Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory Of Personality: An Intrinsic Element Of Success Among Eminently Successful Indian Films

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Abstract: Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality known as Freud's structural theory of personality, argues that human behaviour is the result of the interactions among three component parts of the mind: the id, ego, and superego. These three elements of personality, work together to create complex human behaviours. Films also represent the story bounded with the actions of such complex human behaviours. Along with other factors, leading Character's personality's in the film plays a vital role in involving the audience interest. The resolution of conflicts occurring in the film gives a certain level of relief and peace to the audience. The level of the resolution of conflicts is higher when there is a prominent distribution of id, ego, and superego among film characters. Such kind of the distribution of three components among leading characters can be seen in the eminently successful Indian films. This research paper explores how the common element; the distribution of id, ego, and superego among leading characters is an intrinsic element of success among eminently successful Indian films.

Keywords: Sigmund Freud, structural theory of personality, id, ego, superego, Indian Films

I. INTRODUCTION

Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and its functions, especially those affecting behaviour in a given context. Thus, it observes, analysis and predicts human behaviour. Film is a reflection of society. Films cultivate, express emotions in the dramatic or realistic way. Films sometimes catch up to society but sometimes it leads society too. Contemporary research has also revealed more profound aspects of the film's impact on society.

S. C. Noah Uhrig (2005) describes the collective experience of film as an art renders it a wholly distinct leisure activity. Films have independent and robust effects on mental wellbeing because visual stimulation can queue a range of emotions and the collective experience of these emotions through the cinema provides a safe environment in which to experience roles and emotions we might not otherwise be free to experience.

Over the course of more than a century of cinema, knowingly or unknowingly film makers used numerous psychological theories in the construction of films. Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory is one of them. Many filmmakers have also used these implied connections between film language and desire in order to subvert audience expectations in their work, or to engage more thoughtfully with psychoanalysis. Critics of Hollywood films make an observation on horror films. A knife in a horror film is a phallic symbol or a male authority figure as a manifestation of oedipal relations. To cite Noel Carroll," the retrieval of a film's intended meaning and an explanation of its design, then, where a film maker intends psychoanalytic significance, it is an incumbent on the interpreter to attempt to unravel it" (Schneider, 2004).

There are a number of researches conducted on the connection between psychoanalysis and films, but very few on the concept of id, ego, and superego. There is no comprehensive study conducted on the same in India.

Hence, the purpose of the present study is to understand and describe the distribution of Freud's personality trio's

among the characters of successful Indian films of the different genre.

The present study aims to introduce a new psychoanalytic perspective of looking towards Indian films; how Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality is an intrinsic element of success among eminently successful Indian films.

II. FREUD'S STRUCTURAL THEORY OF PERSONALITY

Freud (1920) identified mental life into the tripartite divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory, compartmentalizing the sphere of mental activity into three energetic components; id, ego, superego. The ego, superego, and id are:

- ✓ The id being the source of psychological energy derived from instinctual needs and drives
- ✓ The ego being the organized conscious mediator between the internal person and the external reality
- ✓ The superego being the internalization of the conscious mind, extenuated by rules, conflict, morals, guilt, and so on

In Freud's theory, the id corresponds to the unconscious, the ego to the conscious, and the superego to the "preconscious." The conscious mind is what a person is aware of at any given moment (Figure 2.1). The preconscious may be defined as "available memory." the things a person is not thinking about "right now." but can easily remember (such as moral and social norms). For Freud, however, these two were just the tip of the iceberg: The largest part of the human mind is hidden—unconscious—things that people cannot become aware of easily. These either originate in the unconscious, such as drives and instincts, or they can become "hidden" at some point in life, because people cannot bear to be aware of them, such as memories of trauma.
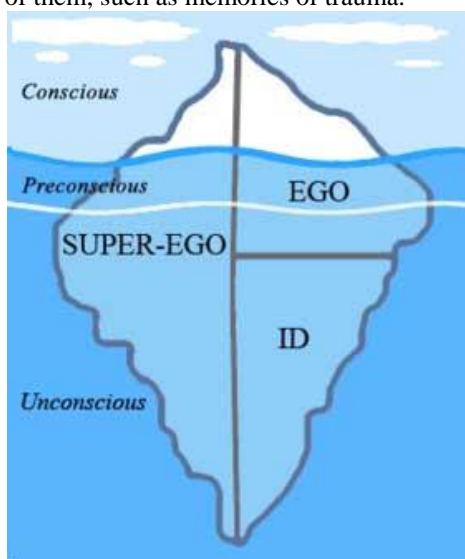

Figure 2.1

A. ID

Freud borrowed the term "Id" from the Book of the It (Das Buch vom Es in German) by Georg Groddeck, a pioneer of early psychosomatic medicine. The id (Latin, "it" in English, Es in the original German) represented primary process thinking—our most primitive, need-gratification impulses. It is organized around the primitive drives of sexuality and aggression that arise from the body. Sometimes the word Freud used in German, Triebe, is mistranslated as "instincts," but it literally means "drives." On occasion, Freud also called them "wishes." Drives are translations of basic human needs into motivational forces.

Freud (1920) identified two main forces among the drives and instincts of the id: life (Eros) and death (Thanatos) instincts. Life instincts perpetuate the life of the individual (all the needs connected to survival: Food, water, shelter, and so on), as well as the life of the species (sex). This synergy that motivates our psyches, Freud called libido, "I desire" in Latin. Libido came to mean the sex drive (not any other drive) in particular, because Freud believed that sex was the most important of the needs in the psyche, and since people are social beings, he considered sex the most social of all needs.

Later in life, Freud started to think that next to the life instincts there is a death instinct. This is an unconscious wish to die. Death promises peace, an end to pain, suffering, and all the negative and unpleasant experiences of life. For many people in the world, life is an everyday struggle and full of suffering. Thus, death is the satisfaction of all human needs. Freud might have agreed with the saying, "the first step of a child is the first step towards death."

B. EGO

Freud (1923) state, the ego is 'that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world.' Ego means I in Latin, the original German word Freud applied was Ich.

In Freud's view, the ego mediates between the id, the superego, and the external world to balance our primitive drives, the moral ideals and taboos, and the limitations of reality. To successfully mediate between all these parties and fulfil its function of adaptation, the ego must be able to enforce the postponement of gratification of the drives and impulses of the id, until such time as the situation (reality) changes or a socially acceptable way to satisfy the drive is found.

Because the id "drives" demand satisfaction and they are often unacceptable to the superego, the ego must establish acceptable conditions. To defend itself from the id's impulses, the ego develops defense mechanisms. These include repression, reaction formation, projection, regression, denial, rationalization, and sublimation. The ego uses such defense mechanisms whenever internal drives threaten to create anxiety, or whenever there is a danger of original, unacceptable impulses to resurface.

Thus, the largely-conscious ego stands in between id and superego, balancing our primitive needs and our moral beliefs. A healthy ego provides the ability to adapt to reality and interact with the outside world in a way that accommodates both id and superego.

Although in his early writings Freud equated the ego with the sense of self, he later began to portray it more as a set of

psychological functions such as reality-testing, defense, synthesis of information, memory, and so on.

Freud (1923) made the analogy of the id being a horse while the ego is the rider. The ego is 'like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse.'

C. SUPEREGO

The "superego" (überich in German) represents our socially-induced conscience and counteracts the id with moral and ethical thoughts. The word "superego" consists of the Latin super (or in German über), meaning "above," or "over," and ego (or ich). So, it actually is "above-ego," the "higher power" of the mind, where the conscience and moral norms reside. Religious people may argue that it is the part of humans where God dwells.

The superego stands in opposition to the desires of the id—fulfilment of our biological desires is often socially unacceptable. There are two reasons why an id impulse can be unacceptable: 1) as a result of a need to postpone gratification until there are reality conditions that make it possible (checking reality for suitable conditions to gratify needs is one of the functions of the ego, as discussed above); 2) as a result of a prohibition imposed by other people (especially parents) and the social environment. The sum of these norms and prohibitions is the content of the superego.

The superego has two sides: conscience and the ego ideal. They function like plus and minus, positive and negative. Conscience involves punishments and warnings; the ego ideal deals with rewards and positive reinforcements.

The superego is based upon the internalization of the world view, norms, and mores children absorb at a young age from their parents and the surrounding environment. As the conscience, it includes our sense of right and wrong, maintaining taboos specific to the child's internalization of parental culture. If the requirements of the superego are not followed, feelings of guilt and/or shame may arise.

According to Freud, the superego arises from the struggle to overcome Oedipal conflict. According to this view, its power is similar to that of an instinctual drive and is a part of the unconscious. Thus, feelings of guilt may arise without any conscious mistake. However, the source of the superego's power lies not in biological needs, but rather in the social pressures the individual experiences.

III. PSYCHOANLYSIS OF FILMS

Psychoanalysis and the cinema were born at the end of the nineteenth century. They share a common historical, social, and cultural background shaped by the forces of modernity. Theorists commonly explore how psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the importance of desire in the life of the individual, has influenced the cinema. But the reverse is also true-the cinema may well have influenced psychoanalysis. Not only did Freud draw on cinematic terms to describe his theories, as in 'screen memories', but a number of his key ideas were developed in visual terms-particularly the theory of castration, which is dependent upon the shock registered by a close-up image of the female genitals. Further, as Freud (who

loved Sherlock Holmes) was aware, his case histories unfold very much like popular mystery novels of the kind that were also adopted by the cinema from its inception. A psychoanalytical approach is one possible way of reading the film.The history of psychoanalytic film criticism is extremely complex-partly because it is long and uneven, partly because the theories are difficult, and partly because the evolution of psychoanalytic film theory after the 1970s cannot be understood without recourse to developments in separate, but related areas, such as Althusser's theory of ideology, semiotics, and feminist film theory. In the 1970s psychoanalysis became the key discipline called upon to explain a series of diverse concepts, from the way the cinema functioned as an apparatus to the nature of the screen spectator relationship.

Despite a critical reaction against psychoanalysis, in some quarters, in the 1980s and 1990s, it exerted such a profound influence that the nature and direction of film theory and criticism have been changed in irrevocable and fundamental ways.

Since the 1970s, theories of psychoanalysis have been adapted for cinema studies. Women and media, reception, and the ontology of the cinematic image were among the first areas to be scrutinized. The use of texts written by Freud and Lacan provided fresh perspectives for film theorists (Allen, 1999). The main focus of these theories was the integration of former approaches like semiotics and feminist film theory. Over time, however, psychoanalytic film theory was met with criticism from other disciplines and other branches within film studies. Just when the demise of psychoanalytic readings of the film seemed imminent, the Slovenian thinker/philosopher Slavoj Zizek contributed to discourses on popular culture through an approach that combined philosophy, psychoanalysis, and film (Zizek, 1991; 1992; 2001). Zizek's approach has been widely accepted, but it should be noted that novel ways of conducting film analysis emerged in the 2000s (Akser, 2011).

IV. INDIAN FILMS

Films have fascinated and entertained the Indian public for a hundred years since the Lumière brothers first exhibited this craft in 1895.Hindi cinema is the largest film industry in the world with the most prolific rate of production. Beyond national boundaries, its aesthetic and affective mode attracts nonwestern audiences in Africa, Eastern Europe, Russia, and the Middle East.

There are difficulties involved in defining whether a film is "popular." First, box office hits are calculated as national aggregates, and such a calculation conceals variations in the success of a film in different regions and over a period of time. Yet not all commercial films supposedly following a formula are successful as business ventures, and more than eighty percent of films produced each year fail at the box office.

Hindi films' subject matter and treatment have constantly evolved, reflecting changes in social and political concerns.

Analysing on the influence on popular Indian films Jones M. (2010) states, that popular Indian films are mostly influenced by the Rasa method of performance, dating back to

ancient Sanskrit drama, is one of the fundamental features that differentiate Indian cinema from that of the Western world.

In the Rasa method, empathetic emotions are conveyed by the performer and thus felt by the audience, in contrast to the Western Stanislavski method where the actor must become "a living, breathing embodiment of a character" rather than "simply conveying emotion."

V. FILMS SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

The social and cultural place of one and the same genre may vary from decade to decade. The way of film making in both aesthetical and the technical term also changes with time. Thus to highlight the importance of the presence of id, ego, and superego; three different eminently successful Indian films from the different time period are selected for the current study.

Criteria for the selection of films
- ✓ Prominent distribution of id, ego and superego traits among lead/supporting characters.
- ✓ Films from the different time period.
- ✓ Globally appreciated, path changing films in Indian cinema, films praised by critics.
- ✓ Highly successful film of that decade on the basis of box office collection
- ✓ Different Genre of Film.

Sr. No.	Film	Release year	Genre
01	Sholay	1975	Action
02	Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge	1995	Romance
03	3 Idiots	2009	Comedy Drama

Table 1: Selected Films

A. SHOLAY

Sholay can be said to have inaugurated the modern period of commercial Hindi cinema. Often described as India's best-known "curry" western, Sholay was 'patterned' on American spaghetti westerns; though as with any other good Hindi film, the presumed 'copy' is at least as interesting as the 'original'. The addition of romance, comedy, and songs gave it the ambiance that one expects of a Hindi film. The film narrates the story of an ex-cop Thakur Baldev Singh (Sanjeev Kumar) who hires two jail birds (Amitabh Bachchan and Dharmendra) to eradicate a town and neighbouring villages of the menace of Gabbar Singh (Amjad Khan) and his band of dreaded dacoits. The story is told in two flashbacks and the climax shows the final encounter between Thakur and Gabbar Singh, where Thakur, whose arms have been cut off, kicks the bandit into submission. (Rajadhyaksha A. 1994)

B. DILWALE DULHANIA LE JAYENGE

Also known by the initialism DDLJ, is an Indian romance film written and directed by Aditya Chopra and produced by Yash Chopra. Released on 20 October 1995, the film stars Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol. The plot revolves around

Raj, Simran and Chowdary Baldev Singh who is settled in London with his wife Lajjo and two daughters, Simran and Chutki. Despite living abroad for more than 20 years, he still strongly believes in Indian traditions, so he arranges Simran's marriage with his friend's son Kuljeet in Punjab, India. Raj, the loafing, care-free son of an NRI, Dharamveer Malhotra, and Simran accidentally meet and fall in love while traveling with their friends through Europe. When Baldev Singh finds out that Simran is in love, he decides to pack and leave for India. Madly in love, Raj comes to India in search of her. His plans to impress Baldev Singh fail. Simran wants to elope but is stopped. The rest of movie is about how Raj is successful in taking his bride by working his way into Kuljeet's family to get to Simran. Earning ☐1.06 billion (valued at about US\$32,766,000 in 1995) in India and ☐160 million (valued at about US\$4,946,000 in 1995) overseas, DDLJ became the highest grossing Bollywood film of the year 1995, and one of the most successful Indian films of all time and also the longest running film in Indian Cinema.(Source : BoxofficeIndia.com)

C. 3 IDIOTS

3 Idiots is directed by Rajkumar Hirani of Munnabhai fame and produced by Vidhu Vinod Chopra. The film stars Amir Khan, Sharman Joshi, Madhavan, Kareena Kapoor, Boman Irani and Omi Vaidya. The film starts with Farhan Qureshi (Madhavan) and Raju Rastogi's (sharman Joshi) quest to find their long lost friend Ranchordas Shyamaldas Chanchard also known as Rancho (Amir Khan) with the help of a college nerd Chatur Ramalingam (Omi Vaidya). While on the way to find Rancho, the film takes us to their life in college where Rancho was an extremely talented student filled with out of the mill philosophies. This made the college principal Viru Sahastrabudhhe's (Boman Irani) ire. The film portrays that Rancho has the capability to do the impossible possible. He convinced his roommate and best friend Farhan to convince his father to take wildlife photography as well as nursing his suicide attempted friend Raju. He even befriends their principal's daughter Piya (Kareena Kapoor) and helps her to realize that the guy whom she plans to marry is an absolute jerk. With plots and subplots, it was proved that Rancho can outsmart any student and won their principal's affection. However after changing everyone's life after graduation Rancho vanishes. Farhan and Raju's quest begins here. As told earlier most of the film is done in flashback but the present situations also bring a comic relief. Anyways, after spoiling Pia's marriage and tolerating Chatur's narcissist comments. The two friends finally met Rancho who is a famous scientist Phunsuk Wangru. Upon release, the film was the highest-grossing film in its opening weekend in India and had the highest opening day collections for an Indian film up until that point. It also held the record for the highest net collections in the first week for a Bollywood film. It also became one of the few Indian films to become successful in East Asian markets such as China.

(Source: BoxofficeIndia.com)

VI. METHODOLOGY

The film has been analyzed through thematic analysis also called as interpretive content analysis; this is a common general approach to analyzing qualitative data that does not rely on the specialized procedures of other means of analysis. In this exploratory approach, the analyst codes (marks or indexes) sections of a text according to whether they appear to contribute to emerging themes. (Schwandt A, 2007) The prior, non-content-specific scheme of coding has been used for the purpose of analyzing the visual data. It is first developed from a careful study of the film and the theoretical interests that drive the inquiry. The codes are derived directly by the researcher from the themes originating in the film and the qualitative data are examined. The codes are organized in a manner that the film can be deconstructed along qualitative themes. The main characteristic associated with id, ego, and superego as per Freud's Theory are coded and discussed as per the appearance in the film. (Table 2).

Unit of analysis					
1.	**Id**	**2.**	**Ego**	**3.**	**Superego**
1.1	Pleasure seeking	2.1	Realistic	3.1	Moral
1.2	Impulsive	2.2	Decision maker	3.2	Judgemental
1.3	Irrational	2.3	Rational/ Reasonable	3.3	Feel Guilty
1.4	chaotic			3.4	Feel proud
1.5	instinctively re actions				

Table 2: Unit of analysis and codes

VII. DISCUSSION

In the selected films, there is a prominent presence of id, ego and superego personality traits among leading and supporting characters. Mostly these films have three main characters, each with one of the following: id, ego, and superego. I think to say that the three main characters of this film are solely personifications of the id, ego, and superego is to ignore the true complexity of the relationships between the characters as well as the characters themselves. Even though it can be seen that the traits; of id, ego or superego are mostly occupied individually by different main characters. Id mostly found associated with the male lead character (hero), while ego and superego are distributed among lead female (heroine) and supporting characters. (Table 3).

Film	Distribution of Id, Ego and Superego among characters					
	A	**Id**	**B**	**Ego**	**C**	**C. Super Ego**
Sholay	A1	Veeru	B1	Jay	C1	Thakur Baldev Singh
Dilwale Dulhania Le jayenge	A2	Raj	B2	Simran	C2	Baldev Singh
3 Idiots	A3	Ranccho	B3	Farhan Qureshi	C3	Raju Rastogi

Table 3: Distribution of Id, Ego and Superego among characters

The representation of id, ego, and superego in the film can be seen by the way of gesture, actions, dialogues and reaction to others actions. There are scenes where a single character is overlapping with id, ego and superego traits still in overall; the character is lean towards id, ego or superego in the entire film. There are a number of scenes who illustrate the current discussion, the following are some of them.

In reference to table 2 and table 3, Id can be seen in selected characters as follow.

Character code from table 3	Scene	Code from table 2
A1	Veeru shows impulsivity in his first meeting with Basanti	1.2
	Veeru giving gun training to Basanti	1.1
	Veeru making fun of Gabbar's dacoit by firing unnecessary while they are leaving back.	1.2
	Veeru comes out from safety zone in front of Gabbar	1.3
	Water tank suicide scene	1.2,1.3
A2	Raj steal beer from Baldev Singh shop	1.2,1.4
	Raj flirting with girls in train	1.2
	Raj's chaotic behaviour in pigeon grain feeding scene	1.4
A3	Rancho's debate with mechanical engineering teacher	1.5
	Rancho explains Priya how her boyfriend is not compatible for love	1.3,1.4
	Rancho taking Raju's father to hospital on bike who had severe heart attack, triple seat, taking bike directly to hospital ward	1.5

Table 4: Id in selected films

In reference to table 2 and table 3, ego can be seen in selected characters as follow.

Character code from table 3	Scene	Code from table 2
B1	Jay returns the key of locker back to Radha, Thakur's daughter-in-law, and decides to stay back till the completion of work given by Thakur.	2.2
	Jay moves towards to Gabbar Singh to touch his feet as threatened by Gabbar to do, but eventually Jay put colours in Gabbar eyes while pretending as he is going down to touch Gabbar's feet	2.2 2.3
	Jay refuses alcohol offered by Veeru for pain relief	2.2
B2	Simran avoids Raj in train, and try to keep a distance from him	2.2, 2.1
	Simran and mother dialogue on love	2.1
B3	Farhan tries to calm down Raju who is angry with Ranchos philosophy	2.3
	Various scene of Farhan mediating between Raju and	2.3

	Rancho	

Table 5: Ego in selected films

In reference to table 2 and table 3, superego can be seen in selected characters as follow.

Character code from table 3	Scene	Code from table 2
C1	Sneak thief Jay and Veeru ask policeman Thakur Baldev Singh to release them for money, Thakur Baldev Singh refuses.	3.1
	Thakurs debate with villagers after the death of Sachin, son of Ahmad. Dialogue: Thakur will leave in dignity only with proud.	3.4
C2	Baldev Singh's anger burst at home against Raj misbehaviour at shop, judgemental comments on western culture	3.2
	Baldev Singh's reaction after knowing simran's love	3.1
	Baldev Singh slaps Raj for cheating on them	3.2
C3	Raju slap Rancho for taking his father casually to hospital who had severe heart attack	3.2
	Raju refuses to take stolen exam question paper	3.1

Table 6: Superego in selected films

Overall, in Sholay, it can be seen that Veeru is very impulsive, pleasure-seeking while jay is almost rational in his thinking and action. The most crucial decisions in the film were taken by Jay. While Thakur Baldev Singh character is based on moral values.

In DDLJ, Raj's character is pleasure-seeking, impulsive and irrational. Simran tries to balance in between her love for raj and following father's moral values. Baldev Singh's character shows proud for his culture and judgmental for other cultures.

In 3 Idiot, Rancho is fun-loving, impulsive, and chaotic. His interaction with teacher shows his instinctively reactive nature. Raju Rastogi is confused between his responsibility towards family and own desires. He carries guilt when he comes across consequences of his own actions. Farhan Qureshi is a mediator between Rancho and Raju. He always tries to rationalize things to settle down conflicts.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

One more common, interesting psychoanalytic aspect can be seen in these three films. Towards the end of the story, all the three id characters show egoistic behaviour doing rational actions applying sublimation as a defence mechanism. Veeru in Sholay choose to settle down with Basanti, Raj in DDLJ refuses to elope with Simran, Rancho in 3 Idiots shown working for kids in the innovative education sector.

Thus, as all three elements of personality trio are being presented in the film with different character, the audience gets an experience of completeness and also gets a momentary release from anxiety as character's use defence mechanism like sublimation. This treatment is similar to a relaxation therapy with stretch and relax, which contribute to film to get repeated audience who seek fantasied visual representation of their own conflicts and momentary relaxation which ultimately leads towards the success of the film.

VIII. CONCLUSION

From the discussion, it can be seen that there is a prominent distribution of id, ego, and superego among the characters of the eminent successful Indian films. This element is common in all three films even they are from the different time period, and of the different genre. The treatment used in this film is of conflict among id, ego, and superego that are prominently represented through different characters and resolution of conflict through defence mechanism like sublimation which associated with getting repeated audience. This aspect ultimately contributes to the success of the film. Thus, the prominent appearance of id, ego, and superego from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality is an intrinsic element of success among eminently successful Indian films. The illustrated treatment in the current study can be utilised for the success of the film.

IX. SCOPE OF FURTHER STUDIES

The current study can be seen as a new psychological perspective in the field of film analysis in India. Also, the result of the current study can be tested with the statistical analysis.

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