

The (Mis) Representation of Racialized Minorities: Barbie Dolls as Social Problems in India

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The relation between commodities and consumers is directly related to the transactional relationship between kids and their interaction with the toys. The paper aims to critique how female representation through Barbie Dolls in popular culture shapes female identity. Production and consumption of Barbie dolls in India became a way of socializing mechanism to educate young Indian girls on the concept of beauty. A notion of beauty is attached to blue eyes, skinny waist, and fair skin giving rise to “American Exceptionalism” (Madsen, 2009, p. 14), where the model nation conceptualizes itself through national identity where perceiver compels to transform themselves to “fit in.” I want to study the relationship between body, embodiment, and technology through the representation of Barbie dolls in media and the political orientation of its stereotypical and ethnocentric identity formation giving rise to cultural production. I want to find out how gendered representations produces itself on television and the internet, which continue to make “coding of the body” (Barker et al., 2005, p. 5) through evidence of Barbie’s aesthetic appeal. Barbie allows Indian girls to play with their senses of self in a way that plays a crucial role in identity formation. Young Indian girls can see and also read themselves as fixed objects within a closed system of commodification. Through the theoretical concept of “American Exceptionalism”, the paper will analyze how social identification conceived through the media industry. Central to the mass production and mass consumption of Barbie Dolls is also the notion of developing the culture of promotion and advertising that supports the selling process. Centralized financial capital and the cost of Barbie Dolls divides the consumption market as possessing a Barbie Doll becomes a symbol of elitism in Indian households.

Keywords: toys, media, gender, culture

Introduction

The Unpacking of America’s Doll: Making of the Cultural Icons

Toys are the societal and cultural processes of commodification and urbanization, illustrating the children and their interaction with the toys, which can be rooted in locating cultural meaning through their association/play with those objects. When toys represent undesirable values, they become troublesome and pose a social problem. One of the key and popular accessories of girlhood is acquiring the Barbie Doll in Indian culture, which forms the important aspect of cultural meaning. Barbie Dolls reproduce ethnicity and gender, forming a cultural icon of racism and sexism. Since the 1960s, Barbie Dolls have been stubbornly white, exposing Indian

girls to harsh cruelties of the American class structure. Emphatically feminine Barbie, through her appearance, feminizes, and materializes these doll icons and send messages about ideal femininity through her perfect hair, shapely legs, and faultless breasts since nothing about Barbie is ever gender-neutral. Barbie symbolizes a fixation on appearance and clothes as the notion of beauty is attached to blue eyes, skinny waist, and fair skin through “dyed-dipped versions of archetypical white American beauty” (Ducille, 1994, p. 50) forming white standards and value systems in the Indian children.

The paper aims to critique how female representation through Barbie Dolls in popular culture shapes female identity. Barbie dolls are not real, but they reinforce to serve as role models and fuel for one’s dreams and hopes towards sculpting of one’s body through its mass advertising and popular culture. Sometimes, mass advertising happens through people, which further propagates the beauty myth and idea of women as decorative, and fashion-conscious because “women’s attractiveness construe as attractive to men” (Morgan, 2016, p. 266). Gender identities forms through consumer culture. These Indian Barbie dolls dressed in *saree* and *salwar kameez* are gendered technological toy objects displaying spaces in merchandized stores. Cultural dynamics of dolls are the agents of teaching young girls of India how to “beautify” themselves further giving rise to “commodification of race and gender difference” (Ducille, 1994, p. 50).

The relationship between gender-roles and gender-typed toys in today’s marketplace act as a socializing agent giving rise to the political orientation of Barbie dolls in media by forming the ethnocentric identity of cultural production. The technology of the body in the twenty-century is driven by the idea that Barbie is an icon of consumerist “somatics” (Amstrong, 2014, p. 112) where the body is an instrument that can be altered through money because plastic is a key to our understanding of Barbie. Barbie’s plastic self is her essence in a way that plastic is capable of molding with technology as it is malleable and ductile in the same way women’s bodies can be altered through plastic surgery to attain a western beauty notion that Barbie represents. The beauty culture deals with transforming “the human body into an increasingly artificial and even more perfect technologized object” (Morgan, 2016, p. 265) through the production of toys.

The advertising industry constructs women’s bodies as sex objects as well as glamor objects. Barbie commercials offer a cultural shift where the sexual representation of barbie addresses the idealized image of a woman signifying style and class to specific target consumers of underdeveloped nations. The first 1959 commercial of Barbie dolls by Mattel International that came to India in the early 1980s depicted the stereotypical hypersexualized and ethnocentric notions of Western beauty standards introduced to young Indian girls where multinational corporations failed to preserve cultural identity. Television advertisements and toy industry are related in a way that since children are young to evaluate the rhetorical use of the toys, they perceive toys like Barbie dolls innocently and forms a particular version of western reality that maintains the dominant culture.

Female representation through Barbie dolls in popular culture shapes female identity. The capitalist consumption of Barbie is an important element of American culture because the selling of Barbie Dolls in India is tied to commodified folkloric themes of American culture, which is further translated into the marketable objects in India. This establishes a means for production, consumption, representation, and reception, conveying notions of femininity and race. However, when young Indian girls fail to notice the doll-like Americanized femininity with the beauty within themselves, there arise identity crises as they aspire to become like Barbie Dolls, but they

cannot achieve those standards of beauty. This further draws insights into an instrumentality of power because the plastic designed dolls alter and mold behaviors of Indian girls interacting through their play with the doll reshaping their gender categories asserting rhetorical concerns freezing stereotypes about the representative play producing a culture of racial formation.

Barbie initiated the representation of television generation of dolls since the late 1980s in India, creating a distortion of reality and prejudiced perspectives of race through advertisements as toys are formative components of children's lives as they entertain and teach. The Barbie dream house asserted the "relationship between technology and biology" (Wright, 2017, p. 16) as Barbie was more of a "feminine technology" (Wright, 2017, p. 15) associated with a female majority. Roland Barthes, in *Mythologies*, in the chapter titled "Toys" states that,

There exist, for instance, dolls which urinate; they have an esophagus, one gives them a bottle, they wet their nappies; soon, no doubt, milk will turn to water in stomachs. This is meant to prepare the little girl for the causality of house-keeping, to "condition" her to her future role as a mother. (Barthes, 2015, p. 53)

Girls played at domestic tasks with toys creating a one-dimensional view of the narrative through advertisements that went around in the 1980s and 1990s in India. Barbie as playthings became corporative objects encoding cultural values, creating structures of domination where white Barbie is a standard by which all others are measured, generating unattainable ideal for beauty. Toy packaging and commercials aimed at children acquiring their social values through toys. Barbies came into the market after the African American civil rights movement exemplifying that dolls through embodied valuation that is implicit with the children's toys through narrative and also material representations that came with the doll.

Literature Review

Richard Dyer's *White* discusses the concept of racial imagery describing how people's ideas are formed about race through media. He further explains that race is not only characteristic of non-white people, but rather racial imagery is about multiculturalism with the focus on whiteness and blackness together in order to understand one in relation to the other. The way west is represented on television as a race of superior, that of "gendered, classed, sexualized, and abled" (Dyer, 1997, p. 3) where "media, politics, and education are still in the hands of white people" (Dyer, 1997, p. 3). This concept of racial imagery by Dyer forms the basis for the understanding of race gets represented and portrayed by media leading to an informed understanding of postmodern multiculturalism and racial difference among many cultures. Dyer discusses how the concept of whiteness is understood through the lens of binary oppositions. When discussing the concept of whiteness, it is understood from the lens of how "the other" (i.e., non-white) operates. Dyer, through the lens of Said's *Orientalism*, discusses how the white is racial when considered in regard to the non-white subjects who make appear, through media, the explicit existing of the colored race.

Moreover, Fantone, in his book titled *Local Invisibility, Postcolonial Feminisms* in the chapter titled "visualizing the Third Space" states that "at times, the film projects an image while the TV is off; other times, the TV screen contains small images surrounded by the large black space of the filmscreen" (Fantone, 2003, p. 69), revealing that advertisements and movies on the screens have a symbolic meaning and its portrayal plays an important role in the child psyche. This further relates to Dyer's discussion on how the east is represented from the lens of the west, and most of the time, in the inaccurate representation of Asian American women, the media

acts as a medium giving out the message on the racial subject through its content in the advertisement. The problem arises when there is an imbalance where only “men are considered the active producers and women the passive consumers of technology” (Oldenziel, 1999, p. 37) As women’s bodies become resilient sites of many articulations of gendered notions, it is important to understand how “women’s attractiveness is defined as attractive to men” (Morgan, 2016, p. 266).

Furthermore, McLuhan in *his Understanding Media* implies that it is very important to understand the different channels through which the message gets passed and in what capacity it reaches its audience and how the audience reacts to the message that they conceived through the medium (i.e., advertisements of Barbie dolls/toys) nationwide. “What we are considering here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the ‘message’ of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs” (McLuhan, 2015, p. 5) because “although the meanings vary with each culture, a sex-gendersystem is always intimately interconnected with political and economic factors in each society” (DeLauretis, 2000, p. 5).

Therefore, construction and representation of gender happen through media and the message given out through media as every message that goes out to the public has a social message tied to it because the message through media is capable of engaging and tying the audience in many different ways as “content of a medium is a matter of policy and personal preference, and for whom all corporate media, not only radio and the press but ordinary popular speech as well, are debased forms of human expression and experience” (DeLauretis, 2000, p. 10). Experiences are vital and crucial to one’s understanding of the consumption and production of gender and technology.

Barbie Dolls and American Exceptionalism

American exceptionalism primarily deals with the United States of America as an exceptional nation. American identity is further clarified when compared with “the rhetoric of ‘the people strategy’ used by revolutionaries” (Gutfeld, 2002, p. 60) of the bourgeoisie class, where, Americanism is an ideology forming acceptance and rejection strategies with minority groups. Exceptionalism is a political discourse where Americans, through their democratic way of life, throughout history, have portrayed the normative dimension of putting Americans in the post-imperial world, forming the universal national identity. This national identity was based on modernization and globalization as the first-world; nation’s role in world history was to create a liberal and internationalist “form of government that would one day dominate and unite the world (Lipset, 1996, p. 62).

The experience of this kind of captivity takes on an additional significance of the “first new nation” (Onuf, 2013, p. 80), signifying the American experience applicable to everyone, in other words, exemplifying the rational government system of people and institutions of America representing a model nation. This leads to “referential illusion” (Barthes, 2015, p. 139) of glorification which seems to appear as natural to the third world consumers in order to “unite social idealism with bourgeoisie empiricism” (Barthes, 2015, p. 92) without aligning oneself to the real obstacles of thriving to achieve the ultimate notion of American standards of ideal beauty.

The cultural system can exist if the ideals are realized without the mental toll within the individuals of third world nations, especially India, about the multifaceted ideology on American values and American standards as the ultimate constitutional-institutional structures. After 1871, American society began to pursue policies aimed

at integrating the Indians into American society with nation defining ideals on political modernity, creating a rupture between inclusiveness and essentialist exclusivity of aristocratic ambitions by the West creating a cultural divergence. Hence, advertisements about Barbie dolls, creating Barbie as an icon of femininity, creating gender insurgencies based on women's physical attributes.

The exceptionalist rhetoric of America gave out the traditional ethos of exceptionalism on the concept of America, "the city set upon a hill" (Rogers, 2019, p. 1) gave the other nations a chance to look up to the wise providence but there is a constant struggle to position Britain within this concept of national identity. American exceptionalism can be tied to Marxist roots with the rhetoric of restoring America to greatness especially after its defeat in Vietnam as America as a nation was an exception to the Marxist ideology of class division with the government tied to the nation for the love of liberty. Nelles, in his article titled "American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword" states that,

Lipset insists that exceptionalism means simply a distinctive position in a matrix of values-not better, only different-and that exceptionalism is a 'double-edged sword' as virtues are seen to have flip-side vices. (Engen, 2021 p. 755)

The idea that the nation throughout its history has served for the basis of accomplishments but Canada is seen as a close competitor to America, but it all relies on the political choices the two nations make. America is significantly different from western Europe, which is different from Canada in its value systems. Canadian liberalism, in the context of American exceptionalism, can be viewed as a founding platform of agrarian socialism having its roots in cultures and the importance of the values associated with culture rather than putting more emphasis on economy and society. It is interesting to note how different nations comply with the concept of American Exceptionalism, keeping in mind the diverging point that different nations see with America as a superpower through the concept of American exceptionalism and its implementation in the society.

It is interesting to note that Canada shares bilateral relations with its neighbors. Also, Canada and the USA have cross-cultural ties. Canada's international trade in the toy market has eventually grown in the past many years. While both the nations enhance economic competitiveness, the global capital shift with increasing time, the production and technology generate different needs. Canada has had a history in providing Libya, Russia, Japan, India, and China the various components of technological configuration in the past years. While Canada exports technology, India exports software engineers and high skilled labor to Canada and many other first-world nations. The commodity speculations at the global level act as a base of global relationships. Human movement, technological flow, and financial transfer from Canada to other nations directly influence the metropolitan markets, especially the toy industry. The digital world influences consumer behavior in the toy industry in the dynamic market space. Canada's toy industry has managed to engage with consumers from different nations has provided comprehensive solutions to address unique business issues in the toy market at the macro level. Canada's toy industries have also helped one understand the relevance of non-violent activities that not only foster cooperation among consumers but also foster creativity in the toy industry by designing gender-neutral toys. Spinmaster company, one of the leading toy industries of Canada, ventured into entertainment, have imported toys at a global level.

Re-Reading the Doll: Toying with the Race Industry Through Media in India

In India, technology is usually associated with masculinity, and computers are associated as male-dominated machines where men are the primary agents of production. In developing nations such as India, even though technical fields exhibit gender segregation, slowly, women have started to become active producers as well as active consumers in the field of technology. According to the research.com website, in 2015, 24% of the total IT workforce in India constituted women, and 76% formed men. However, depending upon the socio-cultural and economic context, this relationship between gender and technology has kept changing with time. There are about 37% of female robotics engineers in India as compared to 63% of male robotics engineers, according to the robotics business review.

Technology and human identity play a crucial role in our daily lives. Television, fashion industry, children's toys, and postcards represent cultural life. Barbie dolls started trending in India in the year 1992, where battery induced Dolls danced on music when switched on. Slowly dolls started to become a material culture in the articulation of "stereotypical relationships with the technological world" (Oldenziel, 1999, p. 40) of children's toys where "men are considered active producers and women the passive consumers of technology" (Oldenziel, 1999, p. 41). Gender identities are formed through consumer culture. These Indian Barbie dolls dressed in saree and salwar kameez are gendered technological toy objects displaying spaces in merchandized stores creating racialized and cultural dynamics of dolls being the agents of teaching young girls of India how to "beautify" themselves.

Using digital imaging technology to alter the pictures, "women are reduced and reduce themselves to 'potential women' and choose to participate in anatomizing and fetishizing their bodies" (Morgan, 2016, p. 262) because of prevalent colorism in the media industry. Technical producers and Robotics engineers of Barbie Dolls "make gender" where they design children's toys for a specific audience for a particular purpose. These dolls not only define the physical attributes of an idealized Indian female but also became a part of the necessity for young girls of the Indian community to own and possess these Barbie dolls, which were fair-skinned and blue-eyed wearing Indian sarees in the year 1992.

When Barbie dolls came in the market initially in India, Indian girls started to experience a notion of beauty attached to blue eyes, skinny waist, and fair skin. Gender ideologies shape human perspectives about the technology of making and designing toys for children. This was troublesome as the notion of beauty was defined by dolls. There has been a gradual shift in the designing industry of creating Barbiedolls since 1992 in India, depending on the consumer behavior in relation to "social influence and gender which play a critical role in influencing behavior" (Flavia, 2012, p. 116) among young girls. This is further tied to McLuhan's *Medium is the Message* which discusses that "content of any medium is always another medium" (McLuhan, 2015, p. 5) as every message that passes through a medium has a social content with it to give out to the society since the medium carries a heavy message with it and in the case of children's toys, the medium is the advertisements.

Barbie commercials sometimes showcase through the dolls the Ethno-whiteness spectrum of American space and, at the same time, construct the ethnonational space of Indian transnational modernity, to an extent creating a utopian vision of western domination on the standards of beauty in India. Female representation, through Barbie dolls, created the stereotyped version of the ultimate standards of beauty. The dolls signify beauty and fragility as dolls are not only inanimate objects but communicative objects. These dolls have dolls have an

iconic status in contemporary society as they are symbols of the cultural site as cultural attitudes tied to dolls are inferential rather than direct in shaping the political choice that is structured and constrained within the dolls.

Moreover, these dolls are also a site of the symbol in contemporary society as they are also a means of art education and material culture where people weave their identities through its portrayal of values, attitudes, and ideas in popular culture. The representation of dolls as what is “ideal good” and what is a “bad” image are forged and rooted in women’s subjectivity and identity. When young girls come into play with these dolls, they start to perform the identity by relating themselves with the dolls. Identity is rooted in its interface between one’s engagement with the world and one’s element of selfhood through one’s experience and participation within each individual’s civic agency (i.e., national identity). The “society shapes adolescent lives and futures through gendered views, expectations, and social practices” (Davidson, 2015, p. 1) through psychological and sociocultural influences in the delivery of fears and apprehensions about sex. This troubles the people’s minds by educating them about “male and female sexuality” (Fishman & Mamo, 2002, p. 179) and sexual behavior. Digital cosmopolitan engenders in viewers about the technology and its poignancy educating young minds about “‘what counts’ as legitimate and appropriate sexuality” (Fishman & Mamo, 2002, p. 179).

Barbie dolls provide an ethnographic account of knowledge production of body types through cultural subjectivity and personal experience. Many body types constitute varied cultures where the advertisements are produced and consumed redefining “the very idea of the ‘self’ and the ‘human’” (Fantone, 2003, p. 55). Girls, when having an encounter with the dolls/toys, are more likely to experience the link between body and environment where playing with dolls involves interactions or performing actions” (Fantone, 2003, p. 55). The narrative within dolls deals with the problems of sexual difference and biological construction of self within the mind of individuals not being able to act freely in their creation of fictional worlds which can be further analyzed through Aarseth’s “reader-response criticism” where he explains that playing as an activity engages players with the configurative activity of toys/games involving emotions, bodily presence, and sexuality as sex provides a sharp opposition between nature and culture defining one’s subjectivity and objectivity within the social struggle of forming one’s national identity.

Barbie dolls, through cognitive system, creates assumptions, beliefs, and ideas through a child’s subjective point of view, emphasizing on their understanding of the faceted issues of the body with skinny waist, sharp-pointed breasts, and thin toned legs. Social media monitoring the representation of Barbie dolls in India is problematic in many ways. The advertisements slowly become autonomous agents of forming the cultural implications of physical attributes and cultural meanings of ethnic creations of make-up, eyelashes, and hairstyles of dolls revolving around the American standards of beauty. Barbie dolls instill social and cultural worlds that are foreign to young Indian girls. Later when dolls came to the market in light, medium and dark skin tones with a heavy body and thick lips it created a boundary between working class family’s toy objects (poor) and bourgeoisie’s play objects (rich Britishers/Americans) slowly seeping into children’s territories of visualizing one’s image within one’s national identity and one’s exterior body types on political front as toys are now becoming interactive on social, cognitive and political front of child’s life.

Representation of Barbie in Bollywood Industry

Mattel's dolls modeled as twenty-first-century Bollywood actresses in the form of Barbie dolls are distributed in the markets. These Barbie dolls educate young Indian girls as to what counts as legitimate and appropriate sexuality within their own Indian nationality. Technology, when merged with toys through their unique designs and visual appearance, seep into children's personal territories of visualizing one's image within one's national identity on a political front. Representation connects meaning and language to culture as a feminist agenda, and popular culture goes hand in hand. Mattel carefully chooses women in social institutions like that of Bollywood film industry especially those who have made a debut in the Hollywood industry to carefully advertise the dolls in resembling the actress' appearance.

These Bollywood actresses though Indian, resemble more to the Hollywood actresses in their appearance. According to McRobie, "modern media encourages women to consent to and play a part in the negative and damaging representation of women by expecting female audiences to judge and be critical of each other's bodies" (McRobie, 2008, p. 8.) as signs and body images represent the culture. Representation of dolls in the form of these Bollywood actresses also symbolize the idealized female body. The concept of dolls follows the causality as "content of any medium is always another medium" (McLuhan, 2015, p. 19.). Mediums are object-oriented where one object extends to another, and in the case of Barbie dolls, they are an extension of an idealized female body as humans extend their senses and faculties to determine who they really are and what they should be. The dolls in the form and shape of Bollywood actresses construct meaning and reveal that the human body can be seen as open to metamorphosis, and that body can and should be altered to be beautiful. Visual cultural studies articulate how media and technology are correlated with image formation that happens in the cognitive mind of the child in the form of pictorial communication as girls start to "position themselves as if they were the subject of the discourse" (Hall, 2013, p. 202), which further shapes the structure, construction, and politics behind the visualized body in the figure of the toy.

The neoliberal ethic of self-care plays a huge role in recognition of the experience of the disabled people and people of the minority community in the process of remaking the body through the act of the play when girls interact with their Barbie. Surveillance of the body is a part of consumer culture that impacts the cultural ideals formed by the advertisements of the Barbie dolls in India, giving rise to materialism and body dissatisfaction. Indian girls sexualize female body by having a perspective on internalizing their own body structure; thus, as a result, they treat themselves as an object to be looked at and evaluated on the basis of their looks and appearance. This kind of body surveillance gives rise to "free rein to some, of putting pressure on others, of excluding a particular section, of making another useful, of neutralizing certain individuals and of profiting from others" (Foucault, 1977, p. 272) because the idealized body is "a state of normality and perfection that becomes an impossible, unreachable and unrealistic body" (Foucault, 1977, p. 272). These idealized female body structures privilege white, tall, young, skinny, and fit bodies that are "deviant and rendered invisible by a dominant aesthetic that project white superiority" (Foucault, 1977, p. 272).

Through the rejection of essentialism, women demonstrate that not all women are the same, and the problem arises when all women of the world are seen as having same body structure and color of the skin like idealized American female bodies. Postmodern feminism seeks to promote subjectivity. Femininity is understood through binary oppositions where the non-white body is understood in comparison with the white body. When a woman is

not able to aspire to the idealized standard of beauty, she suffers from depression and melancholia. According to McRobbie,

Drawing on Butler's analysis of "illegible rage," McRobbie suggests that "gender melancholia has been incorporated into the very definition of what it means to be a young woman. That is, the incessant effort it takes to embody the post-feminist masquerade, or to be 'culturally intelligible' as a modern girl, is producing an entire generation of 'pathological' young women. Moreover, in an even more troubling twist of fate, these 'post-feminist' disorders (anorexia, depression, self-mutilation, low self-esteem) become normalized, rendering gender melancholia a routine state of affairs". (McRobbie, 2008, p. 17)

Barbie dolls crafted in Bollywood actresses' image that represent curvaceous body. For girls aged above six years, physically playing with the Barbie did not completely shield them from appearance centric messages. Also, when girls suffer from anxiety when failing to achieve the idealized beauty, it is considered to be normal by the society. There is an entanglement of popular and political culture which coincides with femininity. When power relations permeate into the social realm of ethnic culture, the "discursive subject positions become *a priori* categories which individuals seem to occupy in an unproblematic fashion" (Hall, 2013, p. 10) because the deconstruction of the body is shaped and reshaped by advertisements depicting "subject positions of a statement with individual capacities to fill them" (Hall, 2013, p. 10). These advertisements by Mattel India with Bollywood actresses depict that race is socially constructed. Representation of the race has the potential to be imaginatively reconstructed as well.

The main problem with this kind of surveillance of the body in the process of remaking the Indian female body is how the dolls are marketed through advertisements and also locally at the shops. While the Barbie advertisements in India are heavily focused on the white American standards of beauty and are mainly American advertisements, the local selling process involves the Barbie sculpted in Bollywood actresses who are fairer and resemble American standards of beauty as well. This kind of representation is problematic in two ways. First, it hampers the children's perceptions about themselves because they are not able to identify with neither the Barbie doll seen on television or the Barbie doll sculpted into Bollywood actress Aishwarya Rai and Deepika Padukone's body figure. Second, the Barbie advertisement shown on Indian television has the Mattel jingle "Barbie, you're beautiful. Someday, I'm gonna be exactly like you. Till then I know just what I'll do: Barbie, beautiful Barbie, I'll make believe that I am you". This is a Mattel jingle, for Barbie television advertisement (1930), which screens in India. When young girls play with Barbie, they manipulate and imagine the body through self-surveillance. Many young Indian girls depict whiteness as central to their desirability and power. The ethnic dolls capitalize the exotic cultural difference which is problematic because girls relate dolls with their ethnic bodies as the gender machines capable of alteration.

According to Feminist critic Ann Ducille (1994) Mattel's production of 'ethnic' Barbies may be an 'easy and immensely profitable way off the hook of Eurocentrism', but she ultimately argues that the marketing of 'multicultural' Barbies simultaneously capitalizes on the concept of exotic difference, and practically eliminates distinction through the mass-produced Barbie bodies that are mostly the same so that the clothes and accessories are interchangeable" (Collins, et al., 2012, p. 109)

The commodification of race and gender through sexualized computer-generated doll images can lead to self-objectification and self-surveillance affecting career choices among young girls. This can further lead to girls

envisioning a limited set of possible future occupational selves. The Barbie bodies emphasize on overt adult sexual expectations into childhood giving out messages of appearance-focus and sexualization. Behind the exhibition of different ethnic dolls, there is an underlying effective politics. A doll, and a doll's house, is symbolic of the American community related to the economic "American dream". Barbie as a cultural icon, depicts more about us as well as the society, and in particular, it teaches us about society's attitudes towards women when their image construction and representation happens through media. Individual choices by female parents regulate girl-child behavior.

Even in the twenty-first century, when parents buy Barbie for these girls, Barbie's image and its representation seep into children's territories of visualizing one's body in a certain way. Mattel is trying to make a shift in the representation of a woman's body, but even with that, Barbie's representation depicts a body ready for molding. Even though Mattel is trying to include various ethnicities within the Barbie, its "petite" "curvy" and "tall" versions of the dolls still fall under the Eurocentric features of representation as these fashion dolls might provide as role models for young girls. Young girls, when indulging in play, slowly starts to buy outfits for Barbie to role-play fashion models or scenes from adult lives. The movable body parts of the Barbie are capable of creating gender-specific sites of play by depicting that body movement is gender-specific through active, strategic, and feminine play inclining more towards passive actions and activity of play. Also, the dressing and undressing activities mostly done by the girls depict that the girls are more expected to be more oriented towards the indoor activities.

Conclusion

The relationship between the commodities and consumer culture can be exhibited through the systemized representation of toys as commodities of everyday products in use, which is capable of creating a bridge between international trade and the monetary value of the toys; between the object (i.e., toy) and the desiring eye. Consumerism of toys is also highly dependent upon the connection between social prestige and social status shaped by an "American Dream" revealed through dollhouse that came after Barbie dolls in India in the year 1995. A dollhouse was symbolic of the American community related to the ethnic, economic, and religious front giving out materialistic gestures to attain happiness, equality, and social status. Barbie's clothes, accessories, house and goods within the doll's house illuminates the society of spectacle displaying its representational systems of "ideal house", "ideal family", and "ideal beauty" through its visual culture and the implied messages within it given out by media.

Visual culture and consumer culture are related in a way where "human body is seen as open to metamorphosis" (Morgan, 2016, p. 275) corresponding to the "collective power of women as consumers to affect market conditions" (Morgan, 2016, p. 275). Dolls, through its construction of beauty, are "machinery of power that explores women's bodies, breaks in down, and rearranges it" (Morgan, 2016, p. 269) in the form of identity of self that the child creates in one's mind when interacting with the toy of Barbie Doll.

In the interaction between young Indian girls and their white dolls highlight the twisting, blending, and flipping of cultural identities where for Indian girls, the Barbie dolls "looks nice," for them which forms the children's views about each race. Foucault's analysis on social constructivism helps one analyze how the discourse of toy culture is portrayed through shape, culture, and identity of Barbie dolls giving rise to social

interactions within a group on a psychological dimension of synthesizing racialized ideas into a discursive learning and meaning-making process within each young Indian girl's minds.

Hence, Barbie dolls are a controversial form of art, giving rise to the feminine desires in young girls about gender identities where the body is a medium of a culture where white Barbie, as a plaything, dictate white values and standards. After a point child rejects to play with brown dolls because they start to imagine their own identity about themselves within their white dolls by studying their white dolls and its design patterns over and over again when playing with it. Visual cultural studies, through advertisements of Barbie dolls in Indian regions, articulates how media and technology is correlated with image formation that happens in the cognitive mind in the form of pictorial communication by giving out advertising messages that is specific to each specific community playing with American Barbie dolls within the real world. Global advertising of Barbie dolls, through cross-cultural visual advertising, act as a representational convention through which images of "ideal beauty" is created within the minds of young Indian girls. Advertising agencies, through their advertising styles, are corresponding to the fundamental underlying cultural divergence that lies in the shape, structure, and construction ideals within the doll of Barbie.

The further scope of the study is that through the case study model of a qualitative study, the researcher can incorporate the data with responses from the young Indian girls with a narrow focus of North Indian girls in specific. The research has the possibility to be analyzed from the perspective of girls by dividing them in the group of thirty-five for the experimental group and other thirty-five for the controlled group. The responses of the girls can then be taken by analyzing how the girls who played with the Americanized version (i.e., experimental group) of the Bollywood actressmodel of Barbie dolls reacted to their self-esteem compared to girls who played with the average-size doll (i.e., control group).

The results can be compared and analyzed in detail. The hypothesis of the study would expect that girls who played with thin dolls would report a larger actual-ideal body size discrepancy compared to girls who played with the average-size doll, which can be moderated by the age of the girls. The girls in the study could be of age ten and below in order to study the effect of Barbie and its paly on the young Indian girls. The factors like owning a Barbie doll, time spent in playing with the doll, body mass index of the young girls, body esteem of the girls before owning a Barbie and after owning a Barbie, all play a very significant role in analyzing a girl's behavior and self-esteem with regard to the toy of Barbie.

In a nutshell, Barbie dolls have been in the Indian market since the late 1980s and has evolved in its presentation with changing times, but one thing that remained constant was the fact that Mattel's first version of Barbie always stayed in the Indian market. No matter what changes Mattel brought, the original Barbie continues to create a cognitive effect of the child psyche. The Barbie, when played in different-sized dolls, had an impact on body image and food intake among young girls too as exposure to these dolls affected young Indian girls' body image and eating behaviors. In sum, the present study draws upon the representation of Barbie dolls through media in India and the effects of actually playing with these dolls giving rise to cultural production. Since girls in Indian societies are frequently exposed to barbie dolls, it is crucial to examine the effects of the exposure on their body image where young Indian girls can see and read themselves as fixed objects within a closed system of commodification.

One of the possible solutions could be the introduction of more gender-neutral toys in the international trade market instead of stocking shelves in pink and blue sections. Verbal and non-verbal communications happen through toys. Barbie has had a psychological impact on young girls for generations. It's time we, as a global society, introduce more toys with realistic themes that enhance global community and friendship at the macro level. Toys based on gender associations, like that of Barbie, force strong feminized these through its play. In a way, Barbie is harming not only the girls engaging in play with the Barbie but also brutally rejects girls who are not interested in make-up and shopping. Barbie is a hyperfeminized toy overemphasizing gender association by reinforcing stereotypes. Toys are capable of teaching children in a non-sexist way about gender roles and identity through its strategies involving its play. Thus, gender-neutral child-rearing becomes essential in the twenty-first century. It is not possible to altogether remove Barbie from the market, but with the introduction of more gender-neutral toys in the market and international trade of gender-neutral toys between Canada, the USA, Japan, India, China, etc. can increase the choice of selection for the consumers.

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