

**REIMAGINING GENDERED NATIONALISM: A SELECT STUDY OF
INDIAN SPORTS CINEMA**



*Project submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS
in English Language and Literature*

By

ARCHA C J

Register No. AM23ENG006

MA English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Ernakulam

Supervisor

Ms. ATHIRA BABU

Assistant Professor

Department of English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Ernakulam

Kerala

March 2025

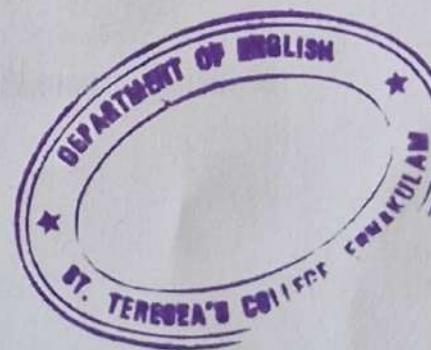
Valued
Tania

21/3/2025

HR
21/3/2025

Arch
21/3/2025

Arch



**REIMAGINING GENDERED NATIONALISM: A SELECT STUDY OF
INDIAN SPORTS CINEMA**



*Project submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) in partial
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS
in English Language and Literature*

By

ARCHA C J

Register No. AM23ENG006

MA English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Ernakulam

Supervisor

Ms. ATHIRA BABU

Assistant Professor

Department of English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Ernakulam

Kerala

March 2025

An Abstract of the Project Entitled:
**Reimagining Gendered Nationalism: A Select Study of Indian Sports
Cinema**

By

ARCHA CJ
Register No. AM23ENG006
MA English
St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)
Ernakulam

Supervising Teacher: Ms. Athira Babu

Indian sports films have frequently been used to navigate national identity and either support or challenge existing gender stereotypes. This study explores the ways in which three important Indian sports films *Chak De! India*, *Mary Kom* and *Dangal* redefine gendered nationalism. The struggles of female athletes against patriarchy, social standards, and institutional biases are depicted in these films, which highlight the union of gender, sports, and nationalism. Through a critical analysis, this study investigates how these films create alternative narratives of nationalism through women's sporting accomplishments, challenging traditional masculinity linked with national pride. *Chak De! India* subverts gendered notions of national representation by establishing patriotism through a women's hockey team. *Mary Kom* depicts a woman's struggle for the recognition of boxing in a way that is both personal and strongly patriotic. Through the father-daughter relationship, *Dangal* both challenges and reinforces patriarchal structures while concentrating on female wrestlers. This research examines how these films contribute to a wider debate on gender and nationhood by utilizing feminist film theory, nationalism studies, and sports discourse.



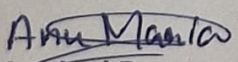
ST.TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) ERNAKULAM

Certificate of Plagiarism Check for Dissertation

Author Name	ARCHA C J
Course of Study	MA. English
Name of Guide	Ms. ATHIRA BABU
Department	English & Centre for Research
Acceptable Maximum Limit	20
Submitted By	library@teresas.ac.in
Paper Title	REIMAGINING GENDERED NATIONALISM: A SELECT STUDY OF INDIAN SPORTS CINEMA
Similarity	3% AI-0%
Paper ID	3414591
Total Pages	45
Submission Date	2025-03-19 11:52:43

Signature of Student

Signature of Guide


Checked By
College Librarian



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “Reimagining Gendered Nationalism: A Select Study of Indian Sports Cinema” is a record of bona fide work done by me under the supervision of Ms. Athira Babu, Assistant Professor, Department of English, and that no part of the dissertation has been presented earlier for the award of any degree, diploma, or any other similar title of recognition.

Archa C J

Reg. No. AM23ENG006

MA English

Ernakulam

St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous)

March 2025

Ernakulam

CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this project entitled “Reimagining Gendered Nationalism: A Select Study of Indian Sports Cinema”, is a record of bona fide work carried out by Archa CJ under my supervision and guidance.

Ms. Athira Babu

Assistant Professor

Department of English

St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous)

Ernakulam

Ernakulam

March 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I extend my deepest gratitude to my Principal, Dr Alphonsa Vijaya Joseph, for her unwavering support and encouragement throughout the course of this research. Her leadership and vision have provided a conducive environment for academic growth.

I am profoundly grateful to my Supervisor, Ms. Athira Babu, for their invaluable guidance, insightful feedback, and constant encouragement.

I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to my teachers, especially my Class Teacher Dr. Tania Mary Vivera and Head of the Department of English Dr. Preeti Kumar, whose knowledge and mentorship have greatly contributed to my academic development. Their guidance has been a source of inspiration and motivation throughout this journey.

I am deeply indebted to my parents for their unconditional love, constant support, and sacrifices, which have enabled me to pursue my academic aspirations. Their belief in my abilities has been my greatest strength

Archa C J

CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
Chapter 1	Nationalism And Gender: A Theoretical Framework	4
Chapter 2	Rescripting Nationalism: Gender and Nationalism in <i>Chak De India</i> , <i>Mary Kom</i> , and <i>Dangal</i>	27
	Conclusion	46
	Work Consulted	48

INTRODUCTION

The term nationalism theory describes the range of theoretical approaches and viewpoints that are employed to comprehend nationalism, which is the political, cultural, and social ideology that places a strong emphasis on the nation as a fundamental component of identity, allegiance, and government. Strong ties to a country, with its shared history, culture, language, and symbols, are frequently associated with nationalism. *Chak De! India* is a 2007 Indian sports movie that was produced by Aditya Chopra and directed by Shimit Amin under the Yash Raj Films banner. Kabir Khan, the former captain of the Indian men's national hockey team, is portrayed in the movie by Shah Rukh Khan. Because of his religious beliefs, Khan is shunned from the sport following a crushing defeat to Pakistan. He tries to make amends by taking on the role of coach for the Indian national women's hockey team seven years later. The life of the boxer Mary Kom is the subject of the 2014 Indian Hindi-language biographical sports film *Mary Kom*, which was produced by Viacom18 Motion Pictures and Sanjay Leela Bhansali and directed by Omung Kumar. With Priyanka Chopra in the starring part and newcomers Darshan Kumar and Sunil Thapa in supporting roles as her spouse and mentor, respectively, the movie follows Kom's path from boxing to her victory at the 2008 World Boxing Championships in Ningbo. Nitesh Tiwari is the director of the 2016 Hindi-language biographical sports drama film *Dangal*, which was produced by Aamir Khan and Kiran Rao under the banner of Aamir Khan Productions with Siddharth Roy Kapur under the banner of The Walt Disney Company India. Khan plays Mahavir Singh Phogat, a Pehlwani amateur wrestler who develops his daughters Babita Kumari and Geeta Phogat into

India's first elite female wrestlers. Aparshakti Khurana plays the adult version of their cousin Ritvik Sahore, while Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sanya Malhotra play the adult versions of the two Phogat sisters, Zaira Wasim and Suhani Bhatnagar his younger equivalents, and Sakshi Tanwar their mother.

In India, nationalism and the fight for independence and identity assertion against colonial control have frequently been linked. Indian sports have always been dominated by men, which reflects larger gender role standards in society. The emergence of female athletes, however, has questioned these expectations by demonstrating women's skills and helping to redefine gender roles within the framework of nationalism. Female athletes continue to confront several obstacles in spite of advancements, such as societal pressures, a lack of money, and subpar facilities. The development of an inclusive sports culture that represents the heterogeneous makeup of Indian society depends on addressing these problems. As a crucial component of the larger nationalistic narrative, the continuous fight for gender equality in sports highlights the necessity of equitable representation and opportunity for all genders.

In the context of Indian cinema, the films *Chak De! India*, *Mary Kom*, and *Dangal* are noteworthy, especially for the way they depict sports and women's empowerment. In addition to tackling more general social themes, each movie has a distinct story that emphasizes the hardships and victories of its characters. A former hockey player named Kabir Khan, who coaches the Indian women's national hockey team, is the subject of the movie. His quest to bring a varied team of players together and guide them to victory is fraught with difficulties. In this biographical

movie, the tale of Indian boxer Mary Kom is told. She overcomes many challenges, including personal hardships and social expectations, to fulfil her aspirations. The movie, *Dangal* which is based on the real-life experiences of wrestler Mahavir Singh Phogat, shows his attempts to teach his daughters, Geeta and Babita, how to wrestle while defying social expectations about women's involvement in sports.

In chapter one shows about nationalism and gender as a theoretical framework. In chapter two shows how women are portrayed in sports films based on gender.

CHAPTER 1

Nationalism And Gender: A Theoretical Framework

In accordance with a nation is delineated by Anderson as 'an imagined political community' having sovereignty as well as limitations. In this assertion indicates that even though the citizens of a country do not physically encounter each other, they can believe themselves as a part of a greater whole. The theory suggests people from a shared nation retain their community identity despite their geographical and social differences. Every nation remains limited to its bordering boundaries regardless of its overall size contributing to overall nationhood constraints. Every nation declares its borders to exclude the universal concept of humanity from its conception. The boundaries which separate nations create different countries while providing residents with their identification and nation of origin.

Anderson examines the historical evolution of nations throughout time to indicate that nationhood existed before the emergence of nation-states which were formed in recent history. According to him nationalism and nationality appear as cultural products of historical events which generate specific circumstances. Mankind now strongly associates these constructs that have gradually formed strong emotional connections throughout history. Anderson emphasizes two fundamental contradictions of nationalism research regarding the modern and ancient nature of national history which actually result from modern nation-state creation. Nation identities and their separate opinions about national forms demonstrate the two sides of nationalism. The intellectual coherence of nationalism faces conflicts with its political capabilities because

nationalism works as a powerful political force but struggles to maintain logical frameworks according to Anderson. He proposes human interchangeability and the building of bureaucratic systems through new personnel recruitment as factors that facilitated national identity formation processes. National identity developed because replacing human resources required an explanation of how different demographic populations within one country related to each other. Through a universal governance language citizens developed stronger relationships and formed better unity among themselves. Throughout this linguistic connection national identity begins to evolve while key shared events work together with combined stories to establish this identity. The colonial situation contributes to forming national identity through historical development. During the colonial era colonized élites throughout the powers created different national identities which developed from their personal experiences of foreign cultural implementation and administrative enforcement.

The Spanish American social structures show this pattern through their Peninsulares and Creoles distinction whose evolution was affected by existing social order. Under Portuguese colonial rule there were no higher education institutions whatsoever so a specific educational environment developed that deeply shaped the political aims of the local elite. Through their education at Coimbra University and other educational institutions Creole elites started developing their own distinct national consciousness which differed from the metropole's approach. Economic factors together with geographic isolation worked as determining elements in shaping the paths of national identity development. The distance between key towns traversing colonial territories created a regional identity as it grew so long that people could form distinct

local group identities. The actual geographic distances between locations led to the development of regional characteristics which unified into national identities during their formation process. The advancement of language used for communication and national identity governance purposes developed further to achieve these objectives. By replacing Latin with a system of vernacular languages administrators built a new kind of identity which could be both recognized and differentiated without requiring Latin skills.

The political division of Western Europe following Western Empire's collapse resulted in complete control over language or identity becoming impossible for everyone else. Without a unified political control various distinct groups establish their differences which leads to independent national identities forming.

The cultural beliefs of Rousseau and Herder linked cultural development exclusively to environmental rights and climactic variability. National identities remained inseparably connected to environmental territories. The prevalent ideological attitude reshaped people's understanding regarding the relationship between their personal identities and their cultural regions and geographical roots. Nationalists as a group express deep feelings about their relatedness to a particular place. People develop strong collective identities toward their nation and feel belong to it because they have emotional attachments there. People experiencing these passions would perform nationalist activities which leads to substantial social and political mobilization. The emotional commitment to collective cultural traditions and historical past and linguistic heritage strengthens our sense of belonging among the nation. The preservation and revitalization of national identity receive reinforcement through pride combined

with feelings of nostalgia that result from cultural dimensions. The strong emotional connection might serve as the dominant force behind how nationalist sentiments form and stay alive. Nations become reactive whenever their core identity or sovereign status faces any challenge because emotional attachments tend to be very powerful. National threats and attacks create the spark for protests along with political involvement and war even among individuals who may not typically engage in such behavior.

The great power of emotional sentiments determines how nationalist movements function inherently. Nations with strong emotional bonding maintain resistance efforts against globalization due to colonial threats. A nationalist movement emerges from nations protecting their cultural heritage and independence against foreign imperialistic threats because humans naturally seek protection measures. Collective emotionally connected stories tend to form into nationalist movement narratives. These stories create enduring shared memories which unite people through their achievements of enduring while making sacrifices to secure victory. Nostalgic feelings about better times from previous periods produce strong emotional bonds among the citizens of particular nations. People who share a history and identity can use feelings generated by this common heritage to support nationalist causes beyond personal experiences.

Nationalist movements require bringing back historical cultural narratives in addition to customary traditions and ancient symbols. Bachelor and master-level students of Political Science Militant groups use selected historical heroes or events to develop nationalist pride through historical reverence. The manifestation of nostalgia occurs through opposition against globalized society

and contemporary trends. Nostalgia functions as an opposing story in combination with nationalist movements which consistently lead to restored traditional cultural values from the past. The primary goal for several nationalist organizations consists of upholding native languages together with traditional traditions.

Nationalist leaders employ nostalgia through their rhetoric as their primary means to strengthen their political support base. Through their prosperous national heritage they validate their present-day political measures to retrieve former greatness and land. Nostalgia results in historical revisionism which involves making deliberate decisions about remembering or modifying past events to match with national collective memories. A misinterpreted historical narrative emerges from this practice that leads to false historical accounts and memory directorates to establish political-driven historical narratives which match political ideological changes.

The emotional bond with cultural artefacts including poetry and music and visual arts becomes extreme under nationalism. Through national cultural expressions people display deep patriotic sentiments that can bring yearning for better national unity or an idealized golden past. Nationalism takes multiple forms while manifesting through different expressive methods that construct idealized cultural legacies and historical writings. The genealogical nature of nationalism identifies the modern tendency among nations to exist in present times through nostalgia for their past ancestors who battled to found new nations. Contemporary national movements view their revival of consciousness through the lens of their desire for past revolutionary vibrancy and positive outlooks. The affective perspective toward intellectuals forms one foundation

for National Movement Renaissance because modern nationalists find inspiration in past movements when reactivating historical movements for present-day nationalism purposes. Within nationalist theory people frequently develop a need for forming a powerful collective identity which transcends both time and geographical boundaries. Any older historical legacy contributes to the nostalgic feelings which develop from disrupted communal unity suffered throughout recent history. A desire for national unity produces nationalist activities and sentiments among people.

History teaches that contemporary national identity revisions occur as an emotional process toward old constructs of public self-identification. Nationalism adjusts to changing social and political conditions by praising historical manifestations of national unity. The examination of how national identities developed demands historical study of their formation phase. The approach aims to reveal practices which formed national identity in its early stages. The knowledge of history enables individuals to strengthen their national sentiments because they gain insight into their ancestors' triumphs and tribulations.

A deep passionate desire arises from genealogy towards those historical periods that transformed while national discourse presents them as romanticized moments. This nostalgic sentiment may trigger a melancholic desire for the original principles alongside past collective unity thus occasionally leading to modern nationalist movements. Modern nationalists develop their allegiance to ancestral ideals and eypes when their current beliefs resemble those of previous eras and when these ideologies link to celebrated historical periods and figures. Social gender stereotypes find substantial reinforcement through the practices

and interactions within the athletics context.

Sporting segregation between genders maintains social inequalities because it establishes long-term normalization of human sexual difference. Scientists who examine gender politics in sports should focus on understanding this fundamental gender-based separation. Women make up only a small minority of the leaders who guide sports organizations. The liberal feminism movement advocates increased female involvement in positions that make important political decisions to counteract existing disparities. Two empowerment approaches used by women include building supportive social networks and promoting inspiring leadership through their actions. Through historical developments society established their belief that women hold fewer abilities than men in sports. The establishment of separate competition spaces between male and female athletes created an organizational structure where men's sports demanding higher priority than women's sports. Gender segregation within athletic sports remains prevalent while snailing down the entirety of gender equality implementation in the world of sports. The activism through feminism has aided women sports participants by giving them equal opportunities to compete.

Women typically encounter barriers within their sociocultural context that stop them from participating in sports primarily experienced by males. Such limitations emerge from viewing women as risk-averse caregivers who question their abilities while being incapable of performing action sports. Mentoring programs must be formed to pair younger women with established female leaders who will guide them. The establishment of networking systems which offer mentoring opportunities between experienced female leaders directly

supports the growth of helpful support networks among peers. The establishment of organizations devoted to leadership positions for women needs to be combined with actions related to increasing gender equality throughout governance structures. The implementation of women leaders requires gender balance during decision-making processes. Organizational cultures require transformation to support and include women in order to achieve differentiation. Monitoring biases during the board membership selection process leads to implementing cultural practices that value equality and diversity. The spread of awareness about women's leadership priority leads to changed public opinion toward female executives thus driving organizations to take action toward gender equality. The promotion of mentoring initiatives focusing on leading female sports executives serves to motivate and encourage followers.

Male activists and feminist supporters of gender equity leadership in sports drive changes against dominant masculine cultures that exist within sports leadership organizations. When they participate their actions serve to boost women's voices throughout society while working toward equal treatment. Cultural and societal acceptance serve as the main barriers that prevent women from joining sports activities. The traditional sporting worldview shows women as weak enough to stay away from athletic challenges because they believe their feminine nature will suffer if they take part in sports. Even though qualified women possess administrative skills and education for sports leadership roles in sports administration there remains an overall deficit of women in these leadership positions. The qualifications deficit serves as a reason for this inequality instead of continuing gender discrimination coupled with men-heavy recruitment practices against women.

The belief system surrounding feminine sports like cheerleading and netball works against the serious recognition of women's sporting events. The regular dismissal of feminine sports by men establishes and maintains an established hierarchy of gender power that reduces sport-related recognition for women. Organizations show limited support to pregnant athletes and postpartum athletes while numerous female athletes encounter problems during the post-childbirth period. When adequate post-birth support is unavailable some women may choose to stop their sports careers. Most cultural beliefs that equate femininity with weakness combined with sexist treatment toward female athletes has led people to generalize that women should not participate in competitive sports. Women feel doubtful about their fitness abilities since they worry about being criticized for not meeting the standards and therefore choose not to engage in physical activity. Certain religious dress rules enforced by religious dictates create challenges for athletes who need to fulfill their sports requirements. Competitive athletes are restricted with burkinis and hijabs which limit their movement and performance benefits. Sporting events that reject particular types of clothing produce further problems in this matter. The accessibility and availability of sports facilities for women according to cultural beliefs influence their participation in sports. The restraining policies of conservative nations deny women access to sports centers and therefore prevent them from exercising or practicing sports or competing. Gender differences in sports participation tend to increase when women do not have sports access.

When female athletes engage in sports they face social discrimination because their culture shows minimal acceptance or understanding of athletic abilities in women. Women tend toward self-censorship since they hesitate to

join sports because they want to prevent social backlash. Society currently views excessive muscle development in women as contrary to established standards of feminine beauty. The cultural social patterns suggest women should exercise strength training moderately because people feel disturbed by muscular women physical appearances.

Social spaces discriminated against people whose preferences diverge from traditional 'lady' and 'man' categorizations. Certain transgender individuals along with those who do not align with masculine or feminine categories encounter obstacles that limit their participation in physical exercise. Little research exists about how annexationary regimes have influenced gender identification protocols in athletic competitions even as the debate on transgender athletes exposes the complexities of sex identification standards for sports. Analysis concerning gender fairness and inclusion occur mainly through a binary approach which conceals the authentic realities of identity. Societal transformation produces corresponding changes in how people view gender identification in sports today.

The progression teams around identity diversity alongside gender understanding serves to strengthen sporting participation through inclusive participation. Some specific occurrences demonstrating natural physical distinctions between female and male bodies have formed the basis for maintaining separate areas for women in sports. Sports industry gender inequalities find justification through this practice due to the belief that men and women need different competitive conditions. The gendered perspectives have created a powerful influence on the manner female athletes have been portrayed in historical media coverage. Women consistently get depicted through media

which highlights their appearances above their sports accomplishments causing the reinforcement of stereotypical gender representations in athletic communities. The constructed male archetype known as hegemonic masculinity carries attributes that combine aggression with dominance and competition characteristics. The traditional cultural standards have established principles around male sporting achievements while abandoning groups outside traditional masculinity norms that encompass both women and non-dominant male athletes.

The implementation of counter narratives takes a direct approach to challenge officially established narratives which tend to exclude specific groups or concerns. The creation of these blank spaces lets new stories emerge to reveal actual realities of groups who frequently experience marginalization and misinterpretation. The distributed counter-narratives help the public learn about different histories and experiences that generate more information needed to understand complex social problems. Through counter narratives communities form because people share their previous experiences and members who share identical circumstances establish an emotional bond. Shared beliefs within society lead people toward continuing their impact on public awareness through their personal work for social change. Public policies today are established through narratives which developed from social movements. Specific discourse transformations within contextual issues create conditions which lead to legislative and cultural changes that build more inclusive social norms of justice and equality. The existence of counter narratives prevents people from choosing to ignore and shut off their minds about their beliefs and their exposed material. A systematised critique of knowledge structures helps us learn better ways to

comprehend and reflect on social realities to develop stronger abilities for resisting dominant systems.

Many people hold the erroneous belief that sporting abilities in women naturally lag behind males. A female athlete who believes these stereotypes would develop confidence issues while decreasing her sports performance and self-esteem. This belief could impact their self-esteem levels and goal achievement in sports since they absorbed the idea that sports usually belong to males during growth.

The widespread existence of stereotypes has established a deadlock where women athletes must abandon typical feminine characteristics or compete athletically. Athletes experience internal tensions since they must sometimes suppress their competitive nature to match how the public expects feminine behavior to appear. The athlete starts doubting their performance abilities due to such internal conflicts. Information about stereotype effects needs immediate communication to the public. Staff members alongside coaches and athletes should organize educational classes to build an accepting atmosphere and stop both stereotypes and their resulting consequences from occurring. People gain understanding about their prejudices so they can both recognize them and develop alternative perspectives. Sport teams and organizational units require to promote an inclusive environment as a fundamental organizational goal. The process of achieving this requires organizations to provide equal athletic opportunities for all players regardless of their gender. Through identity-inclusiveness policy promotion all members of the team receive inclusion opportunities which help eliminate traditional team stereotypes. The adoption of gender neutral changing facilities designed for people outside traditional male

or female categories is gradually emerging within policy guidelines. All persons should have access to inclusive spaces regardless of their gender identity or expression which requires broad awareness of the situation. The growing understanding of gender as a spectrum between two categories has led to the advocacy for these policies. Various policy frameworks now enable the establishment of gender non-specific changing areas. Grassroots establishments obtain building guidelines to construct facilities combined with signage while developing operational approaches for increasing inclusivity. Inclusive facilities are marked using signage which presents messages through clear language explaining that changing areas serve all genders. Several sports organizations together with facilities now compete to place gender neutral changing areas to demonstrate their commitment to diversity.

Existing facilities and new constructions will facilitate single private changing areas for all genders which relieve the pressure of strict gender stereotyping when utilized. The traditional gender stereotypes determine which athletic activities both sexes should play. The sporting community considers football along with wrestling two of the many masculine sports because they require physical strength and aggressive conduct. The sports community recognizes graceful sporting events like figure skating and gymnastics as feminine activities rather than more feminine sports. The polarized system acts as a discouraging factor for individuals who want to practice sports that do not follow traditional gender roles. Individuals normally select athletic activities that correspond with the cultural norms within their society. Girls face peer pressure to drop out from competitive sports despite male athletes being directed by family and friends toward playing sports to display masculinity.

Societal expectations can drive both a reduction and total sports withdrawal among participating individuals. Gender together with racial and other identity stereotypes create significant effects on assessment of personal capabilities. Perceptions about minority athletes and women being less skilled players generate negative consequences on their self-perception and their motivation to participate in sports activities. The way children are perceived by their peers and coach plus family members together with the support they receive may be shaped by this phenomenon. The distribution of athletic funding exhibits connections to conventional stereotypes existing in sports organizations. The inequality cycle will likely persist when funding programs supporting males receives much better backing than programs created to serve females. Resources that are distributed unequally between population groups significantly restrict athletic participation opportunities for these underrepresented groups.

Family units which want their children to do sports provide fundamental support through financial means together with training and coaching resources. Female athletes sporadically receive compensation at these economic levels yet always receive lower amounts relative to their male counterparts thus affecting their athletic prospects negatively. Throughout the film *Mary Kom* viewers can see that female athletes typically face insufficient backing from their families. The movie displays cultural norms that stop women from athletic activities because family members deny support to the main character. These cultural barriers greatly restrict the sports possibilities available to females. Athletes most likely depend heavily on family support but especially when facing tough times because psychological and emotional backing matters significantly in

such circumstances.

Family meeting sessions help relatives teach athletes effective ways to deal with competitive pressures as well as emotional distress caused by failure experiences. Young athletes receive sustained dedication for their sports from the support they gain through their family members. The inclusion of families into athletic activities benefits their children by developing or strengthening their athletic love which proves essential for winning in such a competitive environment. Indian society displays a pronounced cultural influence toward gender roles that determines most acceptable behaviors for each sex. Women in sports need to comply with social expectations of traditional gender roles to survive because traditional sport culture mostly views itself as masculine. Female athletes demonstrate permanent resistance against societal norms in sports films produced by Bollywood. The entire society remains influenced by patriarchal structures that serve as a fundamental reason behind gender inequality in sports.

Women experience unfavorable treatment in recreational fields due to the cognitive images presented by society which diminish their athletic abilities against males. The way female athletes are treated in relationship to male athletes by Bollywood films serves as one of the main stances in this genre. Participation in sports may result in harm to women's health particularly concerning their reproductive wellbeing according to common belief. The myth functions as a gender disparity which keeps me from taking part in athletic activities.

Almost all civilizations starting from India to America have experienced the strong influence of patriarchal societal norms that give men dominant power

while keeping women subordinate. The ideological perspective results in practical exclusion of women from every life area with sport being one of the main affected sectors. The restrictive expectations of society obstruct women's pursuit of athletic achievement according to what Bollywood sport movies demonstrate. The cultural norms view sports as a distinctively aggressive male domain but they associate tenderness with female nature through domestic designations. Social constant perceptions that discourage female athletics exist because people disapprove of sport participation by women who could face negative reactions for choosing this activity. The practice of sports was historically regarded as generating negative side effects that adversely influence female health primarily affecting their reproductive system.

Men uphold these false beliefs which lead to negative perceptions of women in sports which causes familial and communal entities to discourage women from sports participation. These conventions in social discourse regularly assert these beliefs which eventually constrain women from getting involved with sports activities. Strong female characters in Bollywood sports films challenge traditional roles imposed upon women throughout their stories. The story of women fighting against social disparagement becomes evident through watching characters in *Mary Kom* and *Dangal*. The characters illustrate fundamental traits in determination and resilience while showing that women should move beyond family obligations. These movies reflect the deep-rooted gender discrimination which operates throughout the social framework.

Through Bollywood films female athletes face dual social obstacles related to general women's problems and struggle to find support from their families despite males constituting the majority of their members. The portrayal in media

helps fight against limiting gender norms yet it presents women only as sisters even though their goals extend beyond the family connection. Bollywood movies demonstrate how families first attempt to stop their daughters from achieving their goals before ultimately supporting them. The story examines the societal expectation that women must continue putting family needs above their individual dreams without exception. At the beginning of 'Dangal' the father defends traditional family expectations but afterward backs his daughters' wrestling practice because this represents women who fight back against societal constraints.

Through female athletes in Bollywood films the essence of womanhood emerges as strong capable and competitive professional women. You will witness their depiction of female strength which shows multiple empowering dimensions so women may avoid passive roles and caretaker commitments. Athleticism and ambition become on par with femininity when society adopts an all-encompassing definition of womanhood. The Bollywood sports film genre addresses societal perspectives which regard women sports activities as negative phenomena. Female watchers of these films experience breaking stereotypes about women's fitness through watching women AFCON players demonstrate their achievements in sports although they maintain their feminine characteristics. The portrayal presents women athletes in an empowering state which benefits their position in sports while further showing the damage of wrong stereotypes.

The Indian film industry promotes women's rights throughout the nation as it works towards fostering equality in society. Movie characters that break patriarchal norms while celebrating women athletes in sports create narratives

which push audiences to endorse female participation in all aspects of life. Female sports representatives regularly appear in movies playing roles that break traditional social rules and fight against common stereotypes. In the film *Mary Kom* the female lead defender must battle Determine opposition from family members and societal boundaries as boxing training was traditionally associated with male involvement. The tale God told about challenging gender identity illustrates that moving on life or shifting gender identity holds strength regardless of external pressure. The effective portrayal of female empowerment requires depiction of family relationships in the program. In 'Dangal' the father tells his wrestling princesses to follow their skill development as wrestlers even though women typically should dedicate themselves to family needs first. Encouragement of this kind serves as a crucial element to motivate women athletes to display how family backing supports their sports achievements. Onscreen female athletes normally demonstrate strength when facing discrimination. Sports involvement leads to the frequent phenomenon of characterizing female athletes through male characteristics. This representation shows how women can claim their place in male-dominated sports while maintaining their determination to win. Thus this depiction works against stereotypes about female athletes.

The cinematic industry works to eliminate false beliefs about athletic health for women and presents their athleticism in positive lights. Through film promotion the audience becomes motivated to participate in sports because movies support the health benefits that sports bring to women and combat false beliefs preventing women from joining such activities. The existing family units and social networks fail to deliver adequate backing to athletic women. The

Bollywood sports narratives show families providing usual backing to their male athletes but women athletes must battle to obtain this same level of support. The lack of social support can act as an obstacle preventing athletes from reaching their sports success goals. Society commonly discriminates against and applies negative stereotypes to female athletes while using sports as an example of the discrimination against females in activities associated with male dominance. Society's outlook of this activity has potential negative effects on women who fear condemnation and isolation. Among multiple cultures worldwide marriage holds significant value as a life event for women which results in them concluding their athletic accomplishments after marriage. Marriage represents a substantial challenge according to social expectations which blocks female athletes from maintaining their sports careers after marriage. Bollywood sports films carry out this emphasis through presenting women as objects that conform to societal structures. Women experience public and private discrimination and dehumanization and exploitative treatment in various settings. These standard representations of women express their need for men in powerful positions while targeting the widespread belief that females need protection from exercising autonomy because they lack independence. This demonstrates fundamental degrees of patriarchal standards.

Women Olympic athletes face resistance from their family members who try to limit their athletic portrayal in various stories. *Mary Kom* showed the common public opinion about inappropriate athletic choices for women through her father's warning to her about participating in boxing. Such characters represent broader social-cultural barriers which stop women from participating in sports activities. Traditional cultural narratives display what society expects

women to do by playing a limited role in traditional activities while abandoning their ambitions of athletic achievement. When female protagonists attempt to be respected and accepted in sports it becomes more difficult because their chosen disciplines exist primarily as male spaces. Society commonly believes that female athletes end their athletic pursuits upon turning into wives. Female athletes experiencing the dilemma between pursuing their athletic career and family life encounter similar challenges due to societal expectations that push forward family commitments instead of sports investments. Women's athletic programs receive substantially less financial backing than those of men. Lack of financial support can prevent women's teams from participating competitively at elite levels. The lack of sponsorship opportunities for women's teams makes it difficult for them to obtain enough funds to develop facilities and finance travel expenses and training programs.

Most sports organizations choose to invest their financial resources into men programs leading women sports initiatives to regularly receive minimal support. A lack of financing restricts women athletes from maximizing their potential in competitive sports because it prevents proper development of dedicated leagues and programs. Professional female athletes receive substantially lower prize money than their male counterparts do in numerous sport competitions. The mismatch in payments acts as a deterrent for sports funding of women's athletics since it shows both money discrimination alongside societal beliefs that women's sports lack entertainment value and importance. Insufficient funding for women's sports slows down the market development of this product space while simultaneously hindering all emerging and established athletes across the field. Through their state sponsored

nationalism programs government entities sometimes work toward uniting their population. The national cohesion sectors receive most available funding resources which leaves behind popular sports together with underrepresented sports that lack funding. Funds for public institutions become oriented toward nationalist historical interpretations. Under the nationalist perspective history determines how people and geographic areas receive support because decisions depend on both local importance and personal grievances related to past events. Social services and infrastructure and education receive different amounts of resources from this approach. The power behind nationalisms allows politics to control nation-based resources which governments sometimes allocate for nationalistic goals despite consequences for marginalized community members. While political strength reveals that nationalisms effectively collect resources there is no evidence to suggest they distribute these resources equitably. Nationality surpasses financial parameters while possessing formal characteristics which makes it a flawless utilitarian identity partner. Crimean-Tatar national identity together with some others may receive nation-wide support because they hold essential positions within the national historical context. The elusive nature of nationalism creates problems for both evaluation and definition thus making financial inequality harder to analyze. Scholars face challenges distinguishing the nation precisely which leads to financial initiatives that contradict each other and fail to support various national interests. The high levels of political relevance of nationalism remain compromised by serious conceptual uncertainties in multiple situations. A weak theoretical foundation leads to basic or traditional representations of gender within national discourses which subsequently spread into gender (discussions). Understanding

nationalism in relation to gender requires analyzing how several distinct identities including race and class together form the national concept. National identity manifests differently across different groups according to how they interpret gender roles.

The absence of a specific comprehensive definition for 'nationalism' leads people to incorrectly determine which groups belong to a nation. A blurry definition of national membership may grant access to valuable resources and solidarity to establish certain population groups over others. Nationalist movements which control the government distribute resources to areas that maintain their political agenda. Areas backing the dominant national story can gain financial advantages yet generate injustice by neglecting other areas and leaving them without sufficient resources. The lack of coherent theoretical structure causes nationalism to remain intellectually weak in terms of handling the needs of all its members. When resources get distributed by appeals based on emotion or ideologies instead of resource needs then arbitrary allocation becomes more likely. Nationalism stands apart from other ideologies by lacking a recognized intellectual mind who could build a complete theoretical system for distributing resources. When intellectual leadership fails it results in unwise and insufficiently planned policies which lack understanding of modern cultural nuances. The practice of identifying illogical aspects and philosophical defects within nationalism remains normal. The current understanding of gender roles within national identities does not have a solid theoretical foundation which leaves basic theories about their connection and safety undeveloped. According to a logical argument nationalist ideologies remove women's ability to make choices and turn their efforts into national symbols without attention to gender

aspects. Nationalist political power often grants precedence to gender issues thus eventually dismissing women's viewpoints from the discourse. Nationalist movements place emphasis on unity at the expense of specific gender concerns which produces weak representation of how women experience and appear in national history. Great theoretic thinkers have made scarce tries to resolve the link between nationalism and gender-related subjects. A lack of vital knowledge about gender capabilities operating at a national scale becomes a probable consequence of this gap in research. The failure to include gender as an essential element of nationalism diminishes feminist analysis resulting in restricted development of widespread national identities. The nationalist ideology limits women to exist as national representations by representing them either as maternal or cultural value protectors. The approach excludes women's active participation in political life together with their social sphere involvement while restricting them to national symbol status.

The national narrative view prevents women from exercising their own choices and maintains traditional gender roles. Nationalist social movements typically adopt two-dimensional gender schemas to construct their beliefs which produces conventional perceptions about male and female roles. This simplistic two-part thinking ignores all gender-related identities which escape its established classifications before crafting them into lesser categories compared to binary genders. The marginalization of people who challenge prevailing gender norms happens because nationalism holds that power.

Chapter-2

Rescripting Nationalism: Gender and Nationalism in *Chak De India*,

Mary Kom, and Dangal

The makeup of nationalism surpasses political elements by encompassing cultural features as well. Modern countries craft their national identity through historical reinterpretation targeting their self-interest as well as education programs while promoting propaganda. Historical development moves according to nationalism principles. According to Anderson nationalist origins stem from modern times and align with historical knowledge that scholars possess. The ongoing process of forming national identity maintains a complex relationship with the historical narrative presented in this situation. The film *Chak De India* was directed by Shimit Amin but *Mary Kom* received its direction from Omung Kumar along with *Dangal* which was directed by Nitesh Tiwari. The researcher created this study through analyzing these three films.

The female athletes from multiple Indian states with various backgrounds unify into one hockey team for the nation in the motion picture *Chak De India*. Together the film displays unification within Indian values because athletic solidarity overcomes cultural and state distinctions to form a national team. Nationalism presents itself as a group identity that surpasses personal diversity and unites multiple individuals.

Kabir Khan is portrayed as a sympathetic character in the film to a leader who experiences discrimination alongside major life challenges. His recovery from athletic disappointment toward become a winning coach

demonstrates resilience and national redemption which makes him a symbol for the core lessons of nationalism. The film demonstrates how national security depends on successful struggles towards achievement. Throughout the film the main focus is hockey as a means to demonstrate your dedication to the nation. The protagonists nor the audience feel much patriotism in the climactic sequences of the film, especially in the final match. The results reveal sports capability to gather individuals into a joint national experience while athletes strive to deliver victory on behalf of their country.

The movie presents a women's hockey team to challenge gender stereotypes while demonstrating that female athletes possess the ability to enhance their nation's standing and success. The movie follows current nationalist perspectives which advocate for national representation alongside equal national storytelling. The film unites elements representing various Indian cultural traditions to display Indian identity's intricate unity. The national image portrayed in this content demonstrates inclusive nationalist principles because it celebrates cultural diversity while showing how various national identities contribute to the nation's power. Among the components of national identity stand social standards and predefined gender expectations. National narratives establish the ways which men and women appear physically while deciding who represents the nation. Such cultural views split national identity into traditional forms of feminine characteristics. Union with leadership aspirations as well as caring for others represents gender stereotypes that represent masculinity. Different genders in an imagined community gain definition from adopted national narratives which establish their boundaries. Gender stereotype breakdown produces an inclusive identity while showing women to exercise

leadership roles during national activities. The most noticeable instance appears when evaluating women's participation in ground-based athletic competitions because female athletes have the power to build national pride through development. The process of creating unified social identity becomes more complex due to gender factors which extend from other collective attributes including racial background and financial status and personal sexual orientations. The interaction of gender with race results in distinctive expressions of gender depending on how they meet up with one another. Even women of color join nationalist discourses yet their experiences within them become distinct when compared with white women. The argument that women face restrictions in sports because of safety concerns for families functions together with family-related duties as the main basis for their limited participation. The prevailing cultural standards frequently add to existing gender-related performance barriers that men encounter with relative ease. The movie contains numerous male individuals who serve as coaches and administrators and establish typical gender archetypes in their leadership positions. The portrayal in the film strengthens existing beliefs that males hold the natural leadership position in sports comparable to their dominance in political and athletic roles. Almost every part of the film depicts how female hockey professionals must manage both social prejudices and public expectations in their professional journey. In modern sports culture dominated by men there exists an unwritten taboo which forces athletes to battle unrelated attacks against their accomplishment levels. The action of organized sports creates barriers that restrict female and girl access to sports.

The plot starts with both Pakistan and India participating in a heated

hockey match. These rivalries generate crowds that are equal in size to the major games themselves since the events have historical importance to these nations. Throughout this moment the friendly competition demonstrates how English people distinguish themselves from French persons. Throughout the scene Shah Rukh Khan portrays the Indian hockey team's captain displaying his extreme nationalism through his actions of shaking hands with the opposing player after the match despite his supposedly traitorous penalty.

Kabir Khan represents India as the first character in the movie's story because of his role as a former captain of the men's hockey team who lost against Pakistan which caused national outrage. The public and media suspect that he denied to take penalty kicks on purpose leading to accusations of reputation damage and disloyalty to both audiences.

The scene shows how social attitudes drop toward him as individuals stand as national symbols as well as exposing the meaningful effect of personal choices in sports performance. Because national pride strongly depends on athletic performance the disgrace suffered by Kabir damages the national identity at its core. Kabir's fate is entirely dependent on the lack of national unity because his identity as both a person and a 'nation' member remains uncertain and uncertain. His narrative prefigures the film's central theme on the redemption of Kabir and the Indian national sports team. The national sports failure clearly demonstrated significant problems with how the Indian nation defines its identity. The Indian national identity pursues its historical victory through redemption while maintaining parallels with the plight of the Indian volleyball team.

The women's hockey team represents regionalistic disparities combined

with oppositions between individual self-determination and collective public initiatives. The vast diversity of the country results in social differences and cultural differences alongside linguistic distinctions because all players represent different parts of India. The story presents two distinctive personalities in Vidya from Maharashtra and Preeti from Punjab who demonstrate deep-rooted egoism and prejudicial attitudes. Almost all participants show a preference for representing their social group together with their state identity rather than displaying national allegiances. The players show loyalty only to Kabir yet refuse to become members of any “local” or “regional” football team. Each community within India keeps its singular identity while located in the national territory and maintained according to Benedict Anderson’s concept of invented nations. With his leadership Kabir guides them to victory while strategically developing a national identity that has players lose their attachment to individual dreams of liberation in favor of unified national pride. Kabir builds a national identity which has vanished through the methodological method of connecting individual players into a single national team.

The training camp generates opportunities to conquer personal and regional prejudices at the same time as it employs modern global methods to educate the team members in a globalizing environment. During his coach status Kabir instantaneously recognizes the different characteristics (linguistic and cultural) among the players. Among all the contentions present in the game the most prominent competition occurs between players from contrasting states but especially between Preeti and Vidya showcases an overwhelming state of rivalry. Due to the team goal of representing India the underlying regional dispute remains crucial even though it is one of several challenges. Through his

leadership approach Kabir displays the type of national ideology which currently remains absent from the team. The author nonetheless upholds his support for every player through continuous reminders of their individualistic attitudes which harm the national objectives. Through his observations Kabir establishes how players affiliate their personal identity with the unified Indian identity that encompasses the group as a whole. As the training camp advances the players start to recognize differences among each other as strengths that result in team resilience through embracing their diverse nature. Through the passage of time their belief as representatives of their regions transcends into a single Indian national identity.

The phrase "Chak De!" Kabir uses "Chak De!" as his most powerful motivational command to the athletes throughout the movie thus making it an influential motivator. As a memorable thematic element of the film this phrase combined individual determination with the collective drive. When the expression first appeared it functioned as an order yet after strengthening its bonds it developed into a symbol of love for the nation. At the moment they shout 'Chak De!' it means more than just victory hunger because the statement allows them to transform into a unified part of the greater collective. The sequence of motivational speech evolves into a representation of the unified national sports team that champions India's pride. The core message here describes a combination of two processes: the players advance toward national victory targets against Pakistan as they leave behind their prejudices and regional preferences. This alteration demonstrates national identity developing into national importance. This phrase represents both the downfall of inner obstacles and the shift toward unified national identity and the attainment of

complete national belonging.

India's confrontation with Pakistan in the final stands as the zenith of the team's evolution and the collective pride of the nation. The tournament functions beyond sporting competition by transforming into a national symbol which represents the collective honor of each nation. The national team unites various players who previously competed with each other due to regional differences to deliver a single cohesive team which represents India as a powerful force. The encounter between India's arch-rival Pakistan serves only to escalate the playing field's energy level along with the tension stabbing both teams. This competition holds both trophy achievements and honor recognition for the athlete-representatives of the fictional nation-community, India, which transforms into an allegory for national integration. Team success demonstrates that individuals can discover the power to unify and settle internal disputes in order to generate collective contributions that expand national identity. By winning the tournament the film demonstrates how Indians established themselves as a solid united national identity without any particular national ideology at the time of writing and production.

Through the story of the team's triumph Kabir Khan achieves personal redemption while narrating the tale of national revival that he aimed to tell. After facing national disgrace Kabir transforms into an emblematic character who both apologizes to himself as well as acts on behalf of his community. Through his transformation into the saving force of the Indian female hockey team the narrative demonstrates India's journey to establish independence as a nation. Kabir experienced several failed ventures that reshaped his identity but his coaching triumph and leadership of his team brought about a different

rewrite of who he was. His transcendence serves as an allegorical representation that nations possess the ability to transform from their downward patterns into their original grounded state. This aspect of redemption stands out as very interesting. Under Kabir's leadership India's team acquires both a fresh national identity together with rehabilitation of his personal reputation thus blending his individual story with the development of national communities. National pride exists when imagined communities unite to overcome every obstacle while keeping solidarity and unity.

The highpoint of the movie is achieved when India's women hockey team secures victory in the World Cup tournament. During the anthem playing the players display a combined form that unifies into one entity. Previously each hockey player maintained individual characteristics of personal and regional identity but now they reveal the universal Indian national spirit. Since the athletes developed a society that matched their envisioned society this moment illustrates when their nation truly arrived at its complete realization.

The profile of Mary Kom shows the highest embodiment of patriotism. The transition from Manipur to worldwide boxing triumph demonstrates that Indian athletes possess global athletic potential. This narrative fosters a sense of pride in the nation's capabilities and achievements. Through its portrayal the movie illustrates Manipur's heritage while displaying Mary Kom's connection to her place of origin. Nationalism rises from the film through its presentation of cultural identities that generate widespread pride among the people for their heritage. Through her story Mary Kom demonstrates her fight against gender prejudice beyond social stigmas and regional financial difficulties. Mary Kom's success story proves that our country will succeed through persistence so that

millions of global citizens confirm this achievement. The film declares that national success depends on building unity between different communities and cultures across the country. *Mary Kom* attracted participants from numerous cultural groups who joined her as demonstrated through the film. The presentation demonstrates one possible view that a national identity must be based on unified characteristics with multicultural acceptance. Through its dedicated exploration of woman athletes *Mary Kom* opposes societal gender stereotypes which leads to female empowerment. The movie expands our understanding of nationalism within contemporary culture which properly recognizes both female success and improved social conditions.

Sports play a central role in the movie to demonstrate the development of patriotism. Indian citizens understand Mary Kom's boxing triumphs to be victorious achievements for the nation while maintaining faith that sports practice strengthens both national identity and social cohesion. All athletes who choose to participate in sports maintain a connection to different cultural origins. Through *Mary Kom* the film uses cultural heritage to explain how a boxer is shaped by their Manipuri origin and background. The visualization creates a sense of dignity toward your cultural roots and connects you to the athletic brotherhood. Athletes experience their cultural identity during the process of playing sports at a regular rate. The participation of Muslim women in sports determines how their cultural traditions and religious beliefs influence their athletic activities. Athletes face significant issues when trying to merge their cultural traditions with competitive requirements in sports. Cultural identities develop according to the field-specific gender standards in sports. The social expectations from female athletes to remain feminine alongside their

physical appearance gives rise to another influencing variable. The multiple ways women appear in sports settings demonstrate how cultural preferences shape the development of her character and athletic experience. Due to culturally accepted norms of gender stereotypes about female athletes their physical attractiveness becomes more important for evaluation than their athletic skills. Athletic collectives that accentuate multiple cultures through their events function as appropriate celebrations and serve to build alliances among diverse groups.

Every event would include entertainment performances and food displays and competition elements to allow participants both cultural celebrations while striving in constructively competitive activities. This approach fosters both cultural appreciation and comprehension. Such practices create stronger solidarity because organization members display cultural diversity throughout their groups. On the field athletes from various cultural backgrounds work together is how mutual respect manifests naturally. The depicted imagery fosters sense of unity between isolated communities as it actively works to eliminate prejudiced attitudes. The implementation of community-focused sports programs leads to enhanced relationships between individuals with differing cultures. Sporting events organizations should use community stakeholders to establish sporting programs while they execute event activities for improved pride and ownership development. Such engagement serves to increase participation and create shared cultural commitment among society members. The core nature of sports includes both team collaboration and unified venture objectives. Every athlete who aims to win victories and reach personal targets can use this shared purpose to

overcome cultural challenges. The activity gathers people of diverse backgrounds and unites them into closer connected social structures. Through athletic events individuals discover the vital role that inclusion based on different cultures plays in successful campaigns. The advocacy movement selects examples showing ethnic diversity to reinforce awareness of multiple backgrounds both within athlete communities and among fans while diverting attention from racial elements in strength sports. The sports environment will spread to welcome all people as valued members so they experience true respect. Agitators should work to eliminate prejudices together with stereotypes which remain active within sports competition.

Advocacy offsets racism and sexism together with different forms of discrimination in order to build fair competition for all athletes. Through this initiative different backgrounds of athletes can excel in competition which builds collective cultural harmony through mutual sport experiences. Because of this topic athletes gain access to opportunities which allow them to lead cultural activism. Sportspersons making efforts for social justice and equity(("social justice and equity")) motivate people to join their cause. The unified voice unites unconnected groups to share both a purpose and a shared solidarity. Advocacy of safe sports environments serves to develop protected areas which allow people of all cultural backgrounds to freely share their thoughts. Through sport these contexts provide athletes the opportunity to learn from each other before building meaningful relationships that allow free dialogue and cultural exchange. Building unity along with understanding each other requires essential engagement with others.

In the early narrative, Mary's father disapproves of her taking up boxing

believing that it is not a suitable sport for women, particularly in her traditional Manipuri society. At this moment, one can see the tension between individual ambitions and societal expectations. Mary's determination stands for the strength one can and should have in facing the conventionally held restrictive ideologies that we are all held accountable to. Nationalism, as Benedict Anderson identifies, is an 'imagined community' where people that 'belong' together have never actually met each other directly. While Mary sets out to accomplish her private goal, she begins what comes off in the process of bringing her intentions into sync with her sense of national identity. She wanted to tear down social barriers and speak up for India, which then became a metaphor for the bigger national fight to find a space and say for the struggling voices in India.

Mary faces a system—concerned with a predominant lack of desire to, or even contempt for, her aspirations—as she searches for institutional support for her boxing career. Such a scenario, attests the lack of coherent ideology for nation toward women's sports. One of the recurring marginalization of Indian women in sports in spite of considerable resources is their frequent marginalization. Mary's narrative echoes a modern conception of nationalism, among others, where female athletes forging their identity as significant athletes globally are equally important in creating Indian identity as its male counterparts.

Once Mary successfully portrayed India on an international field, the film changes perspective and rests on the notion of nationalism. Mary's accomplishments, as she ducks into the running for tournaments on the global map, are not simply personal successes; they are what further India's nascent

national identity. As prescribed in Anderson's framework, citizens constructed a nation and Mary's achievements support the notion that India is coming out as a superpower. Her resolute mindset to drive the country to valuable accomplishments despite being confronted with high orders of difficulty represents the country's earnestness to affirm its relevance in the world stage as well as motivate everyone Indian with pride and at the same time emphasize unity.

The competition of Mary at the World Championships makes nationalism an extremely dominant theme. Not only her individual success, but her victory is also shown as a success for India where she is competing against competitors from different nations. Anderson's theory is portrayed in this scenario when Mary journeys got one more to view themselves as part of the bigger Indian collective. The way she has accomplished what she has is a symbol of India's improving sporting image, especially for women, helping to build the idealised image of a nation where people will come together across the country to celebrate what she has achieved.

After she's pregnant, Mary reenters the boxing career, refusing to only become a parent. This sequence problematizes the norms of gender and resonates with the understanding of nationalism Anderson has, that nationalism is a fluid identity. Mary's decision to go back to boxing for her country represents a larger change within the society, where women's achievements are gradually put on the same level as their national identity. As such, Mary becomes a source of inspiration for other women at this critical juncture in her life when her ambitions for career and family come into contact with her national pride. But quickly, her struggle becomes one of metaphoric woman's

struggle within a still evolving society.

Mary's last match is the culmination of her endeavor, a critical opportunity for Olympic qualification that combines her personal ambitions and her aspirations for her nation. This contest is framed as one of the rare instances where the stakes are high, for both Indian personal triumph and also for India's international standing. In this regard, Mary's battle metaphorizes the complete nation's yearnings and targets, which makes Anderson's concept of the thought groups particularly significant. The argument that nationalism is essentially based on sources of pride related to a shared identity regardless of the manner in which they apply to each citizen is further reinforced by the observation that her success is unalloyed positively for India as the people see her in competition.

At the end of the video, Mary Kom reflects on her journey, focuses on her achievements, and how this has inspired other generations, especially young girls of India. Anderson's nationalism framework is relative to how one's legacy affects a whole of a nation in this regard. As she observes the young women in the gymnasium, Mary has moved from a story of personal success to one of national inspiration. The reality is that she is now an integral part of India's imagined community where her patriotism has become an important aspect of her being. The final scene of Bollywood Dreams that illustrates how one's fight and triumph can cast a nation's identity and instigate others to take part in the dream India to progress and demonstrate unity.

"Dangal" is a representation of traditional Indian values and it mainly speaks about the women and how they hold a lot of prominence in an overall societal structure, along with bonds within a family. The story revolves around the story of Babita Phogat, Geeta Phogat and the character behind whom

challenge the society and win for achievements in wrestling. The accomplishments validate the fact that the Indian citizens, irrespective of gender, have the potential to add to the pride of the country and serve the symbol of women empowerment in India. Of course, the protagonists face any number of setbacks and hardships ranging from personal to societal opposition. It is a metaphor for the national fight for progress and the world's recognition. This narrative of resilience forms a catalyst that resonates with the audience and creates a sense of pride at the whole nation. Personal trials and social resistance are the obstacles many in the characters in *Dangal* face. Their determination to succeed in spite of adversity represents the national effort to grow and gain recognition on the world scene. "*Dangal*," depicts the journey of Phogat sisters' and would inspire the contemporary generations to chase their dreams and vows to contribute to the nation. Based on the concept of nationalism, this message of hope and prosperity motivates individuals to strive with energy in their respective spheres to make the best possible contribution to the country. The film is also significant as it elevates the importance of familial honor and on par with Indian cultural values. As a demonstration of following the cultural trend of family prestige or lineage, the father, Mahavir Singh Phogat, dogmatically decides to train his daughters to represent India. This value will have resonance for those who hold family accomplishments highly. '*Dangal*' drives home a key point of the relentless struggle and hardwork. The description of the Phogat sisters' sacrifices and rigorous training should make everyone sentimental about the fact that persistence is a key role in getting what one's goals. Although they may have many obstacles, due to this cultural ideal it inspires the viewers to try to strive for excellence in their lives.

The film begins on the cinematic narrative with which Mahavir Singh Phogat harbors the ambition to make the country represent and win Gold medal in the discipline of wrestling but he never gets the chance to fulfill his aspirations due to the shortage of money. Nevertheless, he elects to mentor his daughters into becoming athletes in defiance of societal opposition of women participating in athletics. With regards to this context, Anderson's conceptual framework of imagined communities, a deception being the notion of national success, is evident. Baahubali is a saga of one man's belief in his children who could conquer the mighty Bahubali and rise above the world, overcoming socioeconomic, gender and geographical barriers. His drive to realize the vision of his national pride embodies the 'imagined' bonding of his own goals with the overarching national identity he attempts to better.

Geeta encounters massive opposition from the wrestling community upon entering her first match since both sports world and nearby friends claim wrestling belongs exclusively to males. The male wrestling group makes inappropriate comments to Geeta which leads her to consider quitting her pursuit after wrestling. The obstacles she encounters demonstrate the national absence of sports values which support women's athletics. According to nationalism theory by Anderson countries need to eliminate cultural gender barriers in order to develop one national identity. Geeta's fight in the ring demonstrates the people of India's yearning for equal status within the country's national story. Under Mahavir's direction Geeta currently remakes how India should be portrayed internationally while she demonstrates the same characteristics of persistence. Through her life experiences she illustrates how women today understand their ability to affect national pride while they shape

the growth of the national identity.

The actors Geeta and Babita receive a challenging training sequence from Mahavir that takes them to their maximum emotional and physical capacity for self-improvement. In a metaphorical sense this part illustrates India's ongoing battle to escape the weight of its old beliefs and discriminatory practices. The performance represents fighting against the predefined mindsets along with societal expectations that Indian society currently faces. The famous international recognition which came to the Phogat family required significant economic sacrifices from the family. During their demanding training experience Geeta and Babita transform from family stars into national representatives while their final victories represent collective victories for the Indian nation.

Geeta's outstanding performance in the Commonwealth Games stands as one of the major highlights throughout the film's story. Geeta achieves international success as a champion wrestler while generating national satisfaction because her personal excellence represents a significant victory for India. This phenomenon enables Anderson to advance his nationalism perspective by showing that nations function through collective lived experiences. India's dedication to international competition in any field including sports can be seen through Geeta's remarkable success. All inhabitants regardless of gender now have the opportunity to unite with the national identification. The success of Geeta during the national anthem confirmed this outlook by uniting the feeling of pride and solidarity with her achievement across millions of Indian citizens. Through her triumph Geeta achieved victory both in the conceptual Indian community framework and against societal

barriers which help advance India toward wider national inclusion.

The personal account of Babita in the movie carries equal significance to Geeta's story because individual narratives create essential elements in national storytelling. From the outset Babita's wrestling career battled with private obstacles because her sister Geeta earned more recognition. Babita reached a point where national status became feasible because her father kept motivating her through unwavering support. During one crucial scene the film displays how she conquers her self-doubts that stemmed from social judgments so she and others can properly see her as a radio reporter. At this time the national belief functions as individual work brings benefits to everyone collectively. Babita's accomplishments might lack the same publicity as Geeta's but they demonstrate an identical proportion of impact towards forming India's evolving national identity that embraces women as core representatives of national pride.

Anderson's theory demonstrates how Babita's personal achievements played into India's story of female liberation alongside its rise as a top player in international sports.

The emotional core of the film presents the sacrifices Phogat family made to let their daughters fight the battle against gender discrimination under Mahavir's unwavering determination. The scene in which Mahavir thinks about his sacrifices shows the hidden meaning about how family hardships represent India's national fight for equality and recognition. The film displays by Mahavir how his sacrifices serve to increase national honor rather than focusing on his daughters alone thus supporting Anderson's theory about the origin of nations through collective experiences. Through his unflinching support for his daughters he demonstrates the emerging nationalism which brought together

disparate social groups and genders. Through the Phogat family's story the movie demonstrates how individual perseverance can redefine national identity worldwide regardless of unrecognized sacrifices. The film represents the Indian drive to establish national identity abroad through an all-embracing narrative based on collective actions of Indians.

Geeta makes her triumphant homecoming to worldwide acclaim as a national symbol from her achievements at the international wrestling competition. Through her life story India's national identity expanded while she simultaneously led millions of girls toward sports in the nation. The concluding portion changes Geeta from a country girl into a world wrestling champion as a representation of widespread nationalism. Through her personal accomplishments Geeta belongs to the Indian community concept which enhances the shared identification as an Indian born identity. Her comeback marks a lasting influence from how she established herself as a symbol of top performance thus transforming public views about Indian females to embrace their never-before-seen athletic abilities. This closing declaration confirms nationalism adapts according to who joins and breaks social norms that constrain traditional members. Personal achievement and sports show their power to generate patriotic emotions because of Geeta's global accomplishments in redefining India's international position.

Conclusion

The examination of gendered nationalism through the lens of Indian sports cinema, with a focus on films such as *Chak De!* The traditional roles for women in film representations of India become clearer through analysis of *Mary Kom* and *Dangal* as they align with the nationalistic themes in patriotic cinema. Sports serves as a contest for female athletes in these films to reveal how they both adopt nationalist beliefs while transforming them according to what they understand about their identity within a society controlled by men. Through their analysis these movies reveal the complex connections between gender and nationalism and sports platforms and show how women face hurdles as part of a society fully dominated by masculine ideologies about patriotism. The main finding in this research shows that Indian sport films construct an expansive yet confining vision of nationalism within their stories. The films recognize female athletic accomplishments without rejecting traditional narratives that portray feminine heroines fulfilling their duties through selfless behavior toward their families for the sake of national patriotism.

The film shows patriotism without distinctions based on gender in its perfect form. The success of Indian female athletes receives public recognition through national pride rather than individual freedom and personal success. During the film we see female athletes face difficulty in sustaining different roles such as being wives while also being daughters and citizens showing the film does not completely negate existing gender norms. Mary Kom in the movie illustrates how fitness professionals must face societal challenges to receive recognition as stardom also requires motherhood responsibilities within an exclusive female form.

A revolutionary element of *Dangal* appears in the form of a father who breaks social rules to train his daughters for wrestling. Through his aspirations the father upholds patriarchy that continues to preserve patriarchal systems within the story. National achievement and the fathers' aspirations together construct the daughters' achievements instead of displaying their independence. Indian sports films appear willing to question gender roles yet they rarely create room for women to maintain autonomy when opposed to male-dominated hierarchy and local community honor. These movies serve to represent the conflicting nature of Indian gendered nationalism by presenting that female national involvement results in limiting conditions. Women athletes experience ongoing pressure in film to match masculine qualities because their presentation represents both a changing gender perspective in sports and a diehard sense of nationalism which emerges from collective national unity. The nationalist discourse demonstrates continuous patriarchal strengths along with women's victories thus illustrating that real gender equality remains an ongoing development.

Gendered nationalism appears throughout Indian sports cinema in a way that presents a powerful mixture of different nationalist sentiments. Although *Mary Kom*, *Dangal*, and *Chak De! India* probes gender norms at various levels yet continues to maintain patriarchal system dysfunctions combined with control-agency conflicts and society nationalism progress. Through welcoming gendered nationalism this film shows dual support for nationalism together with analysis of its interconnected complexities in women's evolving roles for Indian national development.

Work Consulted

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Verso, 1983.

CA Sosim and Johnson A Ajith, “A study on gender issues projected in Bollywood sports movies.” *International Journal of Physiology, Nutrition and Physical Education*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2019, pp. 206-208, <https://www.journalofsports.com/pdf/2019/vol4issue1/PartE/4-1-42-252.pdf>.

“Gender Discrimination in Sports: Depleting Respect of Women Players in India.” *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, vol. 6, no. 12, Dec. 2017, pp. 1493–97, <https://doi.org/10.21275/art20179052>.

Győző Molnár, and Rachael Bullingham. *The Routledge Handbook of Gender Politics in Sport and Physical Activity*. Taylor & Francis, 2022.

Özaydın Selçuk, “The Impact of Gender Inequality on Women’s Team Sports – Evidence from Europe.” *Athens Journal of Sports*, vol. 9, 2022, pp. 1-12, <https://doi.org/10.30958/ajspo.X-Y-Z>.

Ruvalcaba, Omar, et al. “Women’s Experiences in ESports: Gendered Differences in Peer and Spectator Feedback during Competitive Video Game Play.” *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, vol. 42, no. 4, 15 May 2018, pp. 295–

311, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0193723518773287>. Accessed 12

Sept. 2020.

Yan, Jixin. "Gender Stereotypes and Discrimination in Sports and Esports Industry: A Systemic Review of Causes and Statistics.