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The Sporting Woman in Hindi Cinema and Civic Arouse
(With special reference to *Mary KomandDangal*)

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Introduction:

In 21st century, inevitably the cinema and audio-visual media are playing a crucial role in the depiction of the contemporary problems as well as movements of the various fields. The cinema working as the mass media for spreading the socio-cultural arena among the contemporary World. The Bollywood or Hindi cinema is playing a vital role in enhancing the woman, which is identified in the society through various movies since the eighties of the twentieth century. It is universally accepted that the woman is the root cause of all innovations and creations of life. She is always playing the central role in the growth as well as the development of the human race. Her existence is widely accepted by the World. It is poignantly accepted that the new, advanced media and cinema is powerfully projecting the problems and self-assurance of the modern woman. Apart from all sorts of media, the Bollywood is playing a dynamic role in feasting the woman in the contemporary world. The developed country like America and developing countries like India and Iran, the cinema is playing its character in this way of the woman problems and solutions. As Turner writes about the role of cinema in the estimation of the woman, "Film is a social practice for its makers and audience; in its narratives and meanings, we can locate evidence of the ways on which our culture makes sense of itself" (Turner 36).

The reason behind choosing this topic for writing this paper is very crucial that the cinema can reach to the every part of the World. All genders and economical class people can easily watch the movies through television or in theatres. Apart from that, "Movies reflect society. When we see movies of a particular time, we get to know the society at that time. Movies have a stake in social change as well. During Indian freedom struggle, movies did their bit to spread the spirit of nationalism among common people" ("Portrayal of Women in Indian Cinema - Group Discussion Ideas 1"). This is the role of cinema where all fields are encapsulated in it. The progress of Bollywood cinema goes hand in hand with the socio-cultural and economical changes of the World itself. There are hundreds of Hindi movies where the themes and stories are woman centric. As per as the Indian Bollywood cinema is concern, "Indian film industry topped in objectification of women according to first ever UN sponsored global study (2014) of female characters in popular films across the world" ("Portrayal of Women in Indian Cinema - Group Discussion Ideas 2"). The woman was considered as the central figure by the film industry. Apart from this, the industry is playing host role in spreading the thoughts and feminism in the contemporary society. It is found that, "The Indian film industry is the largest in the world, with almost 1000 movies made per year. Indian movies have an approximate of 4 billion viewers across the world, which is why its impact on society is 'undeniable'" (Humah). This has created the wide scope for spreading the current problems of the society of the world.

As the role of a woman in Bollywood cinema is concern, she was depicted traditionally as the housewife who following the orders of the males from the family. But, one positive point always came before us that, the role of the woman always crucial for publicity of the movie. Like many superstar actors, women also created themselves as the superstar actress from the last four decades of the Hindi cinema. Till the eighties of the last century, she was kept aside as a woman, but in nineties,



her role has been totally changed in the Hindi movies. Initially she was presented as the token of beauty in the movies, but in the last decade of the 20th century, her representation was totally changed. After the famous movie *Mother India* (1957), in the movies like *Mirch Masala* (1991) and *Astitva* (2000), the woman was strongly projected and it has created the atmosphere in the country regarding the self-protecting identity of a woman.

In 21st century, the Bollywood movies were absolutely transformed around the characters and stories concerning the representation of the female characters. The movies were released on the true stories from the challenging lives of the extraordinary female characters from the history of the country. The famous movies like *Mary Kom* (2014) and *Dangal* (2016) has created strong character of a girl before the contemporary society. These two movies has boosted the courage of the parents as well as the girls of the modern World regarding the fighting spirit of a female character. The movies *Mary Kom* and *Dangal* are biographical sport movies on the lives of the girls who has created the name of India on international platform.

The movie *Mary Kom* (2014) is about the fighting spirit and journey of the international boxing champion Mary Kom. This film has depicted Kom's journey to becoming international boxer who proved her victorious stance by winning the 2008 *World Boxing Championships* in Ningbo. Upon its release, the film recorded the highest opening weekend of all time for a female-led Indian film. The film was a box office success, grossing ₹2.04 billion at the box office. Mary Kom is also ranked among the highest-grossing Indian films led by a female actor ("Mary Kom (film) par. 3"). The movie *Mary Kom* movie was nominated and rewarded with various national and international awards. The movie is totally successful on all platforms of the Bollywood industry. The thrilling story and sportive dialogues of Mary Kom has changed the atmosphere of the movie. The motivational dialogue in the movie, "The rest of the world may be round. But your world is this square ring," which was reminded by the coach of Mary Kom. But the movie showing the strong willpower of a boxing girl, where, "Here it is a curse to be born a girl. And to be born a girl who wants to be a boxing champ!" (IANS) This sentence from the newspaper *Business News* speaks lot about the condition of the Indian woman in the society, but this movie has changed everything and came from the traditional identity of the woman. Throughout in the movie, Mary Kom was strongly supported by her husband for her sportive activities.

The movie *Dangal* (2016) is one more Bollywood movie, where the intensity of a countryside father about preparing the aggressive spirit among his daughter is an eye opener for every parent of the World. It is the biographical sports film loosely grounded on the sportsmanship of Phogat family from Punjab. The story of the movie is based on the life of the wrestler (pahalwan) Mahavir Singh Phogat, who has prepared his daughters for wrestling in countryside India. The answer is found in the movie for the question "How the role of a father is crucial in building the carrier of his daughter?" Every father constantly striving for uplifting the carrier and character of his daughter or son. The advice and preaching of the father is crucial in building the carries of his children. All these ideas were emerged from the movie *Dangal*. The movie has proved that if there is the strong support of family, the Indian girls can encapsulates any impossible challenge in life. As the critical views of the story and film *Dangal*, it was appreciated all over the world. Meenalyer of *The Times of India* wrote about it, "Inspiring and entertaining" and awarded a four-and-a-half out of five star rating. She commended the writing of being for "tongue-in-cheek quality, peppered with humour and several poignant father-daughter emotions" (lyer). In *The Indian Express* Shubhra Gupta gave a three out of five star rating and stated that, "The film worked on two parameters: that it is a "straight-forward film about a popular sport" and the "strong feminist statement about girls being the equal of boys, if not better, in an area they've never been seen, let alone accepted" (Gupta). The movie has changed the mentality of the country regarding the opportunities given to the daughter families. In last century, due to the lack of education, there were no social awareness.





education and rights for education. But the overall awakening in the society has changed the social mind and gender equality was rooted in the society of India. There was indifference between son and daughter, but socio-cultural awakening has created positive atmosphere of the society regarding the education, safety and equality of the woman. The movie was female oriented, where she was strongly prepared by the fighting father. Many mothers and girls were awakened due to watching the movie *Dangal*. The movie was free of cost was shown to the college as well school girls of India for reawakening the spirit among the next generations. As Ananya Bhattacharya of *India Today* has given four out of five star rating and expressed his views, "the fights, emotional turmoil, the father-daughter tiffs, take centre-stage in *Dangal*" (Bhattacharya). Apart from this, many national as well as international awards were given to the film due to the projection of the woman's fighting spirit in the movie with the strong supporting father who firmly stand behind the efforts of his daughters.

Conclusion:

The Bollywood cinema is itself playing crucial role regarding the awakening of the contemporary society of the World. The millions of the viewers are responsible to spread the thoughts and acts among the Bollywood movies of the century. Both *MeryKomandDangal* movies are strongly projecting the Indian woman, who cannot be the only part and parcel of the cultural ceremonies but she can strongly fights against the challenges of life as well she has proved herself by winning the international wrestling championships. Both the movies are pathfinders for the forthcoming generations of the World. The true sporting characters named MeryKom and GeetaPhogat has proved themselves in their real life and both directors were successfully projected them in reel-life. The stories and dialogues of both the movies were successful in creating the inspirational atmosphere in theatres as well as in contemporary society. The families were supporting the children to watch the movies like *MeryKomandDangal* for creation of sportive and inspirational life. It is the success of the movies. Both the movies are the milestones in creating the positive and gender equality atmosphere among the contemporary society. Hence, it is expected that, in future, the Bollywood must select such extraordinary, successful topics from the contemporary Indian society and built another movies for next generations.

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