PORTRAIYAL OF MUSLIM FEMALE CHARACTER: A CRITICAL STUDY OF BOLLYWOOD MOVIE RAEES

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Abstract

The Indian film industry provides a huge source of entertainment to the masses not only in India but also across the borders as well. With the help of artistic fictional expressions, it not only caters to locating facts and realities in the contemporary social structure but also has the undeniable capacity to persuade viewers in a certain way. Indian cinema or “Bollywood” has marked its place in the minds of its consumers and consequently restyled their perceptions about the world around them. There is a variety of subjects, issues and cultures that are projected by the Indian cinema. Amongst them, the portrayal of Muslim females has been the popular theme of Indian cinema. However, Muslim characters like women remain subject to bias. To dissect this phenomenon in Bollywood, present study is an attempt to examine the depiction of Muslim women in Bollywood. For this purpose, Movie, “Raees” (2017) has been selected. Norman Fairclough’s three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (2003) used as the methodological framework. Under the theoretical realm of framing theory, this study focuses on the portrayal of the female character in the Bollywood movie Raees. The study concludes that Muslim women are being portrayed as disconnected from their religious beliefs.

Keywords: Framing, Muslim women, Critical discourse analysis, Bollywood, Raees

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the 20th century, cinema has been serving as one of the most persuasive means of communication. Indian cinema has secured its place as the front runner among the international film industries. So far “Bollywood has been successful in producing nearly 28,100 films. It has grabbed a large number of viewers not only in the sub-continent but also internationally. In the sub-continent, the rate of viewership is equal on both sides of the border i.e. India and Pakistan. The passage of time has equipped the industry with huge technological advancement. Most recently Indian cinema stands equal with Hollywood. As media is known for its function to mould the perception of the audience to a greater extent. The film is an innovative manifestation performing the function of mass media i.e. to lead people’s perceptions of the world around them (Bhat, 2019).

“Bollywood”, with its multiplicity of themes, has been widely studied as an extensive influencer of the societies. The prevalent high reputation of the industry provides a huge space for the

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tradition as well as the ritual within its discourse. As far as the content is concerned, most of the share comes from Hindu norms and believes in contrast with the fact that consumers are not entirely comprised of Hindu audiences. Other than that the glimpses of other cultures and traditions can also be witnessed in Bollywood. Islam is among the most prevailing focuses of the industry. As an inevitable theme in Indian cinema, Islam is related to multiple sub-themes like terrorism, violence, intercultural misconceptions and other stereotypical interpretations (Hirji, 2008).

Similarly in Indian cinema, women are exposed to stereotypical representations. Women generally and Muslim women in particular, had remained widely vulnerable to such biases. The film producers in Bollywood have purposefully produced such films to mould public opinion that negates certain social evils. In the meanwhile, there had also been such movies that promote stereotyping of certain social factors. The Muslim characters are subjected to stereotypical depictions more often. The characterization of Muslims undergoes bias, and they are seen as terrorists, suspicious social agents, dons, and indulged in other evils. Indian film industry fuels already existing social and cultural divides by portraying Muslims as killers and bombing innocents. Such movies are made in which Muslims are shown as promoting terrorist activities not only in India but also all across the world. Movies like “Kurbaan” portrayed a negative image of Muslims (Bhat, 2019).

In the Indian film industry movies are produced while keeping in view the male glance, thus a representation of women is subverted. In these circumstances, Muslim women face double marginalization. Firstly she is stereotyped as a woman and secondly as a member of a minority. Thus in Bollywood Muslim women are exposed to both gender-based bias as well as religious partiality (Parag, 2013). Contrary to it there has been working in Indian cinema that has negated such stereotypes and propagated a positive impression with regards to Muslim women. Movies like “Nikaah” has portrayed women as central character that struggles to free themselves from not only the stigma of divorce but also the clutches of man. The Muslim protagonist successfully manages to live an independent life without any male companion to rely on. This actually promoted a productive stance that proved that Muslim women are courageous enough to win their freedom from the social constraints.

Keeping in view both role and scope of Bollywood, this study helps to give a clear picture of the discourses being utilized to portray Muslim women. This research tries to identify the dialogues that are being used by the Muslim women in Bollywood Movie Raees. Misrepresentations propagated through cinema are liable to create misconceptions not only among the general public but also on the psychology of women as well. To avoid such fallacy among the masses Indian film industry needs to reconsider its content in general and, about sensitive issues like Muslim women in particular. Therefore this study is an attempt to address the prevalent misrepresentations of Muslim women in Bollywood.

Aulakh (2017) observed in his study that cinema strives to be a powerful means of educating, entertaining, and guiding people at the same a universal source of propaganda. Indian cinema with a larger scope of both content and viewership contributes effectively. He further observes that characterization is the key part of a movie and characters are the main incentives to drive the vehicle of a movie. They dive into their roles in such a way that directly or indirectly influence the lives of the viewers (Aulakh, 2017).

Media has a very strong impact on structuring and restructuring the ideology of the people exposed to mediated messages. Media discourse can be located deep-rooted in anthropology. Media
discourse is in fact a multidisciplinary approach. It involves cultural studies, Critical discourse analysis (CDA), discourse analysis (DA) and conversational analysis (CA) and many others. It guides people’s understanding of the world around them, reforming the cultures, moralities, norms and values. Above all, it advocates for power. Bollywood through its cinematographic discourse implements themes of love, hatred, social abuse, social power, social injustice, war and conflict. The study notes that “Producers use specific tools like well choreograph dances, songs, actions, melodrama and well-knit plot to target Hindi speaking people. Hindi movies and dramas are of and for Hindi culture” (Sheikh, Ali, & Shaheen, 2018).

Bhatt (2019) observed that in Hindi movies Muslim characterization is prone to negative implications by the filmmakers and scriptwriters. Taking an example of “Kurbaan” he suggests that no character in the whole movie could give a positive impression about Muslims. The only purpose prevalent is that Muslims can play with the lives of innocents thus portraying them as blindly revengeful and devoid of the emotions like sympathy or care. However, at the same time, he also noted that movies like “My Name is Khan” (2010) proved to be a daring attempt to negate such misrepresentations. The character Rizwan Khan as the protagonist can be witnessed as struggling to remove a widely spreading misconception that every person with the Muslim name (Muslim faith) is a terrorist. This reflected a positive image of Muslims through Bollywood discourse. Islam has served as a powerful part of the Indian culture. Thus its expression in literature, arts and film industry is inevitable. Indian culture could not keep itself unaffected by the influence of Islamic ethos. It has provided multiple interpretations by the filmmakers and considerable content to work on. The Muslim community itself is contributing to the industry to a greater extent. (Singh, 2013).

It was observed that in Bollywood, the identity of women especially Muslim women has been a dire issue over time. The question gets a more interesting turn in the male-dominant as well religiously diverse society of India. On analyzing the Indian Hindi movies right it becomes evident that Muslim women are treated in stereotypical descriptions. In most of the instances, they are treated as plan and passive characters carriers of cultural and moral traditions with the least chances of growth or development in their disposition (Parag, 2013).

Sengupta (2014) observed that; “the way in which Muslim women are treated on silver screen makes a quick and lasting impression creating a jingoist national edifice as well as pushing the community further towards the peripheral margins of Indian society”. Thus making it clear that Bollywood is playing a negative part in the marginalization of Muslim women. Similarly, stereotypical depictions of Muslim women are more likely to carry social and religious distortion in multicultural societies like India. Such images may cause a divide within the nation. At the same time, the cinematographic depictions on the one hand make perceptions about the Muslim woman in the mind of people within a single social structure as well as leads to misconceptions prone to spoilt relationships across the border. The negative images are deep-rooted to the unfathomable extent that the stereotypical roles are conceived as normal true even to the Muslim viewers (Sengupta, 2014). Similarly, another study posed an interesting aspect while studying Bollywood and its discursive practices. Stereotyping particular subjects and characters are actually a way to gain socio-cultural power. To attain power certain institutions take help from capitalism. Capitalization and commodification of everything liable to bring more power, things are exploited. Thus certain social change is nurtured in a particular social order. Therefore certain genres being focused in a particular way in Indian cinema are in fact manipulative towards society. (Ali & Masroor, 2017).
Considering the role of Indian cinema particularly, women depictions need to be studied so that they can get a proper understanding and social space in the society. Language as power can do a lot in creating perceptions among the masses. Thus to understand the scope of Muslim women in the Bollywood language or dialogues needs to be critically analyzed. Mediated discourse can provide an insight into the Muslim women characters in Bollywood.

For this study, framing theory has been taken as the theoretical framework. The concept of framing theory revolves around the way media presents certain information to consumers. Goffman defined framing as “the scheme of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences or life experiences” (Cissel, 2012). Framing has its concept related to agenda setting also called 2nd step agenda-setting. As observed by most the communication researchers framing is actually an extension of agenda-setting extending the notion of “what to think (agenda setting)” to “what to think about (framing)” (Baran, 2009).

The role of cinema in mending society is undeniable. Like mass media, cinema has the potential to create perceptions about different subjects. The way filmmakers frame a particular character never goes neutral rather it follows a consequent perception among the consumers. As far as the portrayal of Muslim women in Bollywood is concerned the concept of framing becomes more prevalent. Whether they are portrayed as victims, submissive creatures, provoking, or devoid of equal rights, all have to do with framing. Writers and filmmakers in Bollywood by applying different frames incite certain prejudices among the masses about Muslim Women in general. Based on previous literature review and theoretical framework the following research questions have been formulated for the study.

RQ:1 What are linguistics choices in terms of lexical items used by main female characters that depict specific traits of Muslim women as depicted in the movie Raees?

RQ:2 In what ways different discursive practices depict the portrayal of specific Muslim women as depicted in the movie Raees?

2. METHOD

Norman Fairclough’s Critical Discourse Analysis has been used to analyze the character of the Muslim female in the given movie. From the recent past few decades, Critical Discourse Analysis as a discipline has been widely used to analyze different features and characteristics of the discourse prevalent in society in the form of mass media like films, newspapers, magazines, Television, Radio etc. Discourse as a separate discipline was first considered during the late 1970s predominantly in UK and Australia (Mey, 1985). Critical Discourse Analysis is employed to study various implicit ideologies and embedded incentives behindhand any communication or text (Agustin, 2009). Moreover, Rogors (2004) suggests that discourses require interpretations and explanations concerning their social context. Similarly “CDA is the analysis of linguistic and semiotic aspects of social processes and problems”. (Fairclough, 2003)

For analyzing, the dialogues of Muslim women in the movie “Raees” Fairclough’s three dimensional model of critical discourse analysis has been used by the researcher. According to Fairclough, there are three points to focus on for critical analysis of a certain piece of communication. He describes three-dimensional model in the following way;

Dimension 1; Text
The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts)” (Janks, 1997).

**Dimension 2: Discursive practice**

This level can be defined as “the processes by which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects” (Janks, 1997).

**Dimension 3: Social/cultural practice**

It can be described as “the socio-historical conditions that govern these processes (of production and reception)” (Janks, 1997).

Keeping in view all these points the researcher applied Fairclough three dimensional concept to critically analyze the discursive approaches being used by the Muslim women characters in the movie “Raees”.

3. **FINDINGS & ANALYSIS**

**The movie “Raees”**

A hit on box office, “Raees” released in January 2017, starring Shahrukh Khan and Pakistani actress Mahira Khan for the lead roles. The story revolves around the Muslim culture and Muslim characters. Shia Islam has been the prevalent theme in the movie. As far as the roles of women are concerned Raees’s mother and his wife predominantly portrayed Muslim women. In the story lead roles can be seen to be defending their wine trade (being their profession) thus making an interesting blend of Muslim values and forbidden ways of earning. The script have been written by Rahul Dholakia.

The movie “Raees” has been set in a multicultural society, with a variety of religious dogmas. Despite the fact lead roles have been played by actors of Muslim origin the element of religious multiplicity remains prevalent. India presents cultural, social and religious variety in such a way that is impossible to be found anywhere else in the world. People of different beliefs live together practicing their own beliefs. This social, cultural and religious mix has been kept in view while critically analyzing the discourse of the selected movie.

Hailing from a poor family Raees’s mother seems very conscious about her economic circumstances.

“Aaj banwana zarori tou nhn (I hope it’s not urgent)?”

In her dialogue, she ignores her son’s weak vision and denies the Doctor’s prescription for a pair of spectacles. Her financial situation compels her to postpone the purchase of glasses which her son Raees badly needs. These lines clearly define the worse economic condition she goes through.

“Kitna paisa lag jae ga (how much it will cost)?”

The given dialogue from the same conversation with Doctor also describes the economic status of the woman. She has to think about her budget and whether she can afford the glasses or not. Moreover, another important point to be noted in this discourse is that she is not ashamed of her economic circumstances rather in the confident tone she claims;

“No doctor I don’t want to give him borrowed vision rather a clear one”.

This dialogue is symbol yet powerful and describes the courage of the speaker. It reflects that despite being poor Raees’s mother is an independent woman in her spirits. She denies the offer of the doctor to get a pair of glasses for Raees instantly as she can pay for this later. She does not
want favours from others and does not allow others to pity her. Above all, in this discourse, it is revealed that as she is unable to buy her son a cure for the physical ailment she wants to make her son a self-reliant man, who should not sell his miseries to hurt his self-respect. Moreover, she wants to give her son a clear vision of mind so that he can see through the world with great precision. Here it becomes evident that her focus is to make a self-regulating man out his son in future.

“We will get it done in two or three days.”

With a little, this utterance reflects another important aspect of Raees’s mother. Here apparently being unable to provide for the purchase of a pair of glasses for her short-sighted son, she proves to be a hopeful person. She is confident that she will get money in a couple of days and with positive body language, she seems assured of the improvement in her financial situation.

Most of the doctors practising in low socio-economic cultures are well aware of the plight of the afflicted people of the society. Thus they carry out their profession in the spirit of service rather than as a source of income. Similarly, when the mother is with the doctor, she considers the doctor as her sympathizer and clearly tells the doctor everything that is in her heart.

Similarly, motherhood is always beyond every social or religious constraint. She is very sympathetic and courageous towards her children and is ready to face any situation. Despite the fact she has dreams with regards to her son’s future but she is also a realist and clearly knows that her son has to live in the same society, thus she is determined to make him self-reliant and independent both economically and intellectually.

Many social decisions are difficult or incomprehensible to the downtrodden because hunger is a fact that prevails over everything. This is the case of a mother who is a poor woman and has several sympathizers around her, but she does not trust them much.

“Hey! Why did you slap him?”

This informal discursive appeal also reflects Raees’s mother being a brave and fearless woman. Being a single mother, she manages domestic as well as professional affairs. She is not afraid of policemen when they raid her working place. Despite being indulged in an illegal profession of wine trade she shows no fear of any sort, rather she angrily questions one of the cops for justifying his slapping her employees. In short, this tone of the dialogue puts her as a strong and fearless woman who can confront not only men but police.

When the police take action against the liquor dealers, Raees does not go unnoticed standing amongst them. The policeman grabs Raees and slaps him. Meanwhile, Raees' mother is between the police and her son. She comes and asks the policeman with great nerve and anger protesting against her son being slapped. Police are loathed departments in such countries. Policemen are least trusted even hated, the reason may be the prevailing bias against the lower socio-economic cultures. This notion is reflected in the film that both, society and the police, hate each other to a greater extent.

Police perceive the small areas and slums as the fostering nests of the criminals. Similarly, since these poor people of the slums are willing to do anything for money, their economic conditions are used as a tool to rectify their crimes and promote their wrongdoings.

“Dhandy ka samaan hye mery (It's my business goods)”

Similarly, the use of the word “danda” has both explicit and implicit meanings. It explains that Raees’s is a working woman. In Hindi and Urdu, it refers to the profession or a means of earning but at the same, it also denotes an illegal activity. When she utters these words in response
to the query of the policeman, it gives clear yet double meaning. No doubt the talked about things were somehow related to her profession but these provoked doubts in the mind of policemen.

When the policeman asks Raees’ mother what is in the bag, she angrily replies that it is my fog, in which the police officer points to the empty bottles of liquor. Raees Her mother sells empty bottles to local winemakers. Since selling empty bottles is her profession she proudly called it “business goods” underlining the nature of the stuff she sells. Thus she seems to be a committed professional woman who loves her profession beyond limits.

Earn for living everything and distinction vanishes when poor people are left with no choice of their own. They opt for what is available and given to them. Thus they are often found to be engaged with such professions that are not regarded respectable in society. What matters in the eyes of society or the law is that they simply go about their business as a means to earn a living without discriminating what is good or wrong.

“Being a cop is your job, selling scrap is my business, Get this loud and clear’.

“For us, no business is small”.

Here she becomes furious when cops ridicule over her being a scrap seller (as she pretends). For her Job is a job and natural jobs does not matter. One needs to earn for living no matter what way he or she chooses. For her, there is no difference between being a policeman or a scrap seller. Words like “Get this loud and clear” reveal her authoritative and commanding nature. She is addressing a policeman but no fear can be witnessed in her disposition. The next words reflect her implicit as well as explicit justification for her professions (i.e. wine selling or scrap selling). The use of “for us” denotes that she is utterly referring to the poor people with no means of living.

The mother of the chief responds to the policeman. Just like you employ the police for employment, I sell this scrap and feed myself and my child with my small job. The nature of the business does not really matter for us as far as it provides us something to eat. No business is small for us.

Where there is poverty in the society, the small section of the society loses this understanding and discrimination between good and bad before adopting a profession. Social morals and even religious constraints fail to guide their judgement about earing sources.

“And no faith is greater than business”

These are the strongest discursive expressions used by her when she declares profession above faith. Here she seems to deviate from the Islamic norms. In Muslim doctrine not only wine consumption is forbidden but its production, selling and every sort of involvement in its dealing is also strictly prohibited. However, despite being a Muslim woman she neglects these teachings of Islam. On the other hand in these words, she justifies her profession not only to the cops but also own herself. She satisfies her conscience that there is no profession good or bad and no work big or small. Earning sources is above all these disparities. While keeping these things in mind this dialogue is a bit controversial one, as faith is everything to Muslims profession must be so that does not harm the religious beliefs of a person. But here being poor and having nothing to eat can serve as a good justification for opting for any profession without indulging in such arguments. Moreover, another important notion that is being depicted through these lexical expressions is that for people from the lower economic and social class source of earning is so rare that it becomes acceptable and respectable at any cost.

Religious values and traditions are seldom seen in the poverty-stricken class of Raees' family, especially when it comes to employment and hunger. These people do not consider it immoral before getting into a profession that is beyond their religious beliefs. They practice such
a profession without any shame or sense of guilt rather they justify it with different logic. Above all sometimes this illegal professional practice continues from generation to generation.

The practice of the society is that when they get into a business, then they do not think of loss or gains, they just stay in the business according to their needs and without even imagining to be separated from it, but continue to seek to expand their business

“It's true.”

These words have been uttered by Raees's mother in response to Raees’s question; “Is it true that no business is small? And no faith greater than business?” This dialogue is the repetition of the previous projects the very notion that the writer wants to emphasize in the movie. That Islam being strictly against the wine has been sub-sided by its followers when economic crisis befalls them. Thus profession is above all other faith or in other words profession (a means of earning) is the only faith that poor people have. Raees being an attentive child follows her mother blindly and learns everything she does and believes. Her reassurance to the notion of profession being beyond any religious dogma again places her as more concerned about her financial needs.

In the poor and middle classes, their business is the real truth, and when they are separated from it, they imagine the loss of themselves and their jobs, and they continue to be where they are, believing it to be true.

In this age source of employment is the reality of life. Social and racial values are neglected. The profession is considered the only truth of their life.

“As long as it doesn't harm anyone. Get that? Sleep!”

On the other hand, she declares her stance on profession conditionally true. The profession is above faith only it does not pose any harm to others. Here this is an ironic expression because her profession is doing detriment to a lot of people. Her tone is persuasive yet straightforward and commanding; placing her as being concerned about so-called morality to some extent. “Get that? Sleep!” is another important expression in which she considers the lesson she gave her son as easy to digest and with no complications to ponder upon it any longer. She orders Raees to put her words in her head and get a sound sleep.

Raees' mother explains to her son that no business is big or small since we work for it and she further argues that a business beyond being measured as bad until it does not do any harm to anyone. She thinks she is doing no harm since she is only supplying empty wine bottles. Wine may harm but empty bottles are perfectly harmless.

It has been observed in poor societies that when anyone in the family is involved in a certain profession that is not hurting or harming anyone, the other family members should also do the business. Not bad at all when they don't think about the aspects that make their business wreak havoc on far-flung societies.

“Why do you always beat about the bush?”

This dialogue has been spoken by Aasiya, the heroine, who complains that Raees is not straightforward in expressing his love for her. Here she is portraying a normal woman who wants admiration and love from her lover.

In this scene, Raees is talking to his beloved (future wife) and making a vow for his new life. Since he plans for a wonderful life ahead, she accepts him the way he is knowing his profession. She has also made up her mind that she will live with Raees.
It is often observed in society that when the relationship is strong, it prevails all other material realities. The relationship is everything ad it is enough to neglect all other faults in the person’s disposition. The concepts of punishment and reward, good and bad fade altogether.

“Then take me to your world.”

This expression places Aasiya as less introverted than a conventional Muslim woman. She is offering herself to Raees a man with whom she has no legal relation as per Islamic norms.

In this scene, since beloved has accepted Raees in her mind and she is happy to live with him. She ignores his profession and her love prevails everything else related to Raees and his life.

There is a tradition in societies that when the minds are in harmony with each other, then the distinction between good and evil disappears.

Get lost, wastrels! One slap will put you in your place! Oh, my!

Use of informal language and slang to get rid of the boys lusting after her, she depicts a conventional ordinary woman. Like every other woman, she reacts similarly as the women might have responded.

“Father’s down with cough again.”

Here she is portrayed as a caring and concerned daughter. She seems worried about the persistent illness of her father.

“May I ask you something? How did you address your father? What if someone calls you father (Abu)?”

Aasiya seeking permission before asking something from her husband places her in the formal tone supporting the notion that she has something important to tell him. Here she is shy to tell her husband that she expecting his child. Using symbols and indirect expressions attributed her disposition to be a shy woman, a conventional property of the woman of her culture.

Raees’ wife asks him by what name he used to call his father because in such classes most people also call their parents by titles which show social satire.

The fact is that when she has a child, she calls or tells the father only because of his connection with the past. Raees appeared as a half orphan child in the movie. So her sudden reference to his father gives a glimpse into his past. His solemn and careless reply is justification that he has no or less memory of his father. Despite all that when he realizes to become a father his happiness is beyond limits.

“It can shut down anytime.

We women must work to make ends meet. Help us, Raees.
We want to buy sewing machines and fend for ourselves.
But the banks aren’t giving us loans”

Here the women factory workers are expressing their concerns about the loss of their earning source. In conversation with the protagonist Raees, they are asking for financial help. Here they can be seen as the earning hands for their family. They are on the verge of losing jobs with no alternate hope. Here the theme of financial degradation is prominent and women are the victim of this deprivation. They are so poor that no bank is willing to give them any loan to buy a sewing machine. Here they seem to depend on a man who according to them is financially stable.

The chief has gained a special place and power in his class, so the people in his vicinity consider him as their Messiah “the saviour” and ask him for solutions to all their problems and help them out of miseries they are stuck in.
When one from the oppressed classes in the society comes to power and fame, the people around him consider him as their Messiah and seek his help in every difficulty. And it is this process that reinforces the rugged and addictive power in society. Because he thinks that this class is being helped, although with improper aid, gradually his obsession with helping the needy is taking him to the path where crime is promoted and there is no turning back is possible.

“Listen. We made 22,000 in cash today”.

The conception of financial disparity is prevalent again in this dialogue placing women concerned with managing monetary affairs.

This scene shows Raees’ business being taken over by his wife after Raees went to jail and she is proud to tell Raees the details of this business. She is not bothered by the nature of her husband’s business. She is happy to have earned out of the same illegal business that has turned Raees into a jail.

This is the way of society that when a relationship is established, sooner or later the whole family adopts it. This indulgence leads them away to distinguish between prohibited and legal. Their spiritual and mental harmony dominates everything else. Good and bad are no more than just words.

“You organise the cash
I’ll garner the votes.
Raees has done a lot for the people.
We'll surely win the elections.”

Another important dimension of the Muslim women is revealed. Raees’s wife is determined to persuade people to vote for her husband. In other words, she intends to run an election campaign for her husband being unable to do so. She asks Raees’s most trusted friend to manage for the money and she will convince people to vote for her husband so that he can be free and could continue her business as before. Here she gives up financial responsibility, previously the most recurring theme in the dialogues of Muslim women, and takes a rather tough responsibility on her shoulders. The financial theme is again recurring in these discursive approaches.

The scene shows Raees plotting to get out of jail, at the same time realizing that joining politics could guarantee his release. His wife and one of his close friends support Raees and decide to execute the plan. They hope that, since Raees has done a lot to remove the miseries of people, they will trust him and vote for him.

There is a series of more crimes in society than crime and more power than power in this society. In this process, the attitude of turning power into more power seems to be the cause of many evils and crimes. Nurturing a criminal can bring the release of the criminal in a similar social context.

“I’ve been noticing. You get worked up over every little thing.
What is wrong with you?”

Here is a wife Aasiya has been depicted as an understanding and supportive wife. Along with her other assistance, she provides psychological and emotional support to him as well. She realizes something is disturbing her husband that has changed his attitude to a greater extent.

The scene in the film shows that the hero's wife eventually adapts to his complexion and helps him with his tasks. She doesn't want to say anything that offends her husband. An understanding of psychology can be noticed here.
It is common in developing countries and lower societies that no matter what business or profession your elders or your business acquaintances are associated with, there is nothing wrong with having the same adaptation in your life.

“What happens to our world?
People's houses, money...? The money's gone!”

Both Aasiya and Raees have a dream world to bring to reality but when the law changes by the newly appointed CM. She mourns for their misery and inability what they had planned to achieve. “Money” supports the financial theme in the discourse once again.

The scene in the film shows that when all the money collected by the chief and the people sank, his wife asks her husband about the money and the hopes of the people, what will be their response now. No doubt Raees has never failed his people and even helped them with his own money, but when their money is lost in the hand of Raees no trust is left. Thus the power of capital is afar every other authority.

In most social systems, when there is a problem, there are only a few relationships that stand by, otherwise, everyone tries to avoid helping. Even if they have done it once they won’t do it again if one fails in the first place.

“How can it fall apart just like that?”

Again a more concerned and anxious tone is revealed here. She questions her husband that how he can give up on all his plans so easily. She can’t believe that situation can turn upside down like that.

“Think.
Talk to the cm. He might understand...”

In the continuation of her discourse, she suggests possible solutions to cope with the declining circumstances. She is depicted as a hopeful and encouraging wife.

The scene shows that his wife is also very worried about her husband thus forcing him to contact people who have ever been in business with him or are involved in his crimes. So that he may find a way out. As a loving wife, she offers every possible solution to eradicate the calamity that has befallen her husband.

It has often been the attitude in societies that greet the rising sun. They do not feel ashamed to change their attitudes with time. The same happens with Raees everyone turns his face witnessing his troubles.

“What good is yelling?
Will it get our money back?
Or, will it help build the colony?”

Back to back three questions give important discursive appeal. She tries to calm down Raees by telling him that being angry is not a way out. Mentioning of money refers to the financial approach again as a prevalent one.

“Tell everyone the truth.
Or, assure them that everything will be fine. It will be.
For god's sake...”

Again she becomes suggestive and tries to show her husband a way out of the misery. She requests him in the name of God so that he may not refuse what she is suggesting. She wants him
to be true to the people and should not keep them in the dark or deceive them. Here her morality is also reflected.

The scene shows his wife encouraging him and telling him to tell people the whole truth. People trust him and they will understand. Again as a supportive wife, she ignores everything and never fails to give her husband another hope to reflect upon. She also trusts the people whom Raees never turned away when they consulted him for help.

Although most of the reasons for the change in social attitudes are given priority over one's own superiority or one's work or one's thinking the assessment of what people might think about it is mostly considered as self-interest.

“You are innocent. 
And to prove that, you should live. If you don't escape, 
they will... Kill you!”

She strongly believes that her husband Raees is innocent so he deserves to be spared. Her innocence can bring him to escape from all the looming dangers. But for that, he must avoid being killed by the police encounter. Thus she wants him to run away before the police raid. He needs to be alive to prove his innocence so he should run away without any delay. A loving and concerned woman has been depicted here again. To escape all expected miseries first he needs to escape from his home in the first place. “They will kill” with a sorrowful tone shows the emotional side of the character Assiya.

“Get out of here, please!”
Her request is strengthening the notion of being concerned for her husband’s survival.

“I'm not going anywhere without you. 
Don't argue with me!”

When her all efforts go in vain and all requests are rejected, she then declares to be staying with Raees no matter what befalls them. Here these lines reflect her loyal and loving nature as a woman. She is ready to face every danger but does want to be separated from her husband. She does not want any arguments over her decision that shows that her decision is final and nothing can alter that. A commanding approach has also been placed here in this dialogue.

“Who called? It was Raees, right? 
Why did you call him here, Sadiq? 
What are you going to do with Raees?”

Suspicion is evident in these lines uttered by Assiya. She is concerned about Raees’s safety and wants to know about his wellbeing. She is doubting her husband’s most trustworthy friend because some mishap may cause harm to Raees. She is suspects why Sadiq is calling Raees here despite the evident danger. “What are you going to do with Raees?” is the most explicit form of her suspicion and doubt regarding the intentions of Sadiq.

“He is a businessman, sir. 
He never betrayed anyone.”

The financial and economic themes are again prevalent in the language of women. She believes that business is merely a way of earning living, it has nothing to do with the betrayal of deception.
The repetitive words like “business”, “trade”, “cash”, “money” provides a strong argument in support of financial concerns in the whole script of the Movie.

The scene shows that when the hero is caught by the law, his wife testifies to his innocence. She swears that her husband is not more than an innocent businessman. Despite being aware of everything she ignores the truth. Living in the system has made her devoid of the reality and distinction of good or bad. Similarly, her love for Raees has made her blind towards every crime he has committed. Not only does she facilitate him in his illegal profession but also she swears for his innocence.

In society, when people do a business or adopt a profession, then it changes the mindset of their relatives as well. First, they accept the nature of the profession and then consider it their right to do as they see fit. They justify the business with every argument conscious of the unconscious.

“Do not be unfair to him, Mr Majmudar!”

These are the powerful discursive expressions delivered by a Muslim woman (Aasiya). She blindly trusts her husband and thinks that the rest of the world is being unjust towards him. She has developed insight into the intentions of the police officer, thus she tries to convince him with an emotional appeal that her husband deserves fair treatment. Killing would be an “unfair” thing for Raees. She believes that since Raees has done well to a lot of people, he must be pardoned.

In the scene, the hero’s wife pleads with the law to prove her husband’s innocence. For her Raees is the justest and fair person and putting him behind the bars will be an injustice to him.

Relationships and attachment mould attitudes and make people completely ignorant of right and wrong. Since they have lost their sense of distinction between good bad they aspect other people to do the same. The same is the case with Raees’ wife who proclaims that the law is doing injustice to him.

4. DISCUSSION

Raees movie is a fictional story based on Muslim society. The protagonist is a liquor dealer and the female characters (mother and wife) are also supporting his profession in the movie. The language choices and the selection of words have a significant part to play with regards to the characterization of Muslim women in Hindi cinema. Muslim women can be witnessed as prioritizing their business over all other social and religious beliefs. Rhetoric like “Dhanda”, “Dhandy ka saman”, “koi bh dhamar dhandy se bara nahi hota” and “koi bh dhandy chota bara nahi hota” are powerful expressions. Such choices are a reflection of a social pattern in which economic gain surpasses everything else. In lower economic societies sources of earning often distort the distinction of good and bad.

The dialogues of Muslim women reveal their economic priorities and loyalty toward their male counterparts to the extent that the nature of the business is neglected altogether. Frequent and forceful utterances like “Dhanda” place Muslim women as professional and materialistic women. Putting profession above everything else normalizes the crime, lawless and illegal earning sources in the social context. When dialogues like “koi dharan dhandy se barh kar nai hota” delivered by the protagonist or the other important character reaches the audience, it tends to become a normal social practice. Common people, passive media consumers, are more likely to adopt such narratives and endangering overall social structure.
5. CONCLUSION

Cinema is considered instrumental to promote escapism among the people, leading them to believe in fantasies of their own. Consequently, they are subdued from accepting prevalent realities in society. People become devoid of acknowledging socially acceptable and non-acceptable content. Indian Cinema while considering its powerful role as a medium of idealistic treatment of society, needs to go beyond the prejudices and reconsider its characterization techniques so that Muslim women could develop their positive impression on the viewers. Findings of the critical discourse analysis revealed that in the movie “Raees” Muslim women have been portrayed under economic themes. Their dialogues have been constructed in such a way that they seem to be overpowered by the burden of economic and social conditions. At the same time, Muslim women have been positioned as least concerned about their religious beliefs and defending forbidden professions. She has been depicted as consciously satisfied with the notion that earning for a living makes every profession as respectable as the faith itself. The repetitive lexical expression like “business (dhanda)”, “money (paisa)” and “cash” etc. in the dialogues of women closely connects them to the socio-economic themes in the movie.

REFERENCES


