



From Script to Screen: Journey of Five Point Someone

Assistant Professor Vidhi Rajora

Dr Deepak Kumar Mudgal

KES' Shroff College of Arts and Commerce

Kandivali West, Mumbai

Email-rajoravidhi@gmail.com

Abstract

To attract large number of audiences, literature writings are adapted by film makers to make movies. The main idea of these adaptations is to give visual intrigue to the writers work. Also, there are large number of readers who read novels and literary subjects of various genres and themes. Film making fulfils the craving of a huge heterogeneous crowd with the component of pleasure and amusement. Film adaptations go back years prior when individuals had restricted choices for entertainment and recreational exercises. The study is a qualitative research based on the adaptation of 'Five Point Someone' by Chetan Bhagat into a film '3 Idiots' by Aamir Khan. The research methodology is to analyze the transition of a novel into screen.

Keywords: Audience, Novels, Film adaptations, Five Point Someone, 3 Idiots

Introduction

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, "novel is an invented prose narrative of considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience." Novels and books are adapted into films to make the content easily available to the audiences through visual display. Novels have stories, epic, romance, essays, anecdotes, past events, while film has songs, sounds, music, dialogue, colour, emotions, photography. One important method to educate the spectators is through adaptations of stories and novels.

Films provide the information and knowledge to viewers by dealing with important issues of society. Media provides content and stories keeping in mind the target audience because it is the viewer who makes the content popular and interesting. It is the audience who makes movie a grand success.

There might be two basic reasons why film creators choose books or writings to make motion pictures. First is that, novels have the specific target audience, for example, Chetan Bhagat's most of the novels are been used by producers to make films. Another reason is novels have stories which can be easily picked up by the filmmakers through the process of adaptation. The process of adaptation is not as simple as it sounds. It has been seen that adaptation from a novel is not a new concept in Indian Cinema. Since the beginning of Indian Cinema, movie makers are taking the stories and plots from novels and literature. The first Indian silent film Raja Harishchandra is an adaptation of the Indian mythological character. From that time onwards movie makers are taking instances and references from various social and political issues and also using mythological stories to make movies. 'Rajneeti' by Prakash Jha is a commercial movie regarded as a modern day 'Mahabharata'. Artistic works of different kinds and from different periods can be contrasted based on films dependent on them. In the study, the researcher will be able to compare and differentiate the fictional attributes inherent in cinema. While studying the art of screen adaptations we will understand the distinctions about the adapted art forms and literary writings through Chetan Bhagat's novel 'Five Point Someone' into its adapted version '3 Idiots'.

Objectives

Each research is conducted with some objective. The present study is taken with an objective

- To analyze the prominence of screen adaptation among audience
- To compare and differentiate the characterisation, story and content between novel and movie

Adaptation

Adaptation is based on the already existing work which is often literal or theatrical converted into a film. Best selling fiction, nonfiction, theatres, comics which are more commercial in nature are often adapted for the cinema.

The three types of adaptation from the theories of adaptation discussed by Michael Klein and Gillian Parker are (NY: Ungar, 1981) [1]

1. Most movies are literal translations based on the classic novels.
2. It is reinterpretation or reconstruction of the source text and retains the core structure of the storyline
3. The source is considered as merely a raw material from the original work.

Two major ‘Schools’ of adaptation that are simplified in the presentation by Morris Beja in Film and Literature, (New York: Longman, 1977) are [1]

- The originality and integrity of the work should be preserved and that is the top most priority of a screenwriter.
- It is a general belief of the screenwriters to adapt the work freely and create a new work of art in some other medium with its own originality and integrity.

Screenplay writing and writing for novel is entirely different. Still, many screenplay writers are successful in developing a common platform for movie lovers and book lovers. The questions which generally arise while adapting one medium into another that can entertain as well as provide information to the audiences are: [1]

- What to be included and excluded from the story to the screen?
- Does literary and film theory help us in film adaptations?
- How reactions and modes of production affect the screen adaptations?
- How reading and writing literature will be affected by new technologies?

There are many Bollywood films which are based on Chetan Bhagat’s novels. 3 Idiots is adapted from the novel Five Point Someone, featuring Aamir Khan, Kareena Kapoor, R. Madhavan, Sharman Joshi and Boman Irani which became the first highest grossing Bollywood movie directed by Raju Hirani. ‘The Three Mistakes of my life’ his novel is adapted into ‘Kai Po Che’ with stars like Singh Rajput, Rajkummar Rao and Amit Sadh. It is directed by Abhishek Kapoor. ‘One Night @ the Call Center’ is adapted into a film named ‘Hello’ directed by Atul Agnihotri. ‘2 States’ novel with the same name of a movie is an Indian romantic comedy directed by Abhishek Varman and had actors like Arjun Kapoor and Alia Bhatt. Other than Chetan Bhagat’s novels there are many novels which are been adapted like Parineeta, Othello, Sahib Biwi or Gulam, Guide etc.

Literature Review

Md. Hasan Ashik Rahman ‘*From Five Point Someone to 3 Idiots: Politics behind Adaptation*’ stated in his paper that the success of 3 Idiots help us to gain an insight about the workings of the Bollywood industry. To make a successful film it should not clash with the existing value system and still it must produce something new which is liked in the contemporary times. There should be synthesis maintained between the existing social structure and modern values. The audience should be entertained, but whether, in the process of adaptation any significant changes brought in the social structure is a debatable question.

March 9, 2011 The Times of India, Sanat Savanali mentioned in the article ‘Adaptation of novels and plays for films’ that there are few names like Rajesh Kolan, Sanjay Jadhav, Mahesh Manjrekar, Milind Bokil who have transferred the literature to screen. They have adapted the Marathi literature which is playing an important role to entertain regional audiences through films.

The Indian Express in its report, states that Arjun Kapoor will be playing the role of Gopal in another love story created by novelist Chetan Bhagat’s Revolution 2020, an adaptation of his novel “Revolution 2020”

. “Mohit Suri to direct Chetan Bhagat’s ‘Half Girlfriend’ film adaptation”, is another headline in Indian Express. The story is about a lower class boy (Bihari) falling in love with the girl belonging to the upper class of society. Chetan Bhagat’s five novels have already been adapted into films like ‘The Three Mistakes of My Life’ as ‘Kai Po Che’ ‘Hello’ based on ‘One Night @ The Call Centre’, ‘3 idiots’ based on ‘Five Point Someone’, 2 states with the same name.

The Times of India dated May 13, 2014, “2 States crosses the 100 crore mark at box-office” in its report stated that Chetan Bhagat’s story of his marriage also adapted in a novel became a big hit on box office. It crosses the 100 crore mark at box office. The spectators showed huge enthusiasm to watch movie after reading the novel. Till 2013 only 3 Idiots crossed the 100 crore mark again an adaptation from Chetan Bhagat’s novel but now Chennai Express having stars like Deepika Padukone and Shah Rukh Khan entered in 400 crore club breaking all the records.

Difference between a novel and its screen adaptations

First of all we should understand that screen adaptation is a very different art form, and are something very different from the literature. A book or a novel is very long having around 200-350 pages or even more than that. On the other side, a film is around 90-120 minutes on an average. Each page of a screenplay is only one minute on screen. With lot of white space an average screenplay is between 90-120 pages.

Another difference between a movie and novel is that through visual representation on screen we can directly observe and imagine and move with the story whereas in book the experience is indirect and more imaginary. Films are more appealing to our sensory organs than reading. There is colour, sound, and motion besides dialogues or language. In addition, while reading the novels readers can imagine the description and can easily connect with the plot and characters which films does not allow. Audiences have different perceptions. For those who enjoy reading does not like the conversion of novel into a film. At times audiences enjoy films and sometimes reading novels. As time is restricted in films therefore film makers have to cut the scenes which are there in novels. Adaption of a novel into film is a skill which mostly depends on moving images, large number of viewers and production on the other hand novel writing is a different artistic form which involves language, individual effort and creativity.

Audiences to get entertainment have accepted the film adaptation with positivity. Many mythological as well as masterpieces from the great writers like Bankim Chandra chatterjee, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay have been accepted and made into films. Many films like Pather Panchali, Shatranjnke Khiladi, Kati Patang, Khilona are adaptations from some prominent writers.

Summary of ‘Five Point Someone’

The story is about the three friends: Ryan, Hari and Alok who are the students of the one of the most reputed institution of India, IIT Delhi. They wanted to enjoy their college life by doing something very different from others. The main characters in this story are Hari Kumar (the narrator), Ryan Oberoi (Rich, brilliant and wants to be unique) and Alok (Poor boy with family responsibilities), female protagonist Neha (daughter of the HOD of department in IIT and girl-friend of Hari), A strict and domineering Professor Cherian whose criteria for judging is the GPA of the students. They try hard to manage the assignments and scores but could hardly score five-point-something GPA and ranks near the end of their class. These scores remained with them till the end. The world has higher expectations from IITian where they struggled to survive. The book mostly dealt with the several challenges by the trio to deal with the system and also Hari’s affair with Neha. The action takes place in the campus mostly, with Ryan often criticising the entire system of IIT which is recognized internationally that how the focus is shifted from creativity to just getting good grades and nothing else. Numerous assignments and uninteresting teachers add to their anguish.

Summary of '3 Idiots'

The film starts with the characters Farhan Qureshi (played by R Madhavan)and Raju Rastogi(played by Sharman Joshi) who wanted to meet their friend Rancho who was with them in Delhi Imperial college. They planned to meet Rancho where enroute they met another class mate Chatur Ramalingam, who has become a successful businessman which reminds them about the bet they took 10 years back. The movie goes into flash back where they are reminded of their college life and their hilarious frolics and also of their professor Viru Sahastrabudhe. They try to find out the address of Rancho who had not met them after the college. Meanwhile, they came to know the truth about the name and story of Rancho (his real name was chhotte). They then went in search of him where they came to know about Phunsuk Wangdu who was none other than chhote their friend. He became a very famous scientist and used to teach children in Ladakh in a creative and practical way. The story also has a female character Neha(Kareena Kapoor) daughter of Viru Sahastrabudhe who was in love with Rancho and then in the end meets him.

Similarities

More or less the central point or plot of the movie and the novel is same. It is about the three friends or students of an esteemed engineering institution who form a great bond in the campus.

The three characters are similar in the movie as in the book. Ryan (rancho played by Aamir) is very practical and has a different way of thinking, the second protagonist is Hari(Farhaan played by R Madhavan) is a perplexed character. The third character is from a financially weak background and has lot of family responsibilities is played by Sharman Joshi as Raju (Alok in the book).The discourse in the novel between the invigilator and the character about definition of machine and 'as if I had asked for kidneys are directly taken from the book in the movie. Female protagonist Pia (Neha –kareena kapoor) daughter of the professor Cherian (Viru played by Boman Irani) confronts her dad about her brother committing suicide because of the dominant and demanding behaviour of the latter. Same scene was constructed in the movie however the book deals it in much more detail and pages.

Differences

Although the novel and book starts with narration but the narrators are different. In the book narrator Hari had an affair with the daughter of professor in the film Rancho romances with the daughter. The names of the characters are changed like Ryan became Rancho a very important and powerful character in the film, Hari became Farhan, a Muslim and photography was shown as his passion which in the book is the passion of Neha. Many incidents and characters were added in the film to increase its entertainment and commercial value. New stories about Ryan's past and present were also added The turning point of the novel is the paper stealing episode which makes Alok to jump out of the window to commit suicide. Film makers have twisted it in the film by making Raju jump out of the window as Virus(name given to the professor by them) decides to suspend him from the college. Songs, dances were also added to make it appealing to the audiences. In the film keeping in mind the social values the kissing scene was exaggerated between Piya and Rancho where Piya managed to kiss him in the last scene. Infact, in the novel Hari and Neha was shown having physical relationship. Also, the scene where Rancho changes the script of Chatur and the word 'chamtkar' into 'Balatkar' was added to make the story comical.

The major difference is seen in the second part of the movie where the characters meet after 10 years of the college and talks about their average position in college have shaped their careers in future while the book ends at graduation only. The scene of delivering a child by Rancho was the scene created in the film giving dramatic twist to it.

Conclusion

It has been observed with this research paper that it is not only the films which are liked by the audiences even the people fond of books enjoy its reading too. The viewers have become more careful in selecting content and genres of the films. The readers relate the characters when they watch movies. They have their imaginative characters in mind which they relate with the screen characters. The market is growing vigorously with high hopes from the writers/novelists. The bestselling book sold was 5000 copies earlier which is now been increased to 10,000 copies . The books which are bestselling are adapted by the film makers to give the visual satisfaction to the audiences. Five Point Someone is one of the bestselling book of Chetan Bhagat. The adaption '3 Idiots' by Rajkumar Hirani is the first movie to cross 100 crore mark in the history of Indian Cinema. Although the novel is very detailed and descriptive and runs into pages adaptation is short. There is restriction of time in the film so all the episodes might not be included or given equal importance as in novel. One cannot deny the fact that screenplay, script moves differently for making the adaptations and literature popular. The demand of the viewers, taste, and target audience has to be considered by the filmmakers. Therefore, they are forced to change the script from original to suit the authenticity of both the mediums. In the end it is concluded that literature gives feelings and meanings to word and films give them sensual pleasure.

References

1. Manmeet Kaur, Divya Rastogi Kapoor, 'A Study on Screen Adaptations from Literature with Reference to Chetan Bhagat's Novel', Journal of Advanced Research in Journalism & Mass Communication Volume 5, Issue 1&2 - 2018, Pg. No. 1-6
2. Md. Hasan Ashik Rahman 'From Five Point Someone to 3 Idiots: Politics behind Adaptation', DIU Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 4 h:ry 2017
3. <https://researchguides.dartmouth.edu/filmstudies/adaptations>
4. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/regional/movie-details/news-interviews/Adaptation-of-novels-and-plays-for-films/articleshow/7653835.cms>
5. <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/arjun-kapoor-in-adaptation-of-chetan-bhagats-revolution-2020/>
6. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/entertainment/hindi/bollywood/box-office/2-States-crosses-the-100-crore-mark-2-States-box-office-business-2-States-is-a-hit-2-States-box-office-business/articleshow/35057850.cms>

Books

1. Bhagat Chetan, Five Point Someone, Rupa Publications, 2004

Newspapers

1. Times of India
2. Indian Express