

## Resilience of Women in the Selected Films in Mollywood

**JIBIN FRANCIS**

*Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of English  
St. John's College, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli*

**Dr. B. BENESON THILAGAR CHRISTADOSS**

*Associate Professor of English  
St. John's College, Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli*

### Abstract

Films always echo and reflect society. Changes in society influence films and at the same time, society is also influenced by the messages conveyed through films. When the old films are compared with the films of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one can find that the change is drastic. It is not only in the physical or technical aspects like the settings and costumes of the characters, but also in the themes and roles of women. For example, strong women-centred themes were not very much experimented in the old films. But in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a number of such films appear and stereotypical women characters are disappearing. Now there are many movies which depict women as the central characters. Such films get wide acceptance all over the world, because they can empower women. Both directors and script writers are courageous enough to come up with women centred scripts. The theme of resilience in films especially the resilience of women is powerful and it carries a dual function in the society. Firstly, it clearly represents the realities which women face and secondly, it shows how women survive struggles and come back to normal life. This encourages women to retain faith and to come back to normal life. This paper goes through the women characters of some selected Malayalam films which show the real meaning of resilience through their actions and convey a strong message to the world.

**Keywords:** 'Malayalam movies', 'Uyare', '22 Female kottayam', 'How old are you', Will power, Faith, resilience.

The film '22 Female Kottayam' which was directed by Aashiq Abu and released in 2012 is considered as one of the best films in Indian Cinema. It got both positive and negative feedbacks for its new approach and theme. This film can be considered as one of the classic movies in the Indian cinema. It deconstructed the stereotypical characterization of women. Undoubtedly, it showed a new path to the Malayalam films and inspired many writers and directors to place women as centre characters films. Rima Kallingal and FahadhFaasil were cast as the main characters in the film and Rima Kallingal won the State award for best actress for her outstanding performance in the film.

The film revolves around a character named Tessa which was played by actress Rima Kallingal. Tessa hails from Kottayam district in Kerala and works as a nursing student in Bangalore with an aspiration to go to Canada for better options. She meets Cyril who is a travel agent in Bangalore. The character of Cyril was played by actor

FahadhFaasil. Soon, they fall in love and start to live together. The innocent girl, Tessa completely believes in the love and care of Cyril. As the story proceeds she is cheated cruelly and ruthlessly by her beloved Lover Cyril who traps her in a drug case by putting drugs in her bag. She is sentenced to be imprisoned. In Jail she meets a character named Zubeida who is sentenced for a murder case. With the help of Zubeida and her criminal world connections Tessa realizes that Cyril is really a pimp and he was purposefully cheating her with the assistance of his boss. Zubeida puts fire in Tessa and strengthens her to take revenge against Cyril. At that time, Cyril was running a modelling agency in Cochin. First Tessa viciously kills Hedge, the boss of Cyril who had raped her brutally and conspired with Cyril to cheat her. Then she moves to Cochin and her target is Cyril. She comes to Cyril's studio with a different appearance and pretends as an aspiring model. But, Cyril recognizes her and beats her badly. That time, Tessa approaches him by saying that she wants

him. Then, the frustration of Cyril calms down and he wants to enjoy her company. That night, Tessa takes extreme revenge on Cyril by doing Penectomises, a surgery in which male organ is removed. The modality of revenge is new to the Malayalam cinema. After the revenge, during their conversation, Tessa informs him that she is moving to Canada and invites him to Canada if he wants to settle the score.

Definitely '22 Female Kottayam' is a film about the revenge of a women, but more than that it reflects the theme of resilience, a coming back to normal life. In most of the films the theme of resilience of women is not shown or it is never portrayed. Here in this movie, after going through the most difficult and extreme level of brutalities, the woman Tessa is finally able to come back to her life. This is something great. At the end of the movie she moves to Canada for a bright career and life. That moment of resilience conveys the great message that with bravery, boldness and faith, women can overcome the setbacks and capture the life, once lost.

'How Old Are You' is a Malayalam movie directed by Roshan Andrews and released in 2014. Manju Warriar and KunchackoBoban were cast as the major characters in the movie. The story centres on the character named Nirupama, a government clerk and a very dedicated wife who lives for her husband and daughter. Her husband Rajeev, who wishes to go to Ireland and settle there, applies several times for migration. But unfortunately Nirupama's profile is not convincing enough to the Irish companies to sanction her Job application. One day she gets an invitation from the honourable president of India who comes to the school where Nirupama's daughter is studying. During the conversation she poses a question to the president. The idea of that question makes her have a meeting with the president. But the pressure and excitement make Nirupama to faint in front of the president and she becomes a laughing stock in the internet. She becomes a victim for insult both in the public and personal life.

Later Nirupama meets her old college friend Susan David and through her she goes back to her most vibrant, energetic and colourful college days. In those days Nirupama was truly an inspiration for all her folks. Tremendous change occurred to Nirupama in the passage

of time. Engaging in the day to day household affairs she forgot her own identify. Susan her friend helps her to go back to those days and to find again the smart and dynamic Nirupama. Later she explains in the social media, the reason for her fainting in front of the president and the people who once laughed at her become hard-core fans of her bravery and guts for coming and explaining herself in the social media. At the end of this movie Nirupama gets another invitation from the president and this time she is invited for her idea of bio-farming through which she got wide acclaim and popularity.

The film 'How Old Are You' actually conveys the powerful idea of resilience in two ways. One is through the character of Nirupama. In the beginning of the movie she is a colourless or depressed person, but at the end of the movie, she becomes a self-sufficient woman who inspires many. The other is through the person of Manju Warriar.

It is actually the coming back of the great actress Manju Warriar. She comes back to film after 14 years of interval. Truly, the film 'How Old Are You' gives a very good message to the audience by explaining the concept and beauty of life. Women are strong and they have their own values, likes and dreams. But unfortunately they never brighten up rather diminish or fade with the passage of time. This movie clearly breaks that concept and explores the real talent and attitude of women.

'Uyare' is a popular Malayalam movie directed by Manu Ashokan in which Parvathy Thiruvothu, Asif Ali and Tovino Thomas act in the main roles. The movie was released in 2019. The story of the movie revolves around a character named Pallavi Raveendran and that role is played by Parvathy Thiruvothu. Pallavi is an ambitious girl who wants to be a pilot. She works hard for it. Her father too supports her to make her dream a reality. She is in relationship with Govind Balakrishnan who is a very possessive person. One day, after having a heated argument, Pallavi asks him to get away from her life because his love became a torture to her and made her life tensed and stressful. The next day, he makes a sudden and unpredictable attack on Pallavi by pouring acid on her face. The acid attack not only severely damages her eyesight, but also makes her life most horrible and diminishes her dreams of becoming a pilot. She is forced to discontinue her pilot training and return to her hometown.

In the next part of the movie Pallavi is offered a job by Vishal Rajashekarana a well known business person who owns an airline. He understands her attitude and believes in her. The job as an airhostess brings back to her life the happiness and joy which she lost after she had left the pilot training. She enjoys her job and makes herself dedicated to it. One day the flight in which she is working gets into trouble when the Captain becomes unconscious and the bold and courageous Pallavi takes control of the cockpit and saves the life of the passengers from a flight crash. The faith and conviction of Pallavi make her to take a prompt decision. Her timely and wise intervention saves the lives of many passengers.

Pallavi Raveendran's character is truly an example of resilience and it spreads a positive message to the world. She was a victim of acid attack but she recaptured her life due to her strong determination. In many places women go through different traumatic and torturing experiences. But through strong determination and daring attitude they can overcome the issues and challenges in life. There are many acid attack victims like Pallavi who are

going through traumatic experience. Some of them conquer this experience through their strong faith but still there are victims who fail to go back to normal life. This movie can instil optimism in such people and strengthen them to come back to life. The meaning of the Malayalam word 'Uyare' is heights. That itself is positive and gives rays of hope to the viewers. The above films are not made merely for entertainment. They successfully convey a strong inspirational message to the world- the message of Resilience.

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