

DISABILITY REPRESENTATION IN INDIAN CINEMA: INVESTIGATING THE PORTRAYAL OF DISABILITY IN INDIAN HINDI CINEMA, ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF THESE REPRESENTATIONS ON SOCIETAL ATTITUDES

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Abstract - The research aims to critically investigate the disability representation in Indian movies, focusing on Hindi cinema and its effects on societal attitudes. It is not new that the Indian film industry has portrayed differently-abled characters on screen. People in this society have a typical mindset about disabled persons, and often such individuals may feel neglected. Hence, it is important to know whether cinematic representation of such conditions has changed society's views. The author has done a primary quantitative research via an online survey of 50 Bollywood movie industry professionals. The data has shown that Hindi films have successfully depicted disabilities and it has changed peoples' perspectives to a significant extent. However, there are still some biases and prejudices that remain the same.

Keywords: Disability representation, Indian cinema, Stereotypes, Stigmatization, Social consequences.

1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Topic

Indian films have represented disabilities in several ways, mirroring societal perceptions and cultural conventions. This is because characters with disabilities were represented as sources of inspiration, pity and even jokes, thus representing a range of attitudes (Sinha, 2020). However, some films address the difficulties of people with inabilities accurately while others exploit the stereotypes or dramatize the portrayals.

Particularly, Bollywood Hindi cinema has depicted incapacities, from commercial films to independent movies. The portrayal of characters with disabilities can be as realistic as it is cinematic, depending on the scriptwriter's narrative needs. These presentations have substantially contributed to moulding the public views and opinions regarding people with disabilities. Positive and genuine representation can create empathy, understanding, and openness, challenging stereotypes and leading to acceptance. Yet, such inadequate or degrading representations can fuel prejudices and keep the existing biases and barriers to integration.

1.2 Rationale and Trigger

The rationale of this research is in the value of film as a powerful weapon for changing the attitudes of society. Having a clear picture of how cinematic representation of disabilities affects perceptions of disabilities in Indian society, it is essential to understand how Hindi movies have portrayed individuals with disabilities and what impact it has on public discourse. Hence, the study's trigger is to make the field of cinema more open and respectful

through this exploration by supplying the world with insights on increasing empathy and destroying stereotypes.

1.3 Problem Statement

This paper serves the purpose which is lacking the complete perception of the projection of disabilities in Indian Hindi cinema and society as a whole. The problem statement aims to clarify the reason for digging into cinema to provide the means for a broader and more balanced point of view.

1.4 Aim and Objectives

The research aims to investigate disability representation in Indian movies by focusing on Hindi cinema and its effects on societal attitudes.

Objectives:

- To examine the depiction of disability in Indian Hindi cinema
- To analyze the influence of cinematic representations of disability on societal perceptions and attitudes
- To identify common stereotypes and tropes associated with disability in Bollywood movies
- To explore potential strategies for more accurate and inclusive representations of disability in future cinematic endeavors

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the depiction of disability in Indian Hindi cinema?
2. What is the influence of cinematic representations of disability on societal perceptions and attitudes?
3. What are the common stereotypes and tropes associated with disability in Bollywood movies?
4. What are the potential strategies for more accurate and inclusive representations of disability in future cinematic endeavours?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter uses multiple previous resources, such as scholarly articles, journal papers, industry reports, etc., to gain a deep understanding of the topic. In this way, some literature gaps have been identified. A theoretical framework has also been generated to discuss the topic from theoretical perspectives.

2.2 Disability in Indian Hindi Cinema

Indian film representation of disability is constantly and dynamically mixed. According to while some of the movies have demonstrated the ability to depict disabilities realistically and sensitively, others still are tilting to typical traits and dramatization. The presentation of disabilities commonly expresses society's thoughts and norms, affecting people's views and

forming the direction of cultural narratives. A film like "Taare Zameen Par" (2007) which was directed by Aamir Khan and looks into the life of Ishaan, who is dyslexic, is a standout example. The movie takes the audience through the many hurdles the protagonist has to endure on his way forward to appreciating himself and his academic excellence (Udin et al., 2022). The movie has rightly depicted the problems faced by individuals with disabilities. However, other films have continued creating stereotypes or marginalizing the depiction of characters with disabilities. Consequently, the analysis of disability representation in Indian Hindi cinema becomes essential both for understanding the cinema trends and for the promotion of inclusivity and erasing the stigma. This is precisely important for the purpose of making the media environment more correct and real.

2.3 Effects of cinematic presentations of disabilities on societal views and attitudes

Cinematic depictions of disability are critically important for shaping society's perception and attitudes towards individuals with disabilities, as they affect collective comprehension and empathy towards them. Senjam & Singh (2020) said that positive and real stories contradict stereotypes, foster empathy and promote inclusivity. Ultimately, this has been instrumental in enabling the wider community to acknowledge and accommodate such individuals, and to provide the right kind of treatment. However, Gupta and Anand (2022) contended that such misrepresentations or stereotypes often lead to stigma providing an excuse for negative views and misconceptions about disabilities. They can be a measure of the rising of the existing barriers which in turn makes the performance of equality operations difficult.

Apart from that, as opined by Somani & Somani (2021), movie portrayals can either intensify the existing cultural prejudices or criticize the prevalent patterns of thought according to the narrative design and surrounding culture. In other words, a critical analysis of film presentations of disability is of primary importance to better perceive the subtle impact on social attitudes. By studying portrayals of disabilities in movies, researchers become aware of intellectual decency and respect for differently-abled people. Thus, they can develop an inclusive and empathic society.

2.4 Common stereotypes and tropes of disabilities in movies

Stereotypes and tropes related to disability in Hindi movies are often portrayed and they create misconceptions that stop from showing the true picture. Shivane & Yadav (2021) stated one common stereotype is the "inspirational hero" where characters with disabilities are portrayed only as sources of inspiration for able-bodied heroes. For example, in "Ghajini" (2008), the main character's short-term memory loss is exaggerated, just a plot device rather than an exuberant exploration of disability. The second type is called "the pity narrative" where characters with disabilities are treated as a source of sympathy or a particular burden. In films like "Sadma" (1983), mental disability of the protagonist is highlighted focusing mainly on her helplessness and dependence, reinforcing stereotypes of helplessness. Additionally said it often features the so-called "magical cure" where characters with disabilities magically overcome their condition. In "Iqbal" (2005), the main character, who happens to be deaf and mute, reaches the heights of cricket via the realization of his hearing

faculty which unfortunately is not usually so. These cases show how Bollywood frequently uses stereotypes and tropes. They also highlight the need for more accurate and subtle representations of disability in the world of cinema.

2.5 Strategies for precise and inclusive representation

In the future, new cinematic presentations should make an effort to show more realistic and inclusive portrayals of disability by using some specific techniques. Islam (2022) highlighted that filmmakers need to prioritize authentic casting by giving actors with disabilities a fair chance to portray characters that depict their everyday lives. Moreover, communication with disability advocacy groups and experts can be helpful in getting their viewpoints and making sure that persons with disabilities feel respected. However, Tekyeh et al. (2022) argued that stories should also avoid predictable and narrow-minded stereotypes and portray the diversity of disability within the community with relatability and depth. The delicacy in the narration, without the use of sensationalism or exploitation of disabilities for dramatic purposes is of utmost importance. Besides, this behind-the-scenes inclusivity consists of many aspects of filmmaking, which can help create more authentic portrayals.

Further, interacting with the audience and hearing the feedback from the disability community can give filmmakers an idea of how they are affecting the community and they can learn and improve (Kumar, 2019). Through the implementation of these strategies, movie-making can take the place of a stigma buster, an empathy builder and a real inclusion officer.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The Social Model:

It is a theory that does not let anyone go past a certain point between being an addict and being disabled. According to Barnes (2019), based on the theory, not being able physically is the opposite of disability and is considered an act of social segregation or isolation of a person from his or her own society. This theory has focused on illuminating the impact of society's failure to comprehend the perceptions about unique bodies. This is a sad state of reality where physical vs social judgment exists where people having this prejudice are influencing this discrimination.

The Normate Theory:

According to Gupta & Anand (2022), the word "normate" refers to a normal male who does not have the social stigma of any form of deformity and it highlights the difference in body types. For example, being an "abnormal" personality in "Taare Zamin Par", Ishaan's rare mental disease makes him weird and socially unattractive. He faced complications in developing relationships and friendships as he was not understood and accepted by non-deviant people in general.

2.7 Literature Gaps

Literature studies on disability representation in Hindi films tend to be limited to qualitative investigations of special movies or themes. In this regard, one may emphasize the lack of

quantitative research about the prevalence and influence of stereotypes and tropes on many parts of the movies. Aside from that, there has been no part for people with disabilities to play in the Bollywood film industry, including the audience's perspectives and the artists'. By dealing with these issues, moviegoers can get a better perception of disability in Indian filmmaking.

2.8 Summary

Hindi cinema that features disability reveals something about society, that is, that accurate representation of disability in films is so important. In most cases, films show stereotypes like "the hero who inspires" or others. Some of the solutions for more inclusive representation are casting truly and telling diverse stories as well as getting feedback from and collaborating with the disability community.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Philosophy

There are three types of philosophies: positivism, pragmatism and interpretivism. In this research, the *positivism philosophy* is ideal. This has helped the author to cover an extensive range of situations in a limited time. It serves as a means of systematized data collection and analysis enabling the researcher to quantify the cinematic representation of disability and its influence on society. Additionally, positivism facilitates objectivity that is achieved through the use of empirical data instead of subjective views (Nickerson, 2022). This philosophy has given this study the added advantage of being credible and also makes it possible to compare to the existing literature which makes the insights deeper.

3.2 Research Approach

For this study, the author has chosen the *deductive research approach*. The main reason is it has enabled to identify the relationship between research concepts and variables. The independent variable is "disability representation in Hindi cinema" and the dependent variable is "impact of the representations on societal attitude". The author can explain how these variables and concepts are linked to each other's causes and effects. Thus, a reliable conclusion can be made for a study. However, other approaches like inductive and abductive cannot provide these advantages and may lead to biased output. Hence, the deductive is ideal.

3.3 Research Design

The *descriptive research design* has been selected for this study. It has enabled an examination of cinema representation of disability which have an effect on the society image. Besides, this design gives the researcher an opportunity to gather highly specific data and describe events and incidents more authentically (Doyle et al., 2020). Here also the author has noticed the trends and patterns in the portrayal of the disability in Indian Hindi films. Whereas other designs have disadvantages like exploratory design produces qualitative data and correlational research contains no effects or causes. Therefore, these have been rejected.

3.4 Data Collection

To gather data, the *primary quantitative data collection technique* has been utilized. With this method, researchers can gain real-time reliable numerical data (Xu & Hickman, 2020). Here, the author has conducted an online *survey* of *50 Bollywood industry professionals* using *an 11-close-ended questionnaire tool*. The questionnaire has been developed with a Microsoft Form whose link has been shared over social platforms to gather responses. The responses are anonymous and no personal data has been acquired and participants can quit or skip any question if they want. Thus, ethics has been maintained. Though a qualitative data collection method can be selected, they have some challenges. Primary qualitative data via an interview required travelling or taking permissions which is very time-consuming. But it is easier and quicker to collect data via a survey.

3.5 Sampling Method

To choose the target population, applying a correct sampling method is necessary (Tabandeh et al., 2022). In this case, the *simple random sampling method* has been utilized. This method has ensured that every participant in the survey gets an equal chance of being chosen. Thus, bias has been removed successfully. On the other hand, other sampling methods might not be suitable in this case. For instance, the convenience non-probability sampling technique is ideal for secondary qualitative data. Therefore, all other methods have been rejected and the simple random sampling method has been chosen.

3.6 Data Analysis

In order to analyze the collected primary data, the *statistical data analysis approach* has been used. With this, it is possible and easier to present any data numerically through charts and graphs (Meeker et al., 2022). In this case also, the author has presented survey results in tabular form and pie charts. This ensures an accurate analysis. On the contrary, other approaches are not appropriate for this study. For instance, content analysis is done to analyze interview data and thematic analysis is ideal to evaluate secondary qualitative data. As this study has collected information via primary quantitative research, the statistical data analysis method has been selected.

3.7 Methodological Gap

Though the author has chosen the suitable methods, there are some gaps. The research data is focused on disability presentation in Hindi cinema only. Considering other language movies and their disability representation might provide a different perspective. Further, the sample size is small (50). A bigger sample might provide a broader insight into the topic.

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

1. To what extent do you believe Indian Hindi cinema accurately portrays characters with disabilities?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Extremely Well	54	27	50
Somewhat Well	22	11	50
Neutral	4	2	50
Somewhat Poorly	14	7	50
Very Poorly	6	3	50

Table 1: Responses to Question 1

● Extremely Well	27
● Somewhat well	11
● Neutral	2
● Somewhat Poorly	7
● Very Poorly	3

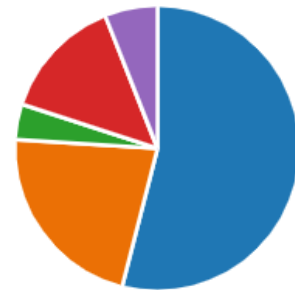


Figure 1: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 1

Most participants (54%) believe Indian Hindi cinema portrays characters with disabilities extremely well and only 6% believe in very poorly.

2. How frequently do you encounter representations of disabilities in Indian Hindi films?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Often	44	22	50
Occasionally	16	8	50
Rarely	20	10	50
Daily	16	8	50
Never	4	2	50

Table 2: Responses to Question 2

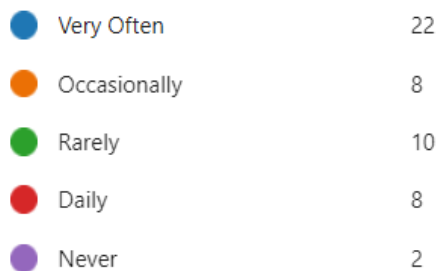


Figure 2: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 2

Most of the participants (44%) very often encounter representations of disabilities in Indian Hindi films and only 8% never encounter them.

3. In your opinion, do cinematic portrayals of disability positively impact societal attitudes towards individuals with disabilities?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Likely	32	16	50
Somewhat Likely	42	21	50
Neutral	6	3	50
Somewhat Unlikely	16	8	50
Very Unlikely	4	2	50

Table 3: Responses to Question 3

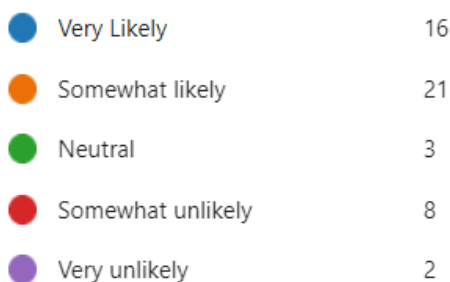


Figure 3: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 3

A maximum percentage (42%) somewhat likely think cinematic portrayals of disability positively impact societal attitudes towards individuals with disabilities.

4. How familiar are you with the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in the film industry?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Familiar	32	16	50
Somewhat Familiar	32	16	50
Neutral	6	3	50
Somewhat Unfamiliar	18	9	50
Very Unfamiliar	12	6	50

Table 4: Responses to Question 4

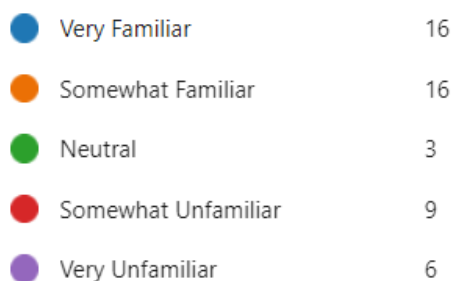


Figure 4: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 4

According to most respondents (32%), they are either very or somewhat familiar with the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in the film industry and only 12% are very unfamiliar.

5. To what extent do you think the film industry accurately represents the experiences of individuals with disabilities?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Extremely Well	36	18	50
Somewhat Well	36	18	50
Neutral	4	2	50
Somewhat Poorly	16	8	50
Very Poorly	8	4	50

Table 5: Responses to Question 5



Figure 5: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 5

As per 36% of the total participants, the film industry either extremely well or somewhat well represents the experiences of individuals with disabilities.

6. How satisfied are you with the diversity of roles offered to individuals with disabilities in Indian cinema?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Satisfied	28	14	50
Somewhat Satisfied	36	18	50
Neutral	10	5	50
Somewhat dissatisfied	18	9	50
Very dissatisfied	8	4	50

Table 6: Responses to Question 6

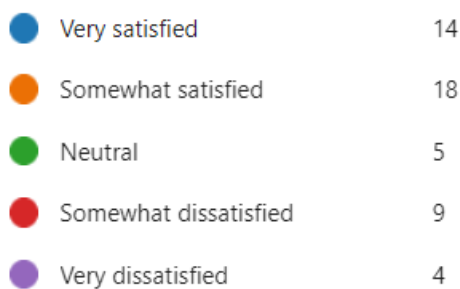


Figure 6: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 6

Most of the surveyed respondents (36%) are somewhat satisfied with the diversity of roles offered to individuals with disabilities in Indian cinema. Whereas, 8% are very dissatisfied.

7. Do you believe that accurate representation of disabilities in cinema contributes to increased empathy and understanding in society?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Strongly Agree	42	21	50
Agree	28	14	50
Neutral	8	4	50
Disagree	18	9	50
Strongly Disagree	4	2	50

Table 7: Responses to Question 7

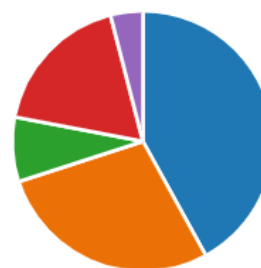
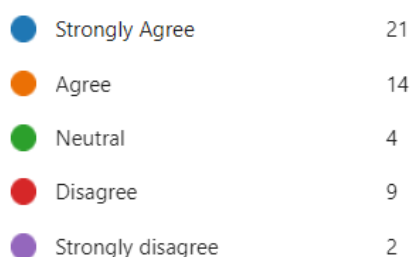


Figure 7: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 7

A significant percentage (42%) strongly agree that accurate representation of disabilities in cinema contributes to increased empathy and understanding in society. However, only a small percentage (4%) strongly disagree with this fact.

8. How likely are you to recommend films that portray disabilities positively to your peers or colleagues?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Likely	42	21	50
Somewhat Likely	28	14	50
Neutral	6	3	50
Somewhat Unlikely	16	8	50
Very Unlikely	8	4	50

Table 8: Responses to Question 8



Figure 8: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 8

As per 42%, they are very likely to recommend films that portray disabilities positively to their peers or colleagues. However, 8% will very unlikely recommend such films.

9. In your experience, do you think the film industry adequately includes individuals with disabilities in behind-the-scenes roles?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Strongly Agree	39	19	50
Agree	22	11	50
Neutral	12	6	50
Disagree	16	8	50
Strongly Disagree	10	5	50
One participant did not respond			

Table 9: Responses to Question 9



Figure 9: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 9

Most participants (38%) strongly agree that the film industry adequately includes individuals with disabilities in behind-the-scenes roles. However, 10% strongly disagree with this fact.

10. How often do you feel that Indian Hindi cinema perpetuates stereotypes about disabilities?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Very Often	32	16	50
Occasionally	26	13	50
Rarely	12	6	50
Never	18	9	50
Daily	12	6	50

Table 10: Responses to Question 10

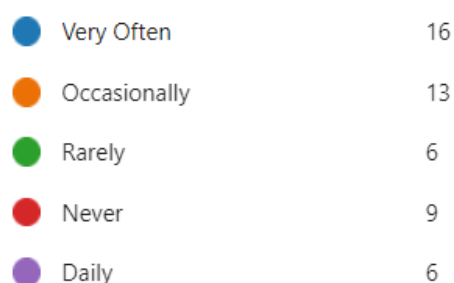


Figure 10: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 10

Most of the respondents (32%) very often feel that Indian Hindi cinema perpetuates stereotypes about disabilities. Though 24% feel it daily.

11. To what extent do you think the film industry has contributed to changing societal perceptions of individuals with disabilities?

Options	Percentage	Respondents	Total Participants
Extremely Well	36	18	50
Somewhat Well	38	19	50
Neutral	2	1	50
Somewhat Poorly	16	8	50
Very Poorly	8	4	50

Table 11: Responses to Question 11

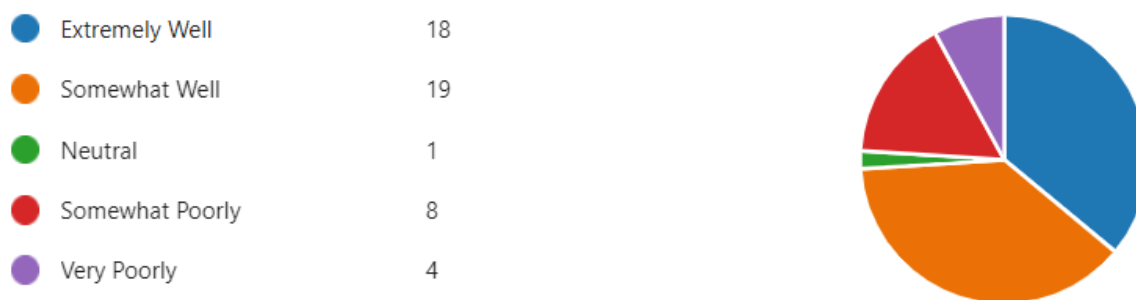


Figure 11: Pie chart presentation of the responses to Question 11

According to most of the participants (38%), the film industry has contributed somewhat well to changing societal perceptions of individuals with disabilities. On the other hand, only 8% think the industry has contributed very poorly to this direction.

4.2 Discussion

Many of the participants might think that the Indian Hindi cinema industry gives a very good portrayal of characters who are disabled because of a number of factors. To begin with, according to Mahajan et al. (2022), there could be high-quality pictures that are shown in a sensitive and real way and win prestigious awards and wide popular approval. In their own way, these films can demonstrate the difficulties faced by individuals with disabilities, but at the same time, demonstrate their positives and show their resilience. They may have caught the attention of audiences and industry experts. Furthermore, Deb (2022) argued that seeing characters with disabilities as heroes or central figures in mainstream movies helps to reinforce this mentality by defying stereotypes and promoting inclusiveness. Besides this, as per the survey results, the implication of movies with powerful disability stories and high levels of advocacy for the rights of the disabled in society may have had a positive impact on the roots of the participants about the stories of the differently-abled in Indian cinema.

The extent to which Bollywood films have approached disabled people in this nation's movies is generally believed to be in relation to the number of characters with disabilities who appear in both mainstream and independent films. As per the study by Downing (2022), this myriad of expressions includes many genres and narratives, such as drama and comedy; these representations manifest the recurring topic of disability in Indian movies. Stated that people with disabilities are frequently portrayed as leading characters or major side characters in these movies, in addition to driving the plot and providing more complexity to the movie's theme. Nevertheless, the author has interpreted that the multiple appearances may not necessarily imply the accurate or sophisticated representation of various cultures. However, Beevi (2020) argued that movies have confirmed the importance of understanding how disabilities are portrayed and the part played by this representation in influencing people's prejudices and attitudes.

On the contrary, the data suggests that cinematic portrayals of disability may enhance the social attitude towards such people as they promote comprehension, sympathy and tolerance. Films portraying such real-life characters have the potential to immortalize these characters destroying all stereotypes and misconceptions about such people. Besides uplifting

images, this approach can be employed as a way to promote social improvement by raising awareness about human rights activism and bringing in a society full of compassion and free from prejudice. Furthermore, as per research by Pathak & Biswal (2021), movies that depict people in wheelchairs playing different characters in various scenarios can serve to normalize their presence in pop culture, thus contributing to a more harmonious and balanced society.

From the survey result it is seen that the way the audience of the society sees the cinematographic presentation of disabilities is affected by several factors, such as culture, personal experience and media impact. As per the author's interpretation of the data, disability-friendly images that overthrow stereotypes and create a welcoming world may help to change the public perception of people with disability. Nevertheless, Sheth et al. (2021) said that these stereotypes and stigmatization as well as a lack of education about the rights of persons with disabilities keep the same way of thinking and prejudice in India's society. Movies often fall short of raising awareness and empathy in this portrayal by movies that employ stereotypes, sensationalism and tokenism. The other type of underrepresentation of individuals with disabilities both on and off screen in the film industry limits opportunities for real storytelling and people with disabilities engagement with disability issues.

The Bollywood industry can have a twofold effect on the representation of individual experiences of disability through the authenticity of the narrated story, diverse casting and work with disability advocates. As per the learner's interpretation, films that present a true portrait of individuals with disabilities in terms of their struggles, achievements, and everyday life provide the viewers with a genuine picture of these people and thus correct people's views and prejudices. The best scenarios create empathy, a sense of understanding and even acceptance which will finally lead to a favourable and just society. Moreover, being the means for people with disabilities to share their experiences and perspectives can strengthen the visibility and representation of their stories in the alternative media. However, the results have shown that providing different career options to differently-abled people through Indian cinemas may have numerous advantages. Firstly, Ahuja & Pundir (2022) said it boosts the sense of belonging as individuals with disabilities are represented in all the roles and plots which are played on the screen. This helps to dismantle the stereotypes and create a better understanding of these issues for society in general. Secondly, it gives the disabled actors the chance to try out their abilities and skills, making the show look more diverse and realistic. Similarly providing diverse roles can make people aware of the differences among people through highlighting the views and contributions of various individuals with disabilities, for the emergence of empathy and social change actively.

The diverse recruitment of individuals with disabilities for the backstage of the movie industry has a lot of advantages as per most survey respondents. This provides for diversity and representation in all the facets of filmmaking which allows for the inclusion of people with disability into the creative process as well as parts of decision making. Even as per, this representation has diversified and encompassed more authentic and nuanced portrayals of people with disabilities in front of the camera, offering real-life experiences individuals can provide the necessary insights and perspectives. To begin with, it harnesses a more unifying and fairer workplace that promotes diversity and inclusion, making the movie industry more accessible. Furthermore, as per the author's interpretation from the survey data, getting people

with disabilities involved in these roles means they can also serve as an example for other businesses, showing how beneficial having different perspectives and talents in creative fields can be. Moreover, behind the scenes, the Indian Hindi cinema has proliferated disability stereotypes because of different aspects, such as commercial interests, lack of awareness and unconscious inclinations. Stereotypes could be reinforced for theatrical effect or to get the preference of viewers who are partial to popular mediums rather than overplayed images that are static. Furthermore, the lack of both on-screen and off-screen representation of individuals with disabilities curbs the chances of accurate storytelling and deep involvement in disability issues. In addition, societal prejudice and myths about incapability might be the enablers of the continuation of stereotypes in movies that in turn reveal existing biases and obstacles to inclusion.

The data prove that portraying the differently able people's conditions on screen has a great impact on society's behaviour and perception towards them in real life. One of the main responses is that films depict characters with disabilities perfectly, which supports the positive role of the cinema on social attitudes towards disabilities. Furthermore, there is a significant portion of people who think that movie representation of disability makes the negative attitude of society towards people with disabilities more positive and brings about more compassion and understanding. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that though the movies probably have some impact, views of and prejudices about people with disabilities in this country are rather unchanged suggesting that the complex nature of societal attitudes is far more difficult to change. The research, on the other hand, portrays the ability of movie depictions to shape the public views and ways toward differently-abled people. This illustrates the significance of true and inclusive characterizations as vehicles of social improvement and inclusiveness. Thus, this study has answered the research questions and filled the gaps.

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Overall Conclusion

This research paper has explored the depiction of disability in Indian Cinema and the effects it has on the public's attitudes. For that, the author has done primary quantitative research via a survey of 50 Bollywood industry professionals that has indicated several crucial results. To start with the majority of the responders perceived Hindi films' portrayal of characters with disabilities as very well done which means that there is a positive impact created on society's perception. On the one hand, there is a serious argument about avoiding the perpetuation of stereotypes about disabled people, while on the other hand, a more complex and authentic representation can be achieved through the media. In addition, the representation of disabilities on screen has perceived that such disability themes were very popular in mainstream Indian cinema over the years. While this is a more common trend, the lack of inclusive depiction in the film industry as a whole recognized the gap between representation and inclusivity. The study has also recognized cinematic portrayals of disability as a positive factor that leads to a cultural change, where they think that accurate representations contribute to increased empathy and understanding in the whole society. However, there still remain unchanged opinions and prejudice against people with inabilities in this nation,

underlining the complex character of societal attitudes towards disability. In general, the author also validates the power of Bollywood cinema in differently-abled people's perceptions and behaviour. While film portrayals of disability have some positives like increased awareness and empathy, there are also some challenges such as perpetuating stereotypes and more inclusiveness in acting and storytelling. Thus, working to produce more realistic, true-to-life and genuine portrayals of society and people in this country's cinema in the future is critical for social change and nurturing an inclusive society.

5.2 Recommendations

Encourage collaboration: Encouraging alliances between Indian filmmakers and disability rights campaigners is a way of making sure that the cinema with the highest number of native speakers presents disabilities in a sensitive and appropriate way. Working together with the professionals in the film industry can give people invaluable know-how and aid at any step of the way.

Promote diversity in casting: Extending the horizons of actors with disabilities who can play parts that are disabled people on screen can successfully lead authenticity and inclusive in the cinema representations. This might improve the stereotypes and brighten the visibility of disabled people in the filmmaking industry among the masses to stop discrimination.

Raise awareness and education: Legislating laws and rolling out plans can finally increase the awareness of the disability law and uplift the acceptance and understanding of individuals with disabilities. This category can comprise educational programs and general awareness campaigns that can be facilitated through workshops to address perpetuated stereotypes about disability in Indian cinema and elsewhere.

5.3 Future Scope

The future goal of this investigation is to determine the effect of such depictions shown by Indian Hindi cinema on the attitude of a wide range of audiences, including the disabled people themselves. Not only that but it might be interesting to explore the way popular culture, including movies, benefit from other new technologies, e.g. virtual reality, in order to improve the immersive experience of the disabled and help the audience understand and be empathic to every single individual. In addition, longitudinal studies can be used to monitor shifts in societal perception after successive films scored well in their depiction of disability.

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