

Chapter - 2

Black: Exploration of Potentials and Discovery of Dignity

The film in the context of the present chapter is an Indian Bollywood drama movie titled “Black” directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali and released in 2014. The protagonist of the movie is daughter of McNallys, an Indo- Anglian family living in Shimla. The movie deals with multiple problems regarding disabilities and a deaf-dumb and blind character’s effort and determination in overcoming the adversities of the physical limitations caused by the consequence of the her impairments. This movie divulges and puts off a cover of illusion from the perceptual eyes of those people who have an erroneous proposition and misconception about the abilities of a person who has some kind of physical, intellectual or sensorial impairments. This movie, starred by Amitabh Bachchan as Debraj Sahai, a stubborn teacher and Rani Mukerji as Michelle McNally, a silent and violent child and as adult a struggling disabled student to overcome her disabilities. This movie not only explores the potentials of a disabled person but also it deals with a vigorous exertion in search of dignity to live a life of a normal human being. The movie, presenting an authentic relationship between a teacher and a student, reveals a true love between them. At the beginning of the movie, the violent and uncontrollable deaf and dumb girl-child struggling with her physical limitations and restrictions of living away from the world full of light and finally the same child turns to be a fine young lady full of self- esteem, feelings and emotions to love and to be loved.

The movie starts with Michelle’s search for her teacher, Debraj Sahai, who has taught Michelle how to move from her world of dark to the world of light but the collateral

of her progress becomes the deterioration of Debraj who succumbs to Alzheimer's disease and loses his memory. In other words, the movie not only deals with Michelle's decreasing disability but also her teacher's progressing disability. As the movie opens Michelle McNally puts as:

“Yah kahani hai meri aur mere teacher ki.

Bachi-khochi mitti se banaye gaye un do insano ki

jinhone apne takdir se jang ladi aur namunkin ko munkin kar dikhaya.”

(This story is about me and my teacher.

A story about two people left incomplete by god...

who have fought a battle with fate

and made the impossible, possible.)

The movie frequently runs into flashbacks turning back into Michelle's childhood when Michelle's illness causes in her a complete vocal, visual or hearing impairment. Michelle's parents have misconception and misapprehension about impairments and their effect on Michelle's abilities and to prevent her from being seen by public, Michelle's parents put her inside the house and she becomes unaware of the world which exists outside the walls of her house. Michelle comes to the point of frustration when she finds herself unable in hearing others and communicating her feelings and desires to her parents and as a result the exasperations she shows by becoming violent during eating food at the dining

table and frequently causing many harms to the house by breaking objects and goods inside the house.

The title of the movie *Black* symbolises the protagonist Michelle's dark and pitch-black life and her dark world. 'Black' refers to darkness which is symbol of ignorance, foolishness and unawareness of the world in which different objects, persons and she herself has existence. Michelle cannot see the world and the light of the world as she is blind, she cannot hear sound of objects and voices of people as she is deaf, and she cannot speak or communicate to as she is dumb that's why she has visual, auditory and vocal ignorance to the world. The movie not only presents how Michelle's blindness and other impairments are not the real phenomena which create darkness in her life but also because of her blindness and other impairments she is pushed and expected to live her life in dark and how she shatters the illusions and myths of her parents and people by learning Sign Language and Braille as well as becoming a Graduate in Arts at the age of forty to lead her life in the world of light. Michelle needs light, light of knowledge, and not the eyes as eyes for a normal man is of no use when there is no light overthere. At one point in the movie Debraj Sahai falls down in the room full of dark, he finds his eyes of no use for the moment and says:

“Mahatwa aankhon ka nahi,

ujale ka hota hai.”

(Eyes are not important

as compared to light.)

At the age of eight years she finds herself in the world that is different from the world of others; her world is full of dark and pitch-black symbolizing ignorance of the world and her world is suffocating world and there is no any ray of light which is symbol of knowledge and awareness of the outer world. At the start of the movie she throws light on the condition of her own troublesome and irritating world as:

“Mere is kahani ki duniya hi kuchh alag hai

jahan pahuchate hi aawaj dam tor deti hai

aur roshani aankhe mund leti hai.

Ye meri duniya hai jahan kuchh dikhai nahi deta,

jahan kuchh sunai nahi deta

agar ek hi shabda me baya karo

to mere is kahani ka naam hai ‘BLACK’”.

(The world in my story is different

Where sound transcends into silence

And light into darkness.

This is my world

where nothing can be seen and heard

there is only one name for my world, “BLACK”.)

Michelle’s world has been ‘black’ for her for 40 years as she comprehends but her bad and strong perception of her own abilities is the constructive tool of her ‘black’ world and her misconception is the result of public’s essentialism and stereotypical opinion about the physical and sensorial deficits. Being their daughter, Michelle’s parents have affection and caring for her and on grounds of Michelle’s impairments her parents have sympathy to her considerable situation of life. The parents’ having sympathy is not any cure of her impairments and no anyway helpful in making her less disabled. Paul (Dhritiman Chatterjee), Michelle’s father, is fed up with her tantrums and he has lost his spirit of having her any more in the house and he makes mind to put her in an asylum. Michelle’s causing fire in the house makes Paul so disappointed that he says:

“Jab tak Michelle is ghar me rahegi

yahan koi khushi nahi aa sakati.”

(With Michelle, we can never be happy.)

To Paul, Michelle is a burden only because of her impairments. She is taken as an inauspicious and a treasure of problems for Paul’s home. In India and other Asian countries disability has been seen as a sign of dire and awful mishaps. As Renu Addlakha puts:

Historically in India as elsewhere in the world, there has been a deep-rooted cultural antipathy to persons with disabilities. Throughout the disabled have been looked down upon with disdain, almost as if they were subhuman. They have been

portrayed as medical anomalies, helpless victims and a lifelong burden on family and society. (TARSHI, 20)

Katherine or Mrs. McNally (Shernaz Patel), being Michelle's mother, has a sympathetic heart to her daughter but she also begins to lose her heart as she does not have any idea to help her daughter in making her able to live a normal life. The parents have put a cow-bell hanging on her hips to locate her presence when she is out of their sight. Michelle's life has been like an animal as going back in her childhood Michelle puts:

“Insan ke rup me janwar thi mai.

Mujhe satane mebachchon kobari khushi milati thi.”

(I was like an animal.

Children loved playing pranks on me.)

Standing at the edge of her hope Mrs. McNally hears about a teacher named Debraj Sahai from a dumb and deaf school in Dehradun. Although Debraj Sahai is an alcoholic teacher still he dedicates himself to his duty to teach his ward and to bring her into the world of light from the world of darkness. He, being anomalous, applies unconventional method of teaching and he never hesitates in slapping his ward when he thinks it necessary. Out of sympathy, Michelle's parents do not agree to give their approval to Sahai in continuing his duty of teaching by becoming harsh to a girl who is deaf, dumb and blind. At the dining table Sahai does not permit Michelle to eat food by using her hands like an uncivilized and indecent person because Sahai's aim is to make Michelle one of us. When

she shows her rude and haughty behaviour, Sahai's becoming harsh over there is not acceptable to her parents and they sympathize with their daughter by expressing:

Paul: "Let her go. This is no way to teach.

Aapko is apaahij bachchi par jaraa bhi daya nahi aati."

(Don't you feel pity for the handicapped child?)

Persons with any kind of impairments are not objects of sympathy and compassion. They are to be taught to live their lives of dignity and honour in the mainstream society. Frequently a person with impairments is treated like a newly born-baby. In the movie *Koshish* (1972), directed by Gulzar, when Aarti Mathur (Jaya Bhaduri Bachchan) is admitted in a special school named Deaf and Dumb Institute, her mother, Durga (Dina Pathak), suddenly becomes worried about Aarti's problems she may come across on the way of the school and she says to the lady teacher (Seema Deo) of the institution as:

Mother: *"Ji, achchha. Mai khud bhi chhor jaya karugi.*

Akele to ise (Aarti) bahut takalif paregi."

(Well, ok. I myself would use to leave her.

She would feel inconvenience alone.)

Teacher: *"Ek baat aur kahun aapse.*

In bachchon ko jyada sahare bhi nahi dena chahiye.

In par taras kabhi naa khayiye.

Inhe bilkul ye mahasus na hone dijiye ki

iname kuchh kami hai, isliye dusaron se alag bartav kiya jaye,

balki aam logon me jitana ghulegen-milegen utana hi achchha hai.

Inakon to normal bachchon se jyada aazadi deni chahiye.”

(One more thing I tell you.

These children should not be given so assistance.

People should never sympathize with these ones.

These ones should never be made feel some defects in themselves

so that they may feel themselves treated differently from others.

But as much as these ones mingle themselves in public, it will be good as much.

These ones should be given more freedom than normal ones.)

Mother:“*Lekin ye school aayegi to kaise batayegi bas waalon ko*

kahanjana hai.

(But when she comes to school,

howshe will tell the bus assistant where she has to go.)

Teacher: *“Durga ji, yakin maniye, ye takalif jitani ham samajhate hain,
utana in bachchon ko mahasus nahi hoti.*

(Mrs. Durga, have faith. As much problematic we think it as they do not feel.)

Sahai is a special teacher and here his aim is to make Michelle an abled person and for achieving his goal he is determined and stays there even after Michelle’s father terminated him from his position by giving him a cheque for his salary and an order to leave his home. Paul’s going on a business for twenty days gives Sahai a chance to stay there by persuading Catherine who gives her approval to Sahai unwillingly. Mrs. McNally does so as she has some presumption about Michelle’s probability of going to asylum if Debraj Sahai leaves the home by leaving Michelle in that critical condition. Debraj Sahai makes shift all the painting works of Paul’s study to another room to make an object-free room to teach Michelle by keeping her away from familiar persons and objects and at this Mrs. McNally is surprised and she takes it as a ridiculous. But vice versa on the part of Mrs. McNally it is very ridiculous that she takes Paul’s study to be important and Michelle’s study to be insignificant.

Mrs. McNally: This is ridiculous

I don’t believe this!

What have you done?

This is Paul's study...

Who are you?

Debraj Sahai: *"Mai aapaki aakhiri ummid hun, Mrs. McNally.*

Agar mai yahan se aaj chala gaya to

usake kuchh hi dino baad Michelle asylum men pahunch jaayegi."

(I am your last hope, Mrs. McNally.

If I leave today then after a few days...

Michelle will reach the asylum.)

Michelle is deaf, dumb and blind but she is no anyway mentally retarded, below average intelligent. To have visual, hearing and any other sensorial impairments is not meant to have inability in learning or mental retardation. Michelle's parents themselves have negative attitude towards her ability to learn language and through language to communicate her necessary feelings and desires and to live life with the pace of time. To be blind refers to her becoming different which intends she is abled but differently and can learn everything in different way with different language that is Sign Language and she can communicate to people by writing in Braille script as Debraj Sahai puts to Michelle: *"Tumhare akshar, tumhare shabda, tumhari duniya alag hai, Michelle."*

(Your alphabets, your world are different, Michelle.

You are different. You are,

You are, and you are different...

and are proud that you're different.)

The twenty days, the time of Paul's business trip, given to Debraj Sahai to teach Michelle by Mrs. McNally, is about to get ended but Debraj Sahai has not achieved his aim that is to make Michelle an abled person. The contract of time period between Debraj and Mrs. McNally is like the contract between Dr. Faustus and Mephistopheles. Debraj Sahai has a strong commitment to empower and construct ability in Michelle. Michelle is not only a student to Sahai but she is someone who may lose her everything if she is put in asylum once. Mrs. McNally comes to Sahai on the eve of the twentieth day and warns Sahai that she will come the next day to take Michelle. She warns as:

Mrs. McNally: I will come to get Michelle tomorrow, at sunrise.

Debraj Sahai: And I shall pray there is no sunrise tomorrow, Mrs. McNally.

Debraj's complement to the warning of Mrs. McNally refers to the despondent and despairing condition of Sahai and reminds the watcher of the movie Marlowe's Dr. Faustus' wretched condition when the last day of twenty four years, the period of contract between Dr. Faustus and Mephistopheles, is near to get ended as he says:

Stand still, you ever-moving spheres of heaven

That time may cease, and midnight may never come;

Fair nature's eye, rise, rise again, and make

Perpetual day; or let this hour be.... (Dr. Faustus, 121)

[\[https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/doctor-faustus_christopher-marlowe.pdf\]](https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/doctor-faustus_christopher-marlowe.pdf)

The movie *Black*, set in Shimla, depicts how the Indian patriarchy system is dominant on every activities done in the family. Mrs. McNally, out of fear of her husband, gives permission to stay Debraj Sahai but the end of Paul's time on business trip becomes the sign of end of the first chance of Debraj's trying his hand on Michelle. This shows not only contradictory perception of parents but also of men and women on disabilities. The dominant patriarchy system may be one of the prominent bases to deprive most often the women, comparatively men, with disabilities of the access to the resources of health, information, education and inclusion in social and cultural activities. Renu Addlakha, in her occasional paper No. 44 titled "Gender Subjectivity and Sexual Identity: How Young People with Disabilities Conceptualise the Body, Sex and Marriage in Urban India" (2007), puts as: "Men with disabilities do have greater access to health, education and employment opportunities than their female counterparts." (TARSHI, 54)

Debraj Sahai does his best to convince Michelle's parents to let him do his duty of teaching their daughter and make her eligible for living a life of up to the mark and standard. But out of fear of social stigma, Michelle is taken back from her teacher by her parents. Paul's intention is to put her in an asylum to get rid of her, her troublesome tantrums and of her mischievous and harmful activities. But the institutionalization of

disabled persons is not the solution of their disabilities as it may be an answer for a temporary period of time but not a permanent solution. Debraj Sahai tries to take Michelle in his confidence and also revitalizes her to learn first needed fact that is learning of Sign Language. Debraj also makes effort to make aware Michelle of the troublesome and vexatious circumstances she may come across in an asylum. Debraj puts as:

Debraj: You will, you will never be able to see the light.

They will put this bell around you

and call you a cow. C. O. W., COW.

“Tum ek janwar banker rah jaogi, Michelle

ek janwar banker.”

(You will become an animal, Michelle,

just an animal.)

They will put you in an asylum.

The persons with disabilities in asylums and mental hospitals or institutions are mistreated and abused by using derogatory words as *pagal* (mad). The asylums and institutions, made for care for persons with disabilities and severe mental disease, are ill-managed and have no proper and necessary equipments to FIR against the staff who misbehave with them. They are not given proper attention or proper medicine at the proper time and exploited for different purposes as washing clothes, cleaning rooms often. Human

Rights Watch (HRW), an international non-governmental organization, in its report titled “Treated Worse than Woman: Abuses against Women and Girls with Psychological or Intellectual Disabilities in Institutions in India” (2014), illustrates the dejected and dismal condition of mental institutions. HRW puts:

The prevalent mindset is that people with disabilities, particularly women and especially those with intellectual or psychological disabilities, are incapable, weak, and lack the capacity to make any meaningful decisions about their lives. Institutions to which they are sent are overcrowded and poorly managed: all women and girls with psychological or intellectual disabilities currently or formerly living in institutions interviewed by Human Rights Watch experienced forced institutionalization; most faced a range of abuses in institutional care, including neglect, physical or verbal abuse, and involuntary treatment.⁽⁷⁾<https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/india1214-insert-LOWRES-WITH-COVER.pdf>

Debraj Sahai, after teaching twenty days and having found himself unable in making Michelle learn a word, is dismissed from the post and ordered to leave Michelle. He, being shocked and disappointed for the moment, tells Michelle’s parents as:

No, I am not going to leave Mrs. McNally.

I will not give up so easily.

There are still a few minutes left.

This conveys Debraj's hard determination and zeal not to leave his own ward who also really needs him. Debraj, however, takes Michelle to a water fountain, outside of the house, and over there he teaches Michelle the first word, 'WATER' to speak in Sign Language, at the same time she also touches 'flowers' and 'grass' in the lawn and she tries to speak these words in Sign Language. It becomes possible only because of Debraj Sahai who has a strong and full dedication to Michelle. To teach a person with multiple impairments needs a special care and technique which Debraj has. A person with impairments needs a teacher with empathy, the ability to share someone's feelings. To teach a student with some impairments a teacher is required to use student-centered and not authoritarian method, one of the traditional teacher-centered methods. Debraj Sahai becomes very excited and takes Michelle's hand and asks her to speak:

Debraj: (Holding Michelle's hand) It's water. W.A.T.E.R. water.

Michelle learns to speak the word 'water' by touching it inside the fountain and her learning to speak by touching an object refers to the method where the senses are required to be very active and alert. A person with impairments, especially a person with visual impairment, can be taught and made him identified with an object by making them touch the targeted object.

The persons with sensorial impairments easily comprehend the sense and meaning of a person speaking near to them. The fingers of such persons work as everything for them as they not only use it as to hold the blind-stick to go on right path but also with the help of their fingers they nearly see an object or person by touching or holding. As in the movie *Sparsh*(1980), the teacher, Anirudh Parmar (Naseeruddin Shah) tells a customer, at the

exhibition of handicrafts made by the blind students in the special school, “... *ye bachche apane haathon se dekh sakate hain.*” (These children can see with the help of their hands.) They use fingers to touch the speaking lips of a person to read and comprehend the real meaning. Such persons with sensorial impairments use their fingers to express themselves in Sign Language. As in the movie *Koshish* (1972), the teacher (Seema Deo) tells Aarti’s mother about the capacity of Aarti (dumb and deaf) as:

“Aawaj ke saath to nahi bol sakati ye bachchi’ lekin

ungaliyon ke isaaron se bilkul usi tarah baat

kar sakati hai jaise ham log haathon se baat kar sakate hai”

(This child cannot speak with voice

but with the help of fingers’ sign

she can talk as we can talk with the help of our hands.)

In the movie *Black*, at the Christmas party, Michelle makes herself fully enjoy the song a lady sings over there. She reads the lips of the singer by putting her fingers on singer’ lips and to express her joy she also moves her whole body in hilarious mood. Having looked at her dancing, Mr. Fernandez says to Debraj:

“Mr. Sahai, dekhiye ek laraki ko jo

dekh nahi sakati, sun nahi sakati. Fir bhi...”

(Mr. Sahai, look at that girl. She can't hear or see,
and still..., just look at her, it's wonderful.)

Sign Language uses fingerspelling and to understand, a normal person should be expert in joining together the separate fingerspelling to make a meaningful word.

Historically, children with impairments or disabilities were asked to study in special schools as it was thought that such students would feel comfortable in sitting and learning with other children having the same circumstances. Such children, at home, felt separated and isolated from the boys of normal schools. Such children with disabilities were also put in residential institutions where they felt getting lost or becoming invisible from the mainstream community. Their personality development did not take place appropriately by living outside the community of normal children. Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.<http://watchlist.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/Universal-declaration-of-human-rights.pdf>

Children, with normal body or having any kind of impairment or disability, have rights to study in a school made for normal children. Such children cannot be segregated on the grounds of impairments or disabilities. Every human being has equal right to live a

life with dignity and have right to participate in any cultural and social organization or institution. Children with disabilities must not be discriminated or seen as burden or barrier in the social and economic development of the nation. The phrase ‘full participation’, in the PWD Act 1995, refers to the participation of people from all grounds and levels including marginalized and denied class of persons with disabilities at level of social, cultural and economic. The National Policy on Education (1986) holds the perspective that a student with motor disability and mild disability will be put with normal students in the normal schools without any discrimination to make them able to face the challenges of life with courage and confidence. Councils of Ministers of Education, Canada give a very obvious panorama against discrimination, recommended by UNESCO, towards the students with disabilities or with special needs on any ground. The Councils in its report titled “The UNESCO Recommendation against Discrimination in Education” holds the point as:

Special-needs students, such as the physically or mentally disabled, the gifted, etc., are accommodated in the public schools in various ways. In some cases, separate programs are available to meet their needs; in other words, these students are integrated into the regular classroom and, to the extent possible, follow the regular program of instruction.(3)

<http://www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/163/UNESCO-reco-discrimination-education-1997.pdf>

The stereotypical and negative attitudes as well as existing essentialism philosophy are the major factors to keep continue the attitudinal barriers of looking at students with

impairments and disabilities as weak, fool, uncivilized, burden, imbecile and feeble minded or having low intelligence quotient and on these illogical grounds people of a community or society put the persons with disabilities aside and hardly get ready to admit them in a normal school. “Negative attitudes to disability are still the major stumbling blocks for the disabled children in accessing and benefitting from mainstream education.” (Ahmed145)

In the movie *Black* when Debraj Sahai makes Mr. Fernandez, principal of the King Edward University, aware of dancing Michelle as to be the very girl Debraj wants to talk about to him for admission in his university in B.A.; the principal is surprised at knowing this fact and Mr. Fernandez at once says, “That’s impossible, Mr. Sahai.” The principal suggests Debraj to put Michelle in a special school by saying, “*Aise bachchon ke liye special schools hain; jahan unko bahut kuchh sikhaya jata hai.*” (There are special schools for such children; where they are taught many things.) This statement of the principal not only refers to the trend of possibility of segregation of the children with impairments and disabilities but also to the trend of making such children learn to produce handicraft products such as cup-plate, buckets, jackets, candles, bouquets and ropes etc., to earn their bread and butter. To complement to Fernandez’s perspective Debraj critically puts, “*Tokari banana, chatai bunana....*” (To make baskets, weave carpets....)

Mr. Fernandez’s attitude towards Michelle is stereotypical and he has no any concrete ground to evade her from his university. The children with disabilities have, like others, under 14 and 16 of Indian Constitution, fundamental rights of equality before law and equality of opportunity in matters of public employment respectively. If the educational institutions, schools, colleges, and universities, being parts of society, do not

focus on the integration and inclusion of students with disabilities and deprive them of the opportunities of attaining education, by and large these integral agencies of society do not comply with the four pillars of education, i.e., learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be, the ultimate goals of education, covering a wide terrain, brought into consideration by the UNESCO in its educational manifesto titled “Learning: The Treasure Within” (1996). The UNESCO at the World Education Forum (2000) adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, re-affirming the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All (1990) and reports:

...all children, young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and the fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. It is an education geared to tapping each individual’s talents and potential, and developing learners’ personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies. (8)

http://www.unesco.at/bildung/basisdokumente/dakar_aktionsplan.pdf

The segregation and exclusion of children with disabilities from normal schools can, possibly, lead them on the periphery of the society and they may result as an extremely and doubly marginalized class among human beings. The exclusion of such children from normal school not only deprives them of mainstream education pattern but also of the mainstream living pattern, culture and civilization. Mr. Fernandez, being principal of a university, seems to be extremely illogical when he says:

“Kya aapne suna hai, Mr. Sahai,

aise students ko aam college me admission mila ho?”

(Have you heard of a girl like Michelle

getting admission in a normal college?)

Mr. Fernandez must think of the rights given to the persons with disabilities in Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Indian Constitution and other Acts announced from time to time at national as well international level to integrate and include such children in the mainstream society and to make them able to live with equal liberty, dignity and esteem. Persons with disabilities are different from normal persons only in the respect of different physical, sensorial and psychological scale. Persons with disabilities may be, mostly and often, like us in getting and understanding anything with normal intelligence and as they are called differently abled persons. “Disability rights activist often claim that being disabled isn’t something that’s bad for you’ disability is, rather, a natural part of human diversity—something that should be valued and celebrated, rather than pitied and ultimately

‘cured’.”[http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/10.1086/677621.pdf?accept%20TC=true&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents]

Mr. Fernandez, stereotypically, asks Sahai how Michelle will understand the lectures in the class, Sahai answers without any delay:

“Mai baithunga usake sath class me.

ungaliyon se parhegi, mai sikhaunga use.”

(I will sit with her in the classroom.

She will learn everything through ‘Signs’

every word, every letter.)

Mr. Fernandez’s last excuse is that the university is for only normal students and not for the students like Michelle. Mr. Fernandez, by making such blatant excuse, contravenes the internationally proposed premises of Article 7 of the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which intends to provide hurdle-free environment and directs:

Providing and modifying devices, services or facilities, or changing practices or procedures in order to afford participation on equal terms’, including installation of wheelchair ramps, elevators for people with mobility impairments, introduction of part-time work schedule for workers with severe conditions, availability for readers with visual impairments, and the essential sign translation for people with hearing impairments. (Kothari129-130)

Michelle is interviewed by the persons with ability but Mrs. Nair is assigned the task of a translator of lingua franca, language of common mass, into Sign Language and also as interpreter of Signs. Michelle’s interview, being very touchy, is full of influence and results as a measurement of her intelligence, i.e., like normal persons’ intelligence. Her answers, in Sign Language interpreted by Mrs. Nair, in the interview goes as the following:

Interviewer 1: Why does she want to study?

Michelle: I want to study...and learn... so that I may live with dignity,
With independence... and to be alive.

Interviewer 2: How many oceans are there in the world?

Michelle: For me every drop of water is an ocean.

Interviewer 1: What does knowledge mean to her?

Michelle: Knowledge is everything.

Knowledge is spirit, wisdom, courage, light, sound.

Knowledge is my Bible, God...

Tee! (Teacher) knowledge is my teacher.

After the interview the movie *Black* depicts Michelle's happiness and merriment at home which becomes very obvious landmark of her wish and determined will to learn and live her life with dignity and full of respect. She has knowledge of her condition resulting from her deprivation of education as becoming burden on her family, and hurdles in the development of society and the nation. Her educational deprivation can lead her into the depth of misery and considerable situation. The deprivation of rights to education of marginalized people as persons with disabilities and other neglected people always becomes a hard and fast contributory tool in making a doubly marginalized class. 'The Guardian', a well-known and well-accepted British nationally daily newspaper, published an article on 28 October 2003 titled "Amartya Sen: The Importance of Basic Education", Amartya Sen's speech given at the Commonwealth education Conference, Edinburgh clearly puts: "When people are illiterate, their ability to understand and invoke their legal rights can be very limited, and educational neglect can also lead to other kinds

of deprivation. Indeed this tends to be a persistent problem for people at the bottom of the ladder, whose rights are often effectively alienated because of their inability to read and see what they are entitled to demand and how the educational gap clearly has a class connection.” [<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2003/oct/28/schools.uk4>

Michelle, after hard diligence and several times failures, completes her B.A. at the age of forty but her Mentor, Debraj Sahai, himself becomes victim of Alzheimer, a disease which makes the victim lose memory or past experiences. Michelle, being herself once disabled, empathizes with Sahai by making effort to remind him all the past experiences have felt together.

Though the movie *Black* has very strong positive impact in the evolvement of unbiased and right attitude towards persons with disabilities still have demerits and flaws. As Michelle’s visual disability becomes the cause of her taking longer time than other students in the exam, the examiner attempts to snatch the exam copy from Michelle as she is not able to complete her writing in the prescribed time. The examiner snatching exam copy asks:

The Examiner: Time up, Michelle...time up, Michelle.

You’ve already had extra time.

Michelle.... I will take the paper out then.

It is very apt and evident that India and other international countries, in many legal cases have solved the legal prosecution regarding the time given to persons with disabilities indifferent exams. Jayna Kothari, in his book titled *The Future of DisabilityLaw in India* (2012), puts about such a case as:

In the case of ‘National Association for the Blind and Others v. Central Board of Secondary Education and Others’, the Delhi High Court directed to grant an extra hour to blind students (appearing for a written examination): meaning thereby that they shall be given four hours instead of three hours given to normal students.(Kothari 79)

Such appreciable steps taken to benefit the persons with disabilities can lead them towards integration and inclusion and can make them feel positive towards their inclusion and participation in the mainstream society. Rumi Ahmed taking into account the integration and inclusion of disabled persons puts the directory Article 4 of The National Policy on Education (1988-92) as:

Strenuous efforts should be made to equalize educational opportunity; including that the educational facilities for the physically and mentally handicapped children should be expanded and attempt should be made to develop integrated programmes enabling the handicapped children to study in the regular schools. (Ahmed 235)

Michelle, growing into a young girl like other normal young girls, has a positive and powerful wish to have Mr. Sahai as her lifetime friend which is reflected through her disapproval of acceptance of the blind-stick, given to her by Mr. Sahai as a gift after her admission in the university. She has strong emotions and passions of love which come to be alive and get activated when she comes to know of the kiss on the lips given to her younger sister, Sara by her husband. This realization of Michelle puts a premise that a young girl with some impairments and disabilities, like other usual young girls, has passions and pure love in her heart for a person, of opposite sex, who is near and dear to

the girl. Michelle puts a proposal before Debraj, her own mentor and even older than her, to love her and kiss her on lips. Debraj does so reluctantly but his desertion of Michelle is not acceptable to the disability rights activists. Such presentation, made by mass media including television, radio, film, cinema, drama, newspapers, can lead to stronger and more critical socially stigmatized picture of persons with disabilities.

In societies where there is premium on beauty, youth and fitness, people with visual disabilities are particularly stigmatized. The more 'different' they look from the 'ideal' as projected through the mass media and films, the more is the discrimination and stigma they encounter. In society's collective illusion and idealization of the 'perfect' body, a person's visible disability gets the most attention and their other aspects as individuals are ignored. (TARSHI 26)

This movie, dedicated to Helen Keller, is based on Helen's struggle to achieve education and to live life with equal dignities and with rights of mainstream people. The movie also depicts the help of Helen Keller's teacher, Annie Sullivan, in her doing so. Even though the movie has maintained its audience's appreciation in its dealing with the effort and success of a girl with tri disabilities yet is under criticism because its first half part is copy of the English movie *Miracle Worker*(1962) directed by Arthur Penn and released in the USA. But the director of *Black* rejects the charge of committing plagiarism. Finally the movie deals with the exploration of an unrecognized girl child's educational achievement running on the path of life full of hurdles and barriers in different forms.

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