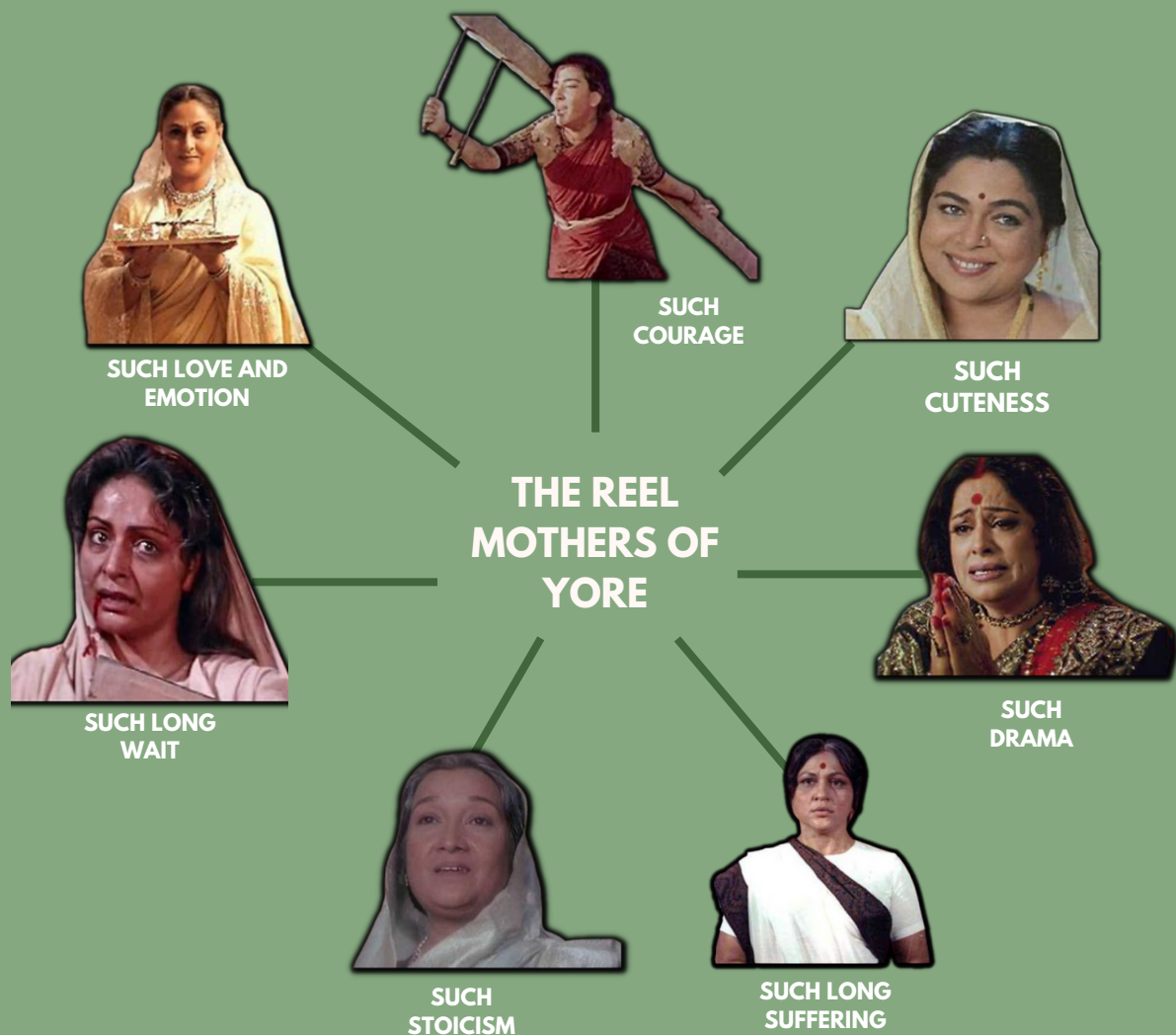


Mere Paas Maa Hai!

We celebrated Mother's day earlier this month. For decades, Indian movies have peddled the image of a supermom. Her identity is subsumed by her role as a mother. Here's looking at some of these iconic 'moms' and the typical traits they have personified on the silver screen over the years.



Thankfully, we have seen some changes in this image during the last few years. Next, we look at a few movies that have managed to go beyond the stereotypical image of a mother. These new-age moms may not be able to serve *gajjar ka halwa* at short notice, but their multi-faceted and realistic characters make them far more interesting to watch.

Here are a few reel mothers who defy the "perfect mother" stereotype:

Bhoothakalam: Revathy is a single mother battling crippling depression, and a strained relationship with her son. She is an individual with her own set of flaws and not a mere addendum to someone's life.

Haider: Tabu's character is loosely based on Gertrude from Shakespeare's Hamlet. The character portrays shades of grey, with focus on her troubled relationship with her son.

Jaane Tu Yaa Jaane Naa: Ratna Pathak Shah's role is that of a more open-minded, free spirited mother, who doesn't sweat the small stuff.

Magalir Mattum: Three mothers take a break from their over-possessive and abusive families, and go on a trip by themselves. It ends with decisions to be more assertive and chase their dreams.

Neel Batte Sannata: Swara Bhaskar's character goes back to school to encourage her daughter to take up studies more seriously. She fights her way through and refuses to give up on her daughter as well as her own dreams.

Tribhanga: The movie showcases two generations of mothers played by Kajol and Tanvi Azmi. It humanises them and highlights the multidimensionality of their characters.

Varane Avashyamund: Shobana essays a single mother. When the daughter objects to the mother finding love at a later age, she doesn't let society dictate her choices.



SHARE THE LOAD



Source: MTR advertisement featuring a mother cooking up a storm for each individual member.

It might be a common sight in most homes to see the mother or the female members of the household running around trying to juggle kitchen duties along with helping the children with their school work and making sure everyone in the family has hot tea and breakfast. This understanding is so commonplace that many movies have had an opening shot with the very same sequence to show the ideal mother/woman.

Popular conceptualization fueled by movies and social media has propelled motherhood as the rite of passage for a woman to fulfil her role in society. Good mothers are selfless, altruistic creatures with no vices; their mere existence surrounds the family's well-being. This can often lead to an immense amount of strain and burden on a single individual. How practical is that all of this load falls on a woman, especially in a setting where they have to factor in work as well?

Keep scrolling to look at some replies on how members of the IIM A community feel they could help share the load.

SINCE BOTH OF US ARE WORKING, THE IDEAL SOLUTION WAS TO GET A DOMESTIC WORKER. IT MAKES MORE SENSE THAT WAY.

My husband is a researcher and has a more flexible schedule. He does most of the work, and my mother helps him.

IIM A COMMUNITY REPLIES

I noticed that only amma does the cleaning and all the other work. No one helps her out. I do my bit by making sure my personal cleaning is taken care of



I am not home most of the time. However, whenever I am there, I try to help her out

Both my parents take up whatever work depending on who is free or not tired at the moment. There is no set division per se, it is more of an understanding.

We have turned to technology. Roomba for the floor cleaning, dishwasher for the plates and so on.

I don't want my sons to grow up without basic lifeskills. And I want them to know that I don't exist to clean up after them. We have a whiteboard where I write down their chores.

NOW THAT I EARN A SALARY, I ENSURE THAT SHE GETS A BREAK FROM HER DAILY LIFE AT LEAST ONCE IN 2 MONTHS. SHE STAYS WITH ME WHILE I TAKE CARE OF HER—THE LEAST I CAN DO CONSIDERING HOW SHE SPENT HER YOUTH RAISING ME.

If you feel you have been subjected to sexual harassment or would like to make any suggestions to us regarding curbing sexual harassment or gender bias on campus please reach out to us at:
Email: chr-cmgi@iima.ac.in
Phone: 9712915533
Please note that each communication with the CMGI is completely strictly confidential.

The monthly newsletter from the Committee for Managing Gender Issues (CMGI) is an attempt to initiate conversations on discrimination, gender bias, sexual harassment, and related issues. We would love to have the community participate in the process. Please reach out on theresea@iima.ac.in for submissions, queries, and/or feedback.