

= Taare Zameen Par =

Taare Zameen Par (titled Like Stars on Earth internationally) is a 2007 Indian drama film produced and directed by Aamir Khan . Darsheel Safary stars as eight @-@ year @-@ old Ishaan , and Khan plays his art teacher . Creative director and writer Amole Gupte initially developed the idea with his wife Deepa Bhatia , who served as the film 's editor . Visual effects are by Tata Elxsi 's Visual Computing Labs , and the title animation ? the first use of clay animation in a Bollywood film ? was created by Dhimant Vyas . Shankar ? Ehsaan ? Loy composed the film 's score , and Prasoon Joshi wrote the lyrics for many of the songs . Principal photography took place in Mumbai and in Panchgani 's New Era High School , and some of the school 's students make appearances .

The film explores the life and imagination of Ishaan , an eight @-@ year @-@ old dyslexic child . Although he excels in art , his poor academic performance leads his parents to send him to a boarding school . Ishaan 's new art teacher suspects that he is dyslexic and helps him to overcome his disability . The film made its theatrical debut in India on 21 December 2007 , and UTV Home Entertainment released a DVD for Indian audiences in 2008 . Disney 's later release of the international edition DVD marked the first purchase of distribution rights for an Indian film by a global company .

Taare Zameen Par has received numerous awards , including the Filmfare Best Film Award for 2008 and the 2008 National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare . It was India 's official entry for the 2009 Academy Awards Best Foreign Film , but did not progress to the short @-@ list .

= = Plot = =

Ishaan Nandkishore Awasthi (Darsheel Safary) is an eight @-@ year @-@ old boy who dislikes school and fails every test or exam . He finds all subjects difficult , and is belittled and berated by his teachers and classmates . But Ishaan 's internal world is full of wonders that he is unable to convey to others , magical lands filled with colour and animated animals . He is an artist whose talent is unrecognised .

Ishaan 's father , Nandkishore Awasthi (Vipin Sharma) , is a successful executive who expects his children to excel . His mother , housewife Maya Awasthi (Tisca Chopra) , is frustrated by her inability to educate her son . Ishaan 's elder brother , Yohaam (Sachet Engineer) , is an exemplary scholar and athlete , which Ishaan is frequently reminded of .

After receiving a particularly poor academic report , Ishaan 's parents send him to a boarding school . There he sinks into a state of fear and depression , despite being befriended by Rajan (Tanay Chheda) , a physically disabled boy and one of the top students in the class .

Ishaan 's situation changes when a new art teacher , Ram Shankar Nikumbh (Aamir Khan) , joins the school 's faculty . An instructor at the Tulips School for young children with developmental disabilities , Nikumbh 's teaching style is markedly different from that of his strict predecessor , and he quickly observes that Ishaan is unhappy and contributes little to class activities . He reviews Ishaan 's work and concludes that his academic shortcomings are indicative of dyslexia .

On his day off , Nikumbh sets off to Mumbai , to visit Ishaan 's parents . Nikumbh is surprised to learn that Ishaan is passionate about painting , and shows great talent in art . Nikumbh then asks Mr Awasthi as to why he sent Ishaan to a boarding school . Mr Awasthi replies that Ishaan was an ill mannered boy and was a poor student . Nikumbh shows Ishaan 's mother her son 's notebooks and gives an analysis of the script . Nikumbh deduces that Ishaan has severe difficulty in understanding letters and words . Mr Awasthi tries to dismiss it as a mere excuse for Ishaan 's laziness . Nikumbh demonstrates what Ishaan experiences every day at school . He states that Ishaan has dyslexia as well as he may be having other conditions , which make him a difficult child .

Mr Awasthi bluntly categorizes it as mental retardation , but Nikumbh criticizes him . Nikumbh argues that Ishaan is an above average child and processes information differently . He further states that Mr Awasthi failed to understand Ishaan and as a result the latter is facing low self @-@ esteem and no longer paints .

Nikumbh returns , and subsequently brings up the topic of dyslexia in class , and offers a list of

famous people who were dyslexic . Later , Nikumbh reveals to Ishaan , that he too is a dyslexic and faced problems similar to Ishaan . Nikumbh then visits the school 's principal and obtains his permission to become Ishaan 's tutor . He attempts to improve Ishaan 's reading and writing by using remedial techniques developed by dyslexia specialists ; Ishaan soon develops an interest in language and mathematics , and his grades improve .

Towards the end of the school year Nikumbh organises an art fair for the staff and students . The competition is judged by artist Lalita Lajmi . Ishaan , with his strikingly creative style , is declared the winner and Nikumbh , who paints Ishaan 's portrait , the runner @-@ up . The principal announces that Nikumbh has been hired as the school 's permanent art teacher . When Ishaan 's parents meet his teachers on the last day of school they are left speechless by the transformation they see in him . Overcome with emotion , Ishaan 's father thanks Nikumbh . As Ishaan is getting into the car to leave with his parents for summer vacations , he turns around and runs toward Nikumbh . The film ends with a freeze frame shot of Nikumbh tossing Ishaan into the air .

= = Cast = =

Darsheel Safary as Ishaan Nandkishore Awasthi : In looking for an actor to play the central figure of Ishaan , writer Amole Gupte turned to Shiamak Davar 's Summer Funk workshops . Gupte had several boys informally audition by explaining to him how they would react to scripted situations from the film . Of his decision to cast Darsheel Safary , Gupte recalls that " it was a tough call . But Darsheel has the mischief in his eyes to be Ishaan . Everyone just naturally gravitated towards him . "

Aamir Khan as Ram Shankar Nikumbh (" Nikumbh Sir ") : Gupte , who based the character on his art teacher Ramdas Sampat Nikumbh , initially asked Akshaye Khanna to play the role .

Tanay Chheda as Rajan Damodran : Ishaan 's classmate at New Era High School .

Sachet Engineer as Yohaán Nandkishore Awasthi (" Dada ") : Ishaan 's elder brother .

Tisca Chopra as Maya Awasthi (" Maa ") : Ishaan 's mother , who gave up her career to raise her children . Chopra tended to speak softly during filming and was subsequently required to re @-@ record some scenes using automated dialogue replacement .

Vipin Sharma as Nandkishore Awasthi (" Papa ") : Ishaan 's " strict , hard , dominating father " . Part of the reason for Sharma 's casting was his " extremely strong and dominating " face that " exudes harshness . " Described by Khan as " naturally polite " and sensitive , Sharma was instructed to lower his voice to sound " harsh " and " dominating " .

Girija Oak as Jabeen , Nikumbh 's co @-@ worker

Bugs Bhargava and Shankar Sachdev as Sen Sir and Tiwari Sir : Two teachers at New Era High School , whose attitude towards Ishaan softens as his grades improve and he wins the art contest . The roles are caricatures of teachers in general .

M. K. Raina as the principal of New Era High School .

Lalita Lajmi as herself in a cameo role . It was her first appearance as an actor .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

The husband and wife team of Amole Gupte and Deepa Bhatia developed the story that would eventually become Taare Zameen Par as a way of understanding why some children cannot conform to a conventional educational system . Their initial work began as a short story that evolved into a screenplay over seven years . Deepa Bhatia later stated in an interview with The Hindu that her original inspiration was not dyslexia but rather the childhood of Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa , who performed poorly in school . Her goal was thus to explore the story of " a child who did not fit into the school stream . " She referenced a specific moment in Kurosawa 's biography where he began to excel after meeting an attentive art teacher , and noted that this scene " became

the inspiration for how a teacher could transform the life of a student " .

In developing the character of a young boy based on Kurosawa , Bhatia and Gupte explored some possible reasons why he failed in school . Their research led them to groups such as the Maharashtra Dyslexia Association and Parents for a Better Curriculum for the Child (PACE) . Dyslexia eventually became the central topic and theme of the film . The pair worked with dyslexic children to research and develop the screenplay , basing characters and situations on their observations . Bhatia and Gupte carefully concealed the children 's identities in the final version of the script .

Khan and Gupte first met in college . Khan has said that he admired Gupte 's abilities as an actor , writer , and painter . Three years before the film 's release Gupte brought Khan to the project as a producer and actor . Gupte himself was to direct , but the first week 's dailies were a great disappointment to Khan , who " lost faith in Amol and his capability of translating on screen what he had so beautifully written on paper " . Khan was on the verge of withdrawing his participation in the film because of these " creative differences " , but Gupte kept him onboard by stepping down as director . Contrary to Khan 's claim , Gupte lashed out saying that after the wrap @-@ up party , Khan announced that he was the director of the film , despite Gupte acting as director . Had it been necessary to hire a third party , production would have been postponed for 6 ? 8 months as the new director prepared for the film . Keen to keep Safary as Ishaan ? the actor might have aged too much for the part had production been delayed ? Khan took over the role of director . Taare Zameen Par was Khan 's first experience in the dual role of actor and director . He has admitted that the transition was challenging , stating that while he had always wanted to direct a film , it was unknown territory for him . Gupte remained on set , " guiding [Khan] and , at times , even correcting [him] " .

= = = Title and translation = = =

Initially the film was to retain the short story 's title of " High Jump " , because of Ishaan 's inability to achieve the high jump in gym class . This subplot ? filmed but later cut ? tied into the original ending for the movie . In this rendition , a " ghost image " separates from Ishaan after the art competition and runs to the sports field ; the film would end on a freeze frame of Ishaan successfully making the leap . Khan , however , was unhappy with that proposed ending and convinced Gupte to rewrite it .

With the working title no longer relevant , Khan , Gupte , and Bhatia discussed several alternatives , eventually deciding on Taare Zameen Par . Possible translations of this title include Stars on the Ground and Stars on Earth . According to Khan :

Taare Zameen Par is a film about children and it is a film which celebrates the abilities of children . Taare Zameen Par is a title which denotes that aspect . It is a title with a very positive feel to it . All the kids are special and wonderful . They are like stars on earth . This particular aspect gave birth to the title .

= = = Filming = = =

Principal photography for the film took place in India over five months . Khan spent his first two days as director blocking the first scene to be filmed ? Ishaan returning home from school and putting away his recently collected fish ? and becoming comfortable with his new responsibilities . Believing that the audience should not be aware of the camera , he chose a simple shooting style for the film that involved relatively little camera movement .

At the same time , Khan also made use of illusory camera tricks . For example , the opening scene of Ishaan collecting fish outside his school was shot on location and at Film City . Shots focusing on Ishaan took place at the former , while those involving the gutter terrarium were filmed at a water tank at the latter . The tank 's water often became murky because the mud would rise to the top , forcing production to constantly empty and refill it . Due to this hindrance , the scene took eight hours to film . The film 's next sequence involved Ishaan playing with two dogs . To compensate for the " absolutely petrified " Safary , most joint shots used a body double , though other portions

integrated close @-@ up shots of the actor . Ishaan 's nightmare ? he becomes separated from his mother at a train station and she departs on a train while he is trapped in a crowd ? was filmed in Mumbai on a permanent railway @-@ station set . To work around the train set piece 's immobility , production placed the camera on a moving trolley to create the illusion of a departing train . For the sequences related from the mother 's point of view ? shot from behind the actress ? Chopra stood on a trolley next to a recreated section of the train 's door .

All the school sequences were filmed on location . The production team searched for a Mumbai school with an " oppressive " feel to establish the " heaviness of being in a metropolitan school " , and eventually chose St. Xavier 's School . As the school is situated along a main road filming took place on weekends , to minimise the background noise , but an early scene in which Ishaan is sent out of the classroom was filmed on the day of the Mumbai Marathon . The production staff placed acrylic sheets invisible to the naked eye on the classroom windows to mask the sounds of nearby crowds and helicopters . New Era High School served as Ishaan 's boarding school . The change of setting was a " breath of fresh air " for the production crew , who moved from Ishaan 's small house in Chembur to the " vast , beautiful environs " of Panchgani .

Production relied on stock footage for the brief scene of a bird feeding its babies . Khan carefully selected a clip to his liking , but learned three weeks before the film 's release that the footage was not available in the proper format . With three days to replace it or else risk delaying the release , Khan made do with what he could find . He says that he " cringes " every time he sees it .

= = = Children = = =

Real schoolchildren participated throughout the movie 's filming . Khan credited them with the film 's success , and was reportedly very popular with them . Furthermore , Khan placed a high priority on the day @-@ to @-@ day needs of his child actors , and went to great lengths to attend to them . The production staff made sure that the students were never idle , and always kept them occupied outside of filming . New Era Faculty Coordinator Douglas Lee thought the experience not only helped the children to learn patience and cooperation , but also gave them a better understanding of how they should behave towards children like Ishaan who have problems in school . Because filming at New Era High School occurred during the winter holiday , those portraying Ishaan 's classmates gave up their vacation to participate . To fill out the campus background , students from nearby schools were also brought in . A total of 1 @, @ 500 children were used for wide @-@ shots of the film 's art @-@ fair climax ; medium shots only required 400 students .

New to acting , the children often made errors such as staring into the camera , and Khan resorted to unorthodox methods to work around their rookie mistakes . For example , an early scene in the film featured a school assembly ; Khan wanted the students to act naturally and to ignore the principal 's speech , but recognised that this would be a difficult feat with cameras present . First Assistant Director Sunil Pandey spoke continuously in an attempt to " bore the hell out of [them] " , and they eventually lost interest in the filming and behaved normally . A later scene involved Nikumbh enlightening his class about famous people who suffer from dyslexia , and the children 's responses to his speech were the last portion to be filmed . Having already spent 3 ? 4 days hearing the dialogue the children 's reactions were " jaded " . Khan opted to film them while he recited a tale , and manipulated his storytelling to achieve the varying spontaneous reactions . The following scene had the children playing around a nearby pond . Horrified when he learned that the water was 15 feet (4 @. @ 6 m) deep , Khan recruited four lifeguards in case a child fell in .

Khan found it important that the audience connect the film to real children , and had Pandey travel throughout India filming documentary @-@ style footage of children from all walks of life . Those visuals were integrated into the end credits .

= = = Art and animation = = =

While claymation has been used in Indian television commercials , the film 's title sequence ? a representation of Ishaan 's imagination ? marked its first instance in a Bollywood film . Khan gave

claymation artist Dhimant Vyas free rein over the various elements . The storyboarding took one and a half months and the shooting required 15 days . The " 3 into 9 " sequence , in which Ishaan delves into his imagination to solve a math problem , was originally conceived as a 3D animation . Halfway through its creation , however , Khan felt it was not turning out as he had envisioned it . Khan scrapped the project and hired Vaibhav Kumaresh , who hand @-@ drew the scene as a 2D animation .

Artist Samir Mondal composed Ishaan and Nikumbh 's art @-@ fair watercolour paintings . He held a workshop with the schoolchildren , and incorporated elements from their artwork into Ishaan 's . Mondal also instructed Khan on a painter 's typical mannerisms and movements . Gupte created the rest of Ishaan 's artwork and Assistant Art Director Veer Nanavati drew Ishaan 's flipbook . The art department 's designs for Ishaan 's school notebooks disappointed Khan , who had familiarised himself with dyslexic writing . Using his left hand , Khan instead wrote it himself .

= = = Musical sequences = = =

The musical sequence of " Jame Raho " establishes the characters of the four members of Ishaan 's family ; for example , the father is hardworking and responsible , and Yohaana is an " ideal son " who does all the right things . A robotic style of music overlaps most of the sequence ? this is mirrored by the machine @-@ like morning routines of the mother , father , and Yohaana ? but changes for Ishaan 's portion to imply that he is different from the rest . This concept is furthered by speed ramping and having the camera sway with the music to create a distinct style . The twilight scenes of " Maa " were a particular issue for the production crew . Because the specific lighting only lasted ten to fifteen minutes a day , the scenes took nearly ten evenings to film . Production at one time considered having a child singing , but ultimately deemed it too over the top and felt it would connect to more people if sung by an adult . Shankar initially performed the song as a sample ? they planned to replace him with another singer ? but production eventually decided that his rendition was best .

Ishaan 's truancy scene ? he leaves school one day after realising that his mother has not signed his failed math test ? originally coincided with the song " Kholo Kholo , " but Khan did not believe it worked well for the situation . In his opinion , the accompanying song should focus on what a child wants ? to be free ? and be told from the first @-@ person perspective instead of " Kholo Kholo " ' s second person . When Khan took over as director , he opted to use " Mera Jahan " ? a song written by Gupte ? and moved " Kholo Kholo " to the art fair . Viewers of test screenings were divided over the truancy scene . Half thoroughly enjoyed it but the rest complained that it was too long , did not make sense , and merely showed " touristy " visuals of Mumbai . Khan nevertheless kept the scene , because he " connected deeply " with it and felt that it established Ishaan 's world .

Shiamak Davar choreographed the dance sequence of " Bum Bum Bole , " and was given free rein over its design . He had intended to use 40 students from his dance school , but Khan did not want trained dancers . Davar gave the children certain cues and a general idea of what to do , but left the style and final product up to them to avoid a choreographed appearance . Time constraints meant that while Khan was busy filming " Bum Bum Bole , " Ram Madhvani took over as director for " Bheja Kum " . The latter sequence , containing a " fun @-@ filled " song of rhythmic dialogue , allowed the audience to perceive how Ishaan sees the world and written languages . It was intended to represent " a young boy 's worst nightmare , in terms of ... the worst thing that he can think of " ; Madhvani based the visual concept on his son 's fear of " creepy @-@ crawlies " such as cockroaches , dragonflies , and lizards . Tata Elxsi 's Visual Computing Labs made the creatures out of the English alphabet and numbers , although Khan insisted they include the Hindi alphabet as not all the audience would be familiar with English . The chalkboard writing 's transformation into a snake was included to surprise the audience and " end the song on a high note . "

In writing the song " Taare Zameen Par , " lyricist Prasoon Joshi followed the theme of " however much you talk about children , it 's not enough . " Every line throughout the song describes children , and only one repeats : " Kho Naa Jaaye Yeh / Taare Zameen Par " (" Let us not lose these / Little stars on earth ") . The song is mostly set to the annual day performance by the developmentally

disabled children of Tulips School . Actual students from Tulips School and Saraswati Mandir participated , and were filmed over a period of five days . The sequence originally featured numerous dance performances , but was trimmed down when test audiences found it too long . A song accompanying the scene in which Ishaan 's mother is watching home videos of her son was also cut , and replaced with background music after test audiences expressed their opposition to yet another song .

== Background music ==

Timing and other aspects are usually planned when scoring a film , but Khan chose to take a more improvised approach . Instead of using a studio , he and the trio Shankar ? Ehsaan ? Loy recorded it at Khan 's home in Panchgani , to clear their heads and not be in the mindset of the city . As they watched the film , Khan pointed out when he wanted music to begin and of what type . Ehsaan Noorani noted that this strategy allowed the score to have a " spontaneity to it . "

Different styles of background music were used to convey certain things . For example , a guitar is played when Ishaan is tense or upset , sometimes with discordant notes . The music of the opening scene ? the recurring " Ishaan 's Theme , " which represents the character 's peace of mind ? overpowers the background noise to show that Ishaan is lost in his own world ; the noise becomes louder after he snaps back to reality . But the scene in which Nikumbh explains dyslexia to Ishaan 's family took the opposite approach . Silent at first , the music is slowly introduced as the father begins to understand his son 's dilemma . The almost seven @-@ minute long scene scarcely used any background music , to slow the pace and make it seem more realistic .

== Release ==

== Box office ==

Taare Zameen Par was released worldwide on 21 December 2007 , although countries such as Australia , Malaysia , New Zealand , and Fiji opened it on 20 December . It debuted in India with 425 prints , although revenue @-@ sharing issues between the film 's distributors and theatre owners caused some slight delays . The movie grossed ? 150 million (US \$ 2 @. @ 2 million) domestically within the first three days . Its theatre occupancy in Mumbai dropped to 58 percent during its third week , but climbed back to 62 percent the following week ? this brought the total to ? 770 million (US \$ 11 million) ? after the Maharashtra government granted the film exemption from the entertainment tax . Anticipating further tax exemption in other states , world distributor PVR Pictures circulated 200 more prints of the film . The film completed its domestic run with \$ 19 @, @ 779 @, @ 215 . To reach more audiences , the film was later dubbed in the regional languages of Tamil and Telugu . Both were scheduled for release on 12 September 2008 , the former under the title Vaalu Nakshatram . It grossed \$ 1 @, @ 223 @, @ 869 in the US by its seventh week , and £ 351 @, @ 303 in the UK by its ninth week . Reports regarding the film 's worldwide gross have conflicted , with sources citing ? 889 @. @ 7 million (US \$ 13 million) , ? 1 @. @ 07 billion (US \$ 16 million) , ? 1 @. @ 31 billion (US \$ 19 million) , and ? 1 @. @ 35 billion (US \$ 20 million) .

== Protests in Gujarat ==

In response to Khan 's support for the Narmada Bachao Andolan and his criticism of Chief Minister Narendra Modi , approximately 50 activists of the Sardar Patel Group conducted protests outside of PVR and INOX theatres in Vadodara , Gujarat . The group also issued statements to all the multiplexes of Gujarat , suggesting that the film not be screened unless Khan apologised for his comments . The INOX cinema eventually boycotted the film ; INOX Operations Manager Pushendra Singh Rathod stated that " INOX is with Gujarat , and not isolated from it " .

= = = International Dyslexia Association = = =

The International Dyslexia Association screened *Taare Zameen Par* on 29 October 2008 in Seattle , Washington . Khan noted in his official blog that there were about 200 people in the audience and that he was " curious to see the response of a non @-@ Indian audience to what we had made . " He felt some concern that *Taare Zameen Par* was shown in a conference room rather than a cinema hall and was projected as a DVD rather than as a film . He said that the showing concluded to an " absolutely thunderous standing ovation " which " overwhelmed " him and that he " saw the tears streaming down the cheeks of the audience . " Khan also noted that the reaction to the film " was exactly as it had been with audiences back home in India " .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Taare Zameen Par received several positive reviews . Subhash K. Jha suggests that the film is " a work of art , a water painting where the colors drip into our hearts , which could easily have fallen into the motions of over @-@ sentimentality . Aamir Khan holds back where he could easily resort to an extravagant display of drama and emotions . " Rajeev Masand of CNN @-@ IBN argued that the true power of the film lies in its " remarkable , rooted , rock @-@ solid script which provides the landscape for such an emotionally engaging , heart @-@ warming experience . " Manish Gajjar from the BBC stated that the film " touches your heart and moves you deeply with its sterling performances . [It is] a film full of substance ! " Jaspreet Pandohar , also of BBC , posited that *Taare Zameen Par* is a " far cry from the formulaic masala flicks churned out by the Bollywood machine , " and is " an inspirational story that is as emotive as it is entertaining ; this is a little twinkling star of a movie . " Furthermore , Aprajita Anil of Screen gave the film four stars and stated , " *Taare Zameen Par* cannot be missed . Because it is different . Because it is delightful . Because it would make everyone think . Because it would help everyone grow . Because very rarely do performances get so gripping . And of course because the ' perfectionist ' actor has shaped into a ' perfectionist ' director . " In addition , filmmaker Anurag Kashyap stated that , " *Taare Zameen Par* took me back to my hostel days . If you take away the dyslexia , it seems like my story . The film affected me so deeply that I was almost left speechless . After watching the film , I was asked how I liked *Taare Zameen Par* . I could not talk as I was deeply overwhelmed . "

However , there were some criticisms . Jha 's only objection to the film was Nikumbh 's " sanctimonious lecture " to Ishaan 's " rather theatrically @-@ played " father . Jha found this a jarring " deviation from the delectable delicacy " of the film 's tone . Although she applauded the film overall and recommended " a mandatory viewing for all schools and all parents " , Nikhat Kazmi of The Times of India believed the second half was " a bit repetitive , " the script needed " taut editing , " and Ishaan 's trauma " [seemed] a shade too prolonged and the treatment simplistic . " Despite commending the " great performances " and excellent directing , Gautaman Bhaskaran of The Hollywood Reporter , too , suggested that the movie " suffers from a weak script . " Likewise , Derek Kelly of Variety criticised it for what he described as its " touchy @-@ feely @-@ ness " attention to " a special needs kid 's plight . " Kelly also disliked the film for being " so resolutely caring ... and devoid of real drama and interesting characters " that " it should have ' approved by the Dyslexia Assn . ' stamped on the posters . "

= = = Scholarly response = = =

In his article " *Taare Zameen Par* and dyslexic savants " featured in the Annals of Indian Academy of Neurology , Ambar Chakravarty noted the general accuracy of Ishaan 's dyslexia . Though Chakravarty was puzzled by Ishaan 's trouble in simple arithmetic ? a trait of dyscalculia rather than dyslexia ? he reasoned it was meant to " enhance the image of [Ishaan 's] helplessness and

disability " . Labeling Ishaan an example of " dyslexic savant syndrome " , he especially praised the growth of Ishaan 's artistic talents after receiving help and support from Nikumbh , and deemed it the " most important (and joyous) neurocognitive phenomenon " of the film . This improvement highlights cosmetic neurology , a " major and therapeutically important issue " in cognitive neuroscience and neuropsychology .

Likewise , in their article " Wake up call from ' Stars on the Ground ' " for the Indian Journal of Psychiatry , T. S. Sathyanarayana Rao and V. S. T. Krishna wrote that the film " deserves to be vastly appreciated as an earnest endeavor to portray with sensitivity and empathetically diagnose a malady in human life " . They also felt it blended " modern professional knowledge " with a " humane approach " in working with a dyslexic child . However , the authors believed the film expands beyond disabilities and explores the " present age where everyone is in a restless hurry " . The pair wrote , " This film raises serious questions on mental health perspectives . We seem to be heading to a state of mass scale mindlessness even as children are being pushed to ' perform ' . Are we seriously getting engrossed in the race of ' achievement ' and blissfully becoming numb to the crux of life i.e. , experiencing meaningful living in a broader frame rather than merely existing ? " The film depicts how " threats and coercion are not capable of unearthing rich human potentialities deeply embedded in children " , and that teachers should instead map their strengths and weakness . With this in mind , the author felt that Khan " dexterously drives home the precise point that our first priority ought to be getting to know the child before making any efforts to fill them with knowledge and abilities " . Overall , the pair found a " naive oversimplification " in the film . With India " only recently waking to recognizing the reality and tragedy of learning disability " , however , they " easily [forgave the film 's fault] under artistic license " .

= = = Public response = = =

The film raised awareness of the issue of dyslexia , and prompted more open discussions among parents , schools , activists , and policymakers . Anjali Bawa , a parent @-@ activist and founder of Action Dyslexia Delhi , said that the number of parents who visit her office increased tenfold in the months following the film 's release . Many began taking a more proactive approach by contacting her after noticing problems , rather than using her as a last resort . Gupte himself received " many painful letters and phone calls " from Indian parents . He noted , " Fathers weep on the phone and say they saw the film and realized that they have been wrong in the way they treated their children . This is catharsis . "

These reactions have also brought about a change in policies . The film , only ten days after its debut , influenced the Central Board of Secondary Education to provide extra time to special children ? including the visually impaired , physically challenged and dyslexic ? during exams . In 2008 , Mumbai 's civic body also opened 12 classrooms for autistic students . In Chandigarh , the education administration started a course to educate teachers on how to deal with children with learning disabilities .

= = = Accolades = = =

Among its many awards , Taare Zameen Par won the Filmfare Best Film Award for 2008 , as well as the National Film Award for Best Film on Family Welfare . Khan 's directorial role and Saif 's performance were recognized at the 2008 Zee Cine Awards , 2008 Filmfare Awards , and 4th Apsara Film & Television Producers Guild Awards .

= = = 2009 Academy Awards submission and Slumdog Millionaire = = =

Taare Zameen Par was initially acclaimed as India 's official entry for the 2009 Academy Awards Best Foreign Film , but after it failed to progress to the short list , a debate began in the Indian media as to why Indian films never win Academy Awards . Speculation for the reasons behind Taare Zameen Par 's failed bid included Rediff.com 's Arthur J. Pai 's observation that it lacked mainstream

media attention ; AMPAS jury member Krishna Shah criticised its length and abundance of songs .

Khan claimed that he was " not surprised " that Taare Zameen Par was not included in the Academy Award shortlist , and argued , " I don't make films for awards . I make films for the audience . The audience , for which I have made the film , really loved it and the audiences outside India have also loved it . What I am trying to say is that film has been well loved across the globe and that for me it is extremely heartening and something that I give very high value to . "

The Indian news media also frequently compared Taare Zameen Par 's nomination failure with the British film Slumdog Millionaire 's multiple Academy Award nominations and wins , and noted that other Indian films in the past were overlooked . Film critic Rajeev Masand argued that it is difficult to compare the two films and noted that Slumdog Millionaire was being marketed in a way that Indian films such as Taare Zameen Par could not compete with . In this context , Slumdog Millionaire actor Mahesh Manjrekar stated , " I'm sad that Aamir's Taare Zameen Par didn't make it to the final round of the Oscars . I thought it to be way better than Slumdog [Millionaire] ... , without taking away anything from Boyle and the kids . But , Indian movies are underestimated there . "

== Home media ==

UTV Home Entertainment released the film on DVD in India on 25 July 2008 . It was launched at Darsheel Safary 's school , Green Lawns High School , in Mumbai . Aamir Khan , Tisca Chopra , Vipin Sharma , Sachet Engineer , and the rest of the cast and crew were present . In his speech , Khan stated , " Darsheel is a very happy child , full of life and vibrant . I am sure it 's because of the way his parents and teachers have treated him . I must say Darsheel 's principal Mrs. Bajaj has been extremely supportive and encouraging . The true test of any school is how happy the kids are and by the looks of it , the children here seem really happy . "

Walt Disney Company Home Entertainment , which acquired 33 percent of UTV Software Communications , bought the DVD rights for distribution in North America , the United Kingdom , and Australia for \$ 70 million (US \$ 1 @ 0 million) . This marked " the first time an international studio has bought the video rights of an Indian film . " Retitling it Like Stars on Earth , Disney released the film in Region 2 on 26 October 2009 , in Region 1 on 12 January 2010 , and in Region 4 on 29 March 2010 . A three-disc set , the Disney version features the original Hindi audio soundtrack with English subtitles or another dubbed in English , as well as bonus material such as audio commentary , deleted scenes , and the musical soundtrack .

== Soundtrack ==

The soundtrack for Taare Zameen Par was released on 4 November 2007 under the label T-Series . The music is mainly composed by Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy , with lyrics by Prasoon Joshi . However , " Mera Jahan " was scored by Shailendra Barve and written by Gupte , with the latter also composing " Ishaan 's Theme . " Joshi received the National Film Award for Best Lyrics , and Shankar Mahadevan won the National Film Award for Best Male Playback Singer for " Maa . "

Joginder Tuteja of Bollywood Hungama praised the variety of genres present in the soundtrack and the lack of remixes . He gave it an overall rating of 3.5 out of 5 stars , calling it a " zero compromise album " that " stays true to the film 's spirit " . Planet Bollywood 's Atta Khan rated it 9 out of 10 , noting that the soundtrack " unquestionably lives up to all expectations " . He felt that it maintained an " all round polished nature " and " is destined to become a classic " . Although he , too , enjoyed the musical variety , he believed the composers overused the guitar and synthesizers . Sukanya Verma of Rediff.com gave the soundtrack a score of 3 out of 5 , commenting , " Taare Zameen Par isn't your regular soundtrack about fluttering hearts and sleepless nights . What makes these delicate and whimsical creations special is their underlying innocence . "

== DVD references ==

Khan , Aamir (12 January 2010) . Like Stars on Earth DVD commentary (DVD) . Walt Disney

Studios Home Entertainment .

Various (12 January 2010) . Like Stars on Earth Bonus Disc : The Making ... (DVD) . Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment .