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1. Student, Department of English (UG and PG), Bidhan Chandra College Kazi Nazrul University, Asansol West Bengal

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The Transition from Body Shaming to Body Positivity in *Bala* (2019) and *Fatafati* (2023)

Eishita Pal¹

Abstract

Body Shaming is a phenomenon that refers to an act of criticizing or mocking someone based on their appearance irrespective of their class, gender or sex. This paper intends to show the passage from body Shaming to body positivity in two influential Indian Comedy movies *Bala* (2019) and *Fatafati* (2023). The film *Bala* primarily focusses on the struggles of a bald protagonist, while also shedding light on the experiences of individuals with darker skin tones, oversized bodies, and other physical characteristics which are unconventional by societal standards. While the movie *Fatafati* depicts the struggles of an over-sized woman named Phullora Bhaduri, a tailor by profession. By end of the movie, she breaks free from societal norms and ultimately becomes a pioneering plus-sized model, revolutionizing the fashion industry and redefining body image. This topic will explore how the Selected texts feature characters who challenges conventional notions of beauty and that their narratives are powerful and noteworthy. To evaluate this topic, hegemonic masculinity, hegemonic femininity, Goffman's idea of Stigmatization, and Marxist critic Gramsci's Cultural Hegemony, have been used. In a nutshell, this study deals with the characters of the movies, who are the victims of body shaming, how they experience the problems, the negative impacts on their psyche and subsequently overcome them.

Keywords – Body Shaming, Body positivity, Hegemonic Masculinity, Hegemonic Femininity, Stigmatization, Cultural Hegemony, Inferiority Complex.

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The Transition from Body Shaming to Body Positivity in *Bala* (2019) and *Fatafati* (2023) Introduction

The term “body shaming” was first used in the 1990’s. Body shaming is the act of practice of humiliating someone based on their body type by making critical comments about their body shape. Although it is not limited to fat-shaming, shaming for thinness, the scope for body shaming is wide and includes shaming of hairiness in body, height shaming, baldness, shaming of penis size or breast size, shaming of looks, and shaming of skin colour. Society set the ‘beauty standards’ i.e. one should be fair, zero figure (for women) and handsome look, muscular body and must have beards and hair (for men).

Film Producer, “Emma Hanson explores the long history of the changing ‘ideal’ body type. In Ancient Greece through to the Renaissance period and Victorian Britain, larger bodies were idealised”. During the Victorian era, Queen Victoria's physique set the standard for beauty, with a fuller figure being idealized. This admiration highlights the connection between body image and wealth, where a desirable body reflected an affluent lifestyle. By promoting this ‘acceptable’ body type, society indirectly shamed those with different physiques, essentially Stigmatizing poverty. But in Modern age, food costs reduced, and universal healthcare have led to a changing perception of the “wealthy body”. Those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds still have access to food. So, weight does not reflect one’s wealth as it did previously. “Organic food, veganism and exercise classes were all within reach for those with enough income to buy typically more expensive foods. A slim toned body became a physical manifestation of this new wealth distribution” (1).

This excessive emphasis on physical appearance overlooks the inherent beauty of individuality. Everyone is unique, and this uniqueness makes humans, most beautiful creatures in Earth. Naomi Wolf correctly writes, it is very shameful “to admit that such trivial concerns - to do with physical appearance, bodies, faces, hair, clothes - matter so much” (Mishra and Kumar 17). She says in “The Beauty Myth” that it is “an obsession with physical perfection that traps the modern woman in an endless spiral of hopes, self-consciousness, and self-hatred as she tries to fulfil society’s impossible definition of the flawless beauty” (1). The unattainable beauty standard, perpetuated by body shaming, is deeply rooted in capitalist ideologies that equate physical appearance with wealth and status. If you are wealthy and have enough money and time to build your body into an image of ‘health’, or keep up with cosmetic trend, then you are accepted.

Body shaming happens when someone is made to feel shame for his or her physical appearance, body size, or image. This harmful behaviour can manifest through various forms, including mockery, hatred, dehumanization, mistreatment, bullying, disrespect, and so on, ultimately leading to emotional and psychological effects like depression, anxiety, self-worthlessness, and inferiority complex. These individuals who are not fit in traditional gender norms, are generally face discrimination in marketplace, school, college, even private place and while they are travelling (Mishra and Kumar 18).

This paper examines the portrayal of three forms of body shaming - fat shaming, baldness shaming, and colour shaming - in two recent Bollywood comedy film, *Bala* (2019) and Tollywood Comedy *Fatafati* (2023). Apart from these two, there are many movies in Indian film industry which addresses the tussle and experience of individuals those who face shame for their different body type or shape. Bengali film *Teko* (2019) and Bollywood movie *Ujda Chaman* (2019) shed light on the societal struggles faced by individuals dealing with baldness in India. Meanwhile, films like *Double XL* (2022), *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (2015), *Gippi* (2013), Malayalam movie *Da Thadiya* (2012), and Telugu film *Size Zero* (2015) delve into the harassment and stigma associated with being overweight or obese. Additionally, the issues of colour shaming are highlighted in Bollywood movie *Tera Kya Hoga Lovely* (2022) and Malayalam film *Kuruvipappa* (2024).

Literature Review

In a research paper, “Fatness, Baldness and Skin Colour an exploring consequence of Body Shaming and self-acceptance in *Da Thandia* (2012) and *Bala* (2019),” Kishan Kumar Mishra and Nagendra Kumar “explores the stigmatized representation of the characters that are fat bald and of dark skinned in two influential Indian films *Da Thandia* and *Bala*”. This paper delves into the selected texts and highlights characters challenge conventional powerful narratives that challenge, notions of beauty and advocate for body positivity. They used “Goffman’s idea of stigmatization and Alfred Adler’s notion of inferiority complex in this paper”.

In another article, “Bollywood Comedy films Catalyst for Body Positivity and Self as Acceptance,” Kishan Kumar Mishra argues about how Bollywood Comedies have evidenced a shift in their attitude and perspective towards body image. In previous comedy, people of difference physical appearances were Stigmatized but now these comedy movies serve as powerful Catalyst for positive change in Society. This paper is attempted to analysis three selected films such as *Bala* (2019) *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* (2015) and *Gippi* (2013) ,and “explores how these movies influenced individuals’ perceptions, and destigmatize identity, challenge Stereotypes and advocate for self-acceptance”.

In a research article, “Amader Skin: Fighting Against Body shaming,” Mohammad Osman Gani talks about that, “social media and Society have created an unrealistic standard of beauty that forces people to believe they need to look a certain way to be beautiful”. Television commercials constantly suggesting ways “a dark-skinned person can become fairer. A guy below six feet tall persistently advice to follow a certain exercise regime that would make him taller ‘aka’ desirable”.

In a Research paper, “Self-Objectification and Ideal body Shape for men and women,” the author Marissa E. Wagner Oehlhof, argues that “Objectification theory posits that valuing one’s body for appearance rather than performance is associated with a range of negative psychological outcomes.” This paper aims to examine the relation between self-objectification and idea body shape in both men and women.

This article, “Body Shaming: Ramifications on an Individual,” by Nalini Arumugam, “employed a quantitative method where a set of questionnaires regarding body shaming was distributed to members of the public randomly through social media”. This paper stated that “body shaming is the action of expressing humiliation about another’s individuals body shape or Size which can result in severe emotional trauma. Body shaming is serious and gives huge negative effects on the physical and mental health of a person”.

Research Methodology

Aim: The aim of my research paper is to establish the phenomenon of body shaming in Bollywood comedy movie *Bala* (2019) and Tollywood comedy movie *Fatafati* (2023). These movies show the evolution of body shaming to body positivity.

Objectives:

- i. To discuss body shaming and body positivity.
- ii. To discuss hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity.
- iii. To discuss cultural hegemony.
- iv. To discuss stigmatization.
- v. To discuss inferiority complex.

Theoretical Framework

The phenomena of body shaming and body positivity is used in analysing the two Indian movies *Bala* (2018) and *Fatafati* (2023). Regarding shame Tangney and Dearing Say, by citing H.B. Lewis, the feeling of shame, “involves fairly global negative evaluations of the self- the sense that ‘I am an inferior, inadequate, unworthy (or bad, immoral, unprincipled) person’” (Seok, P.22). Body positivity is a movement and a mindset that promotes self-acceptance, Self-

love and Self-esteem, regardless of one's body shape, size, weight or appearance. Self-acceptance refers to the acceptance of both positive and negative body image (Zhao, 2).

The term "hegemony" in 'hegemonic femininity' and 'hegemonic masculinity' draws on Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci's concept, where dominant ideologies and social hierarchies are sustained not only those in power but also by the tacit consent of many individuals at the lower rungs of the social ladder. This collective consent serves to maintain the existing power dynamics and social order, effectively perpetuating the status quo (Bose 1).

Connell (1995) discusses the Hegemonic masculinity is a form of masculinity that is dominant, expresses a successful strategy for domination of men. Connell refers to it as a culturally authoritative form of masculinity that supports the dominance of men and the subordination of women demanding total submission. Although it is a dominant form of masculinity but only a few men can meet the standards. Hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities especially subordinate masculinities, a form of masculinities that is marginalised, stigmatized or subordinate to the hegemonic form of masculinity.

Connell resist the terminology hegemonic femininity at the start because she argues no version of femininity is truly in a position of power in Society. All femininities are considered Subordinate in relation to masculinities and men. She calls the culturally valued form of femininity "emphasized femininity". Taking this forward Schippers describes hegemonic femininity as "characteristics defined as womanly that establish and legitimate and hierarchal and complementary relationship to hegemonic masculinity and that by doing so guarantee the dominant position of men and subordination of women" (Bose 1). Regarding, societal beauty standards and body image, hegemonic femininity embraces Eurocentric features like fairness slenderness and flawless beauty. In India, critics like Sridevi Nair points out that there is a big difference between how real Indian woman look and the unrealistic beauty standards they are expected (1).

The Marxist intellectual Antonio Gramsci developed Cultural Hegemony (1971) as a concept, which is primarily used to mean dominance with consent. Gramsci argued that consent to the rule of the dominant group is achieved by the spread of ideologies - beliefs, assumptions and values - through social institutions such as schools, churches, courts, and mass media, among others.

"Media has been used as an omnipotent technological tool to shape popular culture and circulation of certain ideology in the Social fabric by Capitalist" (Ansari and Roy 113). Branded content or advertising emerged as a powerful marketing tool, enabling businesses to craft compelling brand stories that resonate with their target audience. However, these narratives often subtly reinforce the ideologies of consumerism and patriarchy. Brands try to connect with their audience by incorporating local culture, values and traditions into their marketing stories on advertising. This helps them build sense of community and encourages people to engage with their brand. This strategic approach is called 'Cultural Hegemony' where brands co-opt cultural elements to reinforce their own interest (113-114).

According to Erving Goffman's theory, a social stigma is "an attribute, behaviour or reputation" that society views as unacceptable or shameful. This stigma leads others to categorize an individual into a negative and unwanted stereotype, rather than seeing them as normal or acceptable. Erving Goffman (1963,3) classically defined stigma as "an attribute that is deeply discrediting". A discredited attribute could be readily discernible, such as one's, skin colour on body size or could be hidden but nonetheless discreditable if revealed, such as one's criminal record or struggle with mental illness (Clair. 1). Once a person is stigmatized, they are often associated with stereotypes that leads to discrimination, marginalization and psychological problems.

An inferiority complex is a psychological phenomenon, which signifies an intense feeling of deficiency or insufficiency about something. People with an inferiority complex may feel inferior to others and believe they are not so good, intelligent and attractive. Alder defines: "Everyone (...) has a feeling of inferiority is not a disease; It is rather a stimulant to healthy, makes them depressed and incapable of development..." (Wiki).

Introduction To the Movies

Bala (2019), a Hindi-language satirical Comedy movie directed by Amar Kaushik and produced by Dinesh Vijan. It Stars Ayushman Khurrana (Balmukund Shukla), Bhumi Pednekar (Latika) and Yami Gautam (Pari Mishra). The movie *Bala* (2019) concerned with the protagonist Balmukund Shukla, a young man who struggles hard with his baldness and highlights social issue of colourism through the female protagonist Latika Trivedi.

The movie opens in Kanpur (2005) with the flashback to the childhood of the protagonists, Bala and Latika, showcasing a scene in a classroom where the students ridicule and mock their teacher for his baldness. During his schooldays, Bala took great pride in his physical appearance, particularly his hair on the other hand Latika, a dark-skinned girl was subjected to bullying by Bala and people in general. The scene then, shifts to 2016, where we find 25 years old Bala, now a fairness cream salesman by day and nightclub comic by night, struggling with new reality: he has gone bald. On the other hand, Latika is Lawyer, a confident woman who do not care about her skin colour.

In the movie there are also some minor characters (men and women) who are also suffering from body shaming on looking good. As the plot develops the main character Bala faking his hair and getting married to his crush, a fair-Skinned model Pari Mishra. The climax of the plot reaches, when the next day of marriage Pari comes to know that he is bald. As soon as she filed a divorce case. Bala approaches Latika, a dark-Skinned lawyer, to defend his case but unfortunately, her efforts are unsuccessful. Bala confessed in court that he could never have the courage to confess the truth.

At the end of the movie, Bala realizes that true beauty goes beyond physical appearance. He then publicly removes his false wig, demonstrating that self-love is essential, regardless of appearance.

Fatafati (2023), an Indian Bengali-language movie directed by Aritra Mukherjee and produced by Nandita Roy and Shibhoprosad Mukherjee. Ritabhari Chakraborty as Phullora Bhaduri while Abir Chatterjee takes on the role of Bachaspati Bhaduri and Swastika Dutta plays Bikki Sen, forming the lead cast of the movie. It was huge box office success. The film centers around Phullora Bhaduri, the protagonist, who tussle with the challenges of being overweight forming the core of the story.

Mrs. Bhaduri is a tailor by profession, who lives in Dhulisohor with her husband Bachaspati, mother-in-law Behula, and brother-in-law Gogol. She has a distinctive coffee habit, taking it with 2.5 teaspoon of sugar and ample milk. The movie opens in a hospital setting, where a doctor records Phullora's weight at 95k.g. Furthermore, the doctor highlighting the concern that Phullora's overweight condition may potentially affect her ability to conceive and suspects the possibility of an endometrial cyst. Bachaspati proves to be a loving and supportive husband to Phullora, consistently offering her comfort and reassurance. The film also showcases three other women, close friends of Phullora who shares similar physical attributes- they are all plus sized. The four friends including Phullora, Aruna, Seema, and Rinku. Each of them has their own unique life experience and struggle being a fat woman, which they share among themselves. Her neighbour Bikki Sen, a model and content creator frequently mocks Phullora about her weight.

The movie reaches its climax when Gogol translates Phullora's passionate words about plus size fashion and post them on Instagram under a new account named "Fatafati".

He chose the name “Fatafati” because he thinks “from fat to fatafati” (44:27). She uploads a photo hiding her face and becomes a sensation for plus sized model Miss.Fatafati on social media. She starts to shoot photos for Fashionista brand and later participates in a ramp show organized by Mohini & co.

Discussions

While Bollywood often idealizes women who are fair, tall and, toned-bodies and zero-figure, the Bhojpuri film industry has a different beauty standard, favouring women who are “big, fleshy, with oversized breasts accentuated by colourful cholis or blouses.” Despite prevailing beauty standards Bhojpuri Cinema and music videos uniquely celebrate larger body type as an “index of vernacular idiosyncrasy”. All the leading actresses of Bhojpuri Cinema, like Amrapali Dubey, Kajal Raghvani and Akshara Singh, glorifies “rather healthy, plump, and well-rounded figure that are essentially them from their representative counterparts in Hindi Cinema” (Singh 164).

The movie *Bala* tackles the social issue of colourism and promotes acceptance of darker skin tones. However, this message contrasts with the prevalent bias in Indian film industry, where dark skinned actresses struggle to find opportunities. Interestingly Bhumi Pednaker, who played Latika in *Bala*, had to wear heavy make-up to darken her naturally fair skin, highlighting the industry's lack of representation for darker Skinned woman. (Singh 156). Dusky actresses such as Konkona Sen Sharma and Bipasha Basu have been essentially marginalized and written off in recent time (157). Bhumi Pednaker also gained weight for her debut film *Dum Laga Ke Haisha*, which highlights the challenges faced by overweight individuals.

Body shaming is not limited to women; men are also affected. The Indian film industry has highlighted the struggles of men who are overweight or bald, showcasing that body image issues can impact anyone, regardless of gender. The Bengali language film *Teko* (2019) and Hindi films *Bala* and *Ujda Chaman* (2019) share a common theme focusing on male protagonist struggling with baldness. These movies highlighting the challenges they face in finding a life partner in Indian society, where societal pressure and beauty standards often emphasize a full head of hairs and muscular man. The Malayalam movie *Da Thandia* (2012) revolves around a male protagonist named Luke John Prakash who is an overweight individual. The movie also deals with Luke’s love life and his challenges as an obese man.

Application

Body shaming happens when society’s beauty standards do not match how someone looks, making them feel embarrassed. In the movies, *Bala* and *Fatafati*, the main protagonists like Balmukund Shukla, Latika and Phullora, and other minor characters are subjected to body shaming. In his mid-20's Bala struggles of premature balding, feels embarrassed to face the world. Due to embarrassment, he could not have the courage to reveal the truth about his balding. Latika was also faced criticism for her dark skin. In *Fatafati* the main character Phullora and her friends Aruna, Seema and Rinku face body shaming and are made to feel ashamed of their plus sized body.

‘Hegemonic Masculinity’ which promotes a narrow-idealized view of manhood, can contribute to body shame in men, by emphasizing traits like, toughness, handsome looking and physical dominance, leading to pressure to conform in unrealistic body Standards. This concept is applicable in the character Balmukund Shukla in the film *Bala* who subverts traditional notions of hegemonic masculinity, as his struggles with balding and societal beauty standards render him non-conforming to the conventional ideals of masculine physical appearance. During the promotion of fairness cream, Latika interrupts the seminar pointing out the irony that their company claims to offer solutions for skin issues but has no remedy for hair loss. This awkwardly highlights Bala's own baldness, leading to his humiliation and demotion by his boss, a marketing role to a lesser position in inventory management. His boss stating that “I need presentable boys for marketing... young and energetic” (Bala 16:47-16:51). This line

refers that Bala is not presentable and attractive. Due to hair loss, he is looking like aged and less energetic.

“In terms of appearance and body image, Hegemonic femininity comprises Eurocentric characteristics such as fair, Slim and flawless” (Singh 1). The female protagonist Latika and other minor characters such as Kusum and Latika’s maternal aunt in *Bala* and the friend circle, including Phullora in *Fatafati*, are not fit in the hegemonic femininity. Latika and Phullora destabilized the concept of ‘hegemonic femininity’. Though in her childhood, Latika feels ashamed for her skin tone. But as she grew older, she learned and love herself the way she is. In the movie *Fatafati*, despite being told by Bikki Sen and other people that fashion is not for the fat, Phullora challenges the hegemony related beauty standards and establishes herself as a plus size model, Miss *Fatafati*.

‘Cultural Hegemony’ is a strategic approach where branded content as advertising emerged as a powerful marketing tool. In capitalist society, media enjoys their dominance chiefly through the exercise of hegemony, which signifies an ideological dominance rather than physical. To understand cultural hegemony in movie *Bala*, the lines are quoted from the speech, which is given by Bala, to promote beauty products in a seminar:

...so let me start with my presentation. These are some matrimonial ads...that one factor everyone’s stressed on...is fairness...these songs. Bhajan Samrat, Anup Jalota said “says to Mother Yashodha, Nandalala...why is Radha so fair and me so dark?”, Kumar Sanu said “O fair one ...don’t steal my heart” ...In short who is fair is beautiful. I am not saying this. It’s the ideology of society. A tradition that’s being followed since the onset of time... You can’t change this ideology, but you can change the colour of your skin...Presenting “Pretty You” ... Yes, in only 5 weeks it will make you fair... (13:19-14:28 *Bala*).

In his lengthy speech, Bala employs a tricky strategy to market the fairness cream, perpetuating the harmful notion that dark skinned individuals are not beautiful or appealing. He cites examples from matrimonial adds to Bollywood songs, highlighting how Indian culture often worship fair skin. “Ideology of fairness as a desirable skin complexion in the Indian society has been nourished by the brands to ensure continuous business by providing solutions for darker skin” (Ansari and Ray 117).

In the movie *Fatafati*, the model and content creator, Bikki Sen makes videos on various types of diet or how to be slim, on You Tube. The ideology that a slim body is ideal, has been promoted by influencers in the fashion world, promoting a market for diet culture, targeting plus sized individuals. In one of her You Tube video Bikki Sen is talking about “...intermittent fasting. Complete fasting post dinner for 16 hours. You have eight hours, to eat. As I say, remember, last night what you ate because you just can’t put weight” (1:28:30-1:28:49 *Fatafati*).

Crocker et al (505) state that stigmatized individuals possess some attribute, trait, or characteristic, that conveys a social identity that is devalued in a particular social context. In alignment with the concept of stigma the characters Bala and Latika are stigmatized, because of their appearance. This personal trait or mark is associated with the baldness and skin colour, leading to social disapproval and negative judgement. For her skin complexion Latika was subjected to bully by Bala who calling her “black kubja” (6:54 *Bala*), a derogatory term that highlights her skin tone. When the headline “wife dumps husband for his bald patch, files a cheating case” (*Bala* 1:34:26-1:34:32), comes out in newspaper. As consequence, Bala faced humiliation from other bald individuals who had previously came to know the remedy for his luscious locks (unaware that they were fake). They started bullying and calling him “Baldy” in a hurtful way.

In the film *Fatafati* being an overweight individual, Phullora is not considered as a human being. Phullora’s identity is reduced to his weight, as he is mocking and called “a damn

fatso" (5:03 *Fatafati*) by a toto driver. Later in the fashion show, Bikki humiliates Phullora Infront of everyone, speaks: "...Bachaspati Bhaduri brought his fat wife to do the ramp walk. A fatso will walk along with me...no way! Don't you know? ...How heavy your wife is? She will break the stage..." (*Fatafati* 1:55:24-1:55:46 *Fatafati*). When her mother-in-law sees the backless blouse Phullora made, she made a hurtful remark, saying "decorating an elephant with a string" (8:02-8:05) implying the Phullora's weight makes the stylish garment look ridiculous on her. Rinku, one of Phullora's friend, is beaten and cursed for her body by her husband who saying Rinku: "Damn you sick woman! ... all you do it eat! and bloat up like an elephant..." (1:9:42-1:10:3 *Bala*). Fat women are stigmatized through comparisons of their oversized bodies to elephants.

Body shaming has severe consequences, negatively impacting both physical and mental health. Inferiority complex is a psychological phenomenon one has a feeling of lacking. It leads one suffering from anxiety, depression, social isolation and unhealthy eating disorders. However, in the film, *Bala* has a feeling of inferiority because of his hair is falling. He relates identity loss with the hair loss, as he is very obsessed with his hair. Bala Speaks: "... I am not just losing hair, but also my identity" (20:24-20:26 *Bala*). In a fit of anger and frustration, Bala lashes out at his father, who is also a bald and blames his genetic inheritance for his own hair loss. The feeling of inferiority is so deep, Bala says: "... even dogs make me envy. I wear a cap before wearing my underwear because without it I feel naked..." (36:30-36:38 *Bala*). In addition, he is faced marginalization in office, also dumped by his childhood girlfriend and later divorced by his wife Pari Mishra, making him helpless and depressed, for his appearance. Though Latika is a strong character but later Infront of Bala she confessed that suffering and embarrassment of being a dark-skinned girl in her childhood days. She speaks: "... comment on my skin tone. Embarrassment...suffocation I have been through it all. And you were among them too. When a 10-year-old girl is called dark. You won't understand the mental trauma she goes through..." (1:38:41-1:39:07 *Bala*).

Although Phullora in the film *Fatafati* does not harbour deep-seated feelings of inferiority like Bala, because her husband is very supporting, loving and caring towards her. She is hurt by the social stigma and ridicule she faces due to her body shape. She feels timid about showing her face in Instagram posts and on the ramp. But due to their feeling of inferiority, a teenager girl Muniya and Behula, mother-in-law of Phullora begins to restrictive diet. As consequence they both fall ill.

However, it is very important to promote body positivity, self-acceptance and selflove to combat the harmful effects of body Shaming. The Both films, *Bala* and *Fatafati*, elegantly capture the transformative journey from body shaming to embracing body positivity. Bala uses various methods to cure his baldness and facing stigmatization, marginalization and discrimination in Society. It is first Latika teach him to self-acceptance: "Why don't you accept yourself ...you look good they way you are" (1:48:53-1:43:58 *Bala*).

In a surprising twist at the end of the movie, Bala used the seminar as a platform to promote 'self-acceptance' and self-love rather than fairness cream. Removing his false hair on stage, Bala openly accepted and embraced his true self, promoting a message of self-acceptance and inner beauty. He speaks: "Fair Meaning who is fair is beautiful...you can't change the colour of your skin... why change it? Why change ourselves?... we won't change" (1:55:53-1:58:29 *Bala*). Further he says: "... whether you are fat, scrawny, short, bald or whatever you look like. If you love yourself, the world will love you. come fall in love with yourself" (2:5:15-2:7:15 *Bala*). With sincerity, Bala spoke about embracing individuals who do not conform to traditional beauty standards promoting a message of self-acceptance. On the other hand, Latika is portrayed as determined character who does not entertain the Eurocentric ideology in terms of appearance. "She emphatically rejects the use of so-called beauty products and convinces others not to use" (Mishra and Kumar 21). She states that: "... I don't have a problem with my

complexion, Bala... fake whiteness" (1:16:52-1:16:58 *Bala*). She is very proud about her skin colour.

In the movie *Fatafati*, the female protagonist Phullora is also a strong-willed character. Despite being told by model Bikki Sen and other people that fashion is not for the fat, Phullora writes some lines about fashion: "Fashion is not about being slim or fat. It means to decorate yourself as you wish. Like we decorate our houses. Not all houses are same thing. But we still decorate them. Fashion is the same thing. Just find out which colours and cuts suit your figure" (40:03-40:28 *Fatafati*). These words are about body positivity and plus size fashion. The director showcases that as a plus sized model, Miss Fatafati make some positive influences and promote body positivity on social media. Phullora Insta account is tweeted by a fashion designer Mallika Gupta and writes: "Miss Fatafati can change tomorrow's fashion. Never seen anyone celebrate plus sized bodies like this. We have to rethink about body type" (59:01-59:11 *Fatafati*). At the end of the film, in ramp show, Phullora initially wears a mask, her steps tentative, haunted by past humiliations about her weight. But taking a deep breath, she summons confidence removes her mask and strides forward with a bold and dazzling smile.

Conclusion

The present research focuses on the topic of body shaming because it becomes a hot button issue that is also relevant in 21st century, affecting in our Society. At Some point, we have all been subjected to body shaming, as none of us meet the unrealistic standards of perfection.

The two Indian Comedies, *Bala* and *Fatafati*, successfully captures the phenomena of body Shaming, shedding light on the marginalization and stigmatization prevalent in Indian society and the fashion industry. Moreover, these films often a message of hope demonstrating how body positivity and self-love can help overcome body shaming. The protagonists of these movies boldly challenge traditional ideologies surrounding body shape and beauty standards.

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