



Breaking the Stereotype Gay Representation in *Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan* and Lesbian Representation in *Maja Ma*: A Movie Study.

Nidhi Prafulbhai Jethava

Research Scholar

Department of English Maharaja Krishnakumarsinhji Bhavnagar University

Abstract:

Movies are part of popular culture, which creates both positive and negative impacts on audiences. Screen has the power to change the perspectives and mindsets of mass. Our world is changing, and controversial subjects are being mainstreaming of the movies. Somehow representation of the third gender in films creates a positive impact on their acceptance in society. *Maja Ma* and *Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan* both are movies representing queers as a mainstreaming of the theme. If we are looking at the history of the presentation of queer people in Bollywood it had been negatively presented but some movies change the stereotype of Movies and societies. After the discrimination of Article 377 In India queer people are legalized, but in our society their acceptance is problematic. This research article focuses on how cinematic representation of the third gender creates an impact on society, mass, and especially third gender community and their problematic acceptance. Another important aspect is how cinema represents LGBTQAI+ on the screen. Semiotical representation is also a matter to be considered. Not only highlighting their contradictory gesture but also their emotional struggle should be considered or not.

Keywords: Gay, Lesbian, representation, Movies.



Introduction:

In society especially in India, the acceptance of Gays and lesbians or any third gender is problematic. But time and again our perspective has been changed and we started to accept them. Now Gay and Lesbian both are becoming strong areas for research. Lesbian and gay studies are the part of queer theory. “Both lesbian studies and gay studies began as “liberation movements”—in parallel with the movements for African American and feminist liberation— during the anti-Vietnam War, anti-establishment, and countercultural ferment of the late 1960s and 1970s. Since that time these studies have maintained a close relation to the activists who strive to achieve, for gays and lesbians, political, legal, and economic rights equal to those of the heterosexual majority.” (Abrams and Harpham #) In countries like India, movies are the most influential source. Nowadays queer cinema is also becoming a popular term in the field of cinema. New Queer Cinema is the name given to a wave of queer films that gained critical acclaim on the festival circuit in the early 1990s. Coined, and largely chronicled, by film theorist B. Ruby Rich, New Queer Cinema, or NQC as represented the exciting prospect that lesbian and gay images and filmmakers had turned a corner. (Aaron, Michele, editor. *New Queer Cinema: A Critical Reader*.) In this research paper researcher will discuss how with the help of some Popular movie directors tried to break stereotypes. Both the Movies *Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan* and *Maja Ma* are movies that break the conventional ways of representing the third gender.

Literature review:

“The LGBT community in India faces a lot of struggles in daily life from lack of acceptance in society to discrimination. The struggle is to find a space in society where gender nonconformity is not being condemned as abnormal. They are never portrayed as accepted members of the society. They are majorly portrayed as outlandish characters who are only there in the movie just as comic quotient. Doubted, ostracized, stigmatized, and criminalized for centuries, sexual minorities are now stepping out from the shadow of invisibility.” (Kaur #)



If we are looking for the history of Bollywood we got that the representation of queer was problematic and somehow they were represented in a grotesque way, “The first-ever gay character seen in an Indian movie is an orange mohawk sporting Anupam Kher in Mast Kalandar (1991). The familiarity with that character and Abhishek Bachchan’s Abbas Ali in Bol Bachchan (2012) goes beyond the floral shorts, bent wrists, and effeminate hip sways – it’s the idea that gay men are a caricature – an abnormal version of an actual human being.” (Bose)

Slowly and steadily our perspective has changed and Bollywood brings the third gender as a central character. “Bollywood tried to remove the barriers and misinterpretation of gay characters in mainstream cinema. Indian cinema has made a few masterpieces it comes to queer identities and one of the ones about female bonding and lesbianism was the fire. However, the censorship hit hard on the filmmakers and the movie and led to heavy protests.” (CHUGH and KUMAR #)

If we look back into the history of representing lesbian characters in Indian cinema how one can forget Deepa Mehta’s *Fire* (1996)? In *Fire*, there is “Radha and Sita are represented as Indian women caught in an oppressive web of commitments to family, arranged marriages, and traditional patriarchal notions of duty. The film documents the attraction, intimate friendship, and eventual lesbian relationship between the sisters-in-law. When their secret is discovered, they leave their husbands, breaking free from the oppressive bonds of patriarchal control over their sexuality and identity rather than begging their husbands for forgiveness.” (Burton #)

“In making films that deal with female sexuality and lesbianism explicitly, there appears to be an active assertion that Indian society at large has matured and is ready to face such sensitive and even possibly problematic issues. However, Indian society is largely conservative and the films dealing with the subject of lesbianism, centering on the problem of female sexuality, are in reality being made for a society where it is still deemed taboo to talk about female sexuality openly, let alone expose the issue on the big screen.” (KAUR, GURPREET.)



Research Objectives.

1. To study the representation of Lesbian and Gay in *Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan* and Lesbian representation in *Maja Ma*.
2. To study the impact of portraying a third gender among the masses.
3. To study the changes in the LGBTQAI+ community.
4. To study the changing perspective on Indian Cinema.

Identification of research problems.

1. Why is the acceptance of the third gender always problematic?
2. How is Indian cinema representative of the third gender?
3. How LGBT+ characters are presented on the screen?

Hypothesis.

Considering the questions presented above, this research works on the assumption that representation of the LGBTQAI+ community in cinema is somehow still problematic, and at some point, they are becoming the central idea of the movies. The research focuses on the changing perspective of representing the third gender on screen. Both moves are fascinating while we are thinking about the LGBT+ community.

Methodologies and techniques to be used:

The research method for the present study includes a descriptive research method, which includes the representation of the third gender in *Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan* and Lesbian representation in *Maja Ma*. with the help of theme, characters, Frames, clips, the importance of lights, and Mise-en-scène.



Gay representation in Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan

Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan is a Bollywood movie released in 2020. It is the most significant movie which talks about the same-sex relationship. “The film is a big leap in the Bollywood culture of queer films being Bollywood’s first mainstream film presenting the love story of a gay couple Aman Tripathi and Karthik Singh. *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* holds a virtue for the Indian audience who is not much adapted to see the realistic portrayal of queer sexualities in mainstream films. Although the concept of gay homosexuality is treated differently in the movie with no history of the characters when they first identified as gay, personal barriers to acceptance faced by them and the story seem to run too smoothly for Aman and Karthik as compared to real life, yet it seems as if the plot is made receptive for the hetero Indian audience who holds a limited perception of sexual orientation and L.G.B.T.Q.I.A+ people.” (Kumar #)

Some scenes are very hard to accept in Indian cinema but one should assert this movie is a new wind for repressing LGBTQ+ people and the community. Initially looking at the movie one might find this a comedy movie but slowly and steadily audience came to realise that it is talking about the burning issues in our society. It’s about the representation of the gay couple, In history it is the movie in which the third gender is central. A gay couple and their love is the mainstream of the story. In the beginning Aman’s father won’t be able to accept his son as gay and he thinks that he might be suffering from some disease. At the end of the movie, Aman’s family accept the reality, and the movie gives a very beautiful message regarding the social and family acceptance of LGBTQAI+ people.

Our Bollywood is always famous for romanticizing things. People also love to read stories but people are used to listening to the story about King and Queen, but this movie talked about same-sex love. It’s about love between man and man. In the movie, there are lots of frames and clips which is not ordinary and acceptable at first glance because our screen never or rarely dared to represent such a reality. It’s not only about representing sex but people also need to understand their emotional mind states, question their acceptance, acceptance of their love.



Lesbian representation in *Maja Ma*.

Lesbian presentation of Bollywood has been stated in Deepa Mehta's *Fire* (1996). When *Fire* was released the theatre was brut by masses. *Maja Ma* was resealed in 2022 and directed by Anand Tiwari. "Society has stereotyped genders and sexuality and it is also seen as a personal target to people. The same thing is shown in the film, where the sexual identity of Pallavi is a matter of Patel family's dignity. The several existing myths on gender and sexuality in society are part of cultural memory that needs attention. The prevailing stigmatized ideologies in people's minds need a platform to understand them. Movies like 'Maja Ma' which addresses issues on the significance of gender studies are a ready-made stage for us to understand and realize the need for it. This research aims to analyze the movie as a text under the terms of gender, sexuality, and Pallavi's quest for self. It also examines gender from different points of view by showing a presentation of an aged lady. However, it changes our spectacle to see and accept a movie on a social topic rather than a basic narrative." (Shareef #)

Conclusion:

To sum up, we can say that both movies are very fascinating and it's breaking our stereotype representation. These kinds of movies are very important not only for LGBTQ+ people but also for our society. One should remain that LGBTQ+ people are not abnormal at all. Definitely, they got legal acceptance but it is time for their social acceptance as well. In fact, our Indian culture also consists of the story of Queer People. Our Two great epics the Ramayana and Mahabharata have queer characters. It's time to consider them normal and in popular culture cinema and media, palsy has very vital roles where you can represent the changes and controversial topics. Subh Mangal Zyada Savdhan and Maja Ma kind of movies are needed which discuss the suffering of the third gender and their acceptance. If they do have emotions like us then why is their acceptance still problematic? At least with the help of this kind of movie society might be aware of the struggle of LGBTQAI+ people.



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