

Impact of Violence in Movies on Juvenile Delinquency

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ABSTRACT

Studies encompassing media-effects are a prime subject for social science scholars worldwide. The dilemma lies in the very fact that in Pakistan this issue of great significance has not been paid proper attention. Juvenile delinquency is one of the major issues that cause a great hindrance in the social progress of any society. It not only creates anxiety and aggression in youth, but also turns productive humans into a destructive force against family, society and nation. This research endeavors to discover the consequences of violence in movies with respect to Pakistani youth and uncovering a connection between subjection to such type of content and consequently criminal propensities. Publicized research has examined media effects with a variety of consequences; this research has empirical evidence that exhibits the very fact that violence in the media causes delinquency, thus promoting criminal behavior, especially within the context of Pakistani society.

KEYWORDS

ANOVA, Criminal Behavior, Juvenile Delinquency, Pakistan, Violence in Movies

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary era, movies are considered as one of the most important entertainment source, especially in our country where there is a lack of sources of entertainment. Movies as a medium are not only a cheap source of entertainment, but also an influential tool to exploit minds of the viewers.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization carried out an international, first of its kind survey on children and media violence during 1996-1997, “UNESCO global study on media violence” as a joint research project under the supervision of Professor Dr. Jo Groebel (Utrecht University-Netherlands) and the World Organization of the Scout Movement (Switzerland), world’s largest international scouting organization.

The respective research highlights television’s role in youth’s life as well as its impact on the development of violent behavior. They surveyed children in 23 countries, selecting 5,000 children of 12-year age and were provided exactly the same standardized 60 item questionnaire. These respective questions were not culture bound, but related to the respondents’ behavior, preferences, habits, and social environment.

The conclusion pronounced, ‘media violence is universal’. Remarkably, 88% of surveyed children identified Arnold Schwarzenegger, a hero from ‘Terminator’ (an action movie) (Bulletin 49, 1999). UNESCO also stated that the majority of children thinks that Terminator like powers are mandatory to cope with the challenges of life. Thus, it all paved way for much sturdier debate between parents, teachers, producers, as well as politicians.

Its further findings indicated that the media influences every aspect of children’s lives. For the children who were in high aggression or problematic environment, the violent content acted as a catalyst in such conditions, thus worsening the situation.

Studies reveal that children in the contemporary era are surrounded by an environment where media as well as real experiences support the notion regarding violence being a natural phenomenon. About one-third of groups settled in high-aggression surroundings perceive that the majority of people are evil, this notion is often propagated and endorsed by the media content. Youth perceive that aggressive behavior in society is often more rewarded.

The present study is an effort to assess the influence of violence in movies on juvenile’s behavior. It is an established fact that Indian movies are one of the major sources of entertainment in Pakistan among people of all age groups. People often follow the values, norms, beliefs, and ideologies propagated through the media and the adoption is high among children. Violence in video games, movies, cartoons, and pertinent content cater to young, impressionable minds and implant seeds of violence by romanticizing it. Things portrayed on the media result in believing those acts and performing them out, which can lead in getting involved in such activities.

Repeated exposure to killings, violence, negation of moral and ethical values results in the development of antisocial behavior among juveniles. Television’s impact is highly debatable for children and there are several studies conducted which have

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