

**An Analysis of the Representation of Women in Bangladeshi Cinema:
Exploring the Perpetuation of Stereotypes and Its Impact on Society**



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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.



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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussion.

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Dedication

This thesis is wholeheartedly dedicated to my parents for their boundless support and encouragement throughout my whole journey of MA, for motivating me when I thought of giving up. I also dedicated this work to my elder brother who is 5633 miles away from me for his unconditional support and love, for inspiring me to reach my goal.

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Abstract

Gender stereotyping focuses on the practice of assigning certain qualities, responsibilities, and expectations to someone based on their gender. The concept of stereotyping might be harmful for society, especially for women. This study presents the representation of women in Bangladeshi cinema and explores the perpetuation of stereotypical depictions of women and impact on society. This study follows a qualitative approach to find out the result based on the content analysis of three popular Bangladeshi cinemas that were released between 2015- 2022 : *Chuye Dile Mon* (2015), *Innocent Love* (2017), and *Hawa* (2022). Additionally, it is important to investigate whether women are being used to give visual pleasure to the audience or whether they are suppressed by the male characters that Laura Mulvey analyzes in “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema.” Her analysis of this particular area helps to understand the role of women in cinema as well as the depiction of their characters. Another analysis that Richard Dyer views as “Stereotyping” highlights the connection between beauty and sexuality on the screen. Stuart Hall’s “Representation” theory helps to focus on the domestication of women on the silver screen. This study points out that the portrayal of women in Bangladeshi cinema usually justifies the traditional domestic role of women by presenting them as housewives, dependents, and emotional characters. This type of portrayal dominates the agency of women to support the norms of the patriarchy. This study argues that female characters are often objectified and sexualized in contemporary cinema. This study has significance for filmmakers, actresses, audiences, and scholars who are working to develop women’s empowerment.

Keywords: *Cinema, stereotype, pleasure, sexuality, agency, domestication.*

Chapter One

Introduction

Cinema is a powerful cultural mirror that reflects the norms, beliefs, values, and traditions of a particular society. In the realm of societal norms in Bangladesh, the representation of women in cinema has always been a divisive topic. In Bangladesh, half of the overall population is women. Women are actually one of Bangladesh's key assets. The concept of gender representation focusing on women is widely discussed in every aspect of the media. The representation of women indicates the way women are being presented on the silver screen. Media and cinema work as reflectors of society as they highlight the common phenomena of contemporary times. The various sections of Bangladeshi media work efficiently to portray the role of women and their activities. Among all the sections of media, cinema has an important role in representing the characterization of women. The portrayal of women in Bangladeshi cinema has always been a confusing concept. The majority of media consumers are more likely to accept the ideas that they see on the silver screen. So it is a great concern to identify the way women are represented in cinema. Cinema visualizes contemporary aspects of human life and society on the silver screen. The authority associated with cinema is investing a lot of time and money to present the incidents or ideologies of contemporary society through the cinema to reach out to the audience. Cinemas can be considered a medium for reflecting messages to the audience. Sometimes audiences consider cinema to be a medium for getting messages, but the cinema industry considers it a business or source of income. Basically, cinema visualizes both real and fake stories at the same time. Cinema relies on contemporary society to tell a good story.

Among all the phenomena of cinema, the issue of gender is the major one. The representation of gender is especially focused on the portrayal of women. The representation of women in cinema is related to society, beliefs, norms, and religion as they carry various characters in various concepts. The visualization of women in cinema actually portrays their image towards society. Mostly, authority is visualizing them partially. In cinema, women are seen to play unfair roles in a disrespectful way that actually oppresses their self-worth. In the reign of capitalist society, women are just a subject of sexuality. “In cinemas, men are mostly seen fully dressed, whereas women are portrayed in appealing clothes or seminude” (Awasthi, 2017). These kinds of depictions present women as more sexual objects than men. Bangladeshi society depends on patriarchy. In patriarchal society, women don’t get enough chances to nourish their character and self-worth. Women are always portrayed as inferior characters, both mentally and physically. In the era of capitalism, the concept of portraying women in an obsessive manner and promoting sexuality has become a normal phenomenon. “In the media, it is visible that men are taking important decisions such as property, technology, and safety, while women are seen to be taking decisions related to households” (Khaneja, 2016). Depicting women in an attractive way is a kind of business strategy to catch the attention of media consumers. Negative things are being normalized easily by getting full priority from the authority as well as the audience. “Women are the center of attraction for consumers” (Pandey & Kataria, 2014). Cinema doesn’t highlight the real issues facing women in reality. In cinema, women don’t always get the chance to play active roles; they are always bound by passive roles. The role of women in cinema is limited by authority. They are bound by some specific inferior role that requires them to depend on others for everything.

Three selected cinemas, *Hawa*, *Chuye Dile Mon*, and *Innocent Love* have some influential female characters who play the roles of heroine, supporting actress, and so on. All the major female characters in cinema have been dominated by male characters. They have been seen to

as playing the role of entertainers. Their main activity in the cinema is to give visual pleasure to the audience. Their attractive appearance and dance movements easily catch the attention of the audience. Though the Bangladeshi cinema industry has changed a lot with the passage of time, the characterization of women still follows conventional norms. The quality of women as heroines is still measured by their beauty. “The beauty, sexual appeal, and appearance of women attract the consumer” (Kumar, 2017). The three films selected for this study show that women can get a proper role on the screen based on their beauty. The world of the silver screen is not that colorful for women in the way it is presented by the cinema industry.

Considering aspects of contemporary society, it is important to focus on the representation of women in cinema. This study focuses on the stereotyping of women in cinema. This concept has a great impact on society almost everywhere in the world. The cinema industry in Bangladesh is confused about the role of women. Bangladeshi cinema is presenting women in a negative way, and society is normalizing the concept so easily. Women are the victims of the decisions of men. Women do not have the chance to be represented in a righteous, respectful way on the silver screen. The silver screen visualizes women in a way that they do not deserve. This study focuses on the development of the characterization of women in Bangladeshi cinema. The stereotyping representation of women is misleading society as well as ruining women’s self-worth.

1.1. Background of study

Cinema is a potential medium that works as an eyelet for society. Usually, a country, society, cultural groups, and contemporary phenomena get highlighted by cinema. Cinema can be considered the voice of society. More specifically, cinema is made to offer pleasure to consumers. In a world bounded by the imbalance of sexuality, rejoicing in espying has been separated into parts, such as males as active participants and females as passive participants.

Laura Mulvey shows that “women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to – be looked- at ness” (Mirzoeff, 2001). Basically, women are presented as compliant, smite, or the compendium of elegance. The objectification of women has become a common phenomenon in both cinema and reality. Women are considered obsessive domestic creatures with no self-worth whereas men are seen as the saviors of women. The depiction of women in cinema indicates that they are vulnerable and product to sell. These types of representations motivate women to believe that they are weak, dependent, and submissive. “It has a significant influence on the behavior of men to comprehend that women are sheer sexual objects” (Gulati, 2014). Cinema highlights femininity with charm and amplitude. In reality, women cannot acquire this unrealistic conception of perfection. As a result, the essence of dissatisfaction gets spread between consumers and actors- actresses. Cinema maker highlights the domestic image of women rather than their professional image. The construction of female characters often delivers the concept of low self esteem. In the film, *Hawa*, Gulti is seen as a naive and silent character with a hidden plan to take revenge. Though she has presented as a rebellious character, her appearance, movement are appealing to the audience. Two other characters in *Chuye Dile Mon* and *Innocent Love* simply portray the concept of sexualization or visual pleasure. Audiences and actors in cinemas are more likely to get pleasure from stories of cinema through the appealing acting of women. Women are bounded by objectification that diminishes their self-worth in cinema.

Studies on the representation of women in Bangladeshi cinema have been conducted by many researchers, but nobody really focuses on the reasons behind the sexualization of women or the types of stereotyping depiction in the name of entertainment. Most of the previous studies have focused on the vulnerability of women based on their weaknesses. They focus on the superiority of patriarchy. The current study focuses on the beautification and sexualization of

women as well as stereotypical portrayals of women. This study also focuses on the silence of women, who are making sexuality an object or a product to sell in the market.

1.2. Problem Statement

Bangladeshi media has various ways to deliver messages to consumers through media pieces. The cinema industry is one of those sectors that create various types of entertainment for audiences. Though cinema always tries to depict the issues or stories of contemporary society, it is always bound by the issue of the characterization of women. Bangladeshi cinema cannot depict the role of women on the silver screen properly. The cinema industry always depicts women in a deceiving way that often misleads society. “The cinema of Bangladesh is dependent on patriarchal supremacy, which depicts women in a bad light while portraying men in positions of superiority” (Sultana & Lazim, 2011). Women get dominated both in public and private places. The message authority is giving through cinema is actually ruining the morality of society. Sometimes the main cover of the cinema focuses on the depiction of women in appealing attire to catch the attention of women. By promoting women as objects, cinemas are provoking society to treat them according to the cinema. In cinema, women are mostly seen serving men to make them happy.

The main three female characters of the films: *Chuye Dile Mon*, *Hawa*, and *Innocent love*, get a significant role based on their beauty, bodies, and popularity. All of them have been seen to dominate their male encounter parts. Their silence makes them sufferers as well as sexual objects. This kind of depiction of women in cinema brings down women’s self-worth. From this concern, it is necessary to examine the reasons for the sexualization of women that ruin their confidence, qualities, and so on.

1.3. Objectives of the study

The depiction of women in cinema is quite deceiving. Not all the women get the same amount of time to show off their acting. From the description of the content, it is evident that the elegance and body fitness of women help them come into the limelight of cinema. Additionally, this study explores how the beauty, body fitness, and sexuality of women are depicted in cinema. It also focuses on the inferiority of women and insists on keeping women busy with household work. Considering the phenomenon, the required data has been collected from the cinemas *Chuye Dile Mon* (2015), *Innocent Love* (2017), and *Hawa* (2022), and analyzed to get the exact outcome of the objectives. The objective of this study is to uncover the silent sufferings of women who insist on playing disrespectful roles, to highlight the reasons for using sexuality and obscene behavior in cinema, and the perspective of society towards actresses.

Research questions

- How does the appearance, beauty, and sexuality of women portrayed in Bangladeshi cinema?
- What kind of stereotyping occurs from the portrayal of women as domestic being?

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Visualizing women in cinema has been an important part of a particular film industry that reflects social norms, and values along with cultural aspects. Movies are a great source of entertainment and the reflection of contemporary society. Bangladeshi movies are known as “Dhallywood” movies. Dhallywood movies have gone through significant changes over the last few years. One of the important aspects of Bangladeshi cinema is the portrayal of women on the silver screen. The depiction of women in Bangladeshi cinema has always been bounded by the role of a sexual or domestic object. The plots and storylines of the three selected movies, “*Chuye Dile Mon*, *Hawa*, and *Innocent Love*”, revolve around the conventional role of women and how they are being used as the subject of sexuality for the audience. Many researchers have conducted studies on the representation of women in media and movies. The current study will review some of the existing studies about the representation of women in Bangladeshi cinema, along with the idea of gender stereotyping.

Cinema is considered a powerful medium for reflecting social norms, and the perspective of people. It provokes people’s thoughts in both positive and negative ways. Women are always portrayed in a typical ways following the conventional rules of society (Talukder, 2021). In the conventional ways women are required to present themselves as inferior human beings who are dependent on men. Also, women are required to please men with their appearance. Some movies portray women in a disrespectful way that is not appropriate. Cinemas can focus on the modesty of women rather than portraying them in a distasteful way. Women are used as objects of sex in most of the movies to entertain the audience. In most item songs, women are seen in short and revealing clothes that attract their male counterparts in a different way (Talukder, 2021). As human beings, women also have the basic right to make their own decisions. But

stories in the cinema depict that women have to rely on men to make any kind of decision. Women are not sensible enough to make any kind of decision by themselves. Moreover, women need to ask permission before going out or buying something for themselves (Talukder, 2021). Cinemas define that women must be beautiful to attract others with their charm. They are portrayed as an object or material that is interesting to others. This type of depiction highlights that women must be charming to present themselves on the silver screen. If they are not beautiful enough, then they are not eligible for acting in any cinema (Talukder, 2021). Society spreads the common idea that women are allowed to handle children and household chores. Cinemas also convey the same message by visualizing women as the homely creatures that are more likely to handle children and homely activities. From the perspective of cinemas, men are required to do work outside to earn money. Women are less powerful, easier to dominate, and suffer from violence in a male-dominant society. Cinemas also convey the message about the inferiority of women according to their own perspective (Talukder, 2021). Men are the center of the family, and can make every decision. The costumes of men are not as disrespectful as women's costumes. Women are portrayed as more flexible in everything. Men are directing the cinemas, using different kinds of cameras to focus on the attractive parts of the women (Talukder, 2021). In the cinema, the role of women is bounded by the conceptions of beauty, love, sexuality, and dependency.

Contemporary societies build up some specific ideas about women, such as they are shy, family-oriented, and concerned about their beauty. Most of the cinemas represent women with a high ratio of makeup that enhances their skin tone along with their appearance. Cinema actually portrays the fundamental features of women that they have witnessed in their surroundings. In most cases, the authority of cinemas is controlled by men, so it is obvious that they will depict women according to their own perspective. In Bangladeshi cinema, directors try to reshape the lifestyle and fashion sense of women by blending them with western culture

(Sire, 2014). Women are bound by the traditional rules of society. According to Sire's analysis on the movie *Agnee*, he stated that women are being presented as subservient to male characters (Sire, 2014). The main actress in this particular movie has presented herself in a glamorous way. The glamour of the female character in cinema is used to catch the attention of a large number of audiences. In the cinema *Agnee*, we see a rebellious depiction of a woman lead, but it also highlights the glamorous aspects of being a heroine, which makes the story more interesting. Cinema can be interesting and attractive without highlighting the sexual side of women in every story. People are more comfortable seeing women as having submissive and inferior characteristic along with sexuality (Sire, 2014). Cinemas actually neglect the idea of working women. They are suggesting that women do not need to go out to earn money. They can easily rely on the money earned by their husbands, fathers or brothers. Women need to be kept in a cage with four walls. Though they are required to stay at home, they need to dress properly to maintain their beauty. Beauty is a subject of attraction. Though some cinema tries to portray women in a rebellious way, but it fails to focus on the dress, posture, and gesture of women (Sire, 2014). Sire focuses on the rebellious characters of women, along with their shyness and beauty, which are integral parts of their character.

Fashion and costumes are also associated with the objectification of women. Rahman finds out that wearing fitting and revealing clothes makes the male audience more curious to know about the female body and sexuality (Rahman & Zannat, 2021). They focus on some particular item songs from Bangladeshi movies, such as "Magic Mamoni, Lojjaboti re Chuile, and Danakata Pori." These kinds of songs offer some irrelevance in their lyrics about the sexuality of women. The lyrics of the songs are awful and thought-provoking for the audience. In these songs, "women are visualized in some inappropriate short clothes that are appealing to others" (Rahman & Zannat, 2021). Makers focuses on these songs more precisely than the main story and plot. The makers of the cinema actually give instructions to the actress to wear revealing

and short clothes to catch the audience's attention. Also, their dance step or body movement easily catches the attention of any man (Rahman & Zannat, 2021). The researchers stated that sometimes the leading actress praises herself for her fairness, appeal, and movement to compete with other actresses in the movies. While shooting these item songs, the movement of the camera mostly focuses on the body parts of the women. In the conventional way, women are required to dance by moving their body parts, hands, and fingers to provoke the male audience. In contrast, men aren't required to wear revealing clothes or dance inappropriately. It just indicates that promoting sexuality by using body parts is the main work of women.

The major role of women in the movie is to support men in their work. Women get selected for a movie on the basis of their fairness and body structure. "Women with fair skin tone and an appealing body get the leading role in any cinema" (Murphy, 2015). Women are being presented as side characters and suffering from crucial discrimination. They don't get the opportunity to select their desired role in the movies. The man is the center of everything, and they decide the position of women in the movie. Men decide the role, dress, and body movement for women. In movies, some women get selected for wearing tight clothes and some get selected for showing their bodies in certain particular scenes. Movies also indicate that the objectification of women in cinema varies from time to time and depends on place and surroundings. The main female character gets objectified more than other characters as their screen time is longer than others. Producers and other people related to movies select women based on the idea of majority and minority. "Women tend to have good connections with higher authority to get a proper role in the movie" (Murphy, 2015). The minor female characters in the movies, such as background dancers, friends of the leading characters and so on, don't get enough screen time. Minor characters are shown in sexual objectification more often. They are shown in the scene of pool or bar dancing, where they get focused by any male gaze more often (Murphy, 2015). Sometimes it is also shown that women are being attacked by the villain

because of their beauty, and a hero is fighting with the villain to protect them. This study highlights that women are an object of entertainment that does not have any freedom of choice. Women don't get the freedom to select their role or dress in particular movies. It indicates that they don't have enough freedom in their workplace.

The idea of objectification of women is not only related to the Asian Subcontinent but also to American culture and media. "In past, the media in America was obsessed with the idea of "ideal" women who were considered to obey social norms and traditions politely" (Berberick, 2010). According to the previous context of the culture of America, they search for the perfection of women rather than other things. "They compel women to be nothing but a source of pleasure to men" (Berberick, 2010). Real women are being compared with screen women. Screen women are presenting a completely different lifestyle from their real lives. Women have two identities on two sides. By blending real life with the screen, they become nothing by losing their identity. Men often compare their wives with the women they have seen in movies, billboards or commercials, which actually ruin the self-confidence of women and make them think that they are not enough beautiful (Berberick, 2010). The idea of perfection and "ideal" women is destroying the peace of society. Men often get confused between picture and reality. They assume that their wives will have beautiful bodies, hair, smiles, and so on. Though men have high expectations in the form of infatuation, women are failed to fulfill them. "The models and actresses of American cinema are 80% thinner than any average American woman" (Berberick, 2010). As a result of this, men have high expectations of having a model wife. Men actually influence women to suffer from self acceptance. They struggle a lot to establish their real selves in a society that is obsessed with perfection. Women choose to have plastic surgery, cosmetic surgery, and some other thing to make them perfect in the eyes of society. Women take dangerous steps to make themselves attractive and appealing. Women are dissatisfied with their self appearance. Their dissatisfaction leads them to take serious steps to change their body

and dressing style. Women often suffer from low self-esteem because of the high expectations of their male partners.

Cinema also promotes the harassment of women at some point. The Bollywood, or Indian movie industry, is an established industry. Bangladeshi cinema industry follows Bollywood in making cinema by adopting their style and storyline. “The Indian cinema industry often presents the idea that women are being teased by some men, and they are normalizing the idea” (Slatewala, 2019). They often use item songs for the promotion of their cinemas. All the item songs are women-centered. Women are the main characters in those item songs. “Most often they have been shown as bar dancers or dancers at private parties arranged by any wealthy man” (Slatewala, 2019). This study highlights that; wealthy and powerful people can buy women in return of money. In their late night private parties they need some attractive women with short dresses and appealing bodies to satisfy their thirst for sexuality. In most cinemas, men are shown to use women for this purpose. By doing this kind of activity, they actually portray women as lower creatures. Women are being judged according to their expertise in dance and body movement. In the cinema, they get a particular role to satisfy a large number of audiences by following the instructions of their directors. “Women tend to reveal more body parts than men in the cinema” (Slatewala, 2019). The acting skills of women depend on their bravery when revealing body parts. This study indicates that women can be easily used to fulfill the sexual urges of men. And women tend to do anything and everything for money. Producers intentionally make them wear glamorous clothes for item songs.

Stereotypical representation of women has always worked as an obstacle in the way of self development as an individual human being. Stereotypical norms in society are building hardship for women and making them vulnerable. It is unfortunate that women are still depicted

as inferior or weak characters in the era of modernization (Sanyal, 2020). In traditional cinema or drama, women are seen as mothers, wives, sisters and so on. They don't have any major role in making decisions or maintaining families. They don't even get the chance to rule their children's. They are being marginalized at every step of their lives. Cinemas are visualizing that women are struggling to achieve their dreams in a stereotypical society where they are facing continuous oppression (Sanyal, 2020). Sometimes it is also visible that they are struggling to get their basic rights, like education, or that they are suffering from a lack of safety. Moreover, they do not get enough opportunity to develop their character from their perspective (Sanyal, 2020). A male-dominant society always tries to rule women according to their choice. In the context of South Asia, women are the major victims of domination. The cinema industry, like Bollywood and Hollywood, promotes unsafe themes in movies related to the violation of women's characters (Sanyal, 2020). Activities of women in cinema that are planned by their male counterparts are highly misleading for the audience at some stage. Their character doesn't go through the proper development that required for the perfect acting. Directors and other people related to cinema focus more on the dress, appearance, and body language of the women's characters than their acting skills. In the conventional way, women spend more time in the kitchen for cooking or household chores than other things. Cinemas are depicting the inferior side of women and making them an object of entertainment (Sanyal, 2020).

In the cinema, women suffer from self-existence as they are portrayed as domestic or sexual objects. Their identity and existence have been controlled by their male counterparts. The actual identity of women is highly controlled by men in cinemas (Rahman, Ullah, Jerin, & Hossain, 2022). According to their analysis, women are presented in a more biased way; in a capitalist society, women are symbolized as a way of gaining popularity. In TVC and cinema, attractive characters and roles of women are ways of getting popularity and fame for any

product easily. In most Bangladeshi TVCs they use female faces to promote any kind of product, whether it is food, home decor, or any other product (Rahman, Ullah, Jerin, & Hossain, 2022). Makers assume that the audience will surely watch the whole TVC if they see any beautiful, attractive lady on the screen. Women are continuously searching for their own existence, while men are searching for materials of sexuality in the female character. In a patriarchal society, men are the controllers of everything. They can present women the way they want in the cinema. In the analysis, they talk about the character Pori from the movie Monpura. In the movie, Pori is portrayed as a naive girl who just silently obeys the commands of her father. The movie depicts that the father is the ultimate decision maker in the family, and they can make any decision for their daughter without her consent. They think they always make the right decision that brings happiness to their children. They don't think about the actual condition or consent of their children (Rahman, Ullah, Jerin, & Hossain, 2022). Despite being treated as domestic objects this type of character suffers from their actual self-existence. Their parents or surroundings make their identity imperceptible. Being silent in every situation ruins their self confidence and ability to create a unique identity.

Women are considered sexual objects in the media in Bangladesh. In most of the advertisements of Bangladesh that play during the interval of a movie, women are conveying messages about how they should be treated (Upoma, 2021). Gender stereotyping is highly visible in the media in Bangladesh because women are given less essential responsibilities both at home and outside. It indicates that women are not capable of doing important things by themselves. Even in the advertisement of men's products women are seen as objects of attraction to the audience. In the advertisement of male perfume or deodorant, women are portrayed as a side character with an appealing appearance, which indicates that the smell can make any woman sexually active towards a man (Upoma, 2021). The characters of women given by the makers are quite misleading for society, as the media is presenting them in a

negative way. Negative characters create a negative impact on society. Appealing portrayals of women actually provoke the thoughts of young people about the role of women on the silver screen and society. At some point, “women are being treated as beautiful animals” (Upoma, 2021). Highlighting the concept of harassing women in a normal way in stories of movies actually represents the vulnerability of women. Women and their characters in the cinema are highly associated with glamour, sensation, and attractiveness. Cinemas are more likely to reveal the sensitivity of women as an integral part of the story. They are being continuously dehumanized and objectified in a male-dominant society. Advertisements and cinemas are influencing adolescents to treat women as sexual objects.

“Women are portrayed as the caretakers of the family and household chores, while men are considered the breadwinners” (Haque & Reza, 2013). The media is visualizing these things as a normal phenomena and society is accepting them as a truth to follow in real life. Cinema, TVC, and dramas are reflections of reality. Men become the center or host of everything, both at home and at work (Haque & Reza, 2013). “In the contemporary society of Bangladesh, people solely believe that women tend to wash dishes, cook for the family, clean the house, and so on” (Haque & Reza, 2013). The idea of gender stereotypes is highly visible in TVC and cinema in Bangladesh. Sometimes they promote the idea that women are not capable of taking on the responsibility of office work. People in the media and society think that nature has made men stronger than women. Men are the providers of money in the family. As they are earning money, they have the power to make every kind of decision without considering the presence of women. In this sense, one thing is noticeable that money and power work everywhere. People who are associated with the media use the sexual identity of women to differentiate them from one another. Some TVC and cinema present the idea of men work versus women’s work. They build up a wall between the work of men and women that is provoking the thoughts of society in a negative way. Audiences are more likely to explore sexuality in TVCs or

cinemas, whether in the characters of women or any product. The makers of the media pieces play a thought-provoking game to attract a large number of audiences by promoting sexuality in a different way. Though they do not need to use sexuality to promote their product in TVC, they do use the same idea. In the context of Bangladesh, women tend to be bound by the rules and work of the household.

Gender stereotyping involves the participation of women in the media. Media is a workplace for both men and women where they can work according to their perspectives. The media reflect the use of the female body in various ways. According to the idea of gender stereotyping, women can't even ensure their own safety (Adnan, 2020). Women are always treated as inferior human beings both at home and outside. People around them think that they can't handle their problems alone. Their surroundings make them dependent on others. In the media, such as cinemas or TVC, it is always visible that "female characters are being protected by their male encounter parts in every aspect of their lives that is considered the normal rules of conventional society" (Adnan, 2020). In the study of Adnan, he talks about a particular advertisement of Robi related to cricket where a young girl makes a tattoo on her hand, and her mother warns her by saying girls from aristocratic families do not do such things (Adnan, 2020). At this point, the TVC is promoting the idea that women need to follow certain rules to be aristocratic ladies. Women need to behave in a certain manner to please their parents and society. Girls cannot go outside to play with boys after certain ages. In the same study, the researcher talks about a movie by Shakib Khan named Bir where he falls in love with Bubly, who is attractive and charming. Makers indicate that Shakib Khan fell in love with the attractive body of Bubly. In some cinemas, it is noticeable that men are offering unethical things in exchange for job offers. It means women have to do something inappropriate to get a proper role on silver screen (Adnan, 2020). Cinemas offers that women need a strong man to protect them from negative people.

Writers of the cinema, or TVC, scripted women in an oppressive way. People associated with the cinema act according to the script. Nowadays, producers are more likely to focus on the sexual relationships of characters rather than their psychology (Papp, Ward, & Marshall, 2022). Women's characters are used to add fuel to the fire. Sometimes it is seen that men are being aggressive to satisfy their sexual frustration, and women are the silent sufferers of this aggression. In the script of cinema, one thing is noticeable; women won't protest sexual aggression. They actually tend to satisfy the thirst of man silently by losing their self-identity (Papp, Ward, & Marshall, 2022). Some films portray men getting involved with various women to satisfy their desires. In some cases, they are comfortable doing the same thing with more than one woman by manipulating her; they think that this kind of thing highlights their masculinity. Men also use extra power and insistency to gain sexual satisfaction from women. They do not bother to ask women about their consent. All these issues are connected to cinemas. They believe that "women need to focus on the beauty of themselves and make competition with one another to get the attention of men" (Papp, Ward, & Marshall, 2022). Cinemas also suggest that men are not required to stay with one partner for so long. Men can change women or their partners at any time according to their choice. Women are treated as a product that men can change or exchange anytime, anywhere. Women toys for them. Cinemas are promoting how women should be treated in society. And the audience of society treats them exactly the same way they watch movies in the cinema. Writers and producers always portray women in a negative, oppressive role that provokes the audience to treat them as sexual objects. Women also accept their characters in such roles. They enjoyed presenting them in an attractive role to catch the attention of the man.

All the above-mentioned studies talked about the dependency of women on men in a conventional way at the cinema. Women have shown been as dependent and domestic creatures in cinema. Previous studies focused on the character development of women in the cinema.

While analyzing character development, researchers may miss the idea of whether women willingly do those acts or not. The current study focuses on the reasons behind the sexual objectification of women in the cinema, along with the stereotypes depicted. It also shows the reaction of society to the attractive role of women in the cinema. This study specifically focuses on the stereotyping of women as a subject of beauty and charm in the cinema. It analyzes the social perspective on the objectification and stereotyping of women in cinema.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Methodology is the process of research that defines the way to analyze any phenomenon. This part of the study presents a complete picture of the whole process by including the method of data collection and analysis, the theoretical framework, findings, and discussions. This study follows the qualitative method for collecting the required data. The qualitative method depends on existing phenomena. The qualitative method achieves the expected result by analyzing existing data. This method follows the concepts of content analysis and narrative analysis. Content analysis indicates the idea of evaluating recorded materials. The material can be any kind of recorded document, media piece, or story from any cinema. Primary and secondary sources have been used for collecting data. The content analysis method includes the analysis of the plot and storyline of the three selected films, "*Hawa*, *Chuye Dile Mon*, and *Innocent Love*. It also includes the analysis of the female characters in the film to acquire specific information about gender stereotyping in the story. The primary source of the data is the storyline of the three selected films. The secondary source of the data is the pictures and some particular scenes from the cinema. In addition, the study has highlighted the storyline and plot of three films released in 2015-2022: *Chuye Dile Mon* (2015), *Innocent Love* (2017), and *Hawa* (2022). These three cinemas are different from each other in plot, narrative, award winning etc. The content and some particular scenes got analyzed briefly because the participation of women in this sector is noticeable. Three selected cinemas are the main materials for this study's to collect data. The selected cinemas have been watched on YouTube, and pictures of some specific scenes have been taken from YouTube to present the data in the study. Three selected movies are available on YouTube with proper quality. Hence, this study shows how women are being objectified sexually and suffering from the concept of gender stereotyping in cinemas, which is affecting society in a different way.

3.1. Theoretical Framework

The narrative analysis method is one of the most common techniques for analyzing cinema. The narrative analysis method has also been used for this study. Narrative analysis refers to the idea of analyzing textual or any kind of visual data. Narrative analysis helps find the best methods for interpreting data. This method is connected with the story, content, and function of cinema. Narrative analysis helps uncover the hidden content of a film. This method helps to invent the underlying meaning of any story or piece of content. Narrative analysis uncovers the story of the cinema that is connected with an aspect of any particular culture. Laura Mulvey's "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema", Richard Dyer's and Stuart Hall's representation theory, and theory related to stereotyping have been used as theoretical frameworks for this study. The representation theory of Stuart Hall helps analyze the content, images, videos, and words of cinema. As the study is focusing on the representation of women in cinema, it is necessary to analyze the images and videos to briefly understand the characters. The presence of women in cinema defines their characters and their activities. Representation theory helps to measure the concept of stereotyping in the cinema. Bangladeshi cinema highlights the character of women as minor, dependent, and domestic beings. Three different cinemas portray different kinds of stereotyping. Richard Dyer's theory of stereotyping helps to bring out the troubles of women while depicting their character. Stereotyping is not only a negative practice but also a part of a system of representation that focuses on imbalances of power and social class. In cinemas, female bodies get more attention than men's which causes sexual objectification. Women always get less important roles, whereas men get more significant roles. "Complexion and age of women have a great significance in getting any kind of role" (Subrina, G, & Anthony, 2017). The representation of women on the screen increases the unconscious desire of men. Laura Mulvey's theory of visual pleasure and narrative cinema brings out the idea of a male gaze towards women in cinema. "Male gaze is the process of portraying women as objects of desire, both for male actors and male consumers" (Mulvey,

1975). Basically, the male gaze has become the controller of the attitude of women on the screen. There are three gazes in cinema that work to objectify women; the camera, male actors, and male audience” (Jacobsson, 1999). The very first gaze, camera is often controlled by men, and they frames women from sexual perspective. “The close up shots of women change or double their body structure and as a result male actors or consumers get attracted” (Jacobsson, 1999). Mulvey examines the relationship between gender and power, focusing on visualizing the concept on silver screen. Mulvey highlights the term “scopophilia”, which refer the pleasure of looking at something. Male gaze is also connected with the structure of the female actress in the movie. Mulvey’s theory helps to explore the concept of gender stereotyping based on sexuality. All three theories help to analyze the cinema more precisely and unveil the main concept. These theories bring out aspects of the representation of women in cinema from the point of view of sexuality.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

The source of the data is three selected films named *Hawa*, *Chuye Dile mon* and, *Innocet Love*. These three films have been released at different times. The context, plot, story, and settings of these three cinemas are different from each other. The three stories include the inferiority of women in cinema. Three cinemas highlight the character of women from different perspectives. Firstly, this study focuses on the analysis of the film *Hawa* (2022).

4.1. Analysis of *Hawa*(2022)

Hawa is a Bangladeshi film released in 2022. The narrative story of this film revolves around the themes of mystery and revenge. The story includes the struggle of fishermen in the middle of the sea. The film is directed by Mejbaur Rahman Sumon and produced by Anjan Chowdhury Pintu, and stars by Chanchal Chowdhury, Nazifa Tushi, Sariful Razz, Nasir Uddin Khan, and Sumon Anwar, among others. From the initial stage, the cinema looks like an ordinary one with a plain storyline, but gradually it has developed a great mystery.

4.2. Storyline of *Hawa*

The storyline of *Hawa* involves the struggle of fishermen who go to the deep sea to earn their livelihood. All the scenes of the movie have been captured on a fishing boat. The fishing boat is led by a man named Chan Majhi. He gives the instructions to the other member of the boat to catch and store fish properly. Chan Majhi is the leader of the boat, and he gets the maximum portion of the profit. In the middle of their journey, they found a beautiful young girl in their fishing net. They were surprised and shocked at the same time. They think that the girl is dead because she has no response to anything. But later, they find out that she is breathing and that she is alive. They start thinking about what to do with the girl, as there is no other girl in the boat. Moreover, police can chase them for keeping a girl in their boat. The name of the girl is Gulti. Gulti is a silent character. She doesn't have enough verbal dialogue in the cinema. Gulti refused to leave the boat as she planned to take revenge on Chan Majhi. Initially, she starts

working as a cook on the boat. She is doing her work silently, without causing any chaos with anyone. After some time the story takes a turn, and the male characters of the cinema get attracted by the appearance of Gulti. Though they try to molest her several times, she manages to save herself from their thirst. In the cinema, Gulti has been shown as a revengeful character. But she is not strong enough to face all the hardships alone. Gulti trained herself very well before coming to the boat to take revenge for the death of her father. She accomplished her mission by killing Chan majhi. The narrative story is not complicated enough to understand. The only female character holds the power to change the story.

4.3. Representation of women in *Hawa*

In the cinema *Hawa*, the role of the female character named Gulti can be divided into two segments. The first role is a silent, dependent, and sexual object for the male counterparts and the audience. The second one is a rebellious, revengeful, and brave character. Gulti is the only female character in the film and the plot's development mostly depends on her. She portrays different types of characters in the cinema. At first glance, the role of Gulti seems incomplete and needs more development. Initially, the character of Gulti can raise a question in the mind of audience, why Gulti is silent and why she is letting men enjoy her beauty. Gulti's character causes confusion among the audiences as she takes the entry all of a sudden.

Focusing deeply on the character of Gulti, it can be assumed that she has been presented as a silent, cowardly woman in the first point. Gradually, she reveals her bravery and tricky plans for taking revenge. Gulti has witnessed the death of her father by Chan Majhi and his gang. The incident makes her revengeful. She appears as a silent character who is working as a cook on the boat. In some scenes, it has been shown that Gulti is taking a shower in the river, and some men are watching her secretly. She doesn't have enough clothes, so she needs to dry them to wear again before the sunrise. She thinks that everyone in the boat is sleeping, but some evil

eyes are watching her body to get satisfaction. Gulti is a source of pleasure and entertainment for them. In the middle of the sea, they are struggling with their work, and Gulti appears there as the source of pleasure. The character of Gulti is dominated by the power of male encounter parts. Most of them try to fulfill their sexual urges in Gulti. They think that Gulti is a silent character, and she won't protest anything.



Image-1: Gulti is being tortured by a man



Image-2: All the men are looking at her cold body with greedy eyes.

The very first photo is the cover picture for the cinema. The first glimpse of the picture represents a negative impression about the role of women. It indicates that women are vulnerable. A man can easily torture a woman without causing chaos. This picture is misleading for the audience and women at the same time. It influences the audience about the domination of women by torturing them. In the picture, a man is pulling Gulti's hair, and the pain is visible in her face. No one is trying to rescue her from the pain. The second picture reveals the curiosity of men about female bodies. After getting the body of Gulti, they become amazed when they look at her. Gulti is senseless, and she doesn't have any clue about the activities of men. The director uses the female body as a source of entertainment.



Image-3: Gulti is working in kitchen



Image-4: Gulti is taking shower

The director and producer try to represent a unique story throughout the plot development and settings. While highlighting the character of Gulti through her acting, they present her as a domestic and sexual object. In image-3, the activity of Gulti in the boat is visible. In the picture, Gulti is cutting vegetables. The role of women is bound by the work of the kitchen. It indicates that women tend to do cooking and other household tasks. The other members of the boat think that, as a woman, Gulti can't have the strength to help them in catching fish. In the third picture, where Gulti is seen in a sharee, that reveals half of her legs. In the picture, the look of Gulti is quite appealing to men. Her appearance indicates that women need to be bound by household activity to obey the commands of men. Revealing body parts in the cinema is a unique way of catching the attention of the audience. In the fourth picture, Gulti is bathing in the river and looking above her because she notices that someone is looking towards her. Gulti looks more attractive when she makes her clothes wet in the river. The scene of taking a shower gives a kind of pleasure to man. All the men have curiosity about the body of Gulti, as she is young and beautiful. All of them want to enjoy her beauty at any cost. The third and fourth pictures indicate that Gulti and her activities are being watched by the evil eyes of men.

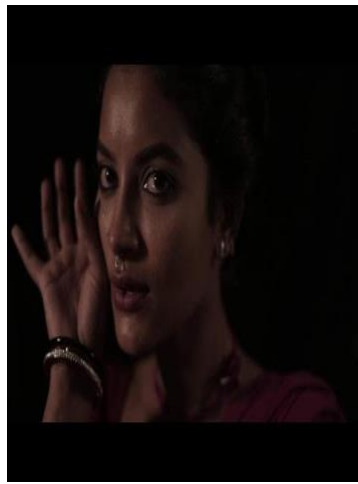


Image-5&6: Appealing gesture of Gulti.

Image-7: Greedy eyes of men over Gulti

In cinema, the role of women is to create pleasure for men. In the cinema, *Hawa Gulti* is one of those female characters who needs to follow the conventional rule of oppression. In the cinema, Gulti has been seen to give an appealing look to men that actually influence their minds. In several scenes, Gulti is revealing her legs, waist, and some other body parts that are provoking the thoughts of men. The style of sharee draping in Gulti is uncommon compared to others. Her style reveals her body parts and gives visual pleasure to the audience. When Gulti sits on the side of the boat to enjoy the view of the river, some men look at her back with greedy eyes. Gulti's appearance, activities, and style can easily influence the minds of men in a negative way. All the men want to get her attention to acquire her beauty.



Image-8: Gulti is protesting against violence

Image-9: A love scene of Gulti

In the cinema, *Hawa Gulti* makes her entry to the boat to take revenge on Chan Majhi. Her journey of revenge is more difficult than other things. In her journey, she faces many oppressions and molestations. As she is a silent character, some fisherman on the boat tries to molest her, and they think that she will not take any steps against them. In the picture eight, Gulti is hitting a man to protect herself from the evil eye. The man's hand is on the waist of the Gulti as he tries to grab her. On the other hand, a man is just silently watching everything and not trying to help Gulti. The last picture portrays a love scene where Gulti is lying on the boat with a man. The main context of the film is revenge. The director and producers use unnecessary vulgarity in the cinema. They emphasize the beauty and sexuality of the female character. Though Gulti appears as a rebellious character, she gets caught by Chan Majhi. Later on, Chan Majhi tries to kill Gulti. Gulti comes to the boat with a strong motif, but she gets attacked by the men. The counter attack of Chan Majhi against Gulti reveals the vulnerability of women. This film indicates that women can't have enough courage and strength to fight against men. Gulti has been portrayed as an object of visual pleasure. The authority of the cinema focuses more on the sexuality of female characters than the plot's development. The cinema doesn't perfectly portray the rebellious side of Gulti. It doesn't break the conventional rules of society to present women as vulnerable and inferior character. Gulti could simply be brave and furious enough to achieve her goals. But the character of Gulti has been bounded by the conventional rules of sexuality and pleasure for men.

4.4. Analysis of *Chuye Dile Mon*

Chuye Dile Mon is romantic Bangladeshi cinema that involves family issue, the superiority of men, love story, and so on. This film actually tells a story of love where a couple is struggling to be together. It shows the struggle of a singer to get his love back. In the love story, two

families and some villains got involved. Initially, the cinema highlights the miracle of fate. This story also involved the concept of taking revenge for a particular incident. The movie was released in 2015 and directed by one of the most renowned people in Dhallywood industry, Shihab Shaheen. The cinema is portrayed by Zakia Bari Momo, Arefin Shuvo, Iresh Zaker, Quazi Nawshaba, Alliraj, and so on. Every character in the cinema tries to develop the storyline in a unique way.

4.5. Storyline of *Chuye Dile Mon* (2015)

Chuye Dile Mon is mainly the story of Abir, who is played by Arefin Shuvo, a renowned singer of the town who lost his childhood love for family issues and got humiliated by the villagers of Hridoypur. Abir's family is also getting humiliated by some upper class people and forced to leave the village at the young age of Abir. He is highly motivated to take revenge on those people. When Abir was young, a girl next door fell in love with him, whose name is Neela. They both develop a deep feeling of love for each other. But the main factor is society, and Neela's father who is a powerful man in the village. He comes to know about the relationship between Abir and Neela, which makes him furious. Neela's father calls Abir's family and tells them to leave the village. As a girl from a conservative family, Neela doesn't have the opportunity to raise her voice against her father. After a long time, Abir disguises himself in someone else's name and returns to the village to take revenge on Neela's family. But in this process, he again fell in love with Neela, while her father has fixed her marriage with someone else. Abir uses a tricky plan to reach his goal. Neela becomes the victim of both her father's and Abir's game of revenge. The story continues with the fight for love against family and society.

4.6. Representation of women in *Chuye Dile Mon*(2015)

Chuye Dile Mon is one of the best known romantic Bangla films of 2015. This film gained popularity for its love story, romantic songs, and conflict between two men over a girl. There are several female characters in the cinema, such as Neela, Neela's mother, Abir's sister, and some other characters who are the friend of Neela. Neela is the main female character in the story. The development of her character starts in her early childhood. At the very beginning, Neela presented herself as a school going girl. After growing up, she has appeared in fancy dress, lots of makeup, and roaming around here and there. Neela doesn't have any job or important work and presents herself in a fancy way. Neela's appearance sometimes indicates that she is in fancy dress competitions where she needs to present herself as an object of beauty. Neela belongs to a conservative political family. In her family, she and her mother are bound by the rules of her father. They need to obey his command silently. Neela's mother doesn't appear on the screen for a long time. Her role is to be silent and support her husband. Focusing on the character of Neela, it can be said that her character is so flat and lacks of development. Neela is portrayed as a typical girl from a conservative family who is struggling with her love life. The director has presented Neela as an archetype character who maintains the passive role perfectly.

Other female characters in the cinema don't get the enough screen time. On the other hand, male characters are seen in high positions like political leaders, job holders, singers, social activists and so on. Neela's mother has to cook and serve food to the family, which is considered her main work.



Image-10: Abir is watching Neela



Image-11: Neela's father is threatening her

In the cinema, the director and the producers emphasize the love story and character of the male rather than the female. Picture number ten is the main poster of the cinema. Authorities spread the poster everywhere to promote their cinema. In the poster, they use Neela as an object of attraction. Neela is seen in a red sharee, which is revealing her waist, hands, and neck, whereas the hero Abir is wearing proper attire like punjabi. The authority uses the character of Neela to catch the audience's attention as they know that people have a curiosity for hidden things. Focusing on the gestures and posture of Neela, it can be assumed that she is trying her best to reflect her beauty and charm to the audience. The poster can raise some questions about Neela's and gestures. The producer is selling the female body to earn money and popularity by portraying her in provocative attire. Picture number eleven shows Neela's emotion in front of her father. The picture actually depicts the early age of Neela, when Abir was getting punished for teasing her. Neela used to like him in her teens. They used to roam around the village. As a girl from a conservative family, Neela's father doesn't allow her to go further. When he calls Abir and his family to interrogate them, Neela gets frightened. Neela is afraid of her father. When he asks about Abir, she says that Abir teased her while going to school. She doesn't know Abir. After that, Abir got punished, and his family got humiliated. Neela knows that her father is a powerful man with anger issues. She is afraid of her father. Her insecurity and her father's anger issue force her to tell lies about Abir. Neela is crying but can't say anything

against her father's decision. This incident highlights the silent sufferings of women for being inferior characters. The silence of Neela insists on her telling lies which make her the victim of the game of revenge played Abir.



Image-12: An intimate scene



Image-13: Neela is dancing

Chuye Dile Mon cinema depicts the conventional love story where two love birds get separated for the honor of their family. Though Neela is the main female character of the film but she doesn't have any important roles to describe. She is just an average girl who is afraid of her father and gets dominated by the other male character in the movie. Neela has worked as a source of pleasure and entertainment. In picture number twelve, Neela and Abir come close to each other. This is the part of the song where Neela and Abir have seen dancing together and spending quality time together. In the video of the song, the angle of the camera is closely focused on Neela's body. The close shot of Neela and her body promotes the idea of unnecessary vulgarity. Revealing the body part of the female actress depends on the instructions of the producers; their role is controlled by the command of authority. Neela is tends to wear tight and revealing clothes to make her character glamorous. In picture number thirteen, Neela is dancing with other co-actresses. One of the main activities of the female characters is dance to songs to show their body movements. Neela's dance steps and her dresses

are quite inappropriate. The representation of Neela is done in a negative way. In the cinema, she is busy trying to please men by obeying them several times.



image-14: Neela's would be husband is scolding her



Image-15: Neela is anxious

As a teenager Neela used to love Abir, but her surroundings oppressed her love for him. Neela is supposed to marry her cousin, as her father makes the decision of her life. She can't choose her suitor. Her fiancé is abusive and dominates her brutally. Her father doesn't even believe her words, as he thinks himself superior. When Abir comes back to Hridaypoor and starts to talk with Neela again. Neela falls for him and plans to run away with him on the day of her marriage. This plan was made by Abir. He instructs Neela to run away from home. It's a master plan of Abir's to humiliate the father of Neela as a form of revenge. Neela comes to the railway station to go with Abir, but he ditches her and tells her that he did all the things to take revenge. Neela has used a puppet in the cinema. As a leading female character, she gets played by almost everyone. Her own opinion has oppressed by the men. She is used as an inferior character that is required to follow the commands of men.

In the cinema the use of beauty, vulgarity blended together. Female characters have been used as puppets for men. Females are portrayed as negative characters or the source of all problems. All the conflict in cinema arises because of women. The director and producers tries to maintain the conventional rules of Bangladeshi cinema in the plot development.

4.7. Analysis of *Innocent Love* (2017)

Innocent Love is a romantic movie released in 2017. The main story involves the conflict between two business rivals. One person is known as Farman, and another is known as Parvez Chowdhury. Both of them are business rivals. One is in the business of baby food, and another is trying to defame his rival in a negative way. Initially, the story looks like a conflicting one, but later it turns out to be a romantic love story. The leading actor of this cinema is known as Tibro, and the leading actress is known as Pori. These two roles have been done by Jef and Porimoni. The name of the movie highlights the main idea of the story. A story of family conflict turns into a love story.

4.8. Storyline of *Innocent Love* (2017)

The development of the story involves three different families. All the families are connected with each other and tend to be involved in conflict. The families of Farman and Parvez Chowdhury are connected as business rivals. On the other hand, the family of Tibro is connected with Parvez Chowdhury as he is the friend of Tibro's father, who is not alive. The involvement of Tibro's mother depicts her hatred for Parvez Chowdhury as she blames him for the death of her husband. Farman is trying to ruin the business of Parvez Chowdhury by delivering fake products in his name. These two are busy with their business issues. On the other hand, Tibro encounters Pori when she is dancing with some children in the rain. Tibro feels the attraction of love at first sight. He started to search for the details of Pori. Pori is the daughter of Parvez Chowdhury, and he thinks that his daughters life is in danger. Pori is bounded by some guard appointed by her father for her safety. Initially, Pori obeyed her father silently. But later on, when she starts a love relationship with Tibro, she gains the strength to disobey her father. Tibro's mother denies accepting the relationship because she doesn't like

the family. But Both Tibro and Pori fight for their love. Their love was able to solve all the issues.

The development of the story or the storyline portrays the traditional love story of Bangladeshi cinema, where couples are fighting to get acceptance. While highlighting the love story, the producers emphasize the glimpses of sexuality and semi-nudity that ruin the elegance of the story.

4.9. Representation of women in *Innocent Love*

Pori and Tibro's is one of the main female actresses of this cinema. In comparison to Tibro's mother, Pori gets more screen time. Pori is the daughter of a rich businessman who is giving the best life to his daughter. Pori's first appearance was in a top and jeans. Pori's dress in this film is based on western culture. Pori has presented herself as a modern girl who loves to wear short dresses. Tibro's mother spent the majority of her screen time crying over family issues. She is very emotional and sentimental toward her family. It indicates that women are soft, helpless, and emotional. Focusing on the character of Pori, it can be assumed that she is being treated as a little child by her father. Pori isn't allowed to go anywhere alone, as her father has lots of enemies.



Image-16: The poster of the cinema



Image-17: Poster of the item song

The cover of the cinema gives the glimpse of the story to the audience. In the main cover of the cinema producers or directors usually uses the attractive image of women to make the audience more curious about the cinema. This technique actually helps increase the percentage of audience in theatre. Women have work as a source of business or money. The intimate scene of the cinema promotes the concept of sexuality. This cinematic concept includes an item song where Pori is wearing revealing clothes and dancing in the middle of a crowd. Both the cover and the movie raise confusion about the dignity of women. Female characters are used to fulfill the desires of men. Women are being presented on the screen the way men want to see them.



Image-18: Tibro is sleeping on her mother's lap. Image-19: Pori is being scolded by her father.

Tibro's mother is a housewife who loves to do household work. Moreover, she is an emotional character who spends half of her time crying over little things. It indicates that women are emotional and inferior human beings. On the other hand, Pori's father keeps an eye on Pori's activities. Once he finds out that Pori is talking with someone, he tells her to put the call on loudspeaker. Pori doesn't have any privacy of her own. Later on, Pori and Tibro decide to run away from home to find their love. In the whole story, Pori doesn't have her own voice. She just follows the commands of men. Wearing appealing clothes and promoting sexuality has become one of the core aspects of catching the attention of men towards Bangladeshi cinema.

The three selected films reflect the same conventional idea about women; that they are vulnerable, sexual objects, products to sell, and source of money. All three main characters are controlled by the rules of the producers and their wishes. The above mentioned analysis actually shows the sufferings of women in a male-dominated society.

Chapter Five

Findings and Discussion

An analysis of three selected movies highlights that the representation of women has always followed the conventional rules of society. In cinemas, women do not get the chance to flourish their own creativity. They need to get the approval of the producers or their co actors to portray their character. The representation of women has always followed the stereotypical ways of society. The stereotypical way mainly represents women as household beings or material

objects of pleasure. In the era of globalization, Bangladeshi cinema is also adopting the concept of western dress for the attire of female characters. Three selected films actually indicate that women are being dominated in every step of their lives. Throughout the analysis, it is visible that screen time, dialogue, and characterization of women are ruining their dignity.

5.1. Portrayal of women in an indecent way

In the three selected movies, the character of women has more screen time than others. Their screen time or characterization doesn't reflect their modesty. Modesty is a common trait for anyone. But in the cinema, the modesty of women is not visible at all. Women are portrayed in a sensitive way, where their appearance is thought provoking. *Innocent Love* (2017) has included an item song where the female character is seen as sex object. The authority of the cinema needs to improve the reach of their movies. As a result they use female body as a medium for their business. When they use an appealing picture of a woman in the poster of their cinema, they actually try to get the attention of a huge number of male audiences. It is natural that people have a thirst for unseen things. From this perspective, males have a thirst to see female bodies or their appearance. The Cinema *Hawa* (2022) portrayed the leading female character in a sharee. But her style of sharee draping is revealing her body. Though she is a rebellious character, her modesty is maintained in a proper way. In *Chuye Dile Mon* and *Innocent love*, female characters are often seen in short dresses that expose their body parts. There is a specific costume designer for each movie, and they decide the dress of every character. They mostly emphasize the costumes of women. They are motivated to present women in an attractive way on screen. It highlights that women do not always choose their costumes by themselves. Men are the center of everything, and they decide the appropriate costume for women. Their only target is to sell the female body as entertainment. In the songs of these cinemas, one thing is visible; the angle of the camera is mostly focusing on specific

body parts of women. The director, producers or even the cameraman do not focus on the male body in the same way. In some scenes, they continually focus on the chest, back, and thighs of the female character. Their way of presenting women is actually to give the visual pleasure to men. Not using a veil is a common aspect of any Bangladeshi cinema. Avoiding the veil is another way of highlighting the female body to the audience. The overall presentation of women in the cinema is quite inappropriate. The authority of cinema presents women in an indecent ways where they are seen as the object of sexual pleasure.

5.2. Women are meant to be beautiful

People have a great attraction to beauty and beautiful things. Beautiful things always catch the attention of people more easily. It is normal to have beautiful and ugly things in our surroundings. But the women on the silver screen are always beautiful. To be a leading actress in cinema, the first criteria one has to fulfill is to be beautiful. In the three selected cinemas, all the actresses have bright skin tones. The authority of the cinema is not likely to present a girl with a dark skin tone on the screen. Though they select girls with bright skin tones, they use a lot of makeup to make them brighter. A female character cannot be a heroine without having a fair skin tone. The skin tone and appearance work as a quality of being a heroine. The side characters that play the role of the heroine's friend, mother, or family members also have to be beautiful enough. It indicates that the self-worth of women is measured by their beauty. If any woman is not beautiful enough, then she is not the perfect fit for the movie. The body structure of women is another factor in being heroine. Heroines need to maintain their body fitness in certain ways. They cannot be thick or extremely thin. They need to have fair skin and an attractive body to get a proper role in cinema. In the film *Hawa (2022)*, the character of Gulti is presented as a rural girl living in a boat with fishermen. Though she is in a boat, she has kohl on her eyes and, lipstick on her lips. Her skin tone and body structure are fair enough for a

heroine. Anonymously, lots of audience members comment that they get attracted by the appearance, body structure, and movement of Gulti(Nazifa Tushi). Gulti is center of attention for this movie. In *Chuye Dile Mon* and *Innocent Love*, both the heroines have fair skin and attractive bodies. In the whole time of the cinema, women are being visualized in makeup or attractive dresses. They are spreading the wrong message that women do apply makeup all the time, even at home. They also present a concept that women wear short dresses to attract men. They maintain their fair skin or body fitness to get the attention of men. By presenting women as materials of beauty, they actually raise the expectations of the audience about perfect women. According to cinema, fair skin, thin, and appealing body make a woman perfect. Cinema actually increases the expectations of society to have a perfect woman in their lives. Especially men search for all the qualities of heroine in their wives, which actually makes their married life chaotic. Cinema should not promote the concept of beauty of women's as the center of everything. Cinema should present the positivity and self-worth of women rather than their beauty.

5.3. Women as the root of all problems

Women are visualized as the root of problems in cinemas. In any love triangle, two men are involved in a conflict over getting the love of a girl. Two families get involved in conflict easily because of the love stories of the girls. Women should get the proper honor on the screen. Though some women play the role of heroine, they often cause conflict and tension between families. In *Chuye Dile mon*, the hero decided to take revenge on the family of heroine because in their teenage his family got humiliated because of her. The incident indicates that the main problem of the story arises from the heroine. Even in the movie, *Hawa (2022)* fishermen fight with each other to get more attention from Gulti. Women are presented as the symbol of conflict in the cinema. Cinema highlights that everything might be goes well if the heroine doesn't

provoke others. A man falls in love with the heroine, and he starts to fight with everyone to protect her from any kind of hassle. The Cinema authority also promotes the idea that women intentionally cause conflict in the family to ruin the relationships of siblings. Women can be portrayed in positive roles like mother, sister, aunt, etc. But the producer or director always creates some negative role for women to play on the screen. By watching this kind of representation, society starts to accept the whole concept as the truth. At some point, society strongly believes that women are ruining the peace of families, society. They are creating unnecessary problems in the family. And men spend their half-time solving the problems of women. Cinema works as eye-opener for the audience. They give a negative message, which actually misleads society and makes people disrespect women.

5.4. Women are helpless

Women face aspects of oppression even in screen. The dominance of women is also highly visible on cinema. The verbal abuse of women is common in cinemas. In the cinema, *Chuye Dile Mon* Neela's fiancé shouted at her badly many times. Also, her father's anger makes her frightened a few times. Neela cannot protest against her father. Sometimes the words of her surroundings make her cry, but she can't say anything against them as she needs to be a soft-hearted person. Teasing women, using abusive words, and shouting at them are a common aspect of cinema. Women are facing all these things in cinemas. Women cannot go anywhere alone. They always need help from men to do anything. They cannot go against the conventional rules of society. Cinemas represent women as inferior human beings who are mostly dependent on their father, brother, or husband. Women can't choose their desired man to get married. They need to obey their father or the male member of the family. Threatening and rising voices over women are represented as ordinary things in cinemas. Cinemas are presenting women as helpless creators and society is accepting the idea in a negative way. In

real life, women get treated badly by their male counterparts. Cinemas are provoking society to treat women in a negative way. This kind of representation is actually ruining the self worth of women in society.

5.5. Women are bounded by household chores

Managing household chores is a basic human skill. But in cinemas, women are seen to handle all the household work. Cinema promotes the idea that men are responsible for handling the work outside and women need to do the work at home. They also need to take care of their children. In the cinema, *Hawa Gulti* has been seen working in kitchen several times. Cinemas have divided work into two parts, such as men's responsibility and women's responsibility. Society is also following the same concept in real life.

5.6. Women are the puppets of men

In cinema, women are always seen to obey the instructions of men. Three select cinemas highlight the superiority of patriarchy. From producers to cameraman, every high position is maintained by men. Women just act according to the perspective of men. Women don't always choose their costumes willingly. The maximum time their costume has been chosen by the director or the producers. In maximum cinema, the audience gets to see some intimate scenes. These scenes were not done with the consent of the heroine. Sometimes they do this kind of things to gain popularity, fame or earn money. In the context of recent times, most actresses love to reveal their bodies and beauty to highlight their bravery. Their activities sometimes show that they are afraid of those people and bound by their rules.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The analysis of the content highlights the aspects of stereotyping of women in cinema. The current study point out that cinema needs to focus on a more progressive portrayal of women on screen. The depiction of women in traditional roles highlights the norms and beliefs of society that dominate women badly. The consequence of such portrayals is visible in society, where women are being treated in a negative way both onscreen and real life. To change the

thoughts of the audience about women, media and cinema need to focus on the proper characterization of women. Analyzing the content of the three cinemas named *Chuye Dile Mon*, *Hawa*, and *Innocent Love*, this study comes up with some recommendations to decrease the sexualization of women on screen based on their beauty, fitness, and inferiority. To prevent the sexualization of women, diverse filmmaking should be included in the cinema industry. The participation of female filmmakers may help create better opportunities for women. The filmmaker should emphasize selecting women from different backgrounds to visualize on screen. Women from different backgrounds, different societies can bring change to the development of the cinema. Authority should focus on the acting skills of women rather than their beauty, appearance, or body fitness. The cinema industry should focus more on the guidelines of making cinema. They may develop rules that help prevent the stereotyping depiction of women as well as obscene behavior. They need to focus on the narrative structure and plot development that may help to portray the diversity of female characters. In a money oriented society, both filmmakers and actresses are more concerned about earning money than popularity. Both filmmakers and actresses need to enrich their media literacy, which may help them act properly. Nowadays, majority of actresses and filmmakers want to be popular so early. As a result, they choose shortcut options such as playing attractive roles or wearing body revealing clothes in the cinema. Their desire to become superstars makes them vulnerable and inferior on screen. To prevent all these issues, women need to raise their voices while choosing their characters in the cinema. If women reject disrespectful offers in cinema, then filmmaker won't offer them such characters again. In this way, women can develop their worth in cinema industry. The audience also needs to acquire knowledge about media literacy. They need to change their mind about the female actress as a source of sexual pleasure. Filmmakers should promote gender equality rather than gender stereotypes in cinema.

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