

# Celluloid Transformations: Decoding the Socio-Cultural Landscape of Indian Cinema

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## Article info

Received: 2 April 2024

Accepted: 7 June 2024

**Keywords:** Indian Film Industry, Social  
changes, Current trends, Cultural derivatives,  
Discourse analysis.

**How to cite this article:** Abhishek K. Singh.  
(2024). Celluloid Transformations: Decoding  
the Socio-Cultural Landscape of Indian  
Cinema, International Journal of Politics and  
Media, 3(1), 27-31 Retrieved from [https://  
ijpmonline.com/index.php/ojs/article/  
view/51](https://ijpmonline.com/index.php/ojs/article/view/51)

## Abstract

Indian cinema is undergoing a metamorphosis, with filmmakers moving beyond pure entertainment to critically engage with social realities. This research explores this shift, examining how films portray evolving social issues and cultural changes, how these resonate with a tech-savvy youth audience, and ultimately, the role cinema plays in shaping social norms and perceptions within Indian society. By analysing existing research, selected films, and conducting a pilot study, this project aims to illuminate the dynamic interplay between Indian cinema's evolving narratives and the ever-changing social landscape.

## 1. Introduction

The approach and techniques of Indian film makers are not new; decades of filmmaking have clearly stated that we never promoted division and dominance. The stories of Indian filmmaking have never highlighted the religious conflict and its political benefits for social violations of peace and harmony. The approach and techniques of Indian film makers are not new; decades of filmmaking have clearly stated that we never promoted division and dominance. The stories of Indian filmmaking have never highlighted the religious conflict and its political benefits for social violations of peace and harmony. Present era of Indian society is different from previous centuries. We have convinced the world to accept our spiritual and material authenticity. No one can betray his people in the name of caste, creed and race. People are prepared for development, self-determination and self-respect. They needs better roads, medical facilities and education for his children, inclusive and sustainable development at the domestic level, healthy entertainment facilities, a safe environment and ecological balance, harmony and tolerance. These all can better realized through cinema and literature. The past representation of Indian society of so-called snake charmers to ownership of huge machines and its expertise in modern science and hardware and software methods indicates the change of scenario.

The Oxford dictionary mentioned that culture is mainly the customs and beliefs, art, and lifestyle of a particular community. The word culture includes all aspects of our lifestyle and new learnings, such as the

food, the clothes, the language, and the social norms and acceptance. Culture in Indian society represents a combination of traditional approaches and living values. It signifies shared relationships, values, and social beliefs. Culture also has a very important feature: it changes as society changes. In Indian society, the culture is very diverse and has different symbolic representations. Similarly, the films are responsible for depicting the architecture, music, dance, and traditions of various regions of India, as well as complex terms of globalisation, modernization, nationalism, and other important terms that people are not very familiar with in the jargon. By studying Indian films, the filmmakers promoted Westernisation, women's empowerment, caste issues, minority rights, and, above all, various social relations. Some important aspects, such as fashion and lifestyle, have also played a central role in Indian society, raising awareness and influencing public opinion on issues of public concern like violence, global assimilation, and economic status.

## 2. Filmmaking and Social Perspectives

Cinema and literature offer a close association with social presentation through new media platforms. These associations mainly deal with the social concepts of socio-political changes like getting rid of the old clothes and accepting, supplementing, and adopting new boundaries and sizes to differentiate society. There should be no profanity or profanity. Audience should be analyzed and evaluated according to the parameters set by our society, not by the West. We have a rich tradition of literary criticism, drama and theater. We need to tell the world that what they are offering today was offered

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by our thinkers and scientists much earlier. A century ago, Indian cinema began its journey as an entertainment agency through a religious biopic (Raja Harishchandra). His absolute strategy was to provide the public with healthy leisure time with ethical values and socio-cultural issues. In addition to the mythical stories, the Eros reports of the film took the lion's share of celluloid. After independence in 1947, religious, patriotic and nationalist themes were categorically filtered out. The purpose of this industry was to integrate and transmit values and inform people about its impeccable fame. B. D. Chopra, Raman, Sagar and many others have rendered an important service to the nation with their soap operas Ramayana and Mahabharata. Everyone in the world can anticipate our cultural and moral ethics. It was very clear that the literature has given new dimensions to the filmmaking, with some exceptions, this was practiced until the 1980s, and in general all types of audiences were considered inclusive. In 1990, the LPG concept (liberalisation, privatisation, and globalization) also came with a new genre of filmmaking, i.e., the culture of trade and consumption, which significantly changed the social and economic structure of this country as a whole. Thus, Modern approaches of filmmaking have created a new class of consumers (upper and upper middle class) who can consume different products and want modern and ultramodern products. The outbreak of imbalance has raised awareness of the needs of this class and the greed of this class. The market took advantage of this opportunity and showed them the dream and desire of materialism. Bollywood welcomed this new category as its passionate promoter and reaffirmed its inclusive role in the mainstream entertainment industry. Indian cinema of the 21<sup>st</sup> century revolves around the problems of the upper and upper middle classes and their problems. There were many questions in between, like about common people, common men who work hard for their family, basic needs like food and shelter, and job crises where a common family and a lady work as maids to fulfil their needs. Issues of hunger, a jobless community, youth and his small town, his childhood love, companionship, harmonious family life, and broken hearts—these give many fascinating cinematic stories. They are the most acceptable part of the glitz and brilliance of the brilliant stories of Bollywood cinema. On the other hand, it shows a concrete panorama of love and lust, divorce and prosecution, extramarital affairs, gay and lesbian culture, cult fashion, the family conspiracy of a rich class society. High investments in the exhibition sector have led to a "multi-room culture" and thus shifted the individual exhibition space. The films are specially adapted to the tastes and feelings of the upper and middle class audience, who can spend three times more than the average viewer.

### 3. Conceptual Framework

The social impact of Indian cinema anticipates much more sociocultural and moral values, and therefore hopes that the film will contribute to positive changes in society (Murthy, 1980). This document focuses on the following main objectives:

- Evaluating filmmakers' efforts to innovatively introduce social causes to the masses through the most influential media – Films
- To show the new type of interest of movie makers in this

type of film, to encourage new directors to present various social issues to the general public by implementing real aspects of literary criticism of real films,

Media culture is a very important ingredient that shapes our identity from various perspectives, i.e., ethnicity, race, sexuality, and social diversity. The cinema is a most important part of society and this is reason sometime it is considerable that cinema is a mirror of the society and it considered as most important tool of social communication. Cinema is well recognised as a tool to show social reality and personal associations. Cinema gives representation of social parameters and new trends in changing society. In the present social situation, cinema is closely related to social ideology and humanistic discourse. Since 1913, the era of Raj Harish Chandra, cinema has been considered one of the dominant and influential media in Indian society.

This was the silent era of the cinema industry, and from that time to the present, the filmmakers have set trends to see social changes and include human changes in the film industry. The films like Epic Indian mythology Ramayana and Mahabharata to Alam Ara set the way for the future of Indian cinema. These are really reflecting the mindset of social capital. And since then, Indian cinema has started experimenting with colour and multimedia-based movies. These were the times when cinema started a number of genres, including comedy, horror, romance, and core action. That was the era when the Indian cinema industry faced the golden era, which gave a milestone to parallel cinema. Another point here is to consider the humanitarian values, including progressive society to arising social concerns and situational analysis as per the change of personality in the cinematic theme. These themes were socially significant and artistically very sound. As it represents a humanistic perspective more sustainable than the fantasy world of popular cinema, In terms of social discourse, Indian cinema has given many definitions, like a variety of social approaches to influence the diverse sections of society (Chakravarty, 1993). The author also mentioned the term realism and used it in the films of Satyajit Ray to understand social issues and problems. On the other side, Raj Kapoor produces other genres of feature films and gives new ideas to growing audiences.

### 4. Indian Cinema and Changing Trends- Past to Present

As the 2000's approach, the film limits its focus to the emotional sentiments of the upper and middle classes. The elegant and beautiful lifestyle of big cities, Western clothes, strange places, material prosperity, unreal conventions and cosmopolitanism are imprinted in the plots of Indian cinema. In this competition, the real Indian socio-cultural ethic has been replaced by virtual reality and the technological identity of the camera. Hindi films that once represented the ground reality of society are now start changing its trend towards average Indians categories which and start making stories on social taste different characters. This has become commonplace because the market has put our social and cultural identities at risk. In general, society has changed the way we think and represent films and their stories in past. Issues such as corruption in government agencies, especially in the police, sexual violence, gender prejudice, dirty politics, gang warfare, public protests over various health problems, the activities of bureaucrats and civil servants, public tensions, agricultural policy, social, religious and political issues and

many of them modern problems have become part of societies. Today's films are putting these sociocultural issues on the agenda to raise people's awareness. Thus, Indian cinema has changed a lot, as people's preferences and preferences have also changed dramatically. Today we see that viewers prefer to watch films that they can relate to films that are closer to reality; films that make them think for a while or encourage them to change their point of view on certain social topics. In fact, literature and cinema should travel together to provide good leisure opportunities. Modern Indian cinema has changed dramatically not only in the technical sense, but also in themes, issues and plots, there are a significant number of differences. It's true that some directors made realistic films in the 60s and 70s, but they were all called feature films or parallel films. We live in a world of technology and machines. The absence of these tools in our lives has made it easy and convenient. Therefore, my goal in this article is to show how films has changed the way we think and reflect out ideas of social representations which certainly has influence literature and cinema. Since social networks have developed a public platform for self-expression, public interaction offers a new definition of a democratic state and society. Literature and cinema are closely intertwined. The influence of the former on the latter has created a solid public platform for interaction, and communication is closely interrelated. The film unites audiences from different social and cultural groups through its verbal and visual presentation.

Its well-known that Indian cinema is one of the biggest cinema industries in the world, producing 800,000 films a year, which is twice the number of films as Hollywood. Actually, Indian cinema is mainly concerned with and focuses on the local issues and practical Indian social problems. The cinemas are in multiple languages, like Bhojpuri, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, etc. The interesting point here is that these movies are mainly focused on the local and regional viewers and their emotional values in society. These movies have a special place worldwide and affect all worlds. These diverse perspectives give a new theoretical discourse to the understanding of audiences and inform them about social concerns, people's responses, and cultural backgrounds. The new generations are very advanced, but their behaviour is also very much changing due to the cinematic variations and shaping society accordingly. Since the beginning, Indian cinema has always worked on social messages and continuously produced experiences in different genres. In this course of discourse, the experiments some time got failed, and very recently, the new generations got involved in accepting the new characters, such as in the recent movie "Animal, 2023," which clearly shows the changing trends of youth. Considering the past and present sociocultural parameters, the purpose of this article is actually to understand the social discourse of Indian cinema and youth channel trends.

#### 4. Research Methodology

The research that is being conducted now is of a fundamentally qualitative nature. Data sources were obtained from secondary sources but some minor primary data has also been considered. The main sources of information were literature available about their perception of the changing aspects of culture due to the influence of

cinema. In addition, the study aimed to analyse various films in order to understand their impact on people's moods.

#### 5. Case Study

*Accut Kanya* (1936): To be love beyond caste barriers, the action of this film takes place during the starting period of the cinema industry, when mythology, love, and marriage were the central focus of filmmaking. The film raised the issue of falling in love with a lower-caste woman. This film was released just in time for Mahatma Gandhi to talk about the need to treat all castes, including the untouchables, on an equal footing. Although controversial at the time, the film marked the beginning of a crucial social cause that aimed to unite all communities and emphasised that love knows no boundaries. The movie represents the social parameters of social difference based on caste and local norms made by people. The movie was very popular, but it also faced a number of criticisms.

*Mother India* (1957): This film was directed by Mehboob Khan, featuring an Indian mother's sacrifices. The film revolves around a widow played by Nargis, a mother of two children who struggles to raise her children (Sunil Dutt and Rajendra Kumar). She grieved badly for the shackles of poverty, illiteracy, and social suffering. The film showed maternal respectability and sacrifice as social symbols. The film goes beyond its time by promoting the idea of equality between men and women, portraying Nargis as thoughtful but brave (Chakravarty, 1993). Apart from many emotions, the film highlighted a number of social problems that modern Indian society is still facing, including extortion, poverty, and lack of education. The film also highlights the importance of preserving justice and fairness above all else.

*Animal* (2023): This film was a representation of money and power in Indian society. Ranvijay (Ranbir Kapoor) is a rich boy from Delhi who grows up with his father, industrialist Balbir Singh (Anil Kapoor). Balbir has a busy personality and is emotionally unavailable, which has upset Ranvijay since childhood. Ranvijay was not well coordinated and officially applauded by his father, Balbir Singh, and due to the disagreements, he left India and settled down in another country, but due to the popularity of Balbir Singh as a very famous industrialist, he was always on the gun point of others rivals. The film changed its sequences drastically once he (Balbir Singh) got attacked and shot bullets. The son Ranvijay got to know and came back and started protecting his father for Bobby Deol, (Balbir Singh's Nephew). The movies got diverted, and many unusual sequences came in between, such as sexual boasts and too much violence. The Ranvijay is now presented with a very brutal and cruel personality, which is not at all accepted socially. This rare heroic expression is very clashing on the name of family revenge and father's love but the movie was monster hit.

#### 6. Interpretation and Analysis

The main purpose of cinematic expression is to recreate people, and then society will receive an ethical message and socio-cultural values that make society civilized and highly civilized. History testifies to this fact that various forms of self-expression, such as painting, literature and cinema, have shaped and shaped the perception and perception

of all mankind. They have the opportunity to renew and revive new expectations and eternal knowledge.

We need to propose a wide range of these issues and problems

- \* Adaptation of literature in Indian cinema
- \* The public and cinema
- \* Socio-cultural issues in cinema
- \* Body politics on screen and in Indian cinema
- \* Reflection of diseases in cinema
- \* Obscenity and vulgarity in Indian cinema
- \* National integration and cinema

The Indian cinema normally produced cinema based on various socio-cultural problems of women and children, sometime the cinema faces some censorship by the board due to the high degree of objectification of women, there are various examples. Indian cinema has recently grown to 100 years. The literature on cinema and Indian culture pointed out that Indian cinema mainly represents the mindset of the local community and social phenomena. The article mainly analysed the literature available and the cases of Indian cinema and pointed out that there are democratic and social perspectives in almost all the cinematic themes and characters. Considering the cinematic elements and technical aspects, the technologies used in the production, presentation, and reception of films provide a soothing and useful platform for presenting narrative discourse in film. In fact, a narrative is a set of representational, organisational, and discursive cues that provide a narrative discourse to an audience. It is generally accepted that a story consists of two parts: a presented story and a presentation or narrative process, often called narrative discourse. The birth of a democratic Indian nation-state based on the ideas of pluralism, equality, and egalitarianism is considered an important historical event in Indian cinema.

The analysis pointed out that the new movie makers are using and dealing with different approached of filmmaking as the recent filmmaking has some new involvements of idea, technologies and very important the assimilation of cultural perspectives. Films are visual narratives and are conveyed using certain codes and stylistic techniques unique to a given medium. New filmmakers are emerging social elements and have already proven their complementarity, but there is still hegemony in the power structure in determining the importance of each variable. Thus, a mixture of materialism and spiritualism, on the one hand, and cinema and literature, on the other, is able to form a powerful Indian film industry, because the forces of binary opposition are able to dominate and control the entire system of the physical and visual world. Indian cinema and literature should be the domain of traditional sexual relations. The hundred-years of evolution of socio-cultural narratives and discourses of various cinematic forms of expression and communication is analysed and evaluated by the researcher in this study. Literature and cinema of the 20th century brought people closer together, and what they left behind was made possible by social networks in the 21st century. The objective of this study was to understand the association between Indian literature, culture, and the philosophy of filmmaking. In conclusion, it can be said that Indian culture is changing significantly due to the deep influence of films. Change is the only immutable

law of nature. According to this, culture is also not static in nature; it is also constantly changing.

## 7. Conclusion

The Indian film industry has a legacy of more than 100 years of quality film and creativity. We have seen movies on horrific attacks, massacres, saints, and foreign invaders, as well as the mythology of rich Indian heritage, and it is very critical to say here that some Indian avenues remained inactive in the hope that they would appear at the right time. In the past, trade and commerce organised the socio-cultural fusion of the various communities living together in India. The framed image of India in the form of a "golden bird" has crossed ocean waves around the world, and trade has flourished in the past. Although we have rich traditions of spirituality, philosophy, literature, and culture and we are not at all are the lands of snake charmers. The image was falsely made by the British people, which was a completely negative image. During our struggle for freedom, first-class freedom fighters and social and religious reformers portrayed the democratic way of India, introduced by the political leaders of independent India. These were all represented by the Indian film makers, and the film on our social crisis and rich traditions is certainly a result of our healthy society and the nature of socialisation and mutual respect. This is very true that cinema is the representation of society, and in the Indian scenario, it is very true as the way Indian movies are taking turns and changing their valuable ideology towards story-making for film production clearly indicates the way we have socialised our coming youth and generations. The way modern film has been produced and the way new generations are accepting the story and iconic characters of heroism are certainly giving a lesson and alarming.

The movies like 'Animal' and 'Kabir Singh' have certainly given a deep analysis of how the youth are now enjoying the negative heroism. This clearly shows the turning point of Indian society. Based on the evidence and content of film history and cases of epic cinema's, this research analysis suggests there is no doubt that film has its own value and representation and has a deep socio-cultural impact on the culture of society. This can be concluding here that cinema and its rich literature can guide society and the country. They can raise awareness, patriotism, social harmony, religious tolerance, calm religious fundamentalism and promote environmental and environmental issues, health problems, the harm of fast food among children and the elderly. Indian film industry has a large market at home and abroad, and the subjects chosen for the films are diverse and young people are certainly getting a lot of content form customs and values of various social systems. The changing trends certainly have an impact on youth mindsets, and if they are negative, no doubt they will raise concerns. Content related to drugs, violence, and crime also attracts people, especially young people. In short, Indian society, which consists mostly of youth, is easily attracted to the glamorous scenes and modern lifestyle shown in films, regardless of whether these scenes are used in a positive or negative way. Therefore, there must be some supervision on the content of films.

**Conflict of Interest:** The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.



**Funding** : The author has not received any grant or financial support for this research.

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