Representation of Women in Electronic Visual Media: Bangladeshi Context

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Abstract

Stereotyping based on gender is a very common phenomenon around the world since early days of civilization. Physical difference might be the basic reason of male-female division, but the distinction evolved into an ideological one that established a misogynistic tradition of putting women as nurses for men. Seeing women only in terms of their body also emerged in visual media as the division was already established as form of culture. Bangladesh is not an exception in viewing women in similar ways in the media. Electronic form of popular visual media projected women in a traditional way in which women are represented as objects rather than an individual. Though women are coming out of traditional roles and working equal or more than men but visual media is encouraging women to follow male dominated culture. Women are shown based on their body and traditional gender image in popular media while women are also consuming such representation as fact. This paper aims to look for such representation in the contemporary visual media that do not encourage women in intellectual practice, rather make them agents for men.

Introduction

Representing women in visual media had been a common practice as visual culture is established based on images and women are often taken as a subject of male gaze. Before considering a contemporary trend of one culture it is important to consider the history because "[h]istory always constitutes the relation between a present and its past" (Berger 11). History of Visual Culture is an ambivalent subject to investigate. It is because watching or seeing something is a very basic sensation of the human mind. Right after opening our eyes as children we start perceiving the world around us. We start recognizing the known faces and culture of the surroundings. We look at the mirror and recognize our face or features. Our heart moves seeing beautiful nature. We trust on something because we see it directly with our eyes. Within that we also see magic that tricks our vision. Before examining the contemporary visual media it is essential to take an account of the emergence of "visual culture". Visual Culture is one significant culture that is "concerned with visual events in which information, meaning, or pleasure is sought by consumer in an interface with visual technology" (Mirzoeff 3). It is not as watching rainbow or nature, it requires consumer deriving meaning based on material output of visuals.

To consider the history of documented visuals it would not be wrong to begin with paintings. It is reasonable to consider cave paintings first which reveal a significant amount of prehistoric art practice from around the world, especially Africa, Europe and Australia. It can be accounted as the earliest practice of portraying the visuals by human being and it is assumed that the purpose of those paintings was mostly religious. History tells us that Egyptians were the first civilization that started depicting an artistic presentation of human form from 3100 BC (Gascoigne, HistoryWorld). Those ancient Egyptian paintings indicate a wealth related to them because those paintings have mostly been recovered from the tomb of the kings, queens or rich people. Later periods of ancient paintings would associate Greek, Chinese, Medieval Europe and Renaissance, Indian arts and much more. The history of visual art and culture is much earlier than literature as the earliest form of literature belongs to 8th Century AD whereas the art of painting began long before that. The basic history of painting might be too long and

uncertain due to diverse cultural ethnography but the initial level can be identified in its relation with religion and power. Creating visuals or owning them was always something that needed capital. Where portrayals are associated with wealth, there is scope of putting ideas of the owners into those visuals.

Visuals have an impact on mind whether it is beautiful or ugly. None would like to experience the horror of watching disturbing images, so automatically attention is driven towards something beautiful that pleases the mind. Probably that is how women came into the picture as a symbol of beauty. Women were or are hidden inside home or the veil because it is considered that their beauty can attract men putting them into vulnerability. Even if we consider stage drama as one of the earliest entertainments or art forms, women were not playing characters before the seventeenth century though theatre emerged Before the Christian Era. Leaving that part when women were absent in the visual arena, this paper aims to find out the presence of women in art and cultural practices and how they are portrayed for men.

It is almost impossible to find out exactly when women became a subject of visuals. Classical art probably presents some earliest forms of women being drawn on canvas for others to see. In those paintings women were just objects for male gaze. As John Berger mentions that "how she appears to others, and ultimately how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success of her life" (Berger 46). There is almost no presentation of working women or happy women in those arts. In fact there is no record painters who were women before the Renaissance period. It defines that those visuals were created by and for men. It is like the first nude portrait of Adam and Eve in European tradition where Eve is blamed and punished. It indicates an idea that "[i]n relation to the women, the man becomes the agent of God" (Berger 48). So the earliest history of visual culture provides us an idea that women were not portrayed as free agents, rather as politicized objects for the male gaze. Painting nude women is also one significant part of history and culture that also reflects the male interest of looking at a woman's body in stylistic forms. It is definitely a social construction that turns women's body into a fetish object for male gaze. John Berger explores various aspects of this in *Ways of Seeing* and asserts that one paints naked women to enjoy looking at her

body and the only target of those paintings are pleasure of men (51). The history reveals that the male is always at the centre of action who seeks pleasure while women are depicted to please them by just being glamorous and fragile.

The practice of depicting visuals took new shape when "visual media" emerged to show images to people. Media itself basically indicates towards a consumer oriented culture and visual media as a part of it associates something visual for the audience who are consumers. The emergence of mass media or visual media is quite recent phenomenon as it developed along with scientific developments from nineteenth to twentieth century. As mentioned earlier that the concept of "visual culture" itself has developed from the idea that consumers will derive meaning and pleasure from visual events stimulated by technology. The invention of the camera can be said as the first form of visual media that created real images for people and it "changed the way men saw" (Berger 18). Images started traveling across the world breaking the barriers of time and space using this media. As Berger observes that paintings had uniqueness that was destroyed by multiple productions by camera; camera also created multiple meanings for people who see the image.

It was nineteenth century when photojournalism began and images started traveling around along with news stories. The radio might be the first form of mass media, but that was not visual as newspapers or magazines. Later, film and television created a revolution of showing moving image or videos to the people. Film and television fit with the first and appropriate place for visual media which is a twentieth century innovation. Moving pictures started shaping minds of people by showing what was inaccessible before. Initially it was all black and white but gradually colour took over. Now it is all colourful screens that engage, influence, and shape daily life of people around the world.

In this chapter it is shown that when the appearance of women in visual media is the subject of study, some idealistic representations are found from history that encourage women to be something else to please men. As Laura Mulvey puts that "women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness" (Mirzoeff

165). The sexualized image emphasizes the body and external getup of women without putting any value on their talent or intelligence. Other avatars of women are mothers and homemakers that also stress on the fact that taking care of home and children is the real motto of women, and their intellect or creativity is nothing desirable. From nude paintings to contemporary visual culture, we see the same expression of making women as men want to see. Thus the portrayal becomes just a representation reflecting male psyche.

Chapter 1

Women in Cinema

Cinema is considered to be a reflection of life, culture and societies. Machines such as zoetrope, kinetoscope and bioscope were used to form the earliest motion pictures during late nineteenth century. Modern form of lengthy cinema for mass viewing basically started in twentieth century along with expansion of technological advancement. Cinema basically is produced to entertain or give pleasure as Laura Mulvey terms 'scopophilia' which is a pleasure of looking and pleasure of being looked at (835). "The first, scopophilic, arises from pleasure in using another person as an object of sexual stimulation through sight" and the "second, developed through narcissism and the constitution of the ego, comes from identification with the image seen" (Mulvey 836-7).

To consider the Bangladeshi context there was no films produced from Bangladesh area (East Pakistan of that time) before 1956 *Mukh o Mukhosh* and Indian films were consumed by the Eastern Bengali Muslim audience (Yasmin 175). We have an independent film industry in Bangladesh, yet dominance of Indian films has not reduced much till now. Whether Indian or Bangladeshi mainstream films it is always based on a central hero while female characters are there as objects to complement hero's actions. Bangladeshi cinemas were an admired form of entertainment before 1990s and after that the tendency of imitation (from Indian cinema) began that resulted only vulgarity targeted for men from prom particular class who seek sexual content from cinema. "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" which is always reflected in mainstream cinema. (Mulvey 837)

Hollywood or Western cinemas are called to be modern while according to a study of 2013 reveals that only "13% of the top 100 films featured equal numbers of major female and male characters, or more major female characters than male characters." (Lausen 1) On the other hand in "Indian mainstream cinema we continue to see a patriarchal version of female sexuality." (Datta 74) If the entire world cinema takes women as inferior object then it is not surprising that Bangladeshi film would do the same.

From contemporary Bangladeshi perspective we find few heroes, who almost created their own genre for the audience, such as cinemas of Shakib Khan, Ananta Jalil, Late Manna, Riyaz, Ferdous while we don't see such genre of actresses. It is the same for Indian films such as Dev and Jeet (Indian Bengali film actors), or Bollywood heroes like Shahrukh Khan, Hritik Rowshan, Salman Khan or many more who leads the movie and the actresses are their just to make a pairs with them. It is also the same for Hollywood such as people do not watch movie only for Julia Roberts or Angelina Jolie (though they are the most popular actresses) as they watch movies of Leonardo Dicaprio, Brad Pitt, Jim Carrey, Tom Hanks, Johnny Depp, Tom Cruise or Robert Pattinson.

Shakib Khan's Movie

In contemporary context Shakib Khan is the most popular commercial hero of Bangladeshi cinema. To consider movies of Shakib Khan, many of the titles speak a lot, such as *Hero: the Superstar*, *King Khan*, *Number One Shakib Khan*, *My Name is Khan*, *Dhakar King* (King of Dhaka), *My Name is Sultan*, *Boss Number One*, *Top Hero*, *Tiger Number One*, *Amar Praner Swami* (My Soul Husband), *Swamir Sangsar* (Husband's family), *Adorer Jamai* (Beloved Husband), *Daring Lover*, *Rajotto* (Kingdom), Don Number One, Premik Number One (Lover Number One), *Pitar Ashon* (Father's Position), etc. These titles suggest that the stories are solely depended on the hero who is the centre of the actions. Here *Hero the Superstar* (Shakib Khan Produced 2014 film) is commented to be a mixed copy of Telegu film *Rebel* and *Nayak*. Only five minutes forty seconds promo of the movie gives idea how the film stands. It is filled with violent actions and unrealistic strength of the hero while women (Bobby and Apu Bishwash) only appear (wearing revealing clothes) in romantic songs with the hero. In one of the song actress dances around Shakib Khan singing "Touch Me, love me, kiss me" ("Bangla New"). *My Name is Khan* (2013) movie trailer describes Shakib Khan saying "he is angry, danger, desperate, but sometimes he is evergreen romantic lover boy" ("My name"). Again the hero is involved in fighting and heroin (Apu Bishwash) is there dancing with him in the songs. But the heroin is shown to have a villain or vamp mother and they (women) are not shown to have any sense of dignity. They are loudly associated with dialogues like "this was your biggest mistake" or "shut up." Plus, in both cases the Hero fights with multiple male villains and dances

with multiple seductive women. Apart from trailer now his one of Shakib Khan's recent popular film *Rajotto* (directed by Iftekhar Chowdhury)of 2010 is going to be discussed. Shomrat (Shakib Khan) is the hero who is shown to be a gangster who falls is love with Rihanna (Bobby). Rihanna appears 40 minutes after starting the movie who opens the door at night wearing extreme make up. She is shown in modeling pose with multiple shot to exhibit that Shomrat has fallen in love. The story continues with the raising action of Rihanna's younger sister being raped and finally Samrat taking revenge on the villains by being the undercover CID Officer. "Bobby's glamorous presence on screen are strong points of the movie, as are its item songs considering the cinema going crowd of Bangladesh" and "the movie Rajotto is very similar to the Indian movie 'Wanted', starring Salman Khan." (Islam) Interestingly Rihanna or Bobby is mentioned to do internship in medical profession while she is shown to be in her workplace only once when she needs to hear a villain's conversation. Other than that she shows no ability as a doctor when her sister was suffering and her father wanted to hide the truth by not taking her into hospital. After Shomrat takes the sister to hospital the family brings her home without treatment while the neighbors start denouncing the family. It encourages on the fact that a rape victim should be hidden fearing the society's scorn. Moreover, Rihanna calls Samrat for help mentioning that her father's pressure got high, although in the scene the father was showing a chest pain on the left side. It is a bit funny that her father dies within some time having a heart attack while the doctor daughter only mentions his high blood pressure calling the hero without trying to cure it or calling an ambulance. This is a misrepresentation of doctors who are women because she has been shown to be just a dumb girl, not any medical professional. Ultimately in all the situations Rihanna is the gorgeous, helpless victim while Samrat is her rescuer. This movie is also associates songs that represent women as seductive sexual object.

Ananta Jalil's Movie

However, another popular actor of Bangladesh is MA Jalil Ananta AKA Ananta Jalil who is Superman, James Bond, Batman, Ironman, Robinhood all alone combined on screen. His big budget films brought change in Bangladeshi cinema industry but his films are always based on his own unrealistic fantasies. We can again see the fighting hero along with dancing women in the trailer of his 2012 popular movie *Most welcome*. Hero there fights (sometimes wearing Indian Superhero Krish mask) with evil while heroin Barsha and Indian actress Sneha Ullal is

shown to express romantic feelings for him. The songs are filled with women but there is no other man than the hero himself. Even the hero is shown to slap the heroin (Barsha) within five minutes 26 second trailer. ("Most Welcome") The sequel of this popular film *Most Welcome 2* trailer starts with a tile "superstar action hero Ananta" and for the heroin it is "glamorous Borsha" who's first dialogue is "Aryan (hero) has become crazy seeing my moon-like shining face." ("Most Welcome 2") In all trailers it is hero involved in serious action while heroin is there for romance and abduction (by villains) so that hero finds reason to show physical power to rescue the heroin. To put one specific example of misrepresenting women let us examine his popular movie *Nishartho Bhalobasha: What Is Love* 2013. The story is about great hero and businessman, who patronizes, helps, saves, forgives and selflessly loves Meghla (Borsha), a village girl who is aspires to be supermodel. Meghla seems to need Ananta at first but entangles herself with other men with bad intentions. She gets drunk in the bar, dances with the bartenders, insults her family and the hero, becomes enticed by fame and money while Ananta gives her flat, car, luxuries, even entire property (worth of 10000000000 taka) to Meghla. She has aspiration to be a model but the presentation is so negative that audience would hate such woman who constantly cheats the hero. Ananta on the other hand gets all the sympathy/pity for saving and forgiving her again and again. Again Borsha in character of Meghla is simply used as a glamorous selfish loser in front of the superhero Ananta. Overall, in all the movies of Ananta Jalil, he cannot overcome from his own superiority complex that makes the heroin absolutely powerless.

Dev's Movie

Somehow Bengali movies of India are also a popular entertainment form for mass Bangladeshis. Now let us talk about Tollywood actor Dev who is also involved in Indian politics. He is so popular that a 13-year-old girl in Dhaka attempted suicide on 15 Oct, 2014 thinking "she would never meet Dev" and hoped "that media stories about her suicide would let Dev know about her." (Shaon) In Dev's one of the popular movie *Challenge 2* (2012), is about Abhi (Dev) who is a police officer. The story revolves around Abhi's actions relating to her father's accident, as well as pretending to be a politician around his father who wanted his son to be a politician. He falls in love with Pooja (Pooja Bose) in Malaysia who is his boss's daughter and a fashion designer. It is shown that Pooja came

to Malaysia by lying to her father to be a fashion designer. But apart from falling in love with Abhi and getting married to him, Pooja does not seem to have any importance in the film. Abhi follows Pooja when he first sees her and Pooja comes to shout at Abhi in her second scene while one of his friends defines her as "maal" (goods). In the name of quarrelling Abhi speaks badly with her indicating her shopping is done with black money and she does some bad business. Later she is not shown to do any work; rather Abhi gets impressed seeing her praying in temple. In Pooja we get to see the less-dressed sexy version of a woman that can lure men's eyes, but later shown in typical Salwar Kamiz or Indian get-up that can fit for an untainted wife image. This is an example of women being extremely underrepresented through entire film and actions. Pooja's character does not even get more than 15 minutes duration while the movie is more than two hours long. Pooja or the heroin here is only getting value in terms of marriage sexuality and or complementing the hero.

In all the cases women are absent as independent human being. It is either glamour that lures male eyes or they are a fragile idol for marriage. It is as Laura Mulvey says that "the visual pleasure of cinema became a suspect category open by definition only to men" and women are "systematically excluded" from mainstream discourses. (Mirzoeff 166) Popular cinemas deliberately make women passive enough to enforce men's sense of authority, and make them an object of male gaze.

In a Bangladeshi research of ASA University on 100 young people it was seen that "only 20% people think that cinema hall's environment is gender friendly" and "majority 82% think that our cinema does not reflect the real Bangladesh at all... especially our cinema industry is compared with the distort image of Indian film industry" (Yasmin 178). So the films are mainly made here keeping the hall-going audience who are mostly men. In such a condition it is mistake to consider our popular mainstream cinema to be actually meaningful.

Chapter 2

Popular Soap Opera on Television

Television is one of the "mass-cultural media which employ techniques of technological reproduction" (Connor 182). It can be taken as the most popular visual medium that provides multiple types of spectacle inside home. Though internet and smartphone technology took spectacles beyond the standby television, yet television is the easiest accessible visual for almost every class and age. From news to entertainment, serious debates to advertisement, television occupies minds of people. And television is a popular media or a consumer reality that produces ideology using visuals that impacts on society.

Television engages, psychologically connects people with the visuals and evokes real emotion by what is shown on the TV. Soap operas would take priority in general television entertainment as these "are one of the most popular genres on television and as a cultural produce, this format is extremely popular among the masses." (Ahmed, A. 1) How much television can effect/affect people in real life? One Bangladeshi drama serial from 1990s named *Kothao Keu Nei* by Humayun Ahmed was one of the most popular TV serials of Bangladesh. The central character "Baker Bhai" was unfairly sentenced to death in the final episode that resulted strong public reaction like processions and mourning around the country. People plead to change the plot so that "Baker Bhai" doesn't die, and followed funeral in places when he died in the final episode. The writer himself expressed great surprise seeing such public reaction for a fictional character. ("BBC Bangla"). Fictional characters from television create an aura for the audience that influences people in real life. Regarding the drama the writer Humayun Ahmed told that the drama had two versions (Baker Bhai dying or keeping alive) where he liked the one where hero is kept alive, but Bangladesh Television decided to air the tragic one for final transmission (See the interview part in appendix 1). It proves that the television wants to evoke strong feeling among people to sell their show.

In recent times (July to August 2014) Bangladesh "resulted in at least three deaths and one divorce" for "Pakhi" dress that was popular around originated from an Indian Bengali serial *Bojhe Na Shey Bojhey* Na (Feroze, "Pakhi' dress, three deaths, and a divorce" *Dhaka Tribune*). "Pakhi" is the heroin of the serial and before Eid festival there was a huge hype to buy an expensive dress as "Pakhi" wears in the drama. Television could promote the consumer culture so strongly that those girls preferred to commit suicide rather than not having that dress. It is as Towheed Feroze puts it that the "suicides would not have happened if the victims were not obsessed with the dress to the point where without it, life seemed meaningless" and those "young girls took their lives because they were the helpless victims of this whirlpool of conflicting cultural practices". In one news bite of RTV on cultural domination of Indian serial a woman was saying "I like the make-up get-up of Indian serials and we women try to follow that get up" (26 Oct 2014). These incidents show how television or the consumer reality obsesses people in real life. *Bojey na Shey Bojhey Na* is the remake of popular star plus hindi serial *Is Pyar ko Kya Naam Doo* and 'Pakhi' (Madhumita Sarkar) in the serial represents a small town poor blabbering girl who is silly, romantic, humorous and helpless in situations. She needs to work in office but she mostly makes silly mistakes which makes her revolved around the rich dashing hero Aranya (Yash Dasgupta). 'Pakhi' is loud and talkative in unnecessary misunderstandings but patient or silent in serious accusations or bad-words. She is shown as a working girl but she lacks the ability to follow proper office decorum. In fact there is no element in her character that makes her strong or independent. She has dreams and societal pressure for marriage which is always shown as the most important event of life for woman. Her character does not encourage girls to have education, intellect or career-dreams, rather emphasizes on being silent on the taunting, attracting men for marriage through silly acts and hoping a fairy-tale life like Cinderella. These features manipulated the young girls so much that without getting dressed like 'Pakhi', they find their life valueless.

Once upon a time television only associated national or local channel while part of globalization provided multiple satellite channels for television viewers. For Bangladesh it was only Bangladesh Television that produced programmes for people. People of Bangladesh knew about those programmes well because it was only one channel to

produce everything. Along with globalization multiple channels emerged that provided different cultural taste for people. It was an option for people to select from their interest such as news, dramas, sports, documentaries, movies, geography, music, etc. But gradually priority for Bangladeshi audience became Indian channels as it provided a semi-similar yet spectacular visual culture.

Bangladesh also produces drama serials but cannot grab that significant amount of audience because of less amount of quality production, irregularity, interruptions by ads or news, and lack of the addictive features that Indian ones provide.

Mega-serial or soap-opera in Bangladesh started in 1999 with a serial called *Joyar-Vata* by Abdullah Al Mamun which completed 100 episodes, but did not gain much popularity (Shamim, *Kaler Kantho*). To call daily-soaps only three names became a bit familiar for Bangladeshi audience during 2007-2008, *Mohanogor*, *Gulshan Avenue*, and *Doll's House*. *Gulshan Avenue* was more known than the other two and Nima Rahman, the maker of the drama confessed that this was an effort to mimic the Indian daily-soap to attract the audience (Shamim). *Gulshan Avenue* is the one such serial of Bangladesh that was less realistic than others and used almost similar level of representation as Indian ones. As it is described in the "TV Watch section of the Daily Star weekly magazine, "[d]rugs and extra-marital affairs among the younger generation, superstitions of the old, and typical in-law backstabbing are the basic themes of this serial" where women characters are almost always inside home either as caregiver, problem solver of home crisis, victim of taunting, or as conspirator that emphasizes on good and evil women patterns. Among three daughters in laws, eldest is held unlucky as a family member dies on the day of her wedding; second one is insecure of her status, so wants to break the family. The youngest daughter in law in threatened for divorce if she does not apologize to her husband's lover while the family blames her for being unable to keep a hold on her husband. *Gulshan Avenue* simply puts women in such inferior position where they have no world outside of family.

Despite of having the Indian-drama-like features as striking lighting, relationship crisis, conspiracies, sound effect, characters wearing heavy makeup and ornaments, *Gulshan*

Avenue could not achieve the popularity as daily-soaps from Indian Star Jalsha (bengali) or Star Plus (hindi) channel.

In later times, mega serials like *Ekannoborti*, *Sporsher Baire*, *Ronger Manush*, and *Sixty-Nine* gained some level of popularity, but we cannot deny that these are only four regular long serials audience got in years while Indian ones provide uncountable amount of options for viewers to see. *Ekannoborti* (written by Anisul Haque, directed by Mostofa Sarwar Faruqi) is probably the most popular soap opera from Bangladeshi context and it also represents the narrative "from a very patriarchal point of view normalizing a male-identified value system and male-centered way of life." (Begum 190) It is a realistically exhibited contrasting story of two brothers who wish for a wife who would keep their families happy where two daughters in laws Sheuli (Api Karim) and Bushra (Farhana Mithu) appears. Bushra belongs from city and she is short-tempered, loud, manipulative, unkind and dominating character who wants to leave the joint family while Sheuli is a small town pretty, caring, polite and an obedient girl who takes care of everything and everyone. Such projection instantly creates the typical binary of ideal versus evil. The writer and the director "have created potent images of the new women: loud and impatient, but ultimately powerless, the image that media is trying to project." (Begum 191) *Ekannoborti* is a well made realistic drama which gained most popularity in Bangladesh, yet we did not or do not find much people to talk about the story, episodes or characters even half as Indian serials. Bangladeshi drama as a genre also makes representation of women that does not encourage for career or intellect, rather encourages to be submissive, compromising and caring mother-figure overall. Bangladeshi drama serials generally do less amount of stereotypical representation of women, but the productions fail to persuade mass audience to make it a popular culture.

Indian drama serials are now very popular among women and to some extend men around the world, especially in neighbor countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri-Lanka. What do they contain that creates some addiction and obsession to watch them? A little bit reflection of culture, domestic or marital life crisis, humor, flavor of romanticism and a whole lot of ideal versus evil women patterns. There are at least two serials going on each our starting from evening to night that is repeated (sometimes 2/3

times) in day time without any long break. They are rarely as realistic as Bangladeshi serials, but somehow they use techniques that can mesmerize the audience. They educate the audience how women should live and please men. Primarily, "[t]he 1950s was a decade that placed an enormous amount of cultural capital in the ability to form a family and to live out a set of highly structured gender roles" using television after World War II (Spigel 340). Gradually this tendency of forming gender roles using television became more important in the name of family values and in this way women are being systematically brainwashed since decades. "The very notion of femininity itself is in part constructed through and by mass media images as they are produced by the "culture industries"." (Spigel 340) To reach more audience, producers sprinkle a bit of salt and pepper to the conventional femininity, but rarely encourages women to think outside of home and family. One Indian serial named *Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin* (There is no one like Jassi) gained a lot popularity during 2003-2007 which was the Indian version of Colombian serial Yo soy Betty, la fea (Ugly Betty). It was a serial where Jassi (Mona Singh) was introduced as an ugly looking intelligent girl who is efficient in work. She was raised to be smart and educated who does not care about her looks. She constantly received criticisms from workplace for not being beautiful. But that story could not go beyond falling in love with her handsome boss Arman (Apurva Agnihotri) and ending up being a beautiful or gorgeous ramp model. Ultimately Jassi became the object who can be termed as glamorous or sexy but not that intelligent girl anymore. Even though the serial starts with breaking the typical notion of a woman by giving Jassi a status of intelligent daughter, but ultimately her success was to be the beautiful wife of Arman.

Although the narratives of the serials are women's, but it is associated with pleasing men's ideals. It is as writer and educator Diana M. Meehan finds that "on TV, 'good' women are presented as submissive, sensitive and domesticated; 'bad' women are rebellious, independent and selfish. The 'dream-girl' stereotype is gentle, demure, sensitive, submissive, non-competitive, sweet-natured and dependent" while the "male hero tends to be physically strong, aggressive, and assertive, takes the initiative, is independent, competitive and ambitious." (Ahmed, A. 2) It is a form of representation because it is not taken into accounts for a woman that from "being a meek, docile, subservient housewife, she has grown and evolved into a strong individual." (Ahmed, A.

1) Overall, almost all sorts of popular soap operas make narratives of women from a male perception.

Women are presented in multiple ways in television screen. The main feature is beauty, glamour and femininity without which screen is incomplete. To talk about their voice, we see in most cases either they have no voice or they are loud or quarrelsome. We see in Bangladesh television news that a woman (mostly) in corner box explaining the news in sign language for deaf people, women in general seems to be the same repeating the content without own voice. India or Bangladesh has a conservative cultural practice which might be reflected in the dramas but we cannot say western world is modern more than eastern world for creating such representations. In western world "[r]epresentations of television continually presented women with a notion of spectatorship that was inextricably intertwined with their useful labor at home". (Spigel 341) So we can say that women are not taken as a free agent rather they are depicted from men's perceptions from around the world.

Chapter 3

Television Advertisement

Television ads are prime subject where women are portrayed based on sex appeal or gender roles. "The false world of the advertisement constructs a reality through the equalization of the objects of nature, the body, race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality" and presents the ideology of advertisers in a believable way. (Barnum 106) In Bangladeshi advertisement women are used in a way that complements male ego by keeping the patriarchal mindset intact. Apart from unnecessary use of female body we get to see avatars of mothers and homemakers. In Bangladeshi television ads we see male making decisions if it is about property or builders, technological involvement while it is all women if it is for decision making inside home such as food products, home appliances or cleaning products and cosmetics products. We see patterns that are provoked in TV ads which R. T. Schaefer explains:

1. Women are underrepresented, which suggest that men are
   of cultural standard and women are insignificant.

2. Men and women are portrayed in ways that reflect and
   perpetuate stereotypical views of gender.

3. Depiction of male-female relationships emphasize
   traditional sex roles and normalize violence against
   women. (Haque 90)

Bangladeshi advertisements reflect the same things because women mostly are there as smart, or quarrelsome, or foolish housewives and they are not shown to make decisions of external world outside of home. According to a survey on television ads (2002) it was found that 91.89 percent ads (397 ads) shows women "with no occupation" while in real life a survey of 1998 found that 54.4 percent Bangladeshi women are involved in agriculture. (M. Ahmed 170) Bangladesh's economy is now absolutely dependant on garments industry where women are the core worker, but we rarely see ads showing garments workers. To consider the contemporary context "for female, there is a decrease

in household work during 2001 to 2010 (2.10 percent)" while "there is an enormous increase in the percentage of female in agricultural sector (30.26 percent) followed by transport and communication sector (13.33 percent), industrial sector (11.85 percent) and business sector (6.67 percent) during the same period." (Rahman 6) Yet advertisers create a traditional portrayal assuming that "women were housewives and that their interests necessarily revolved around cleaning, cooking, child rearing, and, less explicitly, love making. (Spigel 341)

Women as Cleaners

To examine ads of soaps, detergents and toilet cleaners, it seems cleaning is a core struggle of women's life. They are experts if they can do this task efficiently while we do not get to see men struggling with such household cleaning issue. Whether it is Indian or Bangladeshi ads, household cleaning task is shown to be done by women. For instance in Fast Wash Detergent ad it is shown that the housewife likes to send her husband to office with clean clothes and the washing powder helps her to keep them clean (appendix 2.1). In Tibet detergent ad actress Api Karim describes how the powder is three times more powerful for cleaning clothes (appendix 2.2). Another Tibet 570 Washing soap shows that a housewife happily says that her mother and grandmother used to use this soap for cleaning which indicates that cleaning has a family value and she has inherited cleaning task from family (appendix 2.4). In one ad of Surf Excel it was shown that a child says "even if my clothes get dirty, my mother won't scold me, because there is 20 taka reduction in Surf Excel 500 gram" which points out the child evaluates money more than her mother's physical labor to clean the clothes (appendix 2.3). Another ad of Surf Excel children bring dirty cloths and one happy mother explains to another worried mother that one spoon of this powder works better than three spoons of ordinary powder. Then the mother who was also worried about price of the powder throws her three packets of ordinary powder and happily takes Surf Excel (appendix 2.6). In these ads women are shown like a happy washing machine that just needs to find a right detergent to clean. Only one Indian ad (dubbed in Bengali) Salman Khan is shown to clean the clothes, but he actually teaches the neighbors (women) how his wife says that the fragrance indicates that the clothes are clean or not (appendix 2.5). On the other hand, Harpic toilet cleaner

ads mostly show man or man voice suggesting woman that she needs Harpic to clean her toilets (appendix 2.7). In all the cases domestic cleanings are only women's headache and these tasks are not shown to be done men. "The women have been imposed with this responsibility which marks the male dominance and patriarchal belief in our society." (Haque 123)

Women Cook and Serve (at home)

To have a look on food related product we can see that the housewife or woman is always responsible for cooking. In one ad of Fresh salt actress Bipasha Hayat is shown to draw painting on canvas, then the jingle starts mentioning "বিপাশা, অভিনয়ে পূর্ণতা জাতীয় পুরস্কারে" (Bipasha, fulfillment in acting through National Award). Then her son arrives and she says "আমার পূর্ণতা মাতৃত্বে" (My fulfillment is in motherhood). After that she is shown to cook and dialogue comes "রান্নায় পূর্ণতা অবশ্যই ফ্রেশ লবণে" (Fulfillment in cooking with Fresh salt) (appendix 2.8). In the entire ad Bipasha Hayat is shown inside home. Despite of being actress and painter her completeness came from motherhood and she is the one responsible for cooking at home. One ad of Radhuni spice powder it is shown that a mother comes to shop along with her young son and takes one ordinary powder The male shopkeeper stops her imagining possible health risks and gives packet of Radhuni saying you do not have to see a doctor if you take Radhuni (appendix 2.9). Definitely the mother will be cooking and the shopkeeper needed to decide which spice will be better for her son's health. In these ads fatherhood or father's role is not important when it comes to cooking or taking care of children. In Radhuni Fish Curry Masala ad a wife is shown to serve her husband food which he silently eats. When she tries to serve more then her another transparent avatar appears and says "না দেবে না। রান্না যতই খারাপ হোক ও বলবে কখনও? বেচারা, প্রতিদিন কত কষ্ট করে খায়" (don't serve. will he ever utter about worse cooking? Poor him, everyday he eats with such difficulty). When she breaks into tears then a male voice appears and suggests her Radhuni Fish Curry Masala after which she happily serves food and husband happily eats (appendix 2.10). Here difficulty of husband's eating is emphasized while cooking task of the wife is undermined. Shuresh Mustard Oil ad also shows that the woman cooking pickles and

serving her family vary happily. Woman cooking in home is so established by gender roles that it is never shown that a man can or might cook at his own home. One ad of 'Dano milk' shows that a mother is not satisfied with son getting 100 out of 100 marks in exam and says "you have to get more marks next time" and the little son corrects her saying how he can get more than 100 (appendix 2.11). The ad mentions that a mother's satisfaction is never enough while this mother is shown to be less intelligent than her primary school going son. This ad also shows a similar aged daughter coming with the son, but she has no interaction or dialogue as her brother. This mother is concerned about feeding milk to her son and expects high from him neglecting her daughter. In this ad a small boy is the hero while his housewife mother is shown to be foolish and bias, and his sister receives no attention at all. Such ads can be justified as reflection of cultural or social practice, but it might also indicate that such portrayal encourages following the patriarchal ideology which imposes such gender dividing practice.

External Beauty and Sex Appeal

Moreover, another form of representation is showing women in terms of their external look and sexuality. As in 2004 Kaberi Gayen "analyses more than four hundred ads and shows that an overwhelming majority of the ads want the women to be fair skinned (thus pretty), thin, tall, obedient" while the "intellect and education of young women are devalued" and any "kind of independence of the mind is seriously discouraged." (Begum 8) Since the beginning of visual ad the portrayal had been the same which has not changed. It is more vivid in ads of cosmetics which enforces on beauty and glamour as core importance of women's life. Such as Fruity chapstick add contains 4 women posing in a flirty manner. These women are shown to unnecessary dancing, winking, kissing in the air and showing sex appeals (appendix 2.12). An ad of lip-balm does not need to have pretty women flirting around but it has. Similarly women's glamour is unnecessarily used in Tibbat Lip-Gel, Walton TV and Marcel TV ads where women are shown only in terms of physical appearance.

Within cosmetics "Fair & Lovely" cream has probably produced most demeaning types of ads. Such as there was an old Indian ad of this product that shows that a father asks for

coffee while mother taunts him for wasting daughters earning. The father then regrets for not having a son when the broken daughter uses the fairness cream and makes parents proud by being an air hostess (appendix 2.13). So, having an occupation did not bring that pride which glamour did. In a 2013 ad the model (Fariya) is shown to match colour of dress, shoes and she proudly says that in University everyone calls her "Miss Matching" when her friend points out that her hand and face colour does not match. Then the male voice suggests her to use "Fair and Lovely Body Fairness Milk" and her hand becomes white as her face, after which she happily reappears as "Miss Matching" (appendix 2.14). Another foreign ad (dubbed in Bengali) of "Ponds White Beauty Face Wash" is is shown that the lady attracts man's attention after having a fair white skin (appendix 2.15). All the fairness product ads establish that skin colour is the most important feature of one's life and people should turn themselves 'white' using their products because beauty is incomplete without a fair colour. Similarly Lux sandal wood soap ad shows model Mehzabin glowing and ornamenting herself. There it is mentioned "বাহ কি মহনীয় সুবাস, আর সোনার চেয়ে উজ্জ্বল ত্বক" (Wow what an amazing fragrance and skin brighter than gold). After that everyone fascinatingly looks at her when she walks into a party and a man turns off the light while she keeps glowing (appendix 2.16). Women are shown in a way that they need to be noticed by men and to achieve men's attention they need to look brighter, Another Bangladeshi ad of "Smart Spot-Out Cream" a women receives message from her boyfriend "Forget me" because she has spots in her face. When she calls him and mentions that even the moon has spots, the man denies it and leaves her. Then the cream appears as savior which removes her spots and brings back the man (appendix 2.17). This ad suggests that a man can easily leave woman if she has spots on her face and to hold the man she needs to have a spotless look. Within all these ads one exception might be the new ad of "Meril Splash Beauty Soap" that suggests that beauty cannot be defined by a bright skin colour. This ad shows that a the society wants to make a girl's skin colour white from childhood while women of dark skin tone can also look beautiful and tells the audience to think fresh (appendix 2.18). Definitely this ad is an exception which may not persuade the audience to buy the product more than the whiteness ones. Though this ad is different, yet it needed to show the model (Tisha) under splash of water and exhibit only women who use bathing soaps.

Women as Rude and Quarrelsome: Telecom ads

There are more images of women in telecom advertisements that mostly depict young women as shallow beings. Such as in one Banglalink ad a is shown to be stuck in island for eight years and he returns home somehow expecting that her wife will break into tears seeing him. But when the wife opens the door and sees her dead husband coming home alive, she starts terribly shouting that why he came after so long time. She says with anger "আমরা কি খাই না খাই কোন খোঁজখবর নাই" (did not keep any trace on what we eat) and throws a bag towards him saying "যাও বাজার নিয়ে আস" (go bring some groceries) (appendix 2.19). The wife here cares only on the fact that she had to struggle for food or shopping due to her husband's absence and she is shown to be very loud and cruel in her expression. Another ad of Grameen phone shows a girl going through a secluded village path and looks back feeling someone is following. After some time she catches her father who was following him. She goes near her father and yells "আবারও আসছ তুমি? আমি কি একা একা কলেজ জাইতে পারি না? আমারে কি তুমি বড় হইতে দিবা না? পাইস কি তুমি?" (You came again? Can't I go to college alone? Won't you let me grow up? What did you get?) The poor old father softly replies "বাপ হইলে বুঝতি রে মা, মন তো মানে না" (You could understand if you were a father, cannot console my mind). The girl then understands and goes the rest of the way with father. Then the concept of Grameen phone appears so that father can contact his daughter anytime without fearing. But in last sentence the daughter again shouts in phone saying "আব্বা তুমি আবার ফোন করস? পৌঁছাইসি তো!" (Father you called me again? I have reached already!) (Appendix 2.20) In this ad the daughter did not need to shout on her father for being concern of her security. This gives a wrong impression that college-going girls misbehave with elders in the name of independence. Another Robi company's voice clarity ad it is shown that a husband is laughing reading comics when whife startles him by shouting "এই তুমি এখনো বসে আছো? বাজারে যাও" (You are still sitting? Go to market). The husband leaves home with a pale face while the wife orders to bring a big duck from balcony. The husband mistakenly listens bamboo as in bengali Haash (duck) and Baash (bamboo) sounds similar. When the husband brings bamboo then the wife bursts info flames as she asked for duck (haash) not bamboo (baash) (appendix 2.21). The husband

here is shown in a way that he gains all the sympathy while the wife rudely dominates and screams at him. In all these cases women are represented as a loud quarrelsome being who are rude towards men. In these three ads the dialogues or reasons for disappointment are valid or logical, but the way of presenting makes an opposite impression which does not make any compassion for these women.

Media "tend to show stereotypical and gender biased programs portraying women negatively which degrade the status of women to some context." (Haque 12) In Bangladeshi ads young women are shown in terms of their body or sexuality and other cases their role as mothers or housewives. As Mustaq Ahmed analyses from hundreds of television ads that women are shown as homemakers, wives, mothers, caregivers, without occupations, male dependant, beauty agent, foolish, cosmetics-lovers, weak, obedient to male, shy, and querulous. (168) These categorization might be part of many women's life, but emphasizing on only these aspects creates the politics that eliminates women as active human being.

Chapter 4

Women on Internet

Internet is the latest form of screen based media that captured the world in one device for people. In Bangladesh it emerged during 1990s and became popular everyday. Bangladesh has also become a part of global virtual world where there is no boundary for anything. For film or television there is censor board that eliminates objectionable content which is not applicable in a cyber space. Also the cyber practice cannot be limited into geographical boundary; it is almost a similar global trend for any country. This new media is also biased with misogynistic content as these are contribution of mass people and their conditioned ideology. In the cyber space "[g]irls and women frequently experience objectification, meaning they are valued predominantly in terms of their physical and sexual attractiveness." (Vries 1483) This medium contains all seeing eyes of men which can explore women's body as form of pleasure. Representation of women in virtual media is threefold, one is generated by men depicting based on their desire, the second is consumerism's viewpoint that designs contents or spectacles to feed audiences, and the third is women self-objectifying themselves to exhibit their external beauty. Whatever the way is, result is always the same that women are viewed in terms of external beauty. Here I am going to analyse the social media, online news and games where the objectifying tendency is visible.

Social Media

Social media can be taken as the most popular form of exploring internet where one can share visual content such as photos or videos that create objectifying experience. The new hype of 'selfie' appeared just to show self image by self clicking and self uploading in social media. In Bangladesh there was a time when calling 'hot' or 'sexy' was taken as an offence. But following the global trend now "women are definitely more into producing 'stunning' and 'sexy' selfies of themselves" and the "forward-facing camera on smartphones has led to millions of women objectifying themselves, for their own and others' pleasure, on a minute-by-minute basis." (Barnett) Women produce their body image to attract the gaze while the main audiences of their physical appearance are men.

Besides this men also like to become the photographers of gorgeous women or take intimate photographs with women so that they can brag in a cyber world for being able to be friendly with such beauty. Men also encounter objectifying experience in social networking sites but "girls are evaluated more strongly on the basis of their physical appearance than boys." (Vries 1484) The western world in this case encourages more on skin exposure in terms of revealing the entire body which is a little bit different in Eastern world. Beauty and gaze also matters in Bangladesh or India, but nudity is highly criticized in public debate. Yet the objectifying inclination is never less where women voluntarily pitch in to be seen as physically attractive. In fact women who willingly wears 'hijab' (head-scarf) like to show their photographs in a way that can be fashionable or attractive to others. "Every 'like', share and comment feeds the need to share more and more images of themselves looking 'perfect' and 'hot'" while women are not realizing that these images have nothing to do with their inner potential. (Barnett) When "girls and women portray themselves online, (...) they expect that their body and looks will be assessed and commented upon," and they "expect to be evaluated based on their appearance when they portray themselves to an online audience." (Vries 1484-5)Where women are portrayed in mainstream media in terms of physicality is harmful, but women themselves generating their physical images as objects are more threatening for their inner development. It also demoralizes others of the same sex because "for every girl managing to perfect their look in a selfie, there are 10 others just silently looking at these albums of styled perfection feeling worse and worse about themselves." (Barnett) Sometimes the images used in social networking sites contribute to a way of finding partners or marital proposal. Here again emphasis is given to a woman's external look as first impression and finding a partner becomes more important than having a career. For women the effort to look good is much more than effort on education or working skill development. Besides self objectification in a psychological level, there is always risk of privacy violation where one can easily copy and use those images which the provider cannot control. Overall, sharing self images might seem innocent or trendy in a primary level, but this practice is penetrating for male gaze where women are voluntarily contributing to be judged in terms of physical beauty.

Online News Sites

News is always popular among people while as medium online news is getting priority for providing latest news the soonest. In Bangladesh there are plenty of online news portals nowadays to feed different sorts of content among internet users. Apart from political news those sites provide contents that show women from male perspective just to achieve more clicks. For instance popular news portal bdmail24.net gives news of a father physically abusing his daughter being drunk uses the photo below.

This photo shows a girl in a sexually arousing expression while the headline is "মদ্যপ অবস্থায় যুবতী মেয়ের সাথে অশ্লীলতায় বাবা" (drunken father involved in vulgarity with young daughter).

The story inside tells that the girl from India complained and filed a case against her father after which police arrested him. The victimized girl did not receive justice from her mother or family after the incident. But the visual content attached does not relate with the news at all. Such photo and headline does not give any impression that a girl is being a serious victim here and the image includes the girl in such expression unnecessarily.

This phenomenon is not rare to show women's image in a way that could attract the gaze. Such as there was a news in a site called Jononeta.com saying "চিত্র নায়িকা পপি'র সাথে সেক্স

স্ক্যান্ডালের খবরে ফেঁসে যাচ্ছেন দেশের এক শীর্ষ নেতা'' (Top Leader of the country being trapped on the news of a sex scandal with cine-actress Popi). The news used the images given below.

The self proclaimed investigative report talks about Bangladesh Nationalist Party's worker Abdul Awal Mintu's reckless life. Within twelve paragraph of negative representation only one paragraph says about actress Popi but her photos are shown in such a way that could only please male gaze in a sexual manner.

Another example would be Indian actress Pretty Zinta filing a case against his former boyfriend complaining on molestation. In the online version of ittefaq.com uses a photo of Pretty Zinta that is given below.

Here Pretty Zinta is shown in a bit revealing cloth that was not necessary for the news. This photo tries to show Pretty Zinta in a sexy way that masks the fact that she might be a victim of molestation. The entertainment segment of any news site use these type of photos where actresses are shown in a way that serves for male gaze.

Bangladeshi such online sites are also popular for suggesting how to look gorgeous or beautiful, what should women do to get men's attention, what should they do please men and many dos or don'ts for women that only lead to men's satisfaction.

Online Games

Online games are popular forms of entertainment that engages people from young to adults. There are unisex games that are played online but the simulation games are mostly based on sex or gender roles that divide men and women. Such games escape the grasp of stereotypical representation of women. The games which are popularly known as 'Girls' Games' try to concentrate either on household chores or beautification. It seems like girls are only able to do these kinds of activities. For instance, have a look on the images (taken from google image) which promote those games that are considered as girls' games.

If we focus on the names of the games, we will get a clear idea about the tasks under these games. "For female video game characters, the norm is for characters to be depicted as sex objects who wear skimpy clothing, conform to an idealized body type, and are visions of beauty." (Dill 859) Some names go like this- 'Miss Universe', 'Barbie Indian Saree', 'Wedding Time'. These are completely based on the beautification of a female character. These games define women just as a body that needs to be decorated and showed. There are some other games like 'Naughty Babysitter 2' which based on babysitting. There are some other games as well in which the player has to do all the household chores within a given time. "Of the three major stereotypical portrayals of women studied here (sexualized, scantily clad, and vision of beauty), over 80% of female video game characters were depicted in at least one of these ways, and over a quarter were depicted with all three stereotypes." (Dill 859) These games create clichéd view of women among children that impact over their attitude towards the gender views that influence to see women in terms of beauty and physicality.

On the contrary, the games which are popularly known as 'Boys' Games' represent men as superior and savior. Both "male and female video game characters are portrayed in stereotypical ways" while boys' games emphasize on masculine traits. (Dill 859) In some games the male character is given task to rescue the heroine of those games from the grasp of some creatures or some goon. 'The House of the Dead' is that kind of game where 'Sophie', the beloved of the hero is captured by a bat like creature and he shows his courage to rescue her. Opposed to the girls' games, "schemas for male video game characters would focus on aggression and not sexualization or physical attractiveness." (Dill 855) From contemporary context there are plenty of games that are categorized as boys' games and some of the images (taken from google image) are shown below.

These games indicate that role of a male is to fight the world, drive on street, play in the field and have adventure. In some games the gamer has to fight battles to save or rescue his country. We all know about the famous television series 'Star Trek'. Because of its popularity it was later turned into a game which is available online as well. The gamer has to choose a male character to fight the 'Aliens'. Even all the racing games adopt the male characters to be selected by the gamers. In the game "Adventure Jack: Escape from Jungle Island" Jack falls in an island after his private plane crash and he tries to escape and survive as the game progresses. It seems like all the adventurous works are assigned to the men folk. They are mighty and only they can take risks. If we look at the sports games we will see the same. Cricket and football are the most popular games of the world. Football and cricket both are played by men and women. But we get the biggest football and cricket games, online or offline, only for men. In these games we get only the male teams and not the female teams. Though, world cups are arranged for both men and women, games are only developed based on the male teams of cricket and football. This is also a striking feature of these games to notice. They are not merely amusing, stereotypical as well.

Conclusion

Media depiction of women has conditioned women to take themselves in one particular way which is basically the male view of seeing women. Research has "shown that exposure to media images of ideal beauty causes college men to find average-looking "real" women less attractive" which encourages girls to become more eye-catching to get men's attention. (Dill 852) By these practices women learns to give priority to their looks to get a perfect mate. Though visual media has broken the boundary of time and space by making all sorts of images available in public domain, but the politics of manipulation through content is injecting misogynistic ideas that damages mind for long run. The "portrayal of both men and women on television is largely traditional and stereotypical" that "serves to promote a polarization of gender roles" as masculine and feminine. (A. Ahmed 2). If it is about external factor, it is women's body and beauty that becomes important while the internal factor is the role inside home. As a human being girls are not being nurtured to exercise intelligence or free will. All the portrayals put women out of economic engagement so that the money-making world remains only in the hands of men.

Television serials are manipulating women by creating urges to follow the trend of the characters' outlook and lifestyle that are not natural or healthy. The flood of television serials (especially leading Indian ones) "are influencing the cultural sphere of Bangladesh" by systematically feeding "obscenity, nudity, arousal of sexual instincts, or premarital sexual relations." (Islam 20) In the name of entertainment, the serials are creating an addiction among people, especially women, as the stories revolve around the crisis of women. "As people very carefully follow these serials, they get mentally affected by what they see every single night" and their "behaviors became more complaining, critical and impatient." (Islam 22) In most of the Bangladeshi "plays it is the man who is creative, the woman either functions as his inspiration so he can become truly accomplished in his area, or she prevents him from pursuing what he truly wants – the woman is really there in the story to accentuate his creativity." (Begum 45) As a result of such complex projection women are learning to engage themselves as the

television dictates, forgetting the fact that they have their own free will, brain and strength.

Similarly in cinema the portrayal of women is gorgeous but pitiable so that it satisfies male pride. Watching such Bangladeshi cinemas enforce the idea that women are only there to complement the chivalrous men and a heroin is just a symbol of beauty who is dependant on her hero. In some cases "movies (both Hindi and Bengali) may be blamed for propagating eve teasing" as many "movies depict scenes of teasing, showing this behaviour as a way to win a woman's heart" while others "show this as a behaviour for men indulged in some fun, at a woman's expense of course. (Kabir) So it can be said that cinemas provoke sexual harassment in real life. "A lewd stare, a sly whistle, a well-timed clap, an unwarranted bump, a seemingly causal touch, a lingering look at a vulnerable time, the humming of suggestive song, passing downright uncouth comments, cheap gestures, display of indecent snaps or videos, giving "unwelcome call" or "missed call", sending indecent texts" are called eve teasing in real life while such gestures are quite common in popular Bangla cinemas. (Kabir) By polluting men's mind such popular cinemas are putting women's lives in risk in the patriarchal society of Bangladesh. As a result women find it better to be dominated by husband rather than being insecure in the harassing world. Women are not merely objects to satisfy male ego as the cinemas depict and such portrayals take women only a step backwards not forward.

Bangladeshi advertisements on the other hand focus more on domestication of women's role inside home though objectification is there as well. Findings in "research suggest that stereotyping of women as a domestic being is present in Bangladeshi television commercials" and therefore "Bangladeshi people have a notion to think that a good wife is supposed to fulfill her responsibilities towards her family" while " men exercise power over women only by virtue of being a man." (Haque 103,104) Such family responsibilities make no earning and it is not even encouraged for women to have their own income without being dependant on men. According to most ads women are not present in business, office, court, administration and their role is not associated with economic condition. "Sometimes viewers cannot distinguish between reality and make-belief, from advertisements" that misleads people to act on the notions advertisers depict.

(Haque 87) Advertisements almost eliminate the millions of women who are actually working out of home both in rural and urban areas. Society takes such portrayal as universal and ads help as evidence to nurture girls to encourage in works that please men rather than encouraging being independent.

In the internet we see an impact that women are taking media portrayal as important and trying to represent their image in a way that can be admired as good-looking. Research "has shown that women's self-objectification increases when they encounter objectifying information in the media" and "objectifying content from different media cumulates in its impact on self-objectification, but affects self-objectification independently from each other." (Vries 1487) In social media it is visible that ladies like to view themselves as beautiful being and people admire that with flood of likes or comments that is not seen in case of less attractive people. Such behavior pushes women to put more and more effort to look gorgeous that can lead to having eating disorder or using more cosmetic products which could make them as stunning as the men desire. Online games also encourage women's objectification as in more than 80% games for girls "the norm is for characters to be depicted as sex objects who wear skimpy clothing, conform to an idealized body type, and are visions of beauty." (Dill 859) Overall, it is always encouraged to work on women's body neglecting their mind.

In all sorts of electronic visual media we see the dominance of male ideology to view women as male-pleaser. In most cases media "usually use male interest focus narration which identify the audience with the male point of view and subject the women to judgment." (Begum 239) Women are not given any decision-making character which is not the entire truth or reflection of the society. In Bangladesh women do take part in education, labour force, agriculture, farming, banking, politics, judiciary, business, medical profession, even in media. Yet most of the media depiction keeps women isolated and like to eliminate them from economic force. Improvement is taking place but so slowly that it seems difficult if women would really be able to overcome their bodily identity and would be encouraged for a career.

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Apendix 1

Excerpt of writer Humayun Ahmed's interview from BBC Bengali Service

বিবিসিঃ আপনার নাটক কোথাও কেউ নেই –তে বাকের ভাইয়ের মৃত্যু ঠেকাতে মানুষ যখন প্রতিবাদ শুরু করল মানুষের আবেগের দিকে তাকিয়ে একবারও কি বাকের ভাইকে বাচিয়ে রাখতে ইচ্ছে হয়েছিল?

হুমায়ূন আহমেদঃ এই নাটকের ২টি ভার্সন ছিল শেষে। একটি হচ্ছে বাকের ভাইয়ের ফাঁসি হয়েছি আরেকটি হচ্ছে বাকের ভাইয়ের ফাঁসি হয়নি। বাকের ভাইয়ের ফাঁসি হয়নি আমার খুব প্রিয় ভার্সন ছিল। কিন্তু বিটিভি শেষ পর্যন্ত ঠিক করে যেটায় ফাঁসি হয়েছে ঐটাই প্রচার করার।

বিবিসিঃ কাল্পনিক চরিত্র বাকের ভাইয়ের সাথে সাধারণ মানুষের এমন একাত্বতা, এনিয়ে আপনি কি ভাবছিলেন?

হুমায়ূন আহমেদঃ আমি খুবই অবাক হচ্ছিলাম । কত রকম মানুষের ফাঁসি হয়ে যায়, মানুষ মারা যায় রাস্তার পাশে, নির্দোষ মানুষকে ফাঁসিতে ঝুলিয়ে দেয়। এটা নিয়ে কারো কোন মাথা ব্যথা নেই। এটা একটা চরিত্র, একটা কাল্পনিক চরিত্র। তার ফাঁসি হচ্ছে এটা নিয়ে যে এতো মাতামাতি এটা আমাকে খুব বড় রকমের ধাক্কা দিয়েছিল এই টুকু বলতে পারি । শুধু তাই নয়। মৃত্যুতে শেষ হয়ে যায়নি। তারপর শুরু হল কুলখানি। আজ অমুক জায়গায় বাকের ভাইয়ের কুলখানি। কাল অমুক জায়গায় বাকের ভাইয়ের কুলখানি। পরশুদিন বাকের ভাইয়ের জন্য মিলাদ মাহফিল। আমি এই রকম বিস্ময়কর ঘটনা ভবিষ্যতে দেখব তা মনে হয় না।

Appendix 2

2.1 Fast Wash Detergent 2014

2.2 Tibet Detergent Powder 2014

2.3 Surf Excel 2013

2.4 Tibet 570 Washing soap 2013

2.5 New Wheel Active Detergent 2013-14

2.6 Surf Excel 2014

2.7 Harpic Automatic, Harpic Power Plus and Harpic All-in-One toilet cleaner

2.8 Fresh Salt ad 2008

2.9 Radhuni Gura Mosholla

2.10 Radhuni Fish Curry Masala

2.11 Dano Powder Milk 2014

2.12 Fruity Chapstick 2013

2.13 Fair and Lovely Cream ad

2.14 Fair and Lovely Body Fairness Milk 2013

2.15 Ponds White Beauty Face Wash

2.16 Lux sandal wood soap 2013

2.17 Smart Spot-Out Cream 2014

2.18 Meril Splash Beauty Soap 2014

2.19 Banglalink Reactivation ad 2013

2.20 Grameen Phone Father and Daughter ad 2013

2.21 Robi Voice Clarity ad 2013