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**IMPACT OF MOVIES AND TV SHOWS ON THE INDIAN SOCIETY
AND CRIME IN INDIA**- Manal Ali¹**ABSTRACT**

Over the decades, since the early 1960s, all the research evidence that is collected suggests that because of the exposure to violence in social media such as television, movies, video games and the internet, there has been an increase in the risk of violent behaviour of individuals. This is like growing up in a society filled with real violence that causes people to behaving in accordance. In today's world, a significant change in our social environment is the effect of mass media on our daily lives. In this new environment all the above mentioned means of viewing and hearing assumes an important role in our children's daily lives. Mass media has an vast influence on our children's beliefs, values and behaviours. There is however an adverse effect by such exposure which increases the risk of violent behaviour. Today because of the internet- the email, text messaging and chat rooms have assumed significance through which everything is possible. All these features have opened new horizons for social interaction due to which different forms of aggression occur and young people can be victimized. Due to the internet and its virtual world which is easily available to the younger generation, the outcome can be equally dangerous. However, it doesn't mean that parents should keep children indoors because the internet can also have a positive impact sharing wonderful experiences and helping children to become the kinds of adults they desire.

Keywords: Indian Society, Bollywood Cinema, Hollywood, Acid Attacks, Mass Media

INTRODUCTION

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There is an impact of movies and television shows on the Indian society and crime in India. Over a period of many years the subject of crime has emerged as a topic which has mostly influenced our society at large. In the society's everyday mundane life, crime related incidents and events often capture the headlines of news channels on television, newspapers and other forms of social media due to a certain kind of thrill that they provide. Everybody reads and watches these crime related news due to which people get fascinated by the events reflected in such news, particularly the younger generation. Although almost 99% culprits and offenders are caught and prosecuted by law, in the end it still does not prevent the younger generation such as school and college going children from pursuing dramatic criminal measures like rape, kidnapping, robbery and murder. Of course, people of all ages follow such intriguing and titillating news, it is usually the younger generation who draw fascination from crime and even attempt it in lure of quick money and other agendas.

In India one gets to see crime related serials such as Crime Patrol, Savdhaan India, CID and Adaalat which actually reflects on the different types of crimes committed by people and in fact tries to show different kind of preventive measures and one's personal alertness, emphasizing on the adage that "Crime does not pay", meaning that ultimately there is nothing known as a perfect crime and that the offenders and perpetrators are always caught by the police and subsequently prosecuted by law. Unfortunately, such serials as well as movies produced in India and abroad, also show various ways of committing crime, which in turn influences people in general to sometimes try out these methods for their ulterior motives. So in today's world where technology is progressing by leaps and bounds, one finds that the visual means of communication provided by television and the internet has become more powerful than the audio means provided by reading books because what you see happening in front of you, leaves a more lasting impression on an impressionable mind. So even though the crime related serials and movies have an honorable intention of showing crime and yet discouraging people not to do it. The flip side is that they also provide people of novel means and methods of committing crime.

THE CINEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF CRIME

According to criminologists, all films about crime and its impact on society fall into the category of crime films. The first link between crime films and society is that they convey

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information about the society in which they were produced. The other relation is that such films have a direct effect on society, culture, law, justice, etc. and in fact depicts the reality of the society. I have already established the fact that what we see impacts us more than what we read and that a person can only learn from the environment surrounding him. Similarly, a thriller film based on the criminal genre has a greater impact on the audience than a literature. Sriram Raghavan, Anurag Kashyap, and Ram Gopal Verma have directed iconic crime films such as Gangs of Wasseypur, Raman Raghav 2.0, Black Friday, Johnny Gaddar, and Satya in India's film industry, which is also referred to as Bollywood.

Perhaps films have a greater impact to manoeuvre the audience's mind and makes all the things wrong appear to be right. People are influenced by what they see, and films have the ability to control the audience's perspective. When an unpleasant task is repeatedly presented in a film and accepted by the performers' family members, they gain mental approval to carry on with the task and expect others to approve of it as well. They believe it morally and ethically correct after that. Such films skew a person's perspective, particularly that of a teenager.

A few examples of crime movies and its effect on the society are:

In the famous, 1993 movie, "Darr" which starred Shahrukh Khan, the story revolves around a boy who is obsessed by a girl. He stalks the girl, even befriends her fiancé and then finally kidnaps her. In a case of similar nature, 24 years old girl who worked at Snap Deal was stalked by a man belonging to Delhi and later kidnapped by him in 2016. When the man was interrogated by the police he claimed that he wanted to marry her and also confessed that Khan's character in "Darr" inspired him. Frightening, a very common mindset of the India male is that "Jo meranahi ho sakta, use kise aur ke hone ka mauka nahidoonga" which literally means "Who is not mine, will not be someone else's either." Amongst manifold incidents related to this mindset, Kashyap murdered Nikita Sharma, who was a Dubai-based flight attendant. He was obsessed with her but the girl was to get wed to someone else.

The movie, "Kabir Singh", the lead actors character reflects much aggression, misconduct and misbehavior towards the family of the girl he wants to marry and towards people in general. People considered this insane behaviour, correct as "Their immediate need is being gratified." People who are fans of a particular actor follow him without realizing or

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rationalizing that the actor is merely playing a character in a movie. According to Neelam Mishra, a Delhi-based psychologist, Bollywood films and films in general are capable of motivating crimes “The basic phenomena of human psychology says that people choose and follow whatever makes their image come across as powerful.” In the “Kabir Singh” case the image is the glorification of toxic masculinity and drug addiction.”

In a recent 2017 movie, “Hindi Medium”, which is based on the subject of the agonizing process that the parents go through during their child’s admission in school and how they will go to any length to ensure the best education for their child. This film prompted a Delhi businessman to falsify his financial position in order to secure a seat for his son in Chanakyapuri's Sanskriti School for the economically disadvantaged. Similarly, Rajkumar Hirani's 2003 film "Munna Bhai MBBS", starring Sanjay Dutt, motivated many others to imitate in medical tests. A group of DDA officials in Delhi were inspired to auction plots by faking paperwork after seeing the 2006 film "Khosla ka Ghosla," starring Boman Irani. The police agreed that the movie appeared to have influenced their tactics and there has been 1 more related case as well.

Akshay Kumar’s movie: “Special 26” (2013) was itself inspired by a real life incident of criminals who fraudulently pose themselves as Income Tax officers who conducted raids on prominent people, even politicians, found large amounts of undeclared money and coolly walked out with it, being fully aware that because the money is undeclared, it would not be reported to the police authorities or other departments. This was inspired by a real-life incident that occurred in 1987 by Opera House Heist at TribhovandasBhimji Zaveri (TBZ) Jewelers at their Mumbai branch. Ironically after watching this movie, group of armed robbers posed themselves as CBI officers and conducted a raid at Muthoot Finance (Hyderabad Branch) and took 40 kg of gold along with all the CCTV cameras to destroy the evidence. This is one of the cases that has been inspired from this movie but there has been 16 other related cases as well.

In a recent incident in 2021, Sachin Chauhan aged only 25 years was kidnapped in Agra for a ransom of Rs. 2 crore by his friends. According to sources Sachin and Harsh Chauhan, son of his father’s business partner and his close friend, used to go to a sports cub owned by Aswani. Sachin became friends with Aswani and began to borrow from Aswani. When the

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borrowed account reached Rs. 40 lakhs, Aswani asked Sachin to return the money but he was unwilling to pay back. Aswani, Harsh Chauhan and three others murdered Sachin on the same night when they kidnapped him and cremated his body as a Covid-Positive patient. His family members filed a missing complaint with the police. Agra's Special Task Force got a tip-off and detained these five youths who ultimately confessed to the murder. This story (incident) is eerily similar to a movie "Paanch" directed by Anurag Kashyap in 2003. This film is about a failed kidnapping plot in which four male band members kidnap another friend, Nikhil, who is a part of the plot and volunteers to be abducted so that they can all benefit from the money taken from his wealthy but miserly father. Unfortunately, uncontrollable rage and an overabundance of drugs lead to Nikhil's death. These ruthless kids then murder Nikhil's father, as well as a cop who is investigating the crime. The Joshi Abhyankar serial killings in Pune in 1976-77 were reportedly the inspiration for this film. Devika Bose, a 23 year old girl says "When you were young you tend to get easily influenced by what you see. And this can have a lasting impact on the way you perceive things. I watched Pyar Tune Kya Kiya, starring Urmila Matondkar, when I was just 14. In this movie a girl is obsessed over a man so much that it ultimately drives her mad. Because I was naïve and innocent, the film made me think that it's okay to obsess over someone or that such toxicity in love is normal, which it is definitely not. Films and series have the full potential to motivate people to commit crime." In Kolkata, for example, there was a well-known story of a school girl murdering a classmate with a plastic bag. She then said that she had learned this from a crime series she had been watching.

There are several movies that have inspired many criminals and there have been one or more committed by the criminals, inspired from these movies some of them are:

"Dhoom" (2004), there has been around 15 cases inspired from this movie. One of those cases occurred in the Malappuram district in Kerala where a gang of four robbers made a hole on the floor of the bank and managed to rob 80 kgs of gold and Rs. 50,00,000. The robbers later confessed that they were inspired by the movie "Dhoom".

"Bunty Aur Babli" (2005), there has been around 23 cases inspired from this movie. A couple committed 23 crimes. They committed several offences as well such as attempt to murder,

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theft, robbery, snatching, assault and attacking police officers. In 2013 both of them were arrested but were released on bail and continued to commit the crimes.

CRIMES INSPIRED BY HOLLYWOOD AND WEB SERIES

In Hollywood, "The Joker", a critically and commercially successful film, was acclaimed as a masterpiece. However, if you consider how one behaves while viewing it, you'll notice that it not only makes you feel wonderful when the Joker is killing people, but it also makes you cheer for him when he's seen performing those terrible murders. Other Hollywood films, such as "Child's Play," "The Saw Franchise," "Taxi Driver," and "The Matrix," are said to have sparked horrible crimes.

There are 2 movies further which are very horrific and cruel, "The Girl Next Door" (2007) and "Concrete" (2004). The (2007) movie is based on the real case of Sylvia Likens (1965). Likens was a 16 year old American teenager who was held captive for three months, brutally tortured and murdered by her caretaker, Gertrude Baniszewski, her children and several other neighbourhood kids. Sylvia Likens was murdered in October 1965 in Indianapolis, Indiana, United States. Her skin had receded, she had open wounds down to the bone, she had massive internal injuries, and her abusers had carved "I'M A PROSTITUTE AND PROUD OF IT" into her stomach. She was malnourished, forced to take a scalding hot bath, severely beaten, and burned for wetting her mattress while she was sleeping, and she had been brutally raped. The (2004) movie is based on the real case of Junko Furuta (1988-1989). Furuta was a 17 year old, who was kidnapped on 25th November, 1988 by four men, was gang raped and tortured in an unimaginable way for 40 days until she was ultimately murdered on 4th January, 1989 and her body was dumped in a concrete drum. Her murder case was also called "Concrete-encased high school girl murder case". She was kidnapped and murdered for beating her captors in a game 'mahjong'. She was raped over 400 hundred times by these 4 men as well as other boys who were invited over by these four. Iron bars, scissors, skewers, explosives, and a bright light bulb would be inserted into her vagina and anus. They beat her with bamboo sticks, iron rods, and golf clubs, forcing her to eat live cockroaches, drink her own urine, and beat her with bamboo sticks, iron rods, and golf clubs. Cigarettes, lighters, and hot wax were used to burn her eyelids and genitals. Such extreme measures of inhuman torture ultimately led to her death.

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These two movies which are based on real people, Sylvia Likens and Junk Furuta, have depicted the tortures and murders in a disturbing manner that it shocks the people worldwide whereas various criminals steal various ideas of such brutal tortures and use it on the people in real life. Even though these movies create awareness amongst the people, they are like an incentive to criminals all over the world. There might be more disturbing movies like these but when I watched these two movies it really disturbed me to my very core and it forced me to think, how inhumane the world can be!

A man after watching a crime based web-series “Money Heist” on Netflix with his group planned a robbery in a jewellery store in Uttar Pradesh.

Recently a case which has rocked the whole country and specially the capital is the Shraddha Walker Murder Case in which the live-in partner, Shraddha was strangled to death by her boyfriend and her body was chopped into 35 parts with a hacksaw with multiple blades. Then the accused scattered her body parts in the forest area of Mehrauli over a span of 2-3 months. He confessed that he was inspired by the American crime show “Dexter”, in which the protagonist leads a double life- as a forensic expert and as a serial killer.

ACID ATTACKS

India is one of the many countries where incidents of throwing acid on unsuspecting women are increasing. Being predominantly a male dominated society, the causes given by sick individuals who carry out such gruesome acts are unrequited love, spurned love, rejection by a woman, jealousy, anger, etc. the tragedy is that almost all the time the poor female victim is not even aware of a man’s intentions or what is going through his ego centric mind. At times the perpetrator is someone known to the woman but at other times the accused stalker is a total stranger, which is so frightening in the world we live in.

A major incident reported in this context is by Laxmi Aggarwal. Guddu and Rakhi, two of her acquaintances, attacked her in Khan Market in Delhi in 2005. Laxmi was only 15 years old at the time, and this incident was considered as retaliation for her unwillingness to marry Guddu, the brother of her friend Rakhi. It was a horrifying incident which shook India. The most saddening thing about this incident was that it was a female, Rakhi who threw the acid at Laxmi. Previous to this acid attack incident there was no specific law for such attacks. Due

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to this horrific crime the Government of India introduced sections 320, 325 and 326 in the Indian Penal Code, 1860 for the support of acid attack victims, the remedy and medical expenses. "The section 326A in the Indian Penal Code, 1860 now lays down the punishment for acid attacks, the minimum punishment being 10 years in imprisonment which could extend up to life imprisonment with fine." This incident was later adapted in a movie called Chhapaak (2020). Acid attacks are the most ferocious and violent crimes against women. It refers to the act of throwing acid on the body of another person with the intention to disfigure, torture or kill that person. Generally Hydrochloric Acid, Nitric Acid and Sulphuric Acid are used to attack women. These dangerous acids cause severe burning of the face and even damages the skin tissue and dissolves the bones. Victims can also lose their eyesight, ability to hear and even their lives. Shockingly in spite of the severity of laws introduced under the IPC, the incidents have not stopped. It is found that between 2014 and 2018 there have been as many as almost 1,500 acid attacks in India. Even after the release of this movie which was meant to spread awareness of the brutality of acid attacks and its consequences, even today there have cases of many such acid attacks. In the year 2020, approximately 182 cases were reported.

MASS MEDIA

Real-life criminals have used series like "Crime Patrol" and "Savdhaan India" as inspiration for their crimes over the years. According to the police, keeping an eye on such content is not the answer. Crime is a topic and issue that cannot be avoided because it is a part of daily life. Crime appears to be the taste of the season, thanks to the rise of web series on platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime. "Delhi Crime," a seven-episode online series based on the heinous 2012 Nirbhaya gangrape case and its investigation depicted in stark reality and amazing detail, is now making headlines in India. Other notable series related to crime on the web are "Sacred Games" and "Mirzapur" which have become very popular. When asked about the influence of such shows on youngsters, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the Gurugram Police, Subhash Bokan said, "Mature people won't get inspired by these shows but there have been some crimes... during interrogation, the criminals said they used to watch crime shows. They had anyway thought of committing the crime but the procedures, how to go about it, they adopted all that from tv shows." Sharing an example, Bokan said, "A

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few months ago, a man was murdered, his bike and dead body were thrown in a river so that it didn't look like a murder.

When the culprits were asked how it came to their mind, they said they watched crime shows like Crime Patrol. So should the police keep an eye on such shows? It's not like crimes are happening from such shows. The makers and channels are following Government norms and there are agencies that monitor these shows."

The Deputy Commissioner of Police New Delhi District, Madhur Verma was of the opinion that it is futile to keep a check on crime shows. "The stories of such shows are more or less out in the press. Also as a policy" we don't share sensitive information of investigation details that can encourage somebody else to commit a crime. If certain crime shows are entertaining people, we can't put a bar on them, we cannot curb crimes by doing that." "Which is not a good thing, but at the same time, some of the strategies portrayed on crime shows are being adopted by criminals," the Mumbai Police said. there is a lot of awareness that is being created because of these shows. So, we have to see them in a balanced way." Pankaj Shankar , one of the producers of Savdhaan India, said that crime shows team tries its best to be careful while working on it, "Our stories are based on real incidents but there is also fiction to build up suspense. We have an in-house creative team and at least two or three rounds happen before the story is finalized. Then we send the screen play to the channel. Once approves the shooting begins. We can't show brutality or rape scenes and there is a legal division who tells us which scenes can be avoided. It's a commercial venture. The stories that we show have already happened. There are crime stories that show that the criminal mind is way ahead of our creative minds. Also, our anchor always discourages people from committing crimes and warns the viewers."

Actor, Sushant Singh who had hosted Savdhaan India said, "The problem is not with the show. Any person with a criminal mindset learn only what he wants to learn from a show, book, newspapers, television news or even the internet. Love stories and crime stories have been a part of folklore for long. But did everyone turn into a criminal or a majnu? So don't blame the stories or the shows. Blame the upbringing and the mindset of the individual." The former host of Crime Patrol, actor, Anoop Soni , said the whole idea of doing the show was to send out a positive message "My job as an anchor was to tell the viewers that even though

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we all have problems, we can't commit a crime because crime will not solve our problems. Our main focus was to create awareness. I have always tried not to sensationalize crime cases and not to portray the criminal as a hero. To the best of my ability I have repeatedly claimed that crime does not pay, so it doesn't give an excuse to people to commit crimes.”

In another heart wrenching incident, three teenagers who were all juveniles kidnapped their 15 year old friend for ransom. They took him to a hill on the outskirts of Pune where they bound and gagged him. They called their friend's father and demanded a ransom of Rs. 50,000. After paying the first installment of Rs. 15,000, when Shubham still did not return his father registered a complaint of kidnapping, after investigating they traced three boys who were not only Shubham's friends but also lived in the same area. They confessed to having kidnapped their friend and later killing him through strangulation near the forest. They had every intention to kill him from the outset as he would have indentified them, when he was set free. Appallingly, the motive of this crime was purely to get money to have fun, even if it meant killing another human being, in this case their friend who they had known for days. The juveniles said they were inspired by watching crime related serials on Indian television such as Crime Patrol and CID, from where they form this idea and hatched this devious plan.

In another horrifying incident, two boys aged 16 and 14 respectively, murdered a 70-year-old woman, Shalini Babanrao Sonawane. She was found dead with an injury on her head. The events were revealed when her son Virat lodged an FIR with the Singad Police in Pune. Money and gold ornaments worth Rs. 1.6 lakhs were also stolen. The investigation team said that the two boys entered her house around 1:30 pm when she was alone and watching television. The boys knew her well and were familiar with her place. They both attacked her unprovoked and willfully and thereafter decided to rob her house. After the police apprehended the culprits, they were shocked to find that this incident was inspired by the popular tv show “CID”.

An unbelievable incident took place in the Purnea district of Bihar where a boy with the assistance of his mother murdered his father . According to the SP, the father, who owns a fabric manufacturing company, tortured his wife and children. The son and his mother plotted the murder so that they would be the only owners of the property and business. After thrashing his father with a stick, the adolescent killed him. Following that, his mother assisted

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him in concealing criminal evidence. Within 24 hours of the crime, the mother and the youngster were apprehended by the police. They put an end to the rod (murder weapon) and laptop that were used to perform the crime. According to SP Nishnat Tiwari, the 14-year-old planned his father's murder after viewing multiple episodes of crime shows such as "Savdhaan India" and "Crime Patrol." The goal of this assassination was to usurp the property in the business.

CONCLUSION

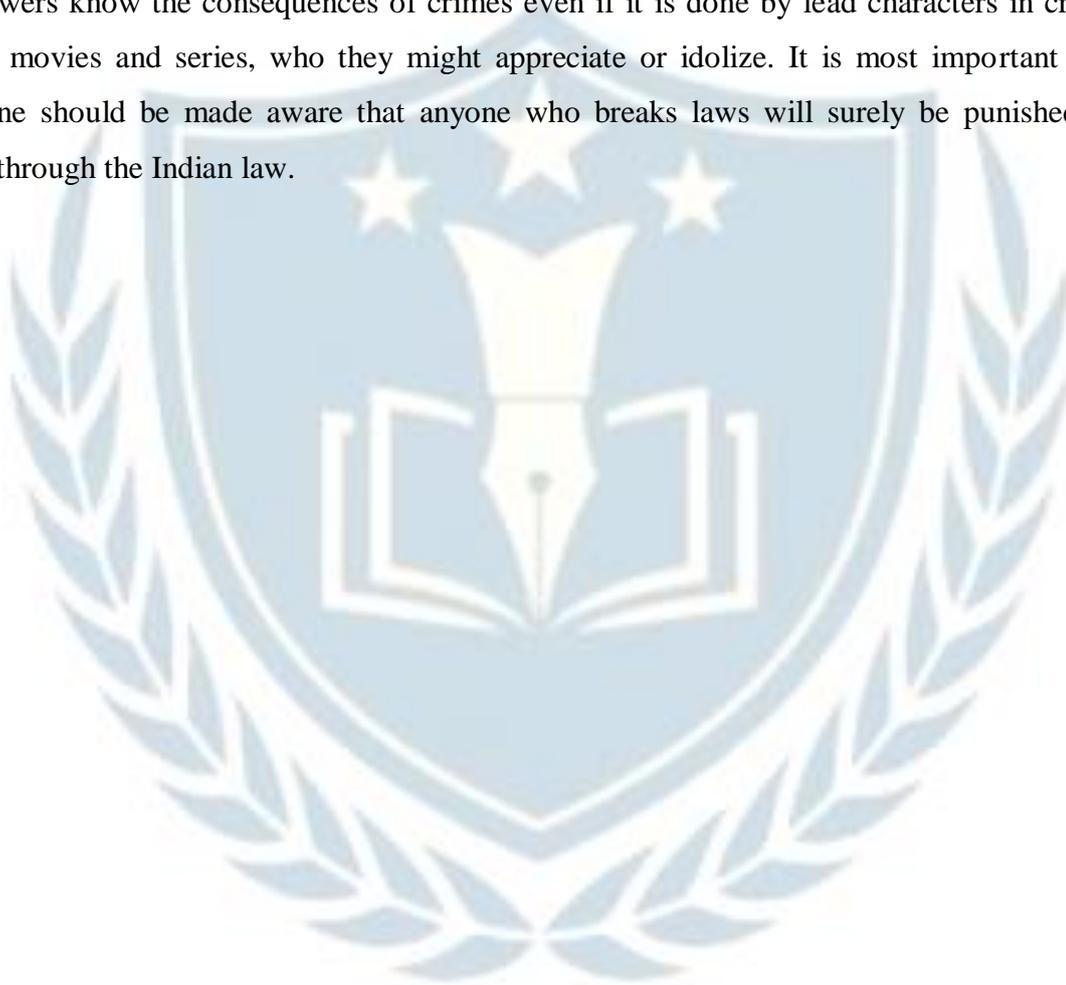
It is very sad to note from such incidents the decreasing value and worth of human life, in the eyes of greedy individuals whose main aim in life is to make quick money satisfy their urges at any cost. It is estimated that almost 20% of all films are crime movies and almost 50% of all films have significant crime content. Almost all of them think themselves to be too smart to get themselves caught but it is a proven fact that crime does not pay and that committing a perfect crime is merely a myth. There have been instances when even after the closure of criminal cases, seemingly unsolved, something happens in a total unrelated case, to help catch the criminals of these "closed cases". Many people who make movies and crime related series have presented their side of the story saying that their creation depict real lives. They are just showing what is already happening in the society and that they are not glorifying the evil in society and encouraging crimes in general. People who are inherently bad will never change for good. Even they are shown movies that encourage positivity and helping nature so their movies and series cannot change the basic characteristics of people. On the other side it is also true that such films and series do influence the young mind to connect with lead characters and imitate them. For example, a very common ailment in Indian society is unrequited love or one sided love where the boy sees a girl, is infatuated with her and wants to marry her, even if it means following her obsessively till she accepts his proposal. The same is the case with the boys. However, girls or women are more vulnerable to such acts. Sadly such movies fail to show the pain and anguish the girl or boy goes through in such situations. This is the precise reason why stalking is very common in India and ultimately many girls are being killed for not accepting love proposals. This is the proof that these kind of movies are not only a bad influence but they also breed crime. Also by watching such films or series, impressionable young minds are exposed to novel ideas and plots of committing different kinds of crime. Thus, these are almost like guides for criminals. Which

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is why after watching crime related movies or series there are so many people trying to replicate the evils shown, hoping to get away with it or to make quick money. So as can be seen in these instances there are always two sides of a coin.

Since most movies are depiction of real stories in people's real lives they show what is already happening in society. Film makers should be held responsible to send a good message to society so that their movies or series do not breed crime. In this respect it is imperative that the viewers know the consequences of crimes even if it is done by lead characters in crime related movies and series, who they might appreciate or idolize. It is most important that everyone should be made aware that anyone who breaks laws will surely be punished in courts through the Indian law.



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