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Desi-fication of Sex and the City: A Postfeminist Reading of Sismance and Sexuality in Four More Shots Please!

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Abstract. In this paper, Critical Discourse Analysis is adopted to deconstruct the text of *Four More Shots Please!* (Nandy, 2019, 2020) having uncanny desi/fied (conforming to Indian traditions) resemblance to *Sex and the City SATC* (Home Box Office, 1998 – 2004). This paper posits that in its bid to (re)configure the postfeminist imagery of free, cosmopolitan, unapologetic, and financially independent women in their thirty's in popular content, the series ends up reinforcing certain gender stereotypes. The web series missed opportunities of drawing from the subtleties of intersectionalities of class and gender to build up larger female solidarity/sisterhood among the working class women but remained restricted to 'sismance'. I posit that although female sexuality and sexual independence find acceptability, but is short-lived making the omnipresent patriarchal norms obvious. This paper probes the emphasis on sexual freedom, sisterhood and female bonding, financial security, and cosmopolitanism personified by a group of four young women living in Mumbai in *Four More Shots Please!* (FMSP). I also buttress the fact that although given opportunities for transgression, the female protagonists end up seeking affirmation from male counterparts and patriarchal norms to remain acceptable to Indian audience.

Keywords. *Web series, female protagonists, popular culture, female sexuality, cosmopolitan, feminism, postfeminism*

Introduction

Sex and the City HBO (Home Box Office 1998–2004), a popular American television series with four protagonists dealing with their everyday professional and personal allegiances with élan (and sometimes failures) was both criticised and lauded for addressing feminism and post-feminism. Gerhard (2005) and Adrianens and Van Bauwel (2011) buttress that essence and storyline of *Sex and the City* (henceforth SATC) emphasised sexual freedom, female friendships, independence, and cosmopolitanism embodied by a group of young women who live and work in New York. These authors also state that SATC was said to be produced from a female perspective and giving meaning to 'the modern socio-sexual life' (Gerhard, 2005; Adrianens & Van Bauwel, 2011). Gerhard (2005) does not shy away from claiming SATC as even a 'post-feminist' text given the possibilities in which its female protagonists enjoy post the seventies equality. The show also exposed the desires of women in terms of sexual equality, social and cultural achievements. The female protagonists of SATC behave the way prescribed by the 'post feminists' (Gerhard, 2005) conscious about their physical beauty and sexual appeal and while managing authority and social power. The repositioning of 'women' in SATC as 'men' in terms of their professional and sexual independence while taking measures for maintaining sexual attractiveness adds to these

postfeminist underpinnings of SATC (Gerhard, 2005). Even the twenty-year gap of its inception from its Hollywood predecessor, *Four More Shots Please!* (FMSP) surrenders to the patriarchal binaries of good/bad, sacrificial/unapologetic, (home)maker/(home)breaker, domestic/wild rather than questioning with fluidity.

Theoretical framework

Further, McRobbie (2007) defines the term 'post-feminism' as signalling the wearing away of the necessity of ideals of feminism of the 1970s and 1980s. McRobbie (2007) argues that representations in contemporary popular culture applaud a 'younger' postfeminist than the 'older' feminist portrayal. The self-critique of the feminist theory by the post-colonial feminist theorist as looking at the body as 'we' rather than 'she' and situating her as an unapologetic workforce, enjoying her financial, cosmopolitan, and sexual life (Butler, 1990; Haraway, 1991; Mohanty, 1995; Spivak, 1988). Walter (1998) argues women to be key agents rather than victims and sexuality as liberating. Post feminism's rise also marked the move towards a world free from binaries of gender and roles associated with it. Establishing as a new form of empowerment about independence, sexual freedom, and neoliberal consumerism, this reorientation on critiquing females although holds immense importance in contemporary research (McRobbie, 2007; Gill, 2016). Postfeminist cultural sensibilities and representation have neoliberal consumerism embedded within it with claims of undoing the gains of feminism (Gill, 2007; McRobbie, 2009). Failing to include the intersectionalities (Crenshaw, 1991) within its ambit of looking at the working-class women by concentrating only on the saleable elite, urban, and young women post-feminism lies within the world of academic paradigms and can be located on the connection between postmodernism, post-structuralism, and post-colonialism. In the present scenario, post-feministic views apply to every field a person could think of. Modleski (1991) opines that postfeminist texts are occupied with opposing the goals of feminism, and in effect, they are relocation us again to a pre-feminist world. Even Jane Arthurs (2003) reiterates post-feminism as the convergence of popular culture and select aspects of feminism organised through revisiting the distinction between feminism and femininity.

In this study, I argue that, in an attempt to break the hegemonic 'women at home' (Modleski, 1982) ideology, the makers of the web series under study have presented a counter-hegemonic 'women at work'. Dosekun (2015) reiterates postfeminism is not restricted to the western white women but transcends geographical, caste class boundaries to include the intersectionalities (Crenshaw, 1991) in various non-western and third world countries. Consequently, when the western countries were already witnessing postfeminist characterisation in popular culture constructions as early as in the 90s (Dosekun, 2015), their non-Western counterparts only followed the suit 30 years later. The western soap operas in the 90s drew upon issues of employment, financial independence, sexual freedom, abortion,

infidelity, alcoholism, and homosexuality (Modelska, 1982). The Indian female viewers, as argued by Munshi (2010) and Jaggi (2011), during the same time were supplied with the portrayal of female protagonists as an embodiment of pure, virtuous, and feminine while the antagonists as independent and working in its Hindi soap operas.

Representation of women in Indian small screen

During the late 1980s, India marked its entry into the global markets and this not only facilitated transformation of its economy but also its media with the broadcast of regular soap operas (Munshi, 2012). The 90's in Indian television witnessed the rise of the portrayal of fiery and progressive female protagonists in soap operas like *Rajani/ Night* (Chatterjee, 1985), *Udaan/ Flight* (Chaudhury, 1989), *Shanti/ Peace* (Pocha, 1994), *Tara/ Star*. (Kumar, 1993). The representation of the modern Indian women represented in Doordarshan's discourses called into attention imagery of strong and assertive women fighting against red-tapism and corruption. Munshi (2012) states that during this time women were also becoming visible in the paid workforce with glaring examples of a woman Prime Minister and the first woman Indian Police Service recruit. Further, with the proliferation of commercial satellite channels by the 1990s, television content also witnessed a transformation in the representation of its women. The entry of commercialised and commoditised women entered the living room of Indian homes via television soap operas of Balaji Telefilms. Overt stereotyping of sex roles and the sacrificial nature of the modern but virtuous 'Bahu' (Hindi, daughter-in-law) took centre-stage. The assertive, working, and progressive female of the 90s lost her race against these female protagonists turned synonymous to Indianess (Munshi, 2010; Mankekar, 1999).

Further, soap operas in India according to Munshi (2010) emphasised dialogue to attempt resolution mixing the elements of melodrama, myth, realism, and entertainment. According to Munshi (2010) although the female characters may be the protagonists the story depends on the actions of the male characters.

The 'family' which is considered as the main setting of the soap opera in American television also forms the setting of the Indian soap operas. Along with these characteristics already prevalent in the soap opera content of Indian television, focus on the joint family system, significance of religious festivals, and region-specific cultural portrayal are new additions to the features of Indian soaps.

Here I would like to disagree with Munshi (2012) who suggests that soap operas presently running in India are not regressive but are rather a portrayal of women who are opposing the dictates of patriarchy. When Munshi (2012) argues that these soaps help to topple patriarchy by depicting 'strong women' tackling 'real issues' I disagree with it. I buttress it as an extremely lopsided argument because of the progressive female protagonists of the '90s in Indian television like *Rajani* of *Rajani/Night* (Chatterjee, 1985), *Kalyani* of *Udaan/ Flight* (Chaudhury, 1989), *Shanti* of *Shanti/ Peace* (Pocha, 1994), and

Tara of Tara/ Star. (Kumar, 1993) can never be matched by the ones of recent times. The portrayal of 'docile' and 'sacrificial' female *bahus* who take resort to religious rituals and seek blessings of 'Intentional force' (read God) to overcome their obstacles are aplenty in the Indian soap operas (Laskar, 2015). The female protagonists and the stories of today's Hindi soap operas are also criticised to be regressive from many quarters due to their portrayal of the ever nurturing and docile wife (Chakravarti, 2012; Menon & Vohra, 2001). Most of the portrayal of female protagonists and the antagonists are dichotomous, either overtly virtuous or evil altogether respectively. India is still a deeply unequal society and the portrayal of women empowerment can never be realized by embedding it with the strength of modesty and self-sacrifice (Matheswaran, 2017).

Postfeminist content in the digital medium

Being a fast-growing economy, India is also witnessing growth, experimentation, and innovation in media content and distribution. As per the FICCI report (2020), India has witnessed the boom of network television since the late 90s, but since the later part of 2018, there has been a huge demand for online video streaming. The huge proliferation of the internet and smartphones has not only led to the seismic shift of production, dissemination, and consumption of digital content. Over the Top (OTT) as they are called, digital streaming platforms like NET FLIX, Amazon Prime, and Disney+Hotstar have become the major players (FICCI, 2020). Given the spectrum and freedom of choice of content and acceptability of this medium among the urban younger audience, there has been a marked difference in the selection of content in comparison to Indian television and film. With the onslaught of online media content invading the existing media space there has been a rapid process of change adopted by the old media who were earlier challenged for the 'primacy of audience' and user attention (Cunningham & Silver, 2013). The main focus of these web series is the urban young audience who are increasingly losing interest in television. There has been a gradual increase in the consumption of entertainment content on a digital platform (FICCI, 2019). There might be no immediate impact on TV viewership but a boom has been witnessed in the consumption of online streaming videos, web series, and short films (Cunningham & Silver, 2013). This shift instead of hampering the already existing consumption spree may increase many folds as well as the change in the type of content.

The living room media that is television is still rooted in the 'saas-bahu' (Munshi, 2010) content but there are forays into online streaming of some brave contents like *Four More Shots Please* given its role as an individual escape medium (Cunningham & Silver, 2013). While at one hand due to the proliferation of the internet and smartphones there is a boom of web series and online content for the audience to consume in their personal spaces. Television is playing its role in controlling the private sphere of women by delivering patriarchal notions of gender roles through its contents. This Indian web series 'Four More

Shots Please!'s younger women trying to fit into the shoes of the 'Sex and the City's middle-aged single women and the modern manners of modern-day metropolitan centres (Adrianens & Van Bauwel, 2011) will create ripples in Indian private spheres. But the question is if these ripples would lead to feminist thought processes or will miss the opportunities given the market pressures like other postfeminist oriented content (Jaggi & Manohar, 2019; Anwer & Arora, 2021). Jaggi & Manohar (2019) examine the 'counter-hegemonic gender representations' by identifying 'postfeminist ideological stance' in web series streaming on online platforms. Although these web series try to withstand the hegemonic gender representation by portraying certain aspects of post-feminism but falls back upon patriarchal designs too (Jaggi & Manohar, 2019).

Can the good virtuous mother, daughter, or daughter-in-law be replaced by the modern, fashionable, sexually, and financially independent women living in the posh spaces of urban locations expand the scope for future research in popular culture? Further, this research paper can become a vantage point for audience perception studies and impact analysis of such postfeminist portrayal among Indian audiences. While a host of reviews and articles on popular media have extensively lauded the attempt of featuring postfeminist content in Indian media (Keshri, 2019; Tiwari, 2020; Jhunjhunwala, 2020). Others (Sharma, 2020; Gupta, 2020; Sharma, 2019) criticised it for being an elitist representation denouncing the caste, class, and spatial intersectionalities (Dosekun, 2015).

While Hindi films in a similar context like the *Zoya Factor*(2019) and *Veerey di Wedding* (2018), a reality-based show on OTT platform *Fabulous lives of Bollywood Wives* (2020) ensures circulation of neoliberal and postfeminist aesthetics (Anwer & Arora, 2021). The characters of this web series also stay in well-furnished apartments in posh localities, earning their livelihood in the choicest of occupations (Anwer & Arora, 2021). They travel in private cars and not by boarding public transport, making professional and personal decisions in the restaurant, and holidaying in travel destinations which is much similar to their counterparts in the *Sex and the City* (Arthurs, 2003). Jane Arthurs (2003) argued that such a presentation of 'women-centred and explicit sexual discourse' is the remediation of consumer culture and postfeminist discourse. The attempt of addressing the preference of the tabloid audience or glossy magazine through this kind of content can be witnessed from a similar film '*Veerey Di Wedding*' (Kapoor, 2018). This film revolved around four best friends from high school, Kalindi, Avni, Sakshi, and Meera living their lives independently, and eventually uniting for one of the friend's weddings (Anwer & Arora, 2021).

The bromance is replaced with sismance (Warner, 2013) in all these content, but they fail to live up to expectations heavily reverting to neoliberal consumerism and sexual transgression. The grand wedding, the vacation destinations, the bachelorette party are all manifestations of either reaching out to an elite consumer class or fanning the aspirations of the middle-class youths. Jaggi & Manohar (2019) analyzed the content of two YouTube web

series to examine the nature of the counter-hegemonic construction of gender in these personal mediums. The overt representation of the privileged urban Indian women resisting the patriarchal norms navigates its way away from creating solidarity among all the working-class women (Jaggi & Manohar, 2019).

Ironically these media content are positioned as postfeminist but ironically reinforces the usual gender role stereotypes from a male's perspective. Although female sexuality and sexual independence find acceptability but is short-lived making the omnipresent patriarchal norms obvious. Despite its insistent heterosexuality, SATC also gave space to queer imageries thereby consciously questioning the binaries of sexuality and gender that are straight/gay and masculine/feminine respectively offering important insights into the women's desires (Gerhard, 2006). Drawing from these kinds of literature this paper probes the emphasis on sexual freedom, sismance, (Warner, 2013) and female bonding, financial security, and urban consumerism personified by young women in their thirties living in Mumbai, the economic hub of India in FMSP. I also buttress the fact that although given opportunities for transgression, the female protagonists are reverted to the binaries of gender arrangements to remain palatable to the Indian psyche.

Objectives of the study

This paper tries (i) to investigate if in its bid to (re)configure the imagery of free, cosmopolitan, unapologetic, and financially independent women in their thirties in popular content, the series ends up reinforcing patriarchal stereotypes. I try (ii) to discern if in an attempt to break the hegemonic 'women at home' (Modelski, 1982) ideology, the makers of the web series under study present a counter-hegemonic 'women at work'. By incorporating a textual analysis I try (iii) to find out if the creation of the female characters and their contextual relations reflect capitalist and elitist bias thereby missing opportunities to address intersectionalities (Crenshaw, 1991). It is also investigated in this paper (iv) if this web series failed to build up larger female solidarity/sisterhood among the working-class women remaining restricted to 'sismance'. Building upon the literal meaning of 'sismance' (Warner, 2013) like its counterpart 'bromance' I posit that it refers to the strong non-romantic friendship and bonding among a group of females.

Methodology and significance of the study

Most of the studies cited above have remained concentrated on textual analysis (Jaggi & Manohar, 2019) postfeminist analysis (Anwer & Arora, 2021), and CDA (Laskar, 2015) to study the representation of the female body and articulations in Indian entertainment media in the recent times. There have been numerous studies being carried out on postfeminism in entertainment media in the west (Gill, 2016; Jerard, 2006; Dosekun, 2015) and in India (Subramanian, 2019; Anwer & Arora, 2021). The population of the sample for this study are all the Web series streaming in online platforms with postfeminist underpinnings in India. The

justification for purposively choosing this Web series *Four More Shots Please!* (Nandy et al, 2018) streaming on Amazon Prime adopting the non-probability method lies on its close resemblance to *Sex and the City* (Keshri, 2019; First Post, 2018, The Indian Express, 2018; Subramanian, 2019; Anwer & Arora, 2021).

The contents revolving around the female protagonists in the traditional soap operas broadcast in the commercial television channels in India remain hooked to the pre-feminist stereotypical representation (Jaggi, 2011; Laskar, 2015). Through this study, I would also buttress that, unlike their film or television counterparts, the female sexuality and sexual freedom of protagonists find space in the Web series targeting niche educated urban audiences. I adopt textual analysis drawing upon the Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 2009) to examine the remediation of consumerism in the veil of postfeminism. The Socio-Cognitive Approach (van Dijk, 2009) has been used to study the surface of the text that is the select content. Then there is a discussion of the microstructure citing the construction of stereotypes and docility in women with the larger implication of remediation of postfeminist discourses being brought into the design. At the macro level, I try to contextualise the preliminary reading with the socio-economic design of the nation.

Analysis and discussion

Four More Shots Please! revolve around the life, fears, accomplishments, anxieties, and relationships of four women named Sayani Gupta as Damini Rizvi Roy “Dee”, an investigative journalist, Bani J as Umang Singh “Mangs”, a bisexual gym trainer, Kirti Kulhari as Anjana Menon “Anj”, a lawyer and divorced mother and Maanvi Gagroo as Sidhi Patel “Sids”, a single child from a wealthy family (First Post, 2018, The Indian Express, 2018). The characterisation of all the four female protagonists of FMSP(2019) distantly resembles the four friends of SATC (Keshri, 2019). Even one of them, Damini is also a writer but unlike Carrie Bradshaw’s (SATC) columnist identity, Damini Rizvi Roy is an investigative journalist running a news portal and finally ending up writing a book on a similar investigative issue.

While one of the characters Damini Rizvi Roy also referred to as 'Di' is shown as an investigative journalist/author but also entangled in a web of sexual and emotional ties with two men and is seeking affirmation and assurance from both of them. The second character Umang, a bisexual physical trainer has come to Mumbai in search of livelihood from Haryana, a non-metro state of India. The politics of representation is also intrinsically crafted within the text by portraying the muscular physical trainer from the hinterlands as bisexual instead of other feminine characters such as Damini, Siddhi, or Anjana. These depictions of the dichotomy of feminineness of Damini, Siddhi, and Anjana and the masculineness of Umang also questions if these newly created images of women depicted in popular media and film display women as being financially independent, and powerful, are these same images invalidated because of the patriarchic system still present in society.

The third feminine character is Anjana, a single mother who also resembles Charlotte of *Sex and the City* working as an attorney and a single mother. She is repeatedly portrayed as struggling between her private space and the public sphere and failing to withstand the patriarchal power relations at both spaces. Anjana is a stereotype in this category who also faces backlashes for being held up in domestic issues at work by her superiors facing mansplaining by her male colleagues during promotions and other professional benefits.

Apart from the boldness and being unapologetic about their sexual desires for men, and seeking assurance from them, suggests how patriarchy is maintained in society today by positioning the independent female's existence concerning the male. When the single mother Anjana is portrayed in juxtaposition with her former husband and the father of her child to understand her choice of men and repeated failures at relationships. The portrayal of 'be like men' in *For More Shots Please* banks on similar rhetorical devices like the *Sex and the City*, when working like men is equated with the first wave of feminism (Wollstonecraft, 1972). The role reversal in the relationship between Anjana and her former husband portrays binaries of male/female, husband/wife, body/soul, provider/nurturer, dominant/subservient. Here, Anjana takes the role of male but is shown to undergo repentance and frustration of solitude compared to the blissful and togetherness of her husband's newly married life with a more feminine woman. The binary opposites of good/bad, responsible/irresponsible, virtuous/promiscuous come to foray when the female character Anjana drives with her sick daughter in a dishevelled state under the influence of alcohol and meets with an accident. Citing her 'irresponsible' behaviour her otherwise 'never responsible' estranged husband threatens her of disallowing her guardianship of her daughter. The first season ends on a cliffhanger with Anjana being taken into custody by the law enforcement agency (Mumbai Police) from the hospital for creating a ruckus and drinking and driving.

The third female protagonist of the Web series is Siddhi who is a single child of rich Indian Gujarati parents, who give prime consideration to get married. Trying to give a feminist flavour to the plot and presentation the content makers either knowingly or unknowingly use ethnic stereotypes. Preference for feminine, young, and thin girls is a patriarchal construct. While Siddhi faces control over her body and food habits in her private sphere, cyberstalking by an older male becomes her source of subordination in the public sphere. Questions are also raised through the representation of Siddhi against the patriarchal notions of virtue, honour, and family as a patriarchal institution.

So, the series in a way tries to show the questionable attitudes of the stakeholders of Indian society. It points out the shaming of the female while leaving the male perpetrator of the harassment and cybercrime walk away unapologetic. But these portrayals in a way reinforces the existing ideology of good and bad, good females with feminine traits will be

rewarded while bad female characters with transgressing nature will be punished and outcast by the kin and society.

Four More Shots Please! (Nandy et al., 2019), an Indian Web television series that debuted its first season on Amazon Prime follows the story of four women in their early thirties who are unapologetic about their choices of work, sexuality, and consumerist indulgence (First Post, 2018; IANS, 2019; Sharma, 2020; The Hindu Net Desk, 2020; Dey, 2020) The show draws on sismance, of a group representing the contemporary independent, privileged, suave, working women living in metropolitan localities. However, they are not only dealing with mansplaining, not separated from their seeking of a (sexual) partner the producers try to shackle the characters repeatedly concerning their male counterparts on whom they fall back to find assurance or appreciation. The four characters unlike SATC develop their relationship during a low moment of their life taking a recluse in a bar to consume alcohol at the pretext for momentary release of their frustration. FMSP is similar to SATC as it talks about four women serving as main characters with the plot revolving around their triumphs/failures in interpersonal relationships, emotional highs and lows in social lives, assurance/betrayal from men, earning/losing economic security, heterosexual/homosexual adventures. The content understudy can be related to the popularity of SACT two decades back around the globe due to its reflection of the concerns of contemporary modern in a post-modern society. Each of the four characters portrays the struggles of modern single women in India or anywhere else. The singlehood status of the protagonists also brings them under scrutiny in a society where marriage is seen as the ultimate destiny of a virtuous woman. Singlehood has to be compromised with seeking the assurance of a male partner in a marital (socially accepted) heterosexual/homosexual relationship. The failures, frustrations, and everyday struggle of these four women against the shackles of patriarchy in their private space as well as the public space are the central theme of this Web series under study. There are conventional, unconventional, traditional, and outright nonconformist ways in which women today find their roles, and this Web series tries to highlight its protagonists' strengths and weaknesses. This Web series could have served as a vantage point for contemporary feminist media text but given its outright unapologetic imagery of sex-crazed, male-dependent, and consumerist tint it ends up falling short of the larger canvas of feminism that was laid out for it. Given the feminist positioning of these four characters they are also crafted into postfeminist women and how they are affected by the ever-changing role of the feminine ideal in a fast-paced, socially-dynamic world.

Conclusion

There is a constant struggle over the creation of meaning during the process of production and the act of reception both of which are determined by their place in a wider social, political, economic, and cultural context. This anaphoric and explicit reference to both

linguistic and visual of consumerist discourse and postfeminist remediation are preferred by the producers of the content for greater marketability among the consumerist audience. An explicit relation is constructed between the representation of characters and the frequency of their association with their sexually-explicit moments of self-expression. These content offered through Web series neither negate the already existing stereotypes in media on gender relations and sexuality nor present alternatives but rather reinforces the occurrences of good/bad, majority/minority, acceptable/unacceptable fears designed by patriarchal norms. Foucault (1979) tends to identify the imposition of discipline upon the body with the operation of a specific institution; in this case, family, marriage, and society as a whole act as the institutions of discipline and punishment. Sometimes, the self is itself turned into an institution to torment the conscience for not living up to the expectations of an external entity. This will add up to the dominant gender arrangements where women's subjectivities are structured within an ensemble of systematically depicted practices and give them a feeling that "they fail to measure up" (Bartky, 1997). Ignoring the fact that we still live in deeply unequal capitalist societies, driven by profit and competition operating on a global scale would be sheer irrational. We can also not deny that we live in a media-dominated world with many different ideas and identities in circulation at any one time.

The present study questions the way in which even the modern-educated women are portrayed not only in the Indian fictional television or film but also on the OTT or digital platforms. This research also suffers from certain limitations and research gaps such as I could not take into consideration the OTT content of other south Asian countries like Pakistan and Bangladesh or even the Turkish Web series which are also very popular among Indian audiences. This can be a vantage point for other research work to relate the audience's perspective with the location and (dis)location of women in the entertainment genre. Is there a constant pressure even in the portrayed postfeminist women in these countries to be guilt-ridden in the words of Bartky (1997) "fail to measure up or are they some baby steps in bringing a change in the way of female portrayal in India as well as other south Asian countries?" It is apparent that the intended audience for *Sex and the City* and *Four More Shots Please* are females (Arthurs, 2003) especially those who are goal-driven and independent. But the plotlines have arguably made the women suffer for being rejected or dominated by the males in a very implicit way where the females lose their power because males are the underlying reason for the ultimate emotional success and stability of the female characters. *Four More Shots* is based on women's experiences as the central point similar to its predecessor '*Sex and the City*' making it all the more interesting. The plot of both the text is central to women but it is the male who is realised to be in dominant roles. The actions of the male characters ultimately determine the consequences within the private sphere as well as the public sphere of these modern independent women.

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