Chapter 4

Delving into the Cinematic Representation of the Nexus between Gender Dynamics, Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability in India

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Abstract: This study aims to present a comprehensive examination of the cinematic representation of the nexus between gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability in India. Previous researchers have widely documented that cinema across the globe has been a powerful medium that both reflects and influences societal norms, perceptions, beliefs, and values. Over the years, Indian cinema has also witnessed a significant transformation in the portrayal of gender dynamics. From traditional gender roles and stereotypes, there has been a shift towards more inclusive and progressive narratives that challenge the status quo. The changing gender dynamics in Indian cinema are a testament to the evolving role of women in society. From traditional, submissive roles, Indian films have moved towards portraying women as strong, independent, self-reliant, and multifaceted individuals. While challenges remain, the impact of these portrayals on society is undeniable, and Indian cinema continues to play a pivotal role in advocating for gender equality, entrepreneurship, and sustainability in the country. This study explores the cinematic depiction of changing gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability in Indian cinema by focusing on the evolution of women's roles and the representation of gender diversity and empowerment. **Keywords**: Gender, sustainability,

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4.1   Introduction

The relationship between gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability is complex and multifaceted (Majeed, 2016; Bhatia, 2021; Arumugam et al., 2022). Each of these elements influences and is influenced by the others, creating a dynamic interplay that can have significant implications for societal development, women empowerment, and familial well-being (Ratten, 2020). Past researchers have defined gender as a social construct which involve the roles, behaviors, and expectations society attributes to individuals based on their perceived gender (Majeed, 2016; Lister, 2023). These dynamics can influence how people engage with and impact the environment, hence, gender dynamics also play a crucial and decisive role in shaping the landscape of social entrepreneurship (Ratten, 2020; Thangaraja et al., 2022). Ensuring gender diversity in the entrepreneurial ecosystem is not only a matter of social justice but also has practical implications (Bhatia, 2021). Diverse teams bring a variety of perspectives and ideas, which can enhance the effectiveness and creativity of social enterprises. Further, the social entrepreneurs often identify and address some gender-specific societal challenges such as gender-based violence, lack of access to education for girls, and unequal economic opportunities, are common focus areas for many social enterprises (Majeed,2016; Bhatia, 2021). By addressing these issues, social entrepreneurs generously contribute to gender equality and empowerment. Similarly, recognizing the role of women in sustainability is crucial. Women often bear the brunt of environmental degradation and are simultaneously powerful agents of change.

Cinema serves as a mirror to society, reflecting its joys, struggles, and complexities. Through films, the audience witness stories that resonate with their own experiences thereby making them feel connected and understood. It portrays diverse cultures, lifestyles, and issues, promoting audience empathy and understanding. Many movies promote awareness, cultural exchange, and inspire change by depicting historical injustices by addressing political and social issues, shedding light on topics like reality checks of the country, poverty, discrimination, and inequality. Cinema also has the power to influence culture by shaping our beliefs and values, often

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blurring the line between fiction and reality. Keeping this discussion in context, present study is undertaken to comprehend the cinematic representation of the nexus between movies, gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability through a Bollywood movie "Sui Dhaaga: Made in India". The understanding and addressing these connections will guide the concerned agencies to foster holistic approaches to societal challenges that promote equality, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development.

4.2   Literature Review: Cinematic narratives as catalysts for change

The advancements in technology have revolutionized the film industry, making it easier for diverse voices and stories to be heard (Majeed, 2016; Bhatia, 2021; Arumugam et al., 2022). Streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime have democratized access to filmmaking and widened the reach of impactful narratives (Ratten, 2020; Bhatia, 2021). Cinema, as both a reflection and influencer of society, continues to inspire change and shape culture with its unique ability to ignite conversations, challenge perceptions, and evoke emotions that lead to real-world actions (Arumugam et al.,2022). The impact of cinema on society will undoubtedly remain a dynamic force, inspiring generations to come. By embracing the power of storytelling, filmmakers have the potential to drive positive change and contribute to a more empathetic, inclusive, and culturally rich society. Movies often depict social issues and injustices, inspiring social entrepreneurs to address these problems creatively. Movies play a crucial role in shaping perceptions of gender roles and identities. The portrayal of men and women in cinema can either reinforce traditional stereotypes or challenge and redefine them. Analyzing gender representation in films helps understand societal attitudes and expectations. Cinematic narratives can serve as a catalyst for individuals to embark on ventures aimed at positive social impact. Several filmmakers and actors use their platforms to raise awareness about social and environmental issues, supporting social entrepreneurship initiatives (Thangaraja et al., 2022). This can contribute to building a culture of social responsibility and conscious consumerism. Similarly, some films directly address environmental challenges, promoting sustainability and ecological

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consciousness. These narratives can influence viewers to adopt more sustainable lifestyles and support eco-friendly initiatives (Mittal, 2020). Further, movies have the power to contribute to cultural shifts and attitudes towards sustainability. By depicting sustainable practices or the consequences of unsustainable actions, films can influence societal values and encourage responsible behavior.

Movies have the power to contribute to cultural shifts and attitudes towards sustainability. By depicting sustainable practices or the consequences of unsustainable actions, films can influence societal values and encourage responsible behavior. Films celebrate diverse perspectives by showcasing the intersectionality of gender, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability (Thangaraja et al., 2022). This inclusivity in storytelling helps break down barriers and fosters a more comprehensive understanding of these issues (Arumugam, et al., 2022; Jora et al., 2023). In conclusion, understanding the cinematic take on gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability in Indian context is a rich terrain for exploration. By critically analyzing cinematic narratives and their impact on societal values and behaviors, researchers and advocates can gain valuable insights into fostering positive change in these interconnected realms.

4.3 Research Methodology: Selection of the Movie

Keeping the aim of the present study, i.e., to present a comprehensive examination of the cinematic representation of the nexus between gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability in India, several Bollywood movies were analyzed resulting in the final selection of the film "Sui Dhaaga: Made in India".

"Sui Dhaaga: Made in India" is a Bollywood film released in 2018 that beautifully weaves the tale of entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and the indomitable spirit of the Indian people. Directed by Sharat Katariya and produced by Maneesh Sharma, the film stars Varun Dhawan as Mauji and Anushka Sharma as Mamta, portraying a heartwarming story of a couple who embark on an entrepreneurial journey to break free from the constraints of their mundane lives. The narrative not only entertains but also serves as a source of inspiration for budding entrepreneurs, highlighting the challenges, triumphs, and the essence of 'Made in India' entrepreneurship.

This movie provides an interesting perspective on the study objectives through its narrative of entrepreneurship, self-reliance, and economic empowerment. For example: (i) the central theme of this movie revolves around Mauji and Mamta's journey to create their own small-scale tailoring business. In doing so, they not only achieve economic independence but also generate employment opportunities for themselves and others in their community; (ii) the film illustrates how entrepreneurship can be a catalyst for economic growth, particularly at the grassroots level. Mauji and Mamta's venture starts small but eventually grows, contributing to the economic development of their community; (iii) Mauji and Mamta's journey involves acquiring and honing their tailoring skills. The film underscores the importance of skill development and capacity building; (iv) the film depicts how entrepreneurship can be a tool for poverty alleviation. Mauji and Mamta's decision to start their own business is motivated by a desire to escape poverty and achieve a better standard of living; (v) this movie challenges traditional gender roles, especially in the context of economic activities. Mamta's active involvement in the tailoring business breaks stereotypes and contributes to a more inclusive understanding of economic empowerment; and (vi) while the film primarily focuses on economic sustainability, it indirectly addresses social sustainability by highlighting the positive impact of the tailoring business on the community. Economic growth, when coupled with social considerations, contributes to a more sustainable and inclusive development process.

4.4   Plot Description and Analysis

The movie "Sui Dhaaga - Made in India" is a heart-warming story of pride and self-reliance, which finds its roots in the heart of India and reflects the passion that runs through the veins of every single Indian. Taking the message of "Made in India" forward, the film modestly tries to bring back our traditional art forms and handicrafts in focus. Through Mauji (Varun Dhawan) and his wife Mamta (Anushka Sharma), the film talks about the need of social entrepreneurship as a tool for social and economic development of our artisans, living their life in the margins due to the changing times. Set in a small town in India, the film encapsulates the journey of an honest man from a humble background, who pursues his passion, overcoming all odds and

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soon finds himself on the cover of an international magazine with the world taking note and appreciating his talent. A clean family entertainer, the film emphasizes virtues like honesty, self-respect and community living.

Gender Dynamics and Entrepreneurship - The film portrays traditional gender roles, with Mauji representing the male breadwinner and Mamta as the supportive wife. However, as the narrative progresses, Mamta's role expands beyond the conventional domestic sphere. She becomes an active participant in the entrepreneurial venture, challenging traditional gender norms. This shift reflects the evolving dynamics in which women are increasingly contributing to economic activities and entrepreneurship. The film also underlines the importance of identifying opportunities in adversity. Mauji faces exploitation at his workplace, working tirelessly for meager wages. However, the turning point comes when he decides to take control of his destiny. Recognizing the demand for handcrafted, 'Made in India' products, Mauji and Mamta seize the opportunity to start their own tailoring business. This reflects a crucial entrepreneurial lesson – the ability to identify gaps in the market and transform challenges into opportunities.

Social Entrepreneurship - Mauji and Mamta's journey epitomizes social entrepreneurship at a grassroots level. They start their own tailoring business to become self-reliant, emphasizing community and social impact. The venture not only transforms their lives but also has a positive ripple effect on the people around them. This reflects the core principles of social entrepreneurship, which aims to address societal challenges through innovative and sustainable business models. As Mauji and Mamta embark on their entrepreneurial journey, they encounter numerous challenges that test their resilience. From financial constraints to societal skepticism, the couple navigates the entrepreneurial landscape with determination and innovation. The film emphasizes the power of creativity in overcoming obstacles. Mamta's unique embroidery skills and Mauji's dedication to quality craftsmanship showcase the transformative impact of innovation in business, reinforcing the idea that creativity is a potent tool in entrepreneurial success.

Sustainability in Craftsmanship - While the film doesn't explicitly focus on environmental sustainability, it does highlight the value of traditional craftsmanship. The characters revive the art of handloom and tailoring, emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting traditional skills. This aspect aligns with a sustainability perspective that values cultural heritage

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and sustainable practices, even though the film's primary focus is on economic sustainability.
At its core, "Sui Dhaaga" advocates for self-reliance. The protagonists break free from the
constraints of their employment and, instead of relying on others, decide to create their own
destiny. This message aligns with the broader narrative of promoting entrepreneurship as a
means of fostering self-reliance, a concept integral to economic development.

Empowerment and Sustainable Development - The entrepreneurial journey of Mauji and
Mamta leads to empowerment on multiple levels. It challenges gender norms, empowers indi-
viduals economically, and contributes to the overall development of the community. Empow-
erment, in this context, is a key component of sustainable development as it seeks to create
lasting positive change that benefits individuals and society in the long term. The movie cap-
tures the essence of the entrepreneurial spirit that is deeply ingrained in the cultural fabric of
India. Mauji, a skilled craftsman working in a nondescript shop, and Mamta, a homemaker with
untapped creative potential, symbolize the countless individuals across the country with hidden
talents waiting to be unleashed. The film brilliantly showcases how the entrepreneurial flame
can be kindled from the most unexpected places, urging individuals to recognize their potential
and pursue their dreams.

Community and Social Impact - The success of Mauji and Mamta's venture is not mea-
sured solely in financial terms but also in the positive impact on the community. Social en-
trepreneurship, as depicted in the film, emphasizes the well-being of the community and the
creation of social value. This aligns with the broader goals of sustainability, which include so-
cial and community development alongside economic and environmental considerations. "Sui
Dhaaga" also underscores the significance of community support and collaboration in entrepreneur-
ship. The couple's journey is not a solo endeavor; it is a collective effort that involves the support
of family, friends, and the community at large. The film portrays how collaborative efforts and
a sense of community can contribute to the success of a business. This aspect resonates with
the real-world scenario where thriving entrepreneurial ecosystems are built on a foundation of
mutual support and collaboration.

Cultural Context and 'Made in India' theme - The film celebrates the 'Made in India'
theme, promoting indigenous craftsmanship and production. This aligns with the global trend

of consumers preferring locally made and culturally rich products. Mauji and Mamta's venture becomes a symbol of promoting and preserving traditional craftsmanship in the face of globalization.

In summary, "Sui Dhaaga: Made in India" provides a narrative that can be analyzed through the lenses of gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and aspects of sustainability. The film portrays a journey of empowerment, challenging traditional gender roles, and fostering economic self-sufficiency at a grassroots level. While the film primarily focuses on economic sustainability, it indirectly touches on the broader themes of social and cultural sustainability through the revival of traditional craftsmanship and community impact. This movie by portraying the transformative power of entrepreneurship in fostering economic independence, generating employment, and contributing to sustainable economic development at the grassroots level, also provides a narrative that aligns with the Goal 8 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is "Decent Work and Economic Growth."

4.5   Conclusion

The movie Sui Dhaaga: Made in India" not only tells a compelling story of entrepreneurship but also subtly delves into the realm of changing gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability in Indian context. This movie portrays gender equality by challenging traditional gender roles, depicting collaborative entrepreneurship, showcasing shared responsibilities, and illustrating the empowerment of women in both personal and professional spheres. The film contributes to the ongoing discourse on gender equality and serves as a positive representation of how partnerships built on mutual respect and shared aspirations can break down societal stereotypes. The main characters of the movie, Mamta and Mauji embark on their entrepreneurial journey together, breaking away from the conventional gender roles often assigned in Indian society. Mamta's contribution is not limited to the domestic sphere, she actively participates in the tailoring business. The film highlights that entrepreneurship is not exclusive to any gender and success is achievable through collaborative efforts. The film realistically depicts the struggles faced by Mamta and Mauji, portraying challenges that are not gender-specific.

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This approach avoids reinforcing stereotypes and emphasizes that entrepreneurial challenges are universal, irrespective of gender.

The movie sheds light on the traditional craftsmanship of local artisans. Mauji and Mamta's decision to start a tailoring business is not just a personal endeavor but also a means of empowering local artisans who possess valuable skills. By choosing handmade products over mass-produced ones, the protagonists contribute to the preservation of local art and crafts, showcasing the social impact of their entrepreneurial venture. As Mauji and Mamta's business expands, they hire local individuals from their community, contributing to job creation. This aspect aligns with the social entrepreneurship model, which often emphasizes creating opportunities for marginalized or underprivileged communities. The couple's enterprise becomes a source of livelihood for others in their locality, fostering economic growth at the grassroots level. The emphasis on handmade, locally produced goods in the film aligns with sustainable and ethical business practices. Social entrepreneurship often involves a commitment to environmental and social sustainability. Mauji and Mamta's focus on traditional, eco-friendly craftsmanship contributes to sustainable consumption and production patterns.

The movie portrays a sense of community support and upliftment. Mauji and Mamta's success is not isolated; it positively impacts the community around them. This resonates with the social entrepreneurship principle of creating positive change in communities by addressing social issues and improving quality of life. Mauji's decision to break free from exploitative labor practices at his previous workplace aligns with the social entrepreneurship narrative. By establishing their own business, the protagonists take a stand against unfair treatment, contributing to a more just and equitable working environment.

"Sui Dhaaga: Made in India" intertwines the narrative of entrepreneurship with elements of social impact. The film illustrates how a small business, driven by passion and dedication, can contribute to the betterment of society by empowering local artisans, creating employment opportunities, promoting sustainability, and fostering community upliftment. The story of Mauji and Mamta serves as a cinematic example of how entrepreneurship can be a powerful force for positive social change. The film emphasizes the importance of craftsmanship and the pursuit of excellence. Mauji and Mamta prioritize the quality of their products over mass production. This

commitment to quality aligns with sustainability principles, encouraging consumers to value products with longer lifespans and lower environmental impact. Mauji and Mamta source their materials locally, contributing to a reduction in transportation-related carbon emissions. The emphasis on local sourcing aligns with sustainability goals by supporting regional economies and reducing the environmental impact associated with the transportation of materials over long distances.

Social entrepreneurs are often at the forefront of developing innovative solutions to environmental and social challenges. This includes sustainable business models, eco-friendly technologies, and community-driven initiatives that promote both social and environmental well-being. Social entrepreneurship often adopts a "triple bottom line" approach, emphasizing social, environmental, and economic impact. This aligns with the principles of sustainability, seeking to balance the needs of people, the planet, and profit. The movie "Sui Dhaaga: Made in India" transcends the boundaries of entertainment to become a cinematic ode to entrepreneurship. Through Mauji and Mamta's journey, the film imparts valuable lessons about identifying opportunities, embracing creativity, building community support, and ultimately achieving self-reliance. As the characters stitch their dreams into reality, the movie stitches together a narrative that resonates with aspiring entrepreneurs, reminding them that with determination, innovation, and community support, they too can embark on a journey towards success and self-reliance.

The relationship between the concepts examined in this study, i.e., gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability underscores the importance of supportive policies. Governments and organizations that promote gender equality, social entrepreneurship, and sustainable practices create an environment conducive to positive change. In conclusion, the relationship between gender dynamics, social entrepreneurship, and sustainability is intricate and interdependent. By understanding and addressing these connections, we can foster holistic approaches to societal challenges that promote equality, environmental stewardship, and sustainable development.

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