls behavior – with girls who completely participated in sport at college 3 to 6 times more likely to have ultimately proven “fan behavior” referring to the manufacturers concerned in game sponsorship.

They additionally requested both men and women to estimate their annual spend in specific aspects of being a sports spectator (buying tickets and products) and sports activities player (garb and equipment). At the same time as men nevertheless out spend girls in preferred, it's far important that the space is narrowest with women elderly 30 to forty nine, who sincerely exceed

Men's averages spend level on clothing for game across these countries. Money spent via them on the relaxation in their family's carrying sports might be an crucial factor right here.



A chief driver of this alteration is girls participation in recreation both as young and adults. Taking component in game drives lifestyles-lengthy hobby, but it additionally drives engagement with the manufacturers associated with sport and the extent of behavior trade sponsors can anticipate encouraging women. Understanding the triggers and boundaries to participation, and how those vary for men and women, is therefore one of the future keys to fulfillment inside the sports activities advertising industry.

RESEARCH APPROACH

Methodology

A strong methodology is the backbone of the research. It provides the ground to the research therefore the topic should also be selective. This researcher deals with qualitative approach with the help of quantitative analysis to find out in depth, how does it affect the psychology, thought and family life of youth?

The researcher uses of Survey method. The study would be conducted on 40-50 individuals (random)

Research Problem: This paper analyses the portrayal and impact of sports women in Indian cinema. Their perspective of public on their representation in Indian cinemas. The data collected will be analyzed on the opinions of the respondents based on parameters set. Considering findings of past, review of literature, opinion of people it will be analyzed differently. This research will help to know the positive or negative responses on sports women and their exposure in this field.

Research Design: According to Research Methodology, descriptive research as the name suggest describes more and more information about the research problem which is to understand the impact and representation of sports women in Indian cinema. Three main purposes of research are to describe, explain, and validate findings of effect, portrayal on sports women.

Data collection : Data collection for this research paper will include both primary data collection and secondary data collection. Primary data collection will be done by questionnaire, whereas secondary data collection is getting information related to research topic through researches already done by other researcher and utilizing the data for our own research objective.

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Content Analysis

The content of the Indian cinema representing sports women will be done in two time frames. The 70's-90's and 90's to the present. The evolution of representation of sports women in Indian cinema though the 70's to the present will be analysed.

Data analysis

Data analysis is the base to find the true and clear conclusion. The data will be analysed through frequencies, graphs and percentages.

Gender of respondents

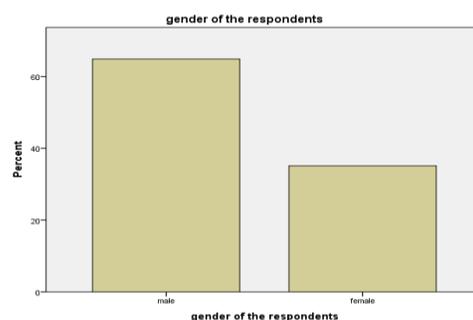
Statistics

Gender of the respondents

Valid	40
Missing	0

Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	24	60	60	60
Female	16	40	40	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	



Analysis: To understand the gender perception on representation and impact of sports women in Indian cinema. Equal number of male and female responses is collected to understand the difference in the behaviour and opinion they have towards sports women. The male respondents are almost upto 60% while the female respondents have come upto 40%.

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Have you watched any Indian Movie based on a sports person?

Valid	40
Missing	0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	38	95	95	95
may be	2	5	5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	



Analysis: To understand the percentage of population that has seen any Indian movie based on sports person. Out of the total population 95% of the population and watched such movie indicating that they like such movies. Out of the total population 5% are not sure that they have watched any such movie.

Do you like women oriented sports movies (Indian movies)?

Valid	40
Missing	0

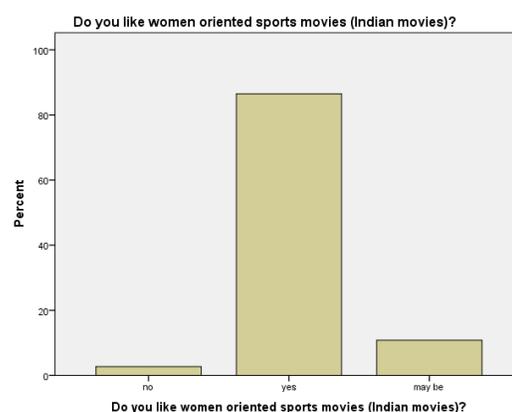
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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	1	2.5	2.5	2.5
Yes	35	87.5	87.5	90
may be	4	10	10	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	



Analysis: Of the total responses received, there are none who has not responded to this question. According to the data collected, Almost 87% of the population has watched a women oriented sports movie—which indicates a good percentage of them supporting such movies. According to the data collected, 3% has never watched a women oriented sports movie which is quite less in percentage. Also the data received says that there are 10% people who are not sure that they have watched any such movie.

What impact do you think sports women have on people?

Valid	40
Missing	0

What impact do you think sports women have on people ?

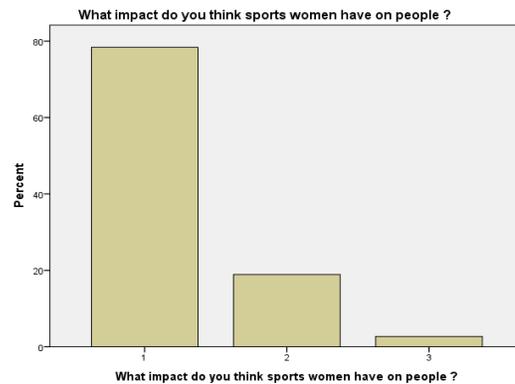
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	30	75	75	75
2	8	20	20	95
3	2	5	5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

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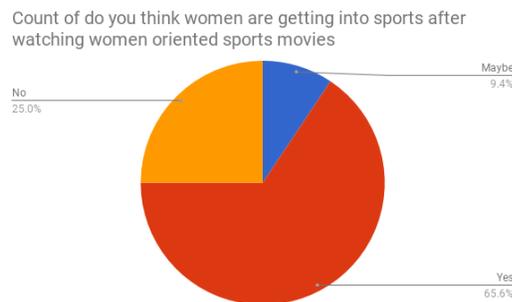
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Analysis: To understand the kind of impact the people have from such movies. This is most important to know as it is the audience you judges and motivates the making of such movies. According to the data received, 75% of the population thinks that such movies have always been inspirational for the spectators. Hence they have a positive impact. The data also show that, 20% of the population thinks that such movies have both a positive and negative impact. The rest 5% thinks that these movies have no impact on the population. Hence it is neither positive nor negative.



Analysis: To know if women are getting an impact to join sports after watching such inspirational movies. The results show that 65% of people think it inspires women to join sports and 25% think it doesn't really effect. And 10% people say it may or may not have an impact.

If positive, are these movies really inspirational?

Valid	40
Missing	0

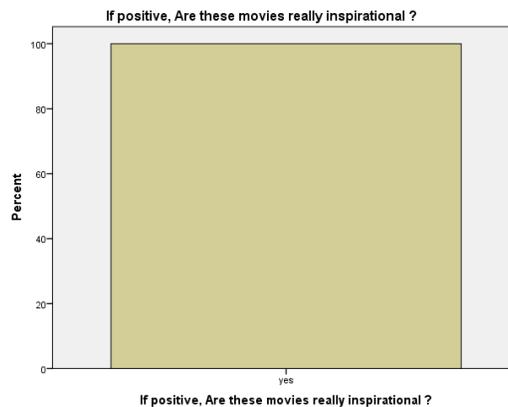
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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	40	100.0	100.0	100.0



Analysis: To understand the extent of positive impact on the population. To know if such movies are really inspirational. According to the data collected, there is a 100% positive result from the population. Hence proving that these movies really inspiring.

Do you think equal importance is given to men and women sports characters in the movies?

Valid	40
Missing	0

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
no	13	32.5	32.5	32.5
yes	27	67.5	67.5	100.0
Total	40	100.0	100.0	

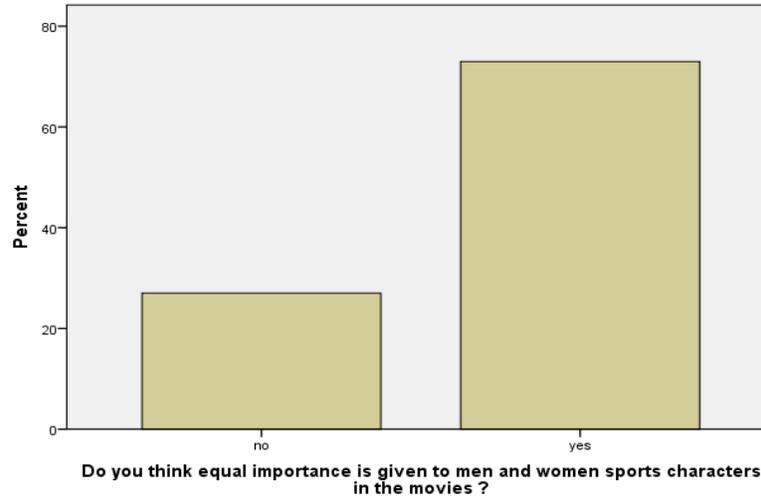
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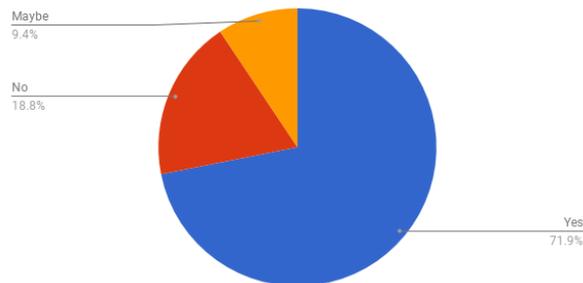
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Do you think equal importance is given to men and women sports characters in the movies ?



Analysis: To understand the level of importance given to Indian sports women in comparison to men. According to the data collected, 73% population thinks that equal importance is given to both men and women sports characters in Indian cinema. Whereas the rest 27% thinks that equal importance is not given to these characters.

Are women oriented movies breaking the stereotypical love stories in bollywood.



Analysis: To know if the women oriented sports movies are breaking the stereotypical love stories of the Bollywood industry. The data collected shows that 71.9% people think that these movies are taking up and are breaking the stereotype form of love stories and creating a new look . whereas 9.4% people think they may or may not effect and 18.8% people think that these movies doesn't affect the love stories of Bollywood.

Do you think there should be more women coming out in the sports field to break the stereotypes?

Valid	39
Missing	1

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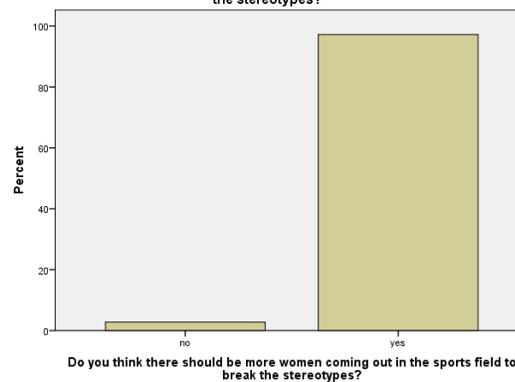
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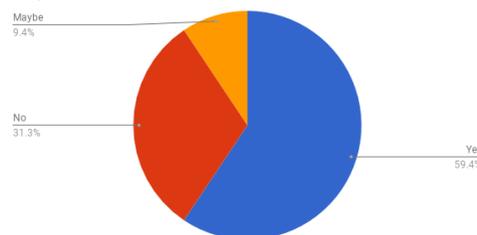
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	2	5	5	5
Valid Yes	37	92.5	92.5	100.0
Total	39	97.5	97.5	
Missing System	1	2.5		
Total	40	100.0		

Do you think there should be more women coming out in the sports field to break the stereotypes?



Analysis: To understand the outcome of such movies in the industry. According to the Data collected, 97% of the population thinks that there should be more sports women coming out to break the stereotypes. Hence these movies are really inspirational.

Do you feel women oriented sports movies will help women empowerment.



Analysis: To know if women empowerment could be effected by women inspirational movies.

According to the data collected around 60 % of people think that these movies will create an impact and help in women empowerment and growth. Whereas 10% think they may or may not help and 30% think they are just for entertainment and they won't help in women empowerment.

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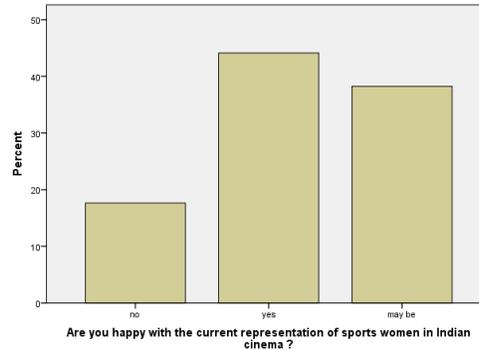
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Are you happy with the current representation of sports women in Indian cinema?

Valid	37
Missing	3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	8	20	20
	Yes	15	37.5	57.5
	may be	14	35	92.5
	Total	37	92.5	100.0
Missing	System	3	7.5	
Total	40	100.0		

Are you happy with the current representation of sports women in Indian cinema ?



Analysis: To understand the effect of representation of sports women in Indian cinema. According to the data collected, 44% of the population is happy with the current representation of sports women in Indian cinema. Which doesn't come upto a majority also. Whereas, 17% of the population is not happy with the portrayal of sports women. And, almost 38% population is not sure if they are happy or not with the current representation of sports women in Indian cinema.

Is women empowerment important for progress?

Valid	37
Missing	3

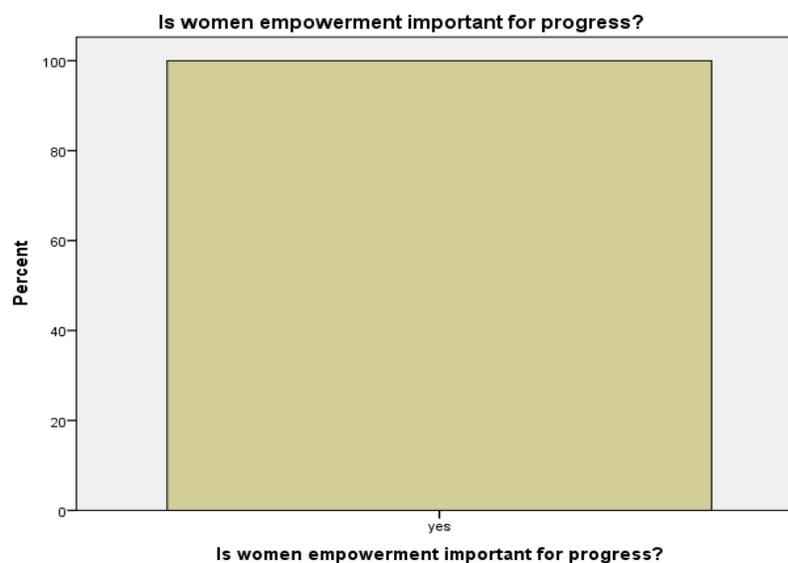
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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	37	92.5	100.0	100.0
Missing System	3	7.5		
Total	40	100.0		



Analysis: To understand where women stand in terms of progress and that their empowerment is necessary for progress. Out of the total responses received, three frequencies are missing that means three of them have not answered the above question. According to the data collected and responses received, 100% of them think that women empowerment is important for progress.

Do you think that behind every successful woman there is a man?

Valid	37
Missing	3

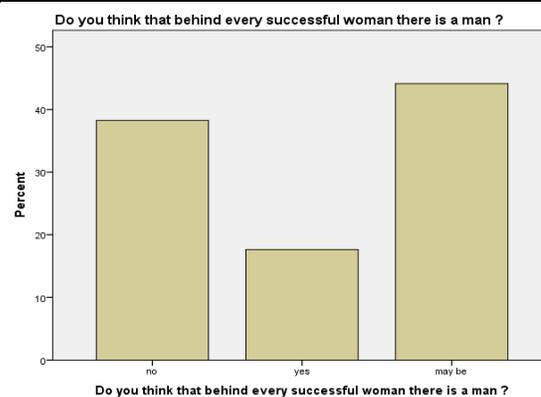
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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	13	32.5	32.5
	Yes	7	17.5	50
	may be	17	42.5	100.0
	Total	37	92.5	100.0
Missing	System	3	7.5	
Total		40	100.0	



Analysis: To understand the reason or motivation behind successful women. According to the data collected, a majority of 42.5% thinks that there might be a man behind every successful woman. Whereas 32.5% of the population thinks that there is no need of a man for a woman to be successful. Also, 17.5% of the population thinks that there is a man always supporting a woman to achieve success.

CONCLUSION

Justifying the objectives:

The result of research conducted on “Representation of sportswomen in Indian cinema”, keeping the respondents for the gender i.e. male and female while filling the online questionnaire.

The result stated that all the respondents watch movies based on sports and also particularly on sports women. 91% of them say that they have watched movies based on sportswomen which comes up to a majority followed by only 9% who may or may not watch such movies. A large number of respondents have reacted in a positive way to the questions. Almost 78% of the population have given a positive impact on sportswomen oriented movies. Hence a conclusion that people are really motivated and inspired by such movies. Thereby giving us major reasons to promote such movies more and more.

When asked about such women coming out more in the field of sports and breaking the stereotypes, a majority of them i.e.; 97% of them said yes—again depicting a positive response on such movies.

About 73% of the population feels that equal importance is given to both men and women sports characters in India. The rest 27% might not feel the same because of various reasons like

Less popularity when compared to male sport stars, endorsements, less appearance in advertisements, living conditions, low recognition and many other reasons.

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Talking about the representation of sports women in Indian cinema, a majority of them i.e.; 44.1% feels that they are happy with the current representation of sports women in Indian cinema. But the percentage doesn't come up to a great extent as we have 38% of them who are not sure if they are portrayed in a good way or not. But overall after the research, we can conclude that people are happy about such movies and they want to see more of it in Indian Cinema. Also such movies are inspiring a lot of women from the rural and urban areas to take up sports as their profession. A huge change can be seen in the rate of women taking up sports as their career which is appreciating and important for the progress of our country.

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