



Harmonising Educational Values: Semi-structured Textual Critique of Pedagogy in Select Songs/Lyrics of Contemporary Gujarati Cinema

Mehulkumar Kavi, Research Scholar, IITE, Gandhinagar

Dr. Viral jadvav, Professor, IITE, Gandhinagar

Abstract

This study investigates the pedagogical potential of contemporary Gujarati film songs as vehicles for value education. Guided by the National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2022) and grounded in critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013) and phenomenological interpretation (Patton, 2014), we conducted a semi-structured textual critique of three songs—"Sapna" (Dhh, 2021), "Udaan" (Divaswapna, 2021), and "Nayi Soch" (Backbencher, 2011). Using NVivo, we coded 52 lyric segments, identifying four principal themes: Resilience & Hope, Self-Efficacy & Agency, Community & Solidarity, and Critical Reflection & Transformation.

Our findings reveal that flight and strength metaphors foster emotional resilience; instrumental imagery and self-affirming statements support learner agency; collective pronouns and solidarity motifs underscore social constructivist learning; and imperative calls to "awaken" and "reflect" promote critical thinking. These themes align closely with NCERT value domains—emotional, intellectual, social-moral, and ethical development—demonstrating that regional film lyrics can serve as culturally resonant, multimodal supplements to formal curricula.

We discuss implications for curriculum design, multimodal pedagogy, and teacher training, advocating for the strategic integration of vernacular media to decolonize educational content and strengthen learner identity. Limitations include the focus on a narrow song corpus and the absence of listener reception data. Future research should broaden the genre scope, incorporate mixed methods, and explore digital adaptations of film music.

By harmonizing educational values with local cultural artifacts, this study offers a replicable framework for educators and policymakers seeking to enrich value education through regionally grounded, arts-based approaches.

Harmonising Educational Values: Semi-structured Textual Critique of Pedagogy in Select Songs/Lyrics of Contemporary Gujarati Cinema

In contemporary education, integrating popular media—especially music and cinema—is increasingly recognized as a transformative pedagogical approach. Film songs encapsulate cultural



wisdom, socio-ethical values, and emotional narratives vital for holistic learning. As India's cultural landscape evolves, regional cinemas like Gujarati have emerged as rich pedagogical sources. Yet, despite extensive scholarship on Bollywood, Gujarati cinema remains underexplored for value education (Sundar, 2021; Nanda, 2019).

Value education is central to India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes "education for values" to nurture socially responsible, empathetic citizens (Ministry of Education, 2020). Although the National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2022) outlines value-education goals, it often lacks culturally contextualized, vernacular materials. This gap presents an opportunity to harness regional cinematic expressions—specifically film lyrics—as pedagogical tools.

Music and Songs in Education

Research across disciplines highlights music's ability to engage learners emotionally, linguistically, and socially (Paquette & Rieg, 2008; Fonseca-Mora & Herrero Machancoses, 2016). Songs create immersive, low-anxiety environments and foster socio-emotional learning through storytelling and metaphor (Kumar et al., 2022). In EFL and arts-based contexts, music improves listening comprehension, vocabulary retention, and motivation (Engh, 2013; Murphey, 1990). Hunter and Frawley (2023) show that film and music deepen critical reasoning, while Cloonan and Hulme (2015) argue lyrics connect personal and collective identities—parallels that extend to value education (Stavrou, 2022; Aya & Ünlü, 2022).

Pedagogy Through Cinema: Global and Indian Perspectives

Globally, cinema fosters empathy and challenges biases in teacher education (Delgado, 2018; Chan, 2009). In India, Bollywood has long acted as a soft pedagogical agent (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2013), with literacy campaigns using subtitled songs to boost rural reading skills (BBC, 2017; Kothari & Bandyopadhyay, 2010). Yet Gujarati films like *Dhh* (2021), *Divaswapna* (2021), and *Backbencher* (2011)—which weave folk idioms, local ethics, and educational themes—have received little attention (Mehta, 2017).

Importance of Regional and Vernacular Pedagogy

Using regional languages in education enhances accessibility, cultural resonance, and learner identity (Mohanty, 2009; Panda & Mohanty, 2011). Vernacular songs amplify these effects by framing values in familiar discourses (Chattopadhyay, 2018). Incorporating Gujarati film lyrics into



value education thus decolonizes pedagogy, centering local narratives and epistemologies (Sundar, 2021; Ghosh, 2013).

Need for Semi-Structured Textual Critique

Semi-structured textual critique combines flexibility and rigor, enabling in-depth analysis of metaphors, motifs, and narrative structures (Patton, 2014; Fairclough, 2013). Although discourse analysis is common in media studies (Van Dijk, 1993), its application to regional film lyrics for value education remains rare. By applying this method, researchers can uncover deeper educational resonances in Gujarati cinema, enriching both theory and practice.

Research Aims and Significance

This study aims to address a notable gap in literature by conducting a semi-structured textual critique of songs from contemporary Gujarati cinema to identify socio-ethical values and pedagogical strategies. It focuses on three representative films: *Dhh*, *Divaswapna*, and *Backbencher*, which have received both critical acclaim and grassroots appreciation. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify socio-ethical values in the lyrics of selected Gujarati film songs.
2. To analyze the lyrical, metaphorical, and narrative strategies used to convey these values.
3. To align findings with the National Curriculum Framework for value education.
4. To propose the use of regional cinematic content in value-based pedagogy.

By doing so, the study makes a novel contribution to educational research, regional media studies, and value pedagogy.

Review of Related Literature

Music and Lyrics in Pedagogy

For decades, songs have enhanced language acquisition, emotional engagement, and value inculcation in classrooms. Murphey (1990) describes music as an “affective filter” that reduces anxiety and aids retention, while Fonseca-Mora and Herrero Machancoses (2016) show it activates both emotional and cognitive domains. In EFL settings, Kumar et al. (2022) found music boosted motivation and listening comprehension; Paquette and Rieg (2008) highlight songs’ role in fostering cooperative learning. These affective and social benefits underpin value education, where emotional connection and critical reflection are essential (Stavrou, 2022).

Film and Media in Education

Educational films reshape pre-service teachers’ beliefs toward more empathetic, learner-centered approaches (Aya & Ünlü, 2022). Hunter and Frawley (2023) demonstrate that integrating



film, music, and art deepens critical reasoning in sociological theory courses. Delgado (2018) and Chan (2009) argue that cinematic storytelling promotes intercultural understanding, ethical reflection, and inclusive thinking. In India, subtitled Bollywood songs have effectively supported rural literacy and civic education (BBC, 2017; Kothari & Bandyopadhyay, 2010), illustrating cinema's power as an educational tool.

Educational Values in Indian and Gujarati Cinema

While Bollywood scholarship explores national and moral values (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2013), regional cinemas like Gujarati offer localized pedagogical narratives. Films such as *Dhh* and *Divaswapna* resonate with rural and semi-urban audiences through themes of social reform, family cohesion, and grassroots empowerment (Mehta, 2017; Patel, 2019). Scholars argue that regional cinema can decolonize knowledge production by foregrounding vernacular epistemologies (Sundar, 2021; Nanda, 2019) and call for integrating such media into curricula to strengthen contextual learning (Chattopadhyay, 2018).

Semi-Structured Critique and Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis, which views language as socially embedded practice (Fairclough, 2013), combined with semi-structured methods (Patton, 2014) and rigorous interpretive techniques (Silverman, 2021), offers a robust framework for examining film lyrics. Prior studies using discourse and arts-based approaches reveal how media texts reflect educational ideologies (Van Dijk, 1993; Cloonan & Hulme, 2015), yet application to regional Indian cinema remains scarce.

Research Gap and Implications

Most educational-media research concentrates on Bollywood, overlooking regional cinemas and song lyrics as pedagogical texts (Sundar, 2021). This study addresses that gap by analyzing how Gujarati film lyrics encode values like empathy, self-reliance, and justice.

- **Teachers** gain culturally relevant resources.
- **Curriculum designers** can integrate regional arts.
- **Policy-makers** are supported in promoting vernacular pedagogies.

Methodology

Research Design

This is a qualitative, interpretive study using a semi-structured textual critique of selected Gujarati film lyrics. The approach combines discourse analysis with arts-based pedagogical inquiry (Patton, 2014; Silverman, 2021).



Selected Songs and Lyrics

The films and songs selected are:

1. **Dhh** (2021) – “*Sapna*” (Dream): A song about childlike imagination, resilience, and belief in possibilities.
2. **Divaswapna** (2021) – “*Udaan*” (Flight): Emphasizes transformation, self-worth, and educational aspiration.
3. **Backbencher** (2011) – “*Nayi Soch*” (New Thinking): Advocates critical thinking and breaking educational stereotypes.

These films are accessible on public platforms like YouTube and JioCinema, and lyrics are available through music streaming platforms and film booklets.

Research Questions

1. What socio-ethical values are conveyed through selected Gujarati film songs?
2. How do lyrical and narrative strategies support value-based pedagogy?
3. In what ways do these align with the National Curriculum Framework (NCERT, 2022)?

Data Collection and Analysis

- **Lyrics:** Collected from official releases, transcribed, and translated.
- **Contextual Material:** Background notes, reviews, and interviews with filmmakers.
- **Framework:** The NCERT (2022) document on value education serves as the analytical benchmark.

Thematic analysis was carried out using NVivo. Coding categories included metaphor, emotional tone, narrative voice, and value type (e.g., empathy, perseverance, community).

Ethical Considerations

No human participants were involved. All media used are publicly available and appropriately cited.

Results

This section presents the findings from the semi-structured textual critique of three Gujarati film songs—“*Sapna*” (*Dhh*, 2021), “*Udaan*” (*Divaswapna*, 2021), and “*Nayi Soch*” (*Backbencher*, 2011)—based on the methodology outlined previously. A total of **52 discrete lyric segments** were coded across the three songs. These segments yielded **four overarching themes**: Resilience & Hope; Self-Efficacy & Agency; Community & Solidarity; and Critical Reflection & Transformation. The tables below summarize the coding framework, frequencies, and exemplar quotations. Following the tables, detailed descriptions of each theme and its constituent codes are provided.



Theme	Code	Frequency	Exemplar Quotation
Resilience & Hope	Overcoming Adversity	12	“હવાસો ઊંચા, પાંખો મજબૂત; સપના તુટી શકે નહિ માન”(“High spirits, strong wings; don’t let your dream break apart”) (<i>Sapna</i>) “ભૂખે ભણતા હો તો આજે સુપરહીરલા થજો”(“If you learn with hunger, today’s struggle becomes tomorrow’s feast”) (<i>Nayi Soch</i>)
	Future Orientation	8	
Self-Efficacy & Agency	Personal Agency	9	“હાથોમાં કળમ, મનમાં વિશ્વાસ; ઊડી જાયશું હું આકાશ”(“Pen in hand, faith in mind; I will soar through the sky”) (<i>Udaan</i>) “જઘડે છેકલ નિજીયું; હું છું મારી સૌથી મોટી ઢઢતલ”(“My battle is personal; I am my greatest strength”) (<i>Nayi Soch</i>)
	Self-Belief	7	
Community & Solidarity	Collective Support	6	“એકતામાં શક્તિ છે, માણસ નહીં હારશે”(“Strength lies in unity; man shall not be defeated”) (<i>Sapna</i>) “મિત્રો સંગમાં ચાલતા, હૃદય સંબંધમાં બંધાય”(“Walking with friends, hearts become bound”) (<i>Udaan</i>)
	Interdependence	5	



Theme	Code	Frequency	Exemplar Quotation
Critical Reflection & Transformation	Meta-cognition	4	“જાગો, વિચારો, નવી દિશા શોધો; જૂના બંધન તોડો” (“Awaken, reflect, seek new directions; break old chains”) (<i>Nayi Soch</i>)
			“સાથે રહીને પણ એકલા, સમાજે આપણને અજાણી દાડી” (“Alone together, society labels us unknown”) (<i>Sapna</i>)
	Social Critique	1	

Table 1. Summary of Codes, Themes, Frequencies, and Exemplars

Total coded segments: 52
Total themes: 4

Song Title	Film (Year)	Total Segments	Dominant Theme
<i>Sapna</i>	<i>Dhh</i> (2021)	19	Resilience & Hope
<i>Udaan</i>	<i>Divaswapna</i> (2021)	17	Self-Efficacy & Agency
<i>Nayi Soch</i>	<i>Backbencher</i> (2011)	16	Critical Reflection & Transformation

Table 2. Distribution of Coded Segments by Song

Detailed Findings by Theme

1. Resilience & Hope

- Overcoming Adversity (n = 12)**

Lyrics in “*Sapna*” repeatedly invoked metaphors of flight and strength—“હવાસો ઊંચા, પાંખો મજબૂત; સપના તુટી શકે નહિ માન”—to encourage persistence despite hardship. This code appeared in 12 segments, underscoring the song’s primary pedagogical aim to instill emotional resilience.



- **Future Orientation (n = 8)**

In “Nayi Soch,” the code Future Orientation surfaced around the idea of present struggle leading to future gain—e.g., “ભૂખે ભણતા હો તો આજે સુપરહીરલા થજો.” This forward-looking stance aligns with goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 2002) and reinforces hope as an educational value.

2. Self-Efficacy & Agency

- **Personal Agency (n = 9)**

“Udaan” foregrounds individual action: “હાથોમાં કળમ, મનમાં વિશ્વાસ; ઊડી જાયશું હું આકાશ.”

Here, the lyrical structure couples instrumental imagery (pen in hand) with psychological assertion (faith in mind), illustrating Bandura’s (1997) notion of self-efficacy.

- **Self-Belief (n = 7)**

Lyrics in “Nayi Soch” such as “હું છું મારી સૌથી મોટી દ્રઢતા” emphasize self-confidence as the foundation of learning. This aligns with Dweck’s (2006) growth-mindset framework, illustrating a parallel between popular song narratives and established educational psychology.

3. Community & Solidarity

- **Collective Support (n = 6)**

“Sapna” also contains moments of communal encouragement: “એકતામાં શક્તિ છે, માણસ નહીં હારશે.” This code reflects Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivist view that learning is co-constructed through social interaction.

- **Interdependence (n = 5)**

The lyric “મિત્રો સંગમાં ચાલતા, હૃદય સંબંધમાં બંધાય” in “Udaan” underscores mutual reliance, resonating with Lave and Wenger’s (1991) communities of practice, where identity and learning emerge through shared activities.

4. Critical Reflection & Transformation

• Meta-cognition (n = 4)

In “Nayi Soch,” the invocation to “જાગો, વિચારો, નવી દિશા શોધો; જૂના બંધન તોડો” tells listeners to engage in self-reflection and break unhelpful patterns. This mirrors Schön’s (1983) reflective practitioner model and foregrounds critical thinking as a curricular aim.

• Social Critique (n = 1)

A single segment in “Sapna,” “સાથે રહીને પણ એકલા, સમાજે આપણને અજાણી દાડી,” articulates a critique of social alienation. Though less frequent, this code highlights the song writers’ attention to socio-political commentary, linking pedagogy with social justice (Giroux, 1997).

Framework of Findings

Based on the codes and themes, Table 3 (conceptual map) illustrates how lyrical devices (metaphor, narrative voice, repetition) map onto educational values, which in turn align with the NCERT (2022) value domains.

Lyrical Device	Educational Value	NCERT Value Domain
Metaphor (wings)	Resilience & Hope	Emotional Development
Instrumental imagery (pen)	Self-Efficacy & Agency	Intellectual Development
Collective pronouns (we)	Community & Solidarity	Social & Moral Development
Imperative verbs (awaken)	Critical Reflection	Critical Thinking & Ethics

Table 3. Mapping of Lyrical Devices to Educational Values and NCERT Domains

Discussion of Findings

Drawing on Fairclough’s (2013) critical discourse framework, Patton’s (2014) phenomenological stance, and arts-based pedagogy theory (Hunter & Frawley, 2023; Stavrou, 2022), several insights emerge.

Lyrical Devices and Social Reality

Fairclough (2013) argues discourse shapes identity; here, recurrent flight metaphors in “Sapna” and “Udaan” do more than ornament—they position learners as resilient agents. The



“wings” motif echoes liberation narratives, aligning with Hunter and Frawley’s (2023) notion that arts-based texts offer “rich contexts for identity work” (p. 18).

Phenomenological Engagement

Patton’s (2014) approach emphasizes lived experience. Lyrics depicting hunger, struggle, and solidarity—in Gujarati idioms—evoke authentic responses. In “Udaan,” pen-and-mind imagery (“હાથોમાં કળમ, મનમાં વિશ્વાસ”) concretizes self-efficacy, mirroring Dweck’s (2006) growth-mindset principles.

Socio-Cultural Situatedness

Community & Solidarity codes reflect Vygotsky’s (1978) social constructivism: learning arises through interaction. Collective pronouns (“મેં,” “અમે”) and support metaphors root values in local contexts, supporting Sundar’s (2021) call to decolonize pedagogy via vernacular media.

Critical Reflection as Transformation

Meta-cognition and Social Critique codes—such as “જાગો, વિચારો, નવી દિશા શોધો”—foster critical thinking. Schön’s (1983) reflective practitioner and Giroux’s (1997) critical pedagogy advocate interrogating existing structures; these lyrics invite listeners to question and reshape their worlds, anticipating NEP 2020’s emphasis on reflective learning (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Alignment with NCERT Value Domains

Mapping lyrical devices to NCERT domains reveals coherence:

- **Emotional Development:** Resilience & Hope
- **Intellectual Development:** Self-Efficacy & Agency
- **Social–Moral Development:** Community & Solidarity
- **Critical Thinking:** Reflection & Critique

This suggests Gujarati film lyrics can supplement formal value-education curricula with culturally resonant materials (NCERT, 2022).

Pedagogical Implications

1. **Curriculum Integration:** Use lyric excerpts as prompts for metaphor analysis and goal-setting (Locke & Latham, 2002).
2. **Multimodal Learning:** Combine audio, lyric handouts, and reflective journaling to deepen engagement (Stavrou, 2022).



3. **Teacher Training:** Incorporate modules on leveraging regional media, per Aya and Ünlü (2022).

Limitations

- **Textual Focus:** Analysis isolated lyrics; future work should include listener perspectives (Silverman, 2021).
- **Sample Size:** Three songs limit generalizability; expanding to additional films may uncover further value domains.
- **Translation Nuances:** Some metaphors lose subtlety in English, affecting broader applicability.

Conclusion

This study confirms that contemporary Gujarati film songs—through metaphors of flight, agency, solidarity, and reflection—encode socio-ethical values aligned with NCERT’s domains. A semi-structured critique of “Sapna,” “Udaan,” and “Nayi Soch” yielded four themes—Resilience & Hope; Self-Efficacy & Agency; Community & Solidarity; Critical Reflection & Transformation—across 52 coded segments.

Key contributions include:

- **Theoretical Integration:** Merging critical discourse, phenomenology, and arts-based pedagogy in a regional context.
- **Practical Framework:** Offering educators a coding schema and conceptual mapping to incorporate film lyrics into value education.
- **Policy Relevance:** Guiding curriculum designers and policymakers in using vernacular media, supporting NEP 2020’s call for culturally contextualized pedagogy (Ministry of Education, 2020; NCERT, 2022).

Future research should expand to other genres (e.g., folk, devotional), adopt mixed methods (e.g., focus groups), and explore digital adaptations (e.g., TikTok) to capture emerging forms of value transmission among youth. Ultimately, Gujarati film songs—through evocative narratives and calls to reflection—offer dynamic, accessible resources for nurturing resilient, agentic, and socially conscious learners.

References

- Aya, A., & Ünlü, İ. (2022). Educational movies and pedagogical beliefs. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 15(1), 106–129.



- BBC. (2017). How Bollywood helps literacy.
- Chan, E. (2009). Beyond pedagogy. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 13(2), 167–178.
- Chattopadhyay, S. (2018). *Regional languages in Indian education*. Open Access Repository.
- Cloonan, A., & Hulme, M. (2015). Exploring lyrics in curriculum. *Education* 3–13.
- Delgado, M. (2018). *Teaching with film*. Routledge.
- Engh, D. (2013). Music in the EFL classroom. *English Language Teaching*, 6(2), 113–116.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). *Language and power* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Fonseca-Mora, C., & Herrero Machancoses, F. (2016). Music and vocabulary learning. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 29(7), 1156–1169.
- Ghosh, R. (2013). *Decolonising education*. Routledge.
- Gokulsing, K. M., & Dissanayake, W. (2013). *Indian popular cinema: A narrative of cultural change*. Routledge.
- Hunter, L., & Frawley, E. (2023). Arts-based pedagogy. *Teaching Sociology*, 51(1), 13–25.
- Kothari, B., & Bandyopadhyay, T. (2010). Same language subtitling. *Journal of Development Economics*, 93(1), 1–14.
- Kumar, T., Akhter, S., Yunus, M. M., & Shamsy, A. (2022). Music in EFL classrooms. *Education Research International*.
- Mehta, M. (2017). *Gujarati cinema: The regional voice*. Open University Publications.
- Ministry of Education. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*.
https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf
- Mohanty, A. K. (2009). *Multilingual education for social justice*. Orient BlackSwan.
- Murphey, T. (1990). *Song and music in language learning*. Peter Lang.
- NCERT. (2022). *National Curriculum Framework for School Education*.
https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NCF-School-Education-Pre-Draft.pdf
- Paquette, K., & Rieg, S. (2008). Using music in classrooms. *Childhood Education*, 84(4), 197–200.
- Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2021). *Interpreting qualitative data* (6th ed.). Sage.
- Stavrou, H. (2022). Popular songs and motivation.