



Expression of Women's Physical Desires via Electronic and Digital Media in Indian Society

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Introduction

Indian culture has played a significant role in the history of sex. As per the Vedic texts, there are four goals in the Hindu way of life - Kama (sensual and aesthetic pleasures); Artha (success); Dharma (ethics) and Moksha (enlightenment). It is argued that India pioneered the use of sexual education through art and literature since times immemorial. India has to its credit the first literature that treated sexual intercourse as science – Kamasutra [1]. It is considered the primary Sanskrit work on human sexuality and one of the first systematic studies of human sexual behavior in world literature. It consists of one thousand two hundred and fifty slokas or verses, and are divided into parts, parts into chapters, and chapters into paragraphs. The major parts are On Sexual Union; About Acquisition of a Wife; About a Wife; On the Means of Attracting Others to One's Self etc.

The Kamasutra (aphorism of love)- a classic work by Vatsyayan (1st-6th century), Ratirrahsya [2] by Kokkoka (11th-12th century) and the third volume of Tirukkural [3] (Tamil) by Thiruvalluvar, The Ananga Ranga [4] by Kalyana Malla (15th-16th century) are some of the scriptures which explicitly outline the importance of sex in life. They teach how to enjoy sex without creating any social or emotional boundaries. The influence of the Indian philosophy is reflected in the sculptures in the temples. Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh); Sun Temple, Konark (Odisha); Osian (Rajasthan); Virupaksha, Hampi (Karnataka); Kailasa Temple, Ellora (Maharashtra) are some of the ancient temples accepting the significance of sex. The philosophers assert that the depiction of Indian sex-symbolism is 'sacramental' in its resemblance to the union of the individual soul with the universal spirit. The present short article is an attempt to show the journey of the Indian entertainment industry vis-à-vis manifestation of the physical desires of women.

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Indian Cinema and Expression of Women's Desires

On the lines sketched by the classic literature, the Hindi movies have with time moved from focusing on men as protagonists to women-centric subjects. The Indian entertainment industry had made attempts like this even before the coming of the digital platforms. Movies like Rihae (1988), Fire (1998), Astitva (2000), Girlfriend (2004), Parched (2015), Lipstick Under My Burkha (2016), Veere Di Wedding (2018), Manmarziyaan (2018) etc. have delved into a woman's sexuality and showcased women's physical desires. Astitva made in Hindi and Marathi was a movie ahead of its time where a married woman developed a relationship with her music teacher. revealed the callous double standards by which society judges women, and by 'society'. It shows how a husband can have many extra-marital affairs; but he expects her to be completely faithful to him. It shows a husband who is away most of the time, and sometimes when he returns, he's in no 'mood' to have sex. These Hindi movies basically emphasize that women too have physical urges and it is absolutely natural to be expressive about these urges. They equally have a right to enjoy sex and seek pleasure on their own or from their partners. Memories of A Machine (2016) Malayalam short film is another example. All these movies assert the right to sexual pleasure of woman, irrespective of being married; aged; in a relationship; gender and so on.

Open Manifestation of Women's Desires on OTT Platforms in India

There is a dynamic relationship between women and technology. The women and technology have always influenced each other. Of late, the various OTT platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, ALT Balaji, etc. have been non-apologetic in showing the physical



desires of women. The last few years have witnessed the streaming of web series or movies portraying the strong physical urges of the women. Prior to OTT, it was considered an absolute taboo in the Indian society, except few cases and remained latent. Lust Stories, Four More Shots Please!, Dolly Kitty aur Woh Chamakte Sitare, The Married Woman, Rasbhari, Ajeeb Daastaans are a few series streaming on these platforms which have given true expression to women's latent physical desires. It is an opportune time to rediscover oneself in terms of sexuality to attain individual freedom and reinvest the social issues related to sexuality.

Right of a Woman to Sexual Pleasure

The movie 'Lust Stories' portrays four different stories of women from different backgrounds. It deals with how a newly married woman not sexually satisfied by her husband tries a sex toy for pleasure; how a rich man uses his maid only for sexual pleasure; how a married woman has a long-term extra-marital affair with her husband's friend and how a lonely married woman got attracted to her young student. Thus, women at all stages of life have sexual urges, which need to be respected by their partners and the society. They cannot be judged for natural desires.

Right to choose Sexual Orientation

AltBalaji and ZEE5's latest web series - 'The Married Woman' is based on the beautiful theme of 'love-beyond-gender'. The series is the adaptation of the book A Married Woman by Manju Kapur. The series portrays the love chemistry between a widow and a married woman.

Conclusion

India has gifted the art and science of expressing physical desires to the world. It is evident that transformation is taking place with regard to depiction of the potent desires of women on Television, movies and OTT. The digital platforms have played an important role in bringing it out in the open and allowing them to express it. It is an opportune time to rediscover ourselves in terms of sexuality to attain individual freedom and reinvest our energy social issues related to sexuality. It is hoped that the taboos around these issues are broken soon and the women get empowered to be themselves.

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