



Analysis of Social Dominance Theory in Hindi Drama 'Aadhe Adhure'

Surabhi Bhardwaj, Research Scholar, Department of Dramatics,
University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, Rajasthan, INDIA

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



Corresponding Author

Surabhi Bhardwaj, Research Scholar,
Department of Dramatics,
University of Rajasthan,
Jaipur, Rajasthan, INDIA

shodhsamagam1@gmail.com

Received on : 07/06/2021

Revised on : ----

Accepted on : 14/06/2021

Plagiarism : 09% on 07/06/2021



Plagiarism Checker X Originality Report

Similarity Found: 9%

Date: Monday, June 07, 2021

Statistics: 185 words Plagiarized / 2100 Total words

Remarks: Low Plagiarism Detected - Your Document needs Optional Improvement.

Analysis of Social Dominance Theory in Hindi Drama 'AadheAdhure' Abstract - Mohan Rakesh is the most acclaimed dramatist of modern Hindi drama. His play 'AadheAdhure' is one of the best examples of literature which includes thorough analysis of the complexity between men-women relationship. It includes the dominance of men over women. Gender difference, is one of the variable on which Social Dominance Theory can relate.

Abstract

Mohan Rakesh is the most acclaimed dramatist of modern Hindi drama, His play 'Aadhe Adhure' is one of the best examples of literature which includes thorough analysis of the complexity between men-women relationship. It includes the dominance of men over women. Gender difference, is one of the variable on which Social Dominance Theory can relate. The present paper includes the analysis of the characters and theme of the play towards gender dominance orientation and correlation with Social Dominance theory.

Key Words

Social Dominance Theory, Mohan Rakesh, Aadhe Adhure, men – women, gender, dominance.

Mohan Rakesh was an avant-gardist in modern Hindi drama. He was acclaimed as a transformative figure in postcolonial literature not only in India, but in whole world. His four plays- 'Aashadh Ka Ek Din', 'Lahron Ke Rajhans', 'Aadhe Adhure' and 'Pair Talce ki zameen' became inspirational works of urban Hindi drama and theatre. "Mohan Rakesh had an in-depth, serious and meticulous analysis of the complex relationship between middle-class women and men. His first drama 'Aashad Ka Ek Din', published in 1958, has been nationally acclaimed for the original concern of the playwright. The same fact was confirmed by his second play 'Leharo Ke Rajhans', published in 1963. Despite being modern in composition, both these plays were based on the history, in terms of plot, character, ambience and language. Till that time, almost all the important plays of Hindi were based on the history - Puraans."¹ All the works of Rakesh were rooted in his immediate surroundings. He

tried to convey the new consciousness and conflict seen in the modern relationships between the two genders. Mohan Rakesh accepted the creative challenge to present modern problems effectively in contemporary scripts, characters and precepts in today's lively language and idioms. As a result, Rakesh's wrote a new play named 'Aadhe Adhure' which fulfilled all the above expectations. To deal with modern issues of ego clash and conflicts between male and female, Rakesh has chosen a modern setting in a dysfunctional household, where the characters have no other option then staying together. This play is a empathetic story of the attachment of men and women. The play describes breakups, conflicts, family disintegration search for wholeness, and collapse of social values. At another level, the play is a tragedy of equality of human experience and emptiness of any option or choice in life. Rakesh has given each character a personal and distinct internal rhythm of speaking.

Theatre group 'Dishantar' in Delhi under the direction of Om Shivpuri performed this play in March 1969 in the award ceremony of 'Sangeet-Natak Academy' in March 1969. In April, 1969 'Theater Unit' group in Bombay under the direction of Satyadev Dubey gave a successful houseful performance of the play. Mohan Rakesh was involved in the preparation of this drama from the very beginning with 'Dishantar' group. The personal involvement of Rakesh and the interactions of Rakesh and Om Shivpuri gave a new dimension to the successful performances of this play by this group. "Rakeshji was with him from the first rehearsal and he was the companion of this artistic journey till the first performance. From the choice of tripods in furniture to the enactment of the play, they worked together. "The solidity, intensity and prosperity of 'Aadhe Adhure' gave rise to new theatre movement not only in Delhi, but also in many other cities focusing on Hindi drama. It played its definite historical role in the creation of a large and serious theatre observer class. This performance of 'Aadhe Adhure' by Dishantar is certainly an important record of modern Indian theatre."²

In 1976, Amaal Alana directed 'Aadhe Adhure' in experimental style, and gave a whole new experience to the theatre world. The play was performed by National School of Drama and was presented around 15 times in the same year. Later in Delhi, it was performed by Robin Batra in 1982, and in 1984 by Shyamanad Jalan along with Padatikthratre group. In 1985, Suresh Bhardwaj presented it in his style. 'Aadhe Adure' became the most loved drama of the audiences of all classes and it set new records of popularity. Many successful performances of this play were presented inside and outside Delhi.

Through 'Aadhe Adhure', Mohan Rakesh has linked to modern and contemporary sentiments of the society. At the level of craft Rakesh has used both Indian and Western theatrical elements in his plays. "The truth is that this is not a unified visionary drama. From every investigative point of view, it opens up new levels of meaning and often gives more than one signal."³

The plot of the drama is woven around Savitri, a working woman. She considers Mahendranath, her husband, to be a worthless, selfless and half-hearted, uninterested person as he has lost all his business and is sitting idle at home without any work. For the last twenty- twenty two years Savitri is in search of a man of her imagination to fulfill her ambitions. First of all, she thought Juneja who is a successful man with money and influence and also he is Mahendra Nath's friend can be her soul mate. But this didn't work because Juneja was a trustworthy man for Mahendranath. Later her vision rests on Shivjeet, whom she considered as a 'whole' man with a great degree and experience of wandering the entire world. But soon she considers him to be a two-faced, fake person and moved on. Then she finds Lala Jagmohan who is soft-spoken, always well-dressed and had generosity of spending money. But before they reach any major decision, he shifts to another place for work. Now Savitri finds her latest love interest in Manoj, but before any commitment happens, he runs away quietly with Savitri's elder daughter Binny. She is shocked by this trauma and tries to get in touch with her boss Singhanian for the job of her son Ashok. But that characterless, corrupt and devious person shows interest in

Binny instead of Ashok. Then suddenly Jagmohan returns. Savitri now wants to make a fresh start with him, but he redeems himself by pretending to the changed circumstances. In the end Juneja comes and quotes Savitri's past and keeps her uprooted. Savitri emphatically puts him side, but Juneja tells Savitri that all the blame is on her vision and demands from life. Even if she had married another so-called 'perfect person' instead of Mahendra, after two years, she would have felt that she had married a half-hearted wrong man. Whatever she wants from life, she never gets it from one man and eventually she feels so empty and restless. It is here that Savitri feels the irony of her quest and she says:

"everybody ... everyone - everyone is one. You are exactly one people. Different masks, but faces? ... but Face... everybody's the same."⁴

It's clear that the selection is not possible. We have to live the life given to us. There is no way out of the cycle of destiny and circumstances. At the end of the play, Mahendra Nath who left the house has to return to the same hell. All the main characters are destined to be incomplete. This element of Aadhe Adhure reminds us the concept of Samuel Beckett's 'Theatre of Absurd'. Savitri is at the centre of this absurdist drama, with a desire to complete her life with the 'another' man. But she is attached to her husband like the string of a puppet, which resembles the character of absurd drama 'Waiting for Godot', where the destiny of the couple is sealed together. The return of Mahendranath at the end makes us go around the circle and reach from where we have started, all incomplete beings are back in the halfway house, both of them are back in the eternal hell.

'Aadhe Adhure' includes all the elements helpful in the analysis of Social dominance Theory, and most importantly, this play was among the most successful, and most staged performances in and after seventies. The play is still relevant to the realities of Indian society; hence we see houseful shows of this drama even in 21st century.

When we analyze 'Aadhe Adure' in respect with Social dominance Theory (SDT), it was found that Social Dominance Orientation of each individual is complex. If we take the example of Savitri and examine her deeper psychological level, on one hand, there was sarcastic aggression and sharpening in Savitri's dialogues with Mahendranath, and on the other hand, there was a clear sense of sweetness, humility and flattering in the context of Singhanian. That means with Mahendranath, the SDO of Savitri was high, hence there she is in hierarchy-enhancing position, despite being a female. But with Singhanian and other men, the SDO of savitri was low, so there Singhanian is in hierarchy-enhancing position. SDO's relationship to these variables may vary as a function of hierarchy-group membership, which is designated by class, gender, age so forth. Like, while going out with Jagmohan, Savitri shows the fake innocence, intimacy and a sense of authority like a young girlfriend. The entire force of Savitri's decision relies upon Jagmohan who is coming to 'fetch' her. The word 'fetch' itself speaks about the attitude of the play towards women.

The 'working woman' is a new phenomenon in the Indian society. When assertion of personal rights and individual freedom became important in the unit of family it became difficult to adjust and created a situation of crisis because no one is ready to surrender. As she became a career oriented woman, she's no longer confined to four walls and she became aware of her identity and therefore in a position to assert her now she's able move in the same man's world and meets other men freely. Working women were seen as a threat to the male dominated world and an agent who could destabilize the patriarchal system.

Aadhe Adure has a hegemonic male-friendly discourse, and gives a gender-biased representation. There Mahendranath is in hierarchy-enhancing position, and deals with domestic violence victimizing the woman. Binny's dialogues also throw light on her father's Social dominance Orientation towards her mother Savitri who is a part of 'negative reference group' according to SDT:

“when he gagged her and beat her up...dragging her by the hair to the commode.”⁵

On the other hand Ashok's disgust towards her mother, his repressed frustrations, directionless outrage, rejection and bitterness with sarcastic aggression, not interested in job attitude and indifference towards Savitri's friends are all a portion of Mahendranath's characteristics. Thus Ashok is a part of 'hegemonic group' which enhances the human social hierarchies.

The SDO of Savitri goes well with the hierarch-attenuating element. She wants to bridge the gap between men and women, as she tries to fulfill all those desires which 'man' think to fulfill without any hesitation. She turns out to be a very career oriented ambitious woman who wants too much from life:

“Because the meaning of life for you is how many different things you can have and enjoy at the same time.”⁶

The insecurities and anxiety of children are a part of a dysfunctional modern family. Binny and Kinny, both are the sufferers of male-dominant society who have high levels of hierarch-enhancing attitudes. Binny's failing marriage and mental turmoil as well as Kinny's aggression and unstable mind are extension of Savitri's self.

The character of Savitri is left with a lot of doubts and uncertainties. In front of Juneja, Savitri fights for her truth like a warrior and fiercely exposes Mahendranath and her relations. The words of Savitri shake up the whole group of patriarchal system where she not only questions the masculinity of her husband, his dependency on his friends but also places her actions as consequences of his dominance and violence. The play seems to give a sarcastic analysis of the unsatisfactory and incomplete nature of middle-class existence. The play focuses a disintegrated family through its characters. In this play, though there is inner incompleteness in all the characters but women are more incomplete than men. Everyone is in pieces of their own dilemmas.

Conclusion

In Social Dominance theory, authoritarianism is primarily an intragroup phenomenon concerning 'individuals or groups' attitudes about what the relationship between individuals and their in-groups should be. As we unfold the psychological characteristics of Mahendranath, Ashok, Jagmohan and other male characters of the play, we can say that the correlations between authoritarianism and SDO were strong. Many of the social attitudes conceptually associated with authoritarianism are predicted SDO. When we compare, SDO tells us about individuals' attitudes towards the type of relationship going to happen between in-groups and out-groups, which is an intergroup phenomenon. The SDO of Savitri, and other female character of the play points out the social inequality based on gender, leading to the dominance of men in the society. Hence, the play 'Aadhe Adure' correlates with gender dominance and the theory of Social dominance.

References

1. Taneja, Jaydev, (2015), *Rang Sakshi: Natya Prastootiyon Ki Sameekhsa-Anuviksha-Rapat*, Taxshila Publications, New Delhi, Page - 35
2. Ibid, Page - 40
3. Chatak, Govind, (1984), *Aadhunik Natakka Messiah Mohan Rakesh*, Indraprastha Publication, New Delhi, Page - 44
4. Rakesh, Mohan, (2009), *Aadhe Adhure*, Rajkamal Publications, Page - 109
5. Ibid, Page - 65
6. Ibid, Page - 58
