

Understanding Mental Health Issues through Movies

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With the proliferation of various digital platforms, movies are becoming a regular feature of our daily life. Whether it's a child, a young adult or elderly person, there are plenty of movies for each age group to watch. Now, one can access a large number of movies through libraries, rental stores, cable TV, and the Internet. Since the viewership has been increasing exponentially so has the production of movies. Therefore, we are able to find movies on many neglected and sensitive issues. Now, movies and other programs are not just for entertainment but also serve as a strong instrument to reflect on various concerns related to human life. In many cases, watching a movie is like being deeply involved in the context of the screen and closely relating oneself with various characters, their emotions and life situations. Many movies mark a lifetime impact on our thoughts, beliefs and behaviours. Being such an influential and powerful tool, movies have been increasing their space in our lives. However, as an educator or teacher, we still feel hesitant to include any movie as a part of our pedagogical process as well as counselling of students.

Mental Health issues are one of the key areas in which movies can be effectively utilized to discuss many life challenges with our students. Many problems of a growing up boy or girl under the pressure of family, society and school can be efficiently handled by a teacher through examples of suitable movies. This will be very useful for teachers of all kinds, but the question is how to move forward. The task is not just limited selecting a movie and screening it for students but also involves, first reviewing it from the perspective of mental health and preparing the capacity to relate it with students. Therefore, the first step is to do Movie Review and identify the inherent mental health issues in them. In this context, the following article briefly discusses some examples of such movies.

In the last two decades of Indian cinema, we can find many movies which either prominently show or are completely based on mental health issues. The film 'Taare Zameen Par' is one such movie, wherein a child Ishan is struggling with

various mental health issues due to his dyslexia problem and family's expectations. He has an authoritarian father who expects perfection from his children. He is often compared with his elder ideal brother. The movie shows many challenges of Ishan where nobody is understanding him. To make him serious about studies, he is sent off to a boarding school as punishment. There, the art teacher (Aamir Khan) meets him and tries to understand his mental struggle. If we review this movie from an educator's perspective, we can bring many mental health issues before the students. Further, a child's mind, his imaginary world, struggle, happiness, social pressure, overcoming challenges, support etc. can also be discussed through it.



In this section, many such movie reviews and mental health issues have been discussed from multiple perspectives. Well-appreciated classical films such as 'Modern times', 'Sherlock Holmes', 'Stepford Wives', 'Inside Out', 'Do Aankhe Barah Haath', 'Here and There TV show' etc. have been reviewed deeply to discover and reflect on various issues of Mental health and illness. In their review, we will be also able to see how films have gradually risen to include mental health topics in their stories. For instance, the review of the film 'Modern Times' is discussing the ideas like individuality, modernism, capitalism and taking it towards changing contours of human life. 'Sherlock Holmes' is another cult movie where the main character goes beyond the boundaries of time as well as genres. In 'Stepford Wives', we will be able to analyse the immense importance given to the society over an individual and how it leads to various mental health problems and issues. 'The Edge of Seventeen' is another fine movie on mental health which deals with an individual's ability to negotiate the daily challenges and social interactions of life. And, various shades of

morality will be visible in the movie review of 'Do Aankhen barah haath'. All these reviews are very crucial for educators to advance their understanding about Mental Health issues with reference to growing-up children, individuals, society and the changing world.