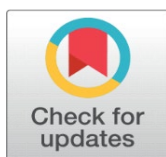
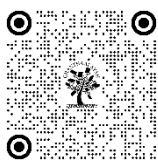


BOLLYWOOD CINEMA AND MENTAL ILLNESS: AN APPROACH TO BALANCE ENTERTAINMENT AND EXACTNESS

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ABSTRACT

Cinema is a reflection of society. Viewers watch and learn so many things and make assumptions with the help of cinema. In this research, the researcher has done conceptual content analyses of three Bollywood films *Taare Zameen Par*, *My Name is Khan* and *Barfi*. All these films portray mental illness and fall under the same genre. The focus of the study is to find out the similarities between the portrayal of the symptoms of mental illness in Bollywood films and the diagnostic criteria of 'Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder- 5th edition', often known as DSM-5. The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is used to know the diagnostic criteria for different mental disorders. The researcher has analysed the themes, behaviour of the family and society and diagnosis and treatment of the person with mental illness in the selected films.

Keywords: Mental Illness, Cinema, Dyslexia, Asperger's Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Conceptual Content Analysis and DSM-5

1. INTRODUCTION

Cinema is an easy and simple tool for understanding any difficult concept as well as cinema is always a representative of society and culture. The status of society affects how mental illness is shown in the film's plot. Films from many cultures have frequently exploited very crude depictions of mental illness and mentally ill people for entertaining purposes. The author and producer/director often confuse symptoms and group numerous psychiatric illnesses together to simplify the

notions of mental disease and make the discussion of mental illness within the setting of the film simpler [Bhugra \(2009\)](#). In the last few decades, mental illness has been a new topic in Bollywood cinema. It puts some spice into the boring cinema. Based on mental illness, Indian cinema is showing new varieties of thrillers and tragedies. Numerous psychiatric conditions, such as widespread developmental abnormalities, mental retardation, anxiety and mood disorders, personality and identity issues, etc. have long attracted Indian film [Acharya et. al. \(2014\)](#). But it is not just a matter of entertainment, it is matter of concern too. How efficiently is Indian cinema portraying all the perspectives and dimensions of mental illness or it is just showing the superficial or extreme kind of things which are harmful to others.

Cinema is a strong way to easily communicate with common people. It can be useful to understand any critical story or topic like mental illness in an entertaining way. Generally, common people do not have proper knowledge about mental illness and it is not easy to understand this challenging subject through books. As a result, this kind of movie is crucial in shaping how people view mental illness and individuals who struggle with it. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Diseases (DSM) has been utilised by the researcher to define the symptoms of various mental diseases. The American Psychiatric Association's The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is a classification of mental disorders with associated criteria designed to facilitate more accurate diagnoses of these disorders [American Psychiatric Association. \(2013\)](#).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jenna Signorelli and Emily Neer in their article, "*Addressing the Portrayal of Mental Illness in Film and Television*" discusses about the stigma associated to mental illness. It is imperative that honest representations of mental illness are given, free of any further dramatisations frequently seen in cinema and television. Storylines that are inaccurate and unrealistic have the potential to increase the stigma around mental illness. According to this study, movies and television are common media types that may be utilised to affect how people see mental illness for the better. One deceptive film or television programme is all it takes to foster prejudice and undermine the reputation of those who are dealing with mental illness. [Signorelli & Neer \(2020\)](#). The article "*Effect of Representation of Mental Disorders in Popular Indian Cinema*" Alekha Acharya, Sahitya Maiya, and Simon Laishram states that the way that mental illnesses are portrayed in Indian film and how they are classified in the DSM are very different. The viewers' perceptions of mental illness can be somewhat improved by proper cinematic representation. Therefore, this study suggests that more realistic depictions will undoubtedly decrease the possibilities of viewers having misunderstandings about people with mental diseases and mental illnesses in general. A fair portrayal of mental illness has the potential to significantly alter how society views individuals who are affected by it. [Acharya et. al. \(2014\)](#). In the study "*Mad tales from Bollywood: The impact of social, political, and economic climate on the portrayal of mental illness in Hindi films*" Prof. Dinesh Bhugra has thoroughly examined how mental illness—particularly psychosis—has been portrayed in Hindi cinema since 1950, as well as how such portrayals have been affected by prevailing social, political, and economic conditions. The author comes to the conclusion that since the 1950s, Hindi films have been increasingly affected by shifting cultural standards, which has had an impact on how mental illness is represented [Bhugra \(2009\)](#). In the study "*Psychosis in Films: An Analysis of Stigma and the Portrayal in Feature Films*" Yancy Aracena writes on how the media portrays mental illness, particularly how it can be portrayed negatively and have few

beneficial benefits. Four categories for examination have been created by the author after choosing films that have representations of mental illness: 1) "The thin line between genius and insanity," 2) "homicidal maniacs," 3) "realistic but disturbing," and 4) "compassionate but fanciful." The author hopes to demonstrate to the audience how readily misconceptions about mental illness have been propagated in popular culture through the use of imagery from these films. [Aracena \(2012\)](#)

Research Gap: The former studies are based on the symptoms, behaviour and stigma of the person with mental illness in the films. These studies have ignored that how the films are portraying the aspect of diagnosis and treatment of that person. In this research, the researcher has attempted to make bridge to cover this gap, therefore, this study focuses on the portrayal of mental illness, diagnosis and treatment and behaviour of family and society for the person with mental illness.

Research Objectives:

- 1) To examine the portrayal of mental illness in Cinema and its similarity with Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)?
- 2) To observe the diagnosis and treatment of the person with mental illness in Cinema?
- 3) To analyse the behaviour of family and society towards those who are struggling with mental illness in Hindi Cinema.

Research Questions:

- 1) The depiction of symptoms of mental illness in Cinema is how much similar to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)?
- 2) How the films are depicting the diagnosis and treatment of the person with mental illness?
- 3) How do society and family behave towards the person who is struggling with mental illness in the films?

Research Design: This study is descriptive and analytical in nature. It describes the different aspects of the selected films.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this research, the researcher has used conceptual content analysis to achieve the research objectives. Therefore, this study focuses on the concepts of the films.

Data Collection Technique: This study is focuses on the qualitative data. For the Conceptual Content Analysis, the researcher has prepared codes and analysed the films accordingly.

Codes for the Conceptual Content Analysis

- Theme
- Symptoms Similar to DSM-5
- Diagnosis and Treatment
- Behaviour of Society

- Irregular Activities/ abnormal behaviour

Population/ Universe of the Study: All the Bollywood Hindi films which are released in 21st century and have mental illness as a key theme is the universe of the study.

Sample Selection:

The selection criteria for the films are-

- 1) The films are released in 21st century,
- 2) The key theme of the films is mental illness,
- 3) One of the protagonist (male/ female) of the film is struggling with the mental illness,
- 4) Films must have good IMDB ratings
- 5) All the films belong to the same genre (Drama).

The purpose of the study is centred on the portrayal of the mental illness and attitude and behaviour of the society in films. To achieve the purpose of the study, purposive sampling techniques seems to be most suitable for the sample selection. In view of that, the researcher has applied the above-mentioned selection criteria for the purposive sampling technique and the selected samples for the study are, *Tare Zameen Par* (Dyslexia), *My name is Khan* (Asperger's Syndrome), and *Barfi* (Autism).

Table 1

Table 1 Descriptions of the Films					
	Name of the Films	Theme of the Films (Mental illness)	Genre	Release Date	IMDB Ratings (on 14 th August 2023)
1	Taare Zameen Par	Dyslexia	Drama, Family	21 st December 2007	8.3/10
2	My Name is Khan	Asperger's Syndrome	Adventure, Drama, Romance	12 th February 2010	7.9/10
3	Barfi	Autism	Comedy, Drama, Romance	14 September 2012	8.1/10

Limitations of the Study: Many films are based on the mental illness but neither it is possible to analyse all the films nor it is possible to examine all the dimensions on the selected films. This study is more tilted towards representation of films So, more technical description can be difficult to understand.

The researcher has analysed three films. [Table 1](#) presents the general description of all the three films. From [Table 2](#), [Table 3](#), [Table 4](#) have

4. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

There are three films selected for the analysis. These are *Tare Zameen Par*, *My Name is Khan* and *Barfi*. The researcher has analysed three films along with the tables. The tables are given below represents the important details of every three film. [Table 2](#) presents the codes of analysis for the film *Tare Zameen Par*, [Table 3](#) presents the codes of analysis for the film *My Name is Khan* and [Table 4](#) presents the codes of analysis for *Barfi*.

Table 2

Table 2 Codes of Analysis for Taare Zameen Par	
Codes for analysis	Analysis
Theme	Dyslexia
Symptoms Similar to DSM-5	Yes
Diagnosis	Identified by Art teacher <i>Ram Shankar Nikumbh (Amir Khan)</i> through his mistakes pattern in writing.
Treatment (therapy)	Educational Intervention and practice sessions with Ram Shankar Nikumbh
Behaviour of Society	Unaware with the problem, Behaves rudely
Irregular Activities/ abnormal behaviour	Difficulty in identifying letters, reading and writing and problem in focusing

Taare Zameen Par

Theme of the Film: This film is directed by *Amir Khan*. This is a story of an eight years old boy *Ishaan Awasthi (Darsheel Safary)*, who is struggling with Dyslexia, a learning disorder characterised by difficulty reading. It occurs in children with normal vision and intelligence.

The theme of the film is Dyslexia. The DSM-5 of American Psychological Association has mentioned the diagnostic criteria of Specific learning disorder are:

- 1) Difficulties learning and using academic skills, as indicated by the presence of at least one of the symptoms that have continued for at least 6 months:
 - Difficulty in reading (e.g., incorrect, slow and just with much exertion).
 - Difficulty understanding the meaning of what is read.
 - Difficulties with spelling.
 - Difficulties with written expression (e.g., multiple grammatical mistakes and poor paragraph organization).
 - Difficulties with number sense, number facts or calculation.
 - Difficulties with mathematical reasoning (e.g., applying math ideas or tackling numerical questions).
- 2) Have below academic skills that are significantly anticipated for the kid's age and bring on some issues in school, work or regular exercises.
- 3) The troubles begin during young regardless of whether certain individuals experience critical issues until adulthood (when scholastic, work and everyday requests are more prominent).
- 4) Learning troubles are not because of different circumstances, like scholarly inability, vision or hearing issues, a neurological condition (e.g., pediatric stroke), unfriendly circumstances like monetary or natural weakness, absence of guidance, or challenges communicating in/grasping the language.

With impairment in reading:

- Word reading accuracy
- Reading rate or fluency
- Reading Comprehension

Another name for this pattern of learning challenges is dyslexia, which is characterised by issues with accurate or fluent word recognition, poor decoding skills, and poor spelling skills. It is crucial to mention any additional challenges, such

as issues with reading comprehension or mathematical thinking, if dyslexia is being used to describe this specific pattern of difficulties [American Psychiatric Association. \(2013\)](#).

Similar to DSM-5: The above mentioned symptoms of dyslexia can be seen in Ishaan of Taare Zameen Par. He is unable and not interested in regular activities. He is facing the difficulty in tying the shoelaces. While playing Ishaan cannot figure out the size, time, distance and speed of the ball. Therefore, It is challenging for him to play with others. He does not identify the difference between similar looking letters like b and d. He writes mirror images of some words. He mixes-up similar looking words like top and pot. He uses multiple spellings for the same word, that means he does not remember the correct spellings. He is unable to focus and concentrate due to the problem of dyslexia. Letters and digits start floating whenever he tries to study.

Diagnosis and Treatment: A new arts teacher Ram Shankar Nikumbh (Amir Khan) is appointed to his school, who is already working in a school of special children as well. He observed *Ishaan's* textbooks and identified that there is a pattern in his mistakes in reading, writing and day to day activities, which are easy for the children of his age group. He discussed it with Ishaan's parents and describe them about dyslexia. Nikumbh Sir's description of dyslexia is same as mentioned in DSM-5.

Currently, no medications are available to treat dyslexia. Instead, educational interventions can teach successful new methods to learn and read. Children with dyslexia may have benefit from working with a qualified professional to develop new reading abilities. Slowing down a class provides a youngster with dyslexia additional time to cover topics. There are therapy sessions available for the children with dyslexia. To develop phonological awareness and other reading skills, the therapists make use of a wide variety of strategies. For example, they might practice rhyming or they might ask children to clap out the syllables in their names in order to recognize them [The Understood Team \(n.d.\)](#). The same thing has presented in the film Taare Zameen Par. The same thing has presented in the film Taare Zameen Par. The art teacher Nikumbh recognizes his symptoms. Therefore, he gives Ishaan extra specialclasses separately to understand alphabets, words and digits with normal level calculations. With his hard work, patient and belief in Ishaan, make him capable to learn things that are for his age group children. Now, he is able to do his regular things himself. Here, Nikumbh has also played a role of therapist for Ishaan.

Behaviour of family and Society: The parents and teachers of Ishaan does not understand his situation. They consider him lazy, idler and aloof. His parents get complaints about him from his school and their society where they live. His performance was not good in the class so his father decided to admit him in a boarding school. It was completely a new place for Ishaan. His condition become worse there and he miss his family so much. Ishaan's elder brother Yuvaan Awasthi is a topper of his class and also a good sportsperson. He is an obedient son and he lives a disciplined life. He is an example of an ideal son. Ishaan's father always compares Ishaan with his elder brother and blames that he is not interested in studies so he makes excuses. Ishaan's father behaves rudely, scolds often and slaps him on his mistakes. But a newly appointed art teacher *Nikumbh* has recognised Ishaan's ability and talent. Ishaan is very creative and talented. He draws beautiful paintings. Nikumbh's belief in *Ishaan* helps to improve the *Ishaan's* performance in the class and as well as he becomes capable of doing his regular things.

Table 3

Table 3 Codes of Analysis for My Name is Khan	
Codes for analysis	Analysis
Theme	Asperger's syndrome
Symptoms similar to DSM-5	Yes
Diagnosis	Diagnosed by his brother's wife Haseena, a psychology professor
Treatment (therapy)	Not getting any therapy
Behaviour of Society	Sympathetic and lovable behaviour but the scenario changes with the 9/11 attack
Irregular Activities/ abnormal behaviour	Gets disturbed by yellow color, noisy and crowded area. Can't express properly and repeats sentences

My name is Khan

Theme: This film is directed by *Karan Johar* and others. My name is Khan is based on the story of a man, *Rizwan Khan* who is struggling with Asperger's syndrome. Asperger's syndrome is no longer considered a standalone diagnosis in the modern world. It now falls under the umbrella term autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which encompasses a wider range of conditions. These connected illnesses have certain symptoms in common. Nevertheless, the word "Asperger's" is still widely used. The disease is referred to as a "High functioning type of ASD" by medical professionals. This indicates that the symptoms are less severe than those of other autism spectrum illnesses [American Psychiatric Association. \(2013\)](#).

The diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder are as follows:

- 1) Persistent deficiencies in social interaction and communication in many circumstances, as shown by the following in the present or in the past:
 - A lack of social-emotional reciprocity, such as an aberrant attitude to social relationships and a failure to engage in the usual back-and-forth discourse, as well as a reduction in the sharing of interests, feelings, or affect, as well as a failure to initiate or participate in social interactions.
 - A lack of social interactional nonverbal communication habits.
 - Lack of ability to establish, manage, and comprehend relationships,
- 2) Limited, repeated behavioural, interest, or activity patterns, as shown by at least two of the past or present examples of the following:
 - Stereotypical, repeated motions of the body, the usage of things, or speech.
 - The insistence on uniformity, rigid adherence to customs, or ritualised patterns of spoken or unspoken action.
 - Abnormally intense or focused interests that are highly constrained and obsessed.
 - An extraordinary interest in sensory features of the environment or hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input.
- 3) Symptoms must appear throughout the early stages of development.
- 4) Symptoms hinder social, vocational, or other relevant areas of present functioning in a clinically significant way.

- 5) Neither a general developmental delay nor intellectual impairment (intellectual developmental disorder) provide a more compelling explanation for these abnormalities. The co-occurrence of intellectual impairment and autism spectrum disorder is common, and social communication has to be below the level predicted for a person's general developmental stage in order to diagnose both conditions [American Psychiatric Association. \(2013\)](#).

Similar to DSM-5: There are no separate detailed explanation available in DSM-5 about Asperger's syndrome. It considers a part of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Therefore, the researcher has compared the symptoms of Rizwan in My Name is Khan with the diagnostic criteria of Autism Spectrum Disorder. The symptoms of Asperger's syndrome are less severe than those of other autism spectrum illnesses and this is mentioned in the film by psychiatrist of an Autistic Society that Rizwan is better than other autistic patient.

The point A. (1.2.3.) of diagnostic criteria of ASD can be completely seen in Rizwan. He is unable to do appropriate social interactions. He is facing failure to engage in discourse and incapable of sharing feelings. He never makes eye-contacts. While talking to someone, he always staring into the void. He doesn't like to hug. The point B (1.2.3.and 4.) can be also observed in Rizwan. He has repeated behavioural pattern and he also repeats sentences during conversation. He has fear of new places and new people. Most of the time, he is grasping some pebbles and rubs together continuously.

Rizwan is a person with some extraordinary talents. He can repair almost any machine. He regularly goes to the house of Mr. Wadia to take lessons from him. One day, there is a problem of water logging in the surroundings of Mr. Wadia so he refuses to take class and tells Rizwan to return to his home but Rizwan instead of going back to home, he prepared a machine with the help of a bicycle to throw out all the water. It was a proud moment for his teacher Mr. Wadia. Now, people recognize his extraordinary talent and they queue up with different home gadgets in their hands. He also has unusual memory and knowledge.

The symptoms can be seen in Rizwan from his early childhood. As per the point C of diagnostic criteria explains that these symptoms can be appear in early stage of development. The symptoms mentioned in point D can be also observed in Rizwan. These symptoms become the hindrance of his social, vocational and day to day activities.

Rizwan has problem with yellow color, loud volumes and crowded place. In a scene, he gets disturbed to see people in yellow color dresses in a gathering for worship of Ganpati on the road. In another scene, Hasina brings some milk in a yellow mug and put it on his table, he immediately throws away it. This is not mentioned in the diagnostic criteria of DSM-5 that a person with Asperger's syndrome may have problem with any colour. But this is identified in other studies that many autists actively gravitate towards a particular colour and/or actively avoid other colours. Autists have been known to eat only white coloured foods, or to only play with toys of one particular colour for example in the film 'My Name Is Khan' where the protagonist sees a man in a yellow jacket and awkwardly turns around to walk in the opposite direction to him. Scientists believe that this may be due to autists' sensitivity to luminance. Alternatively, this may occur because yellow is one of the most heavily sensory loaded colours (it's the brightest colour in the visible spectrum), as it engages multiple colour detection cells (called cones) in the eye. Furthermore, yellow is the most tiring colour for the eyes, which may explain

why sensitive autists avoid it. Yellow has been known to raise a person's anger, and it has also been recognised to be the most fatiguing colour to the eyes, which might explain why sensitive autists avoid it.

Due to lack of social interactional communication habits, people don't take him seriously and he has to do more efforts for selling the products of his brother's company. When his younger brother was moving to USA, Rizwan gets very sad, he wants to cry but he can't. He can't properly express his feelings in oral communication but he can write what he wants to express.

Diagnosis and Treatment: His symptoms are visible from his early childhood but it remains undiagnosed until his sister-in-law Hasina Khan (Sonya Jehan) has observed his communication and behaviour pattern. Hasina is a professor of psychology in the University, so she knows the symptoms of Autistic Spectrum Disorder very well. For more surety, she brings Rizwan to an Autistic society. Where they confirm that he has Asperger's syndrome but his condition is better than other autistic patients. Because every child is unique, there is no one-size-fits-all method. Your doctor may need to test many treatments before finding one that works for you.

Treatment options may include: There are different types of therapies are available that maybe helpful for the person with asperger's syndrome and autism-

Social skills development: Therapists will educate a kid how to connect with others and express themselves more effectively in a group or individual session. Typical behaviour is generally the greatest way to gain social skills.

Therapy for speech: This will assist a child's communication abilities. For example, kids will learn to talk with a typical rising and falling pattern rather than a monotonous voice. They will also learn how to hold a two-way conversation and recognise social indicators such as hand gestures and eye contact.

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT): is one treatment option. This assists a child in changing his thinking so that he can better regulate his emotions and repetitious behaviours. Outbursts, meltdowns, and obsessions will be within their control.

Education and training for parents: Many tactics will be provided to you so that you may practise your child's social skills at home. Some families seek counselling to help them cope with the difficulties of living with someone who has Asperger's syndrome. Examine the application's behaviour. It is a strategy that fosters positive social and communication skills in your child while discouraging undesirable behaviours. The therapist will utilise praise or other "positive support" to accomplish the desired effects.

Medicine: There are no FDA-approved drugs to treat autism spectrum disease or Asperger's syndrome. Some drugs, however, help alleviate associated symptoms such as depression and anxiety. Doctor may prescribe the following items:

- 1) SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)
- 2) Antipsychotic medications
- 3) Stimulant medicines [Shroff \(2022\)](#)

In the film, My Name is Khan, the problem of Rizwan is undiagnosed till his adulthood. After the confirmation of his asperger's syndrome, his sister-in-law Hasina gives him a video recorder, with the help of this recorder he can look at the world like watching a television. It seems comfortable to him for facing the society.

He is not taking any kind of medicine for it. But from his childhood, his mother is unconsciously using social skill development therapy and cognitive behavioural therapy. In a scene, by drawing on a paper, Rizwan’s mother explains him that there is no difference between Hindu and Muslim. Their efforts makes them good or bad not their religion. His mother always educates him how to connect with others and express themselves. Here, she acts like a therapist who guides him how to behave and as a mother she always communicates positive messages and values to him.

Behaviour of Society and Family: Rizwan mother loves him very much, she understands him and explains him everything in a good manner. It helps him to being a kind hearted person. His mother’s affection and dedication towards Rizwan brings the feeling of jealousy in his younger brother Zakir. Therefore, Zakir’s behaves rudely to him. Zakir is the biggest dealer of Mehnaaz Herbal products in USA but he offers the job of a salesman to his elder brother Rizwan. Rizwan wanders salon to salon the road to sell the beauty products and randomly he meets with Mandira (Kajol), who works in a salon. She is separated with her first husband and lives with her 6 years old boy named Sameer. She is a humble and fun loving lady. Rizwan marry to her. She loves him and understands his feelings.

The things become wrong after the attack of 9/11. The entire country starts hating Muslim community, this also affects *Rizwan* Khan and his family. Therefore, they lost their son Sameer. *Mandira* lost her mind after the death of her son. She angrily said to *Rizwan* that he must go the President and tell him “*My name is Khan and I am not terrorist*”. So, he tried so many times to meet the president but he does not get success. During this journey, he meets and helps so many people. He spreads love and affection. In return, he also gets buckets of love from everyone. Finally, one day the president of USA calls him to meet and then he tells him, “*My name is Khan and I am not terrorist*”. This message brings a revolutionary change for the whole country towards the Muslims.

Table 4

Table 4 Codes of Analysis for Barfi	
Codes for analysis	Analysis
Theme	Autism
Symptoms Similar to DSM-5	Yes
Diagnosis	Unspecified
Treatment (therapy)	Not getting any therapy
Behaviour of Society	Parents leave her to a foster home for differently-abled
Irregular Activities/ abnormal behaviour	Failure in social interaction, childish behaviour

Barfi

Theme: This film is directed by *Anurag Basu*. This is a story of *Jhilmil* (*Priyanka Chopra*), *Barfi* (*Ranbir Kapoor*) and *Shruti* (*Ileana D’Cruz*). The theme of the film is Autism. The female protagonist of the film *Jhilmil* (*Priyanka Chopra*) has played the role of an autistic. The diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder are as follows:

- 1) Persistent deficiencies in social interaction and communication in many circumstances, as shown by the following in the present or in the past:
 - A lack of social-emotional reciprocity, such as an aberrant attitude to social relationships and a failure to engage in the usual back-and-forth

- discourse, as well as a reduction in the sharing of interests, feelings, or affect, as well as a failure to initiate or participate in social interactions.
- A lack of social interactional nonverbal communication habits.
 - Lack of ability to establish, manage, and comprehend relationships,
- 2) Limited, repeated behavioural, interest, or activity patterns, as shown by at least two of the past or present examples of the following:
- Stereotypical, repeated motions of the body, the usage of things, or speech.
 - The insistence on uniformity, rigid adherence to customs, or ritualised patterns of spoken or unspoken action.
 - Abnormally intense or focused interests that are highly constrained and obsessed.
 - An extraordinary interest in sensory features of the environment or hyper- or hypo-reactivity to sensory input.
- 3) Symptoms must appear throughout the early stages of development.
- 4) Symptoms hinder social, vocational, or other relevant areas of present functioning in a clinically significant way.
- 5) The co-occurrence of intellectual impairment and autism spectrum disorder is common, and social communication has to be below the level predicted for a person's general developmental stage in order to diagnose both conditions [American Psychiatric Association. \(2013\)](#).

Similar to DSM-5: In the film Barfi, the aberrant behaviour can be observed in Jhilmil (Priyanka Chopra). Point A. (1.2.3.) can easily be observed in Jhilmil's behaviour. Point B (only 1. and 2.) are also visible in Jhilmil's character but point B. (3. and 4.) are not a part of her behaviour pattern. These symptoms are visible from her early childhood which is mentioned in under point C. Because of the autism she is unable to do her own regular activities and she is dependent on someone else for all these. She can't do social interaction. She is unable to properly express her feelings. Therefore, point D of diagnostic criteria can be seen in her character. Point E of diagnostic criteria discusses about that the intellectual development disorder along with the autism spectrum disorder is common, and it more deeply affects a person's general developmental stage.

Intellectual development disorder is a neurodevelopmental illness that creates difficulties with cognitive skills. Children with intellectual development problem struggle with learning, communicating, rational thinking, making decisions, and planning. They frequently suffer in school and may also struggle with peers and day-to-day duties like as bathing or dressing. They may appear to be acting out, but the true issue is that they are unsure of what behaviour is suitable [Child Mind Institute \(n.d.\)](#). All the above-mentioned difficulties can be seen in Jhilmil. She is facing difficulties in her regular activities.

Diagnosis and Treatment: Jhilmil is an autistic but there is no scene where someone is diagnosing her problem. The symptoms of Autism are visible from her

early childhood. Therefore, her parents leave her to a foster home in her childhood. The treatment of the Autism Spectrum Disorder has been mentioned in the above lines. The treatment of ASD is same as the treatment of asperger's syndrome because asperger's syndrome falls under the umbrella term Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Treatment options may include: Social skills development therapy, Therapy for speech, Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), and Education and training for parents. It is a strategy that fosters positive social and communication skills in a child while discouraging undesirable behaviours. The therapist will utilise praise or other "positive support" to accomplish the desired effects.

Medicine: There are no FDA-approved drugs to treat autism spectrum disease or Asperger's syndrome. Some drugs, however, help alleviate associated symptoms such as depression and anxiety. Doctor may prescribe the following items:

- SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors)
- Antipsychotic medications
- Stimulant medicines [Shroff \(2022\)](#).

In the film Barfi, Jhilmil is not having any kind of medication. According to above mentioned treatment options for ASD, there are no medicine for autism. Medicines are useful only for those, who have depression or anxiety along with Autism Spectrum Disorder. There are no scenes of therapy sessions in the film Barfi. Therefore, it is identified that Jhilmil is not getting any kind of therapy to treat her Autism.

Behaviour of Family/ Society: *Jhilmil's* alcoholic mother and gambler father don't care about little *Jhilmil*, so they leave her to the Muskan, a foster home. *Jhilmil* stays in *Muskan* almost fifteen years. Her grandfather wants to bring her back to the home before his death. So, *Jhilmil* returns back to her home after fifteen years. But her parents don't know how to behave and handle an autistic girl. They always fight and they have zero emotions for their daughter *Jhilmil*. She doesn't feel comfortable in their environment. In a scene, there is a party in the house and a person is playing guitar and singing a song. Rimjhim also starts singing loudly with him and people find her funny and they start laughing at her. It makes her angry and she starts shouting on people for laughing at her. The insensitivity of the people makes her uncomfortable.

Barfi has infatuation for *Shruti*, who is beautiful and educated. *Shruti* is already engaged with *Ranjit Sengupta* but She does not love him. She feels more lively with Barfi and enjoys her life like never before. *Shruti's* mother convinced her that she can't happily live her life with a deaf and mute man, therefore she marries to her fiancé *Ranjit*.

Jhilmil meets with her childhood friend and the son of her family's driver *Barfi*. *Barfi* cares a lot and understands *Jhilmil*. He does funny activities to make her smile. *Jhilmil* enjoys his company and she does not want to leave him. They marry to each other and finally they die in each other's arms on a hospital bed.

Findings: The key findings of the study are the answers to research questions:

- 1) To get the answer to the first research question, the researcher has compared the symptoms of mental illness portrayed in cinema with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). By analysing the three films, the researcher has concluded that all the three films follow the symptoms mentioned in the DSM-5. The symptoms of Dyslexia in the film *Taare Zameen Par* are very similar to DSM-5 and the symptoms can be seen in Ishaan. As per the DSM-5 the key symptoms are visible in his behaviour. The depiction of Asperger's syndrome is very similar to some extent in the film, *My Name Is Khan*. Excluding the point E of the criteria, every criteria of Asperger's syndrome [Autism and Colour \(2018\)](#) is visible in the character of Rizwan. But his anger towards yellow colour is not mentioned in the criteria of DSM-5. Although other studies support this symptom of Autism. In *Barfi*, every diagnostic criteria can be observed in the character of Jhilmil.
- 2) The diagnosis and treatment of *Taare Zameen Par* is trustworthy because Ram Shankar Nikumbh (Amir Khan) has experience to teach special children before so he easily identify the problem of Ishaan. He uses educational intervention and takes practice sessions for the improvement in the performance of Ishaan. In *My Name Is Khan*, the diagnosis is done by a psychology professor with the help of an autistic society. That can be acceptable but there is no scene of therapy sessions for his treatment. In the film *Barfi*, it is not shown who has diagnosed the condition of Jhilmil. But everyone knows about her autism from her childhood and she is not getting any therapy.
- 3) In *Tare Zameen Par*, the family and society is unaware about Dyslexia. So, they can't understand his situation and they don't know how to deal with him. They consider him lazy and not interested in studies. His father deals with him very rudely and angrily. In a scene, when his father knows that Ishaan's elder brother writes an absent note on his request because he was wondering on the road instead of attending classes. He starts shouting in anger and slaps him badly. Whenever Ishaan's father gets complaint about him, he loses his mind. In *My Name is Khan*, the behaviour of family and society was mixed. Most of the people treat him normally. Here is the reason of discrimination is Rizwan's Muslim religion not his asperger's syndrome because in 9/11 attack Islamic extremist network al-Qaeda was involved. After this attack people around the world start hating the whole Muslim community and consider them suspicious. Rizwan's brother has no affection and love for Rizwan. The reason behind is that her mother gives more attention and care to Rizwan. It brings the feeling of jealousy and insecurity to Rizwan's brother Zakir. But Rizwan's wife Mandira loves him very much. In the film *Barfi*, the behaviour of her parents for *Jhilmil* is insensitive and careless. They leave her to 'Muskaan' a foster home for differently-abled people in her childhood. After fifteen years, when she returned her home, her parents don't treat her nicely. In a scene, at the time of taking her back from the Muskaan, when the question was asked to him how they will take care of her after taking her back to home. Then her father answered that there are many servants to serve her. She loves *Barfi*, who understands her feelings and emotions and behaves well and takes care of her.

5. CONCLUSION

With the analysis of the above-mentioned films, the researcher can conclude that most of the films successfully depicted the symptoms of the person with mental illness but sometimes it is presented dramatically. These symptoms are similar to the diagnostic criteria of the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. The main focus of the films is the symptoms of a person with mental illness, which can be seen in his/her personality and behaviour. They do not focus on the treatment of the person and improvement in their condition after taking therapy sessions or treatment. This part might be not entertaining that much perhaps it has been ignored by the filmmakers. But also filmmakers have some limitations and they are unable to cover every aspect. They have to follow a story and sometimes it is required to leave the story untold or end the film on that turn where an audience has to think about it themselves.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

If the filmmakers give more emphasis on the procedure of diagnosis and treatment, then the films can be more effective in spreading awareness and understanding of mental illness among the audience. It can be helpful in clarifying the concept of those who think that mental illness can't be cured or treated. Before making such films, the filmmakers can communicate with the psychiatrists for their keen observation and detailed knowledge to avoid misinterpretation.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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