

## The role of comedy films in Sri Lankan contemporary cinema

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The study of World Cinema shows that comedy had a special place from its very inception in the era of the silent cinema. A Comic element was part and parcel of Sri Lankan cinema right from its earliest, beginning with *Kadauna Poronduwa* in 1947. It reached a maturity in 1960s<sup>1</sup> with films such as *Allapagedara*, *Amathikama*, *Kolamba Sanniya*. Although 60 years have passed since the beginning of Sri Lankan cinema, no substantial development can be seen in the sphere of comedy films in Sinhala. The objective of this study is to explore why does the present comedy film differ from its previous tradition and to analyze the factors behind this phenomena. For this purpose I have selected these comedy film titled as parliament Jokes, Wadabari Tazen and Sikuru Hathe to content analyze.

Primary data was taken from articles, related to comedy films of the past as well as related books and studies. Box office records were also used. All the information gathered have placed in the background of world trends in the comedy genre of the cinema. In addition secondary data was collected through 100 randomly selected filmgoers.

The conclusion arrived at is that the Sri Lankan comedy film needs to develop vastly itself. One of the essential contributions of the comedy film lies with its role as a mean of reflecting the faults within the society in a humorous manner. The comedy medium can be used to communicate messages for social development as well. The development of comedy cinema would eventually lead to the overall development of cinema culture of the island.

**Key words:** Comic element, Comedy films, Communicate, Messages, Cinema culture

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