

## Abstract

In current academic and critical quarters, the representation of women in media discourses like music videos (MVs) is felt to be one of the richest sites for studying women and their representation. In the Indian context, with the advent of the consumer-oriented media culture in the 1990s, representation of women has undergone certain changes. MVs, with their high incidence of women artists and characters, constitute an important field where media representation of women can be explored. Research on MVs has concentrated on woman as sight, spectacle and stereotype without exploring narratives. This could be due to the predominance of performance-based MVs in the West. Indian MVs however, have a very high narrative content which may, in turn, probably have its genesis in the Indian love for stories. In films, songs have been found to be spaces with high women-oriented content, and this is true of MVs too. However, since MVs are small private productions, often featuring women artists, women often have a greater say in their own representation. The current work addresses, through analysis of narrative structures, the representation of women in popular Indian MVs of the last 10 years. One hundred eighty MVs were classified on the basis of genre and sub-themes and the following categories emerged as important – adventure (mostly romantic), quest-oriented (romantic quest), romance and women-oriented narratives. An analysis of narrative structure of each category according to appropriate narrative model was conducted in order to identify differences in trajectory of male and female narrative structure through plot analysis. The findings were discussed in the light of gender and feminist critique of media. The key findings are that while male-oriented MVs narrate stories of both men and women, female-oriented MVs focus on stories of women only. In adventure and quest narrative forms, plot trajectories vary based on gender of central character. The narrative forms of romantic and women-oriented MVs are radically different from fairytale and quest narratives. Thus, while fairy tale and quest narratives show dominant patriarchal structure which regulates women's actions and representation, romantic and women-oriented videos celebrate womanhood, deviate from patriarchal structures and critique patriarchy.

*Key Words:* Fairytale, Gender, Music Videos, Narrative Structure, Quest, Romance