EMPOWERED AND COURAGEOUS WOMAN: THE POWER OF CHANGING EDUCATION CHAOS IN THE FILM RAATCHASI

Tira Nur Fitria

Institut Teknologi Bisnis AAS Indonesia, Jl. Slamet Riyadi No.361, Windan, Makamhaji, Kec. Kartasura, Kabupaten Sukoharjo, Jawa Tengah 57161, Indonesia
tiranurfitria@gmail.com

Abstract

This research describes the acts of empowering and encouraging women of the main character (Geetha Rani) in the film Raatchasi. This research is descriptive qualitative. This study describes, writes, and reports the facts or information of a situation, an object, or an event. The researcher attempts to analyze the film by focusing on its main character. Documentation is the instrument used for data collection. The type of document used was a Tamil film entitled Raatchasi. This representation is investigated by analyzing an existing visual text, such as a subtitled movie. The characters’ facial expressions and dialogue reveal this visual text. The analysis shows that Raathacsi film is about a headmistress (principal) converting a poorly run school into one of the best in the state. Geeta Rani is the principal of an unauthorized government school in a secluded area of southern Tamil Nadu. Geetha Rani, the newly appointed headmistress of a government school, fights back against mismanagement and failings of the educational system. She must deal with misbehaving students, unmotivated teachers, and a lack of established rules and regulations. She did her utmost to instruct students and supervise teachers to be professional. Her abrupt, strict, and progressive policies are not well received. Her earnest efforts will bring about some much-needed reform and improve the academic standards in the process, such as conducting discipline in the school area, changing the school atmosphere, changing students’ behavior, organizing a program for students’ talents, engaging students to compete, changing teachers’ performance, approaching students’ parents, and renovating the school’s building. In this film, Geeta Rani makes a favorable impression as a confident woman. This character and film are excellent for empowering and encouraging women.

Keywords: Education, Education Chaos Empowering Women, Film, Film Raatchasi

INTRODUCTION

A film must ‘tell’ and ‘show’ stories (Pichanot & Bhatnagar, 2021). Films are also a source of entertainment (pleasure, happiness, joy, anguish, and mortality), whereas education is a source of inspiration, motivation, information, and communication that enables an individual to realize his or her full potential. Bollywood cinema, now a century old, has recently transformed and quickly emerged as a delectable introduction medium (Kumar, 2000). Indian films are currently developing a lot along with various innovations. There are lots of films that strengthen genres related to life. Inspirational films about women’s empowerment are worthy of many people watching. Women’s empowerment is the process by which women who could not formerly make choices and decisions in life acquire this capacity (Aisyi et al., 2023). How, as women of this century, we are not only required in matters of kitchens, mattresses, and wells. We also have the right to share in the benefit of ourselves in a wider environment, especially if we can do it all.

Recently, numerous films have been produced with the goals of expansion and using creativity to educate people (Fitria, 2021). These facts demonstrate the significance
of the education system and the student-teacher relationship (Fitria, 2022). Numerous empirical studies conducted by social scientists have established a strong correlation between education and national development; all attach nearly equal importance to education as an effective tool for reducing poverty by creating a viable workforce and enabling participation in an increasingly competitive and global economic environment. Bollywood films versus government educational policies are the most popular and well-known industrial facts used to illustrate the reality and fiction of the human lifestyle (Kumar, 2000).

Raatchasi is a 2019 Indian Tamil-language social drama film written and directed by Syed Gowthamraj and produced by S. R. Prakashbabu and S. R. Prabhu under the Dream Warrior Pictures banner. The Tamil film industry has devised the name Kollywood for itself by combining Hollywood and Kodambakkam, the location of the Tamil film industry (Dasgupta & Datta, 2018). In motion picture production, the output of the Tamil film industry surpasses that of Bollywood. Tamil language film industry is India’s third largest film industry in terms of the number of films it generates. Its headquarters is in the Kodambakkam region of Chennai, Tamil Nadu (Saran, 2014). Sahni et al. (2020) state that Tamil cinema is also known as Kollywood, a portmanteau of the term ‘Kodambakkam’, a neighborhood in Chennai where several South Indian film production companies were located. It is India's second-largest film industry in terms of films produced, revenue, and worldwide distribution, with the southern Indian states comprising most of its audience. According to Kunapulli (2023), post-millennium Tamil cinema has increased the number of female protagonists and pivotal roles. In a historically patriarchal industry that relies on a nearly sycophantic male star system, the proliferation of female characters has expanded the possibilities for female prominence in a significant way. In turn, the potential of women actors and women’s narratives showcases and contributes to the larger globalizing impulses of Tamil cinema in the twenty-first century. Tamil cinema became more successful as a result of the advent of sound in film, as local audiences abruptly encountered a language barrier between Tamil and English or Hindi productions (Chan et al., 2011).

In the film Raatchasi, a headmistress named Geetha Rani transforms an inadequately managed school into one of the finest in the state. Lieutenant Colonel Geeta Rani is an Indian Army recruit educator. The government school in R. Pudhur village is poorly maintained and in a terrible state of disrepair. Geetha Rani is the school's newly designated Headmistress. After learning of its existence, Geeta Rani resolves to become the headmistress of a poorly functioning government school to enhance its condition. Geetha Rani hears people speaking negatively about the school upon her arrival in the village, so she progressively implements new positive changes at the school. She makes a few allies and a large number of adversaries, including the local village MLA. Most of the film centers on Geeta Rani's efforts to transform the school into one of the finest institutions in the state. She modifies the school's norms and regulations. She also endeavors to renew positive relationships with the school's alums and parents. Consequently, she earns the ire of the correspondent of a private school (Hareesh Peradi). The correspondent will go to any lengths to impede her development practices, including having her imprisoned. How Jyothika surmounts these obstacles comprises the remainder of the film.
There are several previous studies related to film analysis with education, especially empowered women. Women’s empowerment means giving women rights, regardless of their gender. There are equal rights in participation in the education, community, economic, and political sectors, their involvement is because women have the right to make choices. This concept also means self-love because it allows a woman to prioritize herself and her needs to live according to her wants. There is a great deal of change regarding the position of women in the globe at present. Since the 1970s, the portrayal of women in motion pictures has changed significantly. The portrayal of women in strong roles influences society as a whole to improve the future of women (Kidwai & Ahmad, 2016). In modern India, feminism, women's empowerment, and gender equality are frequently discussed concepts. In addition to other stakeholders, the film industry contributes to women's empowerment (Thangam et al., 2022).

As described by several previous studies that discussed an empowered woman. The movies usually represent women differently from men (Putri & Handayani, 2020). (Cahyanti, 2018) reveals the characterization of the main character in the film American Dream who is good at continuing to fight against oppression from great people in her family and society to realize her dream as a career woman to improve her finances and gain her independence in believing in the by empowering herself and her environment. Zumaeroh (2022) describes the format of the campaign for women's empowerment in the Disney film Mulan 2020 through the character Hua Mulan to prove each woman's ability. Hua Mulan's character can do what men do. No gender equality is already attached to society and can be broken with it. Fani (2022) also described empowered women who appear in several scenes in the film "Layangan Putus" as women who have high self-awareness to choose and determine the path of their life and can act as well as women who rely on themselves and admit that eventually women still need support from other people before deciding on an action.

Based on the previous studies above, there are no studies about Raatchasi films. The researcher is interested in analyzing the Raatchasi film. The discussion of the story from the Raatchasi film carries themes related to life's struggles in terms of education. The meaning of "Raatchasi" itself is a female demon (Iblis perempuan), which is depicted in this film as the power of a female school principal who can make improvements to a school so that it becomes better (Chika, 2023). Raatchasi is a film about a headmaster who transforms a poorly managed school into one of the highest-quality in the state (Kumar, 2000). This film is about the school, the teachers, and the educational system at that school. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in describing more about Raatchasi. Therefore, this research describes the acts of empowering and encouraging women of the main character in fixing education chaos in the film Raatchasi.

METHOD

This research is descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative research attempts to explain how individuals interpret the significance of an event and learn to view it from multiple perspectives. Interpretation is closely related to qualitative research (Neuman, 2013). This study only describes, writes, and reports the facts or information of a situation, an object, or an event. In this study, the researcher attempts to analyze the film by focusing on its main character (Fitria, 2022).
The researcher employs a descriptive strategy when analyzing this film as the subject of this study. Documentation is the instrument used for data collection. The type of document used was a Tamil film, Raatchasi, which can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krCpn6RrNX8. This representation is investigated by analyzing an existing visual text such as a subtitled movie (Fitria, 2023). The characters’ facial expressions and dialogue reveal this visual text.

This investigation determined the actuality, representation, and ideology levels using a qualitative approach and semiotic analysis technique. The representation process is a method of study that involves the investigation of actual signals in their complete form, which may include any sounds, words, images, or objects that function as signs and are arranged as a unified system that can convey and express meaning. Because semiotics is an analysis of signs, semiotics analysis is required to analyze the text (whether from the scene, narration, or visual appearance in the film). The researcher views the film multiple times, concentrating on the dialogue, subtitles, and scenes. Then, the researcher notices the data elements pertinent to the research objective.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This research describes the acts of empowering and encouraging women of the main character (Geetha Rani) in the film Raatchasi.

**Condition of Education Chaos in Film Raatchasi**

The film Raatchasi tells the story of a woman named Geetha Rani who is sent to become the new principal of a school in a remote village, in Southern India.
Many things she observed since the first time she stepped into the school. Starting from a very unprofessional school system to school students who look disorganized. She goes and comes to school as she wants, buys cigarettes in front of the school freely, and fight each other during school hours. Her teachers had a hand in why her students were allowed to behave like that because when Geetha observed her teachers at the school, they had never carried out their duties as teachers. They prefer to gossip, dress up, and skip classes. Their orientation is only limited to money and do not think about the school's future and the students there. The school building is also very inadequate even though it is a public school financed by the government annually. Therefore, she was determined to make major changes for the school's sustainability and her students' future.

She saw many unexpected things in the process, from a very unprofessional school system to messy school students. They go and come to school as they please, buy cigarettes in front of the school freely, and fight each other during school hours.

Based on The figure above, shows that Geetha Rani gives notices to students and teachers in the ceremony. She understands that most students and educators at R. Puthur's school do not obey the rules and neglect their duties and obligations. So the first step taken by Gheeta Rani was to gather all students and teachers in the field to announce that there was a new principal at the school and immediately make rules for all students such as: to go to school on time before 9, the school gate will be locked at 09.05, students are not to jump over walls, and must wear the prescribed uniform (no one should step inside the school without the uniform). Despite hearing the bell ring.
Conducting Discipline in School Area

Based on the figure above, it shows that the coolest moment was when a student smoked and the principal followed where cigarettes were sold. In front of the school, there is a small kiosk on the edge of the school that sells retail cigarettes. Suddenly, the Principal advised not to sell cigarettes to students. She states that the owner cannot sell cigarettes and tobacco products within 500m of the school. The stall owner was annoyed and finally Mrs. Principal joined in too hard by breaking a bottle of drink and the shards were directed to the stall owner.

Changing School Atmosphere

The figure above shows what Geetha Rani did to revive the school by giving a warm-up song. She made it a habit to start every activity at school before learning. She stated “There is a new format for the morning assembly. Everybody must come to the ground as soon as you hear the bell. We will play a song and everybody will dance to the tune. The teachers can also join in the dance if they wish to. This is called a warm-up song”. It showed that Geetha Rani used song and dance can benefit the classroom environment in many ways. Music is expected to help students calm down and relax, while at the same time holding their attention and motivation before the teaching and learning process.
Changing Students’ Behaviour

Based on the figure above, it shows that Geetha Rani reprimanded one of the students who smoked in front of the school, and then asked the child's father to meet him. The next day the student's parents met the school principal. The child's father was an official. He was arrogant and asked the principal not to take care of his son because his son wanted freedom at school. The principal said to the students “You are a zero. You are a zero. Have you achieved anything in life except boasting of your dad's position? Have you ever been ranked in class? Have you ever won an award in a competition? You will be a hero only when you succeed without your dad's help. Alternatively, you will always remain a zero. If you are capable then prove yourself. You will feel proud of yourself if you achieve something in life. You can get out of here if you cannot achieve anything. Geetha Rani tries to advise these students to be able to study and excel in school without taking advantage of his father's big name and wealth.

Organizing a Program for Students’ Talents

Figure 4 Changing Students’ Behaviour

Figure 5 Changing Students’ Behaviour
Based on the figure above, shows that Geetha Rani held a student creativity program to show their talents through the Sunday Box program. She states “The school will be open even on Sundays. All of you don't need to attend school on Sundays. However, I will come here daily. If you have any talent like singing, dancing, or anything else, and if you want to share it with us, you can write about it and put it in the box. It is called the Sunday Box. We will recognize your talent. Geetha Rani demonstrates creative thinking by allowing anyone with desires and requests to record them on paper and place them in the Sunday box. Sunday school is available, but attendance is not required. Each week, one instructor will take rounds serving as Sunday headmaster. The results can be seen in the school’s indirect production of exceptional students and its discovery of students' talents. Therefore, the educator is responsible for uncovering all of these items. Administrator support is crucial in this situation. One teacher will be in charge of the school every day. That one teacher will organize and manage all the events of that day. If anything goes wrong that particular teacher will be held responsible.

**Engaging Students to Compete**

![Image of students engaging in sports activities]

*Figure 6 Engaging Students to Compete*

Based on the figure above, shows that Geetha Rani engaged students to compete in the district tournament. She told the teacher “You will be in charge of the junior district tournament going to be held next week. If we do not win any prize this year it will not make any difference. If he can gather people to protest against me”. Geetha Rani appointed several student representatives to participate in several sports in the tournament and appointed one of the teachers as the head of the district tournament representative.

**Changing Teacher’s Performance**

![Image of teacher engaging with students]

*Figure 7 Changing Teacher’s Performance*
Based on the figure above, shows that Geetha Rani tries to change the teacher's performance. Geetha Rani also warned the teachers who did not enter the class to issue a memo to them. If anyone gets three memos, they will generate suspension. For teachers who have signed the ledger but not inside the school, file a Police complaint against them, Geetha Rani will recommend suspension. She states that school should remain as a school and teachers should be there for students.

She gave an ultimatum to teachers who missed teaching up to three times to make warning letters. If they have been warned three times, give a suspension. If a teacher has signed the ledger but is not in the school, file a complaint with the local police. She also made a rule for the teachers at the school to enter class on time. If there are teachers who do not enter the class even though they have heard the bell, they will be given a warning letter and given a suspension. If there is a teacher who signs the absence book when he does not enter the class, a police letter will be issued. With the formation of these regulations, it is hoped that students and teachers will understand the roles and actions they should take in the school environment.

The figure above shows that Geetha Rani checks the teacher’s teaching ability. This is done to avoid teachers who like not being present in class. Shen every day Geetha Rani came to every class to see how her teacher was teaching. She told the English teacher, “You can easily learn to speak in English by attending an hourly class for forty days. However, students cannot speak English even after studying here for twelve years. They are hesitant. The reason is that the English teacher cannot speak English. I give you thirty days. If you cannot speak English, then I will order your quality check. I hope you got it”. She believes that there are no stupid students, only teachers who are not good at teaching. Many of the teachers still do not even understand the basic knowledge of the subject being taught, she gives one month for the teachers to improve their teaching methods or they will be fired. It makes teachers try hard to improve so they do not lose their jobs.
Approaching Students’ Parents

Based on the figure above, shows that Geetha Rani invited students’ parents to go to school. She invited all parents to come to the meeting. She gave a speech about the role of parents in schools and children. Geetha Rani asks parents “Can the ex-students of this school tell me the changes they have noticed here in all these years?”. Students’ parents state that “Nothing has changed. Everything is as it was. The MLA and MP do not do anything. The officers never report the problems of the school. The government does nothing”. Geetha Rani stated “Then why can't they donate money to the schools? If you come forward to help other institutions besides temples, then we'll notice changes. We should maintain not only the school building but also the toilets. You should wholeheartedly support this cause. I want to tell the laborers whose children study here that they should not make their children laborers in the future. Come forward and help us for the bright future of these children. Only then your children will do well in life. If parents take part in improving school systems and facilities, their children will be more comfortable learning and achieving their goals and making their parents proud.

Renovating School’s Building
Based on the figure above, shows that Geetha Rani tried to call the Public Works Department to renovate the building school. She called an officer of the local Public Works Department (PWD). She emphasized “Funds have been used for the development of the school for the last four years but I do not see any change. I want you to start working from tomorrow. Moreover, if it does not happen, I will go to the PWD office with the entire school”. The next day, the school began to be renovated for the better. Of course, her school rose because of her persistent efforts even though many people were jealous of Geetha's efforts and achievements. There are also competitors from other schools who always cause trouble for the school. However, Geetha can handle everything well because she is not ordinary.

The result in this study revealed that the film succeeds in elevating teaching to a noble profession because the teacher not only ‘humanizes’ his students, but also ‘humanizes’ herself. Geetha Rani develops the self-esteem of students and teachers by emphasizing the future. This element is depicted in several casual yet intriguing scenarios.

Interestingly, Geetha Rani managed to alter society's mentality through education. Administrators must assist instructors in diversifying strategies to make them more engaging and inventive. The school administrator must assist the teacher who reports to him in molding the student's personality. Occasionally, pupils do not yet recognize their potential, talent, intellect, and critical nature. Therefore, the educator is responsible for uncovering all of these items. Administrator support is crucial in this situation.

In line with this study, teachers appear to be a popular topic for feature films (Ambrosetti, 2016). From a social and cultural standpoint, the depictions of what is expected of teachers within the storylines are frequently near to actuality. In many cases, this leads to generalizations about personality and behavior. What works best in 'Ratchasi' is the noble theme of improved education for the disadvantaged and improving the quality of public institutions. The commendable aspect of this film is that it does not stop at posing questions, but also provides convincing answers.

In addition, several advantages of Raatchasi film are: 1) Inspiration for educators and teachers. By seeing the struggle and enthusiasm of the protagonist teacher in changing the school, the audience will be encouraged to give their best in the world of education. 2) Interesting and emotional stories. The Raatchasi film offers an interesting story and can stir up the emotions of the audience. 3) Emphasizing the importance of education as a pillar of development. Through the film Raatchasi, the audience will be made aware of the importance of education as a pillar of development. 4) Submission of implicit social messages. Raatchasi film also contains implicit social messages. 5) Enchanting and quality acting. A figure who plays the role of a teacher manages to bring to life the emotions and strength of a strong woman against a corrupt system. 6) Arousing the spirit of nationalism. The film Raatchasi is also able to evoke the spirit of nationalism through its stories and messages. 7) Stunning shots. The film Raatchasi presents captivating shots.
The use of good composition and a smart color combination can create an atmosphere that can evoke the emotions of the audience.

From this film, we can learn that if we want to advance a school then there must be contributions from all parties including students, teachers, parents, and the environment so that the education process can run smoothly and improve the quality of students and teachers. Besides, another moral value is the supervision of teachers by the principal. Its cover such questions; how can someone be an English teacher but can’t speak English; How can someone become a math teacher if they can only subtract, add, or multiply normally? A teacher is required to be truly professional as an educator following the field of study being taught.

Finally, the film teaches us that education belongs to every child, regardless of their religious heritage, ethnicity, or skin color because humanity transcends such distinctions. Raatchasi film is like a sword that penetrates to the core by severing the blood of the educator's essence, causing them to reflect on the fact that they are an educator. Furthermore, this film demonstrates that as educators, teachers must ensure their students understand and apply the methods they are taught because the method of teaching affects student performance in some manner.

**CONCLUSION**

The theme of the empowered woman is reflected in the film Raatchasi. This film depicts the power of a female school principal who can make changes to a school for the better. At the beginning of her work, Geetha Rani was underestimated by teachers because she was a woman in India who was still strong with the stereotype that women are below the level of men. Especially when it comes to leadership issues. But with strong determination and firm and intelligent personality, makes it easy for her to face every problem that comes her way. Her earnest efforts will bring about some much-needed reform and improve the academic standards in the process such as conducting discipline in the school area, changing the school atmosphere, changing students’ behavior, organizing a program for students’ talents, engaging students to compete, changing teachers’ performance, approaching students’ parents, and renovating the school’s building. In this film, Geeta Rani makes a favorable impression as a confident woman. This character and film are excellent for empowering and encouraging women.

**REFERENCES**


