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# STEREOTYPING INDIAN WOMEN THROUGH INDIAN DIASPORA REPRESENTED IN INDIAN HINDI CINEMA

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## Abstract

The portrayal of women in Indian cinema has also been a matter of enquiry. The paper explores and evaluates the lengths and depths of stereotyping of Indian Women of Indian diaspora through some of the popular post-liberalization movies. The paper reiterates the fact that any discussion on cultural representation leads to the women of it and the virtues, behavior expected from them, and how are they treated. The Indian transnational cinema in the transiting India – aspires for modernity but wants to keep their women in tradition and that too through them only. The paper uses qualitative research and thematic analyses method of the movies of post 90's with diasporic family in central.

**Key Words** – Diaspora, portrayal of women, Representation, transnational cinema.

## Introduction

'I know the value of an *Indian* girl's honour' is one of the iconic dialogues of the cult favorite 90s pop-culture movie *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge* (1995). To the immigrant father that has raised his daughter across seven seas, this is a sigh of relief- actual portrayal of a true Indian bride-to-be. Cut to *Cocktail* (2012), where the love of a man is won over by the inherent 'Indian-ness' of the protagonist while the immigrant side-kick, in her western attributes and lifestyle is depicted as someone to have 'fun' with.

In both the cases and many such, the diasporic lens creates the distinction on how women behave and are ought to behave on the basis of their ethnicity. It demarcates a line of what is acceptable and what is not- which is mostly got to do upholding the Indian woman who has saved her modesty till marriage for her husband- and the western 'type' woman, (again a stereotype) a woman of easy virtues who is definitely not to be brought home. Though this ideology makes the film a blockbuster at the Box Office and is loved by audiences in India and among Indian living abroad, it portrays an image that could not be farther from the truth. There is no yardstick in the world that can determine the virtue of women with such stereotypes in any of the culture.

Such larger than life portrayal in cinema is like a double edged sword. It establishes a certain image of Indian women on western audience and makes things a mess for those Indian women living there. It sets this high bar of standards for the immigrant Indian woman, no nonconformities and no shortcoming. It leaves no room for individual's growth or unconventional choices. These so-called high standards of 'honour', make them more prone to psychological complexities. The second generation immigrants are finding it really difficult to match their 'represented' homeland with the culture clad ladies to the real one with westernized ones.

## Objective

The paper explores and accesses the lengths and depths of stereotyping Indian Women through these post-liberalization movies. It reiterates the fact that any discussion on cultural representation leads to the women of it and the virtues, behavior expected from them, and how they are treated. On the basis of the hypothesis that the Indian transnational cinema in the transiting India – aspires for modernity but wants to keep their women in tradition, very much within the Lakshman Rekha from the Ramayan, the paper uses qualitative research method and does thematic analysis of some popular films released in the span of two