Shifting perspectives: Islam in Bollywood films following the Mumbai terror attacks

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INTRODUCTION

The 2008 November attacks in Mumbai had a deep impact in Indian history as well as other countries across the world. In the aftermath of this incident, there were questions about identity, security and inter community harmony. Bollywood, whose movies are considered as a mirror of Indian society, has been an important tool in shaping the attitude of the audience toward this incident. This study will analyze the way Islamic characters were portrayed in Bollywood films post the 26/11 attacks.

Representation in movies is a term that is used to discuss the way in which film deals with the problems associated with class, gender, homosexuality, age, race and national or regional identity. Through the lenses of representation theory, we can understand how movies shape perception of the audiences. The major concerns of this theory include whether the images of the minority groups are represented accurately or if they are portrayed in stereotyped ways. The representation theory in movies involves looking into issues such as – How a specific community is represented in the movies? – Is an important matter when it comes to film research. Do they strike with truth or are they just pictures of stereotypes? – How the films make up the minds of the viewers especially those who are from the community which is represented in that film. Furthermore, it tells about how these depictions shape how the audiences think, and react in society. Positive depictions of these minority groups help in fighting and eliminating the stereotypes that have existed. If the minority is depicted in a negative manner, it negatively affects other people's opinions towards the minority as well as the reputations of the minority group.

The Indian film industry is one of the largest industries in the world as it releases over hundreds films every year. Mumbai is the main production center of films in the industry and is known as Bollywood i.e. an Indian version for Hollywood. India is the only country in the world where the largest number of tickets are sold indicating the Indians are passionate about entertainment and movies. Whether it's for the joy of its vibrant and melodious musicals or the suspense and drama it cleverly conveys the messages through its stories. Bollywood can be regarded as the king of cultural forces and has the power to attract audiences not only domestically but also internationally. Indian films are booming worldwide especially in those countries where a considerable number of Indians are living. Indian production companies are becoming more global by improving themselves each day. A great number of audiences from the West are also attracted by Bollywood movies. Another group of viewers includes the Pakistanis who are lured by intriguing plots and characters. Many Pakistanis like Indian films and actors more than those in Lollywood (Pakistani movies) and the local actors.

Bollywood started in 1913, with the release of Raja Harishchandra in Bombay. It was the first film made in India. It was a silent film having Marathi and English intertitles. It became famous after the emergence of sound in the 1930's. The 1950s and 1960s were considered as the golden age of Bollywood. The very well known filmmakers Raj Kapoor, Guru Dutt and Bimal Roy gave the shape to this period with their dramatically relevant dramas, extravagant musicals and unforgettable romances. The 1970s and the 1980s saw the introduction of the character known as "the angry young man" embodied by Amitabh Bachchan. In this era, masala films too came up. The beginning of the 1990s saw the period of globalization and modernization in Bollywood as it was accompanied by the West penetration, the production of urban films, as well as the appearance of new actors such as Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan and Salman Khan in cinema. In the last few years, Bollywood embraced various genres, narratives, and innovative technology as well. Filmmakers have touched different themes like social evils, historical events, biopics and genre splurging. Furthermore, internet streaming technologies have completely changed the approach to the distribution of Bollywood movies, thus achieving wider audiences globally. In spite of the success that Bollywood has achieved on the commercial level with its widespread popularity, it is also the target of criticism because of the promotion of stereotypes, underrepresentation of diversity, and bowing to commercial influences. At the same time, it is a significant vehicle for cultural expression, social explorations, and artistic innovations in the ways the face of society is always evolving.

Islam is a religion which is based on the Quran and the teachings of the religion's founder, Muhammad. Muslims who believe in the prophet Muhammad are adherents of Islam and are the second largest religious population after Christians. The life of worshiping Muslims, in general, is focused on the mosque. Earlier, in the days of the prophet, the mosque was the hub of all community activities and it continued to be like that in many parts of the world with Islamic heritage. Many of these mosques also provide spiritual and theological training to serve as religious schools and colleges. Muslims in India, are being discriminately attacked by the Hindu Majority. The main participants in these conflicts are considered to be

Islamic extremism and Hindu nationalism. The partition of India in 1947, witnessed the large-scale massacre in the entire nation. The demolition of Babri Mosque at Ayodhya in 1992, Bombay Riots and Bombay Bombings in 1993, Gujarat riots of 2002 and 26/11 resulted in the worsening of the situation for Muslims in India.

The conflict between India and Pakistan has lasted for years and revolved around the religious identity of Muslims as well as Hindus. The Muslims who came to South Asia in the 7th and 8th centuries were able to maintain their unique religious identity for centuries. Though Hindus and Muslims under Mughal rule lived in harmony, British imperial rule led to the evolution of communal identities that ultimately caused the division of the subcontinent into the sovereign states of India and Pakistan. For over 60 years, the war has continued. Total of four Indo-Pak wars happened during the period and both countries are also at conflict now. As the Hindus form 93% of the population, Muslims face marginalization as they are targeted by discriminators.

The Muslim characters in the Bollywood films before 26/11 were portrayed as Nawabs and Badshahs (Nawab and the King in Urdu respectively). In the first years, for example, there were movies, like Shahjehan (1946), Mumtaz Mahal (1944), Anarkali (1953), Mughal-e-Azam (1960), Mere Mehboob (1963) and Chaudhavin Ka Chand (1960) that presented Muslims as rulers. At the end of the 70s, the portrayal of Muslims on the screen also started to change and the Muslims there were illustrated as idle and unsuccessful Nabobs (a person of great wealth and prominence). Movies which show Muslims as inactive examples include - Pakeezah (1972), Umrao Jaan (1981), Nikah (1982) and Bazaar (1982). While the actors playing the Muslim characters were never named as such, they appeared to be of Arab origin with a particular costume, a briefcase, and a habit of regular smoking. This way of presentation of the Muslims has been direct and clear in the 80s and 1990. Additionally, many movies also portray and demonstrate the problems of Hindu-Muslim communal riots. Portrayal of the Muslims as terrorists and extremists came after 2001. The terrorist strikes of 9/11 changed the course of world politics and Muslims and Muslim countries became the prime victims of the revenge of the world. Further they were accused and suspected by everyone and everywhere. The 26/11 attacks added fuel to the fire and worsened the conditions for Muslims in India.

The 2008 Mumbai terrorist attack that took place between 26th and 29th of November, 2008, in Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. 10 men were the attackers who were suspected to be connected with Lashkar-e-Taiba, a Pakistan based terrorist group. Equipped with assault rifles and hand grenades, the militants turned their guns to the victims in numerous locations in the southern part of Mumbai, including the famous Leopold Café, two hospitals and a movie theater. However, the majority of the attacks stopped within an hour or so of their starting time somewhere between 9. At 8:30 pm the next day, the tragedy continued with the terrorists taking hostages in two places, the Nariman House and in two hotels, Oberoi Trident and Taj Mahal Palace & Tower. The incident in Nariman House was followed by a long standoff that ended on November 28 by the evening with a death toll of six hostages and two gunmen. At these hotels, many guests and employees were either blocked by the crossfire shooting or they were taken as hostages. Security forces of India concluded the hoisting in Oberoi Trident by midday on November 28, and in Taj Mahal Palace in the morning of the following day. In fact, 174 people were killed, including 20 security force personnel and 26 foreign nationals among them. Nearly 300 lives were affected. From the terrorist group, nine members were liquidated and one surrendered.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Indian cinema brought so many important changes by the early twenty century. Movies are the tool of artistic exercises, communication processes, education system, and intercultural diversity. This platform has made people to be entertained, to know things and be educated. Through films, people can be moved to do their part in society. Movies not only give an example of the society that the audience lives in, but also they teach us principles that we ought to live in society. The simple plots and relatable characters of the movies create connections that can affect viewers deeply. The majority of Indian filmmakers tend to deal with problems that are already existing in the society like the system involving dowries and exploitation of labor. In addition, a pattern can be seen in Bollywood movies wherein the Muslims are mainly depicted as terrorists and the black sheep. Such characterization perpetuates negative stereotypes and the hatred of the Muslim community.

Movies like Kurbaan (2009) degrade the character of Muslims/portray them in a negative way thereby breeding fresh prejudices and suspicions against all the Muslims. But films like My Name Is Khan seek to reverse this trend by showing a Muslim leading character that keeps on declaring: "My name is Khan, and I am not a terrorist". This is a great example when a character Kabir Khan should fight with the problem of discrimination and questioning of loyalty among the Muslims in India. Films possess the power of altering the public opinion. For instance, Roja (1992) and Agneepath (2012) and Once Upon A Time in Mumbai (2010) show Muslim as a terrorist and a gang lord and a terrorist respectively. In general, the way Muslims are portrayed in movies has a crucial influence on populace mindsets and opinions as far as Muslim people are concerned.

A survey method of research was deployed for the present study. A set of questionnaires was used to collect the required data for the study. 100 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 28% were Muslims (Male 24% and Female 4%) and 72% were non-Muslims, (Male 41% and Female 31%). There were some questions - Do you like watching Bollywood films? Why do you enjoy watching Bollywood movies? Watch any of the movies where Muslims are depicted as terrorists. Do you feel as if some of the movies from India are creating a devil in the minds of Indians by dividing Muslims and Hindus into two groups? I am wondering if Bollywood movies are portraying Muslims as terrorists. Do you think that Bollywood movies portray Muslim Muslim women as weaker and subjugated in Indian societies? Muslims are portrayed in what way in the Indian Cinema? Is it Muslim women that mostly fill the screen in Indian movies? How do you feel about the Muslim characters in Indian movies after having watched one? Is the Indian cinema portraying a wrong image of Muslims in general? Offer your solutions for not showing Muslims as terrorists on the big screen? By analyzing the replies of the respondents, it is clear that the number of the films featuring Muslims in a negative way, where the fighters and individuals are described as cruel and lawless angels, is much higher rather than those presenting Muslims in a positive way. Those films seek to clarify nerves about the lives of ordinary Muslim people whose communities are two times affected: first, from stigmatization, and second, from persecution. At first,

they are the targets of Islamic terrorists, and then they feel general mistrust of society and each time an attack is attributed to Islam, every Muslim becomes vulnerable to suspicion.

Over the last 15-20 years, it has been a common issue when it comes to finding a film where the Muslim identity of the leading character is constructed as a pivotal narration. In the cinema of Bollywood, for the films where the central characters are Muslim, we are likely to encounter a story that is either politically-themed or revolves around love (when the story is about love, it will usually involve an inter-religious relationship between a Muslim and a non-Muslim). The story can also depict a combination of the two themes. To summarize, Bollywood depicts from a negative stand and as a result, the perception of Muslims by non-Muslims is affected. (Bhat, 2019).

Bollywood, one of the biggest film industries, depicts most of the terrorists as Muslims in their films. In the late 80s and the early 90s, Bollywood filmmakers made numerous movies dealing with the Kashmir issue. During that period, the movies in which Kashmiri freedom fighters were assumed to be terrorists, militants and cruel people were made. The core reason behind the burning of the Islamic community is the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks which resulted in unfair treatment of Muslims as terrorists across the globe and a tag 'terrorist' was attached to them. These movies have the ability to change the way the people around the world look at Muslims. More often, the Muslims are depicted as terrorists, turncoats, or criminals. These imaginations have influenced the perspectives of Indian society and also other cultures. This way of representing the negative stereotypes about Muslims not only makes terrorism in India but in all across the world. These things are the results of it and Muslims as a whole are looked negatively, hence suspicious people, and untrustworthy people.

The researchers try to prove that the Muslims in Indian films are more likely to be presented with negative features rather than with positive attributes. The researchers have chosen this time-frame because of the fact that both after the destruction of the twin towers in New York and the anti-Muslim backlash became wide-spread. Muslims were thereby accused of this disaster and were labeled internationally as terrorists. The structure of national culture was divided into 10 units: Dressing/Getup, Language/Body Language, Rituals, Religious practices, Behavior, Patriotism, Planning, Motivation, Profession and Subliminal message. During the process of investigating ten categories, researchers mostly got answers in the negative.

The Muslims got depicted negatively in Indian films by portraying them as the mastermind of terrorist activities, as disloyal traitors, barbaric and cruel people. Throughout many of these films Muslims were depicted as evil plan givers who did all the killing as well as setting trucks on fire, and blowing up governmental buildings or officials. From portraying Muslims gangsters, to white collar crime cults they are also portrayed as underworld mafia. Which are easily noticed, the Muslims in this film are distinguished thus narrow and strict and not a bit flexible. It reveals that Muslims had a wicked behavior and tendency and did contradict with ethical and universal mindset. Unlike humanity, it is only the matter of Islamic conscious belief and law for Muslims. This research comprises the detailed analysis of the communicative power and effectiveness of the medium which is namely cinema. Therefore, very strongly it is concluded that - it is finally through the medium of cinema in India that the image of the Muslims of the Nation have been considerably distorted. (Khan and Bokhari 2011).

Since India attained its freedom, there have been communal clashes that emerged between the Hindu and Muslim communities. The intensity of these conflicts increased after the partition of India, which resulted in violence and tensions amongst the two communities. The demolition of Babri Mosque brought the situation to worse and so challenged the country's principle of secularism. The 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City totally transformed the way the world looked at Muslims and the tag of terrorist was given to the Muslims communities.

Movies also have participated and played a remarkable part in the forming of untrue stereotypes about Islam. These portrayals have been harmful not only to the society, but they have been fueling opposition to mosques and provoking racist attitudes towards Muslims. The media have repeatedly stereotype Muslims as terrorists, extremists, and violent individuals and thus portraying them as dangerous and scary. This negative portrayal influences the non-Muslims by providing the non-Muslims with a negative image about Muslims and to view the Muslim community in a negative way. The film industry creates deep reflection and understanding in people by using actors, dialogues, and songs. They have become a vehicle for transmitting messages and telling stories to a large audience that later shapes their culture, education and entertainment. Movies are not only a mirror of social opinion but they are also the tool of shaping it, the tool which can influence; trends and traditions. Actually, it is the present course of the film business which causes social tensions. It's necessary for cinema to keep in mind the effect that the movie portrayals are going to have on people's impressions of Islam.

The Mani Ratnam Films, in their earlier films especially, were very much ahead of their own time, in representing Muslim characters in a negative light, in films like Roja, Bombay and Uyire. It deepened them further after the 9/11 attacks and their development has been irreversibly accelerated after the 2008 Bombay attacks. Remaining popular movies like Velayutham and Thuppaki give the depiction of Muslims in a bad way too. A lot of Tamil films have borrowed their story-lines from real life problems, but some of them have actually brought about more confusion and prejudice than an actual solution. The initial introduction of Muslim characters in the Tamil film industry was that of humorous, vulnerable and subservient. However, the two events Babri Masjid demolition and 9/11 attacks led to the mass production of films showing Muslims as impetuses of destruction and systems hurting society through bomb explosions and other violent acts. In the 1990s, both Muslim characterisation and portrayal was always skewing towards being a supporter of Pakistan, or else, terrorist threats and subversive characters. Then they were being associated with providing weapons to criminal elements. Regardless of whether the movie makers did it deliberately or not, negative portrayal of Muslim community unintentionally got linked with Pakistan.

Researchers in their study have used the content analysis method as their strategy. The Tamil films that were chosen for this research are: Viswaroopam (2013), Anwar (2010), Thuppakki (2012), Velayutham (2011), Vaanamu (2011), Peyaanam (2011), and Unnaipol Oravan (2009). And the results reveal that these seven films portrayed Muslim characters in a detrimental fashion. The personification grew with its duration and ended up with the injustice against Muslim youth by labeling them as terrorists. Generally they indicate only Muslims terrorists, showing how they commit acts of violence on innocent people and others (non-Muslims). These characters are usually clad in the traditional Muslim outfits the moment they appear on the scene to commit terrorism, which also creates a negative impression of the Muslim community. Muslims have the reputation of being the bad guys, often depicted as terrorists, traitors, and violent people. Through their portrayal of Islam, the audience got a distorted image of the Islam and thus developed fear about the Muslim community. (Raja & Ganeshkumari, 2015).

In conclusion, Hindus - Muslims communal violence in India has increased year by year, starting from the period of partition and after the demolition of Babri Masjid. The negative portrayal of Muslims in the movies and media has been at the forefront of some of the biggest social challenges, including the protesting of mosque development as well as brutal acts of racism against the Muslims. The film industry is able to mold people's views and to guide society at large, including cultural, educational, and entertainment aspects. All the articles highlight the way Muslims in Indian movies have been portrayed negatively as terrorists, traitors and disloyal people. They are most of the time depicted as the brains behind terror attacks like bomb blastings and assassinations. Similarly, Muslims are portrayed as gangsters and members of the underworld mafia, showing their intolerance and rigidity. This is alarming since it continues to feed this brutal and inhumane picture of Muslims that stems from Islamic beliefs and laws. The researchers conclude that due to the fact that cinema is a powerful medium, the image of Muslims has distorted significantly. Furthermore, the Muslim main characters in Bollywood films are usually associated with politics, such as terrorism or inter-religious romance. This image of Muslims has influenced the way non-Muslims perceive them by portraying them in a bad picture. The last 15-20 years have seen a mostly negative depiction of Muslim characters in mainstream cinema, which is responsible for the cultivation of wrong stereotypes and misconceptions.

METHODOLOGY

This paper covers how the muslims were portrayed in Bollywood movies post 26/11 or November 2008 Mumbai attacks. The incident which is quite similar to the 9/11 tragedy of the USA is also known as the Indian 9/11 and is very significant for the Indian people because it had happened in Mumbai, which is the homeland of the Bollywood movie. For this study, data is collected from Bollywood films that feature Muslims and which are released between 2009 and 2022. This period has been chosen simply due to the fact that after the 26/11 attack an anti-muslim wave had swept the nation. Muslims were held accountable for this catastrophe and as a result they were labeled as terrorists literally everywhere. Muslim characters in Bollywood films are analyzed using the representation theory. It can be assumed that probably in Indian movies Muslims would be represented negatively more than it will be presented positively.

- Sampling - Since it is not possible to analyze all Bollywood films portraying Muslims and which are launched during 2009-2022. A sample of convenient sampling methods are done and the movies with Muslim characters which mostly have a negative portrait are chosen for this study.

- Representation theory - Representation can affect the viewers' brain directly. According to Stuart Hall (1997), the movie pictures are extremely powerful while at the same time their meaning is highly variable. Edward Said's (1997) definition of Orientalism means the dominant depiction of the oriental cultures and societies that designates the west as modern and progressive and the east as traditional and backward. Practically, the concept of Orientalism is a perfect ground to inspect how minority groups are featured in Bollywood films.

ANALYSIS

The following Bollywood movies are selected for this research - New York (2009), Vishwaroop (2013), Phantom (2015), Padmaavat (2018) and The Kashmir Files (2022).

New York (2009) is an action film directed by Kabir Khan and produced by Aditya Chopra. It features John Abraham, Katrina Kaif, Neil Nitin Mukesh and Irrfan Khan in the lead roles.

Synopsis - The story is about three friends at New York University whose lives are altered by the 9/11 attack and its aftermath. New York cab driver Omar has been assigned by Roshan a FBI agent, to spy on an old friend of his, Samir, who they think is a terrorist. As Omar recollects his relationship with Samir, which began nine years prior, during his college days, he also recollects about his friendship with Samir's now wife, Maya, and how all 3 of their lives were changed after 9/11. As Omar get's close to Samir, he learns that this isn't the first time Samir has been targeted by the government. It turns out that Samir had been imprisoned in a terrorist camp for nearly a year and a half. Now he has become a terrorist and he plots to blow up the FBI building. At the end when Maya and Omar talk Samir out of committing the act and he agrees, but then the snipers shoot him while Maya is killed by the strays.

Analysis - Samir's story has a connection with the representation of Muslims in a manner where the population of innocent Muslims living in New York were deliberately targeted following the 9/11 attacks. In this movie, the Muslim in New York are often portrayed as undergoing surveillance, racial profiling, and discrimination in different areas of their life, post 9/11 attacks. The character of Samir represents the wrongs done to the Muslims in the name of national security. Although he is a law-obedient citizen, he is arrested, interrogated, and treated badly by the police. Samir's life in this movie highlights the characteristics of Islamophobia. The film confronts stereotypes by making its Muslim characters come to life and depicting their

capacity for resilience during hard times. Moreover, the movie also focuses on the internal issues that Muslims face while trying to deal with their identities in such a hostile neighborhood. Samir undergoes questions of loyalty, belonging and cultural identity whilst being surrounded by doubts. His journey shows the controversial nature of being Muslim in post 9/11 America, where religion is being regarded as a form of terrorist or extremist activities. Besides Samir, other Muslim citizens in New York have also been victimized. Maya - Samir's wife also encounters discrimination and bullying because of her Muslim identity. But, after the release, Samir gets involved in terrorism as he believes it is the only means of revenge and plans to bomb the FBI building. Again, Samir thoughts are stereotyped - all Muslims believe terrorism is the only solution for their problems.

Vishwaroop (2013) is an Indian action spy film co-written, directed and produced by Kamal Haasan, who also enacts the lead role. It features Rahul Bose, Shekhar Kapur, Pooja Kumar, Andrea Jeremiah, Nassar and Jaideep Ahlawat in supporting roles. The film's script was written by Kamal Hassan, Chakri Toleti and Atul Tiwari.

Synopsis - Nirupama confides in her therapist in New York that marriage to Vishwanath was only for show. Vishwanath, a Kathak teacher, portrays characteristics of a girl who made Nirupama develop an intimate feeling towards Deepankar, her supervisor. She is suspicious that Vishwanath also has some concealed secrets and hires a private investigator (P.I.) to find some proof for divorce. P.I. reveals that Vishwanath is a Muslim before being murdered by Farukh who belongs to Omar Qureshi's group. When Farukh comes with his men into Nirupama's house, both Vishwanath and her are taken as hostages. Surprisingly, Vishwanath kills Farukh and his guards, thus saving Nirupama. It is revealed that Vishwanath and Omar have a common past that involves Al-Qaeda terror training camps. Vishwanathan's original name is Wizam Ahmed Kashmiri who is a wanted Tamil Jihadi. Omar adopts him into the group and unveils that American captives are still alive. Vishwanath sees Al-Qaeda leaders being greeted by Osama bin Laden just before the American air force carries out a bombing raid. Without knowing an informant, Omar wrongly put to death an innocent man. Sleepers planting a dirty bomb in New York City are then found out. Nirupama discovers the real character of Vishwanath alongside his uncle, British friend Dr. Dawkins and one of his kathak students Ashmita. Vishwanath, the RAW agent, breaks into Al Qaeda's sleeper cell in the US. Along with the FBI, Vishwanath and his colleagues eliminate the threat, but Omar escapes in a plane. Analysis - In this movie, the Muslim characters are shown as giving importance to their family. They are always family bonded. The antagonist character Omar shows his extreme affection for his family members. But, he always shows a preference for his religion and terrorist activity. It shows the level of negative thought of the Muslim leading character. In Jihad, most of the workers are youngsters. The leading Jihadi workers mostly used the youngsters to execute their plan against society. The negative characters have great knowlege about the technological aspects and well educated power. But they used their knowledge for negative purposes. And they teach the technological knowledge to their children and test them how they get the idea about that. Such as Omar teaches about the weapon and other guns to his child even while he was a kid. And that child only permits gaming with the weapons. This movie shows the positive character also giving importance to his religion and not giving importance to his country. It shows the level of interest for the motherland. It also creates a negative mindset about the Muslims and Islam religion. Movie shows that Muslims strictly follow "what religion says" in their life. They restrict women and they hide women from society. They are not ready to follow social conventions. But they must obey their clothing convention. Such as most of the Muslims were wearing kurta and kulla systems. Women were forced to wear burqas and scarves. Narcotics behavior had been followed by Muslim characters in this movie. Party culture is also demonstrated in this movie. Muslim characters are portrayed as doing activities against law and society. Lives of men were shown as the dominant character. They expressed themselves as rulers of the society. They treated children and women as unimportant. Women's lives are shown in critical background and They are dependent on the male. They get no rights, no space in their home and any other surroundings. Youngsters are shown as religious bonds. Whatever they studied, it was used for negative purposes. Young Muslims are diverting and they are forced to work in Jihadi path. They changed them for their religious faith and they are willing to do the bombing, suicide attacks and other criminal activities for their religion. They are only training for terror activities. For exaple the kid of Omar had many dreams and he wants to become a doctor, but Omar tries to force his child to handle the weapons.

Phantom (2015) is an action movie directed by Kabir Khan and produced by Sajid Nadiadwala and Siddharth Roy Kapur and has Saif Ali Khan and Katrina Kaif in the lead role. The screenplay is written in parallel with the book Mumbai avengers on the 26/11 attacks chronology by author Hussain Zaidi.

Synopsis - The main theme of the movie centers on the captain, Daniyal Khan who desires revenge on the Mumbai terrorist attacks which took place on 26/11. During this period, Daniyal joins the research and analysis division and decides to perform his duty in an expedient manner in order to prove his competency in the ranks of the Indian Army. For that purpose, Mumbai terrorists used different smart approaches by targeting the heads of such people as Sajid Mir and David Headley. Together, this is the beginning of a great moment, but the unpredictable setback of Brody, which was reported dead, suddenly appears again. However, the route for Daniyal and his team was not a simple one because they didn't just face ridicule and condemnation from the RAW but moved ahead undeterred by their efforts to catch and eliminate the remaining conspirators to mankind. At the very end of the flick the most dramatic part of it is the sizzling face off in Pakistan where Daniyal sacrifices to ensure that the mission will not be overlooked.

Analysis - "Phantom" movie portrays Muslims rather in terrorism and counterintelligence operations format. The central story line of the film is about the dream of the Indian intelligence workers to pay back the people who were behind the terrorist attack in Mumbai in 2008 and who belonged to the organization based in Pakistan called the Lashkar-e-Taiba. Although terrorists and sympathizers are exclusively associated with Muslims, such a depiction is very unidimensional and stereotyped. This may accentuate the already popular negative portrayal of Muslims, intensify the Islamophobia and finally neglect the inner diversity and richness of Muslim Identities. Also, this movie has been accused of being overly simplified as to how terrorism starts, while failing to address the wider socio-political environment in which it arises. Moreover, the film has the ability to create distorted views about the Muslims by depicting them as villains or people in conflict with national security, which therefore creates suspicion and fear of Islam.

Padmaavat (2018) is a historical drama film directed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. It stars Deepika Padukone as Rani Padmavati, a Sinhalese-born Rajput queen, who was very beautiful, the wife of Maharawal Ratan Singh, played by Shahid Kapoor. Sultan Alauddin Khilji, played by Ranveer Singh, hearing of her beauty, attacks her country to own her. Aditi Rao Hydari, Jim Sarbh, Raza Murad, and Anupriya Goenka in supporting roles are also in the cast.

Synopsis - In the 13th century ruler Afghanistan, there was, Alauddin Khilji, who aspired to acquire the Delhi throne, and also to make the princess named Sehrunisa Mehrunnisa as his wife. However, on their wedding night, he committed adultery. Princess Singhal, Padmavati, fell in love with the king of Mewar, Maharawal Ratan Singh and later got married to him. Alauddin was defeated in the first battle of the Mongol invasion; he took the princess captive and turned her into his concubine. Alauddin kills off his uncle Jalaliddin and shakes off all the titles of Jalaluddin as he appoints himself the Sultan of Delhi. Kafur, ambassador of Alauddin Khilji, expresses interest in capturing Chittor after hearing the praise given by Raghav Chetan, a rejected priest, on the skills of Queen Padmavati. In the end Ratan Singh is deceived and carried to Delhi while Padmavati is taking some conditions for the meeting with Alauddin. Alauddin fails in his assassination plot which brings about bloodbath between him and his nephew. And so Padmavati and the generals help Ratan Singh to be released while Mehrunisa assists them to run out. In the duel, Sinh Ratan is badly wounded by Kafur, so has only a few moments left to live. The Khilji forces overpower the Rajputs and capture Chittor but the women of Rajput select jauhar (mass burning of themselves) which really enrages Alauddin.

Analysis - The Muslims in the film are represented by the character of Alauddin Khilji. He looked like an obsessively competitive and bloody invader instead of a subtly illustrated religious Muslims portrait. This depiction failed to provide a fair picture of Muslim rulers that was focused on negative qualities and gave an impression of uneducated and uncivilized people. In addition, there was a discourse whether the movie portrayed the exact reality, because the viewers claimed that it was a whitewashing one and a disputable version of the story. Some of them said that Khili's role, which was only used for the fiction, was in the center, instead of the central part of his personality and reasons. However, its defenders asserted that their version of the film was inspired by historical as well as literary sources and hence the film should be considered a more creative adaptation rather than an accurate depiction. They said the film was not against Muslim people in general but that it was narrating the story of the last century because it was a historical film. The movie shows Muslim character Alauddin Khilji in a generally negative and stereotyped manner.

The Kashmir Files (2022) is an Indian release drama film which was written and directed by Vivek Agnihotri. This movie depicts a fictional story with the 1990 migration of Kashmiri Pandits as its center of interest. Through this scene, however, it presents the exodus and the consequent genocide inaccurately from the experts' point of view. The film stars Mithun Chakraborty, Anupam Kher, Darshan Kumar and Pallavi Joshi in the lead roles.

Synopsis - The film keeps shifting between the year 2020 and the time flashbacks of 1989-1990 Kashmir. In 1989-1990, Kashmiri Pandits were shooed away from the Kashmir valley with violent slogans. Pushkar Nath Pandit, the teacher, fears for his son Karan security and asks for Dutt protection, his good friend. Karan gets shot by the leader of the militants named Farooq Malik Bitta and then, Pushkar's family begs for their pardon. Taking over the hospital by militants prevents Karan going to the hospital to get medical treatment, and he dies from injuries. Along with his family, the Pushkar family finally found safety in a journalist Vishnu Ram and a Hindu poet called Kaul. Kaul and his son's lifeless bodies are later found hanging from adjacent trees. The Kashmiri Pandits flee to Jammu and settle there in a deplorable situation. Brahma turns out to be an advisor to the J&K newly appointed Governor and deals with the returning of a Kashmiri Pandit. When Sharda had her second son - Krishna who was raised by Pushkar, he was told that his parents had died in an accident. Krishna gets to be in touch with a teacher who as well backs Kashmiri separatism. Krsna is a contestant in the student election and uses it to his advantage to condemn the Indian Government for Kashmir. Pushkar's mates rewind Kashmir and call it genocide. Krishna goes to Kashmir to scatter Pushkar's ashes and comes face to face with Bitta, who states that the Pandits are in the situation they are in because of his own misdeeds. Chanda maintains that she is a peaceful ruler and calls the Indian army for murdering Krishna's mother and brother. In the meantime, Krishna found out that the newspaper clippings collected by Pushkar supported Bitta's argument. Krishna makes a speech concerning the history of Kashmir as well as his own hardships at the beginning, the students turn to opposing him but finally, some support is gained.

Analysis - The movie shows how, during the late eighties to early nineties, Kashmir Valley was politicized due to militancy. The film is about militant activities that resulted in the Kashmiri Hindu community fleeing. The movie shows the violence against the community of Kashmiri Hindus, and the way they were forced to leave the valley. These scenes are a good depiction that the time then had a mixture of the social groups in the Muslim community which made the violence spread. It deals with socio-political disparity and the fight of the individual for authorization from Indian rule. The theme of this film revolves around the desires of some Muslim Kashmiris who have the belief that they surely are on the back foot against the Indian government. Since they do not seem to have power to negotiate fairly on equal footing, some of them use historical incidents to justify their political movement of independence or greater autonomy. To begin with, the movie centers mainly on the individual exploits of Kashmiri Pandits, the portrayal of all the Muslim characters is one-sided. Some of the others who are loaded with bitterness, are found resenting the misfortune suffered by the Kashmiri Pandits, concurring that they have been wronged too. Others, this time, mostly innocent people, move in the open spaces where accidents happen and become the victims of events that they never knew were possible. As much as the narration may seem influencing and unbiased through all, it remains brought to question by its one-way storytelling and the way the story is told. The film gives a one-sided view and the picture of reality is presented. It is the Muslims who are depicted as inhuman persons with evils causing harm to the Hindu. The film is accused of not portraying this issue systematically and even blatantly shunning the causal rights violations to which the Kashmiri Muslims are subjected.

FINDINGS

The majority of the movies had the Anti-Islam idea and social justice. Majority of the movies that were released after 26/11 were focused on negative portrayal of the Muslim community. Filmmakers are also affected by the setting where their homeland is at present. To be specific, the national sphere under the banner of Hindutva nationalism has suffered drastic changes in the last two decades. Through cinema as a creative and social medium, there was an impact on society and also reflected what was happening in real life. However, people may say that it only took the visual scenes that were already there in the air and put them into visual narrative. On the other hand, this can be put in the opposite direction, reinforcing the existing stereotypes.

The movie New York, shows Muslims through common stereotypes. Muslims are sometimes associated with terrorism thus creating a perception of fear and mistrust in society. It portrays the Muslim community as the target of discrimination and prejudice, going through racial profiling and hate crime. Muslim characters who are stereotyped as oppressed or marginalized, women are depicted as inferior. The film shows Muslims as representing a single group that contains no differences in the culture or religion. Overall, the movie does not give adequate and real presentations about Muslims which further promotes the negative stereotypes about the Muslim communities.

The film Vishwaroop, it shows Muslim characters to be moral internally but they give more preference to religion than life or the entire world. In their view, the only idea left for them to assert their rights to their religion is terrorism. They call these activities the Islamic jihad of their religion. Unfortunately, this kind of portrayal brings so many bad things to the entire Muslim community of our society. Also, here the Muslim characters were very tender with their family members. They love their particular families. It's worth mentioning that this is the most common clothing convention in such movies, which are mainly represented by the salwar-kameez, dupatta, tasbih, and beard when it comes to the Islamic characters' attires. Muslims are visually pictured as a group who are tied very closely to terrorism; thus, the idea that all Muslims are potential terrorists is easily accepted. The film also shows Muslim as a homogeneous group with little diversity among their stances on beliefs and practices while the existence of sorts of different ideas within the communities of Muslims is ignored.

The movie "Phantom" exploits the Muslims with a stereotypical depiction of them having a connection with terrorism and extremism, presenting them as potential terrorists or backers of terrorist ideology. The main issue is that although the purpose of these movies is to draw attention to the acts of terrorism, it comes with the price of distorting the whole reality and suggesting that violence is an inherent feature of every Muslim. This movie adds to the marginalization and the broadening of negative stereotypes about Muslims in mass media, reinforcing the need for challenging such portrayals for a more inclusive and fair representation of Muslim communities.

In the movie Padmaavat, it reinforces the current Hindutva narrative about the Muslim rulers of India. It portrays Muslim ruler Alauddin Khilji of the Delhi Sultanate, played by Ranveer Singh, as a violent and lustful man lacking any scruples, fitting in with the current wave of Islamophobia in India. The reality was that Khilji was a competent ruler and he ruled Delhi from 1296 to 1316. He was a capable administrator and his taxation and revenue system was followed by the Mughals and the British till the 19th century. He himself monitored daily prices of essentials and storage facilities for food grain to counter inflation. However, he was most influential as a military man. Nevertheless, Bansali's apprehension of Khilji as a barbarian Muslim king is more comprehensive. These wrong depictions give the audience, especially the Non muslim communities a wrong message about the muslim communities.

The movie Kashmir Files portrays the entire Muslim community to be accountable for massacres and expulsion Kashmiri Pandits faced, which is wrong, cause in reality, not every Muslims was involved in this. The movie makes an attempt to reveal the Muslims (especially the Kashmiri Muslims) in the dark light portraying them mostly as perpetrators of violence and oppression and against the Kashmiri Pandits. The terrorists who committed the massacres against the Pandits fall into the role of the ruthless antagonists which strengthened the stereotypes about Muslims in the storyline. The Muslims in the film are frequently exhibiting as uncaring or non-aggressive, playing the part of passive spectators or cooperators in the abuses of the pandit community. The way this portrayal does not look into the multiplicity of individual experiences and views serves the stereotype of Muslims being a group inherently hostile or insensitive towards people of other faiths. Overall, even though it tries to demonstrate the problems of Kashmiri Pandits, it shows Muslim characters in stereotypical ways and again gives the wrong image about the Muslim communities.

In summary, it is evident that there are more movies that touch upon the issues related with Muslims and Pakistan, the number of the movies which depict and render the Muslims as brutal and rogue is greater than the number of the movies which present and portray Muslims in a positive frame of mind.

CONCLUSION

From the above findings, we can conclude Muslims in Indian films are often stereotyped. Films depicting Muslims in a bad light greatly outnumber those doing so in a good one, suggesting that Muslims in India are generally not held in high regard. Bollywood movies often present the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority as enemies, presenting an inaccurate dichotomy. The negative stereotype opens a window for the constructive stereotype to be replaced, biased toward more acts of violence. This study analyzes the representation of Muslims in Bollywood movies. From the research, we can say that Muslims in Indian films are often stereotyped. Films depicting Muslims in a bad light greatly outnumber those doing so in a good one, suggesting that Muslims in India are generally not held in high regard. Movies which show Muslims in the right perspective should be

praised. Bollywood movies often present the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority as enemies, but those things are simply falsehood. It makes the negative stereotype stronger and eventually the good one is replaced. Thus, further acts of violence toward a community are supported.

In conclusion, Bollywood is one of the major entertainment media. Bollywood movies are the ones with the most profound impact on culture since the way they change people and society is the way they affect it. It is considered as an important shaper of culture primarily because of the impact it creates on individuals and societies. In this scenario, these types of stereotyped negative portrayals give the chances for a negative impact on society. The film industry must be very careful, responsible, and conscious of our secularism principles. All minority communities are to be treated equally by the media in order to maintain the secularism of the country.

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