

“BOL”BY SHOAB MANSOOR PORTRYAL OF THIRD GENDER IN COMTEMPORARY CINEMA

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Abstract:-This research paper throwsspotlight on theproblems of third gender people as depicted in the modern cinema with exclusive background to the Pakistani film*Bol*. This film highlightspublicdemeanor in Eastern society with them especially because of their gender identity.Its varioustraits are carefully chosen to search the height of the difficulties faced by transgender people in the chosen movie. Discourse analysis technique is adapted as a tool to create the rationale of the study. The selection of movie isgrounded withinEastern society as portrayed in the cinema. Theattitude of society with this marginalized group is the main cause that generateshostile environment in the lifespan of Saifi, who meetsterrible death by the hands of his father. It is because of lack of awareness about transgender people in the eastern environment; they are poorly treated as if they are not even human beings. So the major issues hereare how the world perceivesthem in the society, and how he will be accepted in the society? To elucidate the problems of transgender, discriminatory behaviors adopted by the society towards Saifi(a transgender child), the main causes of Saifi’s death and the consequences of his death on other transgender community are discussed in this paper.Byemploying qualitative research methodologyit is revealed thatSaifi is betrothed in a struggle for life; his character is found weak which causes failure to save himself from societal disdain. Actually struggle for survival was a challenging task to show the viewers other side of a coin in case of transgender’s issues in all over the world.

Key Words: - Saifi, society, Eastern, Bol,transgender, struggle.

Introduction

Among all the efforts of Shoaib Mansoor *Bol* is one of the most popularmovie(meaning *Speak* or “words”) is a 2011 -Urdu language social Pakistani film written, directed and produced by Shoaib Mansoor(list Pakistani film,2011).The most importantconcerns of the movie is gender appearance of a person which isexposed in the film *Bol*. The title of the film*Bol* is availed from famous poetFaiz Ahmad Faiz’s lyrics which definesthe urge to unveil the fact. The Rediff News network exposes existing norms in this way:

<i>Bol,</i>	<i>ke</i>	<i>lab</i>	<i>a zaadhaitere</i>
<i>Bol,</i>			<i>yethodawaqtbohothai</i>
<i>Jism-o-zabankimaut</i>		<i>se</i>	<i>pehle</i>
<i>Bol,</i>			<i>kesachzindahaiabtak</i>
<i>Bol, jokuchhkehnaikaikeh le</i>			

Translation:

Express for your lips are allowed;
Express, thissmallphase is sufficient
Before the demise of figure and speech:
Speak ,for reality is still flourishing_
Speak ,say whatever is to be said.

Major theme of Faiz's innovatory poetry is to stand up and raise the voice for seeking truth". (Rediff News, 2011) Shaikh Ayaz in his appraisal about *Bol* conveyed that, clashes and conflicts are not only the part of Pakistani culture but exist in most parts of the world today but, especially at every place where inequality and mistreatment flourishes. (Shaikh Ayaz, 2011). *Bol* completely fulfills Faizian tradition of courage in standing up against violations.

The world is generally consisting on two types of genders i.e. as masculine or feminine, but there is a small part of population not recognized by male or female but are transgender people. The people of this community are usually engrained with the incomplete male and female sexual characteristics. It is known as a mental disorder in which one passionately assumes himself the fellow of other gender. As Benjamin study reflects that (2001) "A transsexual is a person in which the sex related structures of the brain that define gender identity are exactly opposite the physical sex organs of the body."

Bol signifies current Pakistani social life and proclaims breakdown in the communal order. *Bol* demonstrates a domestic household suffering severe financial distresses which becomes reason for loss of familial honor. The father's financial difficulties with a transgendered child results in a tragic consequences of Saifi.

The Express Tribune BLOG defines the whole arrangement besides special concerns of gender issues like this:

Shoaib Mansoor's *Bol* is brutally honest. Based on the stories of Hakeem Sahib's Sunni-Syed household of seven daughters, the movie adeptly focuses on gender issues at large, dwelling on tensions between fossilized cultural practices and new ones, speaking well to tensions underlying many South Asian households. Problems including rape and domestic violence, and attitudes towards transgendered people, featured in Mansoor's kaleidoscopic film perfectly harmoniously. (Express Tribune, 2011)

Bol discusses the difficulties of third gender people in a very heart-touching manner in Pakistani society. Third gender community is dealt in a very wretched way. The director of a film is a man of authority for all he wishes to show and in what way; and here he did a great work. The protagonist Saifi is treated brutally and harshly as a family member by hakim sahib because he is a third gendered kid, who undergoes no acceptance and no welcome as a family member. The News Network Express Tribune comments:

"It shows the plight of transgendered individuals in our society, their pigeonholed roles, and their societal constraints. It mocks hypocrisy of the male authority figure, hell-bent on using scripture, circumstance and blatant fabrications to reinforce his authority and maintain his iron-grip on those around him. It shows the systematic and systemic bias our society at large has against female education." (Express Tribune, 2011)

It is our mutual practice that we always examine a film from an intellectual's framework. There are lots of such problems which are not voiced in our general public. Out of these is the birth of third gender baby in one's home, It could be societal enforcement to take away such children to the *Hijras* (eunuchs) community, as if it is the GOD's instructions by just saying. 'aehtaaapnahai hi nai' (He does not belong to us). The social

workers and educated group has put joint effort to modify the mindset of people in this regard but it is not fruitful for a common man's life until we make them realize the fact that they are also human being. That's why the film is planned to hit emotions in their own style. *Bol* suggests an exposure of complex, possibly disastrous, environmental and cultural changes we face them today.

A number of people from various areas of the world indicated many issues of third gender community. From Pakistan Jami (2011) has exposed the true state of third gender population through her article topic "Conditions and status of *Hijras* (transgendered people) in Pakistan" and pronounces many unvoiced issues of third gender people in our society. Humaira Jami deals with gender identity and the authorized and religious rights of the third gendered people in Pakistan. She ventured *Hijra's* sorrows in Pakistan as she declares, "while much is known and written about *Hijras* (transgendered) in India; very little is documented about them in Pakistan" (p. 3). She has very fruitful discussion about the true gender of *Hijras* (transgendered) and proceeds towards their legal and religious status. She deals with the common attitude of the people towards (transgendered). She accomplishes her project with optimistic note of general public towards third gender, as she declares:

"We should understand and abridge the prevailing state of doubt and mistrust. This will help in solving the psychological and financial problems of *Hijras* and make their lives comfortable and productive for society at large". (p. 17)

Rationale:-

Role of cinema:

Shoaib Mansoor's *Bol* set around Pakistani environment depicting the miseries of transgendered people in our society as portrayed by contemporary cinema. It is relatively grave and sensitive issue to deal with but the director deals with it in a very bold manner. Contemporary cinema is a major source to highlight the true life style of transgender people in both Eastern and Western societies. Cinema has undertaken the liability to display the actual way of transgender life throughout the world. Mansoor's film *Bol* is also one of true depiction of Eastern trans people.

To get the true picture of third gender people in eastern society and the societal marginalization of eastern world, *Bol* movie is selected. As well as to acquire the role of today's cinema in our world, I have employed both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include different writings from the books, Newspapers and Magazines and secondary sources included research undertaken previously on the same issue. Whereas Cinema is also a major source of imaging the factual representation of trans people. It is the creation of the modern life style and imparting information and amusement ever since its invention. A large number of works is created to depict the miserable social conditions of the transgender people but cinema is effectively performing its role to portray the sorrow of the third gendered community.

Since the creation of world, millions of issues of both genders remained under discussion, but third gender people are always neglected. They are suffering for eras lack of proper gender identity and are even deprived of survival rights. They are miserably living since their birth. Although it has been reported by a large number of scholars that transgendered people experience various types of sufferings whether they are living in East or West.

The transgender people of eastern countries have miserable lives because of lack of education about them, so most often the transgendered children either leave homes or the Third gender people takes them away to their own separate community.

Miseries of Transgender people:

Miseries of Transgender people are almost same all across the world: whether they are the part of any society of the world. They face the same discriminatory behavior chiefly due to the physical disorder of their gender at birth time. They undergo many hindrances during the life and experience prejudiced and marginalized attitude from everywhere.

Transgender people mainly suffer two types of troubles: first the home-based; and second the societal stress. Benjamin (2001) focused on the worries of Transcommunity by teaching some guide lines at international level with gender identity syndromes. He explains a third gender is a person in whom the sex-defining structures of the brain which designates gender identity are exactly of opposite than the physical sex organs of the body.

There is another great difficulty which is faced by Transgender people that they are found unable to make others understand that being human being equal privileges, affection and care are their basic needs to survive. Among the world of men and women transgender consider themselves “others” in all cultures and in all situations, first grade discriminator are their own parents at an early stage. Whittle (2007) claims in his research study:

“We found that Trans people experience many problems at home and in their neighborhood with some losing their family support network, their home and friend Ship circles” (p.17).

In a research project taken on by Nasir (2013) shares Sahiba’ s sayings The head of Bahawalpur transcommunity about transgender family behavior, in this way:

We learned that in some cases, if the parents of a particular transgender person don’t leave them, they still feel like social outcasts and join the transgender community by their own will. They feel free amongst their own kind. This way, they are able to stand as a family and survive. (2013)

Third gender person is not accepted for any work place nor he is able to get access for educational institute. Most often, the justification for not hiring them is only their odd abnormal appearance among them. Transgender have no other option to leave homes and take shelter and adopt prostitution as profession for survival. Some societies accept homosexuals and lesbians but they do not feel easy with Transgender Persons. Discrimination of trans people at work places are mentioned by Nasir in this way Nasir further give reference working conditions of transgendered people in Pakistani society like this:

They face workplace discrimination. People don’t offer them jobs at home because they are considered hateful and somewhat dirty to touch. They are confused about which attire to wear in order to observe the dress code of certain workplaces. Eventually their need for the basic necessities of life forces them into begging and prostitution.(2013)

Identity crises:-

Saifi the sufferer of fatal death of *Bol* Movie is also a feminine to masculine transgender. His parents are traumatized at the birth of third gender baby after seven daughters. The first thought came in the mind of proud father for the murder of the infant several times. The reasons for this he assumes that it is a curse to have a third gender child; so he turned very harsh towards him. Almost all the transgendered face the distresses

of unwelcoming parents and the effect of harsh attitude, beating, rebukes, or using other methods results in loss of their parental homage and search for their Gender identity.

Kaneez-i-Fatima (2008) raised identity crises of Pakistani transgendered community. She indicated three main types of self-mechanism i.e. Individual, communal and sexual identities. Kaneez-i-Fatima also explained the plight of Pakistani transgendered people "In Pakistani culture, a male to female gender dysphoria is a physically male or intersex person who is considered a member of the third sex" (p.137).

Theoretical background of the study:

The history of the world, affirming that every society in olden times has borne some designation, meaning or some way related to the transsexual, from the ancient civilization to the current day. Whittle (2010) inquired that different cultures of the world have different expressions to define the transgender. They give different names to call them. The term transvestite was initiated by a German sexologist in 1910. Whittle (2010) affirms as: "This is by no means a complete list of words used by people to describe themselves. Long before Hirschfeld, other cultures had developed their own terminologies to describe 'trans' people. From the Hijra of India, to the Fa'afafine of Polynesia, the lady boys and the tomboys of Thailand, and the Takatāpui of New Zealand, there are a myriad of words used by transpeople to describe themselves." (p.7)

The term gender is an olden manifestation which is usually used by Grammarians to define the nouns whether they are male, female, or neuter. With the passage of time the concept of gender was developing. Main task for the psychologists of past times was resistance of the social scientists against the authority of the health community. They were specialists and they dared the therapy of much of the sexual conduct. But communal disciplines or sexologists did not use any specific unified term until John Money designated a consolidated umbrella term in 1955 to differentiate femininity, or womanliness, and masculinity, or manliness, from biological sex disorder.

Methodology:-

The looking-glass self is a social psychosomatic idea, developed by Charles Horton Cooley in 1902 proclaiming that a person's self is established between the people of close interaction by the observation of each other carefully, he performed many experiments, took keen readings and noted them in his studio letter pad. This expression supports to the people understanding of how others identify them.

"Looking glass-self" theory is assisting the notion that an individual's self grows out of the public's social connections and opinions of others. Butler (1980). Bhatti, ZI (2020) further adds information about gender that every act of a person does not only depend upon the gender of that individual but it is also influenced by the outlook and notions of the society towards that individual. By applying Cooley's concept of self Mansoor's *Bolis* purely the work of looking glass-self.'

This research analysis about transgender community conveyed the sufferings of life-threatening harassment and aggravation plus botheration by unfamiliar persons on the way, or exploitation, beating and erotic attacks on transgender community (cited in Lombardi et al. 2001 cited in Hill and Willoughby 2005). Saifi also undergoes erotic nuisance at his work shop. He was a soft target of immoral and wicked people. They mislead him and made the victim of their lust.

Findings:-

The sufferings of Third gender people are life long and are never ending, even they encounter their ultimate destination of death. Saifi is a third gender birth in the harsh environment Hakim sahib's house of *Bol* is a great misfit and ultimately sees his ending by the hand of his father, who brutally kills his third gender child by smothering him with a shopping bag adjoining his face.

A study of Freeman(2012) confirms this:

“The Gay-Straight Alliance Network has printed a list of transgendered individuals whose assassinations have been reported by family and friends”. (p.4)

Freeman (2012) more adds murders of the transgendered people at international level:

“Tran respect Versus Transphobia Worldwide, a research project administered by the NGO Transgender Europe, found that transgendered individuals are currently being murdered Throughout every major region of the world.” (p.5)

It is observed that the transgender people are maltreated in all societies. Gender identity is the major reason of discrimination mainly common man from societies, onlookers, storekeepers, the drivers, the hotel owners and community attitude is the key source of transgender miseries which grows hostility, resentment and self-ruining amongst the transgender community mostly leading to death. Third gender offspring face mental distress and severe stress since childhood. They are commonly found miserable and hopeless.

Saifi's life is the personification of distress and it continues till the terrible end of Saifi. All the background features are opposing him. The industrious powers are feeble and deleterious powers are strong. Society observe him as a third gender at first sight which causes miseries of life and finally meets terrible death.

Conclusion

Even though all the reviews of *Bol*, it is determined that in the course of interaction and human development the importance of modern cinema cannot be unheeded, The customary use of written document for publicity of social issues was common, but in modern times the media and cinema which takes initiative in projecting those issues became practice of the day. So, same is the exposure of the transgendered miseries in Eastern society as projected in *Bol* movie through the lives of Saifi in *Bol* transgendered people have been depicted in this society of the East and it is verified that they are struggling with physical, psychological, and mental problems in society. Existence in this world is hard and tough for them as they do not possess human rights.

This research was projected to bring forth very important issue in front of common masses the miseries of third gender people and spread wakefulness among the societies about some abandoned social issues. The importance of this research cannot be overlooked as it would be supporting in attracting upcoming researchers to pay attention towards minute societal concerns which seems very little but its consequences are worst. If we throw a glance at different movements in the world there had been two groups and the suppressed group tried to emerge as a third class creating a third space. The same is true about transgenders who are treated as a salt in meal. This research would be valuable in showing a track to the Transgender to raise their voice for their rights and identity. It would also be worthwhile in encouraging the contemporary cinema to highlight other social issues so that the masses may be aware of those fellows who are living depressed lives in multiracial

societies such as Pakistan. Marginalization of transgender can be reduced by tolerating them as human being and giving equal rights. This may help in filling the gap between a common man and transgender.

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