

Conclusion

Mainstream Hindi films appropriate the conventional idea of division of society on the basis of Hindu caste system. The struggle of Dalit community for equality and abolition of caste system is ignored in Hindi films. The depiction of Dalit issues and their exclusion is largely appropriated by dominant castes, which obstruct the authentic portrayal of grim reality of caste system. Most of the artists like heroes, script writers, producers, directors belong to upper caste elite families and it results in hegemony of upper castes in process of filmmaking. The bitter experiences of Dalit community are ignored in film industry as their sub-human status is treated as rational in upper caste society. Dalit individuals are neglected in society as they are not a part of society. Dalits do not play any part in creation of cultural and historical narratives of mainstream society. Dalits who constitute near about 200 million in India, were neglected in cinema industry. On the other hand, regional cinema like Marathi and Tamil cinema represents Dalit stories with an insider perspective. Bollywood films show themes of marginalisation but it only revolves around small farmers, poverty, corruption, cruel landlords etc.

Movies like *Aarkshan* and *Achhut Kanya* talk about caste discrimination but within the upper caste political discourse. These movies talk about issues related to quotas and upper caste perspective on merits while need of waging a war against the social evil is not examined beyond upper caste perspective. The caste representation in Hindi films is stereotypical as they are represented as dumb and foolish who survive on the benevolence of upper caste society. Dalits are always represented as victims who survive on the leftovers of upper caste community. Most of the times Indian cinema represented the financial problems of Dalits and ignored their social and cultural

exclusion. Mainstream films portray gentle side of upper caste community by plotting an upper caste saviour who fight on the behalf of Dalit community. In the end Dalit community accept these heroes as their saviour and start worshipping him. We can say that cinema does not show the real aspect of Dalits and they represent the traditions, art forms, cultural practices and language of Dalit community as uncivilised and degraded. This work tried to explore the possibility of Dalit cinema as an alternative to mainstream cinema. It also shows that how films transform the language of cinema with the help of their way of representation. It is important to explore the reasons behind the total absence of Dalit community from media resources.

Dalit cinema includes movies emphasising the problems of Dalit community without any appropriation. Rather than focussing on the romantic aspects these movies focus on the issues related to Dalit community. Intellectuals and artists who believe that cinema is an art form refuse to accept categories such as commercial films, art films, political films etc. It seems impossible to establish Dalit cinema as a totally different segment but we can incorporate Dalit cultural elements and their problems in mainstream movies with an insider perspective. Dalit cinema includes the core experiences of Dalit life with an insider perspective. But considering commercial aspect, it seems impossible to establish Dalit Cinema as a separate domain of filmmaking. Some of the recent movie has tried to represent Dalit cultural and social elements without any appropriation. Movies like *Kaala*, *Kabali*, *Article 15*, *Asuran* etc. focus on the life and struggles of Dalit community. These movies compelled us to think about the role of upper castes in discriminating the lower castes. There is a need for including Dalit struggles and cultural elements in cinema so that other caste audience can understand the grim reality of caste atrocities.

In the present context of culture studies and film studies, the language of cinema has widely been discussed accommodating Dalit perspectives. Earlier movies started endorsing the values and culture of village and as everyone knows that caste is deeply rooted in rural areas these movies naturally represent Dalit community with an upper caste perspective. In most of the mainstream Dalits are portrayed as voiceless people who are victims of unjust social system. They are represented as people who need sympathy and goodwill of upper caste society for their survival. But now the scenario is changing and Dalit characters are projected with originality without any appropriation. Now movies start focussing on the basic and core issues of caste discriminatory practices. Most of the films are inclined to represent upper caste system society, giving a limited space to marginalised population. Dominant castes have actively thrust their hegemony on the medium of cultural expression. The social interaction depicted in films reflects the mainstream community's unjust attitude toward the brutal realities of society. Most of the Bollywood celebrate upper caste traditions and culture that is not related with Dalit-Bahujan culture. These films represent an ideal state that do not care about the concerns of poor Dalit population.

Indian screen personalities often talk about street dogs, education for poor students, medical facilities, sanitation, electricity and many other social evils but they rarely talk about Indian caste system. Dalit characters are portrayed either as criminals or victims and most of the times they are played by actors from upper castes. Indian film industry not only portrays them as criminals rather they failed to represent Dalit art forms, food habits and culture of Dalit community. Art forms such as Dalit theatre or their folk drama or songs receive no recognition in mainstream film industry. Art forms produced by so called lower castes were not acknowledged by mainstream society. Dalit folk

theatre and oral songs and narratives remain anonymous as they criticise discriminatory Hindu caste system and other social evils prevailing in society. The unique and sonorous beat of clapping and stomping, the banging of a drum, hymns recited humming in a peculiar tone, Dalit speech- characteristic of survival and protest do not fit into Brahmanical music tonality, nor does the colourful pattern of clothes in the articulation of self-identity surrounding the spiritual embrace of community politics. Dalit culture, traditions, art forms, food habits, their rituals, festivals etc. remains marginal to the mainstream.

Dalit filmmakers like Manjule, Ranjith play an important role in establishment of Dalit cinema as their movies raise serious question on caste system prevailing in Indian society. The stories portrayed by these directors are inspired from their personal experiences as a Dalit. They narrate their story through finely constructed narratives and celebrate their culture, locality and art forms. *Kaala* shocks audiences by portraying strong Dalit hero who fight against the Hindutva villain and answer him in his own language. There is a question that why Dalit assertion in mainstream cinema remains deceitful? The reason for escaping strong Dalit characters is the biased nature of Central Board of Film Certification which categorised caste as sensitive issue. Films representing strong Dalit identity and anti-caste struggles against dominant upper castes are rejected by CFBC for highlighting sensitive issues. These films have to undergo the changes suggested by CFBC to get certificate. In this way CFBC maintains its caste biased nature and work as a puppet in hands of powerful people.

The collaborated efforts by Dalit filmmakers and artists can led to production of effective Dalit films that raise consciousness regarding Dalit issues in society. Dalit movies can strengthen Dalit movement by highlighting caste atrocities and exploitation.

The cinematic experience of oppressed communities can initiate social transformation by highlighting inhuman status imposed on Dalit community. Dalit cinema can be used as a tool in fighting the battle against discriminatory caste system. The production of Dalit centred movies is result of continuous efforts of filmmakers, artists and intellectuals belonging to Dalit-Bahujan segment, and not of the mainstream filmmakers who inherited everything from their ancestors and use their creativity and resources for production of films that praise their culture and values. Here, creativity can be used as a tool to unveil the oppressive caste system maintained by powerful people.

Indian cinema is involved in appropriation of caste issues by misdirecting reality into myth. Here the bitter social realities of the caste system are hidden beneath a narrative of discomfoting, self-effacing experiences. Almost every commentary on the Indian film industry talks about diversity, globalisation, the interrelations of culture and values, class dynamics and other issues. What is missing is an open discussion about the internal structure and relationships of caste. But now Indian cinema has started including Dalit issues in films without any appropriation. Though Dalit-centred films have long been in the market, Dalit-directed films are yet to become prominent in Indian cinema.

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