Portrayal of Men's Mental Health Through Films:

Character Analysis Of Saji From Kumbalangi Nights And Ved From Tamasha

Project Report

Submitted by

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In partial fulfilment of requirements for award of the degree

Of Master of Arts

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam

College With Potential for

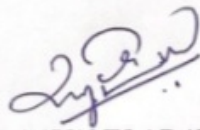Excellence Accredited by NAAC with 'A++'

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Declaration

I do affirm that the project **"THE PORTRAYAL OF MEN'S HEALTH THROUGH FILMS CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF SAJI FROM KUMBALANGI NIGHTS AND VED FROM TAMASHA"** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Master of Arts degree in Journalism and Mass Communication Studies has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

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Certificate

I hereby certify that this project entitled "**THE PORTRAYAL OF MEN'S HEALTH THROUGH FILMS CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF SAJI FROM KUMBALANGI NIGHTS AND VED FROM TAMASHA**"by **AAVANY ARAVIND** is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.
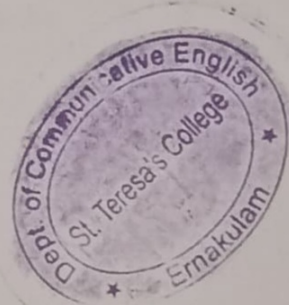
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Acknowledgement

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                                                          AAVANY

ARAVIND

ABSTRACT

Mental health portrayal in cinema plays an important role in shaping the perception of society and breaking the stereotypes surrounding mental well being. This study explores the portrayal of men's mental health through the character analysis of Saji from Kumbalangi Nights and Ved from Tamasha. The research focuses to understand how these both movies and the characters reflect emotional vulnerability, societal pressure, expectations and journey towards self-acceptance. Through qualitative analysis of important scenes, dialogues, and mise-en-scene, the study examines the emotional depth of and psychological struggles faced by these characters. It also investigates how cultural contexts and personal experience shape their mental health. The findings reveal that both characters challenge traditional masculinity norms, highlighting the importance of emotional suppression and then eventually expressing the feelings and seeking help. The research emphasises the role of cinema in fostering empathy and awareness regarding mental health issues among men.

Keywords : mental health, cinema, masculinity, character analysis, emotional vulnerability.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Cinema is a powerful medium to communicate everything, visual storytelling helps the maker to communicate the idea with the audience. This medium goes beyond languages and cultures allowing the audience to connect with the characters and their experience on a personal level. Whether it's joy, the pain of loss, suspense, or love, films have that unique ability to make the audience feel and reflect. The combination of visual storytelling, acting, music, and cinematography craft emotional experiences that can be soft or intense, comforting or unsettling. Cinema has consistently reflected social realities and stigmas. Over the years the portrayal of mental health has been talked about through cinemas.

Emotions in films are not just for entertainment purposes but also for reflecting real-life struggles, including mental health. Movies that showcase trauma, healing and the journey allow the audience to think about the issues that they do not talk about.

There were more films in the past that often exaggerated or stigmatized certain issues, whereas modern films strive for accuracy and empathy. Mental health in all genders was portrayed through films. Movies like 'Melancholia' (2011) are the raw portrayal of depression in women. Earlier,women-centric movies talked more about postpartum depression and motherhood struggles. Movies like 'Black Swan' (2010) talked about the psychological pressure leading to delusion.

Movies like 'The Danish Girl' which was released in 2015,and 'Tangerine' in 2015 talk about the identity struggles that are faced by transgender people. Nowadays men's mental health

has also gained prominence. This has challenged typical masculinity and shows emotional vulnerabilities. A growing number of Indian films have begun to embrace the stories that deal with mental health.explain mental health or mental illness- meaning. How cinematic techniques help to represent it. Why cinema need to be more realistic in current scenario

This study examines the representation of men's mental health by analysing the characters "Saji" in Kumbalangi Nights (2019) movie and "Ved" in Tamasha (2015) movie. Both films have unique narratives of men struggling with their inner turmoil and external pressures, offering us to look more into the topic.

1.1 .Theories

a. Narrative paradigm

Narrative paradigm theory is a communication theory that explains how people understand complex information through storytelling. The theory was developed by Walter Fisher, a 20th-century communication scholar. This theory points to the story depending on the internal consistency and audience's experience and values. Analysing the characters "Saji and Ved" through this perspective allows an in-depth understanding of how films portray mental health narratives that echo the social realities.

b. Cinematic codes theory or Semiotics.

Along with the above theory, we are using Cinematic codes theory or Semiotics by Christian Metz. The cinema could be studied as a language, using methods of denotation.This theory focuses more on the cinematic elements such as mise en scène, cinematography, sound, and editing.In Saji's case, we can include his hesitant interaction with his family and moments of vulnerability as acts that symbolise his guilt and suppressed emotions. In Ved's situation, we can use the metaphorical scenes where he uses the mask to live in the stereotyped society and

the dual personality where he creates his own creative, carefree storyteller and the alter ego of a robotic corporate persona.

1.2 Objectives of the study

a. Analyse the portrayal of men's mental health through the characters Saji and Ved.

b. To explore the societal aspects that influence these portrayals.

The role of cinema in the normalising conversations around men's mental health.

To understand how these portrayals challenge the traditional norms, stereotypes and toxic masculinity.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Mental health is a universal concern; however, it is often discussed in the media without sufficient depth and remains stigmatized, particularly in relation to men. Indian cinema is known for its culture and emotional depths. It started to address these differences, with films like Kumbalangi Nights and Tamasha offering sad depictions of mental health struggles. This research aims to study how these films represent men's mental health with the help of semiotic analysis.

1.4 The need of the Research

The need for this study is to explore the challenges faced by the men in our society,the challenges they face, and to encourage an open mindset about vulnerability, emotional struggles, and healing. By analysing these characters, this study gave hope on the representation of masculinity in Indian films and the change in traditional male characters towards more complex, emotionally available, and aware portrayals. As Indian films often portray social values and beliefs, this analysis provides an insight into how such portrayals influence public perception of mental health issues in men, offering an opportunity to accept life. By focusing on the journey of each character, the study promotes dialogues about the

need for conversations on mental health and support for men in both media and society. This study adds to the growing research on mental health in popular media, providing an in-depth analysis of men's mental health representation in Indian movies, a relatively underexplored area in the field of film studies.

1.5 Scopes of the Research

The research focuses on two films named kumbalangi Nights and Tamasha, which represent a difference in socio-economic contexts. It looks into the characters of Saji and Ved in detail, exploring their mental struggles, coping mechanisms, and interpersonal relationships. The study also explores the narratives within wider social attitudes towards men's mental health and the challenges they face while addressing their emotional vulnerability in a society of masculine stereotypes.

1.6 Limitations of the Research

The main limitation in this study is that it only focuses on two films, in that only two characters are studied. The research focuses on qualitative analysis where the researcher depends on the semiotic analysis, and this study does not include any kind of audience opinion regarding the reception of mental illness awareness.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The representation of men's mental health in cinema has evolved, giving out a unique eye to explore more into social norms, personal struggles, and the impact of relationships being emotionally healthy. This review does research on the portrayal of men's mental health in films, focusing on the characters in Kumbalangi Nights (2019) and Tamasha (2015). Both of these films challenge traditional masculine ideals by presenting minute narratives of vulnerability, emotional roller coasters, and growth.

2.1 Historical representation of men's mental health in cinema

Historically, movies often talk about the toxic masculinity that connects with the mental health and their weakness that comes along with the vulnerability. Characters were expected to suppress their emotions, especially sadness, and only endure the pain which shows the act of being strong. Studies highlight that such portrayals keep up the social stigmas that discourage men from seeking help. Films from the 1970s portrayed mental health as a weakness that fails to usual masculinity. Michael Mesa analysis talks about the strong norms of emotional acts played by male characters, which usually shows they are failing in the society. For example, Wake in Fright shows the emotional struggles as a sign of deficiency, shore up toxic masculinity through violence and repression. Contrasting these films from the 2010s explores the emotional complex of male characters more. Mesas study of Love, illustrates a shift towards the portrayal of mental health and self love, challenging the

stereotypes. As noted the social stigmas remain even in this modern deception which reflects the discomfort in men.

2.2. Toxic masculinity and emotional suppression

The theme of toxic masculinity has been the centre of depictions in men's mental health. They have been normalised in this society as an expectation, while in modern films its damaging impact. Characters like Ved in Tamasha movie showcase a person who is struggling with internal social pressures that lead to emotional breakdowns and illustrate the toll of being forced to obey the traditional masculine ideas.

2.3. Emotional Suppression vs. Seeking Help

Mental health is portrayed as a personal feeling in old films. Malik et al. (2011) argue that such showcases reinforce the stigmas and discourage people who are seeking help. However,films like Tamasha address this by depicting Ved's emotional breakdowns as a turning point towards his healing. Similarly, in Kumbalangi Nights, tear down the stigma by showing Saji seeking help after a personal tragedy, which is breaking these stereotypes around masculinity.

Films like Kumbalangi Nights and Tamasha incorporate elements like their making and the narratives relatable to Indian audience which challenges the typical stereotypes, Basu (2021). Recent narratives embrace positive masculinity by showing the vulnerabilities as a strength. Kumbalangi Nights represents this shift where Saji's breakdown leads to a meaningful change. His change by accepting himself and reuniting with others challenges the traditional norms of strength, which highlight the importance of the community and emotional openness. Likewise, Ved's transformation in Tamasha focuses on the breakdown of social expectation.

The narrative underscores the role of self-expression in overcoming the mental struggles, framing vulnerability as a personal growth.

While contemporary films address mental health, the intersectional remains limited. Studies say that most narratives focus on the middle-class men, often neglecting the marginalised groups. Kumbalangi Nights actually address the multicultural setting.

2.4. Reinforcing stereotypes through films

Cinema reflects the roles, shapes and attitude of the society. A study by Bhugra (2005) and Banwari (2011) argues that films can either challenge the harmful stereotypes or challenge them through the method of storytelling. Movies like 'Good Will Hunting' and 'A Beautiful Mind' emphasise the value of positivity and honest reactions where the characters in kumbalangi nights and tamasha are transforming and that inspire empathy and awareness.

Cinema acts as a mirror to all social attitudes while shaping them. The films we are studying contribute in breaking the stigma around men's mental health by representing the relatable narrative which has influenced all the audience. Studies suggest that such portrayals can foster great understanding which reduce the stigma and encourage help seeking behaviours (Bou-Karroum et al, 2017)

The portrayal of men's mental health in films has made a significant turn which helps in the transformation from the stigmatized narratives to more empathetic depiction. Characters like Saji and Ved show the importance of showing emotional vulnerability and the role of relationship and the value of seeking help. Future research should study more on this theme by analysing films of all language and culture examining the health representation and exploring the long term impact on the audience.

2.5. Barthes' Semiotic Theory in Movie Analysis

Roland Barthes' semiotic theory builds upon Ferdinand de Saussure's foundational ideas in semiology but extends them by focusing on how cultural meanings are constructed. Barthes proposes two type of signification:

1. Denotation – The literal or primary meaning of a sign.

2. Connotation – The secondary meaning, influenced by cultural and social contexts.

3. Myth – A broader ideological message that society accepts as "natural" but is, in fact, constructed.

In movie analysis, Barthes' model allows to decode how films communicate messages through symbols, colors, and body language. This approach is useful in examining the cultural, ideological, and psychological dimensions of films.

Several studies have successfully applied Barthes' semiotics to analyze films like Coco (2017): A semiotic analysis of Coco explored its depiction of Mexican traditions, particularly Día de los Muertos. Researchers identified denotative meanings in the film's visuals (e.g., skull decorations) and their connotative significance (e.g., cultural remembrance). The mythic level suggested how Disney's interpretation of Mexican culture constructs a global narrative of heritage and ancestry.

Aladdin (2019): Using Barthes' model, Aladdin was analyzed to examine power dynamics and freedom. The analysis revealed how visual cues, character portrayals, and settings reinforced traditional and contemporary societal values.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will make use of qualitative methods, especially content analysis of two movies named Kumbalangi Nights (2019) in Malayalam and Tamasa (2015) in Hindi to examine the portrayal of men's mental health in films. The study will focus on the characters 'Saji' from Kumbalangi Nights and 'Ved' from Tamasha, centring on the lens of narrative theory and semiotics theory. By examining elements such as dialogues, colour gradients, costumes, and cinematographic choices, the research aims to uncover how mental health struggles are represented in these characters' journeys. Using qualitative content analysis allows for an in-depth understanding of the symbolic and thematic elements. Narrative theory will help to analyse the character arcs, storytelling, and emotional developments, while semiotics theory will be interpreting the visual and symbolic cues that contribute to the depiction of their psychological states. By identifying patterns in representation, the study aims to contribute to discussions on mental health awareness and cinematic portrayals of emotional struggles.

3.1 Independent variables

Independent variables: Narrative and Semiotic elements

Character arc

Dialogues

Symbols

Cinematography and colour schemes

Narrative techniques

3.2 Dependent Variables

Emotional struggle

Behavioural responses (withdrawal, aggression)

Societal interaction (stigma, relationships)

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher chose two characters from two different language movies to study men's mental health in movies. The researcher selected particular scenes from the malayalam movie 'Kumbalangi Nights' and Hindi movie 'Tamasha', which clearly depict the psychological struggle of characters named 'Saji' and 'Ved'. The selected scenes are analysed on the basis of semiotic and narrative analysis, and the different criteria used to show human emotional struggle are found out.

3.4 Data Analysis Methods

A. Narrative Analysis

1. Character Arc Analysis : examination of how a character changes over the course of a story

2. Key Narrative Elements : plot, characters, point of view, setting, theme, conflict, and style

B. Semiotic Analysis

Roland Barthes theory revolves around understanding how meaning is constructed and communicated through signs. Key concepts of Barthes' Semiotic Theory:

1. Signifier and Signified: The signifier is the physical form of a sign that conveys meaning. and the signified is the concept or idea that the signifier represents.

2. Denotation and Connotation: Direct and cultural meaning of scenes.

1. Visual Symbolism: an artistic technique that uses images, colors, and objects to represent ideas or feelings

2. Cinematic Techniques: camera movement, lighting, composition, and visual effects

3.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does Kumbalangi Nights and Tamasha portray the stigma surrounding men's mental health?

2. What film techniques (mise-en-scene, shot and camera capturing, editing, etc.) are used to convey the inner emotional landscapes of the central characters "Saji" in Kumbalangi Nights and "Ved" in Tamasha movie?

3. How do Saji and Ved's transformative journeys defy the traditional tropes of male protagonists in Indian films?

4. What effect do these portrayals have on audiences' understanding of men's mental health?

CHAPTER 4

CONTENT ANALYSIS

The researcher analyzed various character development sequences in the movie 'Tamasha' and 'Kumbalangi Nights' to conduct this semiotic and narrative analysis.

Plot of Tamasha movie (2015)

Tamasha, a 2015 Hindi movie directed by Imtiaz Ali, tells the journey of a young man, Ved (played by Ranbir Kapoor), who is forced to suppress his true self to fit into societal expectations. As a child, he was always fascinated by imagination and storytelling, but as he grew up, he became the "routine-bound" man with a corporate job.

He travels to Corsica, where he meets Tara (played by Deepika Padukone). They decide to keep their identities secret and enjoy their time. After many years, Tara releases her love for Ved and tries to find him. She finds out about a new version of Ved, and it disturbs her. Her confrontation triggers an identity crisis in Ved, which leads him to rediscover who he is and his real passion. This movie explores themes like mental health and societal pressures.

Plot of Kumbalangi Nights (2019)

Kumbalangi Nights, released in 2019, is a Malayalam film that explores themes like masculinity, emotional healing, mental health, and dysfunctional families. The story revolves around four brothers—Saji, Bobby, Bonny, and Franky—who live in a broken, chaotic background in a fishing village in Kumbalangi. Saji (played by Soubin Shahir) is the elder brother among them. Each of them has their struggles and personal issues and not-so-good relationships with each other.

Bobby, Saji's younger brother, falls in love with a girl. But her brother-in-law doesn't approve of the relationship. Saji's character undergoes a transformation after seeing his friend's death, which traumatises him to the core, leading him to suppress his emotions, which leads him to end his life. From that, he confronts his guilt and grief and seeks help for healthy mental health.

The first part includes character analysis of 'Saji' from Kumbalangi Nights. The researcher includes screenshots of particular sequences and analysed the setting,dialogues,symbols,costume,body language of those scenes.

4.1 REDEMPTION OF SAJI FROM TOXICITY TO TENDERNESS

Scene time :- 7:50 Introduction scene of Saji

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Very dimly lit setting with a messy house which has minimal furniture and old interiors.	This reflects a lower class family which is always in disorder and usually neglect the needs.
Costume & appearance	Saji is shirtless and drunk,	His attire reflects the

	appearing more untidy.	person's carelessness, laziness and negligence.
Body language	Trying to be dominant in front of his brothers, aggressive gestures.	Trying to show that he is not affected by any of the words thrown by his brother by using aggression as a defence mechanism.
Symbolism	The alcohol bottle, dirty surroundings.	Alcohol bottles represent the escapism and family background. The dirty atmosphere shows the emotional and mental stability of the person who is lazy and empty.
Lighting	Warm tone with low lighting. Shadows play a very important role dominating the frame.	Dim lighting shows the inner struggle of the character and the shadows indicate unsolved problems.
Dialogues	He is often uses aggressive tone and is avoiding deep meaning conversation	This reveals his emotional repression and struggle of expressing love and care.

Scene time 25:18 - saji is throwing money to the person he is indebted to:

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Roadside where the cart of his friend is with old	Saji who has no job sitting somewhere when his friend

	bicycles which is a casual environment.	is working and his economic background
Costume & appearance	Dull striped shirt and lungi	His ordinary meek dressing which shows the struggle and self worth.
Body language	He is throwing away the money rather than being respectful.	It's his internal frustration and shame coming out for not being able to pay himself and relying on his friend.
Symbolism	The money.	His emotional burden and act of distancing himself from failures.
Lighting	Natural lighting	This shows the rawness of the scene and the character.
Dialogues	"Who else has won a price for your ticket? Its me only-mind you"	Saji is desperate to make an attempt to assert his role and seek validation even though he feels not enough.

Scene time - 27:57 - the bar scene where saji argues with his brother

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dim light of the bar, smoky atmosphere and crowded background.	The bar is dark and filthy which mirrors the chaos within saji.
Costume & appearance	Simple shirt looks messy.	His attire shows how messy and lazy he is.
Body language	Rigid posture, very aggressive movements and	This indicates the bottled up emotions and dominance he

	sudden outburst.	wants to show off infront of people.
Symbolism	Cigarettes, fights.	Smoke shows the clouded judgments and confusion that saji is experiencing. The fight shows the dysfunctional relationship with his own brother .
Lighting	Low warm lighting with a mix of red and yellow.	Reflects the aggression and tension the dim light can also imply his mental instability.
Dialogues	He's not talking but directly going to fight with his brother.	This shows his relationship with his own family.

Scene time 59:24 - saji is confused about their financial status

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Small, dim interior of a barbershop.	The difference of social status they live with from others.
Costume & appearance	Simple shirt, plain and subdued colours.	The humble nature he is trying to put on in front of others, where he is trying to get accepted by others.
Body language	Saji is hesitant and tries to be soft and polite mannered.	This conveys his inner struggles, shame and the

		realisation of the social background they are in and how they are being seen by other people in the same society.
Symbolism	The red and white curtains in the background with a modest surroundings.	The curtains symbolize the struggle to cover up their past and the reality of their present.
Lighting	Dim, warm lighting with shadows on saji's face.	This type of lighting shows the emotional buren and darkness saji feels within himself when he is being confronted by the4 harsh truth and judgemental eyes of the society.
Dialogues	"I run an ironing shop in partnership" "i did inquire about your family background, not impressive at all"	The first dialogue reflects his livelihood and his job. The second dialogue shows the perspective of society on saji's family highlighting the stigma and negligence.

Scene time- 1:03- emotional outbreak and saji slaps his younger brother.

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dim light, messy space with old furniture and tv.	This shows the economic background of the house.
Costume & appearance	Saji is shirtless wearing a lungi and a chain with a cross.	He is bare, which shows the vulnerability and exposure, the cross symbolises the burden and guilt he carries around.
Body language	He is aggressive and his body is tense and suddenly	His anger is a defense mechanism to mask the pain

|	slaps his younger brother.	and denial of the responsibility for his mothers departure.
Symbolism	reflection of the water outside.	The water symbolizes the emotional depth and turmoil which eventually reflects the internal struggle and inability to get confronted by his past.
Lighting	Low-key, warm tone lighting with dominating shadows.	The lighting reflects the darkness and burden which enhances the melancholy and the tension of the situation.
Dialogues	"It's because of you only" and saji's immediate reaction "what!"	This shows the inability to cope up with the guilt. The confrontation trigger saji and he slaps his younger brother as a defence mechanism to mask the pain.

Scene time -01:05:07 - saji's friend confronts saji with the truth.

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	A street with a sandy background.	This shows saji's emotional darkness. This also shows the chaotic mental health and lack of direction.
Costume & appearance	Saji is worn out, loose and dull coloured shirt.	His messy state shows the struggles with his self worth, responsibility, and identity.

Body language	Aggressive posture and unstable movements.	His body language reflects aggression, guilt and helplessness. The anger is defence mechanism
Symbolism	Impulsive reaction to attempt suicide.	This moment is saji's breaking down point of burden of guilt that he can no longer suppress.
Lighting	Low-key, with shadows and dim street lights.	Darkness shows the mental and emotional isolation of saji.
Dialogues	"You are doing all the work,no? For him im exploiting you" and "look saji, what your brother says is true"	These dialogues directly confront saji's character and force to face reality.

Scene time - 1:09:23 - saji is being questioned in police station
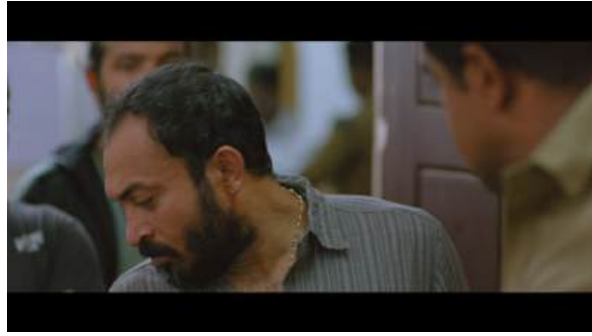
Semiotics elements	Signifer	Signified
Settings	Police station environment with minimal lighting	The cold harsh reality that saji is going to face.
Costume and appearance	Stripped dull shirt, messy look.	The messy appearance shows the chaos and struggles and the muted tone shows the losing of hope.
Body language	Saji is reacting passively, biting off an ant and no response to the slap but only	This shows the emotional numbness and his inability to process the guilt and grief.

	an unnatural smile.	
Dialogues	Saji is quiet all along the scene.	He is feeling numb mentally which is hard for him to talk.

Scene time: 1:17:00 - saji asking for help

Semiotics elements	Signifer	Signified
Settings	The rustic wooden window with iron bars and green surrounding	The bars show the internal prison saji is living in where he suppresses emotions. The natural backdrop contrast

		with his inner conflict.
Costume and appearance	Worn out, dark and a checked shirt.	His emotional exhaution and lack of self care.
Body language	Saaji is snapping his fingers instead of calling his brother by name , his voice strained.	His hesitation to seek emotional support and internalised struggle. He shows emotional detachment. His posture shows helplessness
Dialogues	"I have completely lost my mind" "i am unable to cy" "seriously i need help"	This is where saji accept his mental struggle and his vulnerability. The straightforwardness reflects the raw honesty which breaks the traditional masculinity.

Scene time 1:37:30 - saji defending his step mother (character development)
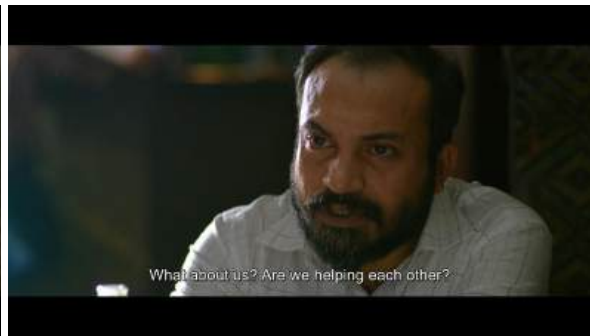
Semiotics elements	Signifer	Signified
Settings	dimly lit bar with a small setup, which shows a casual and serious atmosphere.	Bar representing the place where men usually express their feelings to each other Reflection and confrontation.
Costume and appearance.	Saji is wearing a light coloured check shirt that blend to the surroundings.	This shows the transition from his past aggressive nature to a calm and self analysing version of himself.
Body language	Saji is keeping eye contact	His assertive emotion shows

	while talking, he keeps clenching his jaws while saying their mother should not be cursed.	the protective instincts and regret. He is controlling his emotions.
Lighting	Strong contrast between background and saji's face which is reflecting brighter lighting.	This lighting shows the inner conflict where he is coming out of his past shadows but still in that phase. This shows the growth but also the pain.
Dialogue	"Don't curse her" and "are we helping each other?"	This is when saji becomes protective and regrets defending his step mother. He accepted the fact that his family was a mess, the brothers never helped eachother.

Scene time 1:50:36 - marriage proposal for his brother

Semiotics elements	Signifer	Signified
Settings	The setting is a warm function decorated with balloons and lights in the background.	A social function where people engage in conversations, saji's presence feels somehow blending to the background.
Costume and appearance.	Saji is wearing a simple check shirt which goes according to the surroundings.	The light coloured clothing shows the emotional and psychological transformation.
Body language	Saji is smiling in a gentle way leaning forward while talking showing he wants to be a part of the conversation	This body language shows inner peace and personal growth. He is being respectful but there is also hesitation because he knows the social barriers are still

		there.
Symbolism	His conversation includes "way better" and "peaceful" despite societal rejection.	This shows redemption and self acceptance.
Lighting	Warm lighting with a little yellowish and greenish hues in the background.	The warm lighting reflects the emotional warmth and sincerity of saji while the green tone in the background shows hope for a new beginning.
Dialogue	"Now we are much better, life is much more peaceful"	The statement shows how things have improved in his life. He has overcome the emotional instability and is leading a peaceful life now.

## 4.2 TRANSFORMATION OF VED : SELF DOUBT TO SELF DISCOVERY

Introduction scene of Ved : childhood and obsession towards storytelling

Semiotics elements	Signifer	Signified
Settings	The scenes are set in Shimla with a dreamy atmosphere.	This shows the innocence and numerous imagination the kid has in his mind.
Costume and appearance.	Ved is wearing bright coloured clothes.	This shows the playful character of Ved as a kid and the freedom of thoughts he has.

Body language	Wide eyes, deeply immersed in listening to the story.	Thai shows ved was a kid who was obsessed and had fun while listening to the story telling.
Symbolism	The stories	This is to escape from reality.

First half of the story : Ved's life in corsica
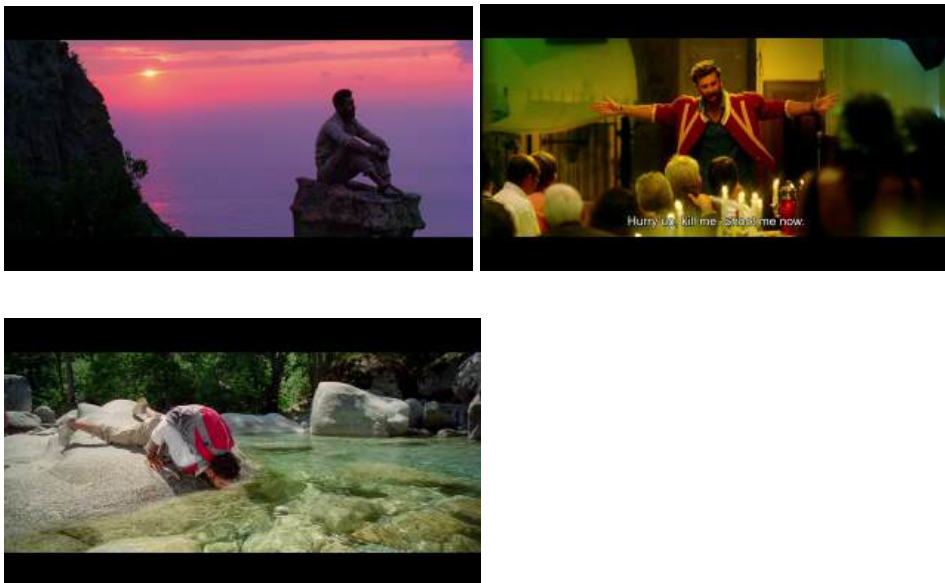
Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Vibrant streets, landscapes and lively environment.	This shows the freedom and adventure within ved, also he experiences away from

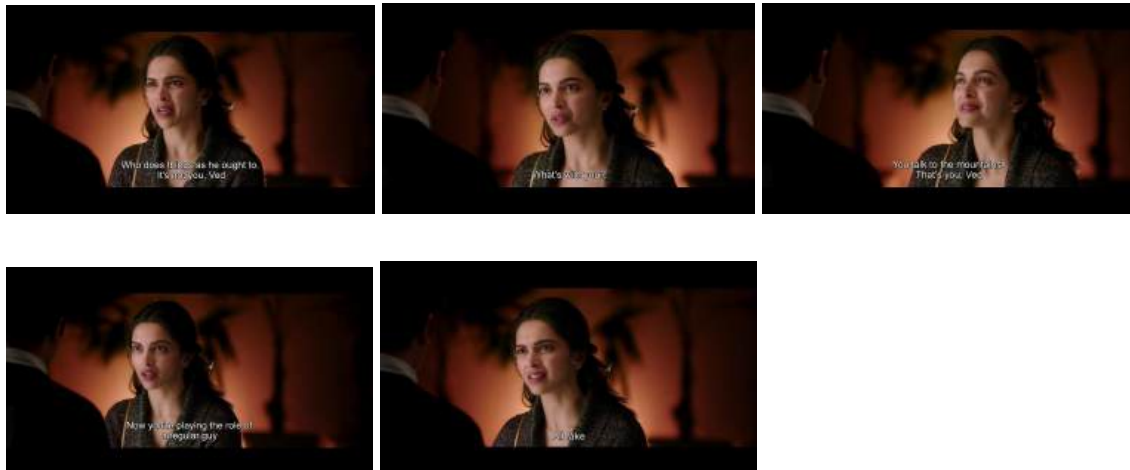|		his usual life.
Costume & appearance	Bright, casual colourful clothing such as jackets with bold colour and patterns.	His attire reflects his character which is playful and is not burdened with his identity.
Body language	Very expressive nature, telling stories and carefree actions.	This shows the true self of ved, who is free from all the societal stigmas and following his heart.
Symbolism	Landscapes, clear water.	The natural environment shows the purity of Ved's true self which he can only show as a temporary escape.
Lighting	Warm, golden hues of sunset and bright day light.	Warmth shows joy and freedom. The natural light reflects the authenticity of his character

Second half : corporate life of ved.

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dim lighted apartment, office environment and congestive traffic.	This shows how ved has been trapped in a monotonous life who was once devoted to creativity and joy. This shows his identity crisis.
Costume & appearance	A shift from vibrant colours to dull formal suits and muted tones in his corporate life.	The change in clothing shows the loss of self awareness and he have submitted himself to the societal expectations.

Body language	Rigid posture, more mechanical movements and lack of eye contact.	This indicates the emotional detachment, who is forced to eat hurriedly, and the lack of expression shows the "corporate robot" situation.
Symbolism	Mirror	Mirror shows the self reflection and duality of ved's identity.
Lighting	Cold, artificial lighting	This shows the emptiness in ved.

Proposal scene : confrontation scene time - 01:09:17

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dim warm lighting	This shows the contrast between ved's inner struggle and calm outer world.
Costume & appearance	Ved is dressed in formal and dark corporate attire while Tara is wearing a casual sweater.	Ved's outfit shows the rigidity while tara reflects the emotional warmth.
Body language	Ved remains stiff while Tara's expression shifts from frustration to desperation to bring out real ved.	Tara's emotional struggle to reconnect with the ved from corsica but ved just stand there which shows the inner conflict and suppression of true self

Symbolism	The reference to "talking to mountain"	This shows the emotional vulnerability and passion of story telling of ved which he buried inside him.
Dialogue	"Now you are playing the role of a regular guy..it is not you, ved."	Tara calls out ved's mask he is putting on which emphasise the emotional detachment between his true self and current life.

Breakdown of ved after the confrontation - scene time - 01:31:09

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dim lighting,plain setting of a cafe	This is an intimate lighting that reflects Ved's emotional turmoil and vulnerability. The plain setting shows the raw and unfiltered emotional confrontation and breakdown
Costume & appearance	Ved is wearing a beige oversized sweater and tara is in red.	This shows how ved is brain and tara is heart, this is a conversation between brain and heart.

Body language	Ved avoids eye contact from Tara then dramatically eventually breaks down.	Ved has the fear of being exposed by tara and is struggling between true self and the identity he created.
Symbolism	Hug between tara and ved which eventually collapses on the wooden table.	This hug is an attempt from Tara to comfort ved while he collapses on a wooden table because of emotional exhaustion.
Lighting	Dim lighting with shadows on ved's face.	The shadows show the inner darkness and confusion.
Dialogues	"That's mighty helpful"	Ved is being sarcastic and rude towards tara to mask his true feelings because he knows she will break into him.

Self confrontation : in front of mirror scene time - 01:41:20

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Dimly lit room with personal items.	Shows the clash between his true self and corporative self
Costume & appearance	Shirt is wrinkled and loosened red tie.	This messy look shows the rebellion against the forced corporate life he is living.
Body language	He is pleading, being sarcastic and mocking his own forced self.	His pleading is the suppressed self and the sarcastic self mocks the societal expectations,
Symbolism	Mirror showing the two versions.	This implies the mask he wears in the corporate world

		and his creative artistic self he longs for.
Lighting	Dim, moody	Inner darkness and emotional suffocation.
Dialogues	"What's happening boss?" "please, i beg you"	Sarcastic tone shows the self criticism while the plea shows the desire for freedom

Self discovery of ved - scene time-02:03:36

Semiotic element	Signifier	Signified
Setting	Cozy lighting with traditional furniture and warm lighting.	This shows the comfort and homely feeling where now he is going to show his vulnerability.
Costume & appearance	Simple white shirt.	This shows his emotional clarity and honesty.
Body language	Relaxed posture with a small smile and maintaining eye contact.	This shows how he finally managed to express himself and reveal his true identity and maintaining the eye contact.

Symbolism	Ved narrating his own story and saying"we'll change the end"	This shows the rejection of societal expectations and path laid out for him, by taking control of his narrative he is holding on to his true self.
Lighting	Warm soft tone	Shows an emotional atmosphere.
Dialogues	"This is who I am, papa. I am no good at maths sorry"	The confession of ved shows self acceptance and rejection of the pressure of the society.

4.3 Discussion

Analyzing Kumbalangi Nights and Tamasha using semiotic and narrative theories allows us to understand how settings, costumes, lighting, body language, symbols, dialogues and storytelling methods contribute to the portrayal of men's mental health.

Using semiotic Theory, in kumbalangi nights we can see the visual symbols of the broken dysfunctional family and emotional status of saji and his brothers. The house acts as a metaphor for the internal turmoil and his journey towards healing. The dark and muted tone is

used throughout the movie where saji suffers with grief and depression and it changes to a warm and light tone once he seeks help and support from his family.

Using the narrative theory, We can see the character arc of Saji where he has a transformation from emotionally detached person to a person who seeks help and accepts vulnerability. The conversations with his brothers serves as a pivotal narrative technique to reveal saji's mental struggle.

Using semiotic theory in Tamasha we can see the symbolism of mask and performance where ved has a dual life. One who is so passionate and creative the other one is a pretended version of himself. His storytelling in Corsica shows his true self while his corporate life shows the robotic behaviour which he's forced to put on for the sake of societal expectations.

In the first half of the movie the lighting is vibrant and open landscapes symbolising freedom and creativity by the second half the tone is changed to dull and grey tones especially in his daily life routine which reflects the suppression and mental distress.

The narrative theory goes as a journey of Ved from self doubt to self discovery. His internal conflict between passion and societal pressure drives the story forward. The use of flashbacks to the childhood of Ved shows his passion for storytelling and creativity.

At the end of movie the confrontation with his father and Tara's support serve as the narrative resolution allowing ved to embrace his authentic self.

By applying semiotic theory we understand how visual storytelling conveys the emotional landscape of saji and Ved. Narrative analysis explains the character arc, conflicts and development also the struggle with mental health and societal expectations. Both the films

effectively use these techniques to challenge the stigma around men's mental health and vulnerability and how society is looking into it.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Based on the content analysis of the portrayal of men's mental health through movies, it is evident that this situation has many implications from the audience on the perspective, emotional understanding and breaking the stereotypes in the society. The conclusion from this "character analysis of Saji from Kumbalangi Nights and Ved from Tamasha" shows the dynamics of mental health representation in Indian cinema and the need for more credible portrayal in future.

This study highlights how both films effectively showcase the stigma surrounding men's mental health. Saji's emotional struggles with guilt and grief following a redemption and ved's identity crises to his self realisation mirrors the hidden pain of men they usually experience but is forced to suppress because of the typical "masculinity". These portrayals not only challenge the traditional societal image of men but also create a space for emotional expression and empathy.

Through the use of film techniques such as lighting, dialogue and costume shows the emotional landscape these characters bring to life. The dark and intense visuals of Tamasha shows ved's mental turmoil, while the raw environment in kumbalangi nights reflects saji's journey towards healing and acceptance. This visual storytelling increases the audience's emotional connection with the character and their own struggles.

The study also focuses on the transformation of Ved and Saji as the departure from stereotypical portrayal of male leads in Indian cinema. Their vulnerability and emotional depth defy the stereotypical, emotionless male protagonist, therefore paving the way for more realistic and relatable male characters in coming films.

Despite the impactful portrayal, the lack of interviews with filmmakers and mental health experts affects the authenticity and credibility of the analysis. The absence of audience feedback limits the understanding of the actual impact of these characters on society on the perception of men's mental health.

In conclusion, the study marks the powerful role of cinema in addressing mental health issues and breaking the stigma. By including more credible representation and promoting open conversations, future movies can play a significant role in shaping the public perception on mental well being.

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