An Analysis of the Contemporary Use of Film as A Medium for Investigating Social Issues

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Abstract

The study reveals that movies that address social issues can increase awareness and spark discussion among viewers. This can lead to increased empathy towards marginalised communities and a greater understanding of complex societal problems. Furthermore, these films have the potential to inspire individuals to take action and advocate for change in their communities. In this way, cinema serves as a powerful tool for social change and activism. Films can influence audiences and bring about social change, expediting justice and encouraging action against issues like farmers' and environmental problems. The success of films like Ketika Mas Gagah Pergi, Tanda Tanya, Uriyadi, Thanga Magal, Tolet, Thaneer Thannee, Kaththi, Karuthamma, PariyerumPerumal, and Merkku Thotarchi Malai can significantly impact society. These movies shed light on various social issues such as water scarcity, farmer suicides, caste discrimination, and environmental degradation. Thaneer Thanneer is a Tamil movie that exposes the hardships of poorvillages and corrupt politicians, inspiring people to fight for their rights. By portraying these issueson the big screen, filmmakers are able to reach a wide audience and create a platform for dialogue and action. Through the power of storytelling, these films have the potential to not only entertain but also educate and inspire viewers to take a stand and work towards positive change in society. Socially conscious films such as Thaneer Thannee and others have the power to spark social movements and bring about real-world change, which cannot be underestimated.

KeyWords: Social Issues, Movies, Awareness, Changes, Influences

INTRODUCTION

Film has a substantial impact on society by moulding attitudes, values, ethics and facilitating socialchange. It utilities as a potent communication instrument capable of educating, informing, and inspiring audiences. Through storytelling and visual imagery, films can evoke strong emotions and initiate

important conversations about complicated issues. Whether by challenging societal norms

or highlighting important social issues, film has the power to spark change and bring about a greater understanding of the world around us, (Fiona & Bryn, 2020) capturing viewers' attention and eliciting emotional responses, leading to changes in individuals and communities.

The influence of movies on moral values can shape people's beliefs and values. They can expose social injustices and marginalised communities, raising awareness and advocating for social equality. Through storytelling and visual representation, films can inspire empathy, challenge societal norms, and promote positive social transformation. Films have the potential to inspire empathy, challenge societal norms, and promote positive social transformation through storytelling and visual representation.

Viewers of the 2004 film "The Day After Tomorrow" felt a responsibility to safeguard the planet's ecology and saw the need for a change in consumer attitudes towards the environment. When films on climate-related issues are shown, there is generally a rise in online queries and media discussions. (Fiona & Bryn, 2020)

The film's portrayal of extreme weather events and their devastating impact on the planet served as a wake-up call for many, sparking a sense of urgency to address environmental concerns. The impact of the visual effects and

realistic portrayal of a world in ruin due to climate change resulted in viewers being more emotionally engaged with the issue and motivated to take action. As a result, discussions around sustainable living practices and policies to mitigate the effects of climate change have gained traction, demonstrating the powerful influence of science fiction films in shaping public opinion and behavior.

Since the introduction of films to the world, films have continued to reflect social issues on the big screen. Films have been a medium to create awareness in society about various social issues (Inglis, n.d.). The mindset of society regarding issues such as casteism, political issues, social discrimination, poverty, untouchability, female rape, child rape, and national integrity has been influenced by many films. Films give us a unique perspective on the different societies and cultures in our country. (Tudor, n.d.)

Films have the power to influence and inspire change in society by shedding light on pressing issues that need attention. They have the ability to provoke important conversations and promote empathy and understanding among viewers. Films have the ability to have a lasting impact on individuals and communities alike through powerful storytelling and compelling visuals, sparking

movements and bringing about positive transformations in society. Overall, films play a crucial role in shaping our perceptions and attitudes towards various social issues,

ultimately contributing to a more informed and compassionate society.

Research method

This article has been written using the methods of data analysis on the social problems of society in films. It reflects society and culture. Secondary data has been used to analyze the role of films in the representation of social issues. Films play an important role in the education, social, political, and moral lives of women. This article examines the impact of films on society by selecting and studying five films that have social themes.

The analysis of these films sheds light on how they can influence our understanding and awareness of important societal issues. The portrayal of social problems in these films allows us to gain insight into their complexities and nuances, which can spark critical conversations and prompt action for positive change. Through the power of storytelling and visual representation, films have the potential to shape our perceptions and attitudes, ultimately fostering a more empathetic and socially conscious society.

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ultimately leading to a more empathetic and socially conscious society.

World Wide Social problems

Social problems are a significant area of study in sociology, social science, and the humanities. These issues are undesirable and require change or eradication. The lack of access to basic necessities like food, shelter, and healthcare is a result of poverty, which affects millions worldwide. Solutions to poverty include social welfare programmes, job creation, and education. Other social issues include unemployment, crime, delinquency, drug abuse, child abuse, discrimination, corruption, family and health problems, education, political, economic, cultural, and environmental issues, and human rights violations.

Addressing poverty is crucial for improving overall health outcomes, but focusing solely on social issues may not adequately address the specific healthcare needs of individuals living in poverty. To address health disparities, direct interventions, such as increasing access to healthcare services and resources, are essential. As Aristotle said many centuries ago, man is a social animal, and this calls attention to the fact that man always lives with others.

Society is essential to human life. (Bryan, 2012) Society is beset with many problems. Every person is different in how they deal with problems. It is common knowledge that many films depict the troubles that each person encounters and the experiences they have had. Social issues in India are often depicted in films, shedding light on issues such as poverty,

corruption, gender inequality, and caste discrimination.

These films serve as a reflection of the challenges faced by individuals in society and can evoke empathy and understanding among viewers. By portraying these issues in a compelling and relatable manner, films have the power to spark important conversations and inspire action towards creating a more just and equitable society. Through storytelling and visual representation, filmmakers have the ability to not only entertain audiences but also provoke thought and drive positive change.

Modern Indian society is beset with a number of social problems that have been labeled as the major social problems of the country. The transformation of the global socio-political order has resulted in some parts of today's society becoming current and exploding. A social problem is generally a condition that is devoid of purpose and disrupts the balance of a society, whereas India is a developing country facing social problems like the caste system, child labor, child rape, illiteracy, gender inequality, environmental issues, superstitions, religious conflicts, and many more. (Lyon, 2009) These social issues have deep roots in the history and culture of India, making them difficult to eradicate.

The caste system, in particular, has been a longstanding problem that continues to divide society and limit opportunities for many individuals. The vulnerability of children in Indian society is highlighted by the prevalent issues of child labor and rape. Despite efforts to address these problems, they persist and require ongoing attention and solutions from government and civil society organizations.

The Impact of Film on Society

These societal issues in India have been brought to light by the film in a significant manner. Filmmakers have used powerful storytelling and visual imagery to raise awareness and initiate discussions on topics like caste discrimination, child labor, and gender-based violence. Movies like "Slumdog Millionaire" and "Lion" have brought attention to the struggles faced by marginalized communities in India, sparking conversations and calls for action. By portraying these issues on the big screen, films have the potential to spark social change and inspire individuals to take a stand against injustice. The impact of cinema on society in India is undeniable, as it can educate, mobilize, and ultimately push progress towards a more equitable and just society.

The greatness and subtlety of social interactions, rapid social change, technological advancement, individual income, the rise of conventional life, some traditional control, and the decline of powers are all characteristics of modern society that are unique to mass media. Mass media can manipulate, influence, coerce, and pressure society. Well-known leaders, such as Adolf Hitler, successfully used films as propaganda tools during World War II. (Clayton & Gregory, n.d.)

However, the Arab Spring movement in the early 2010s demonstrated how social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter can empower individuals and facilitate mass uprisings against oppressive governments without the need for traditional mass media channels. This counterexample challenges the idea that mass media is the sole or most effective tool for manipulating society on a large scale. (The Triumph of Propaganda: Film and National Socialism,1933-1945, n.d.)

In the last century, the dominance of the film industry has taken root in our society. Through ourfavorite characters, films teach us about the reality behind life lessons and social issues. Movies about famous people are the perfect way to positively influence social behavior. Films of any genre, from documentary to drama, can have an amazing impact on real life. Chances are high thatwe have seen at least one film that has changed the landscape of our culture and subculture. A seventh art film is an aesthetic work, along with an art form, photography, architecture, literature, theater, painting, and music. (Welch, n.d.)

The impact of film and social issues

Cinema is a powerful form of entertainment and artistic expression that has existed since its inception. As technology has advanced, cinema has become a dynamic medium that takes audiences to different worlds and evokes a wide range of emotions. From silent black-and-white films to blockbuster 3D spectacles,

cinema has challenged societal norms and influenced culture in fundamental ways.

The subject of this blog will be the complex effects of film on society, with a focus on its role in reflecting and shaping our views, attitudes, and behaviors. Through the lens of cinema, we can explore different perspectives, cultures, and experiences that may not have been encountered otherwise. The power of film lies in its ability to evoke emotions, provoke thought, and spark conversations that can lead to social change. Studying film can provide valuable insights into the human experience and our interactions with the world around us.[5]

The importance of our society cannot be exaggerated. From bringing awareness to important causes to sparking conversations about difficult topics, movies have the power to shape our beliefs and values. Through the lens of a camera, filmmakers are able to capture the essence of humanity and present it in a way that resonates with audiences worldwide. As we continue to consume and engage with films, we must remember the profound influence they can have on our perceptions and actions.

A good film can entertain, educate, and inspire the viewer in many ways. In many ways, a great film can entertain, educate, and inspire the viewer. They make us think. Helping others and doinggood for humanity is inspired by them. Several studies have been conducted so far to assess the role, impact, representations, and many other aspects of medieval literature, films related to the social

representation of Indian films, and the impact of films released in the last decade. Films can simply illustrate cultures, customs, and a broader political, religious, or social context. Social change can be accelerated by media, such as cinema, which removes long-standing misconceptions. Issues like gender inequality, female infanticide, the caste system, dowry, awareness of emotional issues like AIDS, and awareness of mental illness have been brought to the forefront through these alternative forms of film.

[5] An amorous history of the silver screen: Shanghai cinema, 1896-1937. (n.d.). An amorous history of the silver screen Shanghai cinema.

There are obvious advantages to films over other mass media. It primarily combines both audio and video mediums, so movies make a huge psychological difference as the information passes through the eyes and ears. The moral values expressed through films have a lasting impact on the audience. In films, it is easy to understand our anxieties, attitudes, shortcomings, and strengths from our everyday interactions. When our prevailing beliefs and ideologies are challenged in films, sometimes we are able to investigate ourselves and embrace change. Film has become a powerful vehicle for cultural propaganda and fostering the environment.

It is not unusual to find communities in today's world using speech images that have a film industry influence. At the very least, the movie validates the cultural assumptions that were selected. In a 1963 report on Indian film and culture for the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Baltun Dhingra cited Prime Minister Nehru's assertion that films had a greater impact in India than the press, radio, and books. (Jawaharlal Nehru and the Rise of Indian Cinema,n.d.)

As per a news bulletin published in Pandole, hundreds of girls are murdered by their families annually under the guise of honor killing. It was the film G Kutta Se that had the courage to speak out against the practice of honor killing in India. When it comes to bringing these tales to light and taking action, motion picture production is an excellent instrument for changemakers. Films that encourage social change are known as "accelerated crowd learning." It is not unusual to find communities in today's world using speech images that have a film industry influence. At the very least, the movie validates the cultural assumptions that were selected.

Analysis and interpretation of data

Films are the most complex and powerful art form in the contemporary world. Movies help us to better understand our personal lives, the lives of those around us, and how our society and culture work. In this study, some films with social issues as the story theme have been selected for analysis. They are Tanda Tanya (2011), Ketika Mas Gagah Pergi (2016), Uriyadi (2016), Thanga Magal (2013), Tolet (2019), Karuthamma (1994), female infanticide; Thaneer Thaneer (1981), water

famine and political corruption; and Kaththi (2014), water famine and corporate mafia. Merrku Thodarchi Malai (2018) is about conflicts created among villagers by land laborers. Finally, Pariyerum Perumal (2018) talks about the caste oppression and persecution of the upper castes.

We will examine how the films chosen for this study explain the social problem and how people have comprehended the social problems through the films chosen for analysis in the following section. Each of these films presents a unique perspective on pressing social issues in India, shedding light on the struggles and injustices faced by various communities. These films provide valuable insights into the complexities of social problems and their impact on individuals and society as a whole through powerful storytelling and compelling characters. By examining these films closely, we can gain a better understanding of the underlying causes of these issues and hopefully work towards finding solutions for a more just and equitable society.

The Indonesian film Ketika Mas Gagah Pergi (When Mas Gallant Goes) was released in 2016 and is inspired by Helvy Tiana Rosa's novel. Mas Gallant's departure from the Citra Cup team after winning the Citra Cup is the result of the film's exploration of migration, family dynamics, and Islamic wonders. The film stars Masaji Wijayanto, Izzatun Niswah Ajrina, and Hamas Syahid as Mas Gallant. Gita, a tomboy, believes her older brother, Mas Gagah, is perfect. Kyai Ghufron, the head of an Islamic boarding school, looks after Gagah following an accident. Gita encounters Yudi, an enigmatic character who encourages goodness and provides for the underprivileged. Gagah undergoes a significant transformation, taking Islamic teachings seriously and counseling Gita to follow religious laws. Gita receives an invitation to "Rumah Cinta," a homeless children's shelter outside Jakarta, and intends to surprise Gagah by donning a headscarf on his 18th birthday. However, a disturbance by thugs thwarts her good intentions.

Tanda Tanya is a 2011 Indonesian film directed by Hanung Bramantyo that centers on the interactions that take place in early 2010 in Semarang between three families from diverse origins. The movie focuses on interfaith harmony and religious plurality in Indonesia. As a devoted Muslim employed in a Chinese restaurant, Menuk is presented as the obedient spouse of Soleh, an exemplary devout Buddhist. Menuk manages to land a job as Banser in spite of his unemployment, which he views as the best opportunity to support his family and please God.

Menuk has a close friend, Rika, who was widowed and has converted to Catholicism with a Muslim son called Abi. She is dating Muslim actor Surya, who has a challenging profession. Throughout his career, Surya has rarely taken centre stage; instead, he frequently plays small

villains. When he receives the offer to play Jesus for an Easter celebration and Joseph for

a Christmas celebration in the church, he is conflicted. The film sheds attention on Indonesia's intricate relationships between many faiths and social groups.

In the end, four friends who are attending the same college and studying in engineering wind up becoming embroiled in the caste politics of corrupt politicians. This happens by accident. With the rising tensions and the outbreak of violence, the friends are compelled to question their own beliefs and principles in the face of the corruption and injustice that they are witnessing. As a dramatic reminder of the ways in which political influence and institutional discrimination can have an effect on even the most seemingly innocent people, the film serves as a powerful reminder. "Uriyadi" shines light on the urgent need for social reform and the need to stand up against oppression in all of its forms by digging into the complexity of caste politics and corruption. This is accomplished by shedding light at the same time.

Even if things are difficult, a poor guy wants his daughter to be happy. He does not care what happens. In spite of the difficulties and roadblocks they encounter, the father in "Thanga Magal" remains resolute in his pursuit of his daughter's happiness. When confronted with difficulty, the movie emphasizes the significance of family, love, and the willingness to make sacrifices. A powerful reminder of the resiliency and fortitude of individuals who strive for a brighter future, even in the midst of social injustices, it serves as a poignant reminder of the strength of those individuals. The film "Thanga Magal" is a striking depiction of the human spirit and the unwavering desire for a society in India that is more equal and egalitarian.

After being given an ultimatum by their land lady to evacuate their home, a family of three is going through a difficult time as they look for a property to rent. Tolet (2019) is a film that dives into the challenges that a family of three is going through as they look for a new place to live after being compelled to leave their existing apartment. The emotional toll that it takes on the family is highlighted, as is the difficulty of locating accommodation that is within their financial means. The family's strong bond and unwavering resolve to be together shine through in spite of the challenges

they are confronted with, highlighting the significance of coming together as a unit and remaining resilient in the face of adversity. In the end, Tolet serves as a powerful reminder of the hard realities that many families must endure in their search for a home that is stable and secure.

Karuthama (1994)

It is a Bharathiraja-directed drama film in Tamil. The plot, which takes place in a village where female infanticide is rampant, is a film that created awareness about female infanticide among the community at large and forced the government at the national and state level to act against the practice and bring in

appropriate laws to stop it. The film sheds light on the deep-rooted societal issues that lead to the prevalence of female infanticide, such as gender discrimination and patriarchal norms.

Through its powerful storytelling and compelling characters, Karuthama successfully conveys the devastating consequences of this practice on both individuals and society as a whole. The film serves as a call to action for viewers to challenge and dismantle harmful cultural traditions that perpetuate inequality and injustice. Through its impact and advocacy, Karuthama has played a crucial role in raising awareness and driving positive change towards a more just and equitable society.

The film created knowledge and awareness about the role and vital needs of women in the family. This explains the real problems faced by women in their families as daughters, daughters-in-law, and mothers. When the researcher discussed the film with some viewers, the respondents responded that they had gained a broader knowledge and awareness of female infanticide and the importance of women in the family structure and society. However, a detailed counterexample to this would be a society where women are still oppressed and marginalized, despite awareness being raised. For example, in certain cultures where patriarchal norms are deeply ingrained, women continue to face discrimination and violence within their families and communities, highlighting the ongoing challenges in achieving true gender equality.

Kathi (2014)

It is a Murugadoss-directed social action movie in Tamil. The film is based on the suicide of farmers by corporate houses. The movie discusses the actual issues that the villagers in Tamil Nadu face as a result of the water shortage that corporate houses have created to encroach on their industries. This is still a problem in many of the villages shown in the films. The researcher

discussed the film with a random farmer as an audience member, and the respondent said that the film established the real problems faced by farmers in society. Viewers who watched the film felt the corporate encroachment on their industries, affecting agriculture. Also, moviegoers realized the importance of water and what it would be like if there was a water famine.

However, a detailed counterexample to this narrative could be a village in Tamil Nadu where the water shortage is not solely due to corporate encroachment but rather a result of mismanagement of water resources by local authorities. In this village, farmers may be facing challenges not because of external factors like corporate greed but due to internal issues within the community that need to be addressed. This highlights the complexity of the water scarcity issue and the need for a comprehensive understanding of all contributing factors before assigning blame solely to external entities.

Merkku Thodarchi Malai (2018)

Lenin Bharathi is the film's director. The film revolves around the lives and times of landless laborers living in the foothills of the Western Ghats in India. It depicts how the introduction of commercialization creates conflict in the simple lives of the villagers. From the film, the researcher observed how important agricultural land is for every farmer and country. The movie illustrates how crucial agriculture is to the growth of the country as well as how the mafia gang affects farmers who own agricultural land.

The film Merkku Thodarchi Malai provides a detailed example of how external forces can disrupt the lives of farmers, as seen through the struggles of landless laborers in the Western Ghats. It highlights the impact of commercialization and mafia gangs on agricultural land, emphasizing the importance of protecting farmers and their livelihoods.

Pariyerum Perumal (2018)

Pariyerum Perumal is one of the notable films in the Tamil language. Mari Selvaraj is the film's director. Ranjith has produced the film. The film explores the realities of caste oppression and discrimination and the oppression of the upper castes. The film is based on the lives of the people of Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi. Pariyerum Perumal sheds light on the harsh realities faced by the landless laborers who are at the mercy of commercialization and mafia gangs. The film powerfully conveys the struggles and injustices experienced by farmers in the Western Ghats, urging viewers to recognize the importance of protecting their livelihoods.

In a society where caste discrimination is rife, Pariyerum Perumal highlights the urgent need for social change and equality through its moving storytelling.

From the film, the researcher observed how casteism affected society, especially people's personal lives. How casteism affects the progress and empowerment of students in educational institutions like schools, colleges, and universities. It examines the extent of casteism and the targeting of psychological factors among people in a negative way, such as genocide, persecution of the downtrodden, and the abolition of the rights and privileges of people who are excluded from society.

Thanneer Thanner (1981)

This is K. The movie is a Balachander-directed drama in Tamil. The film deals with issues like water scarcity and political corruption. Tamil Nadu residents in a drought-stricken village are attempting to use the cooperative system to bring water to their community, but dishonest politicians are abusing their efforts for their own political purposes. The film was very critically acclaimed and is considered a "classic" film. In addition to the audience

FINDINGS

This paper has reviewed many research papers related to films, and based on the data obtained from them, it has taken some films

that talk about social issues and studied how people became aware of them. Based on that data, it has presented and explained some findings.

- ❖ One of the key findings of the research is that films that address social issues have the power to raise awareness and spark discussion among viewers.

- ❖ The film, set in world wide, has successfully shed light on the struggles faced by drought- stricken villages and the corrupt practices of politicians.

- ❖ It has inspired more people to come together and fight for their rights, using the cooperative system as a tool for change.

- ❖ The film's impact on society has been profound, making it a timeless classic that continues to resonate with audiences worldwide.

- ❖ A film is an effective tool for social change.

- ❖ Films have the potential to influence the audience or the people to manipulate their perspective about any social issues.

- ❖ Films in our country have given us great films that can bring many changes to society.

- ❖ Some films help in expediting pending justice, some encourage people to come forward to fight against social evils like farmers' problems and environmental problems, and some give a completely different and innovative direction to the lives of the audience or people.

11

A study of the films Ketika Mas Gagah Pergi, Tanda Tanya, Thanneer Thanneer, Kaththi, Karuthamma, Pariyerum Perumal, and Paschim Ghatachi Malai reveals that the success of these films will have a greater impact on society, create knowledge and awareness, and empower women in rural areas. And this data will help us study how films are being used to talk about this social problem.

The research reveals that films addressing social issues can raise awareness and spark discussion among viewers. These movies shed light on various social issues such as water scarcity, farmer suicides, caste discrimination, and environmental degradation. By portraying these issues on the big screen, filmmakers are able to reach a wide audience and create a platform for dialogue and action.

Through the power of storytelling, these films have the potential to not only entertain but also educate and inspire viewers to take a stand and work towards positive change in society. The impact of socially conscious cinema like Paani Paani and others cannot be underestimated, as they have the ability to ignite social movements and drive real-world change.

Conclusion

The study highlights how realistic films create social norms and a better society while simultaneously getting input from the same audience. It is because of the efforts of such filmmakers that people are more interested in discussing such topics in society. Still, there are many social issues that remain untouched by the Indian film industry. After the commercial success of all the films mentioned above, other filmmakers are also interested in

directing films with social issues. This trend has the potential to bring about positive change and raise awareness about important social issues in India. By incorporating these themes into popular films, filmmakers have the ability to reach a wider audience and spark conversations that can lead to real- world impact. As more and more filmmakers follow suit, we can hope to see a shift towards a more socially conscious and responsible film industry in India.

Acknowledgment

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