

**The Impact of the Transformation of Women's Image  
in Film and Television Dramas on Adolescents'  
Definition of the "Ideal Woman"**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the changes in female roles in TV dramas and their impact on adolescents' gender perceptions and definitions of the "ideal woman." By analyzing the evolution of women's images in popular TV dramas since the reform and opening up, the study reveals a shift from the traditional "virtuous" woman to the modern "independent and confident" woman. Through interviews with 21 adolescents, the researchers gained an in-depth understanding of how these changes have influenced adolescents' definitions of the "ideal woman." The study found that teenagers are rebelling against traditional patriarchy, breaking free from labeling, and expressing disdain for overly idealized roles, preferring more realistic and complex female characters. Excellent female characters in TV dramas not only influence adolescents' gender perceptions and values but also play a significant role in spiritual guidance, inspiring them to pursue independence, self-confidence, and self-realization. This paper aims to foster societal reflection on the definition of the "ideal woman" through the transformation of female roles in TV dramas, ultimately providing more possibilities for achieving genuine gender equality.

Key words: Mass Media; Gender; Feminism; Social Transformation; Shows with strong female

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background of the Selected Topic and the Question Posed

Film and television dramas are products of popular entertainment, and the creation, popularization, and disappearance of certain types of dramas are closely related to popular psychology. Through searching relevant articles and comments on Weibo, Zhihu, Xiaohongshu, Douban, Baidu and other platforms, we analyzed the image of women in popular films and TV dramas since the reform and opening up and found that at the beginning of the reform and opening up, the keywords of women's image in films and TV dramas were mostly associated with "traditional." As a significant component of mass media, the influence of movies and TV dramas on social culture cannot be underestimated. Popular culture and social trends are subtly influenced and changed by these media, and TV dramas, as one of the most popular forms of mass entertainment today, have a considerable impact on contemporary social culture. Consequently, the development of feminism as an emerging social trend is closely linked to the evolving images of female characters in domestic TV dramas.

In addition, popular TV dramas reveal the lifestyles and roles that women of the same generation admire. As the audience for film and television dramas becomes increasingly younger, the content and ideology of these dramas deeply impact teenagers. The images of female characters in these dramas reshape teenagers' definitions of the "ideal woman" and prompt them to sympathize with and reflect on these portrayals. By examining the development of women's images through the eyes of teenagers and exploring how these images influence their gender awareness and values, society can improve the healthy education of teenagers' gender awareness. Additionally, this analysis can uncover the deeper influence of the media industry on teenagers' thoughts, providing insights into the gradual awakening of contemporary women's thinking.

This paper will review the history of the development of female characters in Chinese dramas to understand the evolution of female subjective consciousness in

film and television. It will focus on the question, "How does the portrayal of female characters in film and television dramas affect adolescents' gender cognition?" By analyzing how adolescents in the new era define the "ideal woman," the paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of female characterizations on adolescents' gender perceptions.

## 2.Literature Review

Film and television dramas, as one of the important carriers of the media, have a significant impact on gender concepts in society through their characterization. Through research and investigation of previously published journals, the media shapes gender concepts in society through the following four mechanisms.

2.1 The media form gender "stereotypes." : Walter Lippmann introduced the concept of the stereotype in *Public Opinion*, stating: "For the most part we do not first see, and then define; we define first and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world, we pick out what our culture has already defined for us, and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form stereotyped for us by our culture." Social psychological research has shown that stereotypes are formed through both direct contact and indirect routes, such as introductions by others and media portrayals. The media play a crucial role in the formation of gender stereotypes, often dichotomizing and reinforcing female and male characteristics. This essentialist view of gender still reflects the "male-centered" tradition of limited male insight and creates a rationale for male domination of women and female subordination to men. By repeatedly representing accepted symbolic meanings, the media consolidate gender stereotypes, embedding them in socio-cultural traditions and values. (Jiang Hong, 2000) ( Wang Lei, 2006)

2.2 Media "Silencing" of Vulnerable Communities: Women have been subjected to suppression and surveillance within patriarchal discourse. Through "agenda setting," the media focus on certain issues while ignoring or covering up others to influence public opinion. Instead of presenting an accurate picture of the world, the media provide selective coverage often shaped by male-centered cultural and societal

perceptions. For instance, the media emphasize "when women are most beautiful" while neglecting "male beauty," highlight the great woman behind a successful man but rarely mention the man behind a successful woman, and discuss "men staying in their jobs and women going home" to alleviate employment pressure without considering the reverse. This type of hidden cultural violence continuously reinforces patriarchal consciousness and suppresses women's awareness and concepts, weakening women's voices. Noelle-Neumann's "Spiral of Silence" theory suggests that non-dominant ideas diminish under media pressure, while dominant ideas gain prominence. As the dominant consciousness, the concept of male power prevails, further suppressing female gender concepts (Jiang Hong, 2000).

2.3 The Male-Centered Values Held by the Media Are Internalized into Women's "Collective Unconscious": In modern mass media, it is difficult for women to resist the pervasive power of male dominance. From an early age, girls are taught to "act like girls," and fairy tales, cartoons, and children's books inculcate the notions of obedience, quietness, and submission. If a girl is bold and spirited, she is labeled a "tomboy," and efforts are made to bring her back to being a "girl." Growing up in such an environment, girls internalize the roles set by patriarchal discourses and believe that playing these roles well constitutes their subjectivity. However, these roles are, in fact, shackles created by patriarchal concepts and the media, and women often do not realize they are living within this enclosure, which objectively maintains an unfair gender order. Domestic violence is on the rise, and women are tolerating it, acquiescing to the legality of their husbands' use of force. In social incidents of female victimization posted online, many women judge the same sex and justify the perpetrators of violence. The biggest obstacle preventing "women" from becoming "human beings" is not the oppression of the opposite sex but the numbness of the same sex. Modern mass media maintain the established gender domination in society and culture, conceal the unequal relationship between the sexes, paralyze women's gender and cultural criticism, and consolidate male-centered cultural and social domination. However, some women refuse to be defined by masculine discourse and challenge the masculine socio-cultural system with their real-life experiences,

heralding the rise of the other half of humanity's power (Jiang Hong, 2000) (Shu Chip Duan, Anmin Zhao, 2014).

2.4 Materialized Women: Feminist theory considers the dichotomous pair of thinking categories, spirit-matter, to be a patriarchal hierarchical mode of thinking. In this traditional dichotomy, "spirit" is exclusively male, and "matter" is feminine. Thus, "materiality" becomes an intrinsic cultural metaphor and poetic rhetoric of masculine cultural sexuality. In the traditional conception, women are excluded from the production of spirituality by the male-centered culture and are forced to be shaped into a material physical gender, symbolized as reproduction, body, and sexuality. These characteristics belong to the pole of devaluation, slaughter, and denial in the male-female binary narrative traditions of spirituality, materiality, consciousness, and body (Zhang Lingjiang, 2006). The media subconsciously transfers this mechanism into the shaping of gender, thus achieving the effect of "objectification of women."

With the rise of feminism in China in this century, the social gender order influenced by the media is slowly changing. As a popular culture product, movies and television dramas have a significant communication effect, and the portrayal of female characters in these media slowly breaks these mechanisms and undergoes unprecedented evolutions. The audience's attitudes towards these portrayals are also changing. However, there is a lack of research exploring the impact of this transformation of women's image on audience perception, particularly studies focusing on teenagers' understanding of women's roles and the definition of the "ideal woman" as they consume new-age TV dramas. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore how the transformation of women's images in Chinese film and television dramas affects adolescents' definitions of the "ideal woman" and to analyze this in depth. This paper aims to understand the influence of movies and TV dramas on teenagers' gender perceptions and to explore the manifestation of the rise of feminism in the media, thereby encouraging society to pay more attention to and reflect on the definition of the "ideal woman."

### 3.Methodology

Data for this inquiry was collected using the interview method; all interviews were completed by this author in July 2024 and ranged in length from 0.5 to 1 hour. The sample was obtained through the author's daily contact with adolescents using the Snow-ball Sampling method. This study is based on interviews with 21 teenage movie and TV drama viewers, 2 males and 19 females, all of whom were distributed between the ages of 15-17. The primary consideration in selecting the sample was whether or not they had watched a certain number of movie and television productions and were concerned about the portrayal of women. The interviews focused on the following core issues: perceptions of the qualities of women's images in films and TV dramas of different periods, definitions of "ideal women" in real life, and the impact of films and TV dramas on self-perceptions of gender. The study was conducted through offline interactive interviews and online WeChat voice calls, with further questions and answers on the core terms and new ideas answered in each question, leading the interviewees to think deeply about the essence of the question, with the aim of discovering the interviewees' logic of thinking about the core of the question and their in-depth perceptions of the question. Prior to the interviews, the interviewees were informed that they could terminate or postpone the interviews or withdraw from the study if necessary. Fortunately, all interviews were successfully completed, except for a few questions that a few respondents chose to drop.

### 4.Result

#### 4.1 History of the Transformation of Female Roles in Domestic Dramas

##### 4.1.1 The Siege Shackle: Traditional Women from a Patriarchal Perspective

In the early 1990s, China's society and economy had just begun, and social attitudes were still relatively traditional. Most of the women portrayed in TV dramas of this period were "perfect" characters from a male perspective. For example, Liu

Huifang, the heroine of *Longing* (1990), is kind and obedient. She presents the image of a perfect wife from the male perspective, capable of running a household, devoted to her husband, and giving her all without complaint even in the face of her husband's betrayal and the death of her son. Her life symbolizes the obedience of the traditional woman. The female characters in the popular dramas of this period, including *Our Parents* (1995) and *A Woman at Home* (1998), are particularly thin, and are basically characterized by "sacrificing oneself to make the family whole" and "stoicism." The female characters in these dramas can be successful, beautiful, tolerant, kind and generous, but they must possess the femininity constructed by the patriarchal society and be completely subordinate to the patriarchal system. Their ultimate belonging is to the family, they are able to be competent in household chores and are devoted and willing to sacrifice their own interests to fulfill the male. This period is closely related to the economic status of women as they were marginalized from the public sphere in a patriarchal society and were portrayed as vulnerable and tragic in films and TV dramas. The "impoverishment of women" forced them to become marginalized figures in a patriarchal society.

#### 4.1.2 Rewriting Love: Variations in Plausibility and the "Mary Sue" Vortex

After 2010, shows with strong female leads began to emerge, with works such as *Jade Palace Lock Heart* and *Treading On Thin Ice* appearing on TV screens. Most of these works were born from online female novels, which not only have a distinctive female perspective, but also embody different story forms and value orientations from those of traditional women. This kind of shows with strong female leads take female characters as the core leading role, presenting the female protagonist's growth and transformation after experiencing the ups and downs of her career and emotions. These dramas have generated unprecedented heat and attention from viewers, and have changed the narrative rhythm of plot development from a male point of view, making them a significant breakthrough.

Whether it's Qingchuan in *Jade Palace Lock Heart* or Martai Ruoxi in *Treading On Thin Ice*, they both start their new lives in the Qing Dynasty with the souls of



modern, independent women. Although their personalities are very different, they all share some common characteristics of modern women, such as: having the ability to think independently, adhering to the concept of equality for all, having their own unique principles of love, and being quirky and quirky, etc. Most importantly, they begin to show the "spirit of rebellion", that is, the confrontation with the imperial and patriarchal society. Of course, the most important thing is that they begin to appear "rebellious spirit", that is to say, the confrontation with the imperial and patriarchal society. Instead of being submissive, they begin to fight for their friends and their own lives, and they are never afraid of the royal sons because of their status. Their images are very much in line with modern women's expectations of their own ideal image, and at the same time fulfill all the fantasies that the majority of modern women have about relationships. From today's perspective, these two dramas can be considered "Mary Sue". However, the birth of these "Mary Sue" characters is a progress of feminism. The female characters in TV dramas have a subtle influence on women in society, and they also influence the way society looks at women. When women in TV dramas are no longer an accessory, they have "backbones", and being submissive is no longer a virtue, women have a more complex image.

#### 4.1.3 The paradoxical dilemma: Rebel against the "pick-me girl" stereotype and the patriarchal trap.

The rebellion against the "pick-me girl" stereotype is a clear signal of defiance. Authors often deliberately create "pick-me girl" supporting characters in their works—characters who appear weak and kind on the outside but are ruthless and unscrupulous on the inside. The plot then exposes their conspiracies through the actions of a clever heroine, providing the audience with a sense of satisfaction. A notable example of this transformation is Legend of Zhen Huan. In this drama, Zhen Huan is depicted as a new type of character, distinct from traditional portrayals. She does not embody unprincipled goodness; while she does not actively harm others, she will not hesitate to seek revenge against those who harm her. Zhen Huan's character showcases the complex overlap and intertwining of "ideal woman" definitions from

two different periods. On one hand, her early obsession with pure love seems naïve in the context of the story's "palace battle"; on the other hand, her later return to the palace to exact revenge fully demonstrates her independence and strength. The audience sees the heroine's attempt to assert self-love while rejecting traditional expectations of "gentleness" and "kindness." Zhen Huan's "coldness," "cruelty," and "imperfection" mark a preliminary departure from the previous phase's emphasis on female gentleness and kindness. The success of this drama confirms the shift in the image of the ideal woman.

The later drama *The Story of Minglan* also carries the same rebellious attributes. Sheng Minglan, the heroine of the drama, prioritizes survival as her primary goal, with her ultimate aim being to "live well, live smoothly, and live with dignity." Ideal love is not among her choices; her approach to her early marriage with the male lead is essentially pragmatic, akin to completing a task, dealing with a boss, and passing a checkpoint. While love can be an influencing factor under her ultimate goal, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition. From Sheng Minglan's character, we can extract the key attributes of being "pragmatic," "transparent," and "independent." This reflects the feedback of the new era, where women's increased contribution to society is acknowledged, and the comparison of the household to the workplace is gaining popularity. This trend visually projects women's dual roles in the family and the social workplace: women have always played a key role in the family but have also become prominent in society, striving for gender equality and independence, and seeking opportunities to be heard in the community.

Unfortunately, since the background of these two works is still based on the patriarchal system, the breakthroughs of the female protagonists in the dramas still rely on the help of male superiors. Under the feudal context, concepts such as the hierarchy of wives and concubines, differences in status, and the principle of the wife being subordinate to the husband still deeply affect every woman. Their seemingly successful endings are inevitably marked by the imprint of patriarchal power.

#### 4.1.4 Mapping the Breakthrough: Three-Dimensional Processing and

## Multidimensional Presentation

With the fading of the "costume craze", Shows With Strong Female Leads have made new explorations and expansions in themes, with modern realistic female themes gradually rising to become mainstream. The 2017 broadcasts of modern urban dramas like *The First Half of My Life* and *Ode To Joy*, as well as business and entrepreneurial-themed dramas like *Nothing Gold Can Stay*, have achieved good ratings and attention, marking useful explorations for the transformation of Shows With Strong Female Leads. In recent years, more and more women's dramas have portrayed the survival status and challenges of various groups of women in real life through ensemble casts, addressing more hot topics related to women.

A series of modern female-themed TV dramas showing the lives and emotions of women of different ages, classes and professions, such as *Nothing But Thirty*, *Twenty Your Life On*, *Remembrance of Things Past* and *Delicious Romance*, which will be aired in 2020-2021, are pouring in with a big breakthrough in styles and genres, which are no longer confined to women's love stories but are focusing on women's lives, capturing the hidden pains and dilemmas of women's hearts at the present time, and exporting the. Instead, they focus on women's lives, capture the hidden pains and dilemmas of women's hearts, and export women's independent values. The female characters in these dramas have become richer and more three-dimensional, constantly breaking the stereotypical image of women in society. They present the independence, complexity, and subjectivity of female characters while emphasizing their interactions and the depiction of how they search for self-positioning and development paths between tradition and modernity, individuality and collectivity.

## 4.2 Changes in Adolescents' Attitudes Towards the Image of Women and Their Understanding of the Definition of the "Ideal Woman"

### 4.2.1 Rebel Breakout

#### *A Groundbreaking Test of Patriarchy*

The interviewee, Ms. Zhang, is a senior high school student and a real drama fan. When asked why she started watching dramas with strong female leads, she replied, "I don't like to see the silly white sweet people revolving around the male lead, it seems that they exist only to fall in love with the male lead, they have no self-worth and are just an accessory to the male lead". She cited *The Love of Love* as an example, in which the female lead's persona is a great beauty, impressing everyone with her looks, and all the male characters are mesmerized by her. In the drama, she is a financial reporter, but her actions do not reflect her abilities. Instead, she is depicted as an "empty vase", spending her days around the male lead, with all resources being "gifts" from her superiors, lacking any personal charm. Zhang emphasized that she doesn't reject the portrayal of love, but she disagrees with the idea that a woman would automatically reduce herself to being a man's property and lose her sense of self-control. She prefers female characters like those in *The Queen of News*, who are ambitious and goal-oriented, view love as a complement to their lives without overindulging in it, and have a clear sense of purpose for the future, working hard to achieve it. These characters are equal to men in the workplace, exuding their own radiance in a vivid and full-bodied way. Zhang's views reflect contemporary teenagers' expectations for female characters to be more three-dimensional and autonomous in film and television dramas, which represents a revolt against the long-standing portrayal of women through the male gaze and emphasizes the importance of female characters' self-worth and goal achievement.

Some students emphasized that they were fed up with the stigmatizing terms attached to women, such as "older women". These terms reflect a social pattern that places harsh demands on women. In many traditional families, the pressure to marry is so severe when a woman is over 30 years old and has not yet married or had children that it is tacitly assumed that having a happy family is the same as being a successful woman. In the dating process, women who are highly educated, capable, and have a superior family background are instead less likely to be favored because the man will think that such women are not easy to handle. These phenomena reveal society's unfair demands on women's roles and highlight patriarchy's suppression of

women's self-worth and independence. As a result, when some episodes in TV dramas overlap with some scenes in reality, viewers feel uncomfortable, judge the characters' behavior, and screen out films and TV dramas that deviate from their values.

The film and television dramas, along with the stigmatized words rejected by young viewers, subconsciously shape the gender order in society: "men dominate the outside world, women dominate the inside world"; men belong to the "public sphere," women to the "private sphere"; men are social beings, women are family beings. The subtext behind this discourse is that men are the center of society, while women remain on the periphery. This mindset is unacceptable to modern audiences and is opposed by thoughtful young people. The primary reason for this historical outcome is the lack of economic independence among women in earlier times and the long-standing male-dominated social division of labor, which forced women to depend on men and become their subordinates. However, in modern society, with the development of the social economy and the spread of education, women's consciousness has been awakening. Women's awareness is growing in areas such as the economy, intellectual thought, and the right to speak on public matters. Women are gradually moving from the "backstage" to the "front stage." This shift is why young people educated in equality are questioning the old mechanisms and striving to change them.

### ***Breaking Free from and Judging "Labeling"***

Research has shown that the division of gender is based on physiological structural characteristics on the one hand, and on social relations and social expectations on the other, resulting from social discipline. For example, the so-called "femininity" and "masculinity" suggest that women should be gentle, lovely, kind, and virtuous, while men should be resolute, decisive, aggressive, and strong. But are "gentle and beautiful," "kind-hearted," "well-read," "passive," and "introverted" necessarily the correct adjectives to describe femininity? Similarly, are "tough and strong," "active and aggressive," and "decisive" necessarily the right adjectives to describe masculinity?

The interviewee, Sun, questioned the "stereotypes" in some movies and TV

dramas. She expressed her confusion over why film and television works often depict "female competition," with the core point of competition usually being a man. In such scenarios, women are shown fighting and scheming for the so-called love, while most men are depicted as having a deep brotherhood. Regardless of whether the setting is a carefree adventure or a workplace, male group portrayals are abundant, whereas female group portrayals are rare and often limited to palace harems. In contrast, real-life female groups are very united and supportive. Sun mentioned that her junior high school was an all-girls' school, where she hardly experienced any rivalry in three years but instead saw mutual understanding and sympathy, witnessing the true beauty of girls. She believes that the current trend in film and TV dramas is increasingly conscious of portraying women's groups, which she sees as progress. For example, TV dramas such as *Twenty Your Life On* and *Nothing But Thirty* intentionally highlight female solidarity, and she is more inclined to watch such dramas.

From this, we can see that teenage viewers today have the ability to think and judge independently. When the content of movies and TV dramas contradicts real life, they become dissatisfied and automatically filter out the movies and TV dramas that break away from stereotypes. The "femininity" or "masculinity" depicted in dramas is the result of social discipline and culture, and it is labeled accordingly. However, the formation of human nature is closely linked to the environment and social relations, and we cannot ignore its complexity by making rough divisions through labeling. We cannot ignore its complexity and make a rough division by labeling. Neither the gender dichotomy nor the dichotomy of gender temperament can reflect the complex reality that individuals are complex, real people with flesh and blood. In interviews with 21 teenagers, when asked "What is your ideal woman like?" the responses included "independent" and "initiative" 21 times, "free" 18 times, and "having goals" and "having ideals" appeared 17 times. These words are more neutral and mostly powerful terms that break gender stereotypes, elevating the concept of an "ideal woman" to that of an "ideal individual." The teenagers nowadays tend to become "free individuals who escape the gender framework". The audience's thinking has also contributed to the development of movies and TV dramas, which have diversified the

roles of women.

### ***Disdain for Over-Packaged "Flawless" Characters***

After the rise of the "Strong Female Leads" trend, many "Pseudo Strong Female Leads" have appeared on the market and have been criticized by audiences. In the interviews, *Ruyi's Royal Love in the Palace* was frequently mentioned. Once praised as a well-produced TV drama, it has now become a target of dissatisfaction due to the "perfect persona" of the female lead, Ruyi. Respondents generally noted that the female characters in many of today's movies and TV dramas adapted from novels are far less complex and tough than those in the original novels. Female characters in written works tend to be more three-dimensional, using necessary means and strategies to pursue their goals and defend their rights. However, screenwriters often weaken or remove these tactics in the adaptation process, fearing adverse effects on the audience. This creates female protagonists who are both strong and kind, leading to logical distortions and audience discussions. Viewers believe that certain "bad things" are necessary for a character to protect herself and that such behavior is understandable and even admirable. As a result, viewers prefer realistic and complex female characters over overly idealized leads. An overly perfect screen image often leads to disappointment in reality. In the portrayal of women's roles, whether they are depicted as enduring silently, avoiding using means to protect themselves due to a kind heart, or having their professional abilities exaggerated while ignoring their vulnerable and sensitive sides, these characters essentially become "mannequins". Overly perfect characters are not only unrealistic but also create unrealistic expectations of real women, leading to disappointment and misunderstanding.

The female characters in the minds of teenagers are evolving from flat, one-dimensional images of "The bitch who was the Moral" archetypes to more three-dimensional and complex portrayals. This shift reflects teenagers' expectations and recognition of the complexity and authenticity of female characters in film and television dramas. Teenage viewers look forward to seeing a myriad of "right" ways of living for women, each with unlimited potential for imagination. Diverse female characters not only reflect the variety of women's lives but also provide viewers with

greater empathy and understanding. Real female characters exhibit strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures, making them more relatable and believable. Such characters are more capable of provoking audience thought and discussion, leading to a more rational and comprehensive understanding of female characters and promoting in-depth reflection on the definition of the "ideal woman" in society.

#### 4.2.2 Spiritual Guidance

Outstanding female characters in TV dramas have an important role as spiritual guides and role models for teenagers. These roles not only influence adolescents' gender perceptions and values, but also shape their definition of "ideal women" to a certain extent. Realistic and real-life female characters can provide positive role models for adolescents and inspire them to pursue independence, self-confidence and self-realization.

In an interview with a new senior, she mentioned that she internalizes some of the character's best traits into her own code of conduct when watching TV dramas. One such character, Luo Qiqi, portrayed in the TV series *Those Young Days That Can't Go Back*, has served as a role model for a long time. Luo Qiqi has a very strong inner core, in her view: her world is always in front of her, she can go anywhere she wants to go, to do anything she wants to do. When they are anxious about the midterm, they will think of Luo Qiqi's path of rebellion, be infected by her strong vitality, and see her as a role model. The wisdom and perseverance shown by the female characters in the TV series in the face of challenges inspired them to face difficulties and not give up easily in their studies and lives. The resilience and determination of these characters help young people understand the relationship between hard work and success, and develop their spirit of struggle and sense of responsibility.

This phenomenon has been mentioned many times in the results of feedback from adolescents, and its essence is that film and television dramas materialize the good qualities that adolescents identify with in their hearts, and create a concrete and vivid female character, in other words, letting the adolescents see their "ideal selves", and this character will provide the adolescents with a model for their daily behavioral



motivation. This kind of role will provide a model for their daily behavioral motivation. When the movie and TV scenes overlap with the real life, the virtual image will inadvertently have an impact on the character and outlook of the real characters, giving the audience new perspectives on things.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The changing image of women in TV dramas reflects the spiritual demands of the contemporary public and signifies a shift in how society defines and shapes the "ideal woman". With the rise of feminism, Shows With Strong Female Leads have taken center stage, reversing the long-standing phenomenon of women being absent or relegated to supporting roles in Chinese TV dramas. This emphasis on women's independence and autonomy holds positive significance in guiding society. Additionally, the diversified portrayal of women in film and television as a cultural phenomenon implies the evolving cultural and ideological patterns of this era and highlights the further rise of women's social status in contemporary China.

Nowadays, the audience of film and television dramas is gradually aging, and the portrayal of female characters often influences young people's definition of "ideal women." Through interviews, we can observe that today's adolescents have developed a new way of thinking about gender perception. I summarize the following conclusions about adolescents' changing attitudes towards the image of women in movies and TV dramas and their understanding of the definition of an "ideal woman." At this stage, adolescents begin to rebel against traditional mechanisms, primarily reflected in their critical thinking when watching movies and TV dramas: breaking through the patriarchal system, rejecting and judging "labeling," and disdaining over-packaged "flawless" characters. Adolescents also view the images of women in movies and TV dramas as "ideal" and use these characters as spiritual guidance to further reshape their perception of the "ideal woman" in real life.

By analyzing the information provided by the interviewees, it is found that the "ideal woman" most teenagers today respect is diverse, undefined, and powerful. The image of women that should be pursued does not depend on how impressive their

titles are, how prestigious their status is, or how many people they please, but rather on whether they have found themselves in their hearts. The strong female lead should possess the courage to fight, the vitality of exuberance, and upward mobility because they know who they are and what they are seeking. Strength is internal rather than dependent, so women will not be easily swayed by external forces. They can control their own territory and navigate life according to their own paths. This should be the goal of women's forward movement.

Therefore, based on audience feedback, the domestic film and television industry should focus on women's real-life situations, address and reflect on the real problems they encounter, and help them realize their true value. Additionally, the social status of women can reflect the degree of civilization in society, and TV dramas, as cultural products in direct contact with the audience, should take the responsibility of shaping a healthy image of women on the screen. While focusing on quantity, the industry should also pay attention to quality, showcasing diverse women's consciousness and the new style of modern women. This approach breaks the shackles of the old society on women and provides more possibilities for gender equality in China.

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