



Depiction of Women as Marginalized Identities in Indian Cinema

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Abstract: Indeed Women in India have made a noteworthy Progress in the last few decades. But still some grounds are still to be conquered. Their struggle is visible from the day to day toil and hardships as well as their desire to have a better lifestyle. Their efforts of continual advancement either through education or through self-employment has made empowered them to some extent. However there are limitations due to social, cultural and economic status. They have to abide the socially and culturally set standards. They are rather the hindrances in their personal career advancement. This present paper is a discussion of selected two Movies on women and their struggle for self-recognition by way of proving their talent in the sports at National and International Level. Nonetheless the movies discussed in this paper are the examples of tolerance and recognition respectively. The former give up the bright future for the poverty stricken family and later revolt against the conservative family rules.

KEY Words: Women, Social Structure, Marginalization, Indian Cinema

Introduction:

After the Independence of India, many changes have been taken place in all the walks of life. It has altered the socio-economic structures of the society. Almost all the spheres of life have witnessed more or less change in itself. In consideration of that the life of the women in India has a gradual and steady change. As a disadvantaged class they could not get the chance of progression as expected. Their journey was still full of struggle, pains and pangs. Amongst such difficult conditions women tried to keep their soul and spirit alive by fighting back to the society especially the Patriarchy. Patriarchy has its own role in shaping the culture of India. Further India also suffered from its deep-rooted castes system, which is a cause of many social and economic problems of India. All this can be visualized vividly through the means of Movies. The Movies are the reflection of the society. They hold the mirror to the society. They have a reformative and corrective role.

Discussion:

The History of Indian Cinema dates back to the 19th century. Over the period of time it went on experimenting with its themes and techniques. Its themes ranging widely from the love, History, freedom struggle, Jamindari

system in India and depiction of many other contemporary social problems. Often it is showcased through either a romantic film, art film or some action films. Over the period of time the Cinema changed its style and themes. Instead of imaginary stories, it started portraying the reality. The canvass was to showcase the lifelike situations than to depict the imaginary tales. This present paper is a discussion of selected two Movies on women published in the year 2019 and their struggle for self-recognition by way of proving their talent in the sports at National and International Level. In spite of their recognitions they were devotedly confined to the social structures of family, class and caste. *Palshichi PT* is a movie about a girl named Bhagi, who belongs to tribal class. She struggles to pursue her passion of becoming a runner. However she is on the brink / verge of national recognition, her father arranges her marriage. The movie ends on a very symbolic note. The movie represents all such girls who aspire to scale the new heights but due to constrain of caste, social and economic set up of the society they have to sacrifice their dream. The second movie is *Saand ki Aankh* is a true story based on the two married women belonging to a Marwari family where the family rules and customs are very rigid. But in spite of that rigidity, sternness these two women succeed in breaking the shackles of life. Both these movies are so inspiring for the younger generations especially for the girls.

One of the biggest drawback of then prevalent Indian society was treatment imparted to the women was not only inhuman but also ill-treated hence women were doubly marginalized i.e socially and gender biased. The word 'women empowerment' is an outcome of the many such long term oppressions on women especially as the marginalized and their reaction to the struggle by way of becoming powerful either in terms of economic or independence. Before the colonial period India was deeply rooted in its traditions and customs. The impact of these traditions and social customs were prevalent in India. The social evils such as caste system was one of the influential factors in determining India's fate in the International Arena. However it is during the British Empire, though India was ruled politically, economically and culturally, it has also have the positive fallouts of British rule. Some of the positive fallouts of the British rule in India are the introduction of formal education, resistance to Sati system etc. Many political thinkers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Dr B R Ambedkar and many more such leaders have sensed the intensity and gravity of these social problems and raised their voices against such inhuman practices in the then prevailing in India. Over the period of time, the change ushered. The anti-social elements like dowry, sati system, illiteracy started disappearing from the society. Gradually women became liberated and independent to some extent.

Through this paper an attempt is made to highlight the cinematic manifestation of two stories of the women's struggle and their recognition. The first movie is from Marathi entitled *Palshichi PT* and the other Hindi Movie is *Saand ki Ankh*.

Palshichi PT is story of a school going girl who belongs to a Normadic Tribes' family known as Dhangar. Their family business is mainly the sheep or cattle rearing. The title of the movie stands for a girl from the village Palshi, a Village named in Satara District and P T stands for the International Athlete P.T. USHA. The girl named Bhagyashri commonly called as Bhagi is a teenager school going girl. The handicapped school teacher finds a spark in Bhagi as a runner. He motivates her to participate in the state level runner championship eventually Bhagi

wins the runner championship. As an athlete, she aspires to participate in the national games also. But unfortunately the poverty stricken family struggles to meet both ends. Meanwhile a policeman saw Bhagi and he decides to marry Bhagi. Under all such conditions Bhagi prepares herself for the National Games. But the family decides Bhagi to be married off because they cannot afford to lose the bridegroom who is financially settled and they do not have enough money to support Bhagi's ambitions. All the efforts of Bhagi of becoming an athlete of national and international level remains unfinished and thus a movie entitles Palshichi P T, who eventually could not become like P T Usha the International Athlete but have shown the courage and fighting spirit for showcasing her talent . Thus the story ends on a very symbolic note that Bhagi standing on the road side looking after the sheep, wearing yellow sari and silver anklets in her feet as sign of a newly married woman.

Undoubtedly the movie depicts the struggle of an athlete, at the same time it evokes the grim reality of most of the girl athletes whose dreams remain unachieved due to the social and economic status of the athletes' .Finally Bhagi has to accept the rule of the society. Thus the individual talent goes unrecognized and yet another journey of disappointed and compromised journey of life begins. Thus the movie depicts that the social customs, rule of patriarchy, lack of concern for the individual talent all leads to a dejected common life despite of being an uncommon talent.

The second interesting story is from a Hindi movie *Saand ki Ankh*, a biopic based on lives of the old women who eventually proves to be the Sharp Shooters despite of their family rooted in the patriarchal dominance and rule. The movie is a story of two women Chandro and Prakashni married to Tomar family, the typically male-controlled family. This story is based on the life of India's oldest sharpshooter, sisters-in-law Chandro and Prakashni who are coming from Johri village in Uttar Pradesh. This movie acquaints us with lives of these two women as newlyweds, giving birth to one baby after the other, doing household chores and spending nearly six decades of their life without a purpose. They further have to do all the physically laborious activities like sweating out in the field or collecting the cow dung and making bricks out of it. On the contrary of the men of the family are merely engaged in smoking Hukha and talking about the richness and greatness of the family honour. The two women somehow learn the rifle shooting. Their learning of rifle shooting does not remain as only a hobby but it turns into professional rifle shooters. The movie circles around these women's attempts to hide their rifle shooting participation in various national and international competitions. Every time they have to make a new excuse or reason so that they can step out of the family and can participate in the event. Quite interestingly these women have won the competitions at various stages. These 60 plus years old Dadis keep collecting the medals at every competitions. They literally have to hide their medals into a trunk so that the men of that family should not see those medals and they should not be caught. After winning so many medals, these women are now convinced to break the boundaries of the society. The threshold of the house are now boldly be crossed in the form of challenging the age old patriarchy rule. This boldness is supported by all the generations of women in the family. Thus this creates a turning point not only in the family but in the entire society. This revolutionary step paves the way for other women to follow the path of success. Thus this movie narrates the story of uncommon struggle.

What makes us think about that is instead of fighting against the age-old system they have simply tried to look for the solution to get the chance to show their talent. This adds to their dignity.

In both the movies the contribution of some of the exceptional men in uplifting the life of women cannot go unheeded. Namely Tushar *Saand ki Ankh* as a young man who identifies the futility of the rule of the father, helps these women in training and getting them chances for participating in various rifle shooting competitions. It also captures the link between the two generations of men the former being the ruler and the latter being the facilitator. In case of *Palshichi PT* the handicapped teacher also acts as a facilitator than a mere teacher. He tries to help Bhagi in the best possible ways.

Thus the two movies showcase the struggle of women in getting their talent exhibited at state/ national and International levels and finally seeking the global recognition due to their untiring and undefeated efforts. Their journey is a true example of their tolerance and getting them recognized at global level for their individual talent.

What is common between these two movies is that the protagonists of these movies are the victims of patriarchy rule and social set up. Further they are not supported with the bare minimum facilities to perform their game. It is their strong desire that overcomes all the barriers and they come out with a crowning glory. The help from a messiah in the form of a doctor and the handicapped teacher respectively in both the movies turns on the wheel of fortune of both these women and they overcome every battle as a victory.

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