

LESBIAN SUBJECTIVITY IN KERALA PUBLIC SPACE: REPRESENTATION OF MEDIA

Written by *Vineetha M*

Faculty in Gender Studies, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, India

ABSTRACT

In this paper, I look at the construction of lesbian subjectivity through the media discourse. Media has simultaneously reflected the lives of homosexual individuals and moulded stereotypical subjects through distorted representations. This paper explores the social context related to addressing same-sex desires and looks at the ways the representation of the lesbian subject has evolved in media. The paper analyses how hetero-normative dominant ideology often looks at lesbian subjects as “deviants”. It tries to explain how factors such as gender and caste contribute to the disciplining of sexuality.

The paper broadly analyses the disciplining of sexuality in the context of events of lesbian suicides and other lesbian issues in Kerala. It looks at how Kerala society disciplines lesbian individuals through marginalisation, exclusion, and violence, which lead to the suicide or death of such individuals. The paper analyses how different institutions intervene in confirming women as ‘normal’ heterosexual agents of society and the vigilance exerted by society to control sexuality. The paper further looks at the role of media in maintaining /reproducing gender and sexual order in Kerala society.

Keywords: Lesbian Subjectivity, heteronormativity, Kerala Public space

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I look at the ways of representation of same-sex intimacy which led to the construction of a 'lesbian subjectivity' in Kerala. 1980s onwards, the term "lesbian women" was seen in the mainstream media. The term is further used, visibilised with the formation of Sahayathrika, meaning a women companion in Malayalam. Sahayathrika, a network for women-loving women, notes they successfully support women lovers, only because they address those 'who are real' even though they are in closets. Sahayathrika says they used to call "lesbian" those who are women lovers to denote women who do not even hear the word "lesbian". According to Devaki Menon, there are women who hide their orientation and get married, women who are alienated from others, women who try to die by suicide (Menon,2004, p. 21). Sahayathrika was initiated as a supporting system for women who love women, considering them as political agents. Sahayathrika played a significant role in creating a language to talk about same sex love in Kerala. Sahayathrika strongly believes that giving visibility can only address many misconceptions about homosexuality.

Here I specifically look into two kinds of works to understand how women to women lovers/lesbian women got represented in media. The first one is an anthology published by the group of Sahayathrika, edited by Reshma Bharadwaj, "*Mythiakalkappuram Swavargalaingikadha Keralathil*" (In Beyond Myths: Homosexuality in Kerala,2004), is a collection of academic works and experiences written by queer activists in India. It takes forward a queer discourse; it includes many English articles translated into Malayalam. Sahayathrika collected stories about the suicide of lesbian women in Kerala. Sahayathrika prepared a fact-finding report on suicide cases of lesbian partners reported in the newspapers. The other category of works includes popular media representations of same-sex relationships.

The first category, the works of Sahayathrika, looks at 'lesbian' subject as political as this is addressed by the political/queer organisation. Moreover, the work is looking at lesbian identity as a political subject. It is an important work that maps lesbian visibility and tries to give a language for queer discourse in Kerala. Sahayathrika has created a space to talk about same sex desires in the Kerala context. Their articulations through the movements and writings after the 1980's helped to develop a lesbian discourse in Kerala.

The engagement of popular media in same sex desire is more important to study as how it contributed as a popular medium in constructing a lesbian subject in Kerala. Of course, the political alternative movement has influenced the popular conception of lesbianism and vice versa, helped to understand the discourse and initiate investigative research on lesbian issues in Kerala.

This work broadly analyses the disciplining of sexuality by looking at representation in the context of events of lesbian suicides and other lesbian issues in Kerala. It is important to trace the representation of different literature on women loving women in Kerala. It is significant to look at the way this representation has led to lesbian discourses in Kerala's public sphere. The main objective of the paper is to analyse the construction of lesbian subjectivity through the media discourse. How ideology of media influenced to construct an idea of 'lesbian women' in Kerala. Through analysing these cultural texts, I illustrate how the institutions are vigilant to discipline sexuality in Kerala. After the 1980's, newspapers and other magazines reported lesbian cases. Reports of Suicide cases, harassment cases in different institutions, eloping cases, reports of vigilance paid by media in preventing lesbianism are some of the important categories of representation in media. These media reports directly or indirectly acknowledge the presence of different sexual lives in Kerala society. This work is not to visibilise lesbian as a category in Kerala but looking at how sexual identities are constructed historically-looking at the discourses, the process of lesbianism same sex love has evolved through media discourse. Popular media is usually addressing mainstream dominant heterosexual society. As propagators of hetero-normative dominant ideology, the media often see lesbian subjects as "deviants". Selected material I discuss includes news reports and other magazine features that acknowledge same-sex desires. Some reports address the facts about lesbianism, but as their role and relation to their regular content in mainstream media, they advise precautionary methods to maintain ideal femininity or to follow familial norms.

INSTITUTIONALIZING HETERONORMATIVITY IN KERALA PUBLIC SPHERE

Romantic desires in the early Malayalam novels, mostly written by Nair novelists, find their most intense, definitive expressions in a marital, institutional vocabulary. The new discourse of romantic love in the early novel suggests not only that marriages need to be found on autonomous desire but also that desire ought to be institutionally oriented. The kind of womanhood imagined by colonial modernity is an institutionalised aspiration that femaleness fits into an institutional requirement. Desires are institutionally oriented. Normative desires are defined and constructed in the reproductive Brahmanical ideology. There is a discipline imagined according to the gender, sexual, and caste order. Disciplined sexuality is imagined in the bodies of women. Sexuality is a restricted discipline among the dominant caste group assumed as women outside the sexuality. Sexuality is assumed in the bodies of marginalised women.

In the Kerala Model discourse, female bodies appear as endowed with the capacity for labour. In the development discourse, the female body appeared as the relatively healthy maternal body devoid of sexuality. The body is treated as if devoid of agency, a mere vehicle of the mind, a shell that holds a mind with the capacity for rationality, predisposed towards the domestic domain. (Devika,2013, p.96)

Devika argues since the early 1990s; there has been a fear over the sexualisation of both maternal and labouring bodies in public discourse. There is a fine line between aesthetic womanhood and the outright erotic woman. (Devika,2013) Devika notes that marginalised groups remain invisible to the dominant development discourse termed as the abject of development. Sexuality is projected upon this group.

Devika writes by 'abjection', 'I mean the social process by which the normal, the possible, the dominant, the sensible, and the mainstream are produced and supported by the creation of a domain of abnormality, impossibility, subservience and marginality.' She quotes, 'Julia Kristeva has argued that the 'abject' cause's great deal of anxiety precisely because it contains elements, which are necessary aspects of living, which, however, also causes anxiety. Drawing

on Kristeva, one should argue that socially stigmatised groups signify ‘dirt’ and ‘disorder’ to the dominant.’(Devika,2013,p.103)

“Social form of desiring is multiple and dynamic. But power works through a process of reifying certain desires, and bodies come to matter and others become unseen, illegible, and unrecognisable. Even within the site of gay, lesbian, and feminist discourse, this process of reification operates in such a way that hegemonic forms of desiring and acting emerge.”(Mokkil, 392, p.12)

The primary question this paper addressed is, how do media represent different sexualities or different identities in a society where media primarily stand for heteronormativity? By looking at the media representations of lesbian subjects, it tries to understand the construction of lesbian subjectivities in Kerala. By looking at lesbian issues in Kerala, the work analyses the disciplining of sexuality through different institutions. How are different institutions part of the construction of gender and sexuality? Here, I look at the ‘visibility’/ ‘invisibility’ of lesbian subjects and the strategies for representing them in a media discourse. Gender, caste, and sexuality matter in a society in disciplining of sexuality. How does the caste class of a person matter in deciding their sexual experience? The experience of Dalit transgender, Dalit queer is different. All these are factors in discipline a society. A ‘*kulina*’ woman, an upper caste woman, is an ideal image for mainstream cultural production. In a disciplined society, dalit, dalit homosexual or transgender will be out of the purity of these spaces. In a homonormative society where some are more acceptable in a Kerala Queer context. In the social process, the normal, the possible, the deviant, the sensible, and the mainstream are produced and supported by the creation of a domain of abnormality, impossibility and marginality.

INSTITUTIONALISING SEXUALITY

We pay to maintain normative desires and sexuality. We have moral codes, laws, educational institutions, psychiatric institutions, medical definitions, social customs, *asleela kridhikal* (degraded literature), popular songs, and literature involved in this micro-fascism. It limits our

view to imagine differences. Those who are not heterosexual become invisible and unrecognisable.

There is resistance happen in the margins. People in the margin employ strategies to find the possibilities of identities, and desires. There is a richness of differences in sexualities in different cultures. It is forbidden in one place and encouraged in another place. The idea of sexual attractions and pleasures is different. The information, illustrations, and representations of sexuality embodied cultural meaning.

How different institutions intervene in confirming women as normal heterosexual agents of society. Preconceptions on lesbianism, media reportages on lesbian suicide, cases of eloping, court permission for living together, and the cases of suspension of loving couples from the school hostels are some instances of media covered on this matter.

Sahayathrika, lesbian women's collective, create a space for queer movement in Kerala. I analyse Beyond Myth: Same-Sex Sexuality in Kerala, an anthology of Sahayathrika on lesbian suicides in Kerala and the media reports on women loving women. Concern about reports of lesbian suicides was an important starting point for the activist group and helpline Sahayathrika (Co-Traveller) to articulate sexual minority rights in Kerala. Sahayathrika is the first organisation in Kerala to focus specifically on the situation of lesbian women. Sahayathrika tried to compile a story and published a fact-finding report on lesbian suicides.

Navaneetha says suicide becomes a dark act of 'coming out' where the couple becomes established through dying together. Navaneetha says that it is a disturbing fact that the event through which the lesbian can become a figure in the imagination of Kerala is often an ending of her life. It led to a social situation where some bodies' desires are 'illegible'; in this situation, death is a political act. When a monogamous society does not accommodate the diverse desires and bodies, these bodies are pushed out of these spaces. So, the relationship appeared/represented in media in subtle/ different ways. It is important for Sahayathrika to bring out lesbian life stories as there are misconceptions about lesbians, there is propaganda against lesbians, there is a sex scandal, etc.

Here, I focused on magazines on women loving women in Kerala and the anthology of Sahayathrika to understand a commonsensical knowledge on lesbian subjects and also report of lesbian issues in magazines to understand the disciplining of sexuality in different cultural institutions. Media reflects the commonsensical understanding of women loving women. Most of the sensitive stories written in the *Painkili* are degraded literature, which is very popular in Malayalam, like Malayala Manorama Weekly, etc. Malayalam Magazine Grihalakshmi publishes a feature on women-to-women relationships. It reflects Kerala society's vigilance towards the discipline of sexuality. The social and cultural prejudices lead this relationship to risk.

SAME-SEX REPRESENTATION IN CINEMA

Sancharam, the movie directed by Ligi Pullapally, directly mirrored the lives of lesbian women in Kerala. Ligi Pullapally places the issue of lesbian suicide as her motivation for making these films and says, "I hope my films help young gay people to consider the option of moving ahead with their lives, instead of taking the devastating step that will resonate for years within their own families and communities, suicide". (393, Mokkil) The number of self-proclaimed lesbian cinema is hardly visible in Malayalam cinema. We can see that cinema very much reflected the social situation in Kerala. *Desadanakili karayarilla(DKK)* is a widely accepted movie which has lesbian undertones. Without labelling as 'lesbian,' DKK deals with same-sex intimacies more seriously and represents how it interplays or negotiates with heteronormativeness.

Cinema is directly or indirectly representing reality, reproducing a reality. So, it is not necessarily to say how important it is to look at the social situation or social context to understand the pattern of same-sex desires and the disciplining of sexuality, a significant factor in cultural production. Lesbian subjectivity reflected in cinema and as a cultural text reflects how cinema or other texts remoulded these subjects.

1. How alternative movement address the lesbian issue and their role in constructing lesbian subjects as agents.
2. How is popular media picturing lesbian women and constructing an ideology?

Analysing two kinds of material in this paper to address the research question; one is the Sahayatrika suicide report, which is intended to address suicide cases. Sahayathrika says they believed that it needs to be lesbians visible because lesbian issues are degraded on many other grounds. Identities of lesbian women are often unrecognised because of their invisibility. Sahayathrika observes that there is a strong rejection when they emphasise lesbian suicide. They strongly say that it is media sensationalism. The commonsensical belief is that suicide happens because of poverty or sex rackets. For them, it is sure that anyway, it is not same-sex desires. Sahayathrika observes that it is lesbian women have to be visible because the media is representing negative ways. Sahayathrika noted that they have to use media for visibility at the same time and, protect the privacy of women who approach them. They have to go with depending the same media. The media understood and produced this commonsensical idea about lesbian women. Sahayathrika is conscious of the visibility and, at the same time, of their privacy. There are misconceptions about the identities of lesbian women. Lesbian issues are often devalued.

FEATURE FROM GRIHALASKSHMI, MAY 2002

Grihalakshmi is a popular Malayalam women's magazine. *Grihalakshmi* can be translated as 'Goddess of Home' or 'Lakshmi Devi of home'. Popular magazines attempt to project how an ideal Malayali woman is to be, like other women's magazines, Malayala Manorama, Mangalam, etc. *Grihalakshmi* usually gives instructions for the normative family to follow. It works as a mini guide for a heteronormative reproductive Malayali family nation. It represents a middle-class, upper-caste heteronormative family. Society puts so much vigilance to control the sexuality into a heteronormative structure. We can see features in these magazines like, "Did our girls go in a right way?". "Cautions for mothers to bring up their children, things to remember for teenage girl's mothers." "What your children do in closed room?" "Whom they make friendship?" This magazine instructs everything about family, marriage, childbirth, bringing up children etc. This magazine assumes an ideal family, which will be an upper caste, middle-class, heterosexual family.

This can be seen as different institutional caution on female subjectivities specifically. Suspension of women lovers from the school Hostel indicates the vigilance of these institutions even though homosociality is more permissible in a heterosexually complex Kerala society. What does this suspension of same-sex friends of school remind us? We have a society where sexual segregation is strict, where we have different hostels for men and women, different seating arrangements in school classrooms, sex-segregated queues in school and other public spaces. We have a society where homosociality is practised and not acknowledged. In a heterosexually segregated society, homosociality is silently enjoyed. It is problematic only when homosocial space transfers into visible emotional-physical bonding. And the couples cannot separate for marriage or break the familial boundaries. Society always shows vigilance to maintain the order of the heterosexual family. These are the women's magazines that reiterate the heteronormative norms.

"Do Women love women? Is homosexual love between women increasing?" This is the title Grihalakshmi (a popular Malayalam family magazine) given for a feature on lesbian relationships. It intended to give a catching caption meant to attract or expect the attention of common people. The feature explores the reasons. Feature tries to balance the anxiety about lesbian relationships and also tries to inform the facts about a 'strange relationship'. It gives a detail of women loving women, which is hardly represented in the news; it is noticed that there are a couple of lesbian suicide cases reported in the newspaper. Mostly, this news was reported in the captions like 'two women were seeming dead'. Sahayathrika collected these reports for the fact-finding.

Grihalakshmi gives an extract of a letter written by women lovers. The magazine tries to make believe of a particular category called "women loving women". The magazine quotes a letter written by a woman to women, revealing same-sex love,

"Dear Parvathi, it is my 18th day without you. Each moment more gives pain. Will this wasted holiday period never end! Only by coming together in our love can I continue. You remember the day we separated? That night that we didn't sleep? How much you cried! Here in my house, they are inviting proposals for my marriage. We should run away someplace together. Far far away. We must just wait a little bit.

With great love,

Yours only,

Emily."

(Extract from the article, Grihalakshmi, Malayalam Magazine).

The magazine describes it as a letter written by a girl to her lover, who is a student at a famous professional college. It creates a sense that it needs attention as this 'strange relationship' is happening in the mainstream spaces, not in the marginalized space. It says it is also seen among women in upper strata and need to pay attention. Grihalakshmi addresses one of these lesbian lovers as '*Kamukan*' (male lover) as she initiates the affair and later commits suicide due to the degradation of honour. This is because social pressure compels her to commit suicide. The magazine reports that this is in recent same-sex love, suicide cases have become news in Kerala. Grihalakshmi, in a column, reports, "even they have an organization"! (Organization for women lovers). The magazine introduced Sahayathrika as a collective of women who like to live together. It reports, 'organization says that it is not their aim to encourage lesbian thinking.' Grihalakshmi assures that Sahayathrika does not encourage lesbian thinking in people. But only give support to those who cannot change their "behaviour". It also explained the reason for the formation of Sahayathrika. The other title says: Why is there homosexuality? It writes that there was homosexuality from the beginning of the world itself, even in ancient Greece and Rome. There are expert comments added. A sexologist and clinical psychologist say homosexuality can be two ways. It discusses like hormonal imbalances and life situations also make a person a homosexual. There are more homosexual who are made so by the situation than by birth, it reported. There are misconceptions about lesbianism also reproduced through the mainstream media. There is also a column titled "Homosexuality is not a disease": it says that in 1980, the American Psychiatric Association decided that homosexuality is not a disease. Also, reports say that marriage is not a solution for homosexuality.

Grihalakshmi discussed that it is not a disease. It also says they have even an organization. The organization is standing for human rights and asking for laws permitting same-sex desires. Even though it discusses lesbian relations in its history, this is not a disease, and the organization stands for same-sex lovers. It finally prescribes precautions to take as much as

possible can take against such 'aberration'. It traces all possibilities of women-to-women relationships. And advise possible ways to stop it. It says the family's parents to be vigilant about the possible relation, which can be labelled as 'abnormal' and may break the norms of the reproductive family.

Grihalakshmi promotes the ideology which discourages gender sexual transgression. The magazine keeps vigilance to protect heteronormativity. It keeps the order of society to not break the borders. "Parents, please remember" on this title, Grihalakshmi give the precautionary instructions. It writes, "From childhood itself, if parents take care, situations which lead to such 'aberrations' can be avoided."

"Even if it is a very close relative, don't allow children to lie down near to them. Thinking that it is only her aunty or sister-in-law, don't let them sleep with, lead to such aberrations can be avoided." In our society heterosexuality is highly monitored. In this case, in media sense where same-sex relations, transgressing gone to 'aberration'. magazine raises an alert on these "abnormal' relations. And advice for vigilance among the homosocial groups.

"Take care not to let relationships develop into closeness beyond limits. From the beginning itself, prevent the tendency of your daughter to sleep with her friend regularly. Even if it is the hostel, don't allow her to share bed with anyone."

Hostels are one of the homosocial spaces where women, mostly in their teenage make their alternative homes. These girls are free from family obligations and make their friendship the most important in their lives. It seems hostels put many restrictions and vigilance on these relationships and all. Even the magazine agrees to the possibility of a women-to-women relationship. More stress is given to the caution society should give to prevent the situation which leads to lesbianism.

"Keep an eye on inseparable friendships."

“Don’t misunderstand good friendships. If one gets labelled as homosexual as well, then there is a possibility to go to that tendency.” Caring in all possible ways not to be a lesbian.

“Don’t be angry if you understand that your daughter has lesbian tendencies. Through open discussion, make her understand the real matters. Lovingly advise her to not slip into such deep relationships. Do not hesitate to consult psychologists.”

“Girls from broken families can have more of a tendency to find deep relationship through homosexuality. It is lesser number of people who have homosexual tendencies from childhood itself. Situations, motivations, prolonging sexual exploitations can create pressure to become homosexuals. The parent should be cautious of these types of situations. Same sex relationships happen due to the ignorance, infatuations of their young age. Women from backward group, broken families, women who are not sexually satisfied go for same sex relations.”

These are the assumptions Grihalakshmi made through the article. “Some woman who has had no sexual satisfaction in marriage can become addicted to homosexuality if they get pleasure in that.” Grihalakshmi, a popular women's magazine, invented that these are the cases of women attracted to lesbianism. So, there should be an alert. The media is perpetuating the misconceptions on lesbianism, considering that same-sex desires are ‘deviant’ and unnatural.

Sahayathrika reports that there are cases of institutions vigilant on women's relationships. One incident is the suicide of lesbian women in Kerala Varma College. The continuous harassment by the hostel warden, and later, the warden labelled her as lesbian. The girls refuse the allegation. Later, she eloped with her friend and came back to the hostel. Due to the conspiracy of the upper caste school administrator, students raised issues against the harassment. It is relevant that we have a social prejudice made think one person to suicide. Sexual and caste marginalization makes this issue more complex. School administrators pick these students to the police when they came back to the hostel. Students’ parents argue that if the students are from well background upper caste groups, they will not do the same and might save them from public insult. Sahayathrika writes lesbian suicide is seen as a direct example of the hardest struggles women loving women experienced in Kerala.

The article written by John Mary, 'coping with lesbianism among school kids,' was published in Indian Express in January 1992. This article primarily looks at the subject of lesbianism; it is meant to report the incident that happened in Thiruvananthapuram. The newspaper reported the incident where seven students of a government girls' high school were recently found by the school authorities to have developed a lesbian group. The title indicates the precautions to take to cope with or manage lesbianism, a 'strange' kind of relationship among school kids. It basically consolidates different opinions and arguments on the incident.

The report says, "A notebook seized from the girls had entries made by one of the girls which tells everything about the group and who all are its members. The notebook contains names of a few others they had been waiting for; they were not 'yet big enough'. The head of the institution said that the girls were united in a strong mutual bond, which was more than just a physical relationship. The parent-teacher association may not like to retain the group in the school for fear that the 'menace' will spread.

The article states that "The news of the group had spread especially among the students in the high school classes despite the teachers hiding it up. They had sensed what had gone wrong and referred to the members of the group euphemistically as "Martina Navartilovas". According to the head of the institution, most of the girls were from lower-class families, with the father being an alcoholic in almost all cases. The article indicates that an investigation revealed that "lesbianism is not an uncommon phenomenon among school girls in the city. Only teachers, parents and children themselves were embarrassed to talk about it because of the social stigma attached to what is generally perceived as both moral and physical perversion."

The article quotes the words of a psychologist from Kerala University, he says, "The news does not shock me. This is a normal phenomenon; it does not need any kind of treatment. The teachers in question need not panic."

He also says girls who are more masculine than feminine also show the tendency to do the male role in the lesbian relationship. Also says that one or two girls in a hostel or school can spread

this kind of activity among their peers. Thus, small groups of lesbians may form in these places. Membership in a group gives girls not only sexual gratification but also a sense of belonging and a feeling of being adventurous. These additional benefits reinforce the homosexual bond and also it gives an idea that lesbianism in the adolescent age is a passing phase. Controlling lesbianism consists mainly of having an eye on the activities of the girls and breaking suspicion-arousing groups. The main strategy in controlling must be denying opportunities for homosexual activity by disallowing girls to sleep together or bathe together. The instructions and the expertise advise it all reject the natural condition of homosexuality. It establishes that the relationship between the same sexes is deviant or illness. It generates homophobia by creating a stereotypical understanding of the lesbian relationship.

Feminist writers in the early period did not give much focus on the issues of same-sex people, which is reflected in how Saradmoni, an early women historian, responded to the incident. Her response often reflects the lack of knowledge on issues of sexuality or homophobic attitudes that the earliest feminists stayed with. According to her, this was a single incident that need not be taken as a big size than it really is. She says this happens in the time when incest, pre-marital, extramarital sex, or even rape within marriage.

She also says I have my disagreement about your using such strong terms as 'lesbian grouping'. Some kind of homosexual attractions may not be uncommon when a large number of boys or girls stay together in close physical proximity for long hours. It can be a passing phase in the adolescent child.

This also should not be looked upon as something arising out of the 'estranged' family backgrounds found among the lower middle class. There is no reason for us to conclude that such things are absent among the upper middle class, even if the children in the present case belong to that class. Also, there is a possibility that such behaviour can emanate from the lower class because they may have greater opportunities to get exposed to this kind of life, she says.

This is mainly looking at lesbian grouping among school students, girls who are in the adolescent age. Because of gender segregation and other sexuality stigmas/ control on men-women relationships in our society, same-sex relationship is more permissible and accepted in

our society. Here in this commonsensical idea, these are the vigilance our institutions keep to make boundaries between homosociality and homosexuality. Homosociality is acceptable; our society is vigilant not to go into the 'deviances'. These reports mainly say how to defend not to be into "strangeness". This is also made visible in how media generally presents same-sex relationships.

CONCLUSION

Media perpetuate the idea that Same sex desire is deviant, disease, abnormal, and something one should not happen. The media often takes a stand that lesbianism, in general, should be 'nipped in the bud'. The magazine, like Grihalakshmi, is a mini guide for a heteronormative reproductive Malayali family nation. Malayali society put so much vigilance to control the sexuality into a heteronormative structure. This magazine assumes an ideal family, which is an upper caste, middle class and heterosexual family. As Devika points out, this normal, heterosexual, dominant, legitimized is built up on the abnormal and marginalized sections of the community. We can see how the society is disciplining a heteronormative society through continuous stereotypical construction through the popular media. These can be seen as different institutional caution on female subjectivities. This indicates the vigilance of these institutions even though homosociality is more permissible in a heterosexually complex Kerala society.

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