

Representation of the Women's Financial Stability Portrayed in Selected Post-Feminist Tamil Films

D.Gowrisankar, I.Ajit, Govindarajan P

ABSTRACT--- *Post-feminism has happened without warning during the 80's, and it is a highly debated topic since the word 'post' can be referred as 'dead' or 'after' feminism. Its goals are different from the second wave and third wave feminism. Postfeminism also called as fourth wave and zero feminism. One of the main goals of Post-feminism says that women can be equality empowered as men. To achieve that woman should be financially stable run their family by themselves. In the establishment, the post-feminist generation and critics has been focused on media a lot. In the present scenario, there are many types of media available; for the purpose of the study, the researcher has chosen one of the visual Medias, film, for the research and particularly Tamil films. In this paper the researcher attempts to analyze how the financial stability of women is portrayed in the latest post-feminist Tamil movies.*

Keywords—*Post-feminism, empowerment, financial stability, film.*

AN OVERVIEW OF POST FEMINISM

Post-feminism has many meanings in literary theory. To be precise, it has been labeled fewer than two categories: The first categories are death of feminism, anti-feminism and feminism is irrelevant now. The second categories are, the next stage in feminism and it's intersects with other 'Post'- philosophies/theories, such as postmodernism, post structuralism and post-colonialism. After 1980 onwards there have been many changes that happened in the literary theory. It also made an effect on feminist theory. Post feminism is generally understood as "after feminism". In popular media, it is sometimes used disparagingly as if feminism is no longer needed. There are many debates that are happening in post feminism theory right now.

Alice (1995) stated that "Postfeminism, (usually written as 'post-feminism') was coined in the period between the achievement of women's suffrage in the U.S. and the rise of 'second-wave' feminism during the 1960s.

It denoted the successful outcome of struggle by women for the right to vote, hold public office and the choice to occupy may more personal spheres." Brooks (2002).The people want something new in the feminism goals. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines that Post feminism as "Of or relating to the ideas, attitudes, etc., which ignore or reject feminist". Post feminism differs from feminism in its

Revised Manuscript Received on May 15, 2019.

D.Gowrisankar, Ph.D. Research Scholar, Division of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

I.Ajit, Assistant Professor, Division of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Govindarajan P, Assistant Professor, Division of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

goals. Historically, in 1919 group of female literary radical in Greenwich Village, have founded a new journal with the idea that "we are interested in people now-not in men and women. 'They declared that moral, social, economic, and political standards 'should not have anything to do with sex'. Promised to be 'pro-woman without being anti-man', and called their stance 'postfeminist'". Genz& Benjamin (2009).The word post-feminist has already been used in a journal in 1919 but it couldn't reach the wider population because peoples were fighting for their basic rights back then. So the post-feminist concept has not been understood by many people.

But officially the term has been first used in the year 1982 on New York Times Magazine by a famous journalist and critic Susan Bolotin's article argues that, "Voice of the Post-Feminist Generation." This article depended on various meetings with ladies who contributed much for the objectives of woman's rights, yet did not recognized as women's activists. On the interview, many people have documented that were not accepted as feminist because their goals have to deal with so many different social issues. Susan Bolotin is the first person who wrote "Voice of the Post-Feminist Generation," in the newspapers and reached a mass audience with the idea that their new goals in their family, working place as well as the society. After that many post-feminist writers stud up and started to support. So it's now clear that the media is the main tool to seed the post-feminist views all over the world since its inception. Bolotin(1982). This will create a major impact happen in western societies through print media. Later those who are support for postfeminist concept they are projected the ideas through digital Medias and films.

Those who are all supportive of the post-feminism goals are called post-feminist.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- I. How postfeminist concepts are applied in Tamil films?
- II. Is women empowerment portrayed in selected films?
- III. Is financial stability of women portrayed in postfeminist Tamil films?
- IV. How does a working woman portrayed in selected films?



In India, the people speak many languages and there are many film industries (Bollywood, Tollywood, Kollywood, Mollywood & Sandalwood) available based on their linguistic barrier. And each industry releases its movies with different themes. In south India, are ports according to Sensex said: "The South Indian languages of Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu make up nearly 50% of the share of movies that are released in India." (Pollard, 2011). In the film industry, Tamil film creates major roles in India for the research has chosen Tamil films for the study. The Tamil film industry, which is one of the largest film industries in the world. The Tamil film industry is a Tamil language film industry located in Kodambakkam also called as Kollywood in Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu. The Tamil film industry has a rich history of film making and over the years, the industry has produced films of many genres, starting with adaptations of mythological texts. This was the initial stage in the industry and as time progressed, the industry moved on to making films about social issues to eventually making films purely for entertainment purposes. Tamil films mostly based on the subject is heroism and also some female characters projected as a women empowerment, women identity, freedom, their family issues, love etc., the film industry has been telling different stories about societies from around the world since film came up as a form of entertainment but just like in society, women have been pushed aside to reveal a hugely male-dominated industry. In Tamil film industry there are many female-oriented subjects and powerful female characters taken by the directors.

TAMIL FILMS AND WOMEN CHARACTERS

In Tamil films, women are portrayed as Mother, Wife and other characters traditionally. In most films, the role of a heroine is to do with being attractive. It is in the way the directors tell the story on the screen. At present in the Tamil film industry, the directors give a major role for the heroines because it makes them more relatable to the audience. So, for the research, the researcher has chosen the films in which the financial stability of women is portrayed.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PORTRAYED IN SELECTED TAMIL FILMS

21st century has become the age of standardizing beauty. Normally women are being portrayed as a commodity by the media to sell goods and services. Nowadays women are given chances to show their skills like cooking, acting, fashion sense in the media. Films exhibit their roles in the society such as wife, mother and children. Women are given equal space such as men in the film industry; the patriarchal mindset is breaking bit by bit through breaking the stereotypes on women. Female characters are penned highlighting their financial stability in the family and in the society. As Engels had rightly said, "To emancipate woman and make her equal of the man is and remains an impossibility so long as the woman is shut out from social productive labor and restricted to private domestic labor. The emancipation of woman will only be possible when a woman can take part in production on a large, social scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an

insignificant amount of her time." Engels, Origin of the Family (1942). This paper is going to analyse the financial stability of women while discussing how the lift up their family and society through their economical contribution.

For the research the researcher has chosen three films for the study. It is mainly female-oriented subject and postfeminist views of women based themes in films. The first one is 36 Vayadhinile (2015) is directed by Roshan Andrews. The protagonist of the story is Vasanthi played by Jyothika. The story is how an ordinary woman achieves in the society after the age of 36. She is working in government office as a UD clerk and earning a monthly salary. Her husband works at a radio station. Her husband plans to go Ireland with his wife and daughter. But unfortunately Vasathi is denied to go to Ireland by the officials. Here is a turning point in her life and she starts 'Green House' project and successfully reaches the society all over the India. Finally, she has met the President of India along with her husband. So it is called postfeminist generation.

The second film is AmmaKanakku (2016), directed by AshwiniYerTiware features the main character, a mother played by Amala Paul. This story is about poor women Shanti and her daughter Abhinaya, who is studying her tenth standard. It is an emotional journey of a mother and a daughter. As the daughter, Abhinaya discovers how much her mother has sacrificed in her life to educate her. It deals with the concept of providing education for not only girls but grown women as well. Both Amala Paul and Yuva Lakshmi were stunning on screen as they portrayed their roles realistically and with such case.

The third film is *Tharamani* (2017) directed by Ram tells the tale of Althea Johnson, a young Anglo Indian single mother working in the corporate sector in Chennai. She got married and due to some reasons she stayed along with her son and mother. She is shown as a modern woman in the movie by the director. Then she after many struggles in her life she starts to live with her son and Prabhu smoothly.

These above films are the best example of postfeminist films and give more important of women empowerment to the female characters.

AN ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL STABILITY OF WOMEN PORTRAYED IN SELECTED FILMS

For the research, three films are chosen and all the characters showcase women empowerment with financial stability. McRobbie (2004) argues that "individuals now must become more reflexive in regard to every aspect in their lives, from making the right choice in marriage, to taking responsibility for their own working lives, and not being dependent on a job for life" In the first film 36 Vayadhinile (2015) the protagonist of the film is Vasanthi works in a government job as a UD-clerk. While her husband and daughter went abroad, only that time she realizes herself. Then she starts an innovative thing, that's terse gardening with their neighbors' support and applied a bank loan which enables her to become successful in the



society. It will show that women should be working in a place only then they can think independently and earn respect from society.

AmmaKanakku (2016), the protagonist of the story is Shanti, who is a widow and she has one daughter. Shanti is working in a home as a helper; her salary is more like daily wages and runs her family which only has her daughter. In the film mother also studies tenth class subjects along with her daughter because she does not perform well at school. This film projected as an ordinary mother living in society. The postfeminist concept also women independent life in society likewise the character has projected a positive way and give importance to education and finance. Finally, the mother and daughter passed the tenth exam successfully. It shows women education and through education only achieves their dream of success.

Tharamani (2017) the protagonist of the story is Althea Johnson, who is divorced women and have one son. She is working in the corporate sector in Chennai and this film projected as a single women life and her struggle in working place. Postfeminist critics give important to women self-surveillance; it's created within a post-feminist culture. It is a benchmarking and makeover example and further attached with the race of consumerism as reinforced in most of the advertisement and other media representations that represent the ideal woman as physically attractive and socially passive women who is always an emblem of success as she maintains constant standards of morality and beauty. Postfeminist critic McRobbie stated that "individuals are increasingly called upon to invent their own structures. They must do this internally and individualistically, so that self-monitoring practices replace reliance on paths. Self-help guides, personal advisors, lifestyle coaches and gurus and all sorts of self-improvement television program provide the cultural means by which individualization operates as a social process". McRobbie, (2004).

These above three films have a positive impact of postfeminist view of women in Tamil society. Financial stability is very important through women empowerment only they can achieve success. The selected films have portrayed as positive and women empowerment with financial importance in the films.

SOCIAL IMPACT

In Tamil film industry, for every week and festival days, many movies get released with different genres. And one among them is Female oriented subjects with post-feminist views to cover young and married women. Because, these kinds of movies are proof that, these concepts from real life situation reach the audience effectively and get a positive impact on society. These above three films are the best example of postfeminist views and individual achievement in society.

CONCLUSION

Postfeminist themes are used for the research there are many films based on the postfeminist concept available in Tamil films. The mode of the film is not in one hand like a novel but it is a difference for the film mainly planned by the directors. The director only thinks and imagines starting

writing the story. The most of the film only outline after that the director discusses with team members, the members are a different area of specialization like the screenplay, cameraman, technician etc., after that only to start the shooting. The job of directors is not easy; they should explain the concept and dialogue to the characters. For the research, the films were selected recently realized in the Tamil film industry. For the research, the researcher has chosen only three films for the research to analyse the characters of women portrayed. The portrayed female characters have the characteristics of courage and power to influence the women audience. It clearly showed that the woman characters get good respect from the female audience and they also take them as a role model in their life to excess at their workplace and family.

REFERENCES

1. Alice, L. (1995). *What is Postfeminism? Or, Having It Both Ways, In Feminism, Postmodernism, Postfeminism: Conference Proceedings*, Massey University, NZ.
2. Bolotin, Susan.(1982). "Voices from the Post-feminist Generation." *The New York Times*. 17 October, pp.28-31.
3. Brooks, A. (2002). *Postfeminism: Feminism, Cultural Theory and Cultural Forms*. Routledge
4. Genz, Stéphanie, and Benjamin A. Brabon. (2009). *Postfeminism: Cultural Texts and Theories*, Edinburgh University Press.
5. Engels, Frederic, and Lewis H. Morgan, (1942). *The origin of the family*. Burmon Publishing House, Calcutta.
6. Gamble, Sarah, (2003). *The Routledge Critical Dictionary of Feminism and Postfeminism*, Routledge, New York.
7. McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-feminism and Popular Culture, *Feminist Media Studies*, 4(3), 255-264.
8. Pollard Adam, (2011). *From Bollywood to Tollywood (Via, Kollywood, Mollywood & Sandal wood)*, UK India Business Council, India.

SELECTED FILMS:

1. Andrews, R, (Director). (2015). *36 Vayadhinile* (Motion Picture)
2. AshwinyIyerTiwari, (Director). (2016), *AmmaKanakku* (Motion Picture)
3. Ram. (Director). (2017). *Tharamani* (Motion Picture)

