

**WHEN MOVIES UNLEARN GENDER MYTH: A STUDY ON THE  
PORTRAYAL OF GENDER ROLES IN MALAYALAM MOVIES  
AND ITS INFLUENCE ON YOUTH.**

**Dissertation Submitted to  
Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Specializing in  
FAMILY AND CHILD WELFARE**

**Submitted by  
ANN MARY BABICHAN  
Reg. No. 210011034046**

**Under the guidance of  
MR. SOORAJ M V**



**Bharata Mata School of Social Work Thrikkakara, Kochi-21  
(Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam)  
(2021-2023)**

**Certificate**

This is to certify that this dissertation titled “WHEN MOVIES UNLEARN GENDER MYTH: A STUDY ON THE PORTRAYAL OF GENDER ROLES IN MALAYALAM MOVIES AND IT’S INFLUENCE ON YOUTH” is a record of genuine and original work done by ANN MARY BABICHAN (210011034046) of IVth Semester Master of Social Work course of this college under my guidance and supervision and it is hereby approved for submission.

Mr. Sooraj M V

Research Guide

Assistant Professor

Bharata Mata School of Social  
Work, Thrikkakara.

Dr. Johnson K M

Principal

Bharata Mata College

Thrikkakara.



**Estd.1965**

**Submitted to Viva-voce Examination on.....**

**External Examiner.....**



**DECLARATION**

I Ann Mary Babichan hereby declare that the research work titled “WHEN MOVIES UNLEARN GENDER MYTH: A STUDY ON THE PORTRAYAL OF GENDER ROLES IN MALAYALAM MOVIES AND IT’S INFLUENCE ON YOUTH” submitted to the MG University, Kottayam is a record of genuine and original work done by me under the guidance of Mr. Sooraj M V, Assistant professor, Bharata Mata School of Social Work, Thrikkakara, and this research work is submitted in the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Social Work Specializing in Family and Child Welfare.

I hereby declare that the results obtained in this research have not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Place: Thrikkakara

Date:

Ann Mary Babichan

## **ABSTRACT**

This research examines the influence of Malayalam movies on shaping the gender roles of youth in Kerala. The study aims to understand how Malayalam movies contribute to the formation of gender identities, perceptions, and behaviours among young individuals. By exploring the content, portrayal, and reception of gender roles in Malayalam cinema, this research seeks to provide insights into the potential impact of popular media on societal attitudes and norms. The research begins with a comprehensive review of the literature on gender roles, media influence, and the role of movies in shaping cultural narratives. Theoretical frameworks such as the social learning theory, cultivation theory, and feminist film theory are employed to guide the analysis and interpretation of the research findings. A mixed-methods approach is adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Content analysis is conducted on a selected sample of Malayalam movies to identify the prevalent gender representations and examine their alignment with or deviation from traditional gender stereotypes. Additionally, surveys are conducted with a diverse group of youth to investigate their perceptions, interpretations, and responses to gender roles depicted in these movies. To sum up, this research on the influence of Malayalam movies on shaping the gender roles of youth provides valuable insights into the impact of popular media on societal attitudes and norms. By examining the content, portrayal, and reception of gender roles in Malayalam cinema, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of how movies contribute to the formation of gender identities and behaviours among young individuals. The findings have implications for promoting more inclusive and equitable gender representations in media and empowering youth to critically engage with media messages

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to each and every one who helped me in completion of this research.

Thank you God Almighty for blessing me throughout the completion of my research.

I am deeply grateful to Rev. Fr. Abraham Oliyapurath, Manager, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, and Dr. Johnson KM, Principle, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, for prayers and support.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to my supervisor, Mr. Sooraj MV, Assistant Professor, Bharata Mata School of Social Work, without whose guidance and encouragement this project would never have been completed. Thank you so much Sir.

I thank Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip, Head of the Department, for her encouragement and for approving my research.

I offer my sincere thanks to all the respondents who helped me in filling out the google form and contributing to the completion of my research.

I would like to extend my gratitude to my family members for their unwavering support and belief in me.

Finally, I thank all other faculty members, friends and non-teaching staffs for their help throughout the completion of my research. Thank you all!

Ann Mary Babichan

**LIST OF CONTENTS**

<i>Sl No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
1	Title page	
2	Certificate	ii
3	Declaration	iv
4	Abstract	v
5	Acknowledgment	vi
6	List of Contents, Tables and Illustrations	vii-ix
7	Chapter I- Introduction	2
8	Chapter II- Review of Literature	18
9	Chapter III- Research Methodology	35
10	Chapter IV- Review of Malayalam Movies	43
11	Chapter V- Data Analysis and Interpretation	81
12	Chapter VI- Social work implications, Suggestions, Conclusion	98
13	Bibliography	108
14	Appendix	113

**LIST OF TABLES**

<i>Sl No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
1	Age wise classification of the respondents	81
2	Gender of the respondents	83
3	Impact of movies in shaping the gender roles among youth.	84
4	Perpetuation of stereotypes about masculinity and femininity in movies.	85
5	Promotion of positive relationship in movies.	86
6	Negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth.	87
7	Need for more diverse and progressive representation of gender roles.	88
8	Depiction of strong and independent women characters in movies.	90
9	Portrayal of dominant men and submissive women.	91
10	Depiction of men and women as equal in partnership	93
11	Role of movies in challenging societal norms regarding gender roles.	94
12	Contribution of Malayalam movies in positive transformation of gender role attitude among youth.	95



**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

<i>Sl No.</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Page No.</i>
1	Age wise classification of the respondents	81
2	Gender of the respondents	83
3	Impact of movies in shaping the gender roles among youth.	84
4	Perpetuation of stereotypes about masculinity and femininity in movies.	85
5	Promotion of positive relationship in movies.	86
6	Negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth.	87
7	Need for more diverse and progressive representation of gender roles.	88
8	Depiction of strong and independent women characters in movies.	90
9	Portrayal of dominant men and submissive women.	91
10	Depiction of men and women as equal in partnership	93
11	Role of movies in challenging societal norms regarding gender roles.	94
12	Contribution of Malayalam movies in positive transformation of gender role attitude among youth.	95

# **CHAPTER 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER-1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The media has a significant and enduring impact on how we see gender roles and the place of women in society. According to studies, children are exposed to gender stereotypes through the media at an early age, which can have a long-lasting effect on their views and attitudes. Sadly, the media frequently contributes to the continuation of gender inequality by depicting women in conventional and hypersexualized ways, especially in advertising.

The media has the ability to influence people's opinions, point of view, and actions. Thus, social standards that encourage and enable gender violence have been the focus of governmental interventions via media communication. According to earlier research, media can have two different kinds of effects: a direct impact on a person (private) or a social impact (public). Due to the individual effect, media coverage of new norms may persuade people to adopt them. Because people are more likely to accept information if they believe others are doing the same, knowledge has a positive social influence by fostering the transmission of common knowledge about norms and enhancing social coordination.

The media, however, also has the power to advance gender equality and subvert established conventions. Although it is not completely their responsibility, female media professionals are more likely to represent women's demands and viewpoints. Men can help portray women more fairly by efficiently addressing gender issues.

It is crucial to understand that the representation of gender roles in the media goes beyond conventional channels like film, television, and advertising. Additionally, the

influence of social media and video games on society standards and expectations is enormous.

Additionally, attempts are being made to address the gender gap in media careers, which is a worrying issue. There are programs and tools available to advance gender equality and give women in the media business more authority.

Both positive and negative gender roles and views are significantly shaped by the media. Recognizing and combating gender stereotypes is essential, as is promoting more fair representations of women in all media.

People are significantly swayed by cinema, which has an impact on their perceptions, feelings, and thoughts. It captivates audiences and draws them into stories, characters, and places as a visual storytelling format. It is clear that movies have an impact on how people think and behave. Films frequently depict society problems, cultural standards, and moral quandaries in interesting and accessible ways. Cinema has the power to expand people's worldviews and challenge preconceptions by displaying a variety of perspectives.

Additionally, seeing a movie might cause strong emotions. Films that are expertly made can inspire empathy, compassion, joy, or despair, leading to introspection and a shift in perspective. The audience are left with a strong impression of the characters and their struggles.

Cinema also serves as a catalyst for raising awareness and initiating conversations on social, political, and environmental matters. It sheds light on marginalized communities, human rights violations, and pressing global challenges. Through storytelling, cinema inspires action, encourages social change, and fosters understanding.

Additionally, film acts as a catalyst for stoking interest in and starting discussions on social, political, and environmental issues. It highlights disadvantaged groups, violations of human rights, and urgent global issues. Cinema inspires action, promotes social change, and improves understanding via storytelling.

However, it is important to recognize that cinema is a work of human creation and is susceptible to influences like financial interests and cultural prejudices. Not all movies adequately represent the variety of human experiences, and some could even support harmful ideologies or prejudices. The media must be critically analysed by viewers, who should also look for inclusive and diverse storylines.

Cinema, a potent kind of mass communication, has a big impact on how people think, feel, and act in society. Pictures have the capacity to affect how people see themselves, other people, and how they interpret gender roles. It is essential to investigate how these films affect young people's gender roles given the importance of Malayalam cinema in Kerala's cultural landscape.

Kerala society's social dynamics are significantly impacted by Malayalam cinema, which is well-known for its excellent storytelling, varied themes, and realistic portrayals. Malayalam films have a long history of providing audiences with entertainment while also reflecting and influencing local values, social mores, and political ideas. These movies frequently act as social mirrors, reflecting people's identities, hardships, and gender perceptions as well as their goals.

Gender roles, which include the behaviours, expectations, and duties assigned to people depending on their gender, are complicated social constructions that are firmly embedded in civilizations. They have an impact on how people perceive themselves and others, which affects their relationships, opportunities, and personal development.

Cultural traditions, socialization processes, and media portrayal all have an impact on the roles allocated to men and women in a given culture.

Although the impact of media on gender roles has been extensively examined, more in-depth research is required to examine the particular influence of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles. The media has a huge impact on how youth, in particular, are shaped as individuals during a crucial time of identity formation. Understanding the social dynamics and difficulties experienced by young people in Kerala requires an understanding of the impact of Malayalam films on youth gender roles.

This study intends to shed light on how Malayalam films help to moulding young people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours about gender roles by undertaking a thorough examination of the movies' content, portrayal, and reception. It looks into the messages these films are trying to get through, how much they support or oppose established gender standards, and how they might affect how young people are socialized and perceive the world.

The researcher has used three theories for the study: cultivation theory, social learning theory and feminist film theory.

A communication theory called *cultivation theory*, which George Gerbner created in the 1960s, looks at how continuous media exposure affects people's perceptions of reality. This idea contends that regular exposure to media content, particularly television, alters people's attitudes, values, and worldviews, resulting in a common perception of reality. People are more inclined to adopt the ideas and values promoted in the media the more time they spend watching television.

The "mean world syndrome" is an essential idea in cultivation theory. Gerbner suggested that people who watch a lot of television develop a distorted picture of the

world as a result of the violence and negativity presented in media. As a result, they tend to exaggerate the presence of violence and risk in society. Those who routinely watch crime dramas, for example, may mistakenly feel that crime rates are higher than they are. According to this hypothesis, continual media exposure contributes to a collective vision of reality, which might influence people's attitudes and behaviours.

The role of mainstream media in creating society norms and values is emphasized in cultivation theory. According to the hypothesis, television programming frequently displays a limited range of viewpoints, supporting prevailing ideologies and leading to a convergence of views and attitudes. Individuals' opinions and attitudes toward gender, ethnicity, and social concerns can be shaped by media portrayals of these themes. For example, portraying women in conventional positions might reinforce existing gender norms and inequality. According to Cultivation Theory, media has a vital role in moulding people's knowledge of the world, as well as their views and attitudes. It emphasizes the influence of extended exposure to media information in shaping societal norms and beliefs. However, the notion has been criticized for oversimplifying a complicated relationship between media and viewers, as well as failing to recognize the active role that individuals play in interpreting and opposing media messages.

Albert Bandura's *social learning theory* proposes that people learn and acquire behaviours through observation and imitation of others in a social context. Individuals, according to this view, are not merely passive recipients of knowledge, but also active participants in the learning process. They observe other people's actions, attitudes, and outcomes and assimilate these observations into their own behaviours and beliefs.

The idea of modelling, whereby people pick up knowledge by taking note of the actions of others and the results that result, is fundamental to the social learning theory.

Individuals learn what is regarded suitable or wrong, desirable or undesirable through paying attention to role models, whether they be parents, peers, or influential personalities. Instead of engaging in actions that result in unfavourable outcomes, they mimic those that are rewarded or positively reinforced.

In the social learning theory, reinforcement is a key component. Vicarious reinforcement occurs when people see the consequences others experience and change their conduct in response. It can take the form of direct reinforcement, where people are directly rewarded or penalized for their actions. Individuals learn which actions are more likely to result in favourable consequences through this process people become increasingly adept at repeating activities that are likely to result in favourable results while avoiding those that are likely to have adverse effects.

In addition, social learning theory places a strong emphasis on the role that cognitive processes play in learning. People actively evaluate and process information from their surroundings, such as the outcomes they see and the models they see. They create mental images of the activities they see and the possible results, which serve as a guide for their own behaviour. This cognitive part of social learning theory emphasizes the significance of motivation, attention, and memory in learning.

In conclusion, the social learning theory asserts that people pick up behaviours through observing others in a social setting and replicating their conduct. Individuals absorb witnessed behaviours into their own repertoire through modelling, reinforcement, and cognitive processes, which shapes their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. This theory emphasizes the social dimension of learning and the significance of imitation, observation, and the effects of others' actions in influencing one's own behaviour.



A critical framework called *feminist film theory* looks at how women are portrayed in movies and investigate how patriarchal and gendered norms are either upheld or challenged by these representations. It seeks to expose the underlying power structures, prejudices, and beliefs that influence how women are portrayed in movies and during the actual filmmaking process. The necessity for increased gender equality and diversity representation in the film business is emphasized by this notion.

The idea of the male gaze is an important component of feminist film theory. The term "male gaze," popularized by film scholar Laura Mulvey, describes how heterosexual men frequently construct films from their point of view, objectifying and sexualizing women as passive objects of desire. Alternative stories and portrayals that empower women and question conventional gender norms are promoted by feminist cinema theorists as a way to challenge and disrupt this prevailing perspective.

The absence of female representation in front of the camera is a topic covered in feminist cinema theory. It criticizes the gender disparity in the industry and pushes for more chances for female screenwriters, directors, and producers. Feminist film theory aims to confront and demolish the patriarchal systems that have historically dominated the industry by emphasizing the voices and perspectives of women in the filmmaking process.

Finally, feminist film theory gives a critical lens through which to evaluate and combat gender inequities in cinema. This theory seeks to advance more inclusive, diverse, and powerful narratives by looking at how women are portrayed, how males view women, and how few women are represented in the film industry. It urges a change in the production and consumption of movies, promoting greater gender equality and dismantling conventional gender roles both on and off-screen.

The results of this study will help us better understand the social processes at work in Kerala society as well as offer insightful information about how popular media shapes gender roles. The study can also help legislators, teachers, and media experts in their campaigns to encourage gender equality and media literacy among young people.

We shall examine the existing literature on gender roles, media influence, and Malayalam film in the following sections of this study. We will also detail the research technique used and talk about the theoretical foundation that underlies this study. This study intends to add to the academic discussion on media effects and offer useful suggestions for a more inclusive and equitable representation of gender in Malayalam films through a thorough analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data.

The media, and movies in particular, have a significant impact on cultural views, values, and behaviours. Movies have a big impact on how cultural narratives are shaped and how social realities are created. Malayalam films have a long history of being praised as a potent form of storytelling and creative expression in Kerala. They are extremely well-liked and have a significant influence on people's lives, particularly those of young people.

Growing curiosity and worry have been expressed about how popular media shapes gender roles. The expectations and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity that are socially constructed as gender roles influence how people see themselves and other people in society. Young people's attitudes, goals, and behaviours can be influenced by how gender is portrayed in the media, which can either support or contradict long-held prejudices.

The rationale behind this research lies in the need to understand the specific influence of Malayalam movies on the gender roles of youth. While existing studies have

explored the impact of media on gender roles in general, there is a dearth of research focusing specifically on the unique context of Malayalam cinema and its influence on the youth of Kerala. By examining the representation of gender in these movies and its reception by the youth, this study seeks to bridge this gap in knowledge.

Kerala, a state renowned for its advanced socioeconomic indices and high rates of literacy, has seen a number of changes in gender dynamics and roles. To determine whether the depictions of gender in Malayalam films support or contradict the evolving social standards, it is crucial to critically examine them. Additionally, young people, who have the potential to both consume and produce media content, are particularly susceptible to the impact of films on how they see gender roles.

This study looks at how Malayalam films affect young people's gender roles with an eye toward revealing insights into the following areas:

**Identification of Gender Representations:** The goal of this study is to analyse the gender representations that are most common in Malayalam films and determine whether or not they support or contradict conventional gender stereotypes. To evaluate these films' possible influence on the development of gender roles among young people, it is essential to comprehend the stories and gender representations they present.

**Examination of Media Effects:** The study intends to investigate how Malayalam films affect young people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours surrounding gender roles. The project will examine how exposure to these films affects young people's perspectives of gender, relationships, and societal expectations by conducting surveys and interviews with them.

**Insights for Media Literacy:** The findings of this research can inform media literacy initiatives and interventions aimed at promoting critical engagement with media content

among the youth. Understanding the influence of Malayalam movies on gender roles will contribute to developing strategies that empower young individuals to interpret and respond to media messages in a more informed and equitable manner.

**Contribution to Academic Discourse:** This study will contribute to larger scholarly discussions on media effects, gender representation, and cultural influences by concentrating on the particular setting of Malayalam cinema. The results can add to the body of knowledge already available and serve as a starting point for additional investigation and analysis in the areas of media studies, gender studies, and cultural studies.

In a nutshell, this study tries to close the knowledge gap regarding how Malayalam films affect young people's gender roles. This study aims to advance knowledge of the social effects of popular media and offer suggestions for fostering more inclusive and equitable gender roles in Malayalam cinema by analyzing the themes, representations, and audience responses of these films.

Particularly among young people, gender roles and how they are portrayed in the media have a considerable impact on how society views and views gender. As a potent form of entertainment and communication, movies have the power to both reflect and shape cultural standards, including how people view and accept gender roles. Examining how the portrayal of gender roles in these films affects young people's perspectives is crucial in the context of Malayalam films, which have a strong cultural identity and a large audience in the Indian state of Kerala.

In order to understand how the portrayal of gender in these films affects young people's attitudes, beliefs, and expectations about gender roles, this study examines the impact of Malayalam films on the development of gender roles in society. This study aims to

advance knowledge of the function of media in influencing societal perceptions of gender roles by examining how men and women are portrayed in Malayalam cinema and examining the effect of these portrayals on young people through surveys, interviews, or focus group discussions. It also offers suggestions for promoting more inclusive and gender-equitable attitudes in Malayalam society.

The research question ‘How does the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies influence the youth's attitude toward gender roles?’ determine how gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam films and how that affects young people's perceptions regarding those roles. It aims to comprehend how the portrayal of male and female characters in these films affects young people's views, beliefs, and actions about gender roles.

A mixed-methods approach is adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Content analysis is conducted on a selected sample of Malayalam movies to identify the prevalent gender representations and examine their alignment with or deviation from traditional gender stereotypes. Additionally, surveys are conducted by circulation google forms with a diverse group of youth to investigate their perceptions, interpretations, and responses to gender roles depicted in these movies.

It has long been acknowledged that one of the most important areas of research is the impact of media on society views and behaviours, particularly in respect to gender roles. This study has important ramifications for numerous stakeholders and academic disciplines in the context of Malayalam cinema and its effect on Keralan youth.

#### 1.1. Understanding the Influence of Malayalam Movies:

This study attempts to offer a thorough understanding of how Malayalam films influence young people's gender roles in Kerala. The study will shed light on the

specific themes, values, and ideologies delivered through the medium of cinema by analysing the content, portrayal, and reception of these films. For researchers and practitioners in the fields of media studies, gender studies, and cultural studies, having this understanding is crucial because it enables them to investigate the complex interaction between media and social norms.

#### 1.2. Empowering the Youth:

Youth are especially susceptible to media impact, and their conceptions of gender roles are still developing. Understanding how Malayalam films affect young people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours might help them become more informed media consumers. They can develop a critical viewpoint and actively challenge and modify gender norms in their own lives and communities by recognizing the potential biases and stereotypes prevalent in media representations.

#### 1.3. Promoting Gender Equality:

A just and inclusive society must adhere to the fundamental premise of gender equality. This research contributes to the greater discussion on gender equality by looking at how Malayalam films affect gender roles. It offers perceptions on how media portrayals either support or undermine conventional gender roles. The research can support ongoing initiatives to advance gender equality by motivating media professionals to provide material that encourages more egalitarian and powerful gender narratives.

#### 1.4. Contextualizing Malayalam Cinema:

Malayalam cinema occupies a special place in Kerala's cultural landscape. This study offers a chance to investigate the distinctive cultural, social, and historical elements that influence how gender is portrayed in Malayalam films. The project would advance

knowledge of Kerala society's intricacies, nuances, and changing gender dynamics by contextualizing the impact of Malayalam cinema.

This study is extremely important since it examines how Malayalam films affect young people's gender roles. The study advances scholarly understanding, educates policy and activism, empowers youth, advances gender equality, and offers insights into the distinctive setting of Malayalam cinema by identifying the meanings and effects of these films. By encouraging more inclusive and equitable gender roles in the media and in daily life, the research findings have the potential to have a positive effect on society.

This study intends to investigate how Malayalam films affect young people's gender roles in Kerala. To do this, the study is divided into a number of sections, each of which serves a certain function and adds to our grasp of the subject as a whole.

**Introduction:** The introduction gives a summary of the study, emphasising its context, justification, and importance. It provides framework for analyzing how Malayalam movies affect young people's perceptions about gender roles.

**Literature Review:** Examining the body of studies on gender roles, media influence, and the influence of films on societal attitudes is the focus of the literature study. It examines significant theories, concepts, and studies pertinent to the study issue and offers a theoretical framework for the analysis that follows.

**Theoretical Framework:** The theoretical frameworks that serve as the research's compass are explored in this part. The social learning theory, the cultivation theory, and the feminist cinema theory are investigated in light of their application in figuring out how Malayalam movies affect young people's gender roles.

**Research Methodology:** This section describes the study's research design, sample plan, data gathering procedures, and data analysis methodologies. It offers a clear and methodical strategy to guarantee the validity and dependability of the study findings.

**Content Analysis of Malayalam Movies:** The content analysis of a few Malayalam films is the main topic of this section. The criteria for choosing movies, the procedure for gathering data, and the coding techniques are all presented. The analysis looks at the topics, recurring themes, and gender representation in these films as well as how they reflect gender roles.

**Quantitative Analysis: Survey Design and Implementation:** The creation and administration of surveys to collect quantitative data from a broad sample of young people are covered in this section. The methodologies for survey design, sampling, data collection, and statistical analysis are described.

**Results and Discussion:** The findings of the content analysis and the quantitative survey are presented in the results and discussion section. The results of the survey and the content analysis are presented, contrasted, and integrated. The section investigates the consequences of these discoveries in respect to how Malayalam films affect how young people perceive gender roles.

**Implications and Interpretation:** The larger ramifications of the research's findings are covered in this section. It investigates how gender norms are influenced by Malayalam films, how gender studies are relevant, and how media literacy initiatives are affected. It offers guidance for media workers, educators, and policymakers in creating more equal gender depictions.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion highlights the research's major discoveries, highlights its contributions to knowledge, and makes suggestions for additional study. It considers



the importance of the study in increasing our knowledge of how Malayalam films affect young people's gender roles.

References: For readers to acknowledge the sources and continue their research on the subject, a thorough list of all the references cited in the research paper is provided.

Appendices: For ease of reference and openness, the appendices provide supplementary materials including the survey instrument, coding sheets, and other data.

This method of research organization attempts to give a systematic and cohesive examination of the impact of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles by utilizing both

# **CHAPTER 2**

# **REVIEW OF**

# **LITERATURE**

## **CHAPTER-2**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Gender Role Perspective: Global Context**

The article titled "Attitudes to Gender and Sexual Diversity: Changing Global Trends" was published in *The Conversation*. The article discusses changing global attitudes toward gender and sexual diversity. It highlights that societal attitudes towards gender and sexual orientation have evolved over time, with increasing acceptance and recognition of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. The author points out that there has been a significant shift in public opinion and legal frameworks in many countries regarding issues such as same-sex marriage, transgender rights, and non-binary gender recognition. The article mentions various examples of countries that have made progressive changes in these areas. The article also discusses the role of cultural and social factors in shaping attitudes toward gender and sexual diversity. It suggests that factors such as education, exposure to diverse perspectives, and activism have played a crucial role in driving these positive changes. Furthermore, the article highlights the challenges that persist in some regions, where discriminatory attitudes and practices against gender and sexual minorities continue to prevail. It emphasizes the importance of ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity, equal rights, and social acceptance globally (Pepper,2019).

In a PubMed abstract of a research article titled "Victim and Perpetrator Gender Roles in Female-Perpetrated Sexual Assault" by Cortoni et al., published in *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* in 2018. As I only have access to the abstract, I can provide a summary based on the available information: The study examined the gender roles of both victims and perpetrators in cases of sexual assault perpetrated by females.

The researchers aimed to explore the relationship between gender roles and sexual assault perpetration by women. The study utilized a sample of 249 women who had been convicted of sexual offenses. The researchers analysed various factors related to women's gender role identification, such as gender-role egalitarianism and traditional gender role adherence. The findings of the study revealed that female perpetrators of sexual assault exhibited a mix of both traditional and nontraditional gender role characteristics. Some participants displayed more traditional gender role characteristics, adhering to societal expectations of femininity, while others exhibited more nontraditional characteristics, challenging traditional gender norms. The study also indicated that female perpetrators who displayed more traditional gender role characteristics were more likely to target children, while those who exhibited more nontraditional characteristics were more likely to target adult victims. The researchers suggest that understanding the complex interplay between gender roles and sexual assault perpetration by women is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies (Elizabeth,2017).

### **Gender Role Perspective: Indian Context**

The perspective on gender roles among common people can vary widely depending on factors such as culture, education, socioeconomic background, and personal beliefs. It's important to note that gender roles are social and cultural expectations placed on individuals based on their perceived gender, and these roles can differ significantly across different societies and communities. In many traditional societies, gender roles have historically been more rigid and defined. Men were often expected to fulfil roles associated with strength, assertiveness, and providing for the family, while women were

typically assigned roles associated with nurturing, caregiving, and managing household responsibilities. However, in recent years, there has been a significant shift in many societies towards more egalitarian gender roles, where individuals are challenging and breaking free from traditional gender expectations.

In many parts of the world, there is a growing recognition of the importance of gender equality and the need to dismantle gender stereotypes and biases. People are increasingly advocating for equal rights and opportunities for individuals of all genders. Women's empowerment movements have gained momentum, and there is a greater emphasis on promoting female leadership and addressing gender disparities in various fields such as education, employment, and politics.

A recent study by the Pew Research Centre has shed light on how Indians view gender roles in families and society. The study surveyed 29,999 Indian adults, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, and respondents who belong to another religion or are religiously unaffiliated. While most Indians say that men and women should share some family responsibilities, many still support traditional, patriarchal values. For example, a slim majority of Indians (54%) say that both the men and the women in a family should be responsible for earning money. But 43% instead take the view that men should be the primary earners. Moreover, nearly two-thirds of Indians (64%) – including 61% of women – express complete agreement with the idea that a wife always is obligated to obey her husband. Indian attitudes about gender roles within family settings vary widely across religious groups. In general, Sikhs and Buddhists are the most likely to support equal distribution of family responsibilities, while Muslims are often the least egalitarian in their attitudes. For example, a large majority of Sikhs say both men and women should earn money in a family (80%) and that both sons and daughters should tend to their parents' funeral rituals (69%). But

Muslims are much less likely to hold these views. The study also found that Indian women "typically are not much more likely than Indian men to express egalitarian views" on both son preference and gender roles. Women are only marginally less likely to say that they 'completely agree' that wives should always obey their husbands, as compared to men (61 percent vs 67 percent). The study highlights that while Indians accept women as political leaders, many still favour traditional gender roles in family life. The study also sheds light on India still leaning towards being a son-preferring nation. The study notes that many Indians express egalitarian views toward some gender roles in the home. However, when it comes to reality, traditional gender norms are still prevalent and hold a significant sway among large segments of the population (Evans et al. 2022).

The article published on the Reproductive Health Journal explores the gender role attitudes and their impact on reproductive and mental health among Asian-Indian immigrant women in the US. The study found that traditional views regarding women's roles and rights are still prevalent among Asian-Indian immigrant women in the US. Bicultural integration, family planning decision-making ability, and anxiety were associated with more egalitarian views, while Punjabi language preference, depression, and more births were associated with traditional views. The study highlights the need for healthcare professionals serving this population to be aware of the potential cultural values conflicts and gender role expectations that influence decisions around reproductive health and mental health care for Asian-Indian immigrant women. Other search results discuss the development and correlates of gender role attitudes in African American youth, the portrayal of masculinity in Malayalam cinema, and gender roles and cultural continuity in the Asian Indian immigrant community in the US (Xiayun & Chaohua, 2018).

Furthermore, there is a growing understanding that gender is not strictly binary, and there is a spectrum of gender identities beyond the traditional male and female categories. Non-binary, genderqueer, and transgender individuals are gaining visibility and recognition, challenging the traditional binary concept of gender.

However, it's worth noting that despite progress in many areas, there are still pockets of society where traditional gender roles persist, and gender inequality remains a significant issue. Cultural and societal norms can be deeply ingrained and slow to change, and there are individuals who hold more conservative views on gender roles.

### **Gender Role Attitude and the Influence of Media**

Gender role attitudes refer to the beliefs and expectations that society holds regarding the appropriate behaviour, roles, and characteristics for individuals based on their gender. These attitudes are shaped by various factors, and the media is one of the influential forces in shaping societal perceptions and reinforcing or challenging traditional gender roles. The portrayal of social groups in mainstream media has often focused on two issues: recognition and respect. Recognition addresses the quantity of representation and, in terms of gender, has often focused on underrepresentation of girls and women (Ruble et al. 2006). Analyses of diverse types of television programming that target youth consistently find that boys and men outnumber girls and women, with boys/men typically comprising approximately 60% or more of characters. Comparable gender proportions have been reported in films targeting children (Baker & Raney 2007, Gerding & Signorielli 2014, Hentges & Case 2013, Martin, 2017, Sink & Mastro, 2017, Walsh & Leaper, 2020).

In G-rated movies, male characters outnumber female characters 2.6 to 1; in family films and in Disney films, the ratio is 2.5 to 1. Sociologists have researched the influence of media representations of social groups and events on audiences. They found that ethnic minority groups are often misrepresented, and certain genders, age groups, and social classes are also represented in a stereotypical way in the media. Media portrayals of social classes focus on hierarchy and celebrate wealth, positively representing the rich, their lifestyles, businesses, and interests (Smith et al. 2010).

The media plays a significant role in shaping attitudes toward gender roles by presenting and perpetuating certain stereotypes and norms. Television shows, movies, advertisements, and other forms of media often portray gender roles in ways that are limited and reinforce traditional stereotypes. For example, women are often depicted as passive, emotional, and focused on their appearance, while men are portrayed as strong, dominant, and career-oriented. These representations can influence how individuals perceive and internalize gender roles. The portrayal of social groups in mainstream media has often focused on three sets of stereotypes: personality attributes, roles, and occupations (Aubrey & Harrison 2004, Leaper et al. 2002). Analyses of diverse genres of children's programming indicate that male characters are more likely than female characters to be physically aggressive and to order others around, and are less likely to be fearful, polite, frail, or romantic. Recent analyses of prime-time television programming reveal that male characters are more verbally and physically aggressive than female characters and that female characters are better liked and more family-oriented than male characters (Sink & Mastro 2017).

When we take in case of occupation, men are more often placed in the world of work and women in the home; when women are shown in the workplace, their occupations tend to align with gender stereotypes (Gilpatric 2010, Lauzen et al. 2008, Smith et al.



2010). For example, in their analysis of top films released from 2010 to 2013, (Smith et al. 2014) reported a ratio of 7.6 men working in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to every 1 woman in STEM. At the same time, men are shown as incompetent in the domestic arena. These role distinctions extend to representations of children's daily activities (Scharrer et al. 2006).

The media influences gender role attitudes are through the process of socialization. Media messages, especially those targeted at children and adolescents, contribute to the formation of their gender identity and expectations. Young individuals often internalize these messages and may model their behaviour and attitudes based on the depictions they see. When these portrayals consistently reinforce traditional gender roles, it can limit the aspirations and choices of individuals and contribute to gender inequality. Furthermore, the media also plays a role in reinforcing or challenging gender stereotypes through advertising. Advertisements often depict gender roles in narrow and stereotypical ways, associating specific products or behaviours with masculinity or femininity. These representations can perpetuate harmful notions of how men and women should behave or appear, influencing societal attitudes and expectations.

However, it is important to note that the media's influence on gender role attitudes is not solely negative. Media can also be a platform for challenging traditional gender roles and promoting more inclusive and diverse representations. In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and effort to depict a broader range of gender identities and roles in the media, which can contribute to more positive and progressive attitudes.

In summary, the media has a significant influence on gender role attitudes by shaping societal perceptions, reinforcing traditional stereotypes, and influencing the formation of gender identity. However, the media's impact can also be positive when it challenges

traditional gender roles and promotes more inclusive representations. It is crucial to critically engage with media messages and promote diverse and empowering portrayals of gender in order to foster more equitable and inclusive attitudes.

### **Gender Role Attitude and Youth**

Gender role attitudes among youth play a crucial role in shaping their beliefs, behaviours, and future choices. During adolescence and young adulthood, individuals develop their identities and attitudes, including their understanding of gender roles. Several factors can influence youth's gender role attitudes, including societal norms, family dynamics, peer influences, and exposure to media.

**Societal norms:** Youth are influenced by the broader cultural and societal norms regarding gender roles. These norms dictate expectations and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity. Traditional norms may reinforce stereotypes and restrict opportunities for self-expression and individual choices.

**Family dynamics:** The family environment plays a significant role in shaping youth's gender role attitudes. Parents and caregivers often socialize children into specific gender roles by assigning different tasks, responsibilities, and expectations based on gender. The attitudes and behaviours modelled by family members can shape youth's perceptions and beliefs about gender roles.

**Peer influences:** Peer groups and social interactions during adolescence have a strong impact on gender role attitudes. Youth may conform to peer norms and expectations, leading to the reinforcement of traditional gender roles. Peer pressure can limit individuals' willingness to challenge societal norms and explore alternative gender identities or expressions.

Media exposure: Media, including television, movies, social media, and online platforms, significantly influence youth's gender role attitudes. Media portrayals often reinforce gender stereotypes and present limited and idealized images of masculinity and femininity. Youth who consume media extensively may internalize these messages and adopt stereotypical beliefs about gender roles (Wood & Julia, 2023).

A study published on PubMed examines the development of gender role attitudes from early adolescence to emerging adulthood and investigates how the developmental trajectory is affected by sex, socioeconomic status, and cognitive abilities (intelligence). The study used four waves of the large-scale longitudinal German dataset BIJU between 1991 (grade 7), 1995 (grade 10), 1997 (grade 12), and 2001/2002 (university/career entry). The study found that adolescents developed more egalitarian gender role attitudes, and differences between the sexes decreased over time but remained significant. Socioeconomic status seemed less relevant, while adolescents, especially those with higher cognitive abilities, developed more egalitarian gender role attitudes (Ullrich, Becker and Scharf, 2022)

It is important to note that while traditional gender role attitudes can have negative consequences, such as reinforcing gender inequalities and limiting individual choices, youth are not passive recipients of societal influences. They also possess agency and the ability to critically analyse and challenge gender norms. Some youth actively seek alternative perspectives and engage in discussions and activism around gender equality and social justice.

Promoting positive gender role attitudes among youth involves creating inclusive environments that allow for open dialogue, challenging stereotypes, and providing opportunities for self-expression and exploration. Education, awareness campaigns,

and media literacy programs can help youth critically analyse media messages and develop more equitable and inclusive attitudes toward gender roles. Additionally, fostering supportive relationships with family and peers that value diversity and promote gender equality can also contribute to positive gender role attitudes among youth (Wood & Julia, 2023).

### **Malayalam Films and the Portrayal of Gender Roles**

Malayalam cinema, also known as Mollywood, has evolved over the years in terms of its portrayal of gender roles. Like any film industry, the depiction of gender roles in Malayalam films can vary depending on the era, the filmmaker's perspective, and the prevailing social norms.

The portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam cinema has been a subject of both criticism and appreciation. While some movies have reinforced traditional gender roles and stereotypes, others have taken a progressive approach by featuring strong, independent female characters and addressing issues of gender justice and equality. The efforts of women directors in challenging gender norms and exploring feminist themes in their movies have also contributed to the evolving landscape of gender representation in Malayalam cinema (Vincent, 2021).

Women are expected to take care of their families even if that means sacrificing their dreams, and household chores always fall upon them. Women are expected to be polite and nurturing, while men are glorified as masculine, and men who lack this are called "effeminate." These stereotypes are purposefully moulded into the ways prebuilt by the patriarchy, and they cement the stereotypes into an individual's psyche. The search results suggest that Malayalam cinema often reinforces traditional gender roles and

expectations, and women are often portrayed as being under the control of men in the family, obeying orders, and living according to unwritten norms. The search results also suggest that Indian cinema, a reflection of society, is completely sexist and portrays male dominance and patriarchy in its entirety. Overall, the search results suggest that the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam cinema is a reflection of societal norms and expectations, and there is a need for more nuanced and sensitive portrayals of gender roles in movies (Shubhangani, 2019).

In older Malayalam films, traditional gender roles were often reinforced. Men were typically portrayed as strong, assertive, and dominant figures, while women were depicted as submissive, obedient, and confined to domestic roles. These films often emphasized the importance of family values and portrayed women as caregivers and homemakers. In recent years, Malayalam cinema has witnessed a shift towards more progressive portrayals of women and their roles in society. There has been a rise in films that highlight women's empowerment, agency, and individuality. Female characters are increasingly portrayed as strong, independent, and capable of challenging societal norms (Edna, 2022).

Some Malayalam films have actively sought to break gender stereotypes and address social issues related to gender inequality. These films focus on themes such as women's education, career aspirations, and the fight against patriarchy. They often challenge traditional gender roles and encourage viewers to question societal norms.

Malayalam cinema has also explored more nuanced and complex characters, irrespective of gender. Films now depict men and women with flaws, vulnerabilities, and multifaceted personalities, moving away from simplistic stereotypes. This shift allows for a more realistic and diverse representation of gender roles in films. The

influence of serials as a primary mass medium in Malayalam cinema has also been explored. Serials have been criticized for perpetuating stereotypical portrayals of female characters, highlighting the need for more nuanced and sensitive representations (Randor, 2019).

Malayalam cinema has also started addressing LGBTQ+ issues, although it is still a relatively new development. Some recent films have touched upon same-sex relationships and gender identity, aiming to create awareness, challenge prejudices, and promote inclusivity.

### **The portrayal of gender roles: A comparison of old and new films**

The article titled "The Evolution of the Female Lead in Malayalam Cinema" discusses the changing portrayal of female characters in the Malayalam film industry. It highlights the progression from stereotypical roles to more nuanced and empowered representations. The article traces the early days of Malayalam cinema, where female characters were primarily limited to being love interests or victims, often lacking agency and depth. However, it emphasizes that the industry has witnessed a significant shift over the years, with female leads now taking on more complex and diverse roles.

The author points out key milestones in the evolution of female characters in Malayalam cinema. They discuss the emergence of strong female protagonists in the 1980s and 1990s who challenged societal norms and expectations. These characters were portrayed as independent, ambitious, and capable of making their own choices.

The article also recognizes the influence of the "New Generation" movement in Malayalam cinema, which brought a fresh wave of storytelling and introduced more realistic and relatable female characters. These characters were shown grappling with

personal and professional challenges, breaking away from traditional stereotypes. Furthermore, the article explores how Malayalam cinema has embraced a variety of genres, allowing female leads to explore diverse roles, including those traditionally reserved for male actors. It discusses how women have played pivotal roles in movies spanning different genres, such as crime thrillers and action films, further expanding their representation. The author concludes by stating that while there is still progress to be made, Malayalam cinema has come a long way in portraying female leads as multi-dimensional and empowered individuals, reflecting the changing dynamics of society. The article highlights the importance of continued efforts to push boundaries and create more inclusive narratives in the industry (Rihan,2019).

The article titled "Mothers in Malayalam Cinema: From Ideal Caregivers to Individuals with Boundaries" explores the portrayal of mothers in Malayalam cinema, highlighting the shift from idealized caregivers to more nuanced and boundary-setting individuals.

The article begins by discussing the traditional depiction of mothers in Malayalam cinema as selfless, sacrificing figures who prioritize their family's needs above their own. They are often portrayed as ideal caregivers and are expected to fulfil societal expectations without questioning them. However, the article points out that recent years have witnessed a change in the portrayal of mothers in Malayalam cinema. Filmmakers have started presenting them as individuals with their own desires, aspirations, and boundaries. These new representations challenge the notion of the "perfect" mother and acknowledge their need for personal space and fulfilment. The author highlights several movies that have played a significant role in reshaping the portrayal of mothers. These films present mothers who question societal norms, pursue their dreams, and establish boundaries to protect their own well-being. The article also discusses how these new narratives reflect the changing dynamics of motherhood in society. It acknowledges that

mothers are multifaceted individuals with their own identities, and it is crucial to recognize and respect their agency and autonomy. The author concludes by stating that while there is still progress to be made, Malayalam cinema is gradually moving away from stereotypical portrayals of mothers and embracing more realistic and empowering representations. These evolving narratives contribute to a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of motherhood in society (Anagha, 2021).

### **The Influence of Malayalam Films in Developing Gender Role Among Youth**

Malayalam films, like any other form of media, have a significant influence on shaping societal perceptions, including gender roles. Films play a crucial role in reflecting and sometimes challenging existing gender norms and stereotypes. Malayalam cinema have been developed with a focus on reproducing patriarchal stereotypes. Even when women's issues-oriented movies have been made, they have not been able to completely break free from these stereotypes (Randor, 2019).

When it comes to the influence of Malayalam films on developing gender roles among youth, it is essential to consider both the positive and negative aspects.

#### **1.1 Representation of Gender Roles:**

Malayalam films often depict traditional gender roles, where men are portrayed as strong, assertive, and dominant, while women are portrayed as submissive, docile, and confined to domestic spheres. Such representations can reinforce existing gender stereotypes and limit the aspirations and potential of both men and women.

#### **1.2 Stereotypical Characterization:**



Many Malayalam films perpetuate stereotypes about gender, portraying women as objects of desire or solely as romantic interests. This can reinforce objectification and the idea that a woman's worth lies in her physical appearance or ability to attract men. Similarly, men are often portrayed as aggressive, macho, and dominant, which can reinforce toxic masculinity.

### 1.3 Challenging Gender Norms:

Despite these limitations, Malayalam films have also played a role in challenging traditional gender norms. Some films have depicted strong female characters who defy societal expectations and take on unconventional roles. These characters can inspire young audiences to question and challenge gender stereotypes, promoting more progressive attitudes towards gender roles.

### 1.4 Discussions on Gender Issues:

Certain Malayalam films have tackled important gender-related issues, such as gender discrimination, domestic violence, and women's empowerment. By highlighting these topics, films can create awareness and initiate conversations among young viewers, leading to greater understanding and positive change.

### 1.5 Impact on Perceptions:

Films have a powerful impact on shaping perceptions and attitudes. The portrayal of different gender roles in Malayalam films can influence how young people perceive themselves and others. It can shape their expectations, behaviours, and aspirations, leading to either reinforcing or challenging existing gender norms (Janki, 2019)

The portrayal of women in Malayalam cinema has indeed been a topic of discussion and analysis. While there have been some positive changes and intriguing female

characters in recent years, there are still concerns about gender stereotypes and problematic portrayals.

According to the article, Malayalam cinema has evolved in terms of the roles assigned to female characters. However, it is noted that women are often portrayed as sweet, horrifying, and problem-making characters, and they are frequently depicted in romantic relationships with the hero. These portrayals can perpetuate certain gender stereotypes and reinforce patriarchal expectations (Randor, 2010).

To conclude, Malayalam films have both positive and negative influences on the development of gender roles among youth. While some films reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, others challenge these norms and promote more progressive attitudes. It is essential for filmmakers, audiences, and society as a whole to be critical of the messages portrayed in films and encourage more diverse and inclusive representation of gender roles.

# **CHAPTER 3**

# **METHODOLOGY**

## **CHAPTER -3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

More in-depth research is needed to examine the specific impact of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles, despite the fact that the impact of media on gender roles has already been thoroughly studied. Youth, in particular, are greatly influenced by the media as they build their identities at a formative age. Understanding the effects of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles is necessary to comprehend the social dynamics and challenges faced by young people in Kerala.

This study intends to shed light on how Malayalam films help to moulding young people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours about gender roles by undertaking a thorough examination of the movies' content, portrayal, and reception. It looks into the messages these films are trying to get through, how much they support or oppose established gender standards, and how they might affect how young people are socialized and perceive the world.

A mixed-methods approach is adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Content analysis is conducted on a selected sample of Malayalam movies to identify the prevalent gender representations and examine their alignment with or deviation from traditional gender stereotypes. Additionally, surveys are conducted by circulation google forms with a diverse group of youth to investigate their perceptions, interpretations, and responses to gender roles depicted in these movies.

## **Statement of the Problem**

There have long been issues with how gender roles are portrayed in the media, notably in movies. People's perceptions of gender roles and behaviour are influenced by how men and women are portrayed in popular culture.

In Malayalam movies, gender roles have been portrayed in traditional and stereotypical ways, which could affect how young people perceive gender roles in society. Therefore, this study's goal is to investigate how gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam movies and how it influences how young people perceive such roles.

## **Significance of the Study**

Since most of our films reflect patriarchal structures and interests, most of them support gender stereotypes and the idea of male hegemony. One of the most powerful forms of mass media, movies have the power to influence viewers in a variety of ways. In order to entertain the general public, most mainstream films feature a heroic, alpha-male protagonist who is also a fragile, dependent female counterpart who is free of all sentiment and as pure as a crystal.

The audience for these types of crafts would be highly familiar with these kinds of male dominating gender values, and this could have a variety of effects on how they perceive gender. This study aims to investigate those set pieces in popular Malayalam films and to determine the degree to which this affected Kerala's young adult males' mentality. Additionally, the researcher is adamant that this study will aid in the process of deconstruction and, as a result, help advance initiatives for gender equity.

## **Aim of the Study**

Growing curiosity and worry have been expressed about how popular media shapes gender roles. The expectations and behaviours associated with masculinity and femininity that are socially constructed as gender roles influence how people see themselves and other people in society. Gender stereotypes in the media can be upended or reinforced, which has an impact on young people's beliefs, aspirations, and behaviours.

The need to comprehend the precise impact of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles serves as the foundation for this study. There is a paucity of study focused explicitly on the distinctive environment of Malayalam cinema and its impact on the young of Kerala, despite the fact that earlier studies have examined the impact of media on gender roles in general. By analysing the representation of gender in these films and how young people respond to it.

## **Research Objectives**

### **General objective:**

To examine the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies and its influence on the youth's attitude towards gender roles.

### **Specific objectives:**

1. To analyse the representation of gender roles in popular Malayalam movies of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

2. To investigate the relationship between the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies and the youth's attitude towards gender roles.
3. To analyse the attempts to defy the gender constructions in Malayalam movies.

## **Definition Of Concepts**

### **Conceptual**

- Gender roles: The phrase gender roles describe norms of behaviour and attitudes in a given culture attributed to people on the basis of their sex to which people are expected to conform (Oxford, 2017).
- Youth: The time of life when a person is young, especially the time before a child becomes an adult. (Oxford, 2023).
- Social Constructions: an idea that has been created and accepted by the people in a society (Marriam-Webster, 2023)
- Gender Construction: “The meaning of the word ‘gender’ has evolved and differentiated from the word ‘sex’ to express the reality that women’s and men’s roles and status are socially constructed and subject to change.” (Butler, 2004).

### **Operational**

- Gender roles: The set of behaviours, attitudes, and values assigned to individuals based on their gender identity
- Youth: Individuals aged between 18 to 35 years.
- Social Construction: Social constructs are beliefs or notions that society has produced and perpetuated. They shape our perception of reality and have an impact on our behaviour.

- Gender construction: The process by which society assigns and reinforces cultural expectations, roles, and identities based on perceived differences between masculine and femininity is known as gender construction.

## **Research Design**

A mixed-methods approach is adopted, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Content analysis is conducted on a selected sample of Malayalam movies to identify the prevalent gender representations and examine their alignment with or deviation from traditional gender stereotypes. Additionally, surveys are conducted with a diverse group of youth to investigate their perceptions, interpretations, and responses to gender roles depicted in these movies.

## **Universe**

The universe of this study is the Malayali youth population aged between 18 to 25 years.

## **Sampling**

The data will be collected from PG students aged between 18 to 25 years, in Bharata Mata College, Ernakulam district. Non probability convenience sampling method is used for collecting primary data.

## **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

### **Inclusion criteria:**

The participant between the age group of 18 to 25 years old with proficiency in Malayalam.



**Exclusion criteria:**

Non- Malayali's who is not between the age of 18-25 years.

**Tool of Data Collection**

The tool of data collection will be a structured questionnaire which consist of basic details like age and gender and the questions will measure the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies, and youth's attitude toward gender roles.

**Method of data collection**

Primary data will be collected through an online survey using Google Forms. Secondary data is obtained through reviewing Malayalam films after the year 2000.

**Limitation**

One of the challenges of this research is the potential for biased responses from participants due to social desirability bias, where participants may respond in a socially acceptable way rather than honestly expressing their views.

Another limitation is the possibility of sampling bias, where the sample may not be representative of the larger youth population in Kerala. Furthermore, the study is limited to the youth population in Kerala, and the findings may not be generalizable to other regions or age groups. The study's reliance on self-reported data may also limit the validity of the findings.

## **Chapterisation**

Chapter 1- Introduction

Chapter 2- Review of Literature

Chapter 3- Methodology

Chapter 4 – Review of Malayalam Movies

Chapter 5 - Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 6 – Findings, Recommendations, Implication of Professional social work practice.

**CHAPTER 4**

**REVIEW OF**

**MALAYALAM**

**MOVIES**

## CHAPTER-4

### FILM REVIEW

#### 1. Popular Malayalam Movies

##### 1.1 *Drishyam*



*Drishyam* is a Malayalam film released in 2013, directed by Jeethu Joseph. The movie revolves around the character Georgekutty (played by Mohanlal), a common man who becomes entangled in a web of lies and deception to protect his family.

While *Drishyam* primarily focuses on the themes of crime, justice, and family dynamics, it does touch upon certain aspects of gender politics within its narrative.

One of the notable aspects is the portrayal of the female characters in the film. Georgekutty's wife, Rani (played by Meena), and his elder daughter, Anju (played by

Ansiba Hassan), play crucial roles in the plot. They are portrayed as strong, intelligent, and resourceful individuals who contribute significantly to the family's efforts to conceal the truth. Their characters challenge traditional gender stereotypes and showcase the agency and capabilities of women.

On the other hand, the film also highlights the power dynamics between the male protagonist and the investigating police officer, Geetha Prabhakar (played by Asha Sarath). The officer initially underestimates Georgekutty's ability to outsmart the system and holds a position of authority over him. However, as the story unfolds, Georgekutty strategically uses his knowledge and wit to outmanoeuvre the officer, shifting the power dynamics in his favour.

While *Drishyam* does not delve deeply into an explicit exploration of gender politics, it indirectly challenges certain traditional gender norms and stereotypes. It portrays women as capable and resourceful individuals, and it questions the assumption of male dominance and authority in certain spheres.

As part of its crime and family-centred plot, *Drishyam* presents a complex representation of gender interactions. It challenges conventional ideas of power and control while showcasing the agency and resilience of female characters.

## 1.2 Classmates



*Classmates* is a Malayalam film released in 2006, directed by Lal Jose. The movie revolves around a group of friends who reunite after several years and reminisce about their college days. While *Classmates* primarily focuses on friendship, nostalgia, and political themes, it also touches upon certain aspects of gender politics within its narrative.

One of the notable aspects is the representation of female characters in the film. The female characters in *Classmates* are portrayed with depth and complexity, showcasing their individuality, aspirations, and challenges. They are not merely relegated to passive roles but actively participate in the narrative and contribute to the storyline.

The film also explores the complexities of romantic relationships and the power dynamics within them. It showcases the struggles faced by female characters in

navigating societal expectations, personal desires, and traditional gender roles. The movie challenges traditional notions of female subservience and encourages the empowerment of women.

Furthermore, *Classmates* also indirectly highlights the impact of gender politics within the political landscape of the story. The film delves into the rivalry and power struggles between different student political factions, where gender dynamics play a role in shaping alliances and power structures. It explores how gender is used as a tool for manipulation and power play within the political arena.

Though *Classmates* does touch upon gender politics within its narrative, it is important to note that the exploration of these themes is not the central focus of the film. The movie primarily emphasizes friendship, nostalgia, and political ideologies. However, through its portrayal of female characters and the dynamics of relationships and power, it does offer glimpses into the complexities of gender politics.

Chiefly, *Classmates* provides a nuanced portrayal of gender dynamics within the context of its story. It challenges traditional gender norms, highlights the agency and aspirations of female characters, and explores the role of gender within political settings.

### 1.3 Bangalore Days



*Bangalore Days* is a Malayalam film released in 2014, directed by Anjali Menon. The movie follows the lives of three cousins, Divya (played by Nazriya Nazim), Kuttan (played by Nivin Pauly), and Arjun (played by Dulquer Salmaan), as they navigate their personal and professional journeys in Bangalore.

When it comes to gender politics, *Bangalore Days* explores the theme in a subtle and nuanced manner, primarily through the experiences and character arcs of its female protagonists.

The film portrays the struggles and aspirations of Divya (played by Nazriya), Sarah (played by Parvathy Thiruvothu), and Natasha (played by Nithya Menon) as they navigate societal expectations, gender stereotypes, and personal relationships.



Divya's character initially conforms to traditional gender roles and expectations, focusing on her role as a wife and mother. However, as the story progresses, she realizes her own dreams and desires, challenging societal norms and asserting her individuality.

Sarah's character represents a more independent and career-oriented woman who strives to balance her personal and professional life. The film showcases her determination to pursue her passion for photography, despite the obstacles she faces.

Natasha's character challenges traditional gender roles through her unconventional career choice and refusal to conform to societal expectations. She confidently asserts her independence and challenges the notion that a woman's worth is tied to her marital status.

The film also addresses issues such as workplace harassment and the importance of consent, highlighting the need for gender equality and respect for women's autonomy.

Additionally, *Bangalore Days* portrays supportive male characters who contribute to the exploration of gender politics. Kuttan, for instance, questions traditional gender norms and expresses his desire for a partner who is more than just a homemaker.

Even though *Bangalore Days* does not explicitly critique patriarchy or engage in overt discussions of gender politics, it subtly challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the agency and aspirations of its female characters. It encourages viewers to question societal expectations and embrace gender equality.

Overall, *Bangalore Days* offers a nuanced exploration of gender dynamics and the complexities of navigating societal expectations for women. It portrays strong and independent female characters, presenting a positive and empowering narrative in the context of gender politics.

### 1.4 Paleri Manikyam: Oru Pathirakolapathakathinte Katha



*Paleri Manikyam: Oru Pathirakolapathakathinte Katha* is a Malayalam film released in 2009, directed by Ranjith. The movie is a crime thriller that delves into the investigation of a murder that occurred in the past and its impact on the lives of the characters involved.

While *Paleri Manikyam* primarily focuses on the murder mystery and the social and political context of the time, it does touch upon certain aspects of gender politics within its narrative.

The film takes place in the backdrop of the feudal system prevalent in Kerala during the mid-20th century. Within this context, it portrays the societal norms and power dynamics that perpetuate gender inequality and reinforce male dominance.

The female characters in the film, such as Manikyam (played by Mamta Mohandas), represent the struggles and challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society.

Manikyam's character showcases the limitations placed on her by societal expectations and the oppressive system that perpetuates gender-based discrimination.

The movie also explores themes of sexual exploitation and abuse of women, highlighting the vulnerability of women within such power structures. It sheds light on the systemic issues that enable and perpetuate such forms of violence against women.

Moreover, *Paleri Manikyam* touches upon the struggles faced by women in seeking justice within a male-dominated legal system. It highlights the power imbalances that hinder women from receiving fair treatment and emphasizes the importance of advocating for gender equality and women's rights.

Despite the film portrays the harsh realities of gender politics, it does not provide a comprehensive analysis or critique of patriarchy and male dominance as central themes. Its primary focus is on the murder mystery and the social and political context of the time.

In total, *Paleri Manikyam* indirectly addresses the influence of gender politics within the societal and historical context it portrays. It highlights the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society, the systemic issues that perpetuate gender inequality, and the need for a more equitable and just society.

## 1.5 Angamaly Diaries



*Angamaly Diaries* is a Malayalam film released in 2017, directed by Lijo Jose Pellissery. The movie is a crime drama that revolves around the lives of a group of young men in the town of Angamaly, Kerala.

In terms of gender politics, *Angamaly Diaries* does not explicitly focus on this theme as its central narrative. The film primarily explores the dynamics of friendship, rivalry, and the consequences of criminal activities within the context of a male-dominated world.

However, within the broader context of the film, certain aspects of gender dynamics and power imbalances can be observed. The movie portrays a predominantly male-centric world, where men hold the majority of the positions of power and influence.

The female characters in the film, though relatively fewer in number, play significant roles in shaping the narrative. They are portrayed with agency and are not merely relegated to passive or decorative roles. They express their desires, make choices, and have an impact on the lives of the male characters.

Additionally, the film does touch upon issues related to gender, such as toxic masculinity and machismo, which are prevalent within the context of the story. It portrays the hypermasculine culture and the associated aggression and violence that exist within certain social circles.

However, it's important to note that *Angamaly Diaries* does not provide an extensive exploration or critique of gender politics. The focus of the film is primarily on the dynamics of the criminal world and the complexities of human relationships.

Thus, while *Angamaly Diaries* may indirectly touch upon certain aspects of gender dynamics and power imbalances, it does not explicitly delve into gender politics as a central theme. The movie primarily focuses on the crime narrative and the portrayal of human emotions and relationships within that context.

### 1.6 Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum



*Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* is a Malayalam film released in 2017, directed by Dileesh Pothan. The movie revolves around the incident of a theft and the subsequent events that unfold in a police station in a small town in Kerala.

In terms of gender politics, *Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* does touch upon certain aspects within its narrative, albeit indirectly. The film explores power dynamics and societal expectations, which have implications for gender roles and relationships.

The movie portrays the experiences of various characters, including the male protagonist Prasad (played by Suraj Venjaramoodu), his wife Sreeja (played by Nimisha Sajayan), and the thief (played by Fahadh Faasil). Each character grapples with their own challenges within the context of the story.

The film subtly addresses the social expectations placed on women, particularly in terms of their behaviour, choices, and relationships. Sreeja's character challenges



certain gender norms by making her own decisions and asserting her agency, even in the face of societal judgment and expectations.

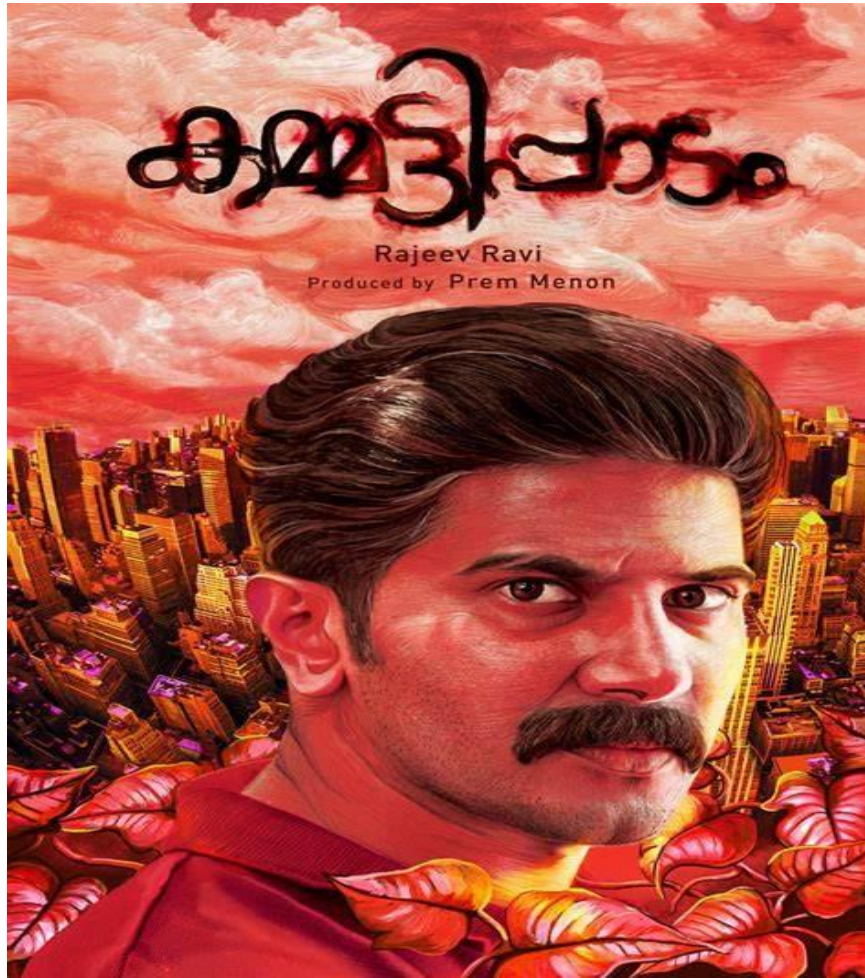
Furthermore, *Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* also highlights the power dynamics between men and women within the context of the police station and the criminal justice system. It indirectly raises questions about how gender influences the treatment of individuals and the exercise of power in such situations.

The movie also touches upon issues of consent and the portrayal of women as victims of harassment and abuse. It raises awareness about the importance of respecting women's autonomy and the need for a more equitable society.

However, it's important to note that *Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* does not provide an in-depth exploration or critique of gender politics as its central theme. The film primarily focuses on the crime narrative and the complexities of human relationships within that context.

*Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* indirectly addresses certain aspects of gender politics, highlighting power dynamics, societal expectations, and the experiences of women within the context of the story. While not the central focus, these elements add layers of social commentary to the film's narrative.

## 1.7 Kammattipaadam



*Kammattipaadam* is a Malayalam film released in 2016, directed by Rajeev Ravi. The movie tells the story of a friendship between two men, Krishnan (played by Dulquer Salmaan) and Ganga (played by Vinayakan), set against the backdrop of a slum area called Kammattipaadam in Kerala.

When it comes to gender politics, *Kammattipaadam* explores the theme in a nuanced manner, shedding light on the impact of societal structures and power dynamics on women within the narrative.

The film portrays the struggles faced by female characters, such as Anitha (played by Shaun Romy) and Rosamma (played by Amalda Liz), who live in the male-dominated



and violent environment of *Kammattipaadam*. They are shown as vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and limited opportunities due to the oppressive circumstances they find themselves in.

Moreover, the movie highlights the link between patriarchy, violence, and the hierarchical power structure within the society it depicts. It delves into the dynamics of power, dominance, and toxic masculinity prevalent in *Kammattipaadam*, ultimately affecting the lives of women.

However, it's important to note that *Kammattipaadam* does not provide an extensive exploration or critique of gender politics. The film's central focus is primarily on the friendship between Krishnan and Ganga and the exploration of themes such as social inequality, urban development, and the impact of violence.

While the portrayal of women in *Kammattipaadam* emphasizes the challenges they face in a male-dominated society, the film does not offer a comprehensive analysis or solution to gender inequality and patriarchy. It serves as a reflection of the realities faced by women within the specific context of the narrative.

In conclusion, *Kammattipaadam* indirectly addresses gender politics by shedding light on the struggles and vulnerabilities faced by women in a patriarchal and violent society. It serves as a commentary on the systemic issues and power imbalances that affect women's lives but does not make it the central focus of the film.

### 1.8 Pranchiyettan and the Saint



*Pranchiyettan and the Saint* is a Malayalam film released in 2010, directed by Ranjith. The movie follows the life of Pranchi (played by Mammooty), a successful businessman from a small town in Kerala, and his pursuit of social status and recognition.

In terms of gender politics, *Pranchiyettan and the Saint* does touch upon certain aspects within its narrative, although it is not the central theme of the film. The movie indirectly addresses societal attitudes towards women and the power dynamics that exist within the patriarchal system.

The film portrays female characters, such as Sridevi (played by Khushboo), and a young woman named Padmashri (played by Priyamani), who challenge traditional gender roles and expectations.

Padmashri's character represents a strong and independent woman who challenges the established power structures. She becomes a symbol of change and empowerment in Prachi's life, questioning his values and forcing him to reassess his priorities.

While *Pranchiyettan and the Saint* touches upon gender dynamics and power imbalances, it does not provide an extensive exploration or critique of gender politics. The film primarily focuses on Pranchi's journey and his pursuit of social status, intertwining elements of satire and social commentary.

*Pranchiyettan and the Saint* indirectly addresses gender politics by portraying the struggles and aspirations of women within a patriarchal society. However, the film's central focus remains on Pranchi's personal growth and societal critique, rather than providing a comprehensive analysis of gender dynamics.

## 1.9 Ustad Hotel



*Ustad Hotel* is a Malayalam film released in 2012, directed by Anwar Rasheed. The movie tells the story of Faizal (played by Dulquer Salmaan), a young man who embarks on a journey of self-discovery and finds himself working at his grandfather's hotel.

When it comes to gender politics, "Ustad Hotel" addresses certain aspects within its narrative, particularly in its exploration of women's roles and societal expectations.

The film portrays the experiences of women characters, such as Shahana (played by Nithya Menon), who challenges traditional gender norms and strives to pursue her dreams. Shahana's character defies the expectations placed upon her and expresses her desires for personal and professional fulfilment.

Moreover, the movie touches upon the themes of female empowerment and independence. It portrays women as individuals with agency, capable of making their own choices and shaping their lives, contrary to societal expectations.

*Ustad Hotel* also subtly critiques patriarchal attitudes and norms prevalent in the society it depicts. It highlights the importance of supporting women's aspirations and breaking free from societal constraints.

However, it's important to note that the film does not provide an extensive exploration or critique of gender politics as its central theme. The primary focus of "Ustad Hotel" is on Faizal's personal growth, his relationship with his family, and the culinary journey he embarks on.

Even though the portrayal of women in *Ustad Hotel* challenges certain gender norms and promotes empowerment, the film's exploration of gender politics remains secondary to its broader themes of family, love, and personal identity.

In conclusion, *Ustad Hotel* indirectly addresses gender politics by portraying the aspirations and agency of women within a patriarchal society. It promotes the importance of individual choice and empowerment. However, it does not delve into a comprehensive analysis or critique of gender dynamics.

## 2. Female-Centric Malayalam Movies

### 2.1 *Take Off*



*Take Off*, directed by Mahesh Narayanan in 2017, emerges as a cinematic masterpiece that delves deep into the intricate realm of gender politics. With its poignant storytelling and nuanced character portrayals, the film captures the multifaceted struggles and triumphs of women within a larger societal context.

One of the notable aspects of gender politics in *Take Off* lies in its unapologetic challenge to traditional gender norms. The movie presents female characters who boldly defy societal expectations, breaking free from predefined roles and venturing into uncharted territories. By showcasing women in non-traditional domains and positions of power, the film sparks conversations about gender equality, pushing viewers to question and reconsider deeply ingrained stereotypes.

In addition to defying gender roles, *Take Off* sheds light on the power dynamics that underpin gender relations. It offers a thought-provoking exploration of how power is distributed, exercised, and contested between men and women. Through the characters' journeys, the film lays bare the unequal power structures and systemic barriers that women often encounter. It serves as a compelling mirror to society, prompting viewers to critically examine and reflect upon the pervasive influence of gender dynamics in their own lives.

Moreover, *Take Off* skilfully navigates the intricacies of intersectionality within its exploration of gender politics. It recognizes that gender does not exist in isolation, but intersects with other social identities such as race, class, and sexuality. By acknowledging these intersections, the film opens up space for a more inclusive dialogue, amplifying the experiences of women from diverse backgrounds and shedding light on the unique challenges they face.

Through its riveting storytelling and nuanced portrayal of characters, *Take Off* emerges as a cinematic journey that illuminates the complexities of gender politics. It inspires conversations, challenges societal norms, and advocates for a more inclusive and equitable world.



## 2.2 How Old Are You?



*How Old Are You?* is a 2014 Malayalam-language film that delves into the theme of gender politics. Through its captivating storyline, the movie explores the struggles, societal expectations, and empowerment of its female protagonist.

The gender politics in *How Old Are You?* revolve around the examination of women's agency and the impact of societal expectations. The film follows Nirupama Rajeev, a middle-aged woman who feels trapped in her domestic role and strives to rediscover her identity and purpose beyond her family responsibilities.

An important element depicted in the film is the exploration of women's empowerment and self-discovery. As Nirupama embarks on a transformative journey, she challenges societal norms and expectations, finding her voice and reigniting her passions. This portrayal highlights the significance of personal growth and pursuing one's dreams, regardless of age or gender.



Furthermore, the movie addresses the stereotypes and biases faced by women as they age. It challenges the notion that women lose their value or relevance as they grow older, pushing back against society's limited definitions of beauty, success, and significance. The film encourages viewers to celebrate and appreciate women at every stage of life.

Moreover, *How Old Are You?* emphasizes the importance of women's economic empowerment in combating gender inequality. The film showcases how financial independence enables women to make choices, gain respect, and assert their agency within society.

The movie also sheds light on the significance of support systems and their role in women's empowerment. Nirupama's journey is facilitated by the encouragement and backing she receives from her family and friends, underscoring the transformative power of solidarity and understanding.

Additionally, the film explores the complexities of gender dynamics within marriages and relationships. It challenges traditional gender roles and the expectation for women to prioritize their family's needs over their own aspirations. Through Nirupama's experiences, the movie sparks conversations about equality and shared responsibilities in relationships.

Furthermore, *How Old Are You?* emphasizes the importance of education and knowledge in empowering women. It showcases how education acts as a catalyst for self-discovery, personal growth, and the development of critical thinking. The film encourages women to pursue education and continuous learning, irrespective of their age. The movie also highlights the importance of women's voices being heard and

valued in society. It advocates for inclusive decision-making processes that involve women at all levels, promoting gender equality and a more balanced society.

Moreover, *How Old Are You?* raises awareness about the need for gender-sensitive policies and societal change. It prompts discussions on the significance of creating an enabling environment that supports women's empowerment, including equal opportunities, access to resources, and the protection of equal rights.

Additionally, the film emphasizes the significance of self-worth and self-belief. It encourages women to embrace their strengths and talents, challenging societal perceptions and stereotypes that undermine their abilities.

In conclusion, *How Old Are You?* offers a captivating exploration of gender politics, showcasing women's empowerment, challenging stereotypes, and advocating for inclusivity. Through its inspiring narrative, the film urges viewers to question societal norms, support women's aspirations, and contribute to a more equitable and empowering society for all.

### 2.3 22 Female Kottayam



*22 Female Kottayam*, directed by Aashiq Abu in 2012, presents a thought-provoking narrative that delves into the complexities of gender politics. The film explores the challenges and resilience of its female protagonist, delving into power dynamics, societal expectations, and the struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society.

The gender politics depicted in *22 Female Kottayam* revolve around the examination of women's agency and empowerment. The movie challenges societal norms, emphasizing the strength, resilience, and self-determination of women. Through the journey of Tessa, the film presents a powerful message against restrictive gender roles, advocating for women's autonomy and the reclamation of their lives.

Furthermore, the film fearlessly addresses gender-based violence and the injustice prevalent in society. It unflinchingly portrays the violence inflicted upon women, shedding light on the urgent need to address and support survivors of such atrocities. *22 Female Kottayam* sparks conversations about consent, respect, and the eradication of violence against women.

The movie also critiques societal norms and double standards that perpetuate gender inequality. It challenges judgmental attitudes and moral policing faced by women when they deviate from social expectations. By confronting these issues, the film encourages viewers to question restrictive norms and fight for women's autonomy and freedom.

Moreover, *22 Female Kottayam* explores the complexities of love, relationships, and power dynamics within them. It unveils the exploitation and manipulation that can occur, emphasizing the importance of healthy relationships based on mutual respect and equality.

The film examines the intersectionality of gender politics, acknowledging how gender intersects with other aspects such as class and social status. It highlights the additional challenges faced by marginalized women, emphasizing the need for an inclusive approach to address gender-based issues.

Additionally, *22 Female Kottayam* raises important questions about the justice system and its response to crimes against women. It exposes biases and hurdles faced by survivors seeking justice, calling for an unbiased and supportive legal framework.

Furthermore, the film emphasizes the significance of friendship and solidarity among women. It showcases the support and strength found in female bonds, countering narratives that pit women against each other. The power of collective action is highlighted as a means to challenge gender inequality and support survivors.

In summary, *22 Female Kottayam* offers a compelling exploration of gender politics, touching on themes such as women's agency, gender-based violence, societal norms, and intersectionality. By shedding light on these issues, the film prompts discussions, self-reflection, and calls for societal change towards a more equitable and inclusive future.

## 2.4 The Great Indian Kitchen



*The Great Indian Kitchen* is a compelling Malayalam-language film that delves into the complexities of gender politics. Through its thought-provoking narrative, the movie explores the challenges and power dynamics experienced by women within a traditional Indian household.

At its core, the film examines the traditional gender roles imposed on women and the burdens they bear. It portrays the expectations of women to fulfil domestic responsibilities and prioritize the needs of the family, often at the expense of their own aspirations. By challenging these predefined roles, the movie sheds light on the struggles faced by women in breaking free from societal confines.

Furthermore, *The Great Indian Kitchen* exposes the power dynamics within the household, where male dominance is prevalent. It critically examines the submissiveness expected of women, highlighting the inequality and emotional toll it exacts on them.

The film also explores the themes of consent and agency within marital relationships. It emphasizes the lack of autonomy experienced by the female protagonist, whose desires and choices are often disregarded. This exploration encourages viewers to reflect on the importance of mutual respect, communication, and consent in relationships.

In addition, the movie confronts the pervasive issue of gender-based violence. It portrays the various forms of abuse endured by the female lead, including emotional manipulation and psychological coercion. Through its portrayal, the film aims to raise awareness and challenge societal acceptance of such harmful behaviours.

Moreover, *The Great Indian Kitchen* addresses the economic dependence of women within the household, which perpetuates the gendered power imbalance. It highlights the limited opportunities available for women to pursue their own careers or achieve financial independence. This depiction underscores the need for equal opportunities and economic empowerment.

The film also explores the suppression of personal identity within a patriarchal structure, as women sacrifice their own dreams and aspirations to conform to societal expectations. This portrayal prompts viewers to contemplate the importance of individuality and self-expression.

Furthermore, *The Great Indian Kitchen* emphasizes the transformative power of education and awareness. It showcases how knowledge enables the female protagonist

to question and resist oppressive structures. The film advocates for education as a catalyst for societal change and gender equality.

Additionally, the movie underscores the significance of solidarity among women. It depicts the support and camaraderie that can be found among female characters, highlighting the strength that arises from collective action and shared experiences. This portrayal encourages viewers to unite in the fight against gender-based discrimination and oppression.

Thus, *The Great Indian Kitchen* presents a profound exploration of gender politics within a traditional Indian household. By examining gender roles, power dynamics, consent, violence, and the suppression of agency, the film prompts reflection on the need for societal transformation, equal opportunities, and the empowerment of women.



## 2.5 *Ishq*



*Ishq* is a Malayalam-language film that delves into the theme of gender politics, as highlighted in the review provided by Women's Web. The movie presents a nuanced storyline that explores the complexities of power dynamics, societal expectations, and the challenges faced by its female protagonist.

Gender politics in *Ishq* revolves around the examination of relationships and the influence of toxic masculinity on women's lives. The film follows the journey of Sachi and Vasudha, a young couple whose lives are disrupted by an incident of moral policing, leading to a series of consequential events. As the plot unfolds, the movie sheds light on the power imbalances and social pressures that shape the characters' actions.

A central element of gender politics portrayed in *Ishq* involves the exploration of patriarchal norms and the policing of women's choices and behaviour. The film highlights the restrictive barriers placed on women, where their perceived honour becomes a measure of their value, and the repercussions of deviating from societal

expectations. Through the character of Vasudha, the film challenges these norms and encourages viewers to critically analyse the underlying biases and oppressive structures.

Moreover, the movie addresses the issue of victim-blaming and the pervasive rape culture prevalent in society. It explores how women are often held accountable for the actions of men and how societal narratives perpetuate victim-blaming attitudes. "Ishq" prompts introspection and dialogue, urging viewers to confront these harmful beliefs and advocate for a culture based on consent and respect.

Furthermore, the film underscores the importance of agency and empowerment. It showcases the resilience and strength of the female characters as they navigate complex relationships and strive to regain their autonomy. *Ishq* emphasizes the significance of women asserting their choices and challenging the oppressive systems that curtail their freedom.

The movie also confronts the concept of toxic masculinity and its detrimental impact on individuals and relationships. It explores how traditional ideals of masculinity perpetuate violence, control, and dominance. By addressing toxic masculinity, *Ishq* encourages viewers to critically examine societal expectations and work towards fostering healthier, more equitable relationships.

Additionally, the film examines the role of consent within relationships and emphasizes the importance of communication and respect. It raises awareness about the boundaries that should be honoured in intimate partnerships and highlights the necessity of enthusiastic consent. *Ishq* stimulates conversations around healthy relationships and mutual understanding.

*Ishq* addresses the influence of social media in perpetuating gender stereotypes and contributing to a culture of moral policing. The film illustrates how the virtual world can amplify societal judgments and intensify the pressures individuals face. It serves as a reminder of the need for responsible online behaviour and the potential consequences of cyberbullying and online harassment.

Furthermore, the movie touches upon the significance of support systems and the strength of solidarity. It showcases the importance of friends and family in providing emotional support and empowerment to individuals navigating gender-based challenges. *Ishq* encourages viewers to cultivate an environment of empathy, understanding, and allyship.

*Ishq* offers a compelling exploration of gender politics, challenging patriarchal norms, toxic masculinity, victim-blaming, and societal pressures. Through its thought-provoking narrative, the film invites viewers to critically examine prevailing gender dynamics and work towards building a more inclusive, equitable society. It serves as a call to action, advocating for consent, agency, and the dismantling of oppressive structures.

## 2.6 *Uyare*



*Uyare* a thought-provoking 2019 Malayalam-language film directed by Manu Ashokan, delves deep into the complex realm of gender politics through its compelling narrative. The movie skilfully unravels the experiences of its female protagonist, Pallavi, as she navigates societal expectations, toxic masculinity, and her unwavering determination to pursue her dreams.

At its core, *Uyare* challenges the deeply ingrained societal expectations placed upon women. The film defies traditional gender roles, showcasing Pallavi as a strong and resilient character who refuses to conform to societal norms. Her aspiration to become a pilot becomes a symbol of her defiance, as she confronts the barriers imposed on her by a patriarchal society. The movie shines a light on the struggles faced by women who dare to break free from societal confines, igniting conversations about gender equality and the need to dismantle rigid gender norms.

In addition to critiquing societal expectations, *Uyare* bravely confronts toxic masculinity and its detrimental impact on women's lives. Through the portrayal of Pallavi's possessive boyfriend, the film sheds light on the controlling and violent behavior that stems from toxic masculinity. This examination serves as a powerful reminder of the pervasive nature of gender-based violence and the urgent need to challenge and eradicate such harmful ideologies. By amplifying this critique, *Uyare* urges viewers to reflect upon their own attitudes and contribute to a more inclusive and respectful society.

Furthermore, *Uyare* showcases the triumph of the human spirit and resilience in the face of adversity. Despite enduring a horrific acid attack, Pallavi refuses to let her dreams shatter. The film underscores the importance of self-belief, empowerment, and the support of loved ones in overcoming societal barriers. Pallavi's journey serves as an inspiration, illustrating the indomitable strength that lies within individuals who refuse to be defined by their circumstances.

*Uyare* delves deep into gender politics, challenging societal expectations, critiquing toxic masculinity, and highlighting the resilience of women. Through its powerful narrative and compelling characters, the film provokes reflection and ignites conversations about the need for a more equitable and inclusive society.

## 2.7 Helen



*Helen*, released in 2019, is a Malayalam film that delves into the theme of gender politics. Through a captivating storyline, it explores the challenges and resilience of its female lead character.

The movie delves into the complex web of gender politics, focusing on societal expectations, power dynamics, and the struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society. It follows the journey of Helen, a young woman employed at a restaurant, who becomes trapped in a life-threatening situation when accidentally locked inside a freezer.

Central to the film's gender politics is the portrayal of societal expectations placed on women. It sheds light on the pressures and limitations imposed upon women as they

pursue their personal and professional aspirations. Helen's determination to navigate the dire circumstances and survive challenges the traditional gender roles, advocating for women's agency and empowerment.

Moreover, *Helen* highlights power dynamics within the narrative, exposing broader issues of gender inequality. It portrays the vulnerabilities women face and the obstacles encountered when seeking help or support. By bringing to the forefront the subtle and overt forms of discrimination experienced by women, the film prompts a call for systemic change and equal opportunities.

Additionally, the movie confronts victim-blaming and challenges prevailing notions of women's safety. Helen's fight for survival showcases her strength and resourcefulness, countering the perception of women as passive victims. It emphasizes the significance of solidarity and support while questioning the societal tendency to blame victims of gender-based violence.

Furthermore, *Helen* explores themes of resilience and the unyielding spirit of women. Despite the perilous situation, Helen displays immense courage, employing her intelligence and determination to find a way out. Her journey becomes a powerful testament to the strength and resilience of women, encouraging viewers to recognize and appreciate the inner fortitude that individuals possess in dire circumstances.

The film also examines workplace discrimination and the unique challenges faced by women in male-dominated industries. Through Helen's experiences in a restaurant setting, it exposes gender biases and unequal treatment encountered by women in their professional lives. The movie raises awareness about the need for equal opportunities and a safe working environment.

Moreover, Helen underscores the importance of empathy and compassion in addressing gender politics. It portrays the impact of understanding and support from Helen's circle, highlighting the significance of building a supportive community that stands against gender-based discrimination and violence.

Additionally, the film raises questions about the role of the justice system in addressing gender-related issues. It sheds light on the difficulties faced by women in seeking justice and calls for a more responsive and empathetic legal framework that provides timely and effective support to victims.

Furthermore, *Helen* emphasizes self-reliance and women's ability to take control of their own lives. Helen's resourcefulness and determination challenge the notion that women are dependent solely on external sources for rescue or support.

Lastly, the movie addresses the emotional toll of gender-based discrimination and violence. It explores the psychological impact on women and underscores the need for mental health support and recognition of the trauma experienced by survivors.

In summary, *Helen* intricately examines gender politics through its exploration of societal expectations, power dynamics, resilience, workplace discrimination, justice systems, and the emotional toll of gender-based violence. Through its compelling narrative and portrayal of a resilient female protagonist, the film prompts reflection on the urgent need for gender equality and the creation of a more inclusive and compassionate society.



**CHAPTER 5**

**DATA ANALYSIS**

**AND**

**INTERPRETATION**

## CHAPTER-5

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 1. Age wise Classification

OPTIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
18-20	12	20%
21-23	28	46.7%
23-25	21	35%
TOTAL	60	

Table 1.1: Age wise classification of the respondents.

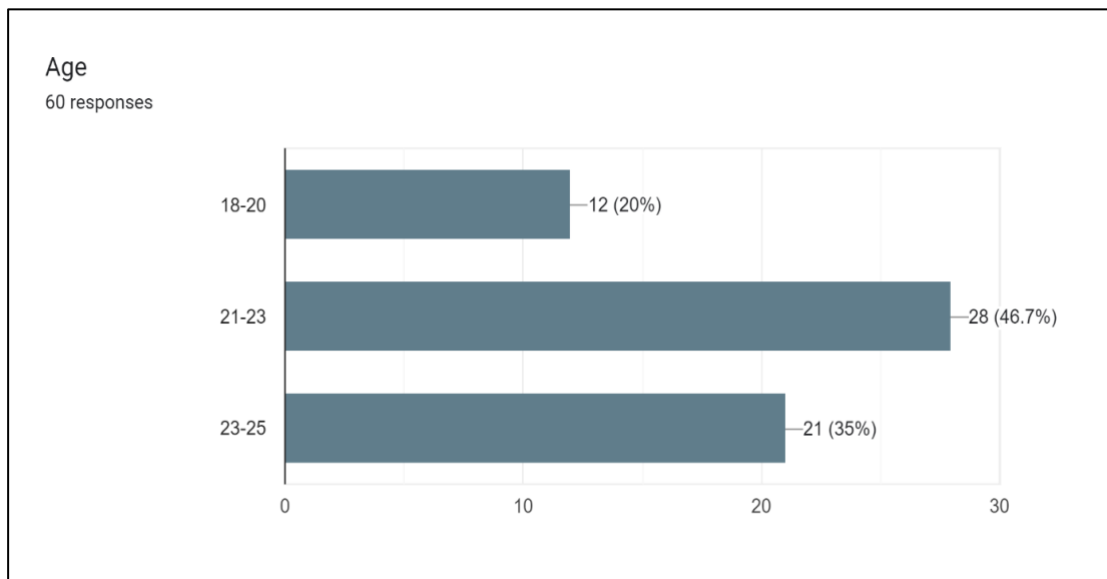


Figure 1.1: Representation of age wise classification of the respondents.

**Inference:** Based on the provided graph, it can be observed that the majority of respondents fall within the age range of 21-23. This age group received the highest number of responses with a total of 28 responses. In comparison to the age ranges of 18-20 and 23-25, received which received 12 and 21 responses, respectively. Therefore,

the data indicates that the highest response rate is among individuals aged between 21-23 years.

## 2. Gender of the Respondents

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Male	23	58.3%
Female	35	38.3%
Transgender	00	0
Prefer not to say	02	3.3%
TOTAL	60	

Table 2.1: Gender of the respondents.

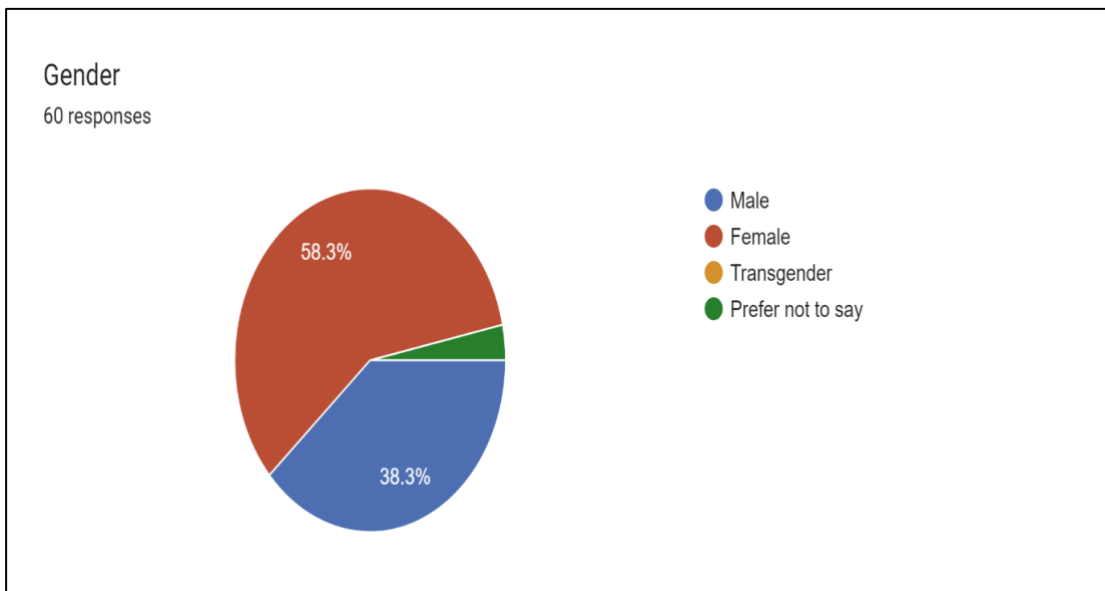


Figure 2.1: Representation of gender of the respondents.

**Inference:** According to the pie chart, majority of the respondents are female, followed by male with 35 and 23 respectively. Two of the respondents does not prefer to say their gender. Thus, the participants are majorly women followed by men.

**3. The Impact of Popular Movies in Shaping the Gender Roles among Youth**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	12	20%
Agree	34	56.7%
Neutral	08	13.3%
Disagree	05	8.3%
Strongly disagree	01	1.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 3.1: Impact of movies in shaping the gender roles among youth.

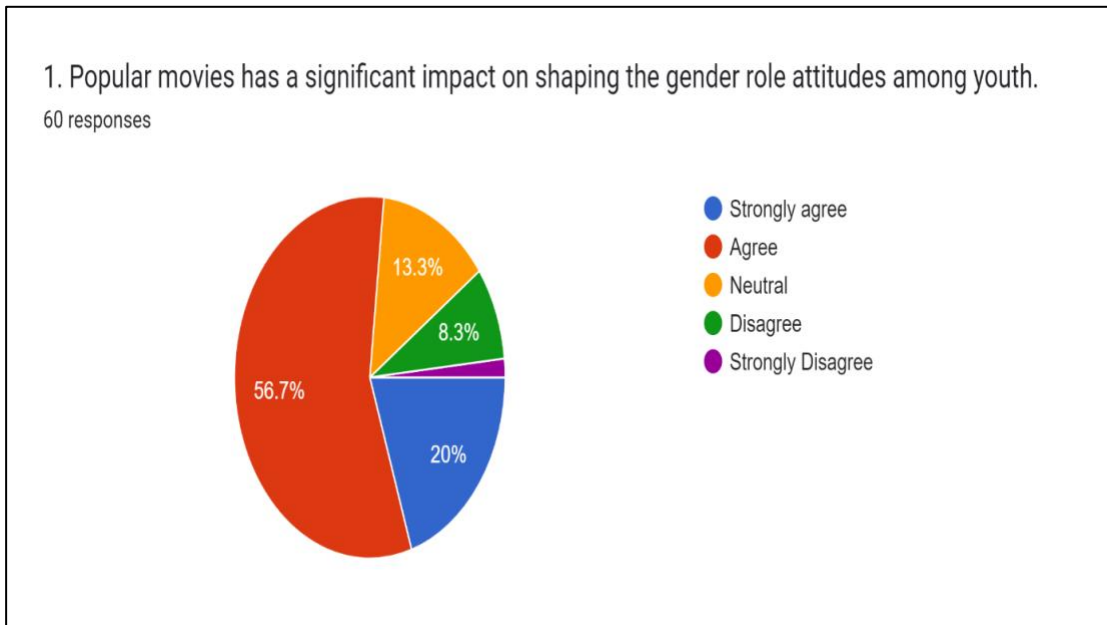


Figure 3.1: Representation of the impact of movies in shaping the gender roles among youth.

**Inference:** According to the data, 56.7% (34 respondents) agreed that popular movies have a significant impact on shaping the gender role attitude among youth. 20% of the respondents, strongly agree to the statement whereas 13.3% marked neutral. The numbers of the respondents who marked strongly agree and neutral are 12 and 8 respectively.

**4. Perpetuation of Stereotypes about Masculinity and Femininity depicted in Malayalam movies**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	09	15%
Agree	33	55%
Neutral	15	25%
Disagree	02	3.3%
Strongly disagree	01	1.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 4.1: Responses for perpetuation of stereotypes about masculinity and femininity in movies.

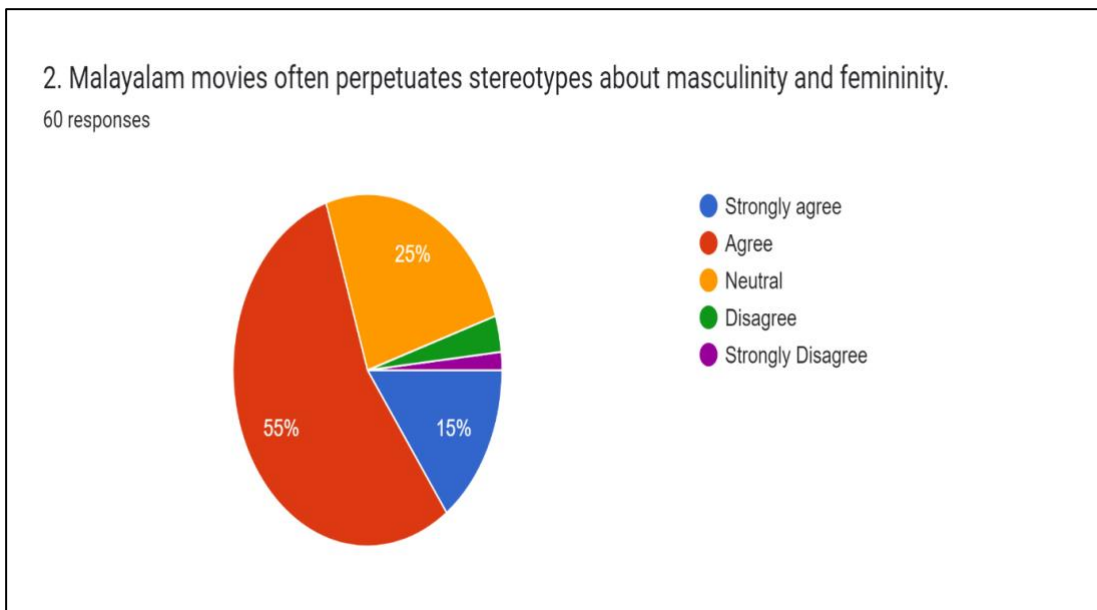


Figure 4.1: Representataion of responses for perpetuation of stereotypes about masculinity and femininity in movies.

**Inference:** Based on the above data, 55% (33 respondents) of the respondents agree that Malayalam movies perpetuate stereotypes about masculinity and femininity followed by 25% (15 respondents) marking neutral and 15% (9 respondents) who strongly agrees to the opinion.

**5. Promotion of Consent and Respectful Relationship portrayed by Malayalam Movies**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	03	5%
Agree	14	23.3%
Neutral	17	28.3%
Disagree	23	38.3%
Strongly disagree	03	5%
TOTAL	60	

Table 5.1: Promotion of positive relationship in movies.

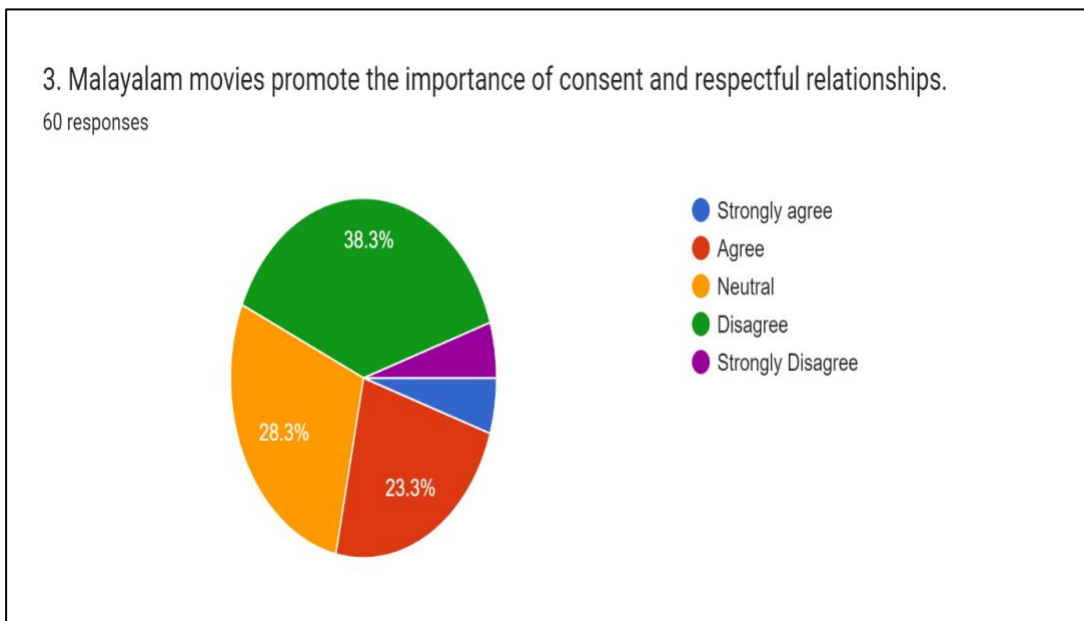


Figure 5.1: Representation of promotion of positive relationship in movies.

**Inference:** From the pie chart, respondents disagree to the statement that Malayalam movies promote the importance of consent and respectful relationships numbering in 23 responses (38.3%). 17 respondents (28.3%) marked neutral and 14 respondents (23.3%) agrees to the statement.

**6. Negative Influence of Malayalam Movie on Youth**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	04	6.7%
Agree	23	38.3%
Neutral	24	40%
Disagree	08	13.3%
Strongly disagree	01	1.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 6.1: Negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth.

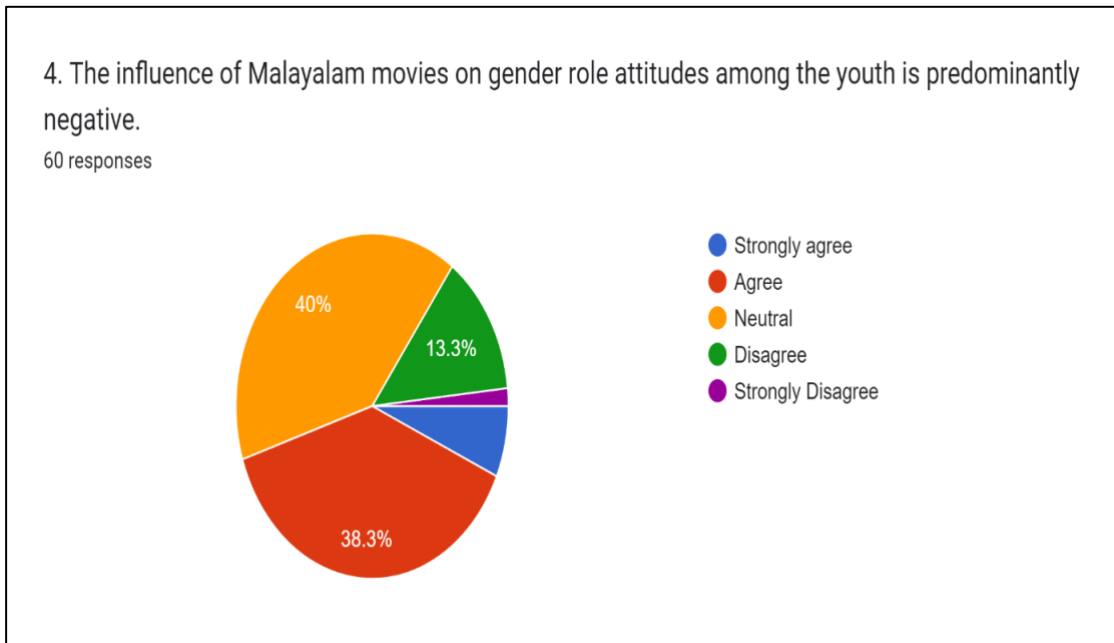


Figure 6.1: Representation of negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth.

**Inference:** The data shows that 40% of the respondents, 24 in numbers, marked neutral to the question that asked about the negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth followed by 38.3% who marked agree and 13.3% who marked as disagree numbering 23 and 8 respondents respectively.



**7. The need for more Diverse and Progressive Representation of Gender**

**Roles in Malayalam Movies**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	12	20%
Agree	38	63.3%
Neutral	08	13.3%
Disagree	01	1.7%
Strongly disagree	01	1.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 7.1: Need for more diverse and progressive representation of gender roles.

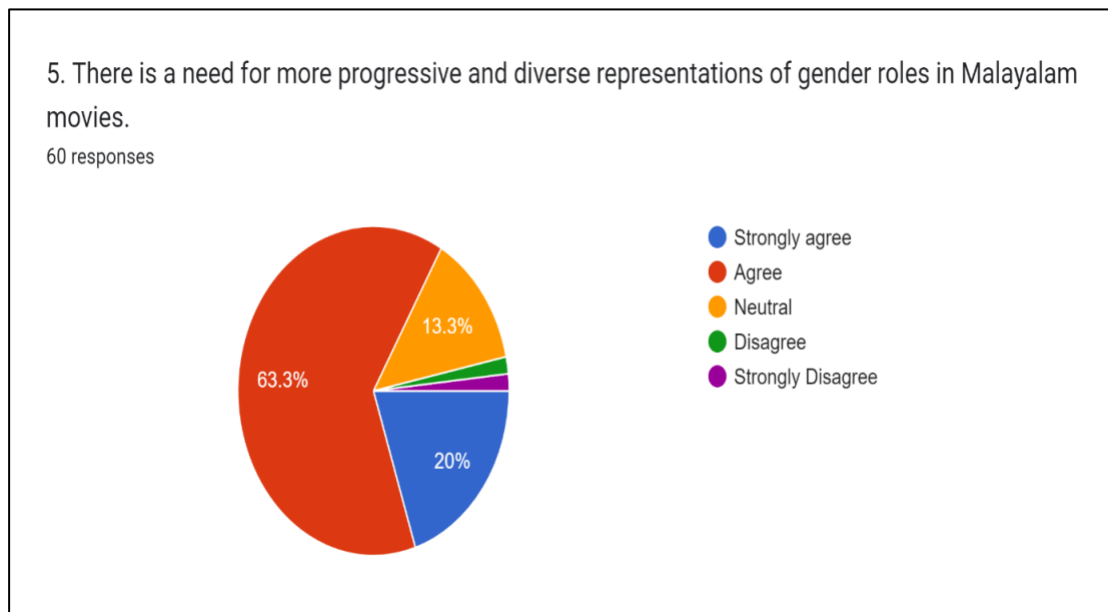


Figure 7.1: Representation of need for more diverse and progressive representation of gender roles.

**Inference:** Based on the above chart, it is observed that majority of the participants agree on the need for more diverse and progressive representation of gender roles. Around 63.3% of the participants, numbering in 38, agreed to the statement. 20% of the

participant, 12 in numbers, marked strongly agree followed by neutral marked by 13.3%, 8 in numbers.

## 8. Does Malayalam movies Depict Strong and Independent Women

### Characters

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	02	3.3%
Agree	19	31.7%
Neutral	23	38.3%
Disagree	14	23.3%
Strongly disagree	02	3.3%
TOTAL	60	

Table 8.1: Depiction of strong and independent women characters in movies.

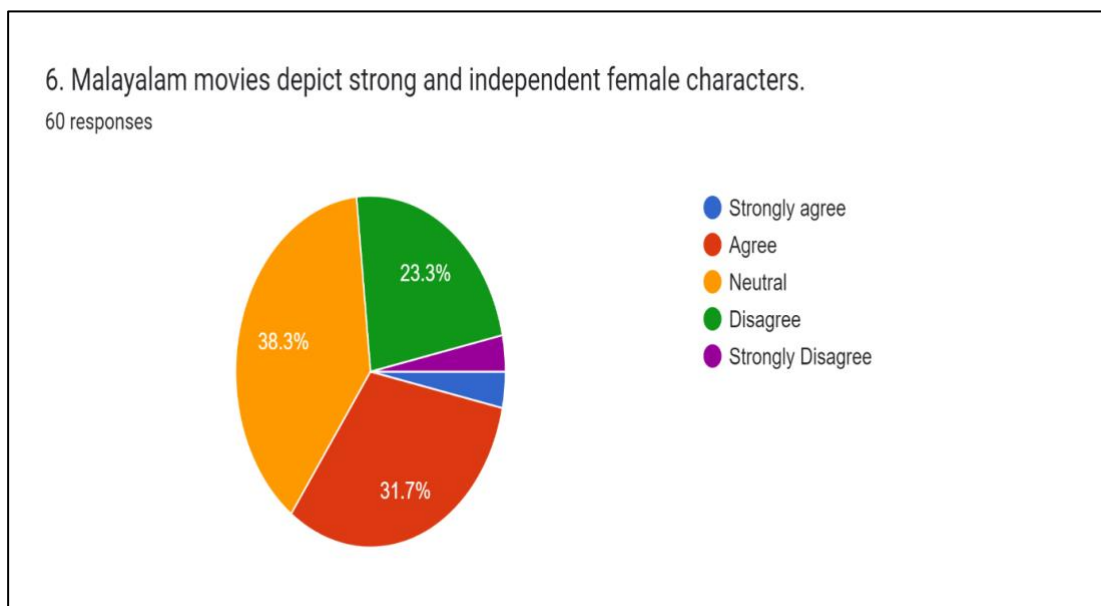


Figure 8.1: Representation of depiction of strong and independent women characters in movies.

**Inference:** According to the data, 38.3% ,23 in number, of the participants opted for a neutral response for the statement which says that Malayalam movies depict strong and independent women characters followed by 31.7% who agreed to the statement and 23.3% who disagreed to the statement which numbers in 19 and 14 respectively.

**9. Portrayal of Dominant Men and Submissive Women**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	04	6.7%
Agree	32	53.5%
Neutral	19	31.7%
Disagree	04	6.7%
Strongly disagree	01	1.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 9.1: Responses regarding portrayal of dominant men and submissive women.

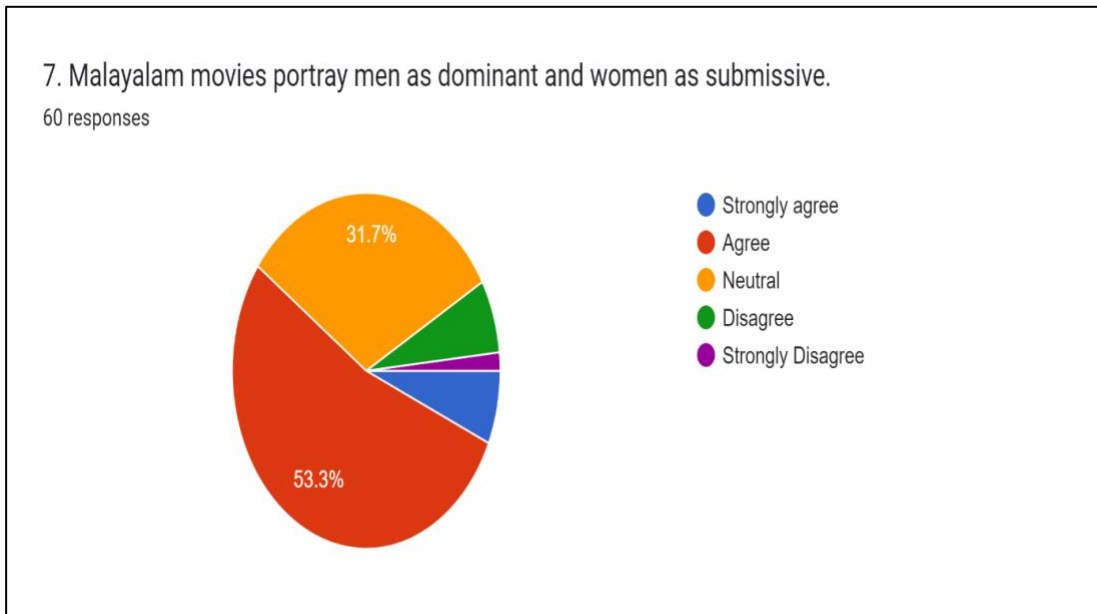


Figure 9.1: Representation of responses regarding portrayal of dominant men and submissive women.

**Inference:** Based on the provided graph, it can be observed that the majority of respondents agree that Malayalam movies portrays men as dominant and women as submissive. The highest number of responses with a total of 32 responses marked agree to the statement. In comparison to the neutral, strongly agree and disagree, which

received 19,4 and 4 responses, respectively. Therefore, the data indicates that the highest number of participants agree to the statement.

**10. Depiction of Men and Women as Equal in Partnership**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	01	1.7%
Agree	05	8.3%
Neutral	28	46.7%
Disagree	24	40%
Strongly disagree	02	3.3%
TOTAL	60	

Table 10.1: Response regarding depiction of men and women as equal in partnership.

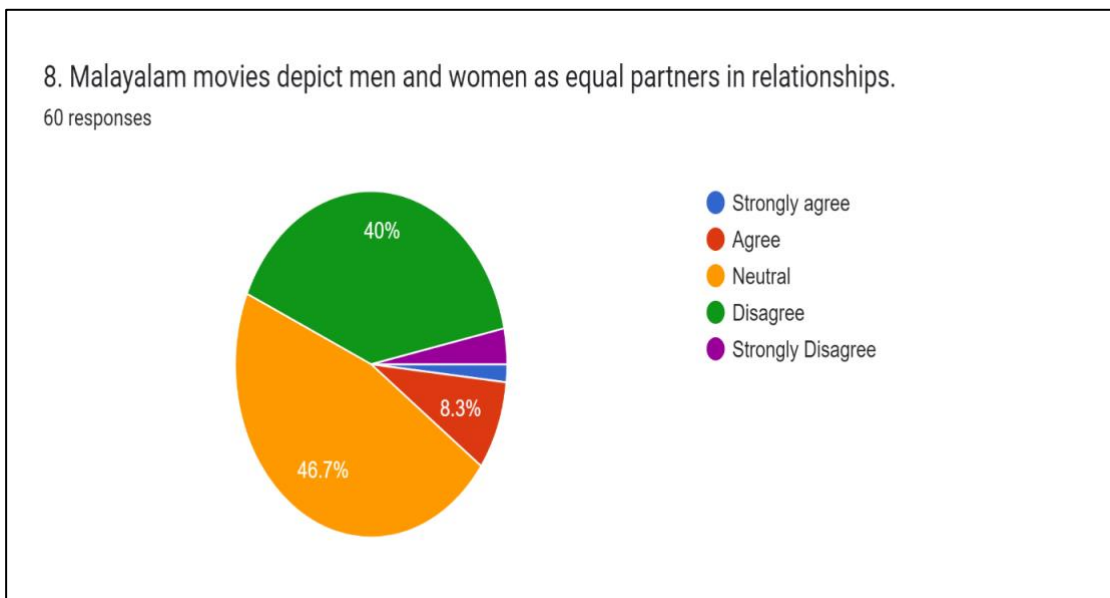


Figure 10.1: Representation of response regarding depiction of men and women as equal in partnership.

**Inference:** According to the pie chart, 46.7%, 28 in numbers, marked neutral response to the depiction of men and women as equal partners in relationship followed by 40%, 24 in numbers who marked disagree and 8.3%, 5 in numbers, who marked as agree.

**11. Do Malayalam Movie challenge societal norms regarding gender roles?**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	01	1.7%
Agree	17	28.3%
Neutral	15	25%
Disagree	25	41.7%
Strongly disagree	02	3.3%
TOTAL	60	

Table 11.1: Response regarding role of movies in challenging societal norms regarding gender roles.

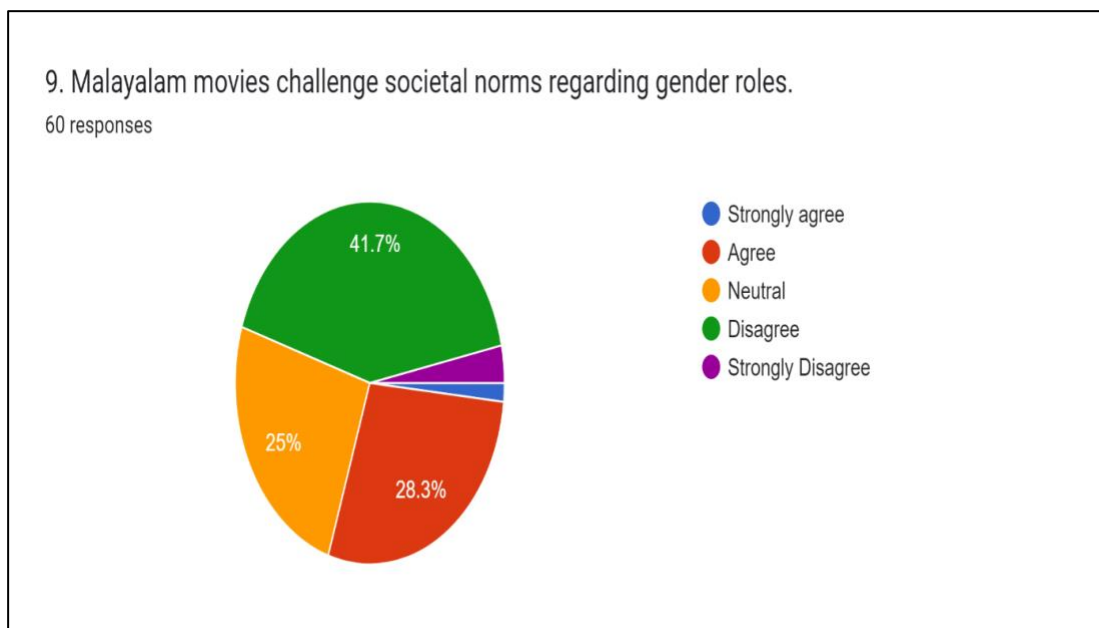


Figure 11.1: Representation of response regarding role of movies in challenging societal norms regarding gender roles.

**Inference:** The data shows that 41.7% of the respondents, 25 in numbers, marked disagree to the question that asked about the negative influence of Malayalam movies on youth followed by 28.3% who marked agree and 25% who marked as disagree numbering 17 and 15 respondents respectively.

**12. Contribution of Malayalam Movies in positive transformation of gender role attitudes among the youth.**

OPTIONS	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Strongly agree	02	3.3%
Agree	15	25%
Neutral	15	25%
Disagree	24	40%
Strongly disagree	04	4.7%
TOTAL	60	

Table 12.1: Responses regarding contribution of Malayalam movies in positive transformation of gender role attitude among youth.

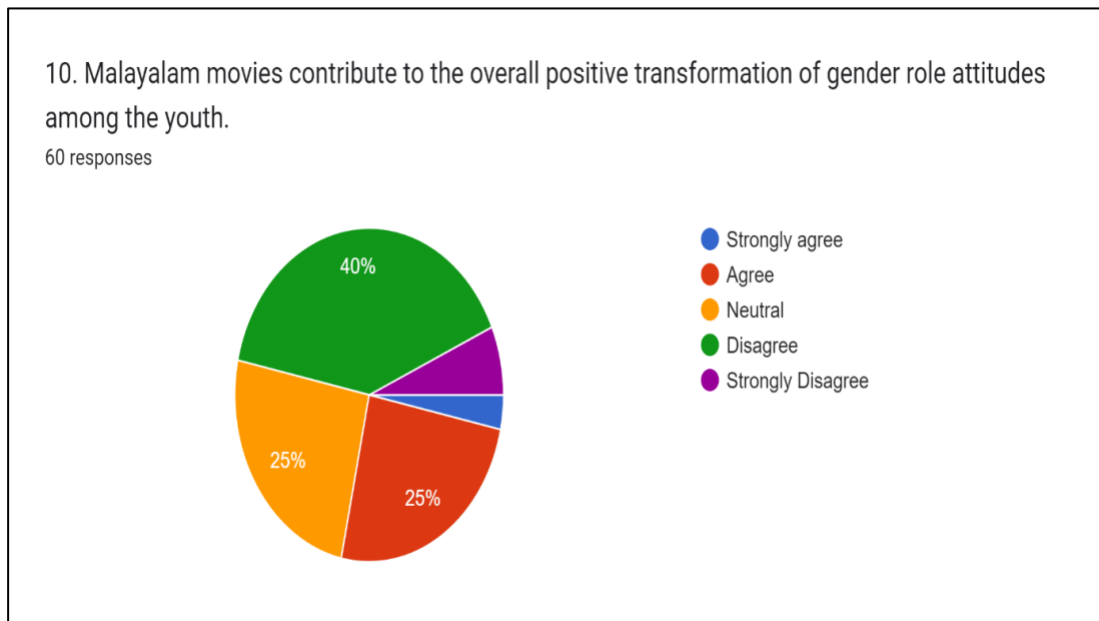


Figure 12.1: Representation of responses regarding contribution of Malayalam movies in positive transformation of gender role attitude among youth.

**Inference:** Based on the provided graph, it can be observed that the majority of respondents disagree that Malayalam movies contribute to the overall positive transformation of gender role attitudes among youth. The highest number of responses with a total of 24 respondents disagreed to the statement. In comparison to the neutral



and agree, which received 15 responses, respectively. Therefore, the data indicates that the highest number of participants agree to the statement.

**CHAPTER 6**

**FINDINGS,**

**SUGGESTIONS,**

**AND**

**SOCIAL WORK**

**IMPLICATIONS**

## CHAPTER 6

### FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, AND SOCIAL WORK

#### IMPLICATIONS

##### **Findings**

The purpose of the study is to investigate how gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam films and how this affects young people's perceptions of these roles. The goal of the study is to determine whether the way gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam films significantly affects young people's attitudes about gender roles.

##### ***Finding 1***

*Objective 1: To analyse the representation of gender roles in Malayalam movies.*

As part of the research, the researcher had reviewed 16 movies out of which 9 of them are popular Malayalam movies in which male characters are the protagonists and female characters play a support role for their male partners and 7 of the movies are female-centric films that depict more strong women characters who are away from the normal stereotyping of female roles. The movies are:

*Drishyam*, does not delve deeply into an explicit exploration of gender politics, it indirectly challenges certain traditional gender norms and stereotypes. It portrays women as capable and resourceful individuals, and it questions the assumption of male dominance and authority in certain spheres. As part of its crime and family-centred plot, *Drishyam* presents a complex representation of gender interactions. It challenges conventional ideas of power and control while showcasing the agency and resilience of female characters.

*Classmates* provides a nuanced portrayal of gender dynamics within the context of its story. It challenges traditional gender norms, highlights the agency and aspirations of female characters, and explores the role of gender within political settings.

*Bangalore Days* offers a expressed exploration of gender dynamics and the complexities of navigating societal expectations for women. It portrays strong and independent female characters, presenting a positive and empowering narrative in the context of gender politics.

*Paleri Manikyam: Oru Pathirakolapathakathinte Kadha* subtly discusses gender politics' impact on society and history in the context it depicts. It draws attention to the difficulties experienced by women in patriarchal societies, the structural problems that support gender inequality, and the demand for a more just and equitable society.

*Angamaly Diaries* may indirectly touch upon certain aspects of gender dynamics and power imbalances, it does not explicitly delve into gender politics as a central theme. The movie primarily focuses on the crime narrative and the portrayal of human emotions and relationships within that context.

*Thondimuthalum Driksakshiyum* indirectly addresses certain aspects of gender politics, highlighting power dynamics, societal expectations, and the experiences of women within the context of the story. While not the central focus, these elements add layers of social commentary to the film's narrative.

*Kammattipaadam* indirectly addresses gender politics by shedding light on the struggles and vulnerabilities faced by women in a patriarchal and violent society. It serves as a commentary on the systemic issues and power imbalances that affect women's lives but does not make it the central focus of the film.

*Pranchiyettan and the Saint* indirectly addresses gender politics by portraying the struggles and aspirations of women within a patriarchal society. However, the film's central focus remains on Pranchi's personal growth and societal critique, rather than providing a comprehensive analysis of gender dynamics.

*Ustad Hotel* indirectly addresses gender politics by portraying the aspirations and agency of women within a patriarchal society. It promotes the importance of individual choice and empowerment. However, it does not delve into a comprehensive analysis or critique of gender dynamics.

*Take off* presents female characters who boldly defy societal expectations, breaking free from predefined roles and venturing into uncharted territories. By showcasing women in non-traditional domains and positions of power, the film sparks conversations about gender equality, pushing viewers to question and reconsider deeply ingrained stereotypes.

*How Old Are You?* addresses the stereotypes and biases faced by women as they age. It challenges the notion that women lose their value or relevance as they grow older, pushing back against society's limited definitions of beauty, success, and significance. The film encourages viewers to celebrate and appreciate women at every stage of life.

The gender politics depicted in *22 Female Kottayam* revolve around the examination of women's agency and empowerment. The movie challenges societal norms, emphasizing the strength, resilience, and self-determination of women. Through the journey of Tessa, the film presents a powerful message against restrictive gender roles, advocating for women's autonomy and the reclamation of their lives.

*The Great Indian Kitchen* exposes the power dynamics within the household, where male dominance is prevalent. It critically examines the submissiveness expected of

women, highlighting the inequality and emotional toll it exacts on them. The film also explores the themes of consent and agency within marital relationships. It emphasizes the lack of autonomy experienced by the female protagonist, whose desires and choices are often disregarded. This exploration encourages viewers to reflect on the importance of mutual respect, communication, and consent in relationships.

Gender politics in *Ishq* revolves around the examination of relationships and the influence of toxic masculinity on women's lives. The film follows the journey of Sachi and Vasudha, a young couple whose lives are disrupted by an incident of moral policing, leading to a series of consequential events. As the plot unfolds, the movie sheds light on the power imbalances and social pressures that shape the characters' actions.

*Uyare* challenges the deeply ingrained societal expectations placed upon women. The film defies traditional gender roles, showcasing Pallavi as a strong and resilient character who refuses to conform to societal norms. Her aspiration to become a pilot becomes a symbol of her defiance, as she confronts the barriers imposed on her by a patriarchal society. The movie shines a light on the struggles faced by women who dare to break free from societal confines, igniting conversations about gender equality and the need to dismantle rigid gender norms.

*Helen* intricately examines gender politics through its exploration of societal expectations, power dynamics, resilience, workplace discrimination, justice systems, and the emotional toll of gender-based violence. Through its compelling narrative and portrayal of a resilient female protagonist, the film prompts reflection on the urgent need for gender equality and the creation of a more inclusive and compassionate society.

From the analysis, the researcher understood that even though there are movies which highlights the equal representation of women on-screen, still there is a need for more movies which deconstruct the gender myths and stereotypes about the submissive female character and dominant male characters as protagonists.

### ***Finding 2***

*Objective 2: To investigate the relationship between the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies and the youth's attitude towards gender roles.*

To understand the relationship between the portrayal of gender roles in Malayalam movies and how it influences the youth's attitude towards gender role, the researcher conducted a survey among youth aged between 18-25 years of age through distributing google form. Some questions which illustrate how popular movies influence the youth's attitude towards gender roles are:

1. *Popular Malayalam movies have a significant impact on shaping gender role attitudes among the youth.*

For this question 56.7% of the participants have marked 'agree' followed by 20% who marked 'strongly agree', which shows that movies have a significant impact on designing the gender role attitudes of youth.

2. *Malayalam movies often perpetuates stereotypes about masculinity and femininity.*

Around 55 % of the respondents have marked 'agree' for the particular question which depicts that movie perpetuates stereotypes about masculinity and femininity which influences the mass audience especially youth.

3. *There is a need for more progressive and diverse representations of gender roles in Malayalam movies.*

For the above-mentioned question 63.3% of the participants have marked 'agree' followed by 20% who marked 'strongly agree' which shows that even though there are female-centric movies which highlights strong female protagonists, there is still a need of more progressive and diverse representation of gender roles in Malayalam movies which deconstructs the gender myths and stereotyping.

4. *Malayalam movies portray men as dominant and women as submissive.*

53.3% of the respondents have marked 'agree' to this question and that shows that normally there is a tendency for the film makers to represent female characters as submissive and male as dominant in movies which in fact influences the gender role attitude among commoners especially adolescent and youth.

5. *Malayalam movies contribute to the overall positive transformation of gender role attitudes among the youth.*

Around 40% of the participants 'disagree' to this statement as they think that Malayalam movies *do not* contribute to the overall positive transformation of gender role attitude among the youth population.

***Finding 3***

*Objective 3: To analyse the attempts to defy the gender constructions in Malayalam movies.*

As per the researcher's investigation from the research, most Malayalam movies have tried to deconstruct the gender myth and stereotyping in which man is dominant and women is submissive. Most of the new era Malayalam movies such as *Helen, How Old Are You? , Ishq, The Great Indian Kitchen, Uyare, Take off*, etc. depicts strong, independent and bold feminine characters unlike the submissive wife's who are



portrayed in old era movies. Thus, from this we can infer that, the society is become more progressive in thoughts and also the attitude towards woman and their potential.

### **Suggestions**

Research on how gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam films and how it influences young people's perception towards gender roles can provide important information. Several ideas can be taken into consideration when conducting this type of research. First, a thorough content analysis of a representative sample of Malayalam films is possible, looking at how gender roles, stereotypes, and power relationships are portrayed. The amount and calibre of representations, as well as the setting in which they are given, should all be taken into account in this study. Second, quantitative surveys can be used to gauge the perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs of young moviegoers regarding gender roles in Malayalam films. These polls can measure how much young people identify with or are impacted by the gender representations they see on television and film. Moreover, qualitative techniques such as focus groups or in-depth interviews can provide a deeper understanding of how youth interpret and internalize gender portrayals in movies and the potential effects on their attitudes and behaviours.

### **Implication of Professional social work practice**

Social workers can educate the public about the potential effects of gender roles depicted in Malayalam films on young people's attitudes. They can impart knowledge

on the value of gender equality and the need for critical media analysis to people, families, and communities.

Social workers can create and administer media literacy programs that provide young people the knowledge and skills to assess how gender roles are portrayed in Malayalam films. Youth can benefit from these programs by learning how the media affects their opinions and being given the tools to confront stereotypes.

Social workers can promote more inclusive and diverse depictions of gender roles in Malayalam films. They can work together with filmmakers, production companies, and business experts to promote fair and admirable depictions that take into account the variety of human experiences.

Social workers can help youth realize the importance of respectful and healthy relationships by offering advice and assistance. They can assist young people in navigating the complexity of gender roles as they are portrayed in media and in learning how to build egalitarian relationships based on equality and respect.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study looks into how gender roles among young people in Kerala have been influenced by Malayalam movies. By investigating the content, depiction, and reception of gender roles in Malayalam cinema, the study seeks to illuminate the possible impact of popular media on social attitudes and norms. The research is built on a detailed literature review on gender roles, media influence, and the influence of films on cultural narratives. Theoretical frameworks including the feminist cinema theory, the social learning theory, and the cultivation theory serve as a guide for the study and interpretation of the research findings.

The results of this study help us comprehend the impact of Malayalam films on young people's gender roles more fully. The research identifies the gender narratives in these films and highlights how much they challenge conventional gender standards. In addition, the study looks at how watching movies affects young people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.

In conclusion, from this study on how Malayalam films shape young people's gender roles, the researcher understood that unlike old generations who beholds women as submissive and dependants, the younger generation perceives women as progressive and also wishes to see more films which provides equal opportunity to women on-screen. Thus, from the study the researcher got an understanding that the younger generations are more progressive in thinking. The researcher could also infer that, there are many new generation movies which defy the gender myths and portrays women as equal to their male partners. Thereby overall, the society's view towards women and their gender roles have changed from the ancient thinking patterns who perceived women as fragile, passive and gentle.

# **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

D., G. (2021). Misogyny in Malayalam Films. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(1), 7. <https://doi.org/10.37622/IJHSS/11.1.2021.7-15>

*From expressing fear to accepting “no”, here are 9 lessons for men from Malayalam films.*

(2019, November 20). The News Minute.

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/expressing-fear-accepting-no-here-are-9-lessons-men-malayalam-films-112643>

Garst, J., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (1997). Advertising’s Effects on Men’s Gender Role Attitudes. *Sex Roles*, 36(9), 551–572. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1025661806947>

*Gender & The Shaping Of New Sensibilities In Malayalam Cinema | Feminism in India.*

(n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2023, from <https://feminisminindia.com/2021/03/05/gender-the-shaping-of-new-sensibilities-in-malayalam-cinema/>

*Gender and media—GSDRC.* (2015, July 2). <https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-media/>, <https://gsdrc.org/topic-guides/gender/gender-and-media/>

Gopinath, S. (2018, June 29). Misogyny & Malayalam Cinema: Why The Women In Cinema Collective Is Striking Fear. *Women’s Web: For Women Who Do.*

<https://www.womensweb.in/2018/06/misogyny-malayalam-cinema-why-the-women-in-cinema-collective-is-striking-fear/>

Hedegaard, J. (2020, February 21). The crucial role of media in achieving gender equality.

IMS. <https://www.mediasupport.org/the-crucial-role-of-media-in-achieving-gender-equality/>

*How Gender Stereotypes In The Media Harm Society | BetterHelp.* (n.d.). Retrieved June

29, 2023, from <https://www.betterhelp.com>

*How Indians view gender roles | Faculty of Economics.* (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2023,

from <https://www.econ.cam.ac.uk/news/iyer-how-indians-view-gender-roles>

*How Malayalam cinema mapped gender bias and toxic masculinity in 2021, from The*

*Great Indian Kitchen to Joji-Entertainment News , Firstpost.* (2021, December 25).

Firstpost. <https://www.firstpost.com/entertainment/how-malayalam-cinema-mapped-gender-bias-and-toxic-masculinity-in-2021-from-the-great-indian-kitchen-to-joji-10225471.html>

Johnson, S., & Nivedhitha, D. (2016). *Women Empowerment through Women Centric*

*Movies in Malayalam: A critical study 2004-2014.*

Joseph, F., & J, C. (2020). The hidden role Patriarchy in Malayalam Cinema: An analysis

of the movie ‘sufiyum sujathayum.’ *International Journal of English Literature and*

*Social Sciences*, 5, 2110–2112. <https://doi.org/10.22161/ijels.56.42>

*Malayalam Cinema and 'her' evolution.* (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2023, from

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/readersblog/indianwaysofportrayingromeosandjuliets/malayalam-cinema-and-her-evolution-51728/>

*Media and the Development of Gender Role Stereotypes | Annual Review of*

*Developmental Psychology.* (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2023, from

<https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-devpsych-051120-010630>

Pepper, M. S. (2019, June 9). *Attitudes to gender and sexual diversity: Changing global*

*trends.* The Conversation. <http://theconversation.com/attitudes-to-gender-and-sexual-diversity-changing-global-trends-117684>

Philip, C. (2021). *Interpretation of Evolution of the Portrayal of Masculinity in Malayalam*

*Cinema for Four Decades.* <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22364.82568>

Ramesh, M. (2022, March 3). *"Wife Must Always Obey Husband": How Indians View*

*Gender Roles Within Families.* The Quint. <https://www.thequint.com/gender/how-indians-view-gender-roles-in-families-and-society>

Saewyc, E. (2017). A Global Perspective on Gender Roles and Identity. *The Journal of*

*Adolescent Health: Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 61(4

Suppl), S1–S2. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.07.010>

*The evolution of the female lead in malayalam cinema—The Hindu BusinessLine.* (n.d.).

Retrieved July 7, 2023, from <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/blink/cover/the-evolution-of-the-female-lead-in-malayalam-cinema/article64561390.ece>

*Toxic and Abusive: New Age Malayalam Films Are Finally Showing Patriarchy in Its Raw,*

*Unglorified Reality.* (n.d.). Retrieved June 29, 2023, from

<https://reset.stck.me/post/5083/Toxic-and-Abusive-New-Age-Malayalam-Films-Are-Finally-Showing-Patriarchy-in-Its-Raw-Unglorified-Reality>

Wood, J. T. (n.d.). *The Influence of Media on Views of Gender.*

Zuo, X., Lou, C., Gao, E., Lian, Q., & Shah, I. H. (2018). Gender role attitudes, awareness and experiences of non-consensual sex among university students in Shanghai, China.

*Reproductive Health*, 15(1), 49. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12978-018-0491-x>



# **APPENDIX**

## **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

- Popular Malayalam movies have a significant impact on shaping gender role attitudes among the youth.
- Malayalam movies often perpetuate stereotypes about masculinity and femininity.
- Malayalam movies promote the importance of consent and respectful relationships.
- The influence of Malayalam movies on gender role attitudes among the youth predominantly negative.
- There is a need for more progressive and diverse representations of gender roles in Malayalam movies.
- Malayalam movies depict strong and independent female characters.
- Malayalam movies portray men as dominant and women as submissive.
- Malayalam movies depict men and women as equal partners in relationships.
- Malayalam movies challenge societal norms regarding gender roles
- Malayalam movies contribute to the overall positive transformation of gender role attitudes among the youth.