Students' Views about Indian Cinema

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Abstract

Today mass media dominated the whole world. From the beginning of the 21st century the importance and influence of mass media has grown. Among different mass media, cinema is the most influential media in society. It reflects the aspirations, ideas, values, needs and culture of the society through fiction or real story. At the same time the role of cinema is also very crucial to shape and influence the society. It keeps us updated, raise our consciousness and mould our opinion about various problems of our society. From the beginning of its journey, cinema is the most popular, influential and powerful media for mass communication in India. Indian cinema celebrated its 100th anniversary in the year 2013. So now the age of Indian cinema is 110 years. India is the world's largest producer of films (ticket sales and number of films produced). Indian film industry is multi-lingual. Regional (Assamese, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Odia, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi [Bollywood] etc.) film industries are here. The purpose of this paper to discuss watching pattern and the views of the students towards various aspects of cinema. A survey was administered to 60 Honours students of different subjects from eight colleges of various districts of West Bengal. A Questionnaire has been prepared by the researcher.

Keywords: *Student, View, Society, Cinema.*

Introduction :-

Today mass media dominated the whole world. From the beginning of the 21st century the importance and influence of mass media has grown. Among different mass media, cinema is the most influential media in society. It reflects the aspirations, ideas, values, needs and culture of the society through fiction or real story. Cinema has an impact on the society in both ways, positive and negative. At the same time the role of cinema is also very crucial to shape and influence the society. It keeps us updated, raise our consciousness and mould our opinion about various problems of our society. Sometimes cinema influence society and society also influence the content of cinema. Cinema and society interrelated with each other.

From the beginning of its journey, cinema is the most popular, influential and powerful media for mass communication in India. Indian cinema celebrated its 100th anniversary in the year 2013. So now the age of Indian cinema is 110 years. India is the world's largest producer of films (ticket sales and number of films produced). Indian film industry is multi-lingual. Regional (Assamese, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Odia, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi [Bollywood] etc.) film industries are here. Different social problems, issues and limitations of society are portrayed in certain Indian cinema with elegance.

Review of related literature:

Goswami, R., and Kumari, M. (2013), noticed that 26% of the respondents under study watch cinema for time passes only. Soothing sense and imagination are the other main factor which makes 20% and 17% of the adolescents to move cinema hall. But 19% of respondents have curiosity as a factor to move to cinema hall and they are very much influenced by the cinema and inhale changes in their lifestyle and behaviour. Udofia, N, A and Anyim, J, S. (2017) a made a study entitled "Impact of modern movies on students – A prospective study". They found that there was a strong influence of parental guidance and control of movies, pornographic movies, violent movies, smocking in movies, romantic movies, musical videos and comedy movies on adolescent behaviour in Uyo Local Government Area. Balabantaray, S, R. (2020) reported that films tend to influence the mind and thinking process of an individual. The influence of movies creates the changes in the patterns of behaviour by the people of Indian society.

Kubrak, T. (2020) reported that after watching the film the attitude of students of postgraduate level towards elderly people changed in a positive way compared to the undergraduate level students. The factor behind this opposite trend were the age, educational status and experience of interaction with elderly people as explained by her. Kethan, M., and Mahabub, B. (2023) conducted a study on "Impact of Indian cinema on youths lifestyles and behaviour patterns" and found that there is a significant relationship effect of Indian cinema on lifestyle of youth and there is also a significant effect of Indian cinema on the behaviour of youth.

Objective:

1. To study the watching pattern of cinema by the students
2. To study the students' views about various aspects of cinema

Methodology:

The survey method was adopted for the conduct of the study.

Population of the Study:

The population included the students studying at the undergraduate level of college.

Sample :

In order to select the sample, the researcher has adopted Random Sampling technique. The present sample included 60 honours students of different subjects (like, Education, History, Psychology, English, Accountancy, Journalism and mass communication etc.) from eight colleges of West Bengal.

Tools :

For this study, self-constructed questionnaire was used by the researcher using Google form. First part of which consists of the questions related with the background of the students like age of the student, gender, honours subject, studying year, stream and name of the college. In the second part questions were given regarding watching pattern of cinema by the students and their views about various aspects of Indian cinema.

Delimitations :

1. The study was limited to eight colleges of West Bengal
2. The sample of the study was restricted to 60 undergraduate students only

Findings :

The respondents of this study were from Arts stream (80%), Science stream (10%) and from commerce and management (5% each) whose ages ranged from 18 to 22. Majority of the respondents (55.1%) were between 20 to 21 years and 36.7% of respondents were between 18 to 19 years old. Others were 22 years old. Most (88.3%) of the samples were female and only 11.7% were male. 45% of the sample population under study were studying in 2nd semester whereas 36.7% and 16.7% of the students were studying in 6th semester and 4th semester respectively.

It is found that 33.3% of the respondents watch cinema once in month. But 20% of the respondents watch cinema twice and thrice in a month. On the other side 11.7% of students watch cinema twice in a week.

It is noticed from this study that students spend varying amounts of time to watch cinema. Majority (83.3%) of the students spends 1 hours to 5 hours to watch cinema. On the other hand, 13.3% of the students spend 6 hours to 10 hours for watching cinema. But a small portion of the sample spends more than 15 hours to watch cinema.

Nowadays various medium and media are there as a place to watch cinema along with cinema hall. Students of this study have various preferences as a place (cinema hall, television, internet, home theatre, digital platforms, smartphones etc.) to watch cinema. It is found that 30% of the respondents of this study love to watch cinema in cinema hall. Smartphone is the second common place to watch cinema by students. As it holds 23.3% of the total population. But 16.7% and 15% of the students like to watch cinema in digital platform and internet respectively.

There are various reasons which make evident role to watch a cinema by an individual. Some of these are entertainment, passion, time pass, curiosity etc. It is noticed that 58.3% of the respondents of this study watch cinema for entertainment only. But 16.7% of the students have curiosity as a reason to watch cinema. They want to know and explore the world along with various culture and lifestyles with the help of cinema. 15% of the sample watch cinema only for time pass. There are various aspects of cinema which attracts the people. These are story, direction, screenplay, acting and many more. Story of a cinema attracted most (65%) of the respondents of this study where as acting is the main reason for their attraction towards cinema as said by 15% of the respondents. On the other hand, 11.7% of respondents said that application of technology in cinema attracted them most.

Among different mass media, cinema is very important for the formation of a better society. It easily attracts the minds of its viewers. There are many Indian cinema, which portrayed different social problems, issues and limitations of society with elegance. Sharma, A, (2018) noticed in his study that various Indian films inspired, motivated, and even changed the mentality of the society on the issues of casteism, social discrimination, zamindari system, untouchability, women empowerment, national integration etc. Majority (86.7%) of the sample opined that cinema is an important medium of social change.

There has been a significant transformation of Indian cinema in recent years through portrayal of various social and political issues. Modern Indian cinema addressed different social issues like casteism, gender discrimination, attitude towards LGBTQIA+ and their problems, corruption, honour killing etc. Nearly 33% of total population of sample said that the cinema on

gender discrimination had an impact on them. But cinema which portrayed the social evil i.e. corruption had an impact on them as stated by 26.7% of the sample in this study. The cinema on issue like honour killing and LGBTQIA+ created an impact on them as said by 10% of students each.

Mass media always plays an important role in society. We cannot deny the importance of the mass media, especially the role of cinema for the formation of a good society. Most (66.7%) of the students had the opinion that modern Indian cinema creates social awareness among viewers. But 26.7% of the students were not sure about the role of cinema as creator of social awareness.

Cinema of India may be completely fictional or inspired from real events. There are also some popular or less popular cinemas which are based on the different social issues of India and left a social message. Respondents of this study agreed that there are many Indian cinema which created social awareness among viewers. They mentioned different names of Indian cinema like Swades (2004), Taare Zameen Par (2007), Mardaani (2014), Nil Battey Sannata (2015), Dangal (2016), Pink (2016), Toilet: Ek Prem Katha (2017), Pad Man (2018), Mardaani 2 (2019), Thappad (2020), Chhapaak (2020), etc.

Discussion:

The descriptive analysis of the study showed that a significant portion of sample of this study love to watch cinema in cinema hall which is similar to the findings of Goswami, R., and Kumari, M. (2013). Some portion of the sample population under study watch cinema only for time pass which is also similar to the findings of Goswami, R., and Kumari, M. (2013). It was also noticed from the study that story of a cinema attracted most of the respondents of this study. Majority of the sample believed that cinema is an important medium of social change. Most of the students had the opinion that modern Indian cinema creates social awareness among viewers which shows the positive side of cinema.

Conclusion:

As an important instrument mass media always helpful to form a good society. Among different mass media cinema easily attracts the mass. From the beginning of its journey, cinema have an impact on peoples' mind, behaviour, lifestyles and culture. We are grateful to some excellent contemporary Indian cinemas for different cultural transformations in society and attitudinal changes among people like love and marriage, shift from joint family to nuclear family, choice of career option, importance of physical and mental health, importance of girls' education and job, brutality of honour killing, female foeticide and infanticide, corruption etc. But at the same time, cinema has also negative impact on the mind of the people. Sometimes it portrays certain themes in a way which is far behind from reality and truth. Creation of a good society and good citizen is a very challenging task, especially the country like India where present different cultures, beliefs, norms, languages, religions and so on. Various themes of the Indian cinema can transform the society and develop positive attitude and behaviour among the students who are the future generation of this country.

Limitation:

1. The sample of this study was collected only from the Kolkata and North 24 pargana districts of West Bengal, India. It would be better if the sample could be collected from the other districts of the state.
2. There was no equal representation of the male students as sample in this study.

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