

## **Women in Bollywood across the last hundred years- The uniqueness of constructing an identity**

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Across the last hundred years and weaving its own pattern of representing the socio-cultural, religious and political ethos of the country- cinema has evolved in India as an important parallel culture. In its initial days-deriving strength from the diverse varieties of folklore, legends, myths and theatrical forms from various parts of India- the cinema in India has come a long way today. Amidst the diverse range of the cinema across many languages in India, Hindi cinema has helped to create its uniqueness with reference to encouraging and providing a specific platform for the growth and development of a storyteller. This has also further helped to encourage various minds to experiment with representations, narratives and the manner in which it is presented to the audience. The representation of women in popular Hindi movies in India- popularly referred to as Bollywood- has created an important niche for itself across the last hundred years. From the days of representing women through the popularly known folktales around the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century- it has come a long way in the modern age. The representation of women has evolved with time and concepts- from an age of reform and experimentation of the 1930s and 40s, the age of populist social realism in the 50s and 60s, the age of New Cinema experimentation in the 70s and 80s- down to the modern age of blockbuster extravaganza. Today, as Bollywood cinema has become a part of 'world cinema', the study of representation of women amidst Bollywood renders an important perspective about understanding this global phenomenon. This study aims to explore this concept of representation of women across the last hundred years and how it has helped to build an image of the Indian women amidst popular culture on a global platform.

**Keywords:** Women representation, Bollywood, century, identities