

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT OF DIGITAL JOURNALISM ON FILM CENSORSHIP

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ABSTRACT--It was after much introspection and a series of consultations that settled on a topic for my very first research work on psychological impact. Some topics like poverty, increasing population, water scarcity, superstitions, etc. as well as some recent subjects like homosexuality did strike my mind, but seemed as obvious and already much talked about. Hence, none of these had a complete agreement from both, the mind and the soul at the same time of my mind. One thing that both settled upon was to choose a topic which has not been easily identified as a social issue, but nevertheless is a part of our everyday routines. I thought that it would only be better if I work on something that is rather immediate to us as individuals and as a part of society that we come from, yet something that was not as evident as it should have been. The topic had to be a unique one, unlike most of the other issues, which are well identified and branded at the national level. 'Film Censorship' was one such subject, especially in the context of the Indian Cinema. As an audience, the society has been accustomed to censorship to such an extent that they become indifferent and unaware, and do not question if/why any part of the media is missing from the movies that they are watching. So, we found this topic as the aptest one to be brought to light and as something that everyone should be aware of.

Keywords-- psychological and behavioural impact of Digital journalism on film censorship

I. INTRODUCTION

As young generation, cinema has always been a part of our everyday lives, so much so that we often forgot that the very cinema we were watching and enjoying at a personal level had a public aspect to it. That is, while we were thinking that we were watching what we wanted to, it eventually dawned upon us that it might not be so. There was Censorship. As a public form of entertainment, cinema can be used to maneuver the thoughts and opinions of the masses. Censorship comes in the picture exactly at this juncture, in order to appropriate these opinions and opinions. For this reason, our group decided that we might want to look into such frameworks and how and why would a film be appropriated according to these frameworks.

Next obstacle for our team was to search for exclusive information from the vast diversity of perspectives that were available on the decided topic. As for me, I decided to touch those specific areas which could describe our idea in its totality. Censorship is more or less an umbrella term, yet it does not comprise of only one kind and manner. Hence, my attempt was to preserve the miscellany that the idea of film censorship internalizes, meanwhile

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to understand censorship in a broad sense. And so, I started phrasing my research work on the topic 'Film Censorship in Indian Cinema'.

II. LITERARY REVIEW

The talk of censorship in films comes along with the talk of films. The basic premise of this paper is to establish film censorship in Indian Cinema, or Bollywood, as a social issue and to acknowledge various ways in which it is being performed. At first, I decided to deal with all the topics included in the internal diversity of the given subject. But later on, I thought that it would be better to include such diversity in major subdivisions. Thus, I subdivided the major concepts into parts such as 'Hollywood to Bollywood Censorship', 'Censorship in Songs', 'Censorship Curbing Ideas', 'Censorship Against Social Messages', and so on. Although these subcategories appear to be few in number, as I attempt to see it and present it, they should give a wholesome idea about what censorship is for Indian cinema and what do the actions of Censor Board of India eventually result in.

From the music numbers like 'Choli ke Peechhe' and movies like 'Ram Teri Ganga Maeli' of the golden era of Indian Cinema, to the very popular latest affair of 'Udhta Punjab', every film in India has to pass the scrutiny of the 'great' Censor Board of India, which sometimes runs its *scissors* in such dubious manners. In doing so, it curbs the ideas of a movie making team in a way that might prevent them from spreading one or many social messages with the help of visual media, merely due to the fear of not being able to clear their 'Examination'. The Indian Censor Board works on an idealistic principle of not allowing a media to have a negative effect on its public besides entertainment and knowledge gaining. As [1]A. Rishabh puts it that idealism seldom stands against realism, and quite often it ends up being an impediment to its very intention (A. Rishabh (2016). Censor the Censor Board. *The Viewspaper*).

[2]Another insensitive step often taken by the Censor Board is snatching the essence of a Hollywood movie script by either cutting scenes from the movie or simply disallowing the movies' release in the country. However, it appears that the board does not pay heed to the actual necessity of the scenes or dialogues which they find as 'obscene' for a film to be publicly presented and simply pick them out. [3]Similarly, it has been seen in various cases how the aggressiveness of a scene is summarized into a 'beep' of variable frequencies. This does nothing except hampering the growth of the Hollywood market in India, meanwhile keeping the Indian audience from experiencing variety.

Most of the movies are intensely criticized without considering the social messages that they are provided with, or sometimes, by a premature judgment. This case can be peculiarly observed in religion-related and politically concentrated movies. Highly entertaining examples of such films could be *P.K.* and *O.M.G.* which were targeted for being hurtful towards the religious sentiments of many, and not just the Indian Censor Board. Especially in the case of *P.K.*, the 'offended' audience included many who did not even bother to watch the movie and protested against it only because the message of the movie was preconceived as 'offensive'. Hence, these films were among those which were highly violative even for the general public, which makes it evident that film censorship is not a characteristic feature only of the Government body, even in such a religiously diverse democracy.

Another part of my research was the interlocking of Bollywood songs and Censorship. One song that was rather obvious was Madhuri Dixit's 'Choli ke peeche kya hai' from the movie *Khalnayak* (1993). (Mehta, Monika.

(2001). What Is Behind Film Censorship? [4]The *Khalnayak* Debates. *Jouvert: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 5, no. 3). The song was and is more popular because of the fact that it was censored. In fact, the name of this song popped out just like an advertisement each time in my Google-searches for a song that was criticised and censored. The advent of this song in the Indian market was no less than a rain of criticism in the account of the ‘obscurity’ that it had in its *choli*. Many famous personalities of that period filed petitions against the song and had shown resistance towards it in various other ways. Some other songs such as ‘Aaja nachle’ from the movie ‘Aaja Nachle’ directly affected the movies themselves, so much so that the movies were banned.

One must understand that imprisonment of all the innovation and modern ideologies is in no way a promotion of the basic Right to Express. Moreover, limiting the type of knowledge gaining procedures and classifying entertainment is no less than a social issue. Censorship against the public interest must be discouraged; also, the mindset of the movie makers should be diverted from a professional, money-making mindset to a media offering best form of freedom of speech. To conclude my argument— the Indian Censor Board has more than once been accused of being motivated by topical political influences and also often by social stereotypes that make them *cut* the film into a cleaner experience. As Gopi Chandra gives an opinion that a comprehensive review of the outdated cinematography law is the need of the hour. Appointing another new committee to suggest mere tweaking of rules and procedures is only eyewash. If the government is authentically radical, it should revamp the ‘ruling party-controlled’ Censor Board into a professional, autonomous and liable body [5]Edra, Gopi Chandra (2016). ‘Censoring’ Government from Film Censorship, *Factly*,). So to say, it keeps the Indian audience in a safety bubble and tries rather not to prick it.

III. WORD OF THE WORLD

With film censorship becoming the talk of the town, here I present what people of different strata have to say about film censorship with a focus on the Indian film industry:

Nagraj Manjule, the director of few criticised film contributions such as ‘Sairat’, had a negative thought, like most of the others, about this practice of Censorship. He considered that censor feels the people through films can reform others by not including abuses, but it doesn’t happen like that. Those who face the wrath of Censorship from the Board as well as the audiences, of course, opposed what they encountered; the unaffected celebrities favored it, be it out of genuineness or due to competition. Famous actor, Salman Khan, came out with reviews as well as some solutions when his movie ‘Bajrangi Bhaijaan’ had a questionnaire over the title.

Most of the masses are of the opinion that Censorship is a disease just like the other social evils, and only those who are in support of these evils promote film censorship. [6]While, on one hand, film censorship aces only a negative critique from a large number, some feel it is a right thing to do. According to them, censor board is not stopping the creativity to pulp up, but it is actually rightfully removing vulgarity from the films, as kids many-a-times, learn vulgarity from such visual media themselves. Some other supporters said film makers, merely to make money, fool the innocent audiences. Thus, it is the duty of the government and its censorship body to control over these greedy film makers. They simply blame the officials for curbing their freedom of showing whatever they want to show. The government of today must make sure these foul mouths film producers who have been raising pitch through media do not get their ways. These gangs in the film industries are not for the best of the public but

for their selfishness. Those who themselves indulged in mass censorship, criticised the Censor board for not putting a ban on movies including issues hurting their personal sentiments. Claims came into consideration when it was about religious sentiments of people, which later turned into wild demonstrations. Thus, film censorship, like any other evil, faces mixed reviews from around the nation and the world.

IV. CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING THE FUNCTIONING OF CENSOR BOARD IN THE RECENT YEARS

[7]It's getting to be progressively troublesome will aggravate movies for opportunity of thought in the nation. If it's a novel into a film documenting Arvind Kejriwal's voyage starting with "aam aadmi" should be a questionable politician or a motion picture ahead of previous leader Manmohan Singh - those Indian novels into a film blue pencil constitution right away needs NOCs from Main government officials to clearing motion pictures dependent upon genuine living figures, much of the alarm about producers. Those Confirmations are issued on the premise of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, which comprises a situated set of ambiguous rules. To instance, it states that "a film ought not to be made assuming that whatever and only it may be against the premium of the power. Furthermore, integrity from claiming India, those securities of the State, inviting relations with outside States, general population order, respectability alternately includes maligning or hatred of court or is inclined will actuate requisition from claiming any offence". This may be concluded by a board comprising up to 25 parts and 60 report board parts starting with crosswise over India, at from claiming whom would be designated by the data & television service. Those president will be predominantly in control about managerial functions, and territorial officers are and only those looking at committees that affirm movies. The decision on certification — Unrestricted public exhibition (U), parental guidance for children below age 12 (U/A), Adult (A) or Viewing by specialised groups (S) — is made by the regional officer based on the (unanimous or majority) report of the Examining Committee. In the event that from claiming tenacious disappointment for the certification, the matter goes to an independent Appellate Tribunal, whose parts would name toward I&B for an expression from claiming three quite some time. Any further dispute goes to court. It has become a trend of sorts.

[8]In recent times the CBFC has progressively used its influence to direct cuts in films for innumerable reasons, leading to it being frequently denoted to as the 'censor board'. In recent months, the CBFC has stimulated up controversy in relation to authorization (or the lack thereof), of films with subject matter vacillating from feminism or women's empowerment and LGBTQ issues, to the Indian government's demonetisation drive. The increasing prospect that a film will not even be approved certification for public display, has led to fears that self-censorship will become a standard. This fear seems to have infused into the online video streaming industry previously. Today, it isn't clear whether streaming facility suppliers are requisite to stand by the certification norms under the Act. While streaming platforms fluctuate in their method, and some providers pick to stream full-length i.e. 'uncensored' content, others are selecting to make only certified versions of films existing online. There have also been provocative claims of service providers choosing to edit / censor content beyond the requirements of the CBFC.

V. EFFECTIVENESS OF CENSORSHIP IN THE INTERNET ERA

[9] India also engaged in moderate Internet censorship despite its generally democratic practice of governance. In 2000, the Indian Parliament approved the Information Technology Act to condense on cybercrime, consenting Internet cafes and Internet users at homes to be investigated deprived of warrants as part of unlawful inquiries. This law endorsed the administration to chunk admission to sites well-thought-out pornographic or which “endanger public order, the integrity and security of the nation and relations with other countries.” Individuals setting up “anti-Indian” websites can be imprisoned for a period up to 5 years.

The results of research conducted in China [10] show that apparent internet censorship expressively diminutions the readiness to talk about penetrating disputes and the probability of signing appeals with true names. The rationalization of censorship meaningfully declines self-censorship on the conducts of petition signing. Though there are diverse forms of internet censorship that Chinese netizens may come across, they do not fluctuate from each other in instigating altered levels of self-censorship. This research contributes to the body of literature about internet regulation as it recognizes a underlying association amid the government’s internet censorship structure and ordinary people’s response to the guideline in an demanding rule. Discharging altered configurations of censorship and unlike proportions of self-censorship portrays the intricacy of censoring and being censored.

VI. SOLUTION & CONCLUSION

We may have mixed opinions and reviews about film censorship in India, but according to me, film censorship is a serious issue of the film industry and, of course, the nation. Thus, a proper management of solutions has to be established. But snatching the freedom of expression of the public censor, or giving all the rights to the film makers is at no cost a balanced solution. There is a need of a controlling body such as the Censor Board, but it has to be answerable for each and every cut it applies on a media. Its powers have to be in a limited amount. Talking about the public that censors the films in its own ways, it is a much more difficult issue to be handled. We can never curb the thoughts and expressions of a person completely. But the public itself has to understand that expressing orthodox views about an artwork and a piece of innovation is, in no manner, acceptable when done by hurting the sentiments of its creator. Thus, no one but the censor public itself has to adapt the concept of broad-mindedness and understand that originality of a media is an important thing too.

If a media teaches a complex concept in a packet of entertainment or simple presents an interesting idea, it should freely be given an open stage to be presented before the audiences and get appraisals and encouragements for the work. It should be the decision of the general public if they want to see and imbibe anything from a media or not, but this decision should not be a sole decision. The government must have limited rights to interfere for the release of a right thing, with a due respect for the point of views of everyone.

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