

WOMEN'S MAGAZINES IN ENGLISH IN INDIA: THE MODERN AGONY AUNTS

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ABSTRACT

What is popular or newly emerging today in the form of customs, beliefs, behavioural patterns or ways of living of people in a particular culture or a subculture will be the folklore for the coming generations for that ethnic group. Folklores are no longer just the grandmother's songs, proverbs, maxims, legendary tales or history meant to be orally transmitted by one generation to another or to be operating outside the institutionalised channels. The beginning of the twentieth century experienced the outbreak of print revolution affecting the lives of the common wo/man and continued to rule the mindset of millions of people till the emergence of the e-revolution that has been controlling our lives for more than a decade now. Amidst the changing trends in the patterns of receiving or granting cultural values and beliefs, one finds the 'old wives' tales', 'agony aunts or uncles' and the 'dai mas' or 'tau jis' now being replaced by their counterparts in columns in newspaper supplements or magazines or online counsellors and social networking websites. The new woman has left the threshold of the "doll's house", broken the "glass ceiling" and stepped out to breathe the fresh air of individuality and independence. Albeit, independence comes with its own costs and new challenges. Where does she go to find solutions for her queries? To whom does she consult when she seeks advice? What does she do to express or voice her anguish and pain? These questions find answers in the new age magazines for women that have undergone a tremendous change in their layout, contents, outlook, perspectives and visuals as compared to those of their predecessors. This paper aims to examine the contents of a few of the leading and largest selling magazines for women of India today.

KEYWORDS: Women, Reading Habits, Classes, Age Groups, Agony Aunts