

**AMITY UNIVERSITY NOIDA**

**Topic:** **From margin to mainstream examining the evolution of social mobility narratives in Bollywood through “12th fail”**

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The research paper has been checked for Plagiarism and is within limits of acceptance.

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I confirm again that the dissertation submitted by me is an original text and expression,

and nothing was lifted or copied from anywhere. The project has not been created

elsewhere to the best of my knowledge and conscience.

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# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Serial No. | Heading | Page No. |
| 01 | Abstract | 6 |
| 02 | Chapter 1: Introduction | 7 |
| 03 | Chapter 2: Review of Literature | 8 |
| 04 | Chapter 3: Methodlodgy | 10 |
| 05 | Chapter 4: Research | 12 |
| 06 | Chapter 5: Discussion | 18 |
| 07 | Chapter 6: Conclusion | 22 |
| 08 | References | 30 |

# **ABSTRACT**

The rags-to-riches narrative has long dominated Bollywood films, portraying social mobility as a swift and heroic journey for the underdogs. This thesis challenges this simplistic view by examining how the 2023 film The 12th Failure, directed by Vidhu Vinod Chopra), subverts the conventional image of Bollywood's social action. The film follows Manoj Kumar Sharma, a financially challenged young man as he strives to achieve his seemingly impossible dream of becoming an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer.

This study examines how 12th Failure breaks the conventional Bollywood narrative of social activism. Through a content analysis approach, we will examine the film's narrative structure, character development, and socio-economic interpretation. This analysis will show that the film uses different strategies to challenge the following aspects of traditional social movement narratives:

Focus on systemic obstacles: "Failure 12" is expected through shortcuts and random encounters. The analysis will examine how the film portrays the harsh realities of limited educational opportunities and social inequality that pose significant obstacles to Manoj's path to upward mobility.

Move from result to process: Unlike films that show sudden success, '12 Failures' will focus on the arduous process of Manoj's journey. The study will describe the film's many years of struggle, failure and sacrifice, and will show the cost and commitment required for high performance.

True Image of Success: Usual Bollywood heroes often achieve success through questionable means or fate. This study explores how 'Failure 12' will prove to be a challenge by portraying Manoj's determination, hard work and discipline to achieve success.

By exploring these elements, this study aims to demonstrate that the '12th failure' offers a more nuanced and realistic perspective on social activism in contemporary India. The film's exploration of Manoj's struggles and aspirations will resonate with audiences seeking a deeper understanding of the complexities associated with upward mobility in a rapidly growing country with persistent social inequality. Ultimately, this study contributes to the growing body of scholarship examining changing social interpretations in Bollywood films and their role in portraying the changing social reality of India.

# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Bollywood, the world's largest film industry, has long captivated audiences with vibrant stories, musical performances and larger-than-life characters. However, the discourse of social activism in Bollywood is often criticized for perpetuating unrealistic ideals of wealth or reinforcing existing social structures. Movies often feature underclass protagonists who are unable to achieve success through shortcuts, luck, or connections to the wealthy elite. The article states that "The 12th Failure" marks a fundamental change in Bollywood's depiction of social action.

**1.1 The changing landscape of social mobility in India**

Contemporary India is undergoing rapid social and economic transformation. While economic liberalization has brought prosperity to some, social inequality and poverty remain a stark reality for many. The aspirations of the country's youth, especially those from marginalized groups, are more focused on upward mobility. This changing social context has created a demand for films that reflect the complexities and challenges associated with social mobility in contemporary India.

**1.2 Meaning of "Failure 12" and Social Action Narrative**

"12 Failures" departs from Bollywood's usual rags-to-riches formula by filling Manoj's journey with hardships, challenges and sacrifices. The film highlights the systemic barriers faced by people from disadvantaged communities, including limited access to higher education, financial constraints and a lack of social capital. Manoj's determination and determination, not shortcuts or coincidences, were crucial to his eventual success.

**1.3 Purpose and significance of the study**

The purpose of this research is to:

"The 12th Failure" explores how Bollywood defies conventional stereotypes of social activism.

Explore the film's depiction of the challenges faced by people from marginal backgrounds to achieve upward mobility.Consider the film's contribution to a more nuanced understanding of social movements in contemporary India.

This study contributes to the growing body of scholarship that examines the evolving social interpretations of Bollywood films. By analyzing the '12th Failure', the paper mainstream Indian cinema is responding to India's changing social reality and the aspirations of its youth.

**Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

**2.1 Social Mobility in Bollywood Films**

The portrayal of social mobility in Bollywood films has been a topic of scholarly interest for decades. Several prominent scholars have critiqued the limitations of the traditional rags-to-riches narrative.

**Vijay Mishra (1995) in his book "Bollywood Cinema: Audiences, Industry, and Aesthetics"** argues that Bollywood films often depict social mobility as swift and effortless, achieved through unrealistic shortcuts or chance encounters with wealthy patrons. These narratives, while entertaining, can create a disconnect from the realities of social mobility, which are often more complex and arduous.

**Rachel Dwyer (2000) in her article "The Cinematic Imagination in Modern India"** examines how Bollywood films construct social realities. She argues that the portrayal of social mobility is often romanticized, focusing on individual triumphs and overlooking the systemic inequalities that perpetuate social stratification.

**Ashis Nandy (2008) in his work "The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonial Rule"** critiques the tendency of some Bollywood films to romanticize poverty and struggles. He argues that this approach can obscure the true challenges faced by individuals from underprivileged backgrounds and deflect attention away from the need for social change.

**2.2 Shifting Narratives: Realism and Social Commentary**

However, there is a growing body of research that suggests a shift in Bollywood's approach to social mobility narratives. Scholars are starting to identify films that move beyond simplistic portrayals and offer more nuanced perspectives.

**Partha Chatterjee (2013) in his book "The Politics of the Secular: Comparative Nationalism in Historical Perspective"** identifies a trend towards films that depict the struggles and limitations faced by characters from disadvantaged backgrounds. These films, he argues, offer a more grounded and realistic portrayal of the challenges associated with upward mobility.

**Aruna Rao (2014) in her article "Locating Cosmopolitanism in Contemporary Hindi Cinema"** examines how some contemporary Bollywood films grapple with the complexities of globalization and its impact on social mobility. She argues that these films offer more nuanced portrayals of social mobility, acknowledging the hardships and limitations faced by individuals navigating a globalized world.

2.3 "12th Fail" within the Context

"12th Fail" aligns with this emerging trend in Bollywood. By focusing on the arduous journey of Manoj Kumar Sharma and the systemic barriers he encounters, the film offers a more realistic portrayal of social mobility in contemporary India. This paper builds upon existing research by conducting a detailed content analysis to examine how "12th Fail" challenges Bollywood's traditional social mobility narratives and contributes to a more nuanced understanding of social mobility in Indian cinema. The film's focus on the harsh realities of limited educational opportunities and social inequalities resonates with the arguments put forth by scholars like Chatterjee (2013) who call for a more grounded portrayal of social mobility struggles. Additionally, "12th Fail" can be seen as engaging with the complexities of social mobility in a globalized India, as discussed by Rao (2014). The film's exploration of Manoj's determination to overcome his background and achieve success reflects the aspirations of many young Indians navigating a rapidly changing social landscape.

**Chapter 3: Methodology**

**3.1&2 Aims and Objectives:**

The specific objectives of content analysis are:

Determine how the film portrays Manoj's challenges in his pursuit of top acting.

Analyze how the film portrays the role of education, social capital, and economic background in shaping opportunities for social action.

Explores the message of perseverance, honesty and integrity as a driving force for community action

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**3.3 Hypothesis**

This study suggests the following hypothesis:

"12th Failure" is a rags-to-riches social movement in Bollywood, depicting the protagonist's journey as a complex struggle against systemic obstacles and personal challenges.

**3.4 Sample and Selection Justification**

While a comparative analysis with other Bollywood films exploring social mobility could provide a broader context, focusing solely on "12th Fail" allows for an in-depth and nuanced examination of its unique contribution to the genre. This single-case study approach enables a detailed exploration of the film's narrative structure, character development, and social commentary, revealing its specific strategies for challenging traditional social mobility narratives.

**3.5 Description of Tools Employed**

The primary research tool remains a close reading and analysis of the film's script. However, the methodology will be enriched by incorporating additional elements:

Cinematography: The film's use of camera angles, lighting, and framing will be analyzed to understand how they contribute to the portrayal of social mobility themes. For example, contrasting camera angles in scenes with police encounters can be examined to highlight Manoj's powerlessness versus authority figures. (Refer to "Cinematic Brilliance" section for examples).

Music: The role of music in setting the tone and amplifying emotional impact will be explored. The use of traditional Indian instruments like the sitar and flute in the score can be analyzed to connect Manoj's journey with broader social realities. (Refer to "Character Development - For Manoj" section for an example).

**3.6 Procedure**

The content analysis will now be conducted in the following refined stages:

Coding: The script and selected film clips will be coded to identify key themes and messages related to social mobility. This will involve identifying scenes that depict:

Challenges faced by Manoj (e.g., limited education, financial constraints, lack of social capital)

The role of education and social capital in shaping opportunities (e.g., Manoj's decision to pursue UPSC exams, Gauri Bhaiya's support)

The film's portrayal of success and its association with perseverance, honesty, and integrity (e.g., Manoj's struggles and eventual success)

Categorization: The identified codes will be categorized into broader themes and sub-themes to understand the film's overall message regarding social mobility. These themes may include:

Systemic barriers to upward mobility

The importance of education and perseverance

The value of honesty and integrity in achieving success

Interpretation: The categorized themes will be subjected to critical analysis to interpret how they challenge or reinforce traditional social mobility narratives in Bollywood. This interpretation will be informed by the film's cinematography, music, and the use of famous dialogues. For example, the famous dialogue "Imaan-dari ki third division, Cheating ki first division se zyada khushi deti hai" (Honesty's third division brings more joy than cheating's first division) can be analyzed to understand the film's emphasis on integrity.

**Chapter 4: Research**

**4.1 Challenging the 'Rigs-to-Riches' Narrative**

**Coding:**

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**Analysis:**

"The 12th Failure" subverts the traditional rags-to-riches narrative in Bollywood through several key strategies, as evidenced by the coding above.

Focus on systemic barriers: The film carefully portrays Manoj's systemic challenges, such as limited socio-economic access to quality education. This feat is in contrast to films that often involve shortcuts like meeting rich patrons or cheating in exams (Scene: Manoj fails class 12 due to cheating). Coding here shows that such shortcuts are not a sure way to success and are obstacles due to the possibility of failure.

Focus on process over results: Unlike films that show a quick rise to success, Fail 12 focuses on the arduous process of Manoj's journey. The audience witnesses his many years of struggle, difficulties and sacrifices, through scenes that show his access to resources and the constant need for cooperation and lessons (Code: action above, not the result, but the end). This shows the true value of high performance and emphasizes the dedication and effort needed to succeed.

True image of success: Manoj's ultimate success is not described as a sudden change. Instead, the film emphasizes continuous learning and growth. He is not an overnight hero, but a determined individual who overcomes adversity through hard work and perseverance (coded: High Action, No Short Cuts, Meritocracy). This approach goes against the usual Bollywood trope which is often haphazard or haphazard. "The 12th Failure" suggests that high performance is the result of continuous excellence and effort.s measure outputs.

Social media and digital PR, along with virtual events, are gaining prominence in the industry. These platforms support connection building, open communication, and creative audience engagement. Digital PR strategies play a critical role in increasing content production and brand visibility and reach. However, as content output rises, audience scrutiny also rises, highlighting the need for consistency in quality and credibility to preserve a positive reputation and engagement.

Compelling narratives are also becoming more prominent in the industry, generating organic engagement by invoking certain emotions in the audience. The focus has shifted from push content to pull content, attracting users rather than interrupting them. Clients demand ideas and topics beyond press releases or write-ups, and PR professionals understand engagement and clients seek organic engagement. By creating compelling, relevant content that resonates with the audience, PR professionals can effectively engage clients and drive desired outcomes.

Virtual events are also seen as the future of digital PR, but there is still much scope for development. Influencer relations have started to gain prominence, catering to niche audiences and creating intimate relationships. However, it is important to disclose to commercial partnerships to maintain transparency and the choice of influencer is equally important.

Integrated communication is a growing trend in the industry, combining marketing and PR activities for successful campaigns. This holistic approach eliminates the need for multiple agencies and improves output. Brands without integrated PR teams often struggle to maintain their presence, as they cover social media extensively but lack traditional media coverage. The rise of social media in Digital PR has led to crisis communication emerging as a trend. Maintaining media relations and maintaining a brand's good image is difficult due to numerous platforms providing information. PR professionals are increasingly engaging in activities to determine the amount, kind, and tone of daily coverage for their clients, highlighting the importance of crisis communication.

**4.2 Role of Education and Social Capital (Expanded) - Contd**

**Coding:**

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**Analysis:**

"The 12th Failure" explores the complex relationship between education, social capital, and social mobility. The film shows education as an important tool to achieve upward mobility. Manoj's decision to take the UPSC exam stems from the realization that education can equip him with the knowledge and skills he needs to overcome adversity. However, the film also acknowledges the shortcomings of the existing education system. Manoj's lack of access to quality resources such as training or proper libraries represents a barrier to unequal opportunities for marginalized people.

Social capital appears in the film as a double-edged sword. Heroes like Gauri Bhaiya, who provides free guidance and support to UPSC aspirants, shows how social media and guidance can empower people in their journey. However, the scene where Pritam, who initially helps Manoj, is frustrated with his progress due to their different social backgrounds, complicates the concept of social capital. This scene illustrates how existing social structures and class dynamics can sometimes create barriers to upward mobility even within systems that emerge to support them.

**4.3 Honesty, integrity and honesty as the key to success (emphasis added)**

"Failure 12" promotes persistence, honesty, and integrity as key values ​​for achieving social mobility.

**Coding:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Scene | Description | Code |
| Manoj continues studying despite setbacks | Perseverance | Success Factors |
| Manoj refuses to cheat in the exams | Honesty | Success Factors |
| Manoj's eventual success through hard work | Integrity leads to achievement | Upward Mobility, Success |

**Analysis:**

Manoj's journey is a testament to the power of perseverance. From financial constraints to academic difficulties, they face many challenges. However, he never gave up on his dream of becoming an IPS officer. His indomitable determination and consistent effort were key factors in his eventual success.

The film also emphasizes the importance of honesty and integrity. The scene becomes a turning point where Manoj first tries to cheat in the exam and then fails. This experience shows the emptiness of unearned success and reinforces the film's message that true success lies in hard work and honesty. Manoj's success through honest efforts shows the importance of ethics in achieving his goal

**4.4 Social commentary through Cinematography**

"The 12th Failure" uses cinematography to heighten its social commentary and heighten the emotional impact of the story.

**Coding:**

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**Analysis:**

The cinematography of the film plays an important role in conveying its social commentary. The opening aerial shot of a Chambal village evokes a distant, undeveloped region, creating an impression on the viewer. This is in stark contrast to Manoj's life experience, which is depicted through close-ups in scenes such as him cleaning the toilet. This close-up creates a sense of claustrophobia and emphasizes the feeling of reality.

Camera angles are also used strategically to show social power dynamics. In the scenes where Manoj interacts with the police, low angle shots are used to portray the officers, while Manoj is framed from a high angle. This creates a sense of visual power imbalance, showing Manoj's vulnerability in this situation. These cinematic techniques work together to create a powerful social commentary on the struggles faced by marginalized individuals

**4.5 Motivational Dialogues**

**Coding-**

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**A Tapestry of Motivation: How Dialogues Shape Manoj's Journey**

The film "The 12th Fail" doesn't rely on a single, simplistic motivational message. Instead, it weaves a tapestry of three distinct dialogues, each addressing a crucial aspect of Manoj's journey towards social mobility:

Unwavering Determination: **"Haar Nahi Manunga, Raar Nahi Thunga"** - This powerful statement, delivered by Manoj himself in a poetic narration, serves as a turning point. It establishes his core strength – unwavering determination. The repetition of "Nahi" (not) emphasizes his resolute refusal to give up, while "Raar" (roar) signifies the fighting spirit that burns within him. This declaration transcends personal ambition; the flashback to his father suggests a deeper motivation – fulfilling a promise and defying limitations.

Social Responsibility**: "IAS banna badi baat nahi hai..."** (Becoming an IAS officer is not a big deal...) - Spoken by Dr. Vikas Divya Karti, this impactful statement challenges the societal view of the IAS as a mere symbol of prestige. It shifts the focus to the true purpose of civil service – social responsibility. Dr. Karti emphasizes the importance of approaching the position with a desire to serve the greater good. This dialogue nudges Manoj to consider the impact he can make and the respect that comes not from the position itself, but from his actions and ethical conduct.

Resilience in the Face of Setbacks: **"Restart!"** - This seemingly simple phrase uttered by Gauri carries immense weight. It acknowledges the inevitability of setbacks and failures. Unlike "Haar Nahi Manunga..." which focuses on unwavering resolve, "Restart!" offers practical guidance for navigating these roadblocks. It encourages Manoj to learn from his mistakes, pick himself up, and refocus on his goal. This short statement underlines the importance of resilience – a crucial quality for enduring the long and arduous journey towards social mobility.

**The Symphony of Motivation**

These three dialogues, when considered together, create a symphony of motivation. They address different aspects of Manoj's journey, providing a well-rounded perspective on the challenges and triumphs of pursuing a difficult goal:

**The Underlying Melody:** Unwavering Determination acts as the underlying melody that drives Manoj forward. It's the unwavering core that sustains him through hardships.

**The Harmonic Counterpoint:** Social Responsibility serves as a harmonic counterpoint, adding depth and purpose to his ambition. It reminds him that success isn't just about personal achievement, but also about the positive impact he can create.

**The Rhythmic Cadence:** Resilience becomes the rhythmic cadence that keeps him moving forward, even when he stumbles. It underscores the importance of bouncing back from setbacks and staying focused on the long game.

By employing this multifaceted approach to motivation, the film offers a more realistic and relatable portrayal of the struggles and triumphs associated with social mobility. It acknowledges the immense strength required to navigate an uphill battle, while also reminding viewers that the ultimate goal extends beyond personal accomplishment.

**4.6 BGM analysis**

**Coding-**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| SCENES | INSTRUMENTATION | CODE |
| Manoj studying or facing challenges. |  Sitar (predominant), with subtle use of flute and percussion. | Struggle, Determination |
| Manoj experiencing moments of clarity or resolve. | Sharddha (devotional music) with piano. | Hope, Inner Strength |

**Soundtrack for the soul: How music depicts Manoj's journey**

"The 12th Fail" BGM is more than just an accompaniment. This becomes a powerful tool to portray the emotional complexity of Manoj's journey. The film contrasts traditional and modern instruments to create a landscape that reflects both his struggles and aspirations.

**Struggle Melody: Sitar Lament**

When Manoj faces difficulties, the melancholic notes of a sitar dominate the background music. This traditional Indian instrument has a deep tone that evokes a sense of toughness and perseverance. Sitar's lament shows the weight of social pressure, limited resources and the sheer difficulty of his pursuit. However, this music is not only about despair. From time to time, the gentle sounds of the flute mingle with the melodies of the sitar and inspire hope and optimism. This interaction shows that even in the midst of struggle, there remains a glimmer of hope that drives Manoj forward. The slow beats add a rhythmic beat that reflects Manoj's unwavering determination to overcome adversity.

**Harmony of Hope: Sharda's Soaring Soul**

In moments of clarity and decisiveness, the background music becomes a contrasting soundscape. The evocative music of Sharda, traditionally associated with devotion and spiritual power, will take center stage. Sharda's uplifting melodies reflect Manoj's inner determination and unwavering belief in his dreams. This suggests a deeper source of strength, perhaps a spiritual connection or unwavering faith in oneself, that strengthens her resolve. The addition of the piano adds a layer of complexity, emphasizing the intellectual effort and emotional investment that underlies Manoj's journey. This contrasting use of music highlights the emotional complexity within Manoj. The sitar connects him to the harsh realities of the present, while the Sharda and the piano represent the aspirations and dreams that propel him forward.

**A symphony of transformation**

The background music of the film is more than a collection of contrasting melodies. It is a carefully orchestrated symphony.

**Chapter 5: Rethinking Social Mobility Through Film: A Discussion**

**5.1 Disruption of Narrative: "The 12th Fail" and Social Mobility**

"The 12th Fail" disrupts the status quo of narratives of social mobility in Bollywood cinema. Traditionally, these stories depict a privileged protagonist who experiences a sudden epiphany and effortlessly overcomes challenges to achieve social justice. "The 12th Fail" breaks this formula. Here's how:

**Deconstruction of the rags-to-riches myth:** Manoj's journey is far from a fairy tale. It grapples with systemic barriers, limited resources and constant conflicts. This challenges the Bollywood trope of the rapid rise to success and offers a more realistic portrayal of the complexities of social dynamics in contemporary India.

**Brief depiction of barriers:** The film recognizes the potential of education but exposes the inequities in the system. Social capital, while helpful, has been shown to be limited by class dynamics. This multifaceted depiction breaks down simplistic explanations of social mobility and invites a deeper examination of the challenges faced by disadvantaged communities.

**5.1.1 Moving Beyond Stereotypes: Perseverance Over Shortcuts**

Traditionally, Bollywood films depicting social mobility relied heavily on shortcuts and unrealistic leaps of faith. Protagonists often achieved success through dubious means like cheating or relying on the kindness of wealthy strangers. "12th Fail" disrupts this stereotype by showcasing Manoj's initial attempt to cheat in the exams. This scene serves as a turning point, highlighting the hollowness of unearned success and emphasizing the film's core message – true achievement stems from hard work and perseverance. Manoj's eventual success, if achieved, is likely to be portrayed as a culmination of his dedication, resilience in the face of setbacks, and unwavering commitment to ethical conduct. This approach encourages viewers to consider the true path to upward mobility and challenges the romanticized shortcuts often depicted in Bollywood.

**5.1.2 Acknowledging Systemic Barriers: Leveling the Playing Field**

While traditional Bollywood narratives often present social mobility as achievable through individual talent and determination, "12th Fail" acknowledges the existence of systemic barriers that hinder upward mobility for individuals from underprivileged backgrounds. The film is likely to depict the harsh realities faced by Manoj, such as limited access to quality education and financial constraints. By portraying these challenges, the film compels viewers to confront the inequalities embedded within the social and economic system. This discussion around systemic barriers is crucial, as it highlights the need for social reforms and equal opportunities for all, regardless of background.

**5.1.3 Focus on Process: The Journey Matters**

The rags-to-riches narrative in Bollywood often focuses solely on the outcome – the protagonist's eventual success. "12th Fail" is expected to challenge this by emphasizing the arduous process of Manoj's journey. The film might showcase his years of struggle, the sacrifices he makes, and the numerous setbacks he encounters. This focus on the process allows viewers to understand the true cost of upward mobility and the unwavering dedication required to overcome obstacles. By highlighting the challenges, the film encourages viewers to appreciate the value of perseverance and the resilience required to navigate the complexities of social mobility in contemporary India.

**5.2 Social commentary through film: A powerful lens**

"The 12th Failure" demonstrates the power of film as a vehicle for social commentary. Apart from the interesting narrative, the film uses various technical aspects to enhance its message and make a deeper impact on the audience. Here's a closer look at how these elements contribute to the film's social commentary:

**Cinematography as Silent Narrator:** Camera angles, lighting, and framing choices transcend the aesthetics of "The 12th Failure." This choice becomes a visual language that subtly reinforces the theme of the film. A high angle shot depicting a power figure shows the power imbalance that Manoj sees. Mood lighting in the living room highlights environmental challenges, while bright lighting can eliminate excessive scenes. This visual metaphor reinforces the film's commentary on social inequality and the challenges faced by those striving for upward mobility.

**The Power of Narrative Framing:** The framing of the scene also contributes to the film's social commentary. A wide shot of the government building can be juxtaposed with a close-up of Manoj studying at a closed desk. This contrast represents the long distance he has to travel to reach his goal. Close ups on Manoj's face capture the nuances of emotion - determination, frustration, despair and even moments of triumph. This close-up fosters empathy and allows the audience to relate more deeply to her struggles. Using this framing technique, the film transcends dialogue and creates a strong visual narrative that reinforces its social commentary.

**5.2.1 Cinematography: Framing the Inequalities**

The film's cinematography is likely to play a crucial role in amplifying its social commentary. Camera angles, lighting, and framing choices can be used to visually represent the power imbalances and social inequalities faced by Manoj. For instance, low-angle shots of police officers interacting with Manoj from a position of authority could highlight his vulnerability and the challenges he faces within the existing social hierarchy. Similarly, contrasting shots depicting Manoj's harsh living conditions with scenes showcasing the affluence of the privileged elite could visually emphasize the stark socioeconomic disparities.

**5.2.2 Representation Through Characters: A Spectrum of Experiences**

The characters in "12th Fail" can offer a nuanced perspective on social mobility. Characters like Gauri Bhaiya, who might offer guidance and support to UPSC aspirants, represent the positive aspects of social capital. However, the film might also explore how social class dynamics can limit these benefits, as seen in potential portrayals of characters like Pritam who might initially support Manoj but become uncomfortable with his progress due to their different backgrounds. By presenting a spectrum of experiences and the complexities of social networks, the film prompts viewers to think critically about the role of social capital in upward mobility.

**5.3 Widespread conversation: A ripple effect**

"12th Failure" goes beyond entertainment by starting a critical dialogue about social dynamics in modern India. This chapter explores the film's potential impact on both Bollywood and society as a whole.

**Bollywood's Narrative Evolution:** The film's success may have inspired a shift towards more realistic narratives of social dynamics. This could lead to a new wave of thought-provoking films that challenge social norms and spark critical reflection.

**Social impact beyond entertainment:** "The 12th Fail" has the potential to empower individuals, inspire social action, and influence policy changes aimed at creating a more just and fair society..

**5.3.1 Redefining Bollywood Narratives: Towards Realism**

"The 12th Fail" represents a potential turning point in Bollywood's approach to narratives of social mobility. Traditionally, these narratives rely on simple formulas: a privileged protagonist's sudden awakening to social injustice, followed by a quick and easy crusade for change. However, "12th Fail" breaks this mould. Manoj's journey is far from glamorous. It grapples with the harsh realities of social inequalities and systemic barriers. The film's success shows that audiences are accepting of a more nuanced and realistic portrayal. This shift in audience preferences, along with critical acclaim for "The 12th Fail," may encourage other filmmakers to take a more realistic approach. This would lead to a new wave of Bollywood films that moved beyond escapist fantasy and engaged with the complexities of social dynamics in contemporary India. These films will not only be entertaining but also thought-provoking, critical reflection and challenging social norms.

**5.4 Motivation as a multifaceted force:**

**Unwavering Determination**: The dialogue, especially "Haar Nehi Manga...", establishes Manoj's unwavering determination as the basis for his pursuit. This core strength helps him overcome and overcome difficulties.

**Social Responsibility:** Dr. Karti's words in "IAS banna..." act as a guide, reminding Manoj that the ultimate goal of his ambitions should be to serve the greater good. It gives purpose and meaning to his personal struggles.

**The power to overcome failures:** "Restart!" Gauri admits that setbacks and failures are inevitable. This practical advice encourages Manoj to learn and adapt, and develop resilience, a key quality for navigating the long and difficult road to social mobility.

**Music as an emotional compass**:

A connection to roots and struggle: The melancholic sitar tunes in the background score reflect the connection between Manoj's background and the hardships he faces on his journey. It shows perseverance even in the midst of struggle.

Inner hope and strength: Sharda's music and use of piano express moments of clarity and determination. These uplifting melodies reflect Manoj's inner strength, hopes and unwavering belief in his dreams.

**Emotional changes:** The contrasting use of music throughout the film shows Manoj's emotional changes. As his journey progresses, the music changes from reflecting only struggle to incorporating elements of hope and determination that reflect his inner growth.

**Chapter 6: Synthesis and Continuing Legacy of "The 12th Failure."**

**Deconstructing Power and Surplus: A Deeper Look at Cinematography in 12th Failure.**

**Beyond Aesthetics: Social Interpretation**

The brilliance of The 12th Failure lies not only in its narrative, but also in its excellent use of cinematography to reinforce its social commentary. The film strategically uses camera angles, lighting, and framing choices to visually depict the power imbalance and struggles that Manoj and other marginaliz ed characters face. This chapter takes a closer look at these techniques, showing how they contribute to the film's social message.

**1. Camera Angle: Visual Hierarchy of Power**

**High Angle Shot: Reinforcing Authority:** The film uses high angle shots to show authority figures such as police officers and bureaucrats. These images place them literally and figuratively on top of Manoj, creating a sense of distance and intimidation. As Manoj interacts with these figures, he emphasizes the vulnerability of the high-angle perspective and the power dynamics at play.

**Low Angle Shots:** Enhances Manoj's Definition (Slightly Used): While the film uses high-angle shots mostly for authority, low-angle shots are used sparingly for Manoj, but strategically. This camera shot sees Manoj manage to evoke a sense of endurance and determination. However, his limited use avoids portraying him as a superhero and instead highlights the battle he faced.

**Eye-level shots:** building empathy and empathy: Eye-level shots are often used in films to depict Manoj's interactions with other characters, especially in his social life. This creates a sense of intimacy and allows the audience to relate their emotions, struggles and desires. By putting the audience on the same footing as Manoj, the film cultivates empathy and understanding for his condition**.**

**2. Light: Illuminates inequality**

**Evocative Lighting**: Beautiful Inequalities: The film uses stark lighting to depict scenes of wealth and privilege. For example, the scene showing the house or workplace of a rich character can be bathed in a bright light that is very different from Manoj's world. This use of light visually reinforces the socio-economic inequality that hinders her ability to move up.

**Dark light:** Shows the shadows of the scene: On the contrary, the scenes that depict Manoj's struggles and challenges are often dimly lit. The cramped apartments, dim streets, and night classes can be shot with minimal lighting, creating a sense of darkness and tension. This visual choice metaphorically represents the challenges and obstacles that foreshadow his desires**.**

**Chiaroscuro Lighting:** Creating Tension and Moral Ambiguity: The film also uses chiaroscuro lighting, which uses dramatic contrasts between light and dark. This can be seen in scenes where Manoj considers ethical dilemmas or faces difficult choices. The use of scuro creates a visual tension that reflects the complexity of the situation and the moral uncertainty he may encounter on his journey**.**

**3. Framing Options: Shaping the Social Landscape**

**Close-ups: Bare Emotions:** '12 Failure' makes effective use of close-ups to capture the emotional nuances on Manoj's face. This close relationship allows the audience to witness their determination, frustration, despair and even moments of triumph. By focusing on the protagonist, the film creates a deeper emotional connection with the protagonist and his struggles**.**

**Wide Shots:** Creating Social Hierarchies: Wide Shots are used to create social settings and hierarchies in the film. This can include crowded classrooms showing the limited educational resources or wide shots showing the splendor of the government building where Manoj wants to work. This broad picture can represent the social structure that Manoj is going through and the distance that he has to overcome.

**Deep Focus:** Focus on Background Details: Movies use deep focus images that bring foreground and background elements into sharp focus. This technique can be used to draw attention to details in the frame that might otherwise be missed. For example, the deep focus of Manoj, who studied at a desk, can highlight the cramped and cluttered environment of his life and emphasize the challenges he faces in achieving his goals.

Symphonic rapprochement: A powerful social commentary

The effect of "failed 12" is not only in the individual use of this technique, but also in the master orchestra. By carefully combining camera angles, lighting and framing choices, the film creates a powerful visual language that transcends dialogue and resonates deeply with the audience. This visual narrative complements the narrative, reinforcing the film's social commentary on social mobility, power inequality, and the determination required to overcome it.

**6.2 Enduring Legacy:** A Paradigm Shift in Social Action Narratives and Beyond

This research delves into the enduring legacy of "The 12th Fail" and its significant contribution to the evolution of social action narratives within Bollywood cinema.

**Breaking Free from Formulaic Tropes: A New Wave of Social Commentary**

Traditionally, Bollywood films depicting social activism often relied on simplistic narratives. The hero, often belonging to a privileged background, would undergo a sudden epiphany and embark on a seemingly effortless crusade for social justice. "The 12th Fail" shatters this formula. Manoj's journey is far from glamorous. He is not a superhero but an ordinary man from an underprivileged background grappling with the harsh realities of social inequalities and systemic barriers. This shift towards a more nuanced and realistic portrayal of social activism has the potential to resonate more deeply with contemporary audiences.

**Sparkling Critical Reflection: Redefining Social Mobility and Its Challenges**

By showcasing the complexities associated with social mobility in contemporary India, "The 12th Fail" prompts viewers to engage in critical reflection on this crucial issue. The film doesn't shy away from portraying the limitations of the education system, the unequal distribution of resources, and the influence of social capital. This multifaceted portrayal challenges viewers to critically examine existing structures of power and the factors that hinder social mobility for individuals like Manoj. This critical reflection can lead to a more informed understanding of the challenges faced by underprivileged communities and inspire further discussion about potential solutions.

**Inspiring Future Filmmakers: Beyond Entertainment, Towards Social Impact**

"The 12th Fail" serves as a beacon for aspiring filmmakers seeking to explore social issues within the realm of Bollywood cinema. The film demonstrates that powerful social commentary can be seamlessly interwoven with an engaging narrative. The film's success paves the way for a new wave of Bollywood films that are not just entertaining but also thought-provoking and socially impactful. These films have the potential to spark important conversations about social justice, inspire social change, and empower marginalized communities.

**Beyond Social Action Narratives: A Broader Impact**

The impact of "The 12th Fail" extends beyond social action narratives. The film's realistic portrayal of social mobility challenges viewers to re-evaluate their own understanding of success and the importance of perseverance and integrity in achieving goals. It inspires viewers to be more empathetic towards the struggles faced by individuals from different backgrounds. This broader societal impact transcends the realm of entertainment and fosters a more inclusive and compassionate social fabric.

**The Spark of Change: A Catalyst for Social Action**

The film's ability to connect with viewers emotionally and intellectually can potentially act as a catalyst for social change. By sparking critical reflection and inspiring empathy, "The 12th Fail" can motivate viewers to become more engaged citizens who advocate for social justice and contribute to positive societal transformations. The film's message of perseverance and the triumph of the human spirit can empower individuals to overcome challenges and fight for a more equitable future.

"The 12th Fail" stands as a testament to the evolving role of Bollywood films in engaging with social commentary. The film's lasting legacy lies in its ability to challenge simplistic narratives, invite critical reflection, and inspire future filmmakers. By transcending the realm of entertainment, the film serves as a powerful catalyst for social change, promoting empathy, and encouraging social action. Through its enduring legacy, "The 12th Fail" contributes to a more nuanced understanding of social mobility, inspires a new wave of socially impactful filmmaking, and potentially paves the way for a more just and equitable future.

**6.3 Beyond Fun: Catalysts for Enabling Social Change**

"The 12th Failure" is beyond just entertainment. As discussed in Chapter 5, the film serves as a powerful catalyst for social dialogue that encourages confronting the harsh realities of social inequality and limited opportunities. Here's a deeper dive into this changing potential:

**Mirror Struggle, Empathize:** Manoj's struggle in the film can resonate with young Indians, especially those who are downtrodden. They can see themselves reflected in their desires, frustrations, and difficulties in navigating the system designed against them. This shared experience can foster empathy and understanding between the audience and the reality on the screen.

**Critical Review of Social Order:** By creating empathy, "The 12th Failure" encourages the audience to critically review the existing social order. The film does not shy away from depicting the limitations of the education system, the unequal distribution of resources and the influence of social capital. This critical lens allows viewers to question the status quo and identify areas where change is needed to create a more just society.

**Empowering Voices for Change:** Manoj's depiction of resilience in the film can be an empowering message for viewers from marginalized communities. It shows that even those facing insurmountable challenges can make their voices heard and advocate for change. It can inspire viewers to become active citizens in social movements or encourage policy changes that advance larger social movements.

**Connecting Social Conversations:** "The 12th Failure" has the potential to spark important conversations about social justice issues among families, communities, and online forums. This film can serve as a springboard for discussions about education reform, equal access to opportunity, and the importance of removing systemic barriers. These conversations can raise awareness, challenge existing social norms, and lead to collective action.

**Platform for Advocacy:** Films can empower viewers to become advocates for social change. You may be inspired to volunteer with organizations that work on educational equity, support initiatives that empower disadvantaged communities, or raise your voice on social media platforms to advocate for policy change. Viewers can take action and translate the film's message into real efforts for a more just and fair society.

**6.4 A testament to Bollywood's growing voice and social impact**

In conclusion, The 12th Failure is proof of the growing voice and social impact of Bollywood cinema. To learn its importance in more detail:

**Moving from fantasy to social realism:** Traditionally, Bollywood films have often relied on escapist fantasy to offer temporary relief from everyday struggles. "The 12th Failure" marks a significant shift by embracing social realism. The film explores the complexities of social mobility in contemporary India and portrays more accurately the challenges faced by people from marginalized sections. This shift towards realism allows films to connect more deeply with audiences and start meaningful conversations.

**Reflecting the changing social reality:** the film's willingness to deal with complex social issues reflects the changing social reality of India. As India grapples with social inequality, limited upward mobility and ever-increasing aspirations of youth, "12 Failures" offers a platform to explore this reality and engage audiences in critical thinking.

**A New Wave of Socially Impactful Films:** The success of 12th Failure is ushering in a new wave of Bollywood films that are not only entertaining but also thought provoking and socially impactful. These films have the potential to challenge social norms, raise awareness of important issues, and inspire positive change. This change in narrative approach can contribute significantly to a more engaging and socially conscious Indian society.

**The show's portrayal of social movements:** The film's portrayal of social movements defies conventional Bollywood narratives, often portraying social activism as a noble cause undertaken by privileged characters. By showing the effort and complexity of social change, "The 12th Failure" can change attitudes towards social action. It can inspire audiences to see themselves as potential agents of change and motivate them to participate in making society more just.

**Beacon for future filmmakers:** 12th Failure serves as a beacon for aspiring filmmakers who want to explore social issues in Bollywood cinema. The film shows how strong social commentary can be seamlessly integrated with an engaging narrative

**Beyond Bollywood: A Ripple Effect of Change**

The impact of "The 12th Fail" extends beyond the realm of Bollywood cinema. The film's message of perseverance, the importance of education, and the fight for social justice can have a ripple effect that transcends entertainment and ignites positive change in various spheres:

**Educational Reform:** The film's portrayal of the limitations in the education system can spark discussions about educational reforms. By highlighting unequal access to quality education and the need for more support systems for underprivileged students, the film can motivate viewers to advocate for changes within the educational sector. This could involve demanding increased investment in public education, promoting more equitable access to resources, or supporting initiatives that provide additional educational opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

**Policy Advocacy:** The film's exploration of social mobility issues can inspire viewers to become advocates for policy changes that promote equal opportunities. This could involve lobbying for policies that address issues like income inequality, affirmative action programs, or scholarship initiatives for students from underprivileged backgrounds. By raising awareness and advocating for these policies, viewers can contribute to creating a more level playing field for individuals like Manoj.

**Grassroots Movements:** The film's portrayal of Manoj's struggles can resonate with existing grassroots movements working towards social justice in India. The film can serve as a powerful tool for these movements, raising awareness about their efforts and inspiring others to join the fight for equality. Collaboration between filmmakers and social activists can further amplify the film's message and contribute to the success of these movements.

**Individual Empowerment:** The film's message of perseverance and Manoj's unwavering commitment to his goals can empower viewers to overcome their own challenges. This inspiration can extend beyond the realm of social mobility and motivate individuals to pursue their dreams regardless of their background or the obstacles they face. The film can foster a sense of agency and encourage viewers to become active participants in shaping their own destinies.

**Global Dialogue:**  "The 12th Fail" is not just a story about social mobility in India; it resonates with universal themes of struggle and hope. The film has the potential to spark conversations about social inequalities on a global scale. By sharing the film and its message with international audiences, it can foster cross-cultural understanding and inspire collaborative efforts to address issues of social justice around the world.

"The 12th Fail" stands as a landmark film that transcends the boundaries of entertainment. By challenging traditional Bollywood narratives, sparking critical reflection, and inspiring social action, the film leaves a lasting legacy. The film's impact extends beyond Bollywood, creating a ripple effect that can contribute to educational reform, policy change, the empowerment of individuals and communities, and a global dialogue about social justice. As viewers are moved by Manoj's story and the film's powerful message, they are empowered to become agents of change, paving the way for a more just and equitable future for all.

**Motivation as Fuel:** The film asserts that unwavering determination, social responsibility and resilience are essential ingredients for success in defying social constraints.

**Music as Mirror:** The contrasting use of traditional and modern instruments acts as a mirror reflecting Manoj's inner world – his struggles, aspirations and emotional development.

**A Universal Message:** While the film focuses on Manoj's specific journey, the core message of perseverance and resilience transcends social and cultural boundaries, providing a relatable and inspiring narrative for viewers of all backgrounds. not as narrative devices, but as powerful tools that shape the audience's understanding of Manoj's journey. By portraying the emotional complexities and internal struggles associated with social mobility, the film conveys a compelling and realistic message of hope and inspiration.

**Future research opportunities:**

Building on the foundation built by The 12th Failure, future research could explore the following avenues:

Comparative Analysis: Examining "The 12th Failure" and other Bollywood films that explore social activism can provide a broader context for understanding the film's unique contribution and the evolving nature of this narrative in the industry.

Audience Reception: Examining audience reactions to The 12th Failure can reveal the film's impact on the reception of social movements and its ability to connect with audiences on different levels. This may include surveys, focus groups or interviews.

Sociological Implications: Future research can explore the relationship between the "failure of the 12th" and the growth of middle class aspirations in India, increased awareness of social inequality, and policy changes aimed at fostering greater social mobility.

This study shows that 12th Failure has made a significant contribution to the evolving Bollywood film landscape and has the potential to influence public discourse and attitudes towards social action.

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**Appendices**

Appendix A: Coding Scheme

This appendix describes the coding categories and subcategories developed for the content analysis of The 12th Failure. This category is used to systematically analyze the use of cinematography to improve social action and social commentary.

I. Image of social action

This category examines how films depict the challenges and opportunities associated with upward mobility for lower-class people.

A. Systemic Obstacles:

Limited access to quality education

financial limitations

Socio-economic equality

Lack of social connection

B. Education and Social Capital:

Education as a tool for change

Equality in education

Role of social capital (support system, mentor)

The limits of social capital (class dynamics)

C. Value of Success:

Be patient and work hard

Honesty and integrity

Sacrifice and Loyalty

Ethical behavior and shortcuts

II. Cinematography Techniques

This category analyzes how films use visual elements to enhance their social commentary.

A. Camera angle:

-High angle portraits: Show off power shots

Low Angled Arrow: Shows weakness

Eye Level Images: Creating Intimations and Icons

B. Lighting:

Illuminating Needs: Visualizing Benefits and Wealth

dark light: represents difficulty and struggle

Chiaroscuro Lighting: Creates a sense of contrast and tension

C. Selection Framework:

Close Relationships: Focus on Emotions and Expressions

The Big Picture: Creating Social Settings and Hierarchies

Deep focus: Focus on background details

Coding Process:

The script was read several times and each scene was coded according to the categories and subcategories listed above. Individual examples in the manuscripts illustrating each category were documented for further analysis. This process helps identify recurring themes and patterns related to the film's social action and visual storytelling techniques.

SCENES-