

Cinema and Social Change: Bollywood's Role in Shaping Public Health Narratives through Entertainment-Education

Shahbaz Aslam

Babar Sohail

Sohail Riaz

Babar Hussain

Abstract

This study examines Bollywood's role in disseminating public health messages through the Entertainment-Education (E-E) framework. Bollywood, one of the largest film industries globally, has a vast cultural influence, producing more than 1000 films annually that reach millions of viewers across the globe. Using theoretical models like Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), this research explores how Bollywood films impact public awareness, attitudes, and behaviours concerning critical health issues and how Bollywood in contributing towards awareness about these issues. A cross-sectional research design vis-à-vis qualitative content analysis was adopted, to analyse the four Bollywood films selected through random sampling based on health communication themes having commercial success on Hindi cinema as well. The study reveals that Bollywood movies have a profound impact towards creating awareness of public health issues including, HIV/AIDS, menstruation, mental health, and negative body image. These films by presenting hope and call to emotions enable the viewers to increase their empathy, decrease the stigma, and make or adopt a societal change. This study demonstrates the potential of Bollywood as a powerful medium for public health communication, emphasizing the importance of strategic collaboration between filmmakers and public health professionals to optimize educational communication.

Keywords: Bollywood; Public health messaging; Entertainment-Education; Social Cognitive Theory; Health communication; Film and media influence

Introduction

Films are one of the strongest communication tools across the globe either a political propaganda, cultural dominance or awareness (Aslam, 2015; Kim, 2018). Health communication aims to inform and influence individual and community decisions to enhance health and well-being (Hannawa et al., 2015). Effective communication strategies are important in education the public regarding health issues and adoption of healthy practices. In countries with huge population like India, where cultural diversity and varying literacy levels pose challenges to traditional health communication methods, leveraging popular media becomes essential. Bollywood, the Hindi-language film industry based in Mumbai, India, has not only served as a source of entertainment but also as a significant cultural force with the potential to impact public health behaviours (Bora, 2020).

Bollywood produces over a thousand films annually, reaching millions of viewers across India and around the world. The industry's wide reach and deep cultural influence make it an ideal platform for disseminating public health messages. The entertainment and popular media have the strongest cultural and communication penetration as compared to any other medium, hence considered as a powerful tool of cultural propagation and preservation (Riaz et al., 2021; Shahbaz Aslam et al., 2015). Bollywood films often reflect and shape societal norms, values, and behaviours, making them powerful tools for public health interventions (Ganti, 2012).

The concept of Entertainment-Education (E-E) is particularly relevant in this context where serious and educational messages are directed towards audience through popular media (Sabido, 2003). E-E is a communication strategy that integrates educational/informational messages into popular entertainment content to influence the attitudes and behaviours of the target audience which varies according to needs and requirements (Singhal & Rogers, 2002). By embedding health messages within engaging narratives, E-E aims to make complex or taboo

topics more approachable and relatable to the audience (Brown & Singhal, 1999). The E-E framework includes key components such as engagement, modelling, repetition, and emotional appeal, which work together to enhance message retention and influence behaviour change (Bandura, 2004).

There are several studies that highlighted the effectiveness of Entertainment-Education in promoting public health messages. As the message through popular media proves more effective and powerful as compared to traditional communication campaigns. For instance, Rogers et al. (1999) demonstrated how the popular Mexican telenovela "Simplemente María" effectively promoted adult literacy and family planning by weaving educational content into the storyline and presenting the sensitive content in an acceptable and entertaining manner. Similarly, the radio soap opera "Twende na Wakati" in Tanzania successfully addressed critical health issue of HIV/AIDS and educate the audience about prevention and family planning, leading to significant changes in audience behaviour (W. Vaughan Arvind Singhal Ramadhan M. Swalehe Peter, 2000).

As far as the Bollywood is concerned, there have been notable instances where films have successfully integrated public health messages on certain very important and critical issues. In the early 2000s, Bollywood played a crucial role disseminating information and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS in the country. Films like 'Phir Milenge' (2004) addressed the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and promoted understanding and empathy towards those affected which were considered as alienated and detestable. This film used the E-E approach by engaging the audience with famous actors, presenting characters who demonstrated supportive behaviours towards HIV-positive individuals, and evoking empathy through the protagonist's journey (Singhal et al., 2013). The spread of HIV/AIDS and awareness to control and precautionary measure as well as developing empathy towards the patients was a contribution of the film. On similar patterns there are many films produced that have contributed a lot towards promoting awareness and safe health practices.

This paper aims to explore how Bollywood films have been effectively used to disseminate public health messages and promote behaviour change through the E-E framework. By analysing case studies, this research provides insights into how Bollywood films can be strategically used to address public health issues and promote healthier behaviours. The findings will contribute to the development of strategies for integrating educational messages into popular entertainment content, ultimately enhancing public health communication efforts in India and beyond.

Despite the potential of Bollywood films or the popular media to influence public health behaviours positively, there are also challenges and limitations for every medium. The risk of oversimplifying complex health issues and the potential for unintended negative consequences, such as reinforcing stereotypes, must be carefully managed. Collaboration between filmmakers and public health experts is essential to ensure accurate and positive messaging.

1: HIV/AIDS Awareness through "Phir Milenge" (2004)

An early attempt of Bollywood in addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS was done in 'Phir Milenge' a movie directed by Revathi and starring Shilpa Shetty, Salman Khan and Abhishek Bachchan. The film involved a successful career woman who is an HIV positive and the climax is stigmatized and job loss. The film succeeded to attract the audience speaking about actors and choosing the story with emphasis on emotional struggle of the main character. The state of emotions elicited by the the protagonist was key in the development of aliments towards people living with HIV/AIDS.

'Phir Milenge' portrayed positive modelling with the lawyer of the protagonist who actually challenged discrimination against HIV/AIDS patients and the rights of the HIV/AIDS

affected persons. Positive treatment of HIV-positive character exhibited by other characters was done severally, which emphasized the important message of acceptance of such individuals.

With regards to the impact made by the film it was able to educate people about HIV/AIDS and also defeating stereotyping. It raised awareness of how people with the disease should be treated and brought an emphasis to the ideas of support and acceptance. Studies done after the screening of the movie showed there was improved knowledge positively changed attitude towards the HIV positive people (Rogers et al., 2014).

2. Menstrual Hygiene Awareness through "Pad Man" (2018)

'Pad Man' was directed by R. Balki with the cast Akshay Kumar, Sonam Kapoor and Radhika Apte and the movie was inspired of the true story of Arunachalam Muruganatham an Indian social entrepreneur who invented a low-cost automatic sanitary pad-making machine. The movie was well suited to the target audience as it offered them an inspiring story full of picturesque hardships of the main hero. The women's picture ethos became appealing to audiences as obvious in the protagonist's determination to better their lives.

'Pad Man' made Vikas, the protagonist, a good role model who did not give up and who came up with something creative. The movie showed that it is necessary to get rid of the cultural taboo and know about the menstrual hygiene. Through the movie "Pad Man" millions were educated about of the issue of sanitation during menses and the taboo of menses prevailing in the society. Post-feature, various questionnaires revealed that there were post-films discussions with reference to menstrual hygiene and that there was general acceptance of the use of sanitary pads among the rural women (Gupta et al., 2020). The film also followed similar interventions and undertaking relating to the bacteriology of menstruation and better menstrual practices across India.

3. Autism Awareness through "My Name is Khan" (2010)

The movie 'My Name is Khan' by Karan Johar, starring Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol gave the message of difficult situation as well as discrimination faced by those having Autism. This film explored the life of an autistic man called Rizwan Khan and how he struggles and try to gain acceptance in America after 9/11 attack. It was possible to work with the audience on an interesting story and the charismatic acting of the lead characters. Such an emotional experience of a protagonist along with social and political setting played an effective emotional appeal to the audience.

In 'My Name is Khan', the protagonist was the epitome of a good character, he was strong and posted a forgiving attitude. Preferences were depicted by the film's repeating notion that the society should embrace people with autism and change its prejudice.

The success of the movie was the awareness and education about autism as well as encouraging a better appreciation and understanding of individuals with this disorder. Self-stigma reports suggested less rejection avoidance and less internalization of the negative stereotype about autism among the viewers (Naveen, 2012). The movie also generated conversations on subjects such as mental health and the importance of essential inventive policies or not.

4: Body Positivity and Weight Issues through "Dum Laga Ke Haisha" (2015)

Another movie that portrayed body shaming and the societal pressure that goes with it is 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha', the movie was directed by Sharat Katariya and featured Ayushmann Khurrana and Bhumi Pednekar. It informed a young man who was forced to marry an overweight woman and how they got to accept each other and fall in love. Viewers enjoyed the matter and enjoyed the characters shown in the movie. Audience also connected with the issues

that the main characters have to face and their win in overcoming their emotional turmoil regarding an issue which is considered as a social taboo.

The characters of 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' were well depicted portraying accepting the different nature of each other. The producers of the film made it a point to display the good heart always triumphs over materialistic body's theme.

And thus, the film was able to overcome the purpose of portraying body positivity and coming with disapproval towards the general culture of understanding weight and looks. Quantitative self-reported data suggested improvement in the perception of overweight individuals and self-identified assimilation to attractive body image norms as well as decrease in weight prejudice of the audience (Katariya, 2015; Singh, 2018). The film was also stirring controversy and debates regarding issues to do with acceptance of the body and the negative impact of cultural pressure.

The above discussed case studies show how the Bollywood films are relevant to different aspects of public health discussed under the E-E framework. Emotionally captivating stories, easy to identify characters and appeals to pathos make Bollywood movies credible in passing health information and changing audience practices. Based on the positive trends noted in these movies, Bollywood would appear to hold great potential for use as a communication channel in the practice of public health. At the same time, these films also show that it is possible to heavily prepare and consult public health officials before developing and presenting a message.

Theoretical Frameworks for Entertainment-Education in Bollywood

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), developed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes the importance of observational learning, imitation, and modelling in behaviour change. According to SCT, people can learn new behaviours by observing others, particularly when those behaviours are modelled by influential or relatable individuals. This theory posits that learning occurs in a social context and can be facilitated by watching others perform behaviours and observing the consequences of those behaviours (Bandura, 1977).

According to SCT, people learn from observing others, especially when the observed behaviours are rewarded or punished. In terms of the Process Use of SCT, Bollywood films can enjoin characters who engage in health-promoting behaviour and who are also positively reinforced so as to promote emulation.

The Indian popular cinema also presents the protagonists as examples of perfect hygiene, healthy diet, and healthy psychologically. These characters are role models for the audience showing it how many advantages healthy behaviour and the corresponding rewards are. For example, in the movie 'Pad Man' (2018) where the central character is an inspiring man trying to invent local and cheap sanitary pads, not only does the movie give information regarding menstruation, but it also teaches dedication, invention, and being socially concerned, and makes the audience want to act like the central character of the story.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991), suggests that an individual's behaviour is influenced by their intention to perform the behaviour, which is shaped by their attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). TPB provides a framework for understanding how Bollywood films can influence audience behaviour by altering these three components.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) predicts that human behaviour is determined by his/her intentions, where intentions are determined by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived

control. This theory has been used by Bollywood films through depicting the advantages associated with practices that form positive attitudes that support healthy behaviours, showing the models exemplifying and supporting these activities to influence the perceived normative beliefs of the viewers and finally illustrating how healthy behaviours are achievable and within the control of the viewers.

Bollywood films can shape viewers' attitudes by portraying the benefits of healthy behaviours and the negative consequences of unhealthy behaviours. Subjective norms can be influenced by showing respected and influential characters endorsing positive behaviours, thereby setting a standard for what is considered acceptable within the viewer's social group. Perceived behavioural control can be enhanced by depicting characters who demonstrate that adopting healthy behaviours is feasible and manageable, even in the face of obstacles.

In effort to influence attitudes of the viewers, Bollywood movies provide positive attributes of healthy behaviours as well as negative attributes of unhealthy behaviours. Subjective norms depend to a great extent on the portrayal of positive behaviours that are considered appropriate by the visible influential role models that may be implemented in the view of the subject. It is recommended to increase perceived behavioural control by presenting examples of characters who show that it is possible and easy to practice healthy behaviours in conditions of barriers encountered.

Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The concept of the Diffusion of Innovations was evangelized by Everett Rogers to lay out the procedure by which change occurs within a society. This theory posits that innovations spread over time with regards to some channels amongst the members of a social system (Orr, 2003). According to this theory, there are relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability, which determine the extent of change in behaviour.

Bollywood films may work as an effective agent in spreading novel health behaviours by portraying new styles of practices and the benefits accruing from them. For instance, 'Vicky Donor' a film of 2012 dealt with sperm donation which was a socially sensitive issue in Indians. Thus, shaping an idea of sperm donation as the responsible and useful action let the movie make the given behaviour more permissible among others.

Health Belief Model (HBM)

The Health Belief Model (HBM) is a psychological model that takes into account extent of the behaviour in relation to health in order to explain and predict health behaviours. The Health Belief Model predicts that people will take action to protect their health if they think they are vulnerable to an illness, understand the consequences of the disease, know that the action they are planning will help reduce their vulnerability, or lessen the severity of the disease, and are willing to pay the price to seek preventive care (Rosenstock, 1974).

Bollywood films can develop stories which reflect on the receptiveness and viciousness of wellbeing issues including adverse impact of unsafe sex or flow of smoking among the youths. In addition, by continuing and drawing a direct focus on action, films may depict the positive outcomes inherent in performance, for example a benefits of smoking cessation, whereas rendering the depiction of barriers through portraying the characters overcoming them.

When these theoretical frameworks are combined it becomes possible to use Bollywood films for public health education as well as to change behaviour among the viewers. The case studies of Social Cognitive Theory, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Diffusion of Innovations Theory, and Health Belief Model in Bollywood films shows how entertainment-education can be used as a potent and effective method of communication for health promotion. These frameworks help in developing social communication purposeful and informative dramas,

which are both informative and create constructive movements in health behaviour among the targeted audiences.

Research Design

This study employs a cross-sectional research design with qualitative content analysis approach to explore Bollywood's influence on public health messaging, utilizing the Entertainment-Education (E-E) framework. The aim is to understand how Bollywood films engage audiences and shape perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours regarding health-related issues. Drawing on theories such as Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), this research examines the narratives, character portrayals, and emotional appeals in select Bollywood films to assess their role in disseminating health messages.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select four Bollywood films that prominently feature public health related themes. These films, recognized for addressing issues such as HIV/AIDS awareness, menstrual hygiene, mental health, and body image, were chosen based on their impact and visibility in Indian society. The selected films include: '*Phir Milenge*' (2004), '*My Name is Khan*' (2010), '*Dum Laga Ke Haisha*' (2015), and '*Pad Man*' (2018).

In addition to film selection, thirty in-depth interviews were conducted with viewers who had watched at least three of these films. The interviewees were chosen based on diverse demographic factors such as age, gender, and socio-economic status to ensure a broad representation of perspectives.

Film Content Analysis: A detailed content analysis of the selected Bollywood films was performed, focusing on how public health messages are embedded within the narrative structure. Key elements analysed include:

- Character development and role modelling of health behaviours.
- Emotional appeal and its effectiveness in engaging the audience.
- Repetition of health messages and their reinforcement throughout the narrative.

In-Depth Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty participants to gain insights into their personal experiences, emotional responses, and perceptions after viewing the selected films. The interview questions explored:

- How the films influenced their understanding of public health issues.
- Emotional and cognitive reactions to the portrayal of health topics.
- Perceived shifts in their attitudes or behaviours related to health.
- The role of cultural context in shaping their responses to the health messages presented in the films.

Data Analysis

Thematic Content Analysis: The content of the films was analysed using a thematic approach to identify recurring patterns and themes related to public health communication. The analysis focused on:

- The portrayal of health behaviours through key characters.
- Narrative strategies that effectively conveyed health messages.
- Cultural nuances that resonated with audiences and enhanced the acceptance of public health messages.

Interview Transcript Analysis: Interview data were transcribed and analysed using coding techniques to identify common themes, emotions, and perceptions among participants. Thematic analysis was applied to draw out patterns in how viewers interpreted and internalized the health messages presented in the films.

Key themes explored include:

Viewer empathy and emotional engagement with health-related issues.

Changes in social attitudes, particularly concerning stigmatized health topics (e.g., HIV/AIDS, mental health, and menstrual hygiene).

The perceived influence of films on encouraging public discussions about health.

Triangulation was used to compare findings from the film content analysis and interview data, ensuring the reliability of the insights.

Content Analysis: The content analysis identified several narrative strategies used in the films to convey health messages:

Character Development: Protagonists often faced and overcame health-related challenges, serving as role models for viewers.

Emotional Appeal: Films used emotional storylines to engage viewers and evoke empathy towards individuals affected by health issues.

Positive Reinforcement: Characters demonstrating healthy behaviours were often rewarded, reinforcing the desirability of these behaviours.

In-Depth Interviews: Interviewees highlighted the following impacts of the films:

Empathy and Understanding: Viewers developed greater empathy and understanding towards individuals facing health challenges, such as HIV/AIDS, autism, and mental health issues.

Motivation for Behaviour Change: Many viewers felt motivated to adopt healthier behaviours, such as improved hygiene practices, after watching the films.

Reduction in Stigma: The films helped reduce the stigma associated with various health issues, encouraging more open discussions and acceptance.

This research concluded that using Bollywood films as information and educational tool could impact public health messages through the framework of entertainment-education. The entertainment signals of appealing and compelling story telling, character identification and appeal to emotion cohesively led to new knowledge, favourable attitude change and behavioural intent among the audience. Such conclusion points to the fact that Bollywood can indeed produce a positive social impact to audiences as a health communication tool that needs the use to integrate the health communication theories to improve the quality of health communication in films.

Category	Phir Milenge (2004)	Pad Man (2018)	'My Name is Khan'(2010)	'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' (2015)
Public Health Issue	HIV/AIDS	Menstrual hygiene	Autism	Body image issues
Narrative Structure	The protagonist, a career woman diagnosed with HIV, faces societal stigma and fights for her rights.	Based on the real-life story of Arunachalam Muruganantham, the protagonist invents a low-cost sanitary pad machine and challenges menstruation taboos.	Follows an autistic man who faces discrimination in post-9/11 America, highlighting both autism and Islamophobia.	A young man is pressured into marrying an overweight woman. The film addresses societal pressures and their journey toward acceptance and love.
Character Development	The protagonist shows	The protagonist is an innovator who fights	The protagonist is portrayed as	Both protagonists grow emotionally, learning to value

	resilience, and the lawyer plays a positive role model advocating for her rights.	against societal norms and improves women's health through his perseverance.	kind, determined, and resilient, fighting prejudice due to autism and religious identity.	inner qualities and challenging societal norms regarding body image.
Emotional Appeal	Strong emotional appeal through the protagonist's struggle with discrimination and societal rejection due to her HIV status.	Emotional appeal is built through the protagonist's dedication to women's health and breaking the menstruation taboo.	High emotional engagement with the protagonist's journey, overcoming prejudice related to autism and religious identity.	The emotional appeal comes from the struggles of the couple, especially the wife's experience with societal body-shaming.
Modelling Behaviour	The lawyer models empathy and advocacy, fighting discrimination.	The protagonist models perseverance and commitment to solving the menstrual hygiene issue despite challenges.	The protagonist models patience, kindness, and perseverance, serving as a role model for people with autism and those facing religious discrimination.	The characters model acceptance and self-love, rejecting society's beauty standards.
Repetition of Health Messages	Empathy, support for HIV-positive individuals, and anti-stigma messaging are reinforced throughout the film.	The film repeatedly emphasizes the importance of menstrual hygiene and challenges societal taboos.	Autism awareness and the need for understanding and acceptance are repeatedly emphasized, alongside challenging stereotypes around Muslims in	The film consistently reinforces body positivity and the rejection of unrealistic beauty standards.

			post-9/11 America.	
Cultural Relevance	The film addresses the stigma around HIV/AIDS in India, reflecting cultural taboos and societal responses to the disease.	Menstruation is a taboo topic in India, and the film challenges this deeply entrenched cultural issue.	Autism and islamophobia are portrayed against the backdrop of post-9/11 America, with a focus on Islamophobia and mental health challenges in an international and cultural context.	The film challenges traditional Indian societal expectations of beauty, particularly in the context of marriage.
Perceived Susceptibility	The film highlights that anyone can contract HIV, emphasizing that it is not limited to marginalized communities.	The film shows how poor menstrual hygiene can affect any woman, especially in rural areas.	The film emphasizes that anyone can face discrimination based on mental health conditions, religion, or ethnicity.	The film makes it clear that societal body image pressures can affect anyone, especially within the arranged marriage context in India.
Perceived Severity	The severe consequences of HIV-related stigma, such as job loss and social isolation, are clearly depicted.	The consequences of poor menstrual hygiene, including health risks and social ostracism, are presented as serious issues.	The severe consequences of social exclusion, prejudice, and discrimination related to autism and religion are depicted, particularly in the context of post-9/11 America.	The emotional and societal toll of body image issues is depicted, particularly through the wife's struggles with social judgment and her husband's initial rejection.
Perceived Benefits	The film demonstrates the benefits of empathy, understanding, and support	The film clearly presents the benefits of affordable sanitary products and the	The film emphasizes the importance of understanding and accepting	The film promotes self-acceptance, showing that happiness and love are not dependent on physical appearance.

	for HIV-positive individuals.	importance of breaking the menstruation taboo.	individuals with autism, while also challenging religious stereotypes.	
Perceived Barriers	The film portrays barriers such as societal stigma and ignorance, which are overcome through legal and social support.	The barriers of cultural taboos, misinformation, and lack of resources are portrayed but overcome through innovation and perseverance.	Barriers include societal ignorance and prejudice, which are portrayed as obstacles to autism and religious acceptance, but are overcome through resilience.	Barriers such as societal norms and personal insecurities about body image are overcome through emotional growth and mutual acceptance.
Emotional Impact on Viewers	Viewers are likely to feel empathy toward people with HIV and reflect on the harm caused by discrimination.	Viewers are likely to empathize with women's struggles with menstrual hygiene and societal taboos, while feeling respect for the protagonist's perseverance.	Viewers are likely to empathize with the protagonist's struggles, fostering understanding of autism and the challenges faced by marginalized communities.	Viewers will likely feel empathy for the wife's experience with body-shaming and may reflect on how societal expectations affect self-worth.
Viewer Empathy	High empathy is fostered through the protagonist's emotional journey and the depiction of discrimination based on HIV status.	High empathy for women facing societal taboos around menstruation, with viewers encouraged to reflect on how these taboos harm women's health.	High empathy for the protagonist and others facing discrimination due to mental health and religious identity, encouraging viewers to challenge	High empathy is created for both protagonists as they navigate societal pressures related to body image, leading to personal and emotional growth.

			societal prejudices.	
Social Stigma	The film directly challenges the social stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS and promotes acceptance.	The film addresses and works to reduce the stigma around menstruation, encouraging open discussions and acceptance.	The film challenges the stigma surrounding autism and religious identity, promoting acceptance and inclusion of individuals with autism while also addressing broader issues of Islamophobia.	The film challenges the societal stigma attached to weight and appearance, promoting body positivity and self-acceptance.
Behavioral Influence	The film encourages viewers to adopt non-discriminatory attitudes toward HIV-positive individuals and advocate for their rights.	Likely to encourage viewers to engage in conversations about menstrual hygiene and break societal taboos, while promoting the use of sanitary products.	The film is likely to influence viewers to rethink their attitudes toward individuals with autism and religious minorities, encouraging more inclusive behaviours.	The film encourages viewers to embrace body positivity, reject societal pressures, and value inner qualities over physical appearance.
Key Quotes/Scenes	The lawyer's courtroom speech about human rights and equality serves as a critical moment, reinforcing the film's message of acceptance.	The scene where the protagonist demonstrates his invention, facing criticism from his community, highlights the cultural barriers around menstruation and the need for change.	The iconic line "My name is Khan, and I am not a terrorist" encapsulates the film's message of challenging stereotypes and promoting empathy.	The climactic race, where the husband physically carries his wife, symbolizes their emotional journey and acceptance of each other beyond societal expectations.
Outcome or Impact	Positive outcome; the legal victory	The film ends with social recognition of	The film ends with a message of	The film ends with the couple overcoming societal

	highlights the importance of social acceptance and the need to reduce stigma around HIV/AIDS.	the protagonist's work, breaking the taboo surrounding menstruation and emphasizing the importance of addressing women's health issues.	acceptance and understanding, promoting inclusion of individuals with autism and challenging prejudice related to religious identity.	and personal barriers, achieving acceptance and love beyond societal beauty standards.
Additional Notes	The use of popular actors such as Shilpa Shetty, Salman Khan, and Abhishek Bachchan increased the film's reach and its ability to influence public perceptions of HIV/AIDS.	The film, based on a true story, significantly raised awareness of menstrual hygiene in India, particularly in rural areas, and inspired real-life initiatives aimed at improving women's health.	Shah Rukh Khan's role as an autistic patient brought significant attention to the issue of autism in India and world, helping reduce stigma and increasing public understanding of both autism and religious discrimination as well as islamophobia.	The film's success in addressing body image issues sparked conversations/debates about body positivity and challenged traditional beauty standards about body images in India, particularly in the context of arranged marriages.

Discussion

This analysis of four Bollywood films—‘*Phir Milenge*’ (2004), ‘*Pad Man*’ (2018), ‘*My Name is Khan*’ (2010), and ‘*Dum Laga Ke Haisha*’ (2015)—illustrates the significant role Bollywood plays in influencing public health perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. Each film addresses different public health issues, including HIV/AIDS, menstrual hygiene, autism, and body image, utilizing storytelling, emotional appeal, and cultural relevance to reach a broad audience.

1. Emotional Appeal and Character Development as Powerful Tools for Behavioural Influence

One of the themes emerged in each of the four films is when showing the dramatic argument or appeal the films employ the technique of persuasive appeal through purely emotional appeal, character growth and alteration of behaviour and attitude. For instance, in the film ‘*Phir Milenge*’ the lead character couches for HIV-AIDS related discriminations and stigmatization compels emotion direction feelings from the viewers. Strengthening her image of lawyer who struggles for her rights and presenting the world where a woman with HIV/AIDS can become

a happy mother feature the movie as an example of the significant choice, empathy and advocacy for the disease-infected people. Thus, the focus on transformation of the protagonist's character is used to de-sensitize the audience regarding the disease, and desensitize them to non-discriminatory actions.

Likewise, 'Pad Man' brings the audience to the persona of their protagonist with actual life challenges and make people actually feel the day to day lives of those women who are degraded and humiliated for the natural biological processes of menstruation. Specifically, the viewers can empathize with the main character who is committed to solve the problem of lack of proper menstrual products regardless of the overall villagers' rejection. By persevering his character reflects behaviours that call for change and make it acceptable to talk about menstruation.

In 'My Name is Khan', the emotional appeal is twofold: It is true that the film addresses the issue of autism and the general theme of film is also the Muslims and Islamophobia. The main character shows a high level of endurance to the exacerbation of the disease and religious persecution, an effectual empathy of the audience will be achieved. For them, his journey becomes a source, which makes viewers and readers rethink on prejudice and discriminative feeling that they have inside them. The features of the movie enhance awareness and tolerance more so to people with autism as well as others with religious differences.

Lastly, 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' gives a message to the couples generally and society specifically who have issues of body image in marriage. It isolates the emancipated female protagonist's transformation from rejection from her husband to his acceptance, and her acceptance of herself into an arc that does not correspond with the standards of modern beauty. Another important idea employed in the picture relates to the necessity to accept oneself and bracket any kind of prejudice stemming from external looks.

2. Repetition of Health Messages and Modelling Positive Behaviour

The repetition of key health messages through each of the films rehearses the behavioural change aspect. The movie "Phir Milenge" depicts this message throughout with reference to the main character's plight, the audience is regularly conditioned to the necessity of assisting HIV positive people. This constant reinforcement of non-discriminatory behaviour is very useful to reduce stigma because the audience is provided with effects of prejudicial behaviour and the results of supportive conduct.

In Pad Man too, promoter of menstruation hygiene is repeated again and again through different episodes where the hero invents cheap pads, experiments to spread awareness. This way the film gives examples of correct behaviour regarding such a sensitive topic as menstruation and underlines the advantages of using healthy practices.

'My Name is Khan' also supports these health promotion communication objectives in terms of promoting health messages by presenting the protagonist of the movie as overcoming patient and kind throughout the movie. His portrayal then not only subverts autism and religious discrimination but as a result is a valuable tool in the social justice arsenal and social change arena. These themes are repeated to ensure that audience members gain an understanding of the lives of autistic persons and to challenge other prejudices society has.

In 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' also, the message of celebrating body legitimacy is echoed over and over again as opposed to the conventional beauty that was a parameter in defining relations between Prem and Sandhya both protagonists realize the beauty of each other apart from what may be considered 'attractive body legitimacy'. The happiness, the personal development of Rumi's character and Tom's character indeed influence the audience to change the perspective toward beauty and body image modelled by the movie.

3. Addressing Cultural Relevance and Social Stigma

One of the significant impacts all four films is breaking of social barriers and develop Understandings of public health problems and social taboos. 'Phir Milenge' explains the social ill of AIDS and how legal support and social acceptance help in changing the society. In the case of the film, this legal triumph reasserts the cultural and legal view on the conformity in order to drive social change for the common good.

In the film 'Pad Man' the issues highlighted are menstruation taboo and it shows where one man's desire to help can bring change across a country. The movie stirred up discourses on menstruation, not only in the media but in various societies' efforts through tangible change regarding sanitary needs for females in rural areas of India. This shows that indeed Bollywood can bring about change in the society through entertainment and education.

'My Name is Khan' also fights prejudice eradicating misconceptions people have towards autism and Muslims. The given film reveals the main character enduring mental state discrimination as well as religious one, which helps the viewers to change their mindsets and exclude all kinds of discrimination.

Last of all, 'Dum Laga Ke Haisha' speaks against the loop, which hassles Indian women and girls in particular, namely, the stereotype of the importance of a thin and smart woman as a proper bride for marriage. Thus, promoting the audience accepting both protagonists' personal developments as emotional characters and promoting body positivity, and dismissing shallow prejudices as negative themes.

4. Breaking Down Social Stigmas and Promoting Empathy

A key outcome of all four films is their ability to break down social stigmas surrounding public health issues and foster empathy. In '*Phir Milenge*', the film directly addresses the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS and shows how legal advocacy and social support can lead to a more accepting society. The film's portrayal of the protagonist's legal victory reinforces the idea that societal norms can and should be challenged to promote social justice.

In the movie 'Pad Man' major concern was on menstrual cycle and how one person invention and effort can transform the lives of many women according the country. Apart from discussion provoking these themes in schools and with friends, the film encouraged people to establish organizations which were to provide affordable and easily available sanitary pads in rural areas of India. This proves that Bollywood can bring about a change in the society through provision of entertainment.

'My Name is Khan' does and does in the similar vein by rejecting prejudice about autism and the Islamophobia. Forcing the audience to look through the eyes and mind of the protagonist as he suffers mental health and religious discrimination, and then stands up for himself and others, the film presses for acceptance of differences by changing the discourse.

'*Dum Laga Ke Haisha*' is also about a social issue of body image and movie challenges the societal stigma attached to body image, particularly in the context of arranged marriages in India. By portraying the emotional growth of both protagonists, the film encourages viewers to embrace body positivity and reject superficial judgments, reinforcing the importance of self-acceptance.

5. Behavioural Influence and Real-World Impact

The films under consideration also sought to elicit concern and disruption of the oppressive culture, but the films serve as transformation agents that can inspire the viewers to alter their conduct. As for the way, HIV/AIDS is presented in 'Phir Milenge', the overall message of the film can help a viewer develop better perception of those suffering from the disease. presenting the disease in empathic way helps to minimise the prejudice towards the patients with HIV.

‘Pad Man’ talks about new ways of applying pads and makes people change for better when it comes to personal care and choice of sanitary items because pads, for instance, are not used sufficiently especially among women of rural regions. It meant to say that apart from just propagating some issue through a film or creating awareness about them, it also triggers the creation of basic services that addresses a particular issue in a country such as menstrual hygiene in India.

‘My Name is Khan’ seeks to change the audience’s perceptions about people with autism and Muslims or other followers of Islam through modelling attitude change. Such a success of the movie in front of the international audience again proves that the audience is able to change for the better and adapt to understanding each other, no matter their culture and religion.

‘Dum Laga Ke Haisha’ helps to regulate body image and encourages people do not pay attention to physical appearance. The content of the movie is an appreciation of an unconventional love by the protagonists and seems to give the society a second thoughts regarding outer beauty but inner beauties instead.

Conclusion

This paper presents the findings of analysis of four Bollywood films to show the role and effect or entertainment-education strategies in health-related communication campaigns. Because of appeal to emotion, cultural sensitivity, and reinforcement of health messages, these films can educate the masses, eliminate prejudice and encourage the call for actions. India’s cinema holds a unique standing in the public domain, and owing to Bollywood’s dominance, possesses the ability to mobilize change on floors for different crises and exhibit the needed sorority to contribute towards the function of health communication.

Future health communication activities aiming at the use of film as an entertainment education tool should include more collaborative linkages between filmmakers and public health practitioners. And through further use of Bollywood’s impact on people’s decisions, those messages can reach the masses and make the population of India healthier and more tolerant.

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