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The Effects of Psycho-Thriller Films from Bollywood on OTT Platforms

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ABSTRACT: This research paper explores the impact of Bollywood psycho-thriller films on OTT platforms and their influence on viewers, particularly the youth. Digital streaming services have popularized psycho-thriller content, offering audiences a unique blend of suspense, intrigue, and psychological depth. The paper examines how Bollywood's psycho-thriller films affect mental health, shape audience perceptions and behaviors, and their cultural and historical significance. Utilizing surveys, interviews, and content analysis, this study provides insights into the evolving digital entertainment landscape and its implications for mental health and well-being.

KEYWORDS: Bollywood, Psycho-thriller, OTT platforms, Youth, Psychological impact

I. INTRODUCTION

Changes in Entertainment Consumption Over Time

In recent years, digital technology's rapid advancement has significantly transformed how people consume entertainment. Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hotstar have democratized access to a vast array of films, TV shows, and documentaries, allowing viewers to enjoy content on demand across multiple devices. This shift has disrupted traditional media consumption patterns, leading to the soaring popularity of streaming services.

The Rise of Psycho-Thrillers

Within this digital landscape, the psycho-thriller genre has thrived, captivating audiences with its mix of suspense, intrigue, and psychological depth. These films and series delve into the complexities of the human mind, exploring themes of fear, suspicion, and the darker aspects of human nature.

Bollywood's Digital Footprint

Bollywood has embraced OTT platforms to showcase its unique storytelling and cinematic techniques globally. Notable examples include Sujoy Ghosh's "Typewriter" (2019) on Netflix, which combines psychological suspense, horror, and mystery, and Sudip Sharma's "Paatal Lok" (2020) on Amazon Prime Video, which explores crime and morality in modern Indian society. Films like Anurag Basu's "Ludo" (2020) further exemplify the genre's diversity, blending dark comedy with intricate narratives.

Impact on Society and Youth

The influence of OTT platforms extends beyond entertainment, shaping societal norms and youth perceptions. Research by Mares & Woodard (2019) indicates that exposure to media content with suspense, violence, and psychological tension can impact viewers' attitudes and behaviors. As digital streaming continues to dominate, it is essential to understand its effects on young audiences, laying the groundwork for future research and discussion.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Saravanan V.M. (2021), in his study "The Use of Online Platforms for Content Delivery: Mapping Students' Viewing Habits of Web Series on OTT Platforms," provides valuable insights into the growing trend of streaming platforms for films and web series. The research shows that most web series viewers are aged 15 to 25, highlighting a strong appeal among the youth. However, this raises concerns about teenagers' unregulated access to potentially harmful content, prompting questions about the societal impact of unmonitored media consumption. The study also notes a rise in web series popularity in urban areas like Bangalore, suggesting a shift in traditional social norms in India. The satisfaction



derived from these series leads viewers to spend more time watching and adapting to new cultural norms, reflecting the influence of OTT content on societal attitudes and behaviors.

Kaneenika Jain (2021), in "The Rise of OTT Platforms: Changing Consumer Preference," explores how technological advancements have shifted consumer preferences in the entertainment industry. The study highlights the characteristics of modern consumers, who are tech-savvy and aware of the latest trends, contributing to the global growth of OTT platforms. Jain's research analyzes the key factors driving the success of these platforms and identifies major players catering to diverse audience needs. The study also predicts significant growth in the OTT market, driven by a shift from traditional offline entertainment to online experiences, marking a major change in global entertainment consumption patterns.

Raj Priya, Pias Mondal, and Trinley Paldon (2021) conducted a study titled "Comprehending Students' Motivations to Utilize OTT Platforms," examining the relationship between OTT platform usage, social satisfaction, consumer engagement, and subscription tendencies. Their research reveals that consumers prefer OTT platforms that resonate with their identities, emphasizing the role of interactive technologies and digital literacy in accessing these services. The study highlights the impact of digital media, offering insights into the evolving patterns of content consumption in the digital age.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study examines the effects of Bollywood psycho-thriller films on youth, with a focus on Lovely Professional University (LPU) students, using a quantitative methodology. A systematic questionnaire was used to gather data from 250 students, giving a thorough picture of their experiences and opinions on these films on OTT platforms.

Taking Samples

The target audience consisted of LPU undergraduate and graduate students who were chosen using a convenience sample technique to get practical access to the university. Considering the limitations of the study, this approach seemed appropriate even if it may induce bias.

Techniques for Gathering Data

To get comprehensive data on demographics, watching patterns, and psychological reactions to Bollywood psycho-thrillers on over-the-top (OTT) platforms, a standardized questionnaire was employed. To guarantee widespread participation, the questionnaire was disseminated in print and internet media.

Design of Questionnaires

Sections on Demographics: age, gender, study level, and topic were included in the questionnaire.

- Watching Habits: How often you watch psychological thriller films, which OTT platforms you favour, and how much time you spend there each week.

Favourite Bollywood psycho-thriller TV shows and films, emotional responses (excitement, terror, anxiety), reported influence on day-to-day life, and behavioural or mood shifts following viewing are all indicators of the psychological impact of the films.

-Open-Ended Questions: Opinions on the representation of psychological topics, recommendations for future Bollywood psycho-thrillers.

Data collection process

Throughout a month, information was gathered via university channels such as social media groups, student organizations, and announcements in the classroom. Informed permission was acquired, and participants were guaranteed anonymity and secrecy.

Considerations for Ethics

The research ethics committee of the university granted ethical permission. Before participation, informed consent was obtained, and participant responses were kept private and anonymous.

Techniques for Analysing Data

Descriptive Statistics: Used frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations to summarise demographic data and viewing patterns.

Inferential Statistics: To investigate associations between variables and test hypotheses, such as the link between demographic parameters (age, gender) and watching habits, chi-square tests, t-tests, and correlation analyses were used.



Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was conducted for open-ended questions, identifying common themes and patterns in students' views on the portrayal of psychological themes in Bollywood psycho-thrillers and their suggestions for future films.

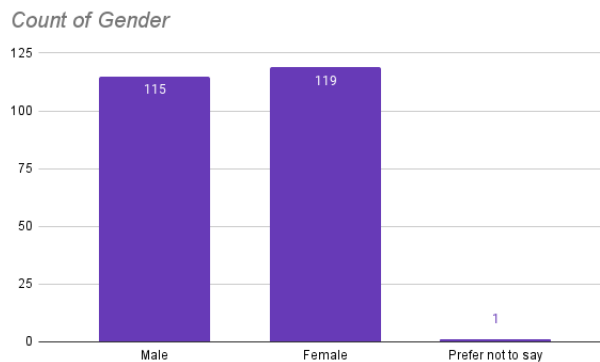
Limitations

The study acknowledges several limitations:

- Sampling Bias: Convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings.
- Self-Reported Data: Self-reported data might introduce response bias as participants may under- or over-report their viewing habits and emotional responses.
- Cross-Sectional Design: The cross-sectional nature of the study captures data at a single point in time, limiting the ability to infer long-term effects.

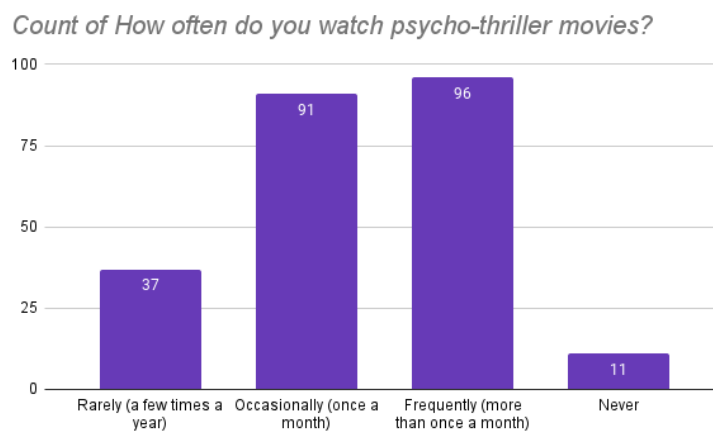
IV. DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

1. Gender Distribution



Participants in the survey were almost evenly divided in terms of gender, with 48.9% identifying as male and 50.6% as female. This equilibrium suggests that the research takes into account a variety of viewpoints from both sexes, which is essential for a thorough grasp of how people see psycho-thriller films. Understanding how people of various genders engage with and interpret media content—including their inclinations, responses, and worries about the genre—requires an understanding of gender parity. Overall, the analysis's findings are more accurate and pertinent when both genders are included.

2. Frequency of Watching Psycho-Thriller Movies



The questionnaire responses provide valuable insights into how often participants watch psycho-thriller movies. About 38.7% of respondents reported watching these movies occasionally, approximately once a month, indicating regular interaction with the genre. Another significant portion (15.7%) stated that they watch psycho-thrillers infrequently, only

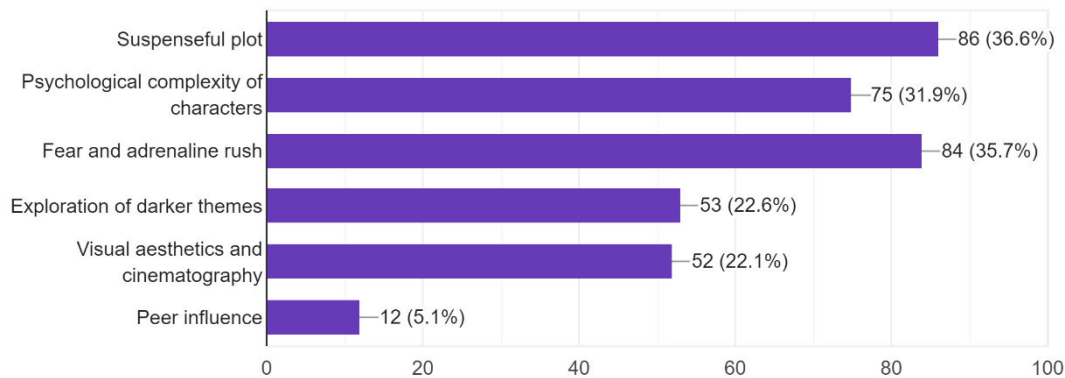


a few times a year. A smaller yet notable group (14.9%) watches psycho-thriller films more than once a month, showing a higher degree of interest in the genre. Interestingly, 4.7% of participants abstain from watching psycho-thrillers altogether, possibly due to personal preferences or a dislike for the genre's themes and content. These findings highlight the varying levels of interest and engagement with psycho-thriller movies among the participants.

3. Attractions to Psycho-Thriller Movies

What attracts you to psycho-thriller movies? (Select all that apply)

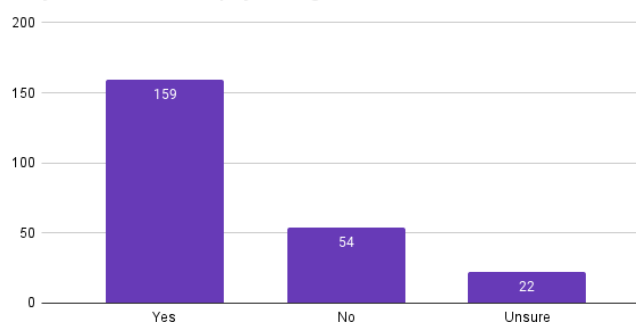
235 responses



The survey results reveal the diverse attractions of psycho-thriller films among participants. A significant majority (36.6%) are drawn to the suspense and unpredictability of the plots. Another notable portion (31.9%) is captivated by the psychological complexity of the characters. Additionally, 35.7% enjoy the fear and adrenaline rush provided by these movies, while 22.6% are intrigued by the exploration of darker themes. A smaller segment (22.1%) appreciates the visual aesthetics and cinematography of psycho-thrillers. Peer influence, though less significant, still impacts 5.1% of respondents. These findings illustrate the various factors that attract people to psycho-thriller films, offering valuable insights for filmmakers, marketers, and researchers.

4. Impact on Emotions and Psychological State

Count of Do you believe psycho-thriller movies have an impact on your emotions or psychological state?

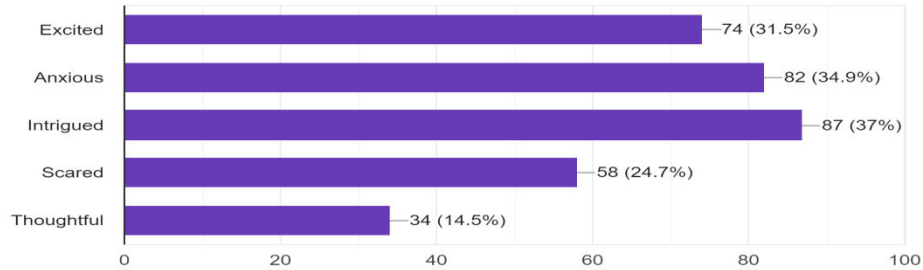


A substantial majority (67.7%) of participants believe that psycho-thriller movies impact their emotions or psychological state. This suggests that the gripping and thrilling nature of these films can evoke powerful emotional responses and potentially affect viewers' psychological well-being. Conversely, 23% of respondents are doubtful about this impact, and 9.4% are uncertain. These results emphasize the complex relationship between cinematic experiences and human psychology, highlighting the need for further research into the emotional and psychological effects of consuming psycho-thriller movies.



5. Emotional Responses to Psycho-Thriller Movies

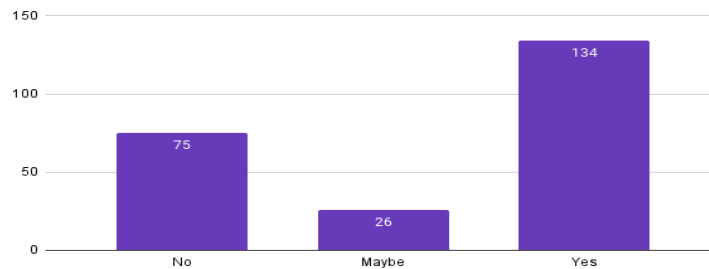
How do psycho-thriller movies typically make you feel? (Select all that apply)
235 responses



Participants reported a wide range of emotional responses to psycho-thriller movies. About 31.5% feel excited, 34.9% feel anxious, and 37% feel intrigued by the intricate plot twists and psychological depth. A smaller percentage (24.7%) feel scared, while 14.5% find themselves thoughtful after watching these films. These findings underscore the genre's ability to evoke diverse emotional responses, contributing to its enduring appeal and captivating audiences on multiple levels.

6. Nightmares and Heightened Anxiety

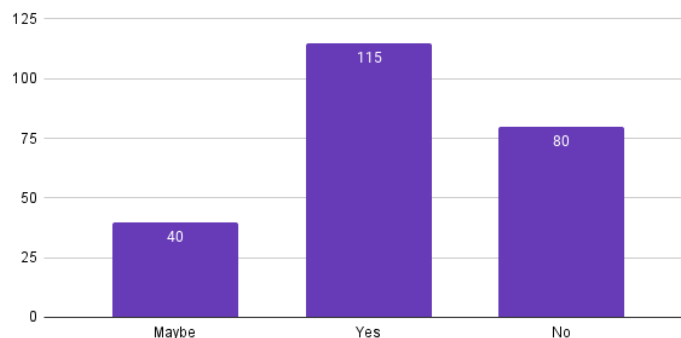
Count of Have you ever experienced nightmares or heightened anxiety after watching a psycho-thriller movie?



A significant majority (57%) of participants reported experiencing nightmares or heightened anxiety after watching psycho-thriller films. This indicates that the intense and thrilling nature of these movies can significantly impact viewers' psychological well-being. Conversely, 31.9% do not experience these effects, and 11.1% are uncertain. These findings highlight the intricate relationship between movie-watching and emotional and psychological health, emphasizing the need to consider the potential impacts of media consumption on mental well-being.

7. Desensitization to Violence and Disturbing Content

Count of Do you think psycho-thriller movies can desensitize youth to violence or disturbing content?

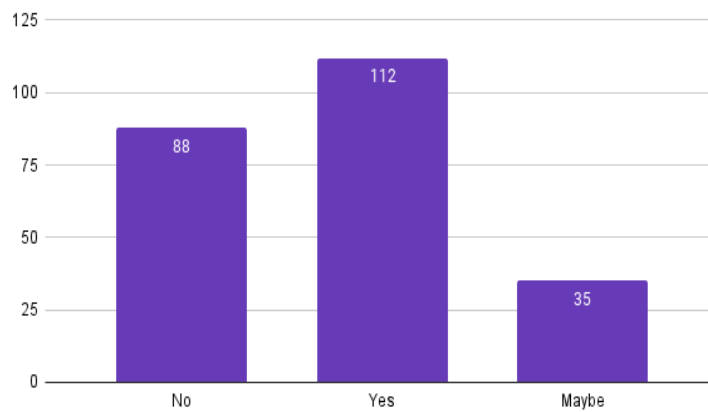




The survey responses reveal mixed views on whether psycho-thriller movies can desensitize youth to violence or disturbing content. Approximately 48.9% believe desensitization is possible, reflecting concerns about the potential influence of intense and graphic content on young viewers. In contrast, 34% doubt this effect, and 17% are uncertain. These findings emphasize the ongoing debate about media's impact on attitudes and behaviors, highlighting the importance of critical media literacy and responsible consumption practices, especially among young audiences.

8. Personal Experience of Desensitization

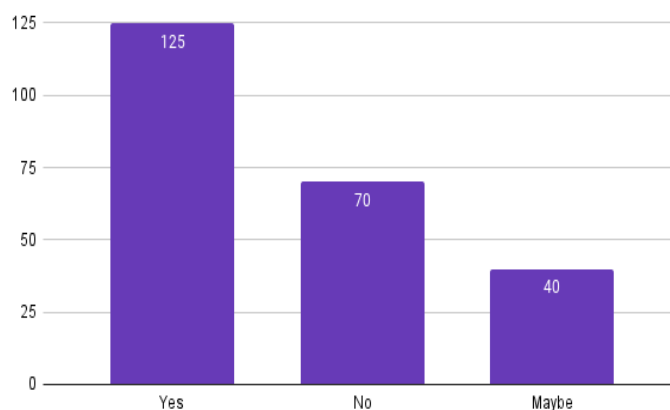
Count of Have you ever felt desensitized to violence or disturbing content after watching psycho-thriller movies?



Participants had varied responses regarding whether they felt desensitized to violence or disturbing content after watching psycho-thriller movies. Only 14.7% reported feeling desensitized, while 37.4% did not experience this effect. Another 14.9% were uncertain. These results underscore the complex ways individuals respond to media influences, emphasizing the need for critical thinking and self-awareness when engaging with potentially impactful content.

9. Educational Value of Psycho-Thriller Movies

Count of Do you believe psycho-thriller movies have educational value, such as exploring psychological concepts or

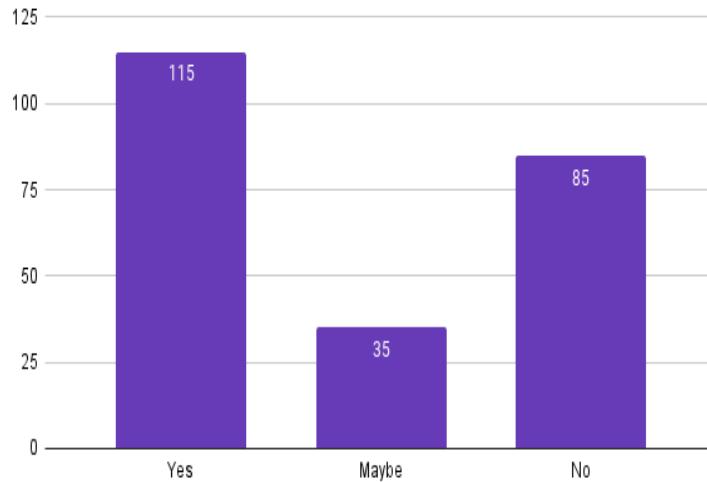


A majority of respondents (53.2%) believe psycho-thriller movies have educational value by exploring psychological concepts and societal issues. This perspective aligns with the idea that films, including those in the psycho-thriller genre, can serve as a medium for self-reflection, discussion, and exploration of various psychological and social phenomena. However, 29.8% of respondents disagreed, and 17% were undecided. These findings highlight the diverse views on the educational potential of psycho-thriller movies and their role in addressing complex themes.



10. Discussions About Psycho-Thriller Movies

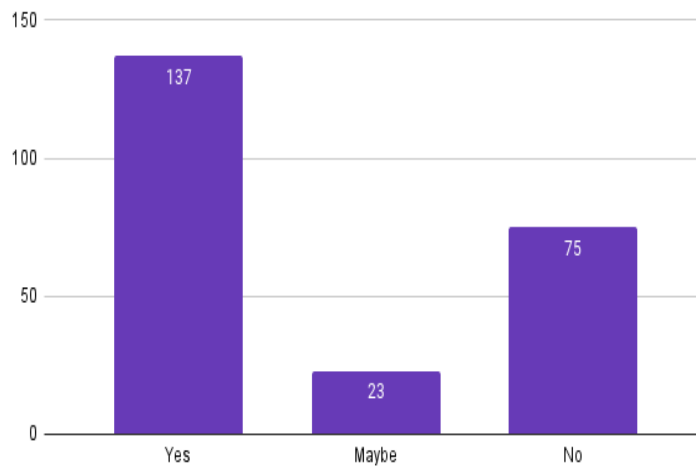
Count of Have you ever discussed the themes or psychological aspects of psycho-thriller movies with friends or family?



The questionnaire responses indicate varied levels of engagement in discussing the themes or psychological aspects of psycho-thriller films with friends or family. About 48.9% of participants have engaged in such discussions, while 36.2% have not. Another 14.9% were uncertain. These findings highlight the genre's potential to spark conversations and encourage further exploration of human behavior and societal issues among social groups.

11. Influence on Youth Behavior and Perception of Reality

Count of Do you think psycho-thriller movies can influence youth behavior or perception of reality?

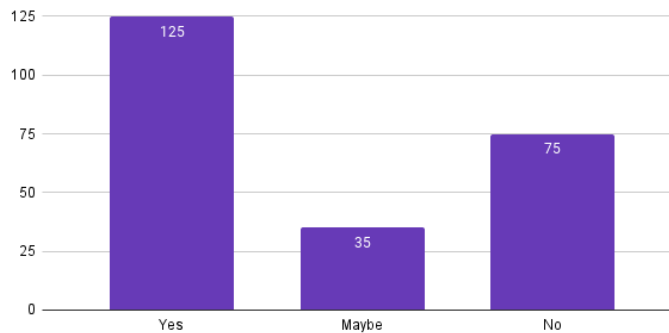


A significant portion of participants (58.3%) believe psycho-thriller movies can influence youth behavior or perception of reality. This reflects concerns about the potential impact of intense and psychologically demanding content on young audiences. Conversely, 31.9% doubt this influence, and 9.8% are undecided. These findings underscore the ongoing debate about media's effects on individuals, particularly vulnerable groups like youth, and emphasize the importance of critical media literacy and responsible consumption practices.



12. Replicating Actions or Behaviors

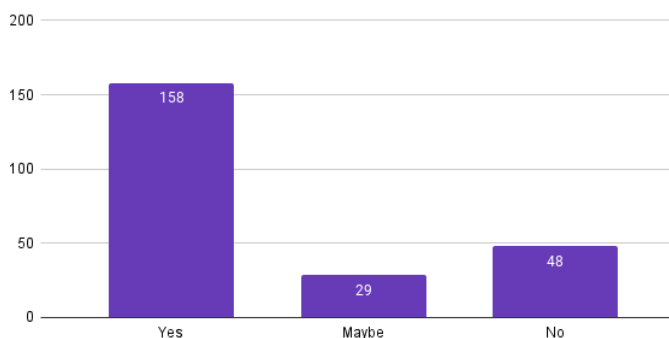
Count of Have you ever tried to replicate actions or behaviors seen in psycho-thriller movies?



Over half of the participants (53.2%) admitted to trying to imitate scenes or characters from psychological thriller films. This raises questions about how the media may affect people's behavior, particularly when it comes to imitating activities from made-up settings. Of them, 14.9% are unsure and 31.9% have avoided copying this behavior. These results emphasize that to lessen possible behavioral detrimental effects, critical media literacy and ethical consuming behaviors must be encouraged.

13. Age Restrictions for Viewing

Count of Do you believe there should be age restrictions or guidelines for youth viewing psycho-thriller movies?



The majority of respondents (67.2%) are in favor of putting age restrictions or guidelines in place before allowing young people to watch psycho-thriller films. This agreement is a reflection of worries about the films' potentially harsh and mentally taxing substance as well as the necessity to shield younger audiences from objectionable materials. On the other hand, 12.3% expressed uncertainty, and 20.4% opposed age limitations. These results highlight the significance of continuing conversations around media regulation and shielding younger audiences from potentially hazardous material.

This thorough examination of the information gathered from LPU students offers insightful information on the viewing habits, feelings, and opinions surrounding Bollywood psycho-thriller films. The results demonstrate the nuanced ways in which these films affect audiences, highlighting the necessity of more study and critical media literacy to fully understand the consequences.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the questionnaire analysis offer valuable insights into the perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes of respondents towards psycho-thriller films. These insights provide information about different aspects, such as the reasons people are drawn to the genre, the emotional reactions that psycho-thrillers provoke, the potential impact on individuals' mental well-being, and opinions on the educational and societal significance of these films. Moreover, the study investigates the frequency of conversations regarding psycho-thriller movie themes, the potential impact on the



behavior and perception of young people, inclinations to imitate actions observed in these films, and perspectives on age limitations for youth viewership. In addition, the questionnaire investigates the frequency at which participants watch psycho-thriller movies and provides a demographic overview by analyzing the distribution of genders.

Keyfindings:

1. **Preference for Psycho-Thriller Movies:** Participants are mainly attracted to psycho-thriller movies because of their suspenseful storylines, psychologically intricate characters, ability to evoke fear and adrenaline, exploration of darker themes, and visually appealing aesthetics.
2. **Emotional Responses:** Viewers frequently experience emotions such as excitement, anxiety, intrigue, fear, and contemplation when watching psycho-thriller movies, demonstrating the genre's capacity to elicit a wide array of emotional reactions.
3. **Mental State Effects:** A large majority of people believe that psycho-thriller movies can have an impact on individuals' emotions or psychological states. A significant number of people have reported experiencing nightmares or increased anxiety after watching these types of films.
4. **Educational Value:** Although most people acknowledge the educational merit of psycho-thriller movies in delving into psychological concepts or societal matters, a notable minority express doubt or uncertainty regarding this aspect.
5. **Impact on Youth:** There is a division among participants regarding the ability of psycho-thriller movies to influence the behavior and perception of reality in young people. A significant number of participants have expressed concerns about the potential negative effects.
6. **The majority of people acknowledge trying to imitate actions or behaviors observed in psycho-thriller movies, which raises concerns about the potential influence of media on individuals' behavior.**
7. **Age Restrictions:** The majority of participants endorsed the introduction of age restrictions or guidelines for adolescents watching psycho-thriller films, highlighting the significance of safeguarding young viewers from potentially detrimental material.
8. **Viewing Frequency:** Participants display diverse levels of engagement with psycho-thriller movies, with a substantial proportion watching them occasionally, followed by those who watch them infrequently or frequently.
9. **Gender Distribution:** The participants are almost evenly divided between males and females, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives in the analysis.

Overall Implications: These findings emphasize the diverse aspects of individuals' engagement with psycho-thriller movies, showcasing the genre's capacity to elicit intense emotional reactions, stimulate conversations about intricate topics, and potentially shape attitudes and behaviors. The research highlights the significance of critical media literacy, responsible consumption practices, and regulatory measures to reduce potential adverse impacts and encourage informed interaction with media content, especially among vulnerable groups like young people. Additional investigation is necessary to examine the enduring effects of watching psycho-thriller movies on the mental well-being, actions, and societal views of individuals. Furthermore, it is important to study the effectiveness of educational interventions and media literacy programs in reducing any potential negative consequences.

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire, it is clear that psycho-thriller movies have a complex appeal for viewers. They evoke a range of emotional responses and lead to thoughtful considerations about their psychological and societal importance. The genre's appeal to participants is emphasized by its capacity to engage through suspenseful storylines, complex characterizations, and visually striking aesthetics that evoke feelings of fear and curiosity. In addition, the genre's examination of more somber subjects appeals to viewers in search of mental stimulation and intense excitement, which helps explain its continued popularity despite its potentially disturbing nature.

The participants' responses reveal that psycho-thriller movies have a significant emotional impact, with viewers experiencing a variety of intense emotions such as excitement, anxiety, and contemplation. These findings highlight the genre's ability to evoke intense emotional responses and stimulate profound self-reflection, blurring the distinction between entertainment and psychological investigation. Nevertheless, in addition to the excitement of suspense, there



are concerns raised about the possible psychological consequences of prolonged exposure to psycho-thriller content. Reports of heightened anxiety and nightmares have led to contemplation about the wider impact on mental health.

When evaluating the educational worth of psycho-thriller films, different viewpoints arise, showcasing subtle opinions on the genre's ability to explore psychological concepts and societal matters. Although many participants recognize the potential of the genre to promote critical thinking and cultural discourse, doubts remain about whether its content is suitable for educational purposes, especially in academic environments. The differing viewpoints emphasize the necessity of a sophisticated comprehension of the media's role in education and the significance of context in assessing the appropriateness of content for educational purposes.

The influence of psycho-thriller movies on young people is a significant concern, as participants have expressed varying opinions on how this genre can affect behavior and perception. While certain individuals stress the necessity of being careful when exposing young viewers to potentially unsettling material, others emphasize the significance of promoting critical media literacy skills to empower young people to analyze media representations in a discerning manner. These findings emphasize the intricate relationship between media consumption and youth development, emphasizing the necessity for specific interventions to encourage responsible media consumption practices and reduce potential negative effects.

The questionnaire analysis revealed that individuals' engagement with psycho-thriller movies is complex, as the genre can elicit strong emotional reactions, encourage critical thinking, and potentially influence attitudes and behaviors. These observations highlight the significance of encouraging the development of critical media literacy abilities, cultivating responsible consumption habits, and enacting regulatory measures to protect susceptible viewers, especially young individuals, from potential negative consequences. Future investigations should be conducted to examine the long-lasting impacts of media exposure on mental health and societal beliefs. Additionally, it is necessary to assess the effectiveness of educational interventions in reducing any potential adverse outcomes.

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