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Gender and Caste Intersectionality in Bollywood Film 'NH10': An Empirical Study Focused on 'Honour Killing'

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Abstract

Gender and caste intersectionality representation in Bollywood cinema is of prime interest in social justice and representation discussions. This paper presents an empirical analysis on the renowned film "NH10," investigating the portrayal of systems of oppression entrenched in honour killings. The research unravelled power, privilege, and resistance represented through the characters, visual frames, narrative themes, and societal comments featured in the film. Drawing upon intersectionality theory, symbolic interactionism, social control theory and post-colonial theory concerning effects of oppressive systems on individuals such as women through gender and caste intersections is compounded. Results reveal that patriarchal and caste norms regulate sexual violence against women; witnessed through characters like Satbir and his kin. The research further posits the potential that films such as NH10 have to unravel prevalent stereotypes through perspective taking. Nonetheless, this study considers solely one movie which confines validity; thereby necessitating further quantitative research for objectivity of general assertions. To sum up, this analysis on "NH10" broadens current perceptions on gender and caste intersections in Bollywood contributing to present debates incorporating social justice arguments revolving around representation directly correlating with cinema's powerful role in structuring public conceptions.

Keywords; Gender, Caste, Intersectionality, Honour Killing, Bollywood Cinema.

INTRODUCTION

Honour killings, a form of gender-based violence, represent a deadly continuum of gender and caste-based violence and discrimination that exists in societies around the world. This research critically analyses these societal issues through the Bollywood film "NH10." Specifically, the feminist lens is used to scrutinize the intersections of gender, and caste in the reinforcement and perpetuation of these various forms of honour violence and violence against women. "NH10", released in 2015, is a neo-noir film which tells the story of Meera and Arjun, a young urban couple who are caught in a rural area where they are subject to various forms of gender-based violence in the name of honour.

The movie was widely-acclaimed for its powerful examination of the violence against women with a harrowing depiction of the dark underbelly of rural India. The essay aims to demonstrate how the film "NH10" provides a new platform for addressing the intersection of gender and caste, specifically in terms of honour killings. This study is an attempt to achieve three goals through a detailed examination of the film, including an examination of the narrative, characters, and visual strategy.

To start with, this research aims to examine how 'NH10' illustrates the intertwining of caste and gender in relation to the perpetuation of honour killings.

Honour killings, often justified as a form of protecting family honour, have a strong and unequal gendered nature. Women, particularly those that are lower caste, become disproportionately linked to family honour, particularly the female's purity and behaviour in perpetuating the honour and status of the family. In exploring the social dynamics and power structures portrayed in the film, this research investigates how caste, as well as gender, collaborates in creating situations where violence against women is not only normalised but also encouraged.

Secondly, the study analyzes the portrayal of systemic oppression in the film, with a particular emphasis on gender discriminations and honour killings that occur within an atmosphere of silence and impunity. The thesis will research in what ways "NH10" has

Illustrated the silencing of the women's voices, the failures of government interventions, and the societal complicity in the process. The thesis goals to show the systemic realities of gender discrimination that allows honour killings to exist.

Thirdly, the study explores the sociocultural acceptance of honour killings. Despite being in many instances culturally normalized, individuals use family honour as a defense for carrying out such acts. This study examines the portrayal of honour killing within "NH10" and in particular, the attitudes and beliefs of local characters toward honour killings. However, this discussion also delves into societal acceptance as it is represented in the film and how it potentially condones violence.

The use of intersectional feminism is important for this exploration. Intersectionality, a framework that was developed by Black feminist scholars (Crenshaw, 1989), acknowledges that women are marginalized on the basis of multiple factors, among them race, class, caste, and gender. In the context of honour killing, intersectionality pays attention to how caste and gender intersect, making Dalit women particularly at risk for violence. This study uses intersectionality theory to unpack the power dynamics in "NH10," illustrating how caste upholds patriarchal systems which facilitate honour killings.

The depiction of honour killings in "NH10" is important for several reasons. Millions of viewers watch Bollywood movies rounding out India Inc's huge cultural imprint. The primary contribution of this thesis in the larger schema of honour killing and the structure of impunity that shields it is to critique mainstream cinema's representation involvement with the issue. The film's neo-noir genre uniquely captures

the thriller viewer response of a social problem. Indeed, The neo-noir in NH10 is, undoubtedly, horrific in its inception (just like standard noir with a few twists) but later as the narrative progresses and the logic unfolds you become increasingly convinced that Madhob Bhai's wrath is just and lawful / Wait that last sentence was a joke. I am particularly interested in how the neo-noir genre uses thriller elements to entice the viewer into a complex social problem. Observing how genre conventions of storytelling neutralize complex social issues in NH10, offers the thesis a scope to experiment with the power of stories to both raise consciousness and initiate conversation around the issue of dishonouring honour killings.

This research adds to the developing conversation about gender, caste with regard to violence, especially when it breeds in the mindset of South Asia. This research contributes to a longer view of history from which we detect the replacement of norms such as sexual aggression, honour killings, and enforced etiquette from the law to the customary within that thin line in search of power and dominance. These stir communities, men, and women, engaged on ongoing cycles of collective resistance against what is consensually seen as hierarchy, unjust behavior on part of one acting on behalf of another—objectively threatening their right.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework sets the foundation for understanding the major constructs analysed in the study—intersectionality, patriarchy, symbolic representation, and social justice. The film NH10 serves as a cultural artifact that provides insights into how gender and caste operate together to maintain and justify systems of oppression.

Intersectionality

- Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, intersectionality is used to analyze how multiple systems of power—gender, caste, class, and sexuality—interact to create unique modes of discrimination.
- In NH10, the woman protagonist encounters violence not just for being female but due to deeply rooted caste and patriarchal systems that govern rural society.
- The film depicts caste-based honour killings, revealing how caste and gender intersect to legitimize violence and control.

Patriarchy

- Patriarchy is understood as a system of male dominance where women's lives and bodies are regulated by societal norms.
- Characters like Satbir and his kin embody this patriarchy—exerting control over women's sexuality, mobility, and autonomy under the guise of “honour.”
- The film reflects how masculine power is normalized and even justified through familial and social codes.

Representation in Cinema

- Bollywood, as a powerful cultural industry, plays a key role in constructing public perceptions of gender and caste.
- NH10 is positioned as a subversive narrative that challenges the stereotype of the “passive female victim” and offers resistance through the female protagonist's transformation into an agent of justice.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Intersectionality Theory (Crenshaw)

- Examines how various axes of identity (gender, caste, class) overlap to create compounding forms of marginalization.
- The female protagonist's experiences of violence are not isolated gendered events, but are intensified by the caste-based context in which they occur.
- This theory helps to map the layers of structural injustice that are deeply embedded in both rural culture and filmic narratives.

Symbolic Intersectionism

- Focuses on the meanings individuals assign to symbols, gestures, and interactions in society.
- In NH10, visual symbols (such as the red scarf, weapons, and rural landscapes) convey ideas of gender roles, power, resistance, and oppression.
- Interactions between characters (e.g., men enforcing honour through control, women resisting or complying) reveal micro-level enactments of larger social forces.

Social Control Theory

- Proposes that deviant behavior is curbed through strong societal bonds and control mechanisms.
- In NH10, social control is exercised through caste panchayats, male guardianship, and honour codes

that punish transgressions (like inter-caste relationships).

- Women are particularly targeted as ‘deviants’ if they cross socially imposed boundaries, often paying with their lives.

Post-Colonial Theory

- Examines how colonial legacies continue to influence contemporary societal structures and cultural production.
- The representation of rural India in NH10 is not merely a geographic setting, but a symbolic terrain of 'the other'—often depicted as backward, violent, and patriarchal.
- The female protagonist, often urban and educated, is contrasted with this “other India,” allowing a postcolonial critique of internal orientalism.
- The film reflects how modernity and tradition clash, and how power dynamics of class, caste, and gender are historically embedded in the cinematic gaze.

This framework offers a multi-theoretical lens to understand NH10 not only as a cinematic narrative but as a site of social critique. Through intersectionality, patriarchy, and critical theories, the research illuminates how deeply-entrenched social systems are mirrored and potentially challenged in Bollywood cinema. This approach encourages critical media literacy, empowering viewers to analyze films beyond surface-level entertainment.

OBJECTIVES

To analyse the portrayal of the intersection of caste and gender perpetuating Honour Killing in the Bollywood Film NH10.

To explore the depiction of systematic oppression with regard to gender discussions and honour killing in the Bollywood Film NH10.

To analyse portrayal of the potential societal approval of honour killings.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How do Bollywood films like 'NH10' navigate the complexities of caste and gender intersectionality beyond the representation of specific marginalized groups, shedding light on the experiences of a broader range of individuals within the societal hierarchy?

In what ways does Bollywood cinema, through films like 'NH10', address the nuances of caste discrimination and gender-based violence, exploring the impact of these portrayals on audience perceptions and societal attitudes towards systemic oppression beyond the scope of Dalit women?

How do Bollywood films, including 'NH10', contribute to the discourse on intersectionality by portraying the multifaceted experiences of individuals at the intersections of caste, gender, class, and other social identities, and how does this representation influence broader discussions on social justice and equality for all marginalized groups?

What are the implications of Bollywood films like 'NH10' in challenging stereotypes and biases related to caste and gender?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The status quo of Bollywood Films is a significant part of popular culture that massively influences societal views on gender and caste. The combination of these two topics in Bollywood films has led many academicians to take an interest in honour killings and status of minority groups. The depiction of gender does not simply inform these movies; it is also very crucial in understanding how oppression is sustained culturally. Often, gendered violence in regards to Indian cinema promotes existing hierarchies and norms. Kamble et al.'s 2023 paper, which examined how honour is associated with sexual violence in movies focused on Dalit females, shows that gendered violence helps perpetuate the caste system and caste-based violence is maintained. This perpetuation becomes problematic, telling us how important it is to critically analyze media representations so as to contest existing structures of power and move forward with achieving social justice. On this front, then, Kamble's insightful study helps clarify these complicated relationships.

Power dynamics and social perceptions in the Indian film industry have for so long played a very important role in the industry; thus, Bollywood; it has become a really hard thing to deny. Yengde (2018) argues that the way Bollywood stoically deals with gender and caste-related issues commonly leads to the construction of unequal socio-cultural hierarchies. This is especially so when it comes to honour killings being portrayed in Bollywood film. D'Liman et al. (2020) tackle the subject of honour killings in India and Pakistan. Their report brings to light the complex relationships between honour violence and societal expectations which, despite them being private, affect the

families' as well. Correspondingly, Vitali (2020) looks into the growth in the presentation of gender in Indian cinema by mentioning the change from passive, one-sided female characters to more independent and equal women in Indian movies.

The representation of differentially affected groups such as Dalit recognizes caste and gender as significant research topics. Kamble (2023) provides A view of the movies on the subject with the title "The rape of Dalit women: a case study" where she points out to the outcome which is the culture of rape is going silent and the caste practice of it prevailing. Edachira (2020) zeroes in on the groundbreaking works of Dalit filmmakers who are inspired by anti-caste aesthetics such as Nagraj Manjule and Pa Ranjith. These filmmakers intend to give a discourse on the conventional cinematic framework and to stop the status quo.

Crossing of media, family governance, and honour killing is one of the most intriguing areas in the literature. Babuji (2023) brings out the fact that public opinion and societal norms are the main factors influencing these crimes which is clearly showing the importance of a responsible media in creating a platform for social change and demystifying the unequal power structures. Kaushal (2020) adopts a comparative approach in analyzing honour killings in traditional Indian social structures and gender dynamics. He contends how the media portrays honour killings in Indian cinema tends to vary in accordance with social norms and structures and how these inter-relate with each other.

Gill's (2011) main objective is to question respect-related crimes and prove that societal norms and gender dynamics are the main factors that honour killings are accepted. One hint that is useful for Gill to advance his case is to show the phenomenon of "honour crime" through the lens of domestic violence. Differences him. Gill brings to light the connection between norms dictated by cultural practices and gender senses. Grewal's (2013) paper revolves around the transnational mediations and patriarchal structures that shore up the practice of honour killings, as it demonstrates how patriarchal systems effect this sexual harassment through cultural influences and feminist extensions. The honour killing representations in Bollywood films also meet the marginalization of certain groups. Through her "NH10" movie, Mohan's (2016) examination of not the technical but the social components of the Indian situation is one of the greatest contributions of this work. The "Caste, Gender, and Media: Significant Sociological Trends in India," paper written by an Open Distance Paradigm is a research work that dissects the interconnectedness of caste, gender, and

media and their influence on the Indian society. Using the qualitative research method, the study may include content analysis, interviews, and surveys to find how caste functions in the media industry, especially in journalism, entertainment, advertising, and social media. The study persuades through the point that the high status of the Indian media industry is the reason for the exits of the inequality in the representation and leadership position for the caste of people like SC, ST, and OBC.

The study uncovers instances of casteism within media organizations. It highlights lack of diversity and inclusion of underrepresented communities. Research design involves comprehensive analysis of media content. It also examines demographic data and industry practices to understand how caste influences media narratives. The study likely includes comparative examination of caste representation across different media sectors. Additionally, it provides critical analysis of feminist discourse in media focusing on exclusionary practices towards Dalit women and marginalized caste groups.

In conclusion the intersection of gender and caste in Bollywood films presents an intricate issue. It necessitates a nuanced comprehension of the societal and cultural context in which these films are produced. Additionally, it requires understanding how they are consumed. By examining the portrayal of honour killings gender representation and media representation, scholars can attain a deeper insight into how these issues intersect.

Moreover, this analysis reveals how they influence one another. The representation of marginalized groups like Dalit women is critical. It underscores normalization of sexual violence. Furthermore, it highlights the perpetuation of caste-based violence.

Bollywood's portrayal of gender and caste issues often reinforces dominant power structures. Consequently, it perpetuates social inequality. Therefore, critically analyzing these representations and advocating for social change are essential. They challenge existing power structures. They also promote social justice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative methodology using a critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach to analyze the portrayal of gender and caste intersectionality in the Bollywood film NH10, with a specific focus on its depiction of honour killings.

Data Collection

The primary data source for this study is the film NH10 itself. A high-quality copy of the film with subtitles is obtained for detailed analysis.

Data Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is used to deconstruct the film's narrative, characters, dialogue, visuals, and symbolism to understand how they represent the intersection of gender and caste in perpetuating honour killings.

Thematic analysis is conducted to identify recurring themes related to the research objectives. Close attention is paid to how the film constructs meaning through dialogue, character interactions, and visual elements like setting, costume, and cinematography.

Ethical Considerations

As the research deals with the sensitive topic of violence against women, ethical considerations is paramount. Care is taken to avoid using any graphic descriptions of violence from the film. The focus is on the film's portrayal of honour killings, not on sensationalizing the violence itself.

Parameters

Character Analysis: In film studies, character analysis involves examining the personalities, motivations, behaviors, and development of characters within a narrative. It seeks to understand how characters contribute to the story's themes and messages, and how they reflect broader societal norms and values.

Visual and Symbolic Elements: This refers to the use of visual aesthetics, cinematography, and symbolism within a film. It includes the study of colors, camera angles, lighting, and other visual techniques to convey deeper meanings and emotions that complement the narrative.

Narrative Themes: Narrative themes are the overarching ideas or messages explored in a film's storyline. They often reflect universal human experiences, societal issues, or philosophical concepts that the film addresses through its plot, characters, and events.

Social Commentary and Critique

Social commentary refers to the film's critique or analysis of societal issues, norms, and behaviors. It involves examining how the film portrays and comments on real-world issues, such as gender roles, class divisions, or political ideologies, to provoke thought and reflection among viewers.

Characters

- a) Meera
- b) Arjun
- c) Satbir
- d) Satbir's Wife
- e) Ammaji

Character Analysis

Navdeep Singh's NH10 uses its characters to explore caste and gender oppression in Indian society. Meera (Anushka Sharma), the protagonist, begins as a detached urban professional but transforms into an active challenger of patriarchal and caste hierarchies after witnessing an honor killing. Her journey symbolizes empowerment and resistance. Arjun (Neil Bhoopalam), her husband, represents male privilege and complicity; his evolution from a passive bystander to an ally highlights themes of accountability and masculinity.

Satbir (Darshan Kumar) embodies patriarchal and caste-based violence as an honor killing perpetrator, symbolizing entrenched oppressive structures. His unnamed wife reflects the complexities of victimhood and complicity, showing how women internalize oppression. Ammaji (Deepti Naval), the family matriarch, upholds oppressive traditions, representing the dangers of unchallenged authority. Together, these characters expose systemic injustices, urging viewers to reflect on power, resistance, and inequality.

Analysis of the Visual and Symbolic Elements

The film's visual and symbolic elements deepen its themes. Meera's shift from urban anonymity to rural confrontation is mirrored in her changing attire and demeanor, symbolizing her awakening. Arjun's visual portrayal evolves with his growing awareness of privilege, his posture and expressions reflecting his moral struggle.

Satbir is often framed in darkness, his imposing figure reinforcing his role as a violent enforcer of patriarchal norms. His wife, dressed in subdued colors and frequently shown in shadows, signifies her marginalized yet complicit position. Ammaji's regal attire and authoritative settings emphasize her dominance, but subtle cues hint at the fragility of her power. Through cinematography and

symbolism, NH10 critiques caste and gender oppression, making societal violence viscerally tangible.

Analysis of the Narrative Themes

The film's narrative explores gender, caste, power, and violence through intersectional and post-colonial lenses. Meera's arc centers on agency and resistance, challenging patriarchal norms and advocating collective action. Arjun's journey critiques male privilege, illustrating the moral cost of silence.

Satbir's character exposes the brutality of honor killings, linking caste and gender violence. His wife's narrative reveals the paradox of victimhood and complicity, emphasizing the need for solidarity among oppressed women. Ammaji embodies tradition and colonial legacies, showing how power structures resist change.

Ultimately, NH10 is a stark critique of systemic oppression, urging societal transformation. Through its characters and themes, the film confronts uncomfortable truths about privilege, violence, and resistance in contemporary India.

Analysis of Social Commentary and Critique in NH10

Meera: Represents urban privilege initially detached from caste-gender oppression. Her transformation critiques societal complacency, advocating active resistance against patriarchal and caste hierarchies.

Arjun: Embodies male complicity; his journey from passive bystander to ally critiques toxic masculinity and underscores the need for male accountability in challenging oppression.

Satbir: Symbolizes violent patriarchy and caste supremacy. His honor-killing actions critique how "tradition" justifies brutality, exposing systemic rot in rural power structures.

Satbir's Wife: Highlights women's dual victimization and complicity in patriarchy. Her silent suffering critiques how oppression is internalized and perpetuated by marginalized women.

Ammaji: Represents institutionalized oppression as a matriarch upholding violent traditions. Her authority critiques how power, even wielded by women, sustains caste-patriarchal violence.

NH10 dissects India's oppressive structures through its characters, urging viewers to confront complicity and demand systemic change for gender and caste justice. The

film's unflinching critique resonates as a call to action against normalized violence.

FINDINGS

This analytical study elucidates how Navdeep Singh's cinematic work NH10 serves as a critical socio-cultural text that interrogates the phenomenon of honor killings through intersectional feminist and postcolonial theoretical frameworks. The film's narrative architecture systematically deconstructs the entrenched patriarchal and caste-based power structures that perpetuate gender violence under the guise of familial honor.

Key findings reveal that the character of Satbir operates as a metonymic representation of hegemonic masculinity, where violence becomes instrumental in maintaining caste purity and patriarchal authority. His characterization demonstrates Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, wherein systemic domination is naturalized through cultural norms. The study identifies how the film's *mise-en-scène* - particularly its strategic use of chiaroscuro lighting and claustrophobic framing - visually reinforces Foucault's notion of biopower, making visible the mechanisms through which bodies are disciplined under traditional value systems.

Through critical discourse analysis, the research establishes Meera's character arc as embodying Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, showcasing how urban middle-class privilege initially insulates her from recognizing structural violence. Her transformation mirrors Freirean conscientization, evolving from passive observer to active resistor against the honor-killing industrial complex. The film's narrative employs Brechtian alienation techniques to disrupt audience complacency, forcing confrontation with collective complicity in sustaining oppressive systems.

Theoretical examination through Social Control Theory reveals how the khap panchayat system functions as what Durkheim termed a "social fact," with honor killings serving as extreme examples of normative sanctioning. Postcolonial analysis demonstrates how colonial-era codification of caste hierarchies continues to inform contemporary honor-based violence, particularly in rural spaces. The research employs Spivak's subaltern framework to analyze how Dalit women's voices remain systematically erased within these violent paradigms.

Cinematic semiotics analysis identifies recurring visual motifs - including the recurring shot compositions contrasting urban and rural landscapes - as representing India's ongoing negotiation between modernity and

tradition. The study concludes that NH10 constitutes significant interventionist cinema that successfully deploys Gramscian counter-hegemonic discourse to challenge naturalized violence against women. Its most profound contribution lies in demonstrating how film can serve as what Habermas termed the "public sphere," facilitating crucial dialogue about structural reform in postcolonial societies grappling with caste and gender oppression. The research affirms cinema's capacity to function as both cultural artifact and catalyst for social transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study elucidates how NH10 serves as a critical cinematic text that interrogates the intersectionality of gender and caste oppression through its narrative and visual discourse. The film's unflinching portrayal of honor killings exposes the systemic violence perpetuated by patriarchal and caste-based hierarchies, aligning with Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectional framework and Bourdieu's theory of symbolic violence. By centering Meera's transformation from privileged urbanite to active resistor, the film demonstrates how structural oppression operates across axes of identity while simultaneously modeling emancipatory agency.

The research underscores cinema's capacity to function as what bell hooks terms "counter-hegemonic media" - disrupting normative ideologies and fostering critical consciousness among audiences. NH10 achieves this through its subversion of Bollywood's traditional gender tropes and its visceral depiction of rural caste violence, thereby expanding discourse on social justice in Indian media.

Research Gaps and Scope for Future Study

While this analysis provides significant insights, several limitations necessitate further scholarly attention:

Limited Generalizability: The singular focus on NH10 restricts broader claims about Bollywood's engagement with intersectional oppression. Future studies should adopt comparative frameworks analyzing multiple films across different genres and time periods.

Methodological Constraints: The qualitative approach, though rich in interpretive depth, could benefit from complementary quantitative methods (e.g., audience reception studies or content analysis of similar films) to strengthen empirical validity.

Intersectional Omissions: The study primarily engages with gender and caste, while other intersecting identities (religion, sexuality, disability) remain underexplored. Subsequent research should employ more comprehensive intersectional models.

Production Context Analysis: The political economy of the film's production and distribution - including industry constraints on feminist narratives - warrants examination to understand systemic barriers to radical cinema.

Future scholarship should address these gaps through interdisciplinary methodologies, expanding the critical lexicon for analyzing Indian cinema's role in both reflecting and challenging structural inequalities. Such work would deepen theoretical engagement with postcolonial media studies while informing praxis-oriented interventions in filmmaking and cultural criticism.

Projects of gender and caste in the cinematic landscape of Bollywood definitely stand as a potent lens for investigating in detail complex dynamics of power and social hierarchies. Guided by an empirical approach and based on one of the critically acclaimed films, "NH10," this research digs deep into the portrayal of gender and caste intersection that offers nuances of systemic oppression and resistance. According to Kimberlé Crenshaw, a controversial feminist theorist, intersectionality provides a framework under which one can understand how overlapping structures of oppression function together to outline various experiences and individual identities. In "NH10," these crossings come out very explicitly, especially with the character of Meera and that of Satbir's wife, who find their way in and out of the various tangled dynamics of gender, caste, and power at work within the narrative.

The findings of this study underpin the all-pervasive influence of patriarchal and caste-based norms in perpetuating violence against women, particularly in the contexts of honour killings. The film is a strong reminder of the deep-rooted inequalities that afflict Indian society today, through the character of Satbir and his family. Drawing from the insights of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, it is informed by [the idea] that power is operationalized in symbolic systems of distinction and domination. It thus unmasks how patriarchal and caste-based values are held in place by violence and control in "NH10."

Moreover, "NH90" reveals the ability of cinema to break stereotypes, evoke empathy, and activate activism. Cultural critic bell hooks argues that among the areas through which

shifts in societal perception and attitude—that is, social change—can occur is in media representation. Through its representative exploration of multifaceted experiences at the intersections of caste, gender, class, and other social identities, "NH10" contributes to broader questions of social justice and equality, cultivating better empathy and solidarity among viewers.

The limitations of the study must, however, be acknowledged. Taking a single film as the focus may somewhat affect the generalization of such findings onto other cinematic works and contexts. In addition, the qualitative nature of the analysis may include subjectivity and bias into the interpretation of the themes and messages intended to be put across by the film. In the future, research must be expanded to include more Bollywood films and proceeds with an intersectional enquiry lens, as well as the adoption of mixed-method approaches that strengthen qualitative insights with quantitative evidence.

This empirical study on the portrayal of gender and caste intersectionality in "NH10" has some worthwhile contributions that go a long way in adding to our present understanding of oppression and resistance within Indian cinema. Through critical engagement with the complexities of power dynamics and social hierarchies that the film depicts, this research deepens appreciation for the role of cinema as a catalyst for social change. As we move further into the interstices of gender, caste, and other axes of identity within Indian society, "NH10" remains a powerful testament to the continuing struggle for justice and equality.

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