

Movie analysis for understanding sports psychology in India

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ABSTRACT: : *Sports psychology is an upcoming field in India and has not been extensively studied. Indian movies based on team sports provide a great insight into the psychological aspects like group dynamics, prevalent among the players. It also provides an understanding of the individual attitudes, beliefs, emotions and cognitions. Inclusion criteria for the sample was 10 college students comprising of 5 males and 5 females belonging to middle and higher socio economic strata from Delhi. The study was conducted by selecting two movies namely "Lagaan" and "Chak de India". The data was collected by using Focus Group Discussion method. The analysis was done using narrative analysis. Some of the themes which emerged were goal setting, aggression in groups, competition and cooperation, emotional management and so on.*

Key Words:

Introduction

In today's world career of sports has become highly professional, making up to headlines every day, and reflecting the hard work, aspirations, and achievements of people from all over the world. This shows the value it needs to be given to make the game better and easy to go with.

A psychologist can play a role in many wide-ranging activities; both on field and off field. This will help in broadening the definition of sports psychology in many wide range activities. In general terms sports psychology is defined as an area of psychology that focuses on people, their attitudes, beliefs, participation, cooperation, and other issues related to sports and their organizations, and helps in building skills and proficiency in the game. In 1996, the European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC) produced a broad definition, which, states that, '*Sports psychology is the study of the psychological basis, processes and effects of sports.*' The definition from the American Psychological Association's (APA, 2009) Division 47 (Exercise & Sport Psychology) website states: "*Exercise and sports psychology is the scientific study of the psychological factors that are associated with participation and performance in sports, exercise, and other types of physical activity*"

In 1986, the American Psychological Association officially recognized sports psychology as a branch of psychology, and in 1993 the British Psychological Society formed a Sports and Exercise Psychology Section, which has now become a full division for the society. Sports psychologists can teach skills to help athletes enhance their learning process and motor skills, cope with competitive pressures, fine-tune the level of awareness needed for optimal performance, and stay focused amid the many distractions of the team travel and the competitive environment. Some of the areas or skills that are paid attention in Sports Psychology are: Anxiety Management, Attention Control (Focusing), Communication, Goal Setting, Leadership and Team Building etc.

Movies are narratives which tell stories about characters going through different experiences. Movie Analysis is a qualitative research method, which helps in understanding different aspects of the movie like the cinematography, sound, songs, dialogues, various scenes in the movie and also the overt and covert meanings shown by the movie director.

Ernest Ditcher is the father of Focus Group Method. It was used during the Second World War to investigate and examine the effects on the war. When it is required to gather maximum information in minimum time, focus group method is the best method. It also helps in understanding group dynamics, requires less time and is much more professional in terms of quality of information it gathers. Some of the characteristics of focus group method are the size of the group, which ranges from 4 to 20 members. Additionally, multiple focus groups can be conducted to collect sufficient amount of quality data with variety and mixture. It gives an open and spontaneous environment to the participants to come up with the ideas and thoughts related to the topic. The discussion is free flowing, and participants listen to each other and also help in stimulating thinking of the other participants and influencing the thought process. Every opinion is valued and given importance in the analysis. Ideally, a focus group involves moderator and

assistant moderator. The job of the moderator is to keep note that the discussion is not going out of the defined area and everyone is participating while the assistant moderator notes, runs the tape recorder, and offers food etc. The facilitator usually keeps a guideline for questions to be asked and it should never go for more than 10. An agenda should be developed before conducting the session and also recording should be done after taking an informed consent.

For analyzing the data it must be boiled down to essential information using a systematic technique. Merits of using Focus Group Method is to give importance to variations, inconsistencies and understanding the reasons in the form of experiences, practices and beliefs existing behind it. Also it can be helpful in exploring the meaning of survey findings that cannot be explained statistically. It can turn out to be a better technique if employed with other quantitative or qualitative techniques.

Narrative inquiry is an umbrella term that captures personal and human dimensions of experience over time, and takes account of the relationship between individual experience and cultural context (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Narrative Analysis talks about the stories which are narrated by people, and analyzed systematically. It brings about layers of understanding, about any culture and how change has evolved over time. The way story is being narrated helps in understanding, organizing and analyzing information about how people have understood and interpreted the events. It also helps understand the causes underlying those values, beliefs and experiences that guide the data and the analysis. After the analysis pattern emerges from the data and the task on the part of the researcher is to understand those social discourses that have impacted the constructions and reconstructions.

There are different forms of narrative analysis, some focus on content of narratives, while others focus on meaning and some focus on both. It depends on the philosophical position taken by the researcher. Stories can also be analyzed with the help of other qualitative techniques like Thematic Analysis, Grounded theory etc.

Braun and Clarke (2006) define thematic analysis as: *“A method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data.”* It is the most common form of analysis. Emphasis is placed on understanding and recording the data and therefore the emerged themes become the categories for analysis. Braun and Clarke’s ‘guide’ to the 6 phases of conducting thematic analysis 1. Becoming familiar with the data. 2. Generating initial codes. 3. Searching for themes. 4. Reviewing themes. 5. Defining and naming themes. 6. Producing the report. It is advantageous to use thematic analysis as it is flexible, and it allows for rich and detailed description of data. It can be widely used across all streams of sciences. It is compatible with both essentialist and constructionist paradigms in psychology.

Need of the Study

The need of the study is to understand how sports psychology plays an important role and how it should be understood from a psychological perspective.

Objective

To examine the psychological aspects prevalent in sports as depicted in the two Bollywood movies “Chak De India” and “Lagaan”

Method

Participants

For the study, 10 participants were selected. The inclusion criterion for the participants was 5 girls and 5 boys belonging to the middle and higher socio economic strata. The participants belonged to Delhi and had a minimum qualification of a graduate.

Research Method

A qualitative approach was taken to analyze the data. For this focus group discussion was chosen as a research method. Two Bollywood movies based on sports psychology namely, “Lagaan” and “Chak de India” were chosen.

Lagaan: Lagaan (Agricultural tax) an Academy nominee for the Best foreign Language Film in 2002 is a Bollywood movie created by actor turned directed by Ashutosh Gowariker. The film was based on a Victorian era of the British government. During the movie, the people of the village were mandated to give lagaan to protect their land from the British. Lagaan was given in the form of grains but because of no rain they could not pay the lagaan. So, the British decide to double the tax but the villagers plead to remove the taxes as they were not getting any benefits of paying the tax. The lead character of the film “Bhuvan” (Aamir Khan) tries to negotiate but the Britisher’s challenge for a cricket match. They had put a condition that if

they lose the tax will be tripled otherwise they will be exempted from paying the tax. So, Bhuvan decides to get together the other villagers and make a team to win the match despite the limited resources.

Chak de India: The movie has been directed by Shimit Amin with the lead role of Shahrukh Khan as a coach of the women's hockey team is based on the game of women hockey. This is based on training 16 women. The movie begins with the hockey final match between India and Pakistan and Indian captain Shahrukh Khan misses the penalty or loses the match. Because of losing respect and pride he becomes passive for 7 years. But after seven years he returns with great enthusiasm to train the Indian women hockey team. The women he trains are from different backgrounds and not willing to accept each other. The dynamics during the training provides a great psychological insight to the audience and helps Shahrukh gain his respect again.

Procedure

The research started with welcoming the research participants for the session at Department of Psychology, University of Delhi. The facilitator conducted an ice breaking session with the participants by asking about their most liked movies and the reasons for it. After this the two movies were shown in two different sessions to the participants. The two sessions for the movie lasted for 3 hours each (approx.). After this is in the third session, focus group discussion was held for 40 minutes where the participants discussed on the emerging themes and the context and gave their view points about the movie with the help of the facilitator's leads. After this the participants were thanked for their participation in the discussion.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the qualitative technique "Narrative Analysis". Themes were identified and stated:

Table 1 Identified Themes

Main Theme : Drive For Need Satisfaction	
Convergent Themes	Divergent Themes
1. Team Building	1. Hope
2. Motivation	2. Faith
3. Conflict Management	3. Cooperation
4. Indian Culture	4. Learning Style
5. Leadership	5. Resource Management
6. Emotional Management	6. Indian Culture

Discussion

Sports Psychology is based on understanding the psychological aspects, personality traits, conflict management, leadership, motivation, efforts and group dynamics. The research was conducted with the aim to understand the psychological aspects in sports prevalent in the two Bollywood movies namely "Lagaan"(which means tax) and "Chak de India". The movies were taken with the plan of doing movie analysis with the help of focus group discussion method. The study was conducted at the Department of Psychology, University of Delhi, and was completed in two sessions. The data was audio recorded for analysis with the consent of the participants. The data from the focus group discussion was analyzed using narrative analysis and prominent themes were identified.

The common theme identified from the two movies was "**Drive for need satisfaction**". There was a difference in the common theme which emerged from the analysis of the two movies. Going by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in "Chak de India" Esteem Needs were shown to be scarce and was the prominent need motivating the characters while physiological and safety needs were seen prominently motivating the character leads in "Lagaan".

In Chak de India, Shahrukh Khan had lost honor in society, was blamed for the loss of the match, and was misunderstood as a traitor for missing a goal in a hockey final match with Pakistan. He felt very dejected and wanted to regain his respect. In order to relive his dream and to regain his respect in the society, he offered to become the coach of the Indian women hockey team and trains them to win the world cup. While on the other hand in "Lagaan" the plot was settled in late 1800's when Britishers were ruling and imposing excessively high taxes on the Indian population. In this movie because of absence of rain and prevailing poverty among the villagers they were unable to give the grains in the form of "lagaan" (taxes) to the then ruling government. Aamir Khan as Bhuvan was challenged to play a game of cricket, which was to be played with the British cricket players. It was also decided that if they won they would be exempted from

paying lagaan for the next three years and if they lost they would have to pay thrice the present tax. So, in order to fulfill their physiological and safety needs, they accepted the challenge.

The sub themes, identified which were slightly opposite in two movies were Hope, Faith, Cooperation, Learning style, Resource Management, and Indian Culture. “Hope” is desire accompanied by expectation of or belief in fulfillment. In the two movies, it was also seen that Shahrukh Khan and the players were very hopeful till the end while on the other hand in Lagaan the villagers were hopeless in the start but gained a lot of hope with time. Hope was seen in team members too but not shown overtly. He as a coach was shown working very hard to make them realize that they can do it and it’s not impossible. While in Lagaan, initially apart from Aamir Khan no one else was hopeful and he kept on building hope for them by playing cricket himself, setting an example with which they could relate and reminding them constantly that if they won, they would become their own master and won’t be poor and would lead a satisfying life free from hunger. Second identified theme was “Faith”- It is the complete confidence or trust in someone or something. In Lagaan a lot of faith was seen amongst the team members; however such kind of faith was absent among the women players of Chak de India and was built on by Shahrukh Khan. Third theme was “Cooperation” is voluntarily arrangement in which two or more entities engage in a mutually beneficial exchange instead of competing. So, we can assess that cooperation was present amongst the team members of Lagaan while there was lack of cooperation seen among the women team members. Fourth theme was “Learning Style” approach used to train the team was identified. Aamir on one hand focused more on positive reinforcement, by asking them to imagine a future that they can have, if they dared to be part of the team and play for themselves while Shahrukh Khan used an opposite approach based on discipline and punishment to train the members. The term “reinforce” means to strengthen, and was used in psychology to refer to any stimulus which strengthens or increases the probability of a specific response. Aamir reinforced the team members by appraising their skills and praising for their inner talents. Punishment refers to a change in surroundings or behavior to decrease the occurrence of any behavior. Shahrukh Khan on the other hand used a more discipline oriented approach and used punishment to reduce the excessive pride among the members and unhealthy competition. “Resource Management” is the ability to achieve goals effectively with the use of minimum resources. As shown in Chak de India, the Hockey team was given the resources to accomplish their goal like the coach, the stadium, dormitory etc. Although, once in the movie they were asked to prove their worth forgetting funds for playing internationally, by playing a hockey match with men’s hockey team, and they proved it. On the other hand in Lagaan firstly set back in 1800s, British challenged poor Indians to play a new game with them, without even considering the fact that they were their slaves, and did not have any resources to play. This can be quoted from the movie that after accepting the challenge, Aamir Khan, went to the field the next day and sat nearby the bushes and observed the game to learn it. To his surprise Elizabeth, a British, provided them with the cricket kit and helped them in understanding the game. Last common identified sub theme was “Indian Culture”- The unity in diversity was seen in both the movies. In Lagaan people from different religions like, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs came together to play and were sensitive to each other’s problems which is depicted by their participation in the team as well as in the song “Ghanan Ghanan”. The song depicted hope that they would soon have rains and all their problems would be resolved. In Chak de India as well people from different states like Manipur, Jharkhand, Ranchi, Punjab, Chandigarh etc came together to be a part of Indian Women Hockey team. So, unities of diversity lead to success.

Now, the common sub- themes identified from the analysis were: Team Building, Motivation, Conflict Management, Indian Culture, Leadership, and Emotional Management.

“Team Building” is a process by which people of different attitudes, interests, personalities are motivated to come together and work towards achieving the goal. In Lagaan, Aamir Khan as the leader of the team was shown having a hard time first convincing the villagers to learn the sport and then identifying the hidden talents of the team members. As shown in movie, after accepting the challenge, nobody was willing initially to play cricket and everybody was criticizing the decision to accept the challenge. He then provided everyone a vision saying “*Koi aur chaaratha? Kya karsakte the hum, do guna lagaan bharnakibhitakaatnaih, ye maukahi, hum sirf josh mein haannahikiye, ekumeed to haijisko hum sacchaim badalsaktehai*” (They had no other option and couldn’t fill twice the amount of tax and this was the only way possible, which could provide them little hope). While in Chak De India, Shahrukh Khan was given a team with identified talents who were chosen as the best state players, his task was to make them come together and play as a unified team, and he had tried different methods for it. For instance, “The McDonalds” incident, where they were recognized for the first time that they could work as a team and could win, also the song “Chak De India- Title Song” the lyrics, the picturization of song shows the rigorous training he gave to everyone in team and

how he guided everyone to reach the goal. Also the way he approached Bindya Nayak, the senior most and experienced player who wanted to be the captain but when not chosen was not very abiding to the coach. He went to talk to her, and put his viewpoint on the table and listened to her and solved the issue.

Second, identified sub - theme was "Motivation" known as a reason for people's actions, desires and needs. It is a theoretical construct most difficult to measure and understand. In "Lagaan", when everyone was criticizing Aamir Khan for accepting the challenge given by Britishers, he tried to motivate by making a bat all by himself and started playing in front of everyone saying "*Koi dikkatnaihahi, gore ise cricket boltehai, aur hum isegulli danda*" (We just have different name for the game of cricket), trying to motivate others to come out of their comfort zone and give this game a chance so that they can convert the impossible into possible, also the song "*Baarbaarhaan, bolo jaarhaan, apnijeethounkihaarhaan*", the lyrics of the song very clearly stated that we have to win and we will, and that's how the whole process of motivation started. It exhibited that once a person was psychologically motivated, any difficult or impossible task could be easily converted into an achievable goal or task. On the other hand, in "Chak De India", aspect of Motivation could be easily seen and felt by the participants in the "70 minutes speech" given by Shahrukh Khan, quoting "*ye 70 minute tumse koi naicheensakta*", "*harusinaan se jisnetumpekbhibharosanaikiya, apne 70 minute cheen lo*" (Prove everyone wrong, by making the most out of these 70 minutes). In the end when he motivated the five players for penalty stroke by saying "*Yaadrakho,hamla goal penai, goal keeper kedimagpekro, goal khud be khudhojaega*" (Don't focus on the goal instead understand and distract the goal keeper for success). Very professionally it shows the need for a team leader or coach who not only through actions but also through speech can motivate the players and this skill should be developed.

"Conflict Management" is a way through which frictions that occur in groups are identified and managed. It is a process through which negative aspects are dealt and efforts are done to come out with a positive outcome so as to reach the goal effectively. In "Lagaan", Aamir Khan faced a major conflict when he invited "Kachra" an untouchable into the team as the eleventh player because of his bowling skills but everyone denied to be part of the team, if he would be a part of the team, quoting from the movie "*saarigaonkihawakochhutachhutkihawa se kaheghotraheho?* (Is the whole village polluted by the attitude of discrimination). After which he himself started playing with Kachra and identified his bowling skills and made everyone realize how he was a value addition to the team. In "Chak De India" Shahrukh Khan was shown dealing with the conflicts in the team in a very professional and righteous manner. For instance, in the second part of the movie, before the last match with Australia he had a conversation with Preeti and Komal regarding their differences and conveyed them very clearly that "*kalhumaripoori team eksaath hoke khelegi, agar zaruratpadi to tum donokekhilafbhi*" (Team will play against Australia and can play against you two) - after this Preeti finally told her reason for her behaviour and tells Chautala that "*meieklaundekodikhanachahtihukieklaundiakyakarsktihi*" (I want to show a man that women could also play well) and this resulted in Chautala finally passing the ball to Preeti for scoring a goal and this is how the conflict was managed.

"Indian Culture" was very nicely and beautifully shown in both the movies also interestingly. It was shown in two lights of totally different eras, one was pre independence when Britishers used to rule India and another one was of a Free and Democratic India in 21st century where everyone has right to exercise their fundamental rights. A movie like "Lagaan" which was depicting the India in Victorian period of Indian's British Colonial Raj, at that time Untouchability was a prevalent concept and the player "Kachra" was not allowed to be part of the team because he belonged to very low caste, also as that time patriarchy was the ruling concept so women were not part of the team. Religious faith was shown in the song "*O PaalanHaare*", (O God, who takes care of all) depicts the faith we Indians show in God as an entity which gave us hope that we can overcome any obstacle and it was shown in the movie. On the other hand "Chak De India", depicting India in 21st century. For ex, Chautala hailing from Haryana, patriarchy still persists there and can be easily seen when his dad says "*Pati rotimangega to kyadegi?*" (What will you do when your husband will ask you to cook). This happened when Vidya, the team captain seemed to be struggling with her in-laws who were not allowing their daughter in law to go out of house to be part of a sports team. In spite of these hurdles, today's Indian Women were able to leave a mark and returns home with the World Cup.

Another sub theme identified was "Leadership", known as an ability to guide people, to unleash the talents, and to pave a way to reach the identified goal. In "Lagaan", Aamir Khan emerged as a leader at the need of the hour and took a bold step by accepting the deal without taking consent from other people. He was shown as a risk taker, a visionary, and a tough minded individual. He made an effort by narrating everyone how that would be useful for all of them quoting from the movie "*Raja chahe 100 kodemanjurhai, hum maafnahi mangenge*" (We are ready to get punished by the king but we would never apologize). Some instances were when he unleashed the talents, when he took Elizabeth's help, also when he came to know

about the traitor “Laakha” and everyone was about to beat him to death, he as a leader showing the trait of patience went to him, and asked him the cause and gave him chance to improve. As a result, the other day he played very well and outperformed the other team members. This showed that how confidence in and support for the team members by an effective leader helped members, unleash their talents and to give their best in In “Chak de India”, Shahrukh Khan during training identified the best player for the best position in the field and guided them accordingly. As Bidya was upset about not getting selected as Captain and trying to de-motivate others, thereby effecting the game by not letting other players play. He communicated very clearly to her in her way “*Har team meekundahosaktahai, aur is team kagunda Mein hu*”. (Every team has a rebel and I am the rebel of this team)

Emotional Management, also known as EQ (Emotional Quotient) is about understanding and managing emotions of oneself and others. In “Chak De India” as a coach he hides a lot of emotions that he had gone through and doesn’t let it affect the training of the team and constantly kept motivating and keeping them in touch with the reality that they should come together and play as a team not just for their team but also to prove their worth that they were not any less than the males. In “Lagaan” on the other hand, since the first time Aamir Khan was seen managing emotions, keeping the faith alive that they would win and handling everyone’s emotions and temperament accordingly. Both the movies, had very clearly depicted how the group dynamics operated in both the movies i.e. their structure, interactions, conflicts, processes and forces shaping the group as one.

Limitations of the study were that it is a pure qualitative research, carrying some issues with it like, being biased, small scale, anecdotal, lack of rigor and issues associated with generalizability. Secondly, instead of taking Narrative Analysis as the only qualitative method, triangulation or any other qualitative method could also have been used to study the same data. Lastly, instead of using Focus group as the only tool, reviews from the critics in newspapers or magazines could have been taken into consideration to support the data. Despite the limitations, the strengths of the research was that it was done in an Indian Perspective to understand the various psychological perspectives prevailing in Indian society. Lastly, it was an attempt to contribute in research being done in the area of Sports Psychology in India. Theoretical Implications of the study are that it will add to the research literature, as very few studies were published in the area of sports psychology in India. Practical Implications would be it will gather attention on how sports psychologists are important and what role they play in efficient performance management and there should be an increase in number of sports psychologist recruitment in India. It will be an insightful research for people not related to the field as this will lead to understanding of the field in a comprehensive manner. It would also enhance the understanding related to dynamic nature of sports among the upcoming generation, trying to establish a career in sports.

Conclusion

Movie Analysis was done on two of the successful movies of Bollywood namely “Lagaan” and “Chak De India”. Narrative analysis was done and major theme and sub themes were identified. This paper was an initial attempt to highlight the importance of sports psychology in India. To understand that this area should receive immediate attention by the concerned authorities as it is an upcoming field.

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