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Abstract

In the world of the 21st century, people are experiencing innumerable changes every now and then; hence, the change in their perspectives is no exception. This paper tries to capture such a recent trend of changing in terms of body politics and the reformed opinions of people regarding that. Although this change has its impact upon a handful of people, it is believed that it would receive more attention. This paper unravels how one's body is termed with certain normative qualities, and if they do not fit under the fixed criteria, they are looked down upon. Very recently, a revival has come to showcase the long-perceived and so-called 'ugly' and 'abnormal' bodies as beautiful and normal ones. Some movies and web series have introduced 'body positivity' that claims why one would consider fat-bodied or dark-skinned individuals as ugly. Therefore, this article will deal with select movies like Gippi (2013), Dum Laga Ke Haisha (2015), Fanney Khan (2018), Double XL (2022), and Fatafati (2023), which have turned the long-believed notions of body politics upside down. These shows have invited us to look at things normally as they appear, rather than being biased. It will show how these movies are unearthing the negativities regarding body politics and claiming to accept the bodies in their own shape, offering body positivity.

Introduction

Since its birth, a child is always physically measured to have a culturally fixed size in terms of its horizontal as well as vertical growth. Sometimes, the biological appearance of an individual does not meet with the expectations of the society, and thus, the sidelining of that individual begins, which is very common in the case of a woman and a differently abled person. Subtly, those individuals having some unique appearances are ostracised. At the same time, it compels the person to feel marginalised and ashamed of having a different outlook. This kind of treatment towards bodily appearance has been termed as 'body negativity'. Dittmar defined negative body image as "[…] the psychologically salient discrepancy between a person's perceived body and their ideal body, which manifests itself as the experience of negative thoughts and esteem about one's body and appearance" (Dittmar 479). Hence, in every course of action, the zeal to make the appearance 'normal' goes on in the person. A revival has come to showcase the long-perceived and so-called 'ugly' and 'abnormal' bodies as beautiful and normal ones, which is termed as 'body positivity'. The term means that all bodies should have equal validity in the mainstream irrespective of different height, weight and colour. It accepts all bodies as they appear to be, and that a person does not have to fit into a specific model or 'body prototype' in order to be beautiful or accepted.

History and Development of the Body Positivity Movement

It is difficult to trace the particular initiating date, when and where it bloomed and developed to its current form with media assistance. However, according to an article

published by the BBC, it reveals that it all began in 1969 with a young engineer in New York named Bill Fabrey who raised his voice against the unfair ways people treated his fat wife. Later on, it became a small group of like-minded people who gave birth to the present-day National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance or NAAFA, the world's longest-running fat rights organisation. Similar groups were also formed, and some even brought forth the Fat Manifesto and called out the "reducing" industries, also known as 'diet culture'. This wave of the fat rights movement started mushrooming in European countries with its first group, The London Fat Women's Group, in the mid-80s and was active for years. Initially, it originated from fat, black, and queer activism in response to certain bodies being so rarely visible or held as valuable in discourses and visual media (like fashion or physical cultures). Nowadays, the movement exists largely in social media and is based on pictures, especially on Instagram. "In the early 2000s, the internet was one of the main places where body shame and body love were spread. Anonymity led to bullying, but it also led to self-expression" ("What Is the History of Body Positivity?"). For instance, millions of pictures on Instagram are hashtagged with some of the similar hashtags used in the movement, like #bodypossitive, #bodypossitivity, etcetera. Besides these, @bodyposipanda is a leading voice on Instagram promoting self-love and recovery from eating disorders, @thebirdspapaya shares unfiltered images and reflections on motherhood, body changes, and #EffYourBeautyStandards was started by Tess Holliday to challenge narrow beauty ideals. It is not only limited to the social media platform, but has also gained popularity at the grassroots level. Many campaigns are held to bring the concept of 'body neutrality'. It is a mindset and approach that encourages individuals to accept their bodies as they are, without emphasising appearance or striving to love every aspect of their physical self. This article will deal with select movies like *Gippi*

(2013), *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (2015), *Fanney Khan* (2018), *Double XL* (2022) and *Fatafati* (2023) to look at how these movies accept this 'body positivity' and also disapprove the claims of acceptance of fat-bodied or dark-skinned individuals as ugly.

Changing perspectives towards Body

As the article deals with the issue of the body, it can be said that bodies matter. Thus, the phrase 'bodies matter' symbolises that physical appearance has an important role in proving one's existence. The problem arises when physical appearance becomes the only marker to judge the status and the positional and intellectual value of any human being, especially for women. It entirely sidelines the role of mind and intellect and gives a new definition for existence, but it is a domineering factor. As with time, change is necessary; thus, the changing of the world has a little impact on the perspective of looking at others' existence in a metaphysical way. Gradually, emerging out of a fixed notion, the body positivity movement is creating a new definition of beauty, value, and power. Thus, 'bodies matter' has got a new perspective and definition too. When it seems that one problem is going to be erased, suddenly, a new problem pops up. Nowadays, the supremacy of technological and virtual definitions of bodies are turning into the constitution of the real body, which creates not only problems but a clash between reality and virtuality too. The natural body remains under the carpet and all the clashes are happening in the air. The media is taking a positive initiative to break the clash. It can be said that the body is constantly under surveillance, be it religious, political, secular, cultural, personal and nowadays virtual too. Women are continuously under the threat that someone is watching, patrolling, and judging, and eventually, it is internalised. This patrolling heightens the body consciousness,

and it is then injected into the blood of the women, indicating that body management is necessary for survival.

Intersection with Consumer Culture and Virtuality

Besides the issues mentioned above, the emergence of the market economy has created a great field of productive culture and consumer culture, which have taken a vital initiative in defining body politics according to their norms, and that becomes the trademark for every individual to become like that particular body type. Thus, a single body type becomes the theme of attraction and worship. All try to fit into that body type, and there is a supremacy of belief that by reaching into that particular point, one will make his/her existence. The emergence of new brand cosmetics to become the ideal beauty is a recent and trendy phenomenon; for example, the demand for Korean glass beauty and multiple filters in cameras, which highlights the tussle between virtual reality and natural reality. Feminist and capitalist theories often intersect in critiquing how economic systems play a key role in gender equality. Marxist-Feminist theory argues that capitalism and patriarchy are intertwined systems of oppression, and both perpetuate gender-based oppression by commodifying women's bodies. Feminist capitalist theory, often referred to critically as purple capitalism, explores how feminist ideals are integrated into capitalist systems. For example, capitalism profits from selling narrow beauty ideals in the fashion and beauty industries. Feminist theorists critique how mainstream cinema often reinforces narrow beauty standards, while body-positive films attempt to challenge these norms by showcasing diverse bodies and experiences. Thus, an initial change is needed in the virtual field to create a healthy reality. Bodies are now a means through which products are sold and esteem

acquired. The prototype body works as an 'impression management' method, and today, this 'impression management' is a trendy phenomenon that is working in the biopolitical management of life. This argument gets justification by quoting Richard Crisp's opinion in his book *Social Psychology: A Very Short Introduction* (2015), where he argues that,

> The social mind is a dynamic system, and one that is constantly growing, revising, and changing. Our attitudes change over time (just think about your opinions on a range of issues a few years ago — political, cultural, social — are they all the same or have some dramatically changed?). The longer the time period between assessing an attitude and measuring behaviour, the less in line they're likely to be. (47)

Thus, this change is also visible in the field of beauty, and along with literature, social media platforms are also emerging as positive influencers. The presentation of bodies through multiple media is engrossing as an active agent that moulds the individual choices of the viewers. Like everything, the media has both good and bad impacts on human life. This work, therefore, delves into these dual perspectives of media. The entire gamut of advertisements, films and media accept the young, slim, sexy and independent body, and at the same time, those who are not representing the idealised version get the opportunity to be reborn by working on their limitations and by accepting or embarking on whatever means are needed, be it cosmetic, exercise or even surgical options. Thus, this will bring them into the position of eternal youth and will also get personal autonomy, but the problem arises when someone refuses to take part in this challenge or is unable to achieve success in maintaining their bodies in a socially valued form and gets accusations of becoming a burden on society.

All these films reflect on this perspective that, as the protagonists are not following the expectations, they are treated as burdens in their social relations. Thus, once again, these are bodies that have the supremacy and through which social and cultural relations are constructed. That can be followed by quoting from Chris Shilling's *The Body: A Very Short Introduction* (2016), "For Pierre Bourdieu, indeed, visual appearance and other impressions 'given off' by the body are critical for people's capacity to accumulate value across the various dimensions of social and economic life" (49). By linking consumer culture with postmodernism, Featherstone suggests that traditional boundaries between high and low culture have eroded, and landscape, fashion, media, and advertising play key roles in shaping desires and social norms. He critiques how consumer culture is encouraging people to focus on appearance and image rather than substance or authenticity. This leads to a fragmented sense of self, where identity is fluid and performative. He sees consumer culture as a powerful force that reshapes how we live, relate, and understand ourselves that prioritises commodification over meaning. His theory on consumer culture, especially as outlined in his influential book *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* (1991), explores how consumption has become central to identity, aesthetics, and everyday life in late modern and postmodern societies. He argues that in consumer culture, individuals increasingly construct their identities through lifestyle choices, brand affiliations, and visual presentation, which is the aestheticisation of everyday life. This means that consumption is not just about utility or necessity, but about expressing status. Body positivity as a movement emerges to challenge this kind of supremacy. Through their protagonists, these films also break the hierarchy of entire body politics. Besides reflecting the position, women's bodily appearance does more than that, but the wing of beauty often takes the overarching role over everything. However,

the forms of resistance, which are continuously emerging with the body positivity movement, occur within overarching social structures that ultimately index existing power relations. Adorning and enhancing the body's appearance are very much a part and parcel of human culture and life. Human beings derive pleasure from beautifying themselves and from contemplating those who are beautiful. Beauty work can be a mode of self-expression, but often people forget that it is not everything.

Stuart Hall's representation theory argues that the media does not simply reflect reality but actively constructs it through signs, symbols, language, images, and cultural codes. He introduced the encoding/decoding model, where media producers encode messages with specific intended meanings, but audiences may decode them differently, based on their own social and cultural contexts. Hall also argues that meaning is not fixed; it is shaped by ideology and power, and the media plays a crucial role in reinforcing or challenging dominant narratives. Modern films, especially those run by a commercial perspective, frequently reflect consumerist aesthetics as slim, youthful, and conventionally attractive bodies dominate screens, reinforcing marketable beauty ideals. This actually tries to create a different world order. Mathew Arnold's concern with culture being reduced to mechanical repetition and materialism resonates here, as body representation is driven by profit rather than human diversity or moral insight. Body positivity movements in film challenge this by advocating for inclusive representation, celebrating bodies of all sizes, abilities, and identities. Films like *Gippi* (2013), *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (2015), *Fanney Khan* (2018), *Double XL* (2022) and *Fatafati* (2023) begin to disrupt the Philistine model by foregrounding emotional depth, complexity, and authenticity over surface-level appeal. In Arnoldian terms,

these films strive toward a culture that elevates rather than commodifies.

Body Positivity in Indian Cinema: Case Studies

Bollywood has a long history of portraying overweight women through a lens of humour, often reducing them to caricatures rather than characters. The dominant trend has leaned heavily on these fat-shaming tropes for comic relief. Their weight becomes the joke, as Sweetu in *Kal Ho Naa Ho* (2003) is mocked throughout the film and compared to a double-decker bus. They are often portrayed as unworthy of love or a punishment in romantic dares. As in *Dil* (1990), the hero dares to kiss an overweight woman, treating her as a joke. Often, the fat women characters sometimes joke about their own weight to deflect shame, reinforcing the idea that fatness must be apologised for. As in *Mission Mangal* (2019), a character's weight is mocked during a professional discussion. Hindi cinema's portrayal of Tun Tun (Uma Devi Khatri) and Guddi Maruti as comedic figures was deeply intertwined with their plus-size appearance, often reinforcing stereotypes rather than celebrating their talent. These portrayals shape public perception. When fat women are consistently shown as comic relief, it reinforces harmful ideas about beauty, worth, and desirability. It also limits the roles available to plus-sized actresses, pushing them into narrow boxes. Thus, it has created a proper demarcation between what should be accepted and what should not.

In this article, the selected films, on the one hand, show that the protagonists are not internalising this disorder, and on the other hand, they highlight how they are fighting to erase this disorder from society. In the film *Fanney Khan,* Prashant Kumar Sharma, also

known as Fanney Khan, the father of the protagonist, wants to make his daughter a famous singer and especially wants to show his daughter's talent worldwide. While society was coming up with its multiple rules and regulations, he did not hesitate to kidnap the star queen only to prove her daughter's talent, which cannot be determined by her bodily appearance. In her school function, Lata, the protagonist, was criticised and taunted, as she was a fat girl, and she sang the song *Shila ki jawani.* Through the behaviour of the audience, the film hints at how society has made its own definition of normalcy. The ending of the film shows that everyone has witnessed Lata's talent. She performed in the great talent show, which her father had been dreaming of for a long time.

Fig 1.1 Lata singing the song, *Fanney Khan* (2:01:51)

The film *Fanney Khan* ends with her singing '*Tere jaisa tu hai mere jaisi mein hoon…*' (You are unique so am I[1]) (2:01:51) indicates the real meaning of the life of everyone, which is beyond any measurement. Thus, this film reflects the real value of being a human as s/he is. It shows that talent is something which is beyond the bodily appearance and

thus challenges the concept of objectification of the body. These selected movies are outbursting the negativities regarding body politics and claiming to accept the bodies in their own shape and colour, offering the feelings of body positivity and, in an acute way, challenging against those great umbrella terms like normativity, culture, etcetera. Featherstone, in his *The Body in Consumer Culture* (1982), argued that "Within consumer culture… the 'performing self' places greater emphasis upon appearance, display and the management of impressions" (22). So, it can be said that appearance depends mainly on 'self-management', and thus, it gradually effects on the psychological status of women as Adler Alfred writes in his *The Scfnce of living* (1930) that,

> Everyone (...) has a feeling of inferiority. But the feeling of inferiority is not a disease; it is rather a stimulant to healthy, normal striving and development. It becomes a pathological condition only when the sense of inadequacy overwhelms the individual and, far from stimulating them to useful activity, makes them depressed and incapable of development. (96-97)

What is striking in these films is that in the case of the protagonists, the feeling of inadequacy is not naturally within them regarding their bodies rather it is imposed on them. They never treat themselves as inferiors; rather, society endeavours to make them inferior for not conforming to the established norms of beauty. In case of Sandhya in *Dum Laga Ke Haisha,* she is portrayed as a courageous, confident, and strong character who does not hesitate even to slap her husband when he insults her in front of his friends. She angrily says, "why should I stay quiet? I slapped him hard. Now he'll not dare to speak to a woman like that"[2] (*Dum*

Laga Ke Haisha 00:55:19-00:55:25). The same happened in the movie *Double XL,* as the protagonist Rajshri was not approved for the audition for the post of Sport Presenter as she was a fat woman. She questions the rules of the great company and how it works on bodily appearance. This act of Rajshri proves how she accepts the intellectual over the physical, and her challenging behaviour shows that this kind of self-respect and self-pride is very much necessary to challenge the traditional definition of women and their position. The protagonists here challenge the concept of 'impression management', which claims a proper and maintained bodily presence, but here, rather than physical appearance, they try to highlight their intellectual impression management. In "The Ethics of Reflexivity: Pride, Self-Sufficiency, and Modesty" (2016), Fischer identifies the "worthiness of one's ideals" as a constraint on pride. The same is happening with both Rajshri and Saira. Rajshri laments over the fact that, how can she blame the society when her mother does not understand her. Saira too pours out her heart by remembering her childhood. Rajshri dreams of becoming a

Fig 1.2 Rajshri and Saira together, *Double XL* (1:31:12)

sports presenter, but for her mother, Rajshri's marriage is the most important thing as she is fat and she is unfit for the marriage market. Both women deal with the same issue; thus, it highlights that even in the metropolitan city, the image of the body is a sacred thing to maintain for women. After this conversation both Rajshri and Saira, get up and realise their worth above everything. In this picture, Rajshri and Saira are rejuvenating their life with new hope and new belief. These films have been chosen to discuss this very essence of existence, irrespective of any gender.

In her book, *The Body Is Not an Apology* (2018), feminist activist Sonia Renée Taylor describes resistance to body oppression in terms of "radical self-love". She also claims that such self-love is "our inherent natural state," but that "social, political, and economic systems of oppression have distanced us from it" (10). This article adds that these films have challenged this kind of distance and flourished the love of one's own existence as it is.

As in *Gippi,* after her break-up, Gippi realises her own value and that becomes the changing moment in her life. This self-love is crucial to get societal recognition. This realisation gives her the meaning of life. Focusing on beauty standards, in "Narcissism, Femininity and Alienation" (1982), Bartky affirms that the stereotypical narrow standards and the pressure to achieve them force women to embody a "repressive narcissism," whereby they live their bodies as always in need of correction. What is interesting is that in all these films, it is not the protagonists who are dealing with this 'repressive narcissism'; rather, it is the society that intervenes with this disorder. Narcissism defines self-love, but according to Bartky, narcissism is repressive as it is not merely self-love but a form of self-discipline, self-regulation, self-surveillance dictated by external social forces like media and the fashion

industry. Gippi is overweight, and in school, she is a backbencher, who is constantly bullied by Shamira, who is the popular queen bee. Shamira mirrors the negative image of the so-called slim, trimmed figure as she mentions how she has to sacrifice many things only to remain like this. This awakens Gippi to understand the value of love of one's own self. To make reference to the above-mentioned film, Michèle Ohayon's documentary *Strip Down, Rise Up* (2021) documents a diverse group of women who use the body to heal their repressed trauma and issues related with body image through sensual movement and the art of pole dancing. Thus, it exposes the therapeutic role of the movement, and thus, it expands its wings in multiple factors. Though, characters like, Gippi, Phullora and Lata when they become entirely frustrated with the fight, they were influenced by this 'repressive narcissism' and started to work to fit into the idealised version, but here family plays a crucial role to make them realise that their body is not the only marker of beauty, rather; they are beautiful the way they are. Thus, these films reflect the role of love and passion which is inevitable to make a change, violence is not always the right weapon. The same happens in the film *Dum Laga Ke Haisha,* it shows the changing of the relationship between the husband and wife.

Fig 1.3 Sandhya and Prem in their room, *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (15:03)

Prem, husband of Sandhya, was not happy to marry her as she is a fat woman. He married her, due to the pressure of his family. There is also dissimilarity between them, as Sandhya is an educated one while Prem has not even qualified the 10th exam. Through the character of Prem, the film represents the patriarchal mindset that in spite of looking at his own inferiorities, he is looking at the others and also to his wife and proclaiming his own supremacy for being a man, but as the film develops it highlights the transition of Prem from a conventional patriarchal to a human being and the weapon that the film has used is 'love'. The first image reflects that Prem does not want to accept Sandhya in her personal life as she is fat, but the change that comes through love and passion that he does not even hesitate to accept her publicly in the following picture shows that.

Fig 1.4 Sandhya and Prem participating in the game Dum Laga Ke Haisha, *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (1:43:47)

Bartky also adds that "Our ideas of the beautiful will have to be expanded and so altered that we will perceive ourselves and one another very differently than we do now"

(140). By following her, it can be said that only after doing these things we can break the binary between the 'symbolic body' and the 'agentic body', and between the 'real body' and 'virtual body' and finally, there will be only a human body, without any more expectations from it. This can be well explained if we look into films like Fatafati and Double XL, where the protagonists break the traditional fashion show model and come up on the stage with full confidence and with their bodies as they are.

In *Double XL,* Saira, a fashion designer, claims that in her store, there will be designs for all sizes, the design will be done for all the body types, not only about the one body type. The fashion show witnesses a revolutionary one, as the models are not representing the idealised version of woman body image. Saira claims that the motto of her fashion is to wear the "clothes that are sized to your attitude" (1:58:04). Women's bodies and social constructions of the ideal female form do more than reflect women's position in society: They offer a powerful means for negotiating, redefining, and reconceptualising that position.

Fig 1.5 Revolutionary fashion show that unfolds body positivity, *Double XL* (1:54:54)

Furthermore, celebrating bodies that have not historically met standards of beauty has sometimes merged with fights for political recognition.

For example, to achieve such an expansion, we need to have representations of more diverse body types in multiple fields, especially in the fashion and entertainment industries. In *Fatafati,* Phullora, for her body weight, often gets snide remarks from people. Despite being told by model Bikki Sen and people in general that fashion is not for the fat, she starts writing about designs that suit all body types. Gogol, her brother-in-law, publishes her writings online and in the Instagram handle, Fatafati, which becomes a rage overnight. While the family goes through a financial crisis, Phullora gets offers to endorse brands through Instagram. Laura Mulvey's theory critiques how mainstream cinema often frames women through a patriarchal lens, objectifying them for male pleasure. Body positivity challenges this by promoting diverse, empowered representations of bodies that resist being reduced to visual commodities. Emerging filmmakers use alternative gazes to centre female subjectivity,

Fig 1.6 Phullora as Fatafati, *Fatafati* (2:05:51)

self-love, and empowerment. These perspectives allow for more nuanced portrayals of body diversity.

In the end, Phullora, who has an alternative name for social media platform and herself, suffers from body image issues, and at the end, she reclaims her identity, and tells the world who she is. In both the film *Double XL* and *Fatafati,* the beauty pageants challenge the power dynamics between thin body and fat body. Fatafati is not only about Phullora but about many women like her, and especially about the fat housewives. Characters like Rinku Di, Aruna Di, and Seema Di all represent what Phullora is performing. Some real-life incidents of the actress also make the argument of the work clear, as Harnaaz Sandhu, after winning Miss Universe 2021, was trolled for gaining weight during her appearances at Lakme Fashion Week. She later revealed that she suffers from Celiac disease, which affects her diet and body. (Naudiyal) Ritabhari, a well-known Bengali actress, faced trolling after gaining weight due to two surgeries in 2020. She was contractually obligated to appear in ad shoots, and when she did, the backlash was intense. "I had always been the skinny, petite one with abs… suddenly I was on the other side of the spectrum" ("Exclusive! Ritabhari Chakraborty . . ."). Similarly, Keely Shaye Smith Brosnan, wife of former James Bond actor Pierce Brosnan, has faced unjustified trolling for her weight and appearance. The criticism often came in the form of comparisons to her younger self that she didn't "look the part" of a celebrity spouse. Thus, life on and off the screen are often under the critical lens of viewers with a traditional mindset. Sarah Banet-Weiser in her *The Most Beautiful Girl in the World: Beauty Pageants and National Identity* (1999), argues that the beauty pageant also carries a "… kind of feminist space where female identity is constructed by negotiating the

contradictions of being socially constituted as 'just' a body while simultaneously producing oneself as an active thinking subject, indeed, a decidedly 'liberal' subject" (24). In *Fatafati,* Phullora's carrying of a false identity to overcome her inferiority shows the clash between the real and the virtual. This false consciousness needs to be broken, which Phullora does, and she accepts her identity as she is. Thus, the recognition is not only limited to personal; rather, it brings the social recognition, turning the personal into political.

In Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein's *I Feel Pretty* (2018), Renee, the protagonist, was on a date with her boyfriend Ethan, and she entered into a "bikini body" contest. Though she wins over the crowd but loses the competition, she tells Ethan that she does not need external validation to prove that she is beautiful. Rather, it is her own existence that matters at the end. Ethan praises her self-confidence and she appreciates his openness over not yet knowing himself. At the end of the film, when Renee hears, that Mallory, the owner of the beauty company LeClaire, is auditioning to model for the LeClaire diffusion line, she realises that the beauty company is out of touch with everyday women, and focuses on the stereotypical definition of beauty. She enters into the product launch with the presentation of her own images along with many so-called 'stereotypically unfit women'. In the course of a presentation, she realises that she was never transformed, and she gives a speech about women accepting themselves as they are, through the collage of diverse real images of women.

Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Robert's objectification theory, which argues how women's bodies are treated as objects, plays a prominent role in understanding the appearance of women. It also argues that pervasive and sexual objectification in society leads

many women to self-objectify, which then disrupts their psychological well-being and contributes to various mental health vulnerabilities (unipolar depression, eating disorders, sexual dysfunction, etc.). Thus, these selected theories, which have been discussed, bridge socio-cultural conditions with individual psychological outcomes, offering insights to challenge oppressive cultural norms.

Conclusion

To conclude, it can be said that these films essentially capture the more significant movement toward a more welcoming and gender-equal environment. The media significantly impacts how society views beauty across time, frequently with far-reaching effects. It has shown negativity for an extended period of time, but these new works are constantly breaking the walls of rigidity and promoting a paradigm change in how beauty is portrayed, and thus, this new media is proof that it has the power to influence societal perceptions and ideals favourably. The industry is not only reflecting shifting cultural attitudes but also assisting in the creation of a more inclusive and equitable society by embracing different beauty and challenging long-standing biases. It conveys that skill, confidence, and intellect are more important than one's outward look. In this way, the films continue to be essential in rewriting the story of beauty.

The protagonists' experiences demonstrate the power of narrative in influencing the viewers' perceptions and promoting empowerment. Female characters are helping to challenge gender stereotypes and inspire women to reach new heights in both film and real life as they become more realistic and inspirational. These prove that there are multiple ways

of opposing and limiting body shame, and thus, different paths toward promoting body positivity. Body positivity also includes an emotional relationship with one's own body. The primary purpose of this article is to sketch an account of body positivity that is broader than the mainstream movement. It further expands aesthetic tastes and also can claim that it can foster positive relationships with our bodies, which can be founded not only on bodily beauty, but also on such aspects of the body as its abilities and its capacity for pleasure. This movement has impacted on the bodily (re)form, and thus, it reflects and motivates the processes of social reform. The so-called fat, ugly women have learned to appropriate the body's symbolism to achieve their own ends. The body has the power within itself to challenge those who are in power and dominate all these. The body thus serves as a vehicle for social action even as it signifies social realities. This transition is limited not only in the portrayal of the female character. Films have transcended their boundaries by challenging the conventional concept of masculinity. Films like *Gully Boy* (2019) and *Kapoor & Sons* (2016) present men who are emotionally vulnerable, introspective, and not afraid to cry or fail. These characters are seen as more relatable and human. Movies like *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* (2020) have been praised for normalising queer love and challenging heteronormative masculinity. Bollywood is slowly moving away from the hypermasculine archetype popularised in the seventies and eighties, toward more layered male characters who listen, feel, and evolve. These films often use humour, satire, or tragedy to critique how society polices male appearance and behaviour and to challenge stereotypes.

Endnote:

[1] Subtitle is taken from T-Series official YouTube page.

[2] Translation is mine due to unavailability of the English subtitle.

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