A Case Study on Neo-Wave Cinema Based on Feminism

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Abstract— The aim of the research paper is to study about the portrayal of women in cinema. Also, it aimed to analyse the changing mind set of the young budding directors from the cinema industry. The emerging directors of our current film industry are very well aware of the portrayal of women which makes them to form a well-scripted for their film story. In this research, these young directors of cinema industry with a feministic approach in their movies are interviewed and analysed for the research. The social issues faced by women in both psychological and physical aspect is been brought to limelight and bravely disclosed in their films. The main films which are been discussed for this research are IRAIVI, THARAMANI and ARUVI which is been released in the year of 2016, 2017 and 2018 consecutively. These directors are been categorised under neo wave film making directors of cinema industry where they portray a favourable opinion regarding the strong characterisation of women and their struggle against gender bias. Henceforth these types of films had created a reflection of rational thoughts among the viewers and audiences to understand the present scenario of social issues against women prevailing in the authoritarian society. This research tries to provide awareness for the future budding directors about the importance of social touch in a movie in connection with the entertainment in the whole form as infotainment.

Keywords— Neo-Wave Films, Feminist thoughts, Gender Bias, catharsis effect, Infotainment, Tamil film industry, Script,

I. INTRODUCTION

Recent film makers of film industry are very conscious about the power and effect of film medium which creates a social change through their catharsis effect in a psychological manner. And this catharsis effect is made on the mass audience through the growth of advanced technological development in terms of visual design and sound design. In this case study paper, three recent films from the Tamil film industry are selected for the analysis. The films are

1. Iraivi - three men who are financially struggling get involved in criminal activities to improve their financial status. However, they end up in prison and their wives are forced to lead an independent life.

2. Tharamani - an orthodox man and a free-spirited lady fall in love, only to realize just how different they are.
3. Aruvi - Aruvi is a gentle girl belonging to a middle-class family, faces the trials of a troubled society and shares her story with a director who tries to use her to increase his show's ratings.

In this research, Section 1 discuss about the introduction of the research problem, section 2 analyses the related

research works to find the related problems and solutions, section 3 discuss about the research methodology followed, section 4 helps to write the findings and section 5 helps to write the conclusions and solutions to the research problem.

Importance of this study
From the beginning era of Tamil cinema to the present day there are hardly less than fifteen cinemas which had mainstream discussion in it with feminism. Due to the business motive to sell the film like a commercial product there are no strong feminist thoughts are found in the cinema industry. This research work tries to addresses the issues related to cinema and feminism.

II. RELATED WORK

History of Cinema:
During the beginning era of silent films, it majorly concentrates on the religious stories of Mahabharata and Ramayana [1]. The best example is the south India's first silent film "keechakavadham" which discusses about the killing of keechakan (a character in the story of Mahabharata) directed by R. Varadharaja mudhaliar popularly known as father of Tamil cinema in the production of silent films who started his career as automobile spare parts merchant and later he started the

"Indian Film company" in madras [2]. Likewise all the cinema dealt with the spiritual story rather discussing about the real life social issues in the society [3]. But after the rise of Dravidian movement in Tamil nadu there are films namely "Parasakthi and Ratha kaneer" paved a way for the story writers to discuss about the women's issues in their movies. "Rathakanner" was the first Tamil movie which greatly influenced the women's remarriage and the movie clearly depicts the worst scenario of women after her marriage. And in the early and late nineties there are certain films which portrayed the rights of the women in the society [4].

It was no longer possible to portray the ideal woman as someone who subordinated herself and sacrificed her well-being for the sake of her husband and family [5]. Instead, film-makers had to deal with the aspiration of women to be treated as individuals in their own right, and the inevitable conflicts and struggles they experienced in trying to live with freedom and dignity [6]. All these feminist narratives of that period in Tamil cinema suffered from limitation that they were conceived and presented by men.

Neo-Wave Tamil Cinema:
Based on the reality of the society and human realism exaggeration of the story and hero worship was the main ingredient of the masala tamil cinema. There are some directors tried to break this old method of masala film making and made films of real life situation and happenings based on the social structure [7].

Directors namely Balumahendran, Mahendran, Bharathi raja and Balachander made their debut in making these kind of realistic movies in the late nineties. But again this effort was broken and the mentality of the Tamil audience is been again changed in to the world of unrealism. A new director emerged in this decade made their experiment in to the masses and knows the pulses of the audience.

The realism was shown in such a way that the screenplay of the movie not only entertained but also had the content of social information for the society [8]. The people's mentality is been changed from the state of entertainment to the state of infotainment. This changed the mindset of the producers to concentrate their production on making infotainment movies on realistic cinema [9]. In the presiding wars between the realistic and unrealistic cinema in the Tamil film industry. But the films discussed for this research proved the market presence of the realistic cinema which carves the truthiness of the society [10].

But the growth of Tamil cinema is very gradual in the rational strategy when the mass really need the information combined with the entertainment which is called as Informational - Entertainment (Infotainment) [11].

III. METHODOLOGY

Movies like Iraivi, Tharamani and Aruvi are selected for the case study. From that analysis, research findings and conclusions are found for the solution of the research problem.

Case study 1: **Iraivi:** The film director Karthick subburaj clearly exhibits the core structure of his feminist movie through the theme song as his first approach. The theme song 'Manithi' lines are composed of the concept that 'women you are already born as a liberated and free woman, you don't need to fight or struggle for your freedom and liberation from men. Liberate yourself and come out of your stereotypical thoughts'..

Case study 2: Tharamani: Andrea Jeramiah works as an IT employee and she faces all the hurdles as a working Indian woman in this male Chauvinist society. She herself sets free her husband from the marriage from the marriage bond when she finds her husband is a homosexual. She understands the emotion of her husband and lets him to choose his own style of living. This movie completely has a matured story scriptwitha proper character lead artists playing a experimental role..

Case Study 3: Aruvi: A girl in the middle class family facing an extra-ordinary twist in her life due to unknowing contradiction of HIV virus in her body. The negligence of her family and the society was well described a shows the unsafe and in secured life of a woman in the mechanistic world of men. A girl was fighting with the disease and also her fight for social injustice committed against her by three men, one being her girlfriend's father and the other a god man and the third being the employer where she works.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The feminist strategy is followed in the concept of post-feminism. And this post feministic a thought is been applied in this cinema as the director itself embraces and portrays and expresses this concept in his form of cinema art. The difficult situation faced by a single mother in an urban background is clearly filmed and well explained in the story. Her love for another man who enters in his life and his understanding of Andrea was mixed up with traditional emotions of a man grown in the Indian society. The story shows the unsecured world for woman and the sabotage of a woman as a sex toy. The film itself is been titled as the name of the girl Aruvi who fights for her justice through a reality show in the television media the film ends up in a way that everybody understands the struggle faced by a HIV patient and the convicts also regret for their unjustifiable act.

V. CONCLUSION

There is a gradual growth in the mindset of the movie directors and make a bold attempt to limelight the real feminism which make them the pioneers in creating a movie based on feministic approach. Very few movies are made in indian industry regarding the feminism. There are certain young directors who tried to emphasize feminism in cinemas but most of the directors discussed about the love relation of a woman rather than picturising the problems sustaining in the society against them. The social concious value of the cinema depends on the awareness level of the director. The knowledge of the director and the story writer decides the value of the movie in terms of its social issues related to gender and differences.

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Authors Profile

Anthony Kimton Prabhu holds Master of Science Visual Communication from LOYOLA College in 2007 and PGDCA in Loyola institute of Business Administration – Informatics. He has eight years experience in the field of television production in media industry and three years experience in teaching field as Assistant Professor. He has attented many workshops, conferences, seminars in universities. He has directed many televison shows in Kalaigner Television Pvt Ltd and has a passion in acting and direction. He also has been awarded as best program producer in Star Asianet Suvarna channel. His research areas are New media, gender studies, social media and its impacts, television serials and advertisements.