



DISABILITY IN LITERATURE AND MOVIES – A STUDY

Dr. G. Kiran Kumar Reddy^{1*}, K. Ravi Kumar², P. Nagarjuna³

¹Assistant Professor, Department of English, Rajeev Gandhi Memorial College of Engineering and Technology, Nandyal, Andhra Pradesh, India.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, St. Francis College for Women, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana, India, Email: k.ravikumar@sfc.ac.in.

³Lecturer in English, Government College for Men, Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Email: nagarjunarenu@gmail.com.

*Corresponding author's Email: kiran.mokshita@gmail.com.

DOI: [10.33329/rjelal.12.2.345](https://doi.org/10.33329/rjelal.12.2.345)



Article info

Article Received: 18/05/2024

Article Accepted: 26/06/2024

Published online: 30/06/2024

Abstract

This paper discusses various issues pertain to disability factors, its influences on deformity. It focuses on literature, human relations, values, traditions. Movies role, portrayal of characters towards the development of society, betterment of family values, mental pain, deformity is not a weakness and a strength for upgrading their life style. Disability include physical and mental deformity are discussed. Finally, the article reflects disability, human health concern in films and literature.

Key words: Films, Family, Values.

Introduction

Disable persons are not specialized human beings in the eyes of God or creator. Whether disabled need special rights in India or abroad. Does disabled persons require any reservation in the parliament, Assembly or in any other political platforms? Physical deformity occurs due to genetical disorder or formation of foetus. It's not a God's curse or boon. If we consider Stephen Hawking, a renowned physicist, he is completely paralyzed one. His contribution is a varied one towards the

development of science. Disability is a physical defect, not internalized one.

In recent Para Olympics, some athletes shown valor, expertise, became talented sportsmen. In the world we come across many disabled victimized persons. It is a common phenomenon, we show mercy, concern towards their physical deformity or mental deformity. Do they require survival skills, support from Governments, NGOs? Various factors could have influenced them in numerous modes, it is not a matter at all, but it is the need hour for discussion.

In the present scenario, disabled persons franchise their rights in their own way of thinking. The present study main focus is on portrayal of disabled characters in Telugu movies. Movies project entertainment, values, traditions, customs, which exist in the society. Society is a mirror to represent the characters in the movies, serials, any electronic media. IT reflects moral values, other ethical aspects in our life.

Disability can be regarded as any physical or mental deformity at birth, accident or sickness. "Physical disability is capable of limiting physical movement while mental disability is capable of affecting he cognitive activities carried out by a person's brain."¹

Disability in Telugu Films

Cinema is an appealing mass media for instructing kids about disabled problems as it shows immense impact on their understanding and trusts disability. Films are regarded as harbingers of reality. Positive films instill confidence in them to overcome their mental trauma and lead their life happily. They can succor people broaden their minds and stand behind the disabled persons for their better living.

Ramcharan's Rangasthala is a Telugu film of 2018 story revolves around deaf protagonist and other characters sukumar. The character Ramcharan of chittibabu is played by ramcharan and the story is about two brothers chittibabu and kumar babu, who struggle for the development of their village and oppose corruptive practices in local cooperative society. Jagapati Babu is an antagonist in the film, president of the village. It is a backdrop of 1980s. He never develops the village, swallows the money from cooperative society bank. Ramcharan is a sound engineer, falls in love with Ramalakshmi (Samanta). The conversation between protagonist and samanta are hilarious.

Chittibabu and kumar babu take the help of villager's protagonist supports kumar

babu to stand as ward members. As a physically challenged person Ramcharan takes a leading role for the development of his village. Kumar Babu loves local MLA Praksah Raj's daughter and staunch follower of local MLA.

With out any mercy MLA's goons kill him brutally. After a lot of mental struggle Kumar Babu serves the bedridden MLA in the hospital. After his recovery from the hospital, Chitti Babu goes to his home and kills him. The story relates the traumatic experience of the boy living in an imaginary village Rangsthala.

Many movies in Telugu portrayed the problems of discussed persons. What is the significance of picturizing disability in movies. Books, poetry, prose, plays, movies are part and parcel of literature. Cinema influence on the audience is an immense one. It shows great impact, changes the attitude of people.

The 1985 film Mayuri centres on a Bharatanatyam dancer, mayuri (sudhachandran) experiences with a car accident and lose her right leg. She wears Jaipur foot and continues her endeavors. She never loses her faith in her caliber, and shows excellence on the dance floor. The film has interesting good message. On the earth, it stresses the point that disabled people can achieve like the abled bodied.

The film concludes and suggests that the overcoming of disability relies on the individual's will power. The portrayal of disabled characters inspire the audience and motivate the audience towards their goals.

In Mahabharata, Gandhari is the main character, she suffers willingly for the sake of her hubby king Dhritarashtra and leads life with her blind husband. In this context, disability is her option, one which she prefers consciousness never to reverse. Gandhari empties her life willingly or unwillingly. She sacrifices her life, shows humanity towards her hubby, stands as a role model for many generations.

Blindness is not a deformity at all for her. With her willness, determination, applies the brain, supports her husband in all aspects of life. Gandhari's intellectuality, good naturedness, keen interest towards minute details, cleanliness of heart surpasses her husband's instincts in the epic Mahabharatha.

In the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharatha Manthara, and Sakuni are important representatives of disability. Manthara is an evil hunch backed lady, servant of Kaikeyi, instills the negative ideology into her mistress brain. She gives bad idea of Rama's exile.

Bahubali Movie reflects disability in the character of Bijjaldeva. In the empire of Mahishmati, Sivagami is one of the protagonist carries a baby in her arms to rescue the baby from the soldiers realizes that she can not be saved, she holds the child in her arms above water, while she drowns herself. Local villagers spot the child and save the infant while sivagami dies and points her hand to the top of the waterfall. Sanga and her husband patronize the child as Sivudu and brought up and closes the cave to save sivudu.

Sivudu grows up and risks to climb the waterfall, but his mother don't wish to lose him. He continues his endeavors to climb the mountain. He never ceases. Sanga asks a solution to pour water on sivalinga for 116 times. Knowing that, sivudu lifts sivalinga and places down the waterfall. Then sivudu finds a mask which belongs to a girl, and again he climbs the waterfall for her. On the top of the waterfall, sivudu discovers that the mask belongs to Avanthika, a warrior whose group fought against Bhallaladeva. And the group is supporter of Devasena, real mother of shiva and she was imprisoned under the custody of Bhalla for 25 years.

While Avanthika initially suspects siva's intentions, later she falls in love with him as he climbed the waterfall for her. Siva

supports the Avanthika in her mission and helps her, reaches Mahishmati to rescue Devasena.

Meanwhile, the king's royal guard Kattapa makes the arrangements to install a statue of king while keeping some warriors slip down. Then siva holds the knot and places the statue. Then the warrior

Views the siva and chants the name of Bahubali. Impressed by Kattapa's skill, a king (Sudeep) makes friendship with Katappa. On the order of king Bhallalla Katappa attacks on siva. Siva kills son of Bhalla, then Katappa knows that siva is Mahendra Bahubali and he is the son of late king Amarendra Bahubali. In the flashback, Katappa narrates Bahu and Bhalla are brothers, trained in various places.

Bijala is a crooked, antagonist and the sole mastermind behind the story. Right from his birth, he had a crippled arm. Even though he is a victim of his disability. He is portrayed as the main villain and the revenge seeker and the igniter of the cold war in Mahismathi. He provokes his son Bhallala Deva to fight with Amarendra Bahubali for the sake of Mahismati throne.

Sakuni is a wicked character, son of Shubala and his sons are starved to death by the deeds of Kauravas. Subala offers each grain to the youngest son Shakuni to end the Kaurava clan with the magic dice made from the subhala's bones. Shakuni, an impaired person determines to dethrone kaurava's of his sister's clan through marriage alliance, he finally gets success.

Shakuni in the Hindu epic Mahabharata (Menon, 2017) was the most fraudulent man that ever lived. He was regarded as the main villain and the exclusive engineer behind the grand Kurukshetra war. From his childhood onwards he had a distorted leg and squint eyed as well. Even though he faced many problems in his life, he was an adamant, depicted as the chief antagonist in both the Hindu cannons and

cinematic dramas. He was always portrayed as a revenge seeker in history.

The most remarkable Thakur protagonist appears in the renowned movie in India, *Sholay* (Sippy 1975). In this film, Bandit snatches away Thakur police officer (Sanjay Kumar's) arms. He appoints two mercenaries to wipe away the gang. The Thakur in *Sholay* is a representative of disability in Indian cinema and parodied in the public platforms. Channel 'v' India's music TV channel criticized the Thakur's inability to show a 'v' sign for a group photo.

Impairment is considered as the penalization of the sins done by the disabled in their past, generally signified as 'karma'. The people are treated sinful and are a subject of hatred. They are considered and treated as an outsider, they are entirely rejected of the chances like education, communication and independence.

In the early 2000s new type of cinema appeared on the silver screen. The number of awards conferred on disabled actors and actresses Amitabh Bachchan (2006), Paa (2009), Actor Vikram for *Kasi* (2001) and Pithamagan (2003), Ranimukherji (Black) Kajol (*Fanna*).

A number of films released in recent years based on conditions, received serious discussion in the public. *Alzheimer's* (Thanmatra 2005 and *U me aur Hum* 2008) *dyslexia* (*Taare Zamme Par* 2007), *autism* (*My name is Khan* 2010) and *cerebral palsy* (*Angel* 2011; *Vinmzegal* 2012).

Literature is an art, transforms the society in various spheres. It plays a crucial role, influences the people minds in a gigantic way. The disabled people were regarded as an evil persons, those people will do harm to the society. "The majority of works portrayed disability as tragic and burden for the disabled individual and those around them."

In Victor Hugo's novel "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" Quasimodo character is a deformed person. He has hunched back, deaf

and wart covering his eye at the time of his birth. Due to deformities, he was deserted alone and hated by the people in his childhood around him. He was a kind hearted person and loved by the lady. He has inner beauty than external deformity. Disabled people suffer from deformity. In this novel his mother could not love him due to deformity. The novel describes inner beauty and external beauty and due to lack of respect for the disabled people judge others mainly on the basis of their external beauty.

In R.J. Palacio's novel "Wonder" Augustus Pullman is the protagonist, has a rare deformity, having no ears and chin. He is an ugly person and dominated by others.

Some realistic examples illustrate the disability in literary canons.

Hellen Keller expresses these words: "I thank God for my handicaps for, through them, I have found myself, my work, and my God."

In "The Story of My Life" autobiography Helen Keller was the first deaf - blinded person to receive Arts degree, firm in her decisions with the guidance of her teacher, leads her journey triumphs over her disability and secures identity in the literature. She inspired millions of people and reengineered the minds of disabled persons. Her work established change in the arenas of cinema and literature.

Conclusion

While some movies in fact are closer to inclusive of disability as part and parcel of society, and several ones are important in many levels, portrayed the public discourse of disability in popular culture are of great critical importance.

Works Cited

Abrams, D (2010) *Processes of prejudices: Theory, evidence and intervention, Equalities and Human Rights Commission.*

- Beauchamp, M, Chung, W.V., & Mongilner, A.
(2010) Disabled Literature - Disabled individuals in American Literature: Reflecting cultures, Review of Disability Studies: An International Journal, 6(1).
- Cumberland, Guy, and Ralph Negrine. Images of Disability on Television, New York: Routledge,1992.
- Keller, H. (2015) The story of My Life : Prakash Book Depot.
- Menon, R. (2017), The complete Mahabharata : Volume 10, Rupa publications.
- Miles, M "Disability in an Eastern Religious context: Historical Perspectives "Disability & Society 10:1 (1995) 49-70, Print.
- Norden, Martin F, Cinema of Isolation: A History of physical Disability in the movies, New Brunrwick: Rurgers University Press,1994.