



Sourav Sarkar

Filmmaker - Director and Founder of  
Fragrant Creation, Kolkata

Sourav Sarkar is an independent Filmmaker, Director and Social Educator since 2012 through his micro enterprise Fragrant Creation, which was established in 2015. He has made acclaimed psycho-sociological short fiction feature and long feature film as well as non-fiction documentary film in Bengali, English, Hindi and partially Tamil language. All his films are widely circulated in Institution of national importance in India and in Indian Mission/Embassy/Overseas film festival also. He is a Graduate (B.E.,2008) Computer Science and Technology, BESU, Shibpur, West-Bengal. He awarded Best Documentary film in Prayag International Film Festival, New Delhi and officially nominated in IIFA, Tampa Bay, Florida and Film Festival in Thrissur, Kerala. The films of Sourav Sarkar were shown in National Institute of Social Defence, New Delhi, Ministry of a Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India, Different Universities( University of Delhi, University of Calcutta, Jadavpur University, Utkal University etc.), Institute of Psychiatry.

In path of our journey through this twenty-first century, the question arises if film medium (cinema) being a massive form of mass communication, has anything to do with the focus areas of human development. In corners of India, film medium is still looked upon as a gateway to entertainment, serving the market. If film medium serves in the format of commodity towards the market, the commerce of cinema may add benefit to the economic 'growth' of the country, but may not to the 'development' of the country in its true sense. However, film medium has a large potential to serve the 'development' of a country, if the medium is utilised to the best of its potential. If a country does not frame a specific policy to utilise film medium to the best of its development potential, the medium will remain underrated and underutilised. The point of focus of this discussion is to realise how film medium can potentially and significantly contribute to the multidisciplinary research and implementation in the field of human development.

Firstly, the human development experts, development economists, social scientists and social workers may gather knowledge and grow empathy regarding the people of the country, their difficulties, tales of suffering, success stories, socio-economic hazards, health hazards through independent films, which are made with real reflection of the subjects, which the films deal with. The documentary films on sociology, anthropology and other topics may greatly help in this. Film being the cluster of images and moving images, may retain more in the memory of viewers, beyond the barriers and differences in spoken languages.

Secondly, the human development experts may also greatly contribute to the enhancement of the knowledge of the people, by dissemination of knowledge through making and exhibiting

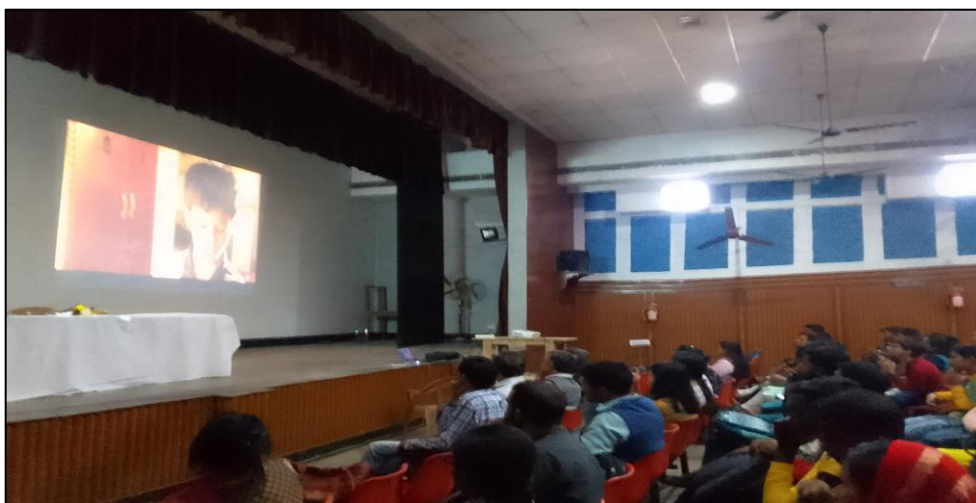
films for the society, to generate empathy, to cater to public education and to facilitate experiential learning. The practice of exhibiting realistic films towards the society, and sensitising the citizens on the techniques to watch and read different kinds of films, may be developed. Academic centres and research institutes may be instrumental nowadays to perform such kind of film exhibition and analytical workshops, thanks to many of such institutions having the digital smart rooms with projectors or USB enabled LCD screens made through State funds.

Thus, the medium of film is having a great potential to expand the choice of people, through expansion of knowledge and empathy, which is the chore ethos of the 'growth of a qualified population', or the 'human development'.

We may have some examples of films like "A Drop of Sunshine" produced by Public Service Broadcasting Trust, directed by Aparna Sanyal, spreading awareness on schizophrenia and a courageous journey. "Paltadacho Munis (The Man beyond the Bridge)" is a Konkani film directed by Laxmikant Shetgaonkar, portraying environmental sensitivity and village dynamics. The film "Ganashatru" made by Satyajit Ray sensitises broadly on scientific temper, to fight against superstition. The film "Koni" by Saroj Dey works on poverty, social stigma and the relentless human spirit to fight against all difficulties. "Modern Times" by Charlie Chaplin handles the nuances of man, machine and dehumanising impact of technology. There are numerous such films in India, and across the globe, which may be utilised for dissemination of knowledge, growth of outlook, choice and taste, to create a 'qualified population'.

Being a film director of the recent times, I have started making films initially out of my passion. However, I discovered later, that my films can be greatly utilised in human development and dissemination of knowledge, through carrying out exhibition and sensitisation sessions on my films. Especially, academic institutions are the places where the young minds are getting prepared to contribute to the quality of population. Therefore, the sensitisation and multidisciplinary workshop with films should start at the academic institutions in a very widespread manner. I have done numerous workshops with my film "Anoochcharito (Unuttered)", which portrays the impact of disturbed parenthood and child affected by parental relationship distress (CAPRD). Since childhood protection, development and family studies are important and interrelated areas of human development, this film has therefore served the youth across India, including different universities, colleges and government bodies, to emotionally connect on the topic of crisis of childhood inside nuclear families. My film "Dugdhonokhor (The Milky Nails)" handles a poignant story of motherhood and post abortion grief. Apart from fictions, my documentary film "Nibhritochari (Solitary Soul)" is heavily useful for understanding the alternative approach of health lifestyle and positive ageing, in contrary to the conventional notion of the sense of abandonment related to elderly care homes. The film helps to build up the concept of 'second home' at the old age, towards positivity. In 2022, during one of my film exhibition - workshops with my film "The Humane Judicature" on judicial activism

in India, I was especially thanked by an employee of defence sector, as a member of audience, that such kind of film exhibition might undoubtedly be looked upon as a 'public service'.



**(An exhibition workshop with film "Anoocharito" on childhood mental health and family during 2022)**

However, this is not a one - man effort. They young generation needs to remain in the practise of film viewing, making and film - analysis. Considering the fact that the film medium is underutilised, it is the duty of everyone to pave the new way ahead. The students and researchers of human development may even do short term courses on film studies, film appreciation and basic filmmaking. Although there are full time courses at the government institutes like Film & Television Institute of India, Pune and many others of similar stature, it is always not very convenient to get through such full time courses. However, the degree colleges and universities may introduce value added courses or add - on courses on filmmaking and film analysis, in form of industry - academia partnership.

On a concluding note, we should acknowledge that self - motivated workforce is required for utilisation of film medium in the vast arena of human development. There may not be much support from the uninformed people we are surrounded by. The journey with films may need be started with own zeal, confidence and fearlessness. The conventional mindset for 'job search' does not fit into the goal of public welfare through film - medium. Needless to say, the existing culture of film awards and prizes does not seem to be very healthy too, in perspective of utility of film medium in public services and social welfare. Each film has something unique to communicate. When you perform 'public service' through films, you should not compete for prizes. Such a culture need be developed with film medium. Then, and only then, we will be able to reach the coveted goal of drawing optimal benefit through film medium, in human development.