

A JOURNEY FROM STRUGGLE TO PROMINENCE IN THE INDIAN FILM *PINK*

Lourdes Antoinette Shalini^{1*}, Alamelu C²

¹Research Associate, Division of Social Sciences and Languages, School of Advanced Sciences (SAS), Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India, ²Professor, Division of Social Sciences and Languages, School of Advanced Sciences (SAS), Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, India.

Email: ^{1*}lshalini62@gmail.com, ²alamelu.c@vit.ac.in

Article History: Received on 24th August 2019, Revised on 27th September 2019, Published on 26th October 2019

Abstract

Purpose of the study: This work explores feminism as a conceptual framework for viewing society and its impact on women by analyzing the changes in women's life and attitude through the film *Pink*.

Methodology: The study is descriptive research and is analyzed through the content and follows interpretive methods for critical analysis.

Main Findings: An amazing, valiant movie that spotlights on real young women who live genuine lives and manage thorny routine issues, which every young woman faces all over the world and relates with.

Applications of this study: The present work is interpreted in the light of feminist theory and criticism which has paved path for many solutions all over the world through not only writings but also by various means, in which films play a vital role where the struggles have been brought out in the screen so that women could relate themselves with the characters portrayed in the films which are not only imaginative; but the real face of many unknown women in the society.

Novelty/Originality of this study: The present work differs and deals with the co-existence that this society should abide by, be it a man or women both have equal roles in the society and through the lead actor this bold issue has been dealt in the film *Pink*.

Keywords: *Feminism, society, prominence, status, liberation, Pink, interpretive methods for critical analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

Family is seen as an essential part, where women play a versatile role in the growth of family as a unit. The status of women, in most of the countries, was strongly connected to family relations; they were subjugated for many years as they were the most latent fragment of society; home was their only world and outer world were meant only for men, the bread-winners of a family. Hence, they were swathed by such a dark life that they remained ignored for many years and have faced many hardships and struggles; they have been tormented for years. According to [Harapriya Mohapatra \(2015\)](#),

Women begin their day at the crack of dawn and take care of the entire family, send children to school, pack their husbands' lunch. They have to perform their duties equivalent to their male counterparts. On returning home they have to complete all their household works and have to manage the same routine of the next day. The works they do at home are uncountable. This invisibilisation of women's labor fails to get them their due weightage in the family. [Harapriya Mohapatra \(2015\)](#)

Until now, women were only an entity of the family but of late they have become energetic participants from all walks of life. At present, women are becoming not only a noteworthy unit of society but also influencing the track of social change in society. The present society has begun recognizing the individual identity of women as their awareness and involvement in social life are mounting.

In recent times, women in India have also been freed from their chains of subjugation and they have changed drastically over the years. They are inflowing into certain novel fields that were unknown to the woman's sphere of role-sets; these are the involvement of women in economic, political, and social life. Women in modern times keenly desire to enter into a work career because of the serious economic requirements of the family and to achieve their goals to prove their value and identity. In middle-class families, much importance is given to the maintenance of high standard of livelihood as they need to fulfill the financial needs of the family; women participate in economic activities to accomplish privileged standard of living. Though women are progressive in and around still they face certain individual struggles which are hurdles to their success. These struggles prevail quite often in their lives which are untold and they are put into light through some vibrant creators in their novels and movies. One such struggle which is brought out into light is the movie *Pink* where the protagonists suffer by a false accusation for the only reason that they are women.

The emergence of feminist movements has a major influence on breaking the barriers of subjugation of women in this patriarchal society. Individual and social views resulted in changing the roles of women in family and society and influence of feminism is evident in communal structures. The feminist theory forms the base for the study of the experiences of women in society, specifically women's status and position within that society. Women have to break the barriers which act as a stumbling block in their way to achieve success and improve their status of living. The absence of these conventions in traditional and sociological learning is one of the criticisms that have emerged in feminist erudition.

This work explores feminism as a conceptual framework for viewing society and its impact on women by analyzing the changes in women's life and attitude through the film *Pink*. This work explores feminism as a conceptual framework for viewing society and its impact on women by analyzing the changes in women's life and attitude through the film *Pink*.

METHODOLOGY

FEMINIST THEORY AS CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND FILMS

The struggles of women are built upon feminism as a theoretical framework. "Feminists have recognized the factor of gender differentiation as the root cause of women's derogatory status in the hierarchical order of most of the societies." [Janet Richards \(1981\)](#)

The present work is interpreted in the light of feminist theory and criticism which has paved path for many solutions all over the world through not only writings but also by various means, in which films play a vital role where the struggles have been brought out in the screen so that women could relate themselves with the characters portrayed in the films which are not only imaginative; but the real face of many unknown women in the society. There are numerous media studies that act as weapons and pact with the recent social changes and also act as a gateway for women to vanquish their bondages of subjugation that tie them up in family and society. "Films are one of the great storehouses of society's stereotypes about women" [Blewett \(1974\)](#).

Feminist theory has an impact on film theory and new feminist criticism, as it deals with the predicament of women. The new feminist theory forms the base for the study of the hardships of women in society; particularly of women's status and position within that society. Women's experiences emerge from its social and economic structure. According to Jaggar,

Feminist scholars are distinguished from non-feminist scholars precisely by their common social interest in ending women's oppression, and they see their scholarly work as contributing to a comprehensive understanding of how women's liberation should be achieved. [Jaggar \(1983\)](#)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several works have been discussed by various writers in their works one such is [Nidhi Shendurnikar Tere](#) in her work "Gender Reflections in Mainstream Hindi Cinema" has stressed upon feminist film criticism and how they are reflected in films which portrays the real-life situations on screen.

[Mana Tabatabai Rad](#) in her work "Women and their Portrayal in Indian Cinema" has also dealt with feminism through films by applying Sociological approach to interpret select films that portray women both have victimized and empowered ones.

[Amala S. Charulatha](#) in her work "Female-Centric films in India: A Feminist Critique" has dealt with few Bollywood movies including *Pink* which is taken for the present study. Amala S. Charulatha has clearly thrown light on the feminist views which were brought out in the movie but she has raised a question how that the film industry has relied in on an actor (Amitabh Bachchan) but not on a renowned actress, to bring out this bold social issue which every woman face in their day to day life.

The present work differs and deals with the co-existence that this society should abide by, where the lead actor plays a supporting role to argue for the three protagonists and how though being a man, he comes to rescue the girls who have been falsely committed. Be it a man or women both have equal roles in the society and through the lead actor this bold issue has been dealt in the film *Pink*.

Pink is a significant film, in a day and age when there are numerous such cases in the news when endeavors by women seeking justice are often equated with hurtful proceedings. It clearly depicts women's day to day struggles in the society in and around them which at the same time gives them strength and confidence to face it without fear and act vigorously towards their struggles.

Constitution gives equal importance to women's position and accorded equality to them. It is seen that where all citizens irrespective of gender are equal, women are clearly less equal than men. There exists high gender inequality in our country. [Harapriya Mohapatra \(2015\)](#)

Though women face numerous struggles in society through various means they accept and go through all those hurdles and overcome it by proving their position in society and their importance in it throughout their life.

The newfound ideologies, in turn, have impacted this patriarchal society to a great extent that it has brought with it individual and social changes and different perspectives about the roles of women and men in family and society, both in concealed lives and communal structures. [Shalini. L and Alamelu.C \(2017\)](#)

There are several Indian feminist movies which deal with the issues faced by women in their day to day lives each movie is unique in a way but are united in the feminist perspective. Feminist movies like English Vinglish, Tumhari Sulu, Dangal, Magalir Mattam, and How Old Are You? that deal with the feminist issues, their hurdles and their victory in every aspect

of their lives. Recently the movie *Pink* has been remade in Tamil titled *Nerkonda Paarvai* starring Ajith Kumar, Vidya Balan, Shraddha Srinath, Abirami Venkatachalam and Andrea Tariang directed by H. Vinoth.

PLOT OVERVIEW

There's a perception of trepidation in the opening titles of Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury's *Pink*, as the scene pursues two arrangements of individuals in their vehicles late around the evening time. In one, a young fellow lies in the rearward sitting arrangement, groaning in agony as blood keeps running down the side of his face, while his companions drive him to the emergency clinic. In another, three young ladies travel in a taxi, gnawing their fingers and taking a gander at one another apprehensively. Those three are the protagonists" specifically Meenal Arora (Taapsee Pannu), Falak Ali (Kirti Kulhari) and Andrea Tariang (Andrea Tariang) who are working women residing in a well-to-do south Delhi area. Their regular battle with neighbours' testing eyes has made them dauntless and prepared for intense difficulties. They meet Rajveer Singh (Angad Bedi) and his companions at a stone show, which closures when Rajveer gets hit by a bottle and starts bleeding. Rajveer is rich and a nephew of an influential politician neighbours' by a woman and cannot believe that he would have nearly lost an eye because of a woman and struggles in pain, "We won't spare those girls", one of his companions' pledges and chooses to look for retribution on the young women. A war between the genders begins and the police, society, parents, legal executive and every other person become a gathering. In this way, it doesn't come as a surprise when the police capture Meenal under Section 307 IPC, endeavor to kill. Who considers it as in the event that she did it in self-protection! No one recognizes what happened that decisive night everybody's accepting, in light of the fact that the young ladies went with the young men and they ate and drank together, moral measuring sticks must be set. A woman investigative officer doesn't help either after all she also is a part of this general public.

Be that as it may, a good-natured man is yet to enter the game and could transform it for the young ladies. When a fruitful attorney, Deepak Sehgal (Amitabh Bachchan) needed to hang his boots in view of a falling apart state of mind however he comes back to the court for one final time. The end credits indicate what precisely happened that night with the occasions paving the way to Meenal's assault on Rajveer. Be that as it may, by then a large portion of us have officially taken a choice and realize whose side we have to take for a superior future.

ANALYSIS

A JOURNEY FROM STRUGGLE TO PROMINENCE

The protagonists in the film lead a peaceful life in the society until they face an unexpected invitation from their known friend who introduces them to his acquaintances which leads to astonishing happenings which paves way for their struggle in the same society where they led their normal life which is mentioned by Sehgal in his argument "In cities girls should not stay all alone... Boys can stay but not girls ... Alone, independent girls, use to confuse the boys" [Pink \(2016\)](#). The sole reason that led to their struggle is that they were women who attended a rock concert and went for dinner with the boys who were just introduced to them that led to an unpleasant incident which was totally unpredicted by the girls. A neighbor as well as a lawyer Sehgal comes to their rescue when everything turns against them, he defends them in the court, despite his mood swings. Sehgal argues "Girls who drink at parties... become your ancestral property" [Pink \(2016\)](#). The journey of struggle to prominence begins with the lawyer in the courtroom who tries his best to defend the girls and the master's supremacy silences the courtroom and the audience.

The term masculine and feminine are used systematically only as a matter of form, as on legal papers. Actually, the relation of the sexes is not quite as if that of the two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and negative whereas, the woman represents only the negative. [Simone de Beauvoir \(1949\)](#)

Pink sketches the callous truths of south Delhi's middle-class locality. Unfortunately, the mind-set of people inhabiting these regions is general across the country and might even be universal. Because we have witnessed this occurrence in and around our real life also. Sehgal says that when the girl prevented the boy by saying NO which meant she is not interested in any relationship with the boy, but the boy did not give any heed to her words, so she had to attack him in order to defend her. Sehgal's argument is

A woman's no means no, be it a sex worker, a casual acquaintance or even a wife. "NO" is not only a word... it's a sentence by itself ... it doesn't need any explanation or interpretation ... no simply means no. There remains no excuse for "but" in "no". [Pink \(2016\)](#)

Pink effortlessly packs various debates into a distinct compact film: how society judges single women, the preordained notions about women not staying with their parents, the assumption that if women receive male visitors at home, they must be immoral. As we find Sehgal arguing

No girl should go out all alone with a boy. Because doing so this ... people over there assume that that girl has gone there willingly and they have been issued the license to touch her. [Pink \(2016\)](#)

The three protagonists in *Pink* do not dance, buzz or play coy around the heroes but they are threatened with the fear of attack. They are frightened of the crime of not accepting and being unapologetic about saying no to sexual advances, a

situation that is all too familiar for many women in Indian cities. "If girls go for a dinner or drink with boys... then it is their own choice ... not a signboard saying "I'm available." [Pink \(2016\)](#)

The women are livid and offended at the hurt caused by a merciless patriarchal system. The court rules in favor of the girls releasing them, whereas Rajveer, Ankit, and Dumpy are taken into custody with the final verdict of their punishment pending. Deepak Sehgal gains the respect of all those gathered in the courtroom. "A woman should be aware, self-control, strong will, self-reliant and rational, having faith in the inner strength of womanhood. A meaningful change can be brought only from within by being free in the deeper psychic sense." [Manju Kapur \(2002\)](#)

The protagonists were brave enough to face the court proceedings though they were falsely accused and were strong to argue with the opponents to prove their innocence to the society; through their victory in the court, the whole women's race has faced victory.

CONCLUSION

Pink, perhaps it's called so in light of the fact that the shading is girly, destabilizes it and flips it completely around, in its brilliant bits, the film blasts, and its invitation to battle shining outwards and driving us to yield difficult certainties. It has something to say and says it with mental fortitude and conviction. At last, an incredible, daring, standard film which spotlights on genuine young women who live genuine lives and manage prickly routine issues, which young women everywhere throughout the world will recognize and relate with. The protagonists struggle to break the ceiling is fruitful and they do it bravely and overcome all the hardships, the breaking of the ceiling is not alone for them but it's for the race which results in changing of men's view on women.

STUDY FORWARD

Research can be done in various Indian or International feminist movies with the feminist aspect and the success story of a woman will bring a change in every individual in society. It will pave way for numerous solutions and be an eye-opener for the problems faced by women in and around society.

REFERENCES

1. Charulatha, A. (2017). Female-Centric Films in India: A Feminist Critique. *Social Sciences International Research Journal*, 3(1). <http://www.imrfjournals.in/pdf/MATHS/SSIRJ-NEW-JOURNALS/SSIRJ-31/60.pdf>
2. Mohapatra, H. (2015). Status of Women in Indian Society. *Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 3(6) pp:33-36 <http://www.questjournals.org/jrhss/papers/vol3-issue6/F363336.pdf>
3. Pink. (2016). Dir.Shoojit Sircar, and Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury.Perf. Amitabh Bachchan, Taapsee Pannu, Kirti Kulhari, Andrea Tariang, and Angad Bedi.Rashmi Sharma Telefilms and NH Studioz. Film https://www.hotstar.com/in/movies/pink/1000154578/watch?utm_source=gwa
4. Roof Judith, (2018). *The Feminist Foundations of Narrative Theory* Cambridge University Press pp 72-86 <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-companion-to-narrative-theory/feminist-foundations-of-narrative-theory/E7B127310BFBD5D6429620CE79D11964/core-reader>.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108639149.007>
5. Sahebrao Aher Varsha, (2016). Portrayal of 'The New Woman': A Feminist Reading of Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*. *Pune Research World An International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1(2) <http://puneresearch.com/media/data/issues/575b0f0f237a6.pdf>
6. Sarkar, S and Gagne, P. (2016). Women-Centric Films in India Contemporary Journal of Anthropology and Sociology <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a39f/8c809bf907c0ae25c6c94ff1ff4a636b7a61.pdf>
7. Shalini, L.A. & Alamelu, C. (2017). Struggle for inclusiveness and identity in the movies: English Vinglish and 36 Vayadhinile. 97. 209-216. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316254356_Struggle_for_inclusive_ness_and_identity_in_the_movies_English_vinglish_and_36_vayadhinile
8. Shalini, L.A. & Alamelu, C. (2018). The Invisibilization of Women in a Societal Propinquity and A Rummage for Carte Blanche *Journal of Advanced Research in Dynamical & Control Systems*, 10 (9) <http://jardcs.org/papers/v10/20183000.pdf>
9. Tabatabai, M. R. (2016) Women and Their Portrayal in Indian Cinema *International Journal of Humanities And Cultural Studies* 2 (4) <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/a644/a8f98326f347fa9801a598d62b8c409e242e.pdf>
10. Tere, N. S. (2012). Gender reflections in mainstream Hindi cinema. *Global Media Journal* 3 (1) 1-9. <https://www.caluniv.ac.in/global-mdia-journal/Students%20Research/SR4%20NIDHI.pdf>
11. *Pink movie review: A blazing indictment of all that's wrong with us.* (2018). *The Indian EXPRESS*. Retrieved 20 March 2018, from <http://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/movie-review/pink-movie-review-amitabh-bachchan-taapsee-pannu-star-rating-3032180/>
12. *Pink: The girls are alright, but the boys?.* (2018). *The Hindu*. Retrieved 20 March 2018, from <http://www.thehindu.com/features/cinema/Pink-The-girls-are-alright-but-the-boys/article14639361.ece>
13. *Pink movie dialogues* (2018). *Bollywood Clown*. Retrieved 20 March 2018, from <http://www.bollywoodclown.com/pink-movie-dialogues-quotes-all-dialogues-amitabh-bachchan-taapsee-pannu/>