

Technological Communication and Re-living the world of Disabled through Sanjay Leela Bhansali's films

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to understand the challenges faced by disabled people and the struggle they go through in their life through the imaginary world of Sanjay Leela Bhansali's films. In order to understand it deeply, this research work will try to peel all the layers ingrained in these films and the disabilities shown will be dealt in detail to show how the protagonists of the film communicate with the world within and the world outside. For a comprehensive analysis of the issue, filmmaker's three major films like Khamoshi (1996) Black (2005) and Guzaarish (2010) have been taken into consideration as they make us believe in the world of disabled people and the difficulties, they face in their day-to-day life. The protagonists of the films have their own unique way to deal with their handicaps but the emotional quotient which is attached with these films make the internal conflict quite obvious. Although, there have been few films like Koshish (1972) in the past and Taare Zameen Par (2007) in the recent times which dealt with this issue, but due to the relevance of such issues in the imaginary world of Sanjay Leela Bhansali, they become significant and let us dwell in that world to know it better.

Therefore, the paper will make an attempt in understanding the broader issue of dis-ability through the prism of the above mentioned films and situate its argument in the peripheral image of this highly debated issue.

Keywords: Disability, Challenges, Protagonists, Difficulties, Communication.

Introduction

The Hindi film Industry has been grappling with the disability theme since a long time, yet it has not touched upon many issues which is prominent in our society. There have been a number of films which has zeroed in on the issue of disability and its significance in the current scenario or

the time the film is based in. One of the most important films on this line is *Waqt* directed by Yash Chopra which is one of the major that which touched the hearts of millions despite its theme being disability and the protagonists of the film being the disabled people. It was such an achievement of the filmmaker who dwelt on this idea and came out triumphant. The audiences and critics alike made their appreciation count and it was hailed as one of the greatest films based on such themes. For this, the filmmaker won so many awards and was bestowed with several international awards.

Ability and Disability

In the generic terms, ability of a person is one's capacity to do something on their own and the disability is someone's incapability to do anything one's own because of one's physical, mental or emotional handicap. In today's times many people are undergoing a lot of mental problems because of the stress caused by the workplace or family pressure. So, the disability caused either mentally or physically is one's handicap which may not augur well for the family of the person concerned. In such a case, people are either pre-occupied with their virtual world and end up being depressed. The films I have chosen for the study concerns mainly the mental and physical aspect of the protagonists which is quite relevant for today's generation. In the film, *Black*, the protagonist is suffering from Alzheimer's disease which mainly concerns the memory loss in a person and has been beautifully portrayed by star of the millennium, Amitabh Bachchan. Through his performance one can relate to the character and sympathise with him. In another film, *Guzaarish*, the protagonist is bed-ridden and can't express his feeling by the movement of his limbs which is another handicap people suffer. The character played by Hrithik Roshan makes one realize the potential of cinema in dealing with such issues which might not have had an impact as it had with the portrayal of such character through the medium of cinema, the very essence of euthanasia was dealt in a wonderful way which shows the acumen of the director, Sanjay Leela Bhansali. This whole issue was raised in the supreme court recently and the jurists were of the opinion that if a person who is not able to live because of his or her physical or mental health can appeal for euthanasia or a right to die gracefully. In another film which mainly dealt with the mute people played by Nana Patekar and Seema Biswas in the film, *Khamoshi*, the characters are not able to express their feeling properly because of the physical handicap they are suffering from. The characters get etched in the memory of the people for their sheer acting potential and the way they have been conveyed by the filmmaker.

Filmmaker and the theme of disability

Sanjay Leela Bhansali, the director of these three films *Khamoshi*, *Guzaarish*, and *Black* is known for his larger-than-life characters and films such as *Hum Dil De Chuke Sanam* (1999) and *Devdas* (2002) but his sojourn with these themes had taken audience and film critics by surprise.

But his ability to deal with these themes made us wonder how he dealt with these things simultaneously with finesse. To be able to dabble with larger-than-life sets and the set which shows a person suffering acutely from a disease can make people be in awe of him. His ability to be comfortable in different genres made us sit back and notice his craft which is no more than a miracle for the audiences but also for those who are suffering from these problems or the person concerned with them.

Disability as a theme itself is quite risky for a filmmaker as people are more interested in getting entertained than watching a film with the physical and mental handicap of a person. Yet, he brought these issues in the mainstream media and was appreciated for his effort can be great for any of the filmmakers across the globe.

Conclusion

A director and his/her vision can be understood in terms of what he wants to show to the people with the medium of cinema but one who is able to show the disabled with equal finesse can be no ordinary achievement. Although, Sanjay Leela Bhansali worked his way to show to the world but the anguish of such characters can still be very relevant when we look around for our inner satisfaction.

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