

Sustainability Communication in Tamil films

Are popular Tamil films promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? An analysis of *Jai Bhim* (2021)

Dr. Radha Bathran¹

Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami

Abstract

In India, the regional language Tamil films have played a vital role in shaping the perceptions and beliefs of the Tamil society towards socio, economic, political, and cultural developments. Over the past decade and in a post-Covid-19 scenario Tamil film industry has been witnessing a series of films on social issues, predominantly on the environment, agricultural crisis, and ecosystem protection. It is vital to understand how far these films reflect global concerns in relation to social development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as outlined by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, serve as an appropriate framework for understanding this. As an effective form of mass media, the film is seen as one of the important media in Sustainability Communication. This paper tries to assess the nature of SDGs dealt with in 21st-century Tamil films, especially in popular film narratives. The Tamil language film, *Jai Bhim*, released in the year 2021, on custodial torture leading to the death of a Tribal person and the subsequent legal battle towards justice, has gained more acclaim and recognition in the national and international arena. This film has been seen as a hope for Sustainable Communication of the rights of ordinary and vulnerable Tribal people. Using a thematic analysis based on 17 SDGs, the paper tries to identify the presence of three key dimensions of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely, social, economic, and environmental.

(Keywords: SDGs, Sustainability Communication, Tamil Cinema, *Jai Bhim*, Thematic Analysis)

¹ Associate Professor, Department of Media and Communication, Central University of Tamil Nadu, India

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Introduction

The Tamil cinema industry, popularly known as 'Kollywood', is a prominent producer of regional language Tamil films in India. Narratives built on the backdrop of crucial social issues are part of the industry's productions for many years. Globally, research shows that films not alone entertain us, it also communicates important social issues. Specifically, it informs and educates the masses on many aspects like social problems, politics, state policies, the everyday lives of people, their development, and many more. Many significant concepts relating to society's development have been major parts of the Tamil film industry since the late 1940s. The components of present-day Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) like poverty, hunger, social well-being, equality in education, access to resources, gender equality, justice strong institutions, and labour rights can be identified in the Tamil films of the 1950s and beyond. The themes created awareness among the masses, insisting on the need for social development. However, it is vital to understand the deliberations concerning SDGs in Tamil films in the present scenario. This paper tries to assess the nature of SDGs dealt with in the 21st century Tamil films, especially in the popular film narratives. This paper discusses the basic concept of SDGs, the role of film medium in sustainable communication, the presence of SDGs in popular Tamil films under three key dimensions and its relevance in sustainability communication. The paper further describes the theoretical framework and methodology used in identifying the presence of key themes related to the three dimensions of SDGs in the chosen film.

Sustainable Development Goals

A developed society is one with all resources for its people to ensure basic human rights, namely, the right to equality, freedom, life, and dignity. Globally inequalities in access to basic rights like the right to food, water, shelter, a safe environment, and health exist at a larger scale. The need for SDGs is, primarily, the eradication of poverty and has a long way to go, which is not happening. Second, human societies are harming the world and the ecosystem more than ever. Thirdly, there is growing inequality within and between nations. Finally, with the expanding influence of technology, governance is getting more complicated (SDSN, Action Agenda Report 2014). When access to basic needs and human rights are

sustained forever, it is sustainable development, a development that will not go away suddenly. Development that "meets the demands of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" is considered sustainable development (Brundtland, 1987). The United Nations General Assembly officially adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. The SDGs guide development efforts globally for the next 15 years or 2030. It sets out 17 Goals, which include 169 targets. According to the United Nations, the Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a rallying cry for action from wealthy and developing nations alike in a worldwide alliance. They understand that combating poverty and other forms of deprivation requires policies that enhance health and education, lessen inequality, promote economic growth, combat climate change, and fight to protect our oceans and forests. The 17 SDGs officially adopted by the UN General Assembly serve as the core criteria of critical analysis in the present study. For effective, sustainable development, inclusion, participation, and information dissemination by media plays a crucial role.

Film as a medium of Sustainability Communication

Examining film as a medium of sustainability communication is vital because our understanding of environmental concerns and our willingness to act on them are shaped by how films communicate about them (Cox, 2009; Hansen, 2010). Lindefeld and McGreavy (2014) demonstrate how the film content and the narratives we consume about climate change potentially influence our sense of the world, guiding and impacting the collective abilities to create a sustainable future. Significantly, the past few decades have witnessed the inevitable role of the film medium in taking forth strong environmental (Brulle, 2010) and health (Whittingham, Ruiter, Zambie and Kok, 2008) communication issues in the context of the climate change crisis. In studying audience reactions to climate change and science in disaster cli-fi films Griffin (2017), highlights how film as a communication medium transfers the ideas and warnings on climate change communication. Bondi, Monani, Principato, and Barlett (2021) highlight the crucial role that visual appeals have in framing climate change in movies.

Sustainability Communication in films

The 21st century has seen the rise of a new genre of fiction called climate change fiction or 'cli-fi' dealing with the causes, effects, and results of global warming. The advent of SDGs and the need for sustainable communication across the globe are reflected in several media platforms like television, film, literature, and education. Predominantly the concepts of climate change became a significant part of Hollywood film stories highlighting the dangers of climate change and human extinction. Kollywood, the Tamil film industry, is no exception to this trend and has been on the run-in producing films reflecting SDGs. Not only in literature but also a shift in film production on the causes and consequences of climate change has also been gaining momentum over the past decades.

Integrating three dimensions of SDGs in popular Tamil films

The UNESCAP (2015) states that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commits the global communities to 'achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – social, economic and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner.' Integration of the three pillars of sustainable development is not just a goal; it is essential to the continued existence of economies, ecosystems, and society UNESCAP (2015). Popular Tamil films of the past two decades include one or a few components of the three dimensions of SDGs concerning identifying the causes of underdevelopment, inequality, climate change, agrarian crisis, and environmental protection. The famous Tamil film narratives on the three dimensions of SDGs are discussed below,

(i) Social Dimension

Narratives on social inequality, social justice, women's rights, and the abolition of the feudal system formed part of Tamil films from 1950 to the 1980s. Especially the influence of the Dravidian movement led by E.V. Ramasami, known as *Periyar*, was present in the content of Tamil films. Periyar was the most prominent social reformer in Tamil Nadu during his time and ferociously campaigned for social justice, women's rights, and equality for all, irrespective of gender, caste, religion, and class. Through the *Self-respect movement*, started in the year 1925, he challenged the fundamentally discriminating rules and procedures of the conventional and orthodox systems of society. Over the years, Tamil films reflected all the above themes along with the growth of Dravidian politics. Arigna Anna, the prominent leader of the Dravidian party, was also a famous scriptwriter in the Tamil film industry. His first film script for the film *Nallathambi (1948)* was on the abolition of the zamindari system,

which was a great success. Films like *Vellaikari* (1949), *Or Iravu* (1951), and *Parasakthi* (1952) deliberated on hunger, poverty, unemployment, and the role of the state in addressing such issues. Since then, development communication has been part and parcel of Tamil film discourse on labour issues, feudal system, monarchy, women's rights, eradication of caste and communal differences propagating social justice and equality. The Tamil film *Aval Oru Thodar Kathai* (1974) highlighted women's rights, *Pasi* (1979) the horrors of hunger and poverty, the film *Varumaiyin Niram Sigappu* (1980) depicted the pain of unemployment and poverty amidst educated first-generation youth and the film *Thanneer Thanneer* (1981) highlighted the struggles of people for basic drinking water and politicization of the water crisis by politicians in a drought-affected village.

(ii) Economical Dimension

Alongside, films in the Angry Young Man genre by superstars critiquing the capitalistic culture formed a significant part of the films released in the 70s and 80s. Like the Bollywood counterpart, actor *Amitab Bachan*, in Tamil films, the actors like *Rajinikanth*, *Kamal Haasan*, *Vijayakanth*, and *Arjun* were part of the angry heroes fighting against social odds. Films like *Nayagan* (1987), *Maaveeran* (1986), *Sathya* (1988), *Manithan* (1987), *Chatriyan* (1990), *Mudalvan* (1999), and *Ramana* (2002) were narratives of the protagonist being a crusader to save the people against all odds by the wealthy and corrupt. *Kaattumaina* (1963) is a film that dealt with indigenous people's issues, corporate exploitation of their labour, and land rights. It depicted the life of indigenous people, and the film gained acclaim from both Tamil and Malayalam film audiences. A few prominent films on indigenous people's socio-economic struggles, like *Peraanmai* (2009), had the movie's main character as a tribal forest guard who promotes awareness within his tribe and strives for their welfare. *Kaththi* (2014), the box office hit film of the year 2014, the actor *Vijay*, the mass hero of Tamil Nadu, played the protagonist role. The predominant narrative trope is the 'Saviour Hero,' who saves the farmers' land from the corporates. The farmers depend on the protagonist to address their problems and save them. The film *Vanamagan* (2017) is about the struggles of a tribe to protect their land from corporates, *Kumki* (2012) highlights the livelihood of indigenous communities as a backdrop of a romantic story set in the forest regions, *Kullangal* (2021) deals with the dry rural landscapes and livelihood struggles of people.

(iii) Environmental Dimension

The industrial revolution and subsequent modernisation have been frequently critiqued in Tamil films beyond the 1950s in the context of its impact on nature. Tamil films on the themes like environmental protection, climate change communication, protection of ecology and forests, agricultural crisis, and water scarcity have been continuously creating a discourse on the different SDGs relating to the environment and climate change directly or indirectly. Culturally, respect for nature is inbuilt into the Tamil ethos; specifically, the rivers are seen as sacred, and many temples are built on their shores. The village deities, the form of worship to gods and goddesses by different communities, are predominantly based on nature and aim to protect the environment. Many of the village deities are worshipped as protectors of the land, agriculture, health, and prosperity of the villagers. The construction of ponds and gardens in big temples was part of the culture to respect and relish nature. Narratives condemning technological advancements and the importance of the ecosystem were naturally part of Tamil films. The above contexts have been part and parcel of many film narratives though they may not explicitly deal with environmental protection. After realizing the consequences of global warming, many countries globally heard and thought of the wake-up call on environmental protection. However, dealing with more scientific concepts of globalization and climate change gained momentum in recent decades. Hollywood films on the end of the world, natural and artificial disasters queued up, and a large-scale awareness was created globally. These films were dubbed in Tamil language and gained popularity.

Tamil films have come up with themes on the risks of biotechnological developments that are against nature and human beings. The film-*Naalai Manithan* (1989) is a science fiction horror film on the effects of science misused on human beings. *Dasavataram* (2008) deals with the issues of human-made bioweapons and natural calamities like tsunamis. The film *Enthiran* (2010) deals with the effects of Artificial Intelligence, as what happens when a highly efficient robot desires to rule the human race. The film *7aum Arivu* (2011) discusses the biotechnological threats to nations and their development. It highlights the vulnerability of people affected in huge numbers due to bio wars. This film strongly emphasized the need and importance of traditional medicinal knowledge.

A film like *E* (2006) consists of the plot of illegal bioweapons testing on innocent poor people without their knowledge and consent. The film *Maatraan* (2012) highlights the

aspects of food adulteration, mass animal rearing, and its health hazards. *Kaapaan* (2019) highlights how the protagonist, a National Security Officer and an organic farmer back home, officially prevents the artificially bred locusts from destroying crops. The film *2.0* (2018) depicts the harms of radiation on the fragile ecosystem on which human existence precariously rests. Actor *Akshay Kumar* is cast as an Ornithologist concerned over the extinction of sparrows as an effect of cell phone radiation. Unable to address the issue, he is depressed and dies. Coming back as a supernatural power to take on the Government to understand and act on the problem, thus presenting an 'alternate reality in the narrative.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda-setting is an important theory in understanding the mass media influences on social perceptions of what is essential to society (McCombs & Reynolds, 2009). Much of social learning takes place through observation of others' attitudes, behaviours and films, enabling this observational learning (Bandura, 1977; Howell, 2014). According to research by Nicholson-Cole (2005), people's views and attitudes concerning climate change are closely tied to the visuals they encounter on television and their own experiences. Smith, Suldovsky, and Lindenfeld (2016) state that the agenda-setting process is very important to sustainability research because most global sustainability challenges are not immediately noticeable to media audiences and are only perceived through the media. Films like *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004) or *The Age of Stupid* (2009) provide a probable visual imagination on problems that people do not have a previous experience with the climate change crisis (Bilandzic & Sukalla, 2019). Film medium provides us with narratives, emotions, reactions of varied characters, strategies, problems, solutions, and analysis of the crisis that are not experienced by its audiences.

In the given context of agenda-setting, it is to be observed that in the recent past, in a Covid-19 scenario, in the year 2020 to 2021, there has been a series of Tamil films dealing with different themes of SDGs. Popular Tamil films have been continuously deliberating on socially relevant themes as part of their narratives, thus setting an agenda. In the popular and box office hit films of the year 2021, *Jai Bhim*, *Sarpatta Parambarai*, *Mandela*, *Maanaadu*, *Karnan*, *Thaen*, *Kaadan*, and *Master* films dealt with crucial social issues relating to poverty, vulnerability, rights violations, exploitation of the poor and marginalized people. Films like *Bhoomi*, *Sulthan*, *Kadai Vivasayi*, *Vellai Yannai*, *Laabam*, predominantly dealt with the agricultural crisis. It is important to understand the type of SDGs that are dealt in popular

film narratives that are rated high. Films built explicitly on narratives of socially relevant themes do include principles of SDGs knowingly or unknowingly inbuilt into the stories. However, it is vital to understand the SDG themes dealt in films with a broader audience reach. This means the SDG goals are communicated to a larger audience via film. The analysis of the nature of Sustainability Communication by these films can contribute to identifying the agenda set within the scope and reach of SDGs inbuilt into such films.

SDGs in *Jai Bhim* (2021) – Highly Rated Film

Internet Movie Database (IMDb) is a popular website many people use to get information on film ratings and reviews. It has 42 million registered users, a repository of movie-related information, and a forum where viewers can assess, analyse, and criticize pretty much anything happening in the movie industry (Ridanpaa, 2014). The Tamil films released in the year 2021 are rated by IMDb based on their rating and popularity. Based on the above context, the most popular and highly-rated Tamil film released in 2021 was identified as *Jai Bhim* from the IMDb site (IMDb, 2022). *Jai Bhim* is directed by Gnanavel Raja and was the top-rated (8.9) film in terms of rating and popularity among the Tamil films released in the year 2021. The film represents the issues relating to the SDGs of Tribal people who are the victims of police violence and custodial torture. In the above context, this paper tries to understand the different types of SDGs dealt with in the narratives of popular and highly rated Tamil films *Jai Bhim*, released in the year 2021.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are as follows,

1. To determine the elements of SDGs dealt with in the film narrative of *Jai Bhim*
2. To trace the presence of different dimensions of SDGs in the film *Jai Bhim*
3. To find out if popular Tamil films are specific in addressing the SDGs

The research aims to answer the questions pertinent to this analysis as follows,

- i. Which of the three dimensions of SDGs are prominent in the film *Jai Bhim*?
- ii. Does the film have a hope narrative promoting SDGs?

Summary of the Film

The lead character *Rajakannu* is taken into police custody under false theft charges and tortured in custody in front of his pregnant wife, *Sengani*. At one point, police state *Rajakannu* escaped police custody along with two of his counterparts. *Sengani* desperately searches for her husband and, unable to trace him, seeks the help of a community organizer. Through the community organizer, she seeks the help of a High Court lawyer who fights for the rights of the downtrodden. *Sengani* narrates the incident of custodial torture of her husband by the police with pain and agony and pleads with the lawyer to help her. Going through the detail of the case and after a preliminary inquiry of the alleged escape of *Rajakannu* from police custody, the lawyer *Adv. Chandru*, files a Habeas Corpus petition in the High Court. This is vehemently opposed by the police, who try their best to frame and stage an escape of *Rajakannu* from their custody. On investigations and legal trials, the lawyer, the social worker, and *Senkani*, along with her daughter, need to struggle hard to find *Rajakannu*. At one point, the staging of escape is proved in the court, and the court takes the petition for inquiry. Understanding the gravity of the case, the court appoints a police officer of higher rank to investigate the case further. The investigations prove the custodial death of *Rajakannu* and the police excesses. The final verdict of the court acknowledges police excesses and custodial death, punishes the law enforcement officials for their crime. The film ends with a hope on judicial justice for all.

Methodology

Using narrative thematic analysis, the presence and relevance of themes related to 17 SDGs are identified from the film *Jai Bhim*. This analysis helps to identify, analyze and report the prominent themes and the patterns of the themes. This is a six-stage analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Towards familiarisation with the content, the film was carefully watched several times by the researchers to familiarise the content of the film. Online reviews and secondary sources were referred to understand the varied views on the film. The initial codes were identified by analyzing the visuals, symbols, images, dialogues, elements of mise-en-scene, and narrative content relating them to the 17 SDGs. The presence of content and the related sequences were alone taken for generating the initial coding. Classification of the open codes, directly or indirectly associated with the 17 SDGs, were further categorized into three themes based on

the dimensions of SDGs. The initial codes were mapped with the three dimensions of SDGs, namely, social, economic, and environmental. Reviewing the themes eliminated any appropriate SDGs that were not dealt with in the film narrative. Finally, based on the theme, the data was analyzed to relate them to the study's research questions.

Coding and Theme Mapping

The coding and theme mapping were done based on analyzing the film content by dividing them into sequences. The sequences that did not have content on SDGs were not taken for the analyses. The sequences that had relevance minimum of any one of the 17 SDGs alone were taken for initial coding and theme mapping. The following ten sequences are presented in the order of analyses and not in the order of the film narrative. The themes are prominently based on the three dimensions of SDGs – Social, Economic, and Environmental.

Table 1

Description of the sequences	Initial codes	Themes – Three dimensions of SDGs
<p>Sequence 1</p> <p>In the opening sequence of the film, policemen from different police stations wait outside the jail for the release of prisoners. Few prisoners are released from jail on completion of their term of imprisonment. The policeman at the entrance asks for their name and community details among the released. Based on their caste identities, the Tribal community people alone are asked to stay back. The others are just sent off without any further delay. Few are addressed with respect based on their caste identities. The detained Tribal community people, as stated, six from the <i>Koravar</i> community, four from the <i>Irular</i> community, and two from the <i>Ottar</i> community alone, are divided for want of new cases by police officers coming from different stations. They discuss their requirement for prisoners in their stations. Prisoners from the so-called dominant communities, namely, <i>Devar</i>,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequality • Health and Well-being • Justice Institutions • Vulnerability • Law enforcement 	<p>Social dimension</p>

<p><i>Vanniyar, Gounder, Naidu, and Mudaliar</i>, are released after knowing their identities. The police officers fight among themselves to get more share of prisoners to book false cases on them. It is shown that the police officers take these people to file new cases so that they meet the case targets for promotion.</p>		
<p>The desperate family members waiting to take the Tribal people are turned off and ignored. When one older person intervenes and asks to send his son as his punishment is over, he is beaten and pushed off. The shot fades to the helpless and painful faces of the deceived Tribal family members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence on vulnerable 	<p>Social Dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 2</p> <p>The Tribal families, along with their children, are engaged in catching rats. The conversations among them reveal that they are used for their food. One small rat caught by the lead woman character, <i>Sengani</i>, leaves it behind, letting it go citing that it is a baby rat, and she did not want to harm it. The families are paid adequately for their work in the fields.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty, hunger, children out of school, • Labour exploitation 	<p>Social dimension Economic dimension</p>
<p>Display of traditional knowledge on rat hunting by the Tribal people to support their livelihood and the dangers associated with it are portrayed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Knowledge 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 3</p> <p>A man comes to the house of <i>Rajakannu</i> in the settlement where the Tribal people live and says that the President had called him to catch a snake that had entered his house. This scene takes us through the residential regions of the Tribal people in small huts without doors, half-open roofs, minimum utensils, and mud floors with no toilet facilities. On the contrary, the roads to the residential regions of the village Panchayat President are cement roads and well-constructed brick houses with water and other required basic facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor living conditions • Inadequate housing • Lack of basic facilities • Inequality 	<p>Social dimension Economic dimension</p>

<p>After catching the snake that had entered the village president's house, <i>Rajakannu</i> refuses to kill it when asked to do so by the President. He also refuses to take money for his work. He states that his work was based on humanity and not done for money since he belonged to the same village as the wife of the village president. The President's wife gets annoyed upon hearing this and counters, how would it be possible for both of us to belong to the same village when you are not allowed to reside in the central regions of the village? She warns him to refrain from repeating this as it would identify her as his relative, which would demean her status quo.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequal treatment • Humiliation • Inadequate pay for work 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>The caught snake is safely left in a lonely forest area by <i>Rajakannu</i>, and he tells the snake not to come.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Knowledge • Love for living beings 	<p>Environmental dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 4</p> <p><i>Sengani</i> is left with her hardly 6-year-old daughter, and her husband <i>Rajakannu</i> leaves to work in the brick kilns for a livelihood. The pregnant <i>Sengani</i> takes care of the basic needs of her daughter and herself, fetches firewood along with her daughter and does the household chores.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migration for work • Women headed families • The struggle of women to fetch firewood and food • Struggle for basics 	<p>Social dimension</p> <p>Economic dimension</p>
<p>During the migration of <i>Rajakannu</i> to work in the brick kiln, along with several other families and older people, women and children are shown traveling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploitation of labour • Struggle for livelihood • Children out of school 	<p>Social dimension</p> <p>Economic dimension</p>
<p><i>Rajakannu</i> is not even allowed a day of leave after one month of work in the brick kiln. The poor working conditions in the brick kiln with women working with their babies who are hardly one year old and young boys working as labourers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploitation of labour • Hazardous working conditions 	<p>Social dimension</p> <p>Economic dimension</p>

<p>Sequence 5</p> <p>During informal education classes conducted by the social worker, <i>Rajakannu</i> expresses his passion for educating his daughter. The thirst for learning is reflected in their body language. Display of knowledge of <i>Sengani</i> on traditional medicine making to address snake bites.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illiteracy 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 6</p> <p>The tribal people go to get community certificates, ration cards, and voter identity cards from the Government offices. The officials say they would only believe if they catch snakes and rats in forests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaction and indifferent attitudes of the law enforcement officials 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 7</p> <p>During the search for <i>Rajakannu</i>, his wife is abused verbally and physically. She is a pregnant woman and, even then, taken to the police station, beaten, and abused. The women from the Tribal families, <i>Rajakannu's</i> wife and sister are beaten, verbally, sexually abused, and dragged at odd hours to the police station. The crying children are left behind unattended in unsafe circumstances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender violence • Police excess 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 8</p> <p>The police frame false cases on <i>Rajakannu</i> and tortured him under custody. He succumbs to death in custody, and to cover it up, the police stage an escape drama. They prepare false pieces of evidence claiming the escape of <i>Rajakannu</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodial torture and death • Human rights violation 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 9</p> <p>The case comes to court for a hearing, and the trial proceedings are shown in a few sequences. Primarily, the role of the judiciary and its power to intervene to deliver justice is the rest of the plot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace and Justice Strong Institutions • Partnerships to achieve the Goal 	<p>Social dimension</p>
<p>Sequence 10</p> <p>During the trial, the struggle of the pregnant woman, the lawyer, and her child portray the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality • Peace and Justice 	<p>Social dimension</p>

difficulties in accessing justice.	<p>Strong Institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships to achieve the Goal 	
<p>Sequence 11</p> <p>At the end of the trial proceedings, the judgment recognizes the custodial torture and lock-up death of <i>Rajakannu</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced inequality Peace and Justice Strong Institutions Partnerships to achieve the Goal 	Social dimension

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 reveals that thematic analysis reveals the presence of three dimensions of SDGs in the film taken for analysis. However, the presence of the social dimension is higher than that of the economic and environmental dimensions. Out of the eleven sequences taken for analysis, all eleven sequences represent codes related to SDGs from a social dimension. The social dimension highlights the issues relating to the denial of the basic right to dignity, life, freedom, and equality. Poverty, hunger, the struggle for survival, and ignorance of laws and procedures highlight the vulnerability of the tribal people in the film.

Major themes on the social dimension deal with inaction, negligence, and excesses by law enforcement officials. The police excesses and custodial torture of *Rajakannu* show the inhuman behaviour and third-degree treatment by the police. All this is done in the name of extracting the truth concerning the theft of jewellery in the President's house, where he had gone to catch the snake to help his family. The manner of police dealing with the dominant caste President is indifferent in terms of their politeness in the President's house and the excesses they indulge in the house of *Rajakannu* and his sister. The women from the Tribal families are beaten, verbally, and sexually abused, and dragged at odd hours to the police station. The crying children are left behind unattended in unsafe circumstances. Verbal, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse by law enforcement officials forms the central part of the narrative. The denial of community certificates, ration cards, and voter identity cards by the officials show the inaction and indifferent attitudes of the law enforcement officials. The narratives point out that such insensitive officials are significant barriers to implementing the SDGs for the vulnerable.

The economic dimension is presented along with the social dimension in five out of the 11 sequences taken for analysis. Migration-related economic and social crises are well-documented in the film. The migration of women, children, mothers with infants, aged men, and women represents the vulnerability of the tribal people from an economic dimension. *Rajakannu* is not even allowed a day of leave after one month of work in the brick kiln. The poor working conditions of the brick kiln, women working with their babies of hardly one year, and young boys working as labourers reveal the hazardous working conditions.

The environmental dimension is not found in direct reference; however, indirect references with the SDGs can be identified. The caught snake is safely left in a lonely forest area by *Rajakannu*, and he tells the snake not to come. Display of knowledge of *Sengani* on traditional medicine making to address snake bites. The display of traditional knowledge on rat hunting by the Tribal people and their relationship to nature is definitely from the environmental dimension.

A 2015 report by the International Council for Science and the International Social Science Council stresses that to achieve the 17 SDGs, it is important to communicate about the necessity of SDGs. "To be effective in communicating the SDGs, it is necessary to have a compelling narrative to describe how the world could look when the SDGs are fully achieved" (ICSU and ISSC, 2015). According to UNESCAP (2015), by developing a compelling narrative on SDGs, a picture of its advantages should be communicated across nations. This agenda-setting on SDGs has been effectively done by the film *Jai Bhim* across several media platforms.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that the film taken for analysis covers significant areas of SDGs, specifically, the three dimensions of SDGs – social, economic, and environmental. On the one hand, the film highlights the consequences of ignoring SDGs and, on the other hand, gives a strong message about the need for ensuring justice and related development. The entire process of court proceedings, the role of judges, civil society organizations, and support mechanisms display the need and hope for SDGs relating to justice. The film finally rests its hope on the rule of law and justice delivery mechanisms. The judiciary's role is upheld by setting up a Commission to inquiry into the excesses of booking 7000 false cases and the staged escape and subsequent missing of *Rajakannu*. The court's final verdict on the custodial torture and death of *Rajakannu* instils hope in the judiciary. It serves the purpose of

Sustainability Communication in the context of Tribal people. It propagates the need for a sustained dignified livelihood enjoying all human rights – the right to life, freedom, educational rights, dignity, access to safe and secure living conditions, legal protection, and legal entitlements. The film takes the message, the need for fair and equal treatment of human beings by law enforcement and the judiciary as their primary duty. It emphasizes the rights of the Tribal communities, women, children, and men, to live a dignified life free from any form of discrimination towards sustainability.

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