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Examining Film as an Eminent Source of Entertainment: A Case Study of Pakistani Youth

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: Films are narratives, means of communication and a mirror of a society, simultaneously. It is the finest form of escapism or entertainment as watching it makes one forget the realities. This research aimed to explore the prominence of film entertainment among Pakistani youth.

Methodology: The study employed quantitative cross-sectional survey design to gather data from a representative sample of (N=202) Pakistani youth aged 18 and above.

Findings: The findings revealed that a significant majority of Pakistani youth (84.2%) consider films an eminent source of entertainment. The study identified the popularity of various film genres among the youth, with action, thriller, and drama genres being the most preferred. It also found that personal interest; recommendations from peers or friends, and media exposure are the factors influencing film preferences among the youth.

Conclusion: The research concluded that films hold significant appeal and influence among Pakistani youth, serving as a meaningful and pleasurable form of entertainment that shapes their cultural identities and personal lives.

Keywords: Pakistani Youth, Film, Entertainment, Movie Preferences.

1. INTRODUCTION

Entertainment is there to improve people's quality of life. After one's basic needs, there's entertainment. Traditionally, entertainment experiences have been conceptualized as hedonistic experiences such as pleasure, enjoyment, fun, drama, amusement, stimulation, and distraction (Bosshart & Macconi, 1998; Vorderer, 2001; Vorder, Klimmt, & Ritterfeld, 2004) However, films are one of the hedonistic entertainments by having all the elements like tragedy, joy, remorse, separation, death and life that are intimidating and entertaining. Human beings share the same common problems, and a film can depict these properly.

The attention of today's youth has been influenced by the visually-driven world. Movies, with their audio-visual storytelling, captivate their attention and serve as an engaging medium for learning. Films sculpt time, behaviour and connection. Without films, life goes on like a number Pi. A movie is a pleasurable,

reliable and eminent source of entertainment and language acquisition (Ismaili, 2013). Films mirror society, sometimes catching up with society while other times it leads the way.

Movies are the most considerable way to spend leisure hours. For escapism or self-realisation, entertaining content can lead to self-enhancement or self-realisation, (Vorderer, 2001) and even movies incredibly help one to relax. Youth can watch films to relax their minds during study breaks as it has been proven within studies that individuals can retain more information when their minds are relaxed (Kelland, 2010) films also help students to stay focused and keep their attention alive. Films can provoke critical thinking among youth, enabling them to understand complex ideas or narratives and inspire them to become a change agent. Cinema also shape youth's views about a culture or country, one never visited (Kubrak, 2020).

Individuals watch films for entertainment as they provide a means to escape the realities of their lives and immerse themselves in a world of fantasy. These visuals capture the youth's attention, who are often drawn to the dynamic and fast-paced nature of films. Despite being a form of escapism, films modify society, influencing politics, law, and culture. They possess the power to reshape contemporary life and leave a lasting mark on history. Films are a form of art that can create deep emotional connections and expose personal vulnerabilities without uttering a word. They are capable of transforming individual perspectives and life outlooks.

Research has demonstrated that films influence people's opinions, perpetuate stereotypes based on ethnicity and gender, and shape beliefs and attitudes (Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, (2008); Junmoni G. 2022). Consequently, films can alter how individuals view and interact with various groups of people, introducing new perspectives that viewers may adopt.

Films hold a significant and distinctive role in human civilisation. It is an art form, a language, and a medium that serves various purposes, including education and inspiration. It offers employment opportunities for a large number of individuals globally and brings joy to countless people. Moreover, it serves as a living testament to the human experience and imagination throughout history. Films are an incredibly entertaining medium that allows people temporary escape from their lives, and individuals prefer to watch movies in their leisure hours (Rohini, 2018) to explore different worlds/ cultures. The ability to transport us elsewhere is the fundamental appeal of film.

Movies have become so popular it is because the images move. They are not static, and one could stare for hours. Some movies present a particular perspective, and one has the choice to either agree or disagree with their content. Some movies go beyond taking sides and spark conversations that can cover various areas like politics, society, or even specific fields like fashion. Movies can be controversial and tackle challenging narratives. Throughout history, movies have taken a stance, remained neutral, or envisioned something new.

Additionally, movies have the power to generate debates, initiate conversations, and create an overall atmosphere. The research may help to identify the films and their charms for youth. The audience was inquired about film genres, attractions and reasons to watch. Moreover, the study may also determine any influence on the viewers' perception and delve deep into whether movies are a more prominent or enjoyable source of entertainment than others or not.

1.1   *Significance of the Study*

This research provided valuable insights into the role of film as an eminent source of entertainment among Pakistani youth, contributing to a deeper understanding of their media consumption habits, cultural identity formation, and the potential impacts of film on their personal and social lives. The findings of this study can inform policy decisions related to preferred film genres, attractions and the reasons to watch movies.

Film has become an integral part of modern society, serving as a powerful medium for entertainment, education, and social commentary. In Pakistan, film has played a significant role in shaping the cultural landscape and influencing the lives of people, particularly youth. This research paper aimed to examine whether film is an eminent source of entertainment for Pakistani youth or not, by exploring its impact on their leisure activities, social interactions, and cultural identity formation.

1.2   Research Objectives

- To identify and analyse the preferred film genres among youth.
- To investigate the factors that contribute to the film preferences of Pakistani youth.
- To explore the relationship between demographics and preferences for watching movies.
- To explore the reason behind considering films as an eminent source of entertainment.

1.3   Research Questions

1. What film genres are popular among Pakistani youth?
2. What factors influence Pakistani youth in selecting their preferred film genre?
3. How do demographic factors (age, gender, socio-economic status) influence their movie preferences among Pakistani youth?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Entertainment is what we seek to escape from reality or boredom of routine, and cinema has the power to make one forget about their worries or chores. Films have always been a pervasive form of entertainment. According to Anna, & Sujeevan (2018), the audience is likely more interested in films than books and newspapers as it is more entertaining than the rest.

According to Fariha & Jagmohan (2022), film can promote positive relationships between groups can evoke certain emotions in the youth, and María Isabel & Ariadna (2021) revealed in the study that film is more influential and youth consider it the appreciable form of enjoyment. Because the design of movies, like literature, attracts much of the young people's attention they can observe cultural values (Stempleski and Tomalin, 2001) and Junmoni (2022) agree that films can alter one's ideas and attitudes. When films possess accurate information, it can expand an individual's knowledge base and view situations, cultures, and scenarios from another perspective.

Pakistani youth find films intimidating and exhilarating but Pakistani cinema suffers most of the time. Ahmad, (2017) exposed in his research that the Pakistani film industry has been struggling to achieve an environment which facilitates further growth because the specific authorities tried hard to take control and use it as a propaganda tool which was a giant tactic in its growth. According to the Uzma, Tahira, & Tariq (2015) study, it is apparent that the absence of new ideas and old themes and political unrest in the country are the main reasons for the downfall of the Pakistani film industry. Fouzia & Sadia (2017) narrated another reason for Pakistan's film industry's downfall in their study that story writers or scriptwriters had been careless in writing the same stories that the public had been watching in Bollywood for many years.

Films have captured the attention of researchers worldwide for many years due to their genuine and meaningful nature. Sherman (2003) emphasised the significance of authenticity in films, as experiencing something real brings unique excitement and enjoyment. Rohini (2018) dug deep into the topic and hypothesised that new technology has skyrocketed the number of movie viewers and suggested that scriptwriters should be careful while crafting movies and directors, producers, and crew must be cautious as they influence society. Films can inspire learners in ways that other learning materials cannot.

Jonas (2019) discusses in his research that films are a guiding force and able to bring a dynamic change in the lifestyle as we perceive what we see more than what we think or observe. It proposed that art and

cinema directors can exercise some hegemony and moral values in society by crafting masterpieces cautiously.

Films have a strong influence on people, both in negative and positive ways. The effectiveness of this impact depends on the direction it takes. For instance, (Harris, 2002) says in his study that it is more challenging to change human behaviour compared to influencing individual opinions and attitudes. Films have their effects on viewers for example, Hussain, Ejaz, and Shabir, (2019) explored that audience determines their feelings after watching patriotic films i.e., they fill them with pride, happiness, emotions, and motivation and sensitivity.

Cinema is the mirror in which one often sees themselves. Films can alter people's moods and even shape the world. While they provide an escape from reality, films have also had a significant impact on societies, influencing areas such as politics, law, and culture. It has the capacity to change people's opinions and perspectives on life. Behm-Morawitz & Mastro (2008) have discovered that films can influence people's views, challenge stereotypes, shape beliefs and attitudes, and even impact ethical and gender-related stereotypes.

Movies possess the power to redirect the course of contemporary life by leaving a lasting impact and films can shape ideas in the minds of young viewers (Kubrak, 2020). As an art form, film can create emotional connections and subtly expose individual vulnerabilities. Yang & Bergh, (2017) argue that when films identify with the individual's emotion of watching the film despite if the film is violent, happy, or scary, viewers tend to be engrossed within the story. The emotional connection leaves a favourable impression of the places featured within the film.

Movies are the magic and are often seen as another type of text, enriched by its "visual dimensions" (Voller & Widdows, 1993). People mostly watch films for entertainment, seeking an escape from their reality and entering a fantasy world that is unrelated to their everyday lives. Ismaili (2013) supports the idea that movies are an eminent source of entertainment/ escapism. We are in the entertainment age where without films, life just goes on and on like the number Pi.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Film has become a pervasive form of entertainment, shaping popular culture and societal norms and reflecting the aspirations and anxieties of individuals and communities. Understanding the film preferences of Pakistani youth is crucial for comprehending their cultural identities and entertainment preferences as they make up a significant portion of the population. This research paper examined 'film as a prominent source of entertainment among Pakistani youth' from diverse perspectives.

Uses and gratification theory suggests that individuals seek media content to fulfil specific needs and gratifications. This theory help understand why Pakistani youth consider films an eminent source of entertainment by exploring the needs that films satisfy. It also helped to identify the popular genres among Pakistani youth and explore the reasons behind their appeal.

Demographic variables such as age, gender, and socio-economic status significantly shape individual preferences and media consumption patterns. This research investigated how these demographic factors influence Pakistani youth's movie preferences.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research employed quantitative cross-sectional survey design to gather data from a representative sample of Pakistani youth. This approach is considered suitable for examining the prevalence of film preferences, identifying factors that influence these preferences, and exploring relationships between demographic variables and movie preferences.

3.2   Participants

The target population for this study was Pakistani youth. This age range encompasses individuals for whom Film has become a pervasive form of entertainment. The total sample of participants consisted of (N=202) people aged above 18 years. 119 (58.9%) participants were female and 83 (41.1%) of the population were male. The sample was available and convenient distributed among different Pakistani university students.

3.3   Data Collection

The researchers adopted a quantitative methodology and applied the survey method for data collection. The tool used for the survey research was a structured questionnaire with close-ended questions, which were answered by the population based on convenient sampling. According to the research objectives, the researchers designed the questions to determine the perception of Pakistani Youth about the Film as an Eminent Source of Entertainment.

3.4   Data Analysis

The researchers employed SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences version-21) to extract the results. The data was analysed as descriptive statistics that involved the calculation of frequency and percentages through SPSS. The data was allocated a number to each response category for computer analysis. For example, Gender: Male assigned (1) and Female was (2). The survey included questions about their film preferences, media consumption habits, demographic characteristics, and reasons for considering films as an eminent source of entertainment.

4. RESULTS

Table 1: *Demographic Statistic*

Demographic Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
	Male	83	41.1
	Female	119	58.9
Gender	Total	202	100.0
	18-24	133	65.8
	25-31	46	22.8
Age	>31	23	11.4
	Total	202	100.0
	<30,000/-	39	19.3
Household Income	30,000 - 60,000	66	32.7
	>60,000	97	48.0
	Total	202	100.0

Table 1 reveals the demographic characteristics of the participants that among them 58.9% were female and 41.1% were males who filled the survey form. Among the respondents 65.8% were the age of 18-24, 22.8% were 25 to 31 years old, while 11.4% of them were above 31 years. The results of the study exemplify the household income of the respondents that 19.3% have less than 30 thousands rupee, 32.7% were earning 30,000 to 60,000 rupee, and only 48.0% have 60,000 plus household income.

Table 2: *Frequency of Watching Movies*

Question	Regularly	Often	Occasionally	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
How frequently do you watch movies?	38	85	79	202 (100.0)	2.20	.735

Table 2 reveals the results of movie watching time of the participants that among them 42.1% often watch

movies, 39.1% occasionally watch, and only 18.8% regularly watch films.

Table 3: *Preferred Film Genre*

Question	Drama & Fantasy	Action & Thrill	History & Documentaries	Science Fiction & Anime	All	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
What genre do you prefer to watch?	47	59	15	18	63	202 (100.0)	2.96	1.603

Table 3 reveals the results of the preferred genre of the participants. The study signifies that 31.2% watch all kinds of films without any preferences. The findings of the study shows that 29.2% preferred to watch action movies, 23.3% likely to watch dramas and fantasy types movies, and only 8.9% watch science fiction and anime while about 7.4% showed interest in watching historic theme movies and documentaries.

Table 4: *Attraction to Watch Films*

Question	Plot/Story	Music & Cast	Directors	Theme & Visual Effects	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
What attracts you to watch movies?	115	34	29	24	202	1.81	1.076

Table 4 reveals the results of the attraction of the participants to watch movies. The findings of the study showed that among them 54% found story and plot the most attractive element to watch a movie. The study further signify that 19.8% watch movies because of the cast and music, 14.4% consider directors while selecting a film to watch and only 11.9% find theme and visual effect as persuasive element.

Table 5: *Movie Selection*

Question	According to personal interest	Recommendations from Peers/Friends	Accessibility (easily available)	Media exposure (ads, reviews, trailer)	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
How do you typically select a movie to watch?	90	52	29	31	202 (100.0)	2.00	1.100

Table 5 reveals the results of the participants how typically they select a movie. The study explored that 44.6% select genre according to their interests. The finding further showed that 25.7% watch whatever their peers or friends recommend, 15.3% gets idea from media I.e., trailer advertisement, and only 14.4% do not bother any criteria and watch films that are easily available.

Table No 6: *Reason to Watch Movies*

Question	Entertainment & Escapism	Emotional Connection	Trends & Popularity	Personal Identification	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
What is the main reason for watching movies?	125	21	29	27	202 (100.0)	1.79	1.123

Table 6 reveals the reasons of watching films. The findings scrutinized that 61.9% watch films for entertainment and escapism. 14.4% watch to keep up with the trends and popularity, 13.4% considered it a source of self-realisation and only 10.4% were emotionally connected.

Table 7: *Influence on Viewers*

Question	A little bit	Enough to make a noticeable impact	No Effect	Total	Mean	Std.Dev
To what extent have movies influence your life?	93	35	74	202 (100.0)	1.91	.907

Table 7 reveals the results of the impacts of films on the participants' lives. The findings disclosed that 46% were influenced by movies. On the contrast, 36.6% have no effect of movies on their lives, and only 17.3% were highly inspired that films left a noticeable impact on them.

Table 8: *Respondents' Perception*

Question	Meaningful/ Insightful	Pleasurable	Both	None	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
What is your perception of films?	26	50	91	35	202	2.67	.911

Table 8 reveals the results of the participants' perception about films. The findings scanned that 45% perceived films both insightful as well as pleasurable. The research further decomposed that 24.8% apprehended as pleasurable element and 12.9% recongnised it a meaningful medium. However, 17.3% have no opinion about film.

Table 9: *Eminent Source of Entertainment*

Question	Yes	No	Total	Mean	Std. Dev
Do you agree "film is an eminent source of entertainment" among other mediums?	170	32	202 (100.0)	1.16	.366

Table 9 reveals the results of the participants acknowledgment of films as an eminent source of entertainment. The findings analysed that 84.2% favoured films as a prominent means of entertainment while 15.8% did not agreed.

5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

According to the research questions, the researcher presented the discussions of this study's findings. The analysis of this study signifies that 84.2% of Pakistani youth consider films a considerable and reliable source of entertainment. A movie is a form of art that essentially affects the viewers with an appealing story, powerful characters, and the presentation of a cinematic world. Films help to provoke emotions in the audience, and the results disclosed that 45% found film watching both meaningful and pleasurable while 24.8% took it as an amusing element, 12.9% considered films as a meaningful/ insightful medium and only 17.3% have no perception of films.

1. *What film genres are popular among Pakistani youth?*

Films wield a significant influence on the youth. Therefore, it is crucial to seek out movies that are worth watching. Cinema is an exhilarating experience that makes people dream and changes things within them. The research unveiled that 31.2% of the population likes to watch all types of movies only if they are attracted to the story. Also, 61.9% agreed that they watch movies for entertainment or escapism and deemed plot or story while selecting a movie. On the other hand, 29.2% have a knack for thrill and action movies, 23.3% tend towards drama and fantasy, while 8.9% and 7.4% like watching anime and documentaries, respectively.

2. *What factors influence Pakistani youth in selecting their preferred film genre?*

Critical thinking is the key skill that plays a big part in understanding a film. The study discussed all the factors that transform their preferences. The findings discovered that 44.6% select movies according to their interest or mood, and 54% of the population look over the story of a film while selecting, and they can watch any movie if they like it. The study by Yang & Bergh.,(2017) also acknowledged it. However, individuals need to be mindful that films should not completely alter their identity. It's essential to remember that films are created from the thoughts and perspectives of individuals therefore, the content within films should not have a profound impact on an individual's personality.

3. *How do demographic factors (age, gender, socioeconomic status) influence their movie preferences among Pakistani youth?*

Movies are different things to different people which makes them incredible. For some, movies are about escapism or entertainment, while for others these are about emotions or personal identification. Some watch movies just to keep up with the trends and popularity, and demographic factors like age and gender govern the preferences. One cannot sit and watch films for two or three hours- to watch a story unfold with people one does not know until you have a connection. This connection differs from person to person, and the study examined the difference and acknowledged that demographic factors play a key role in movie selection. The results of the study revealed that demographic factors influenced the preference for movies. People aged between 18-24 often watch films even though 18.8% of the population (N=202) watch regularly and films influence their lives, keeping a note about 17.3% had a noticeable impact on them. In contrast, people above 25 years old occasionally watch movies that do not influence their lives.

6. CONCLUSION

The empirical findings of the research have shown that films are indeed an eminent source of entertainment for Pakistani youth. The study's findings highlight the importance of understanding their preferences and perceptions regarding film genres, attractions, and the potential impact of films on cultural identity formation and personal lives. The study emphasizes the need for meaningful storytelling and recognizes the influence of the film industry on society. Future research could explore the nuanced relationship between film preferences, demographic factors, and cultural values among Pakistani youth.

6.1   Limitation

The primary limitation of this study was the time allocated for its implementation. Conducting the study over a longer period may yield different findings. Additionally, this study focused solely on Pakistani youth and had a limited number of participants. It is important to assess other contexts and large populations to obtain a more comprehensive understanding.

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