

Influence of Cinema on the Social Thinking of Private University Youth: A study on Private University Students of Bangladesh

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Abstract: In today's world, cinema has become the most powerful and influential platform on the arts world. People from every segment of the society is somehow connected to it. It helps to understand lives and cultures of our own and the people surrounding us. The importance of cinema has become so much that now it one of most popular subject to study around the world. According to the famous filmmaker Federico Fellini, "Talking about dreams is like talking about movies, since the cinema uses the language of dreams; years can pass in a second, and you can hop from one place to another. It's a language made of image. And in the real cinema, every object and every light means something, as in a dream. It is like the visualized version of the dreams of the filmmaker. Bangladesh is very rich in culture. We have our own language, our own tradition and our own alphabets. The social structure is very strong because of the culture and tradition we have. A big part of the society is the students specifically the university students. They are regarded the pioneers of the future because after they finish their study, they will work in different sectors of the country as the new frontier. They will become the society's new thinkers. The university education is mainly divided into two parts. One is the public university education which are the Govt. owned universities and another one is the private university education which are the private ownership universities. Because of this ownership, the two education system is different. Private universities are most situated in the capital of Bangladesh, Dhaka. These institutes are organised in terms of delivery method. They follow semester based system. On the other hand the public universities follow year based system and they also have session jam. So students who want to finish their degrees on time, they get admitted to these private universities. So there is a divide in the thinking between the private university students and the public university students. This study is done to find out the how cinema influences the ability of social thinking among these private university students in Bangladesh. After conducting the research on different private university students it is clear that there is clear indication of influence on their social thinking done by cinema.

Keywords: Cinema, Social thinking, Culture, Education.

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I. INTRODUCTION, RATIONALE AND STATEMENT OF THE CONCEPT

Cinema has become the greatest influences in modern life, and it is also the seventh art along with music, literature, photography, painting and play. It combines entertainment, business, and modern technology. In this present world, all of these three has a very powerful impact on our life. But cinema has also become a part of the society we live. Many unknown aspects of the society are reflected through cinema. It helps to create opinions and characteristics of a society. In its long journey of more than a century, cinema has transformed itself from being a taboo and absolute no-no to a virtual way of life. Social dynamics have always regulated the content of cinema. Cinema is not only a source of entertainment but also a tool to create social awareness. Bangladesh has its own social structure which contains different types of people like any other countries. Social dynamics have always regulated the content of cinema. The main theme of most cinemas is a protagonist fights the antagonists who are the reflections of different societal evils like the village money-lenders, land hawks advocates of dowry, terrorists etc. By watching a cinema from any country, it is very easy to get an idea about the societies of the country. "Social Thinking is what we do when we share space with others and when sending an email, sitting in a classroom, lining up at the grocery store, reading a work of fiction, watching a funny video clip, participating in a business meeting, driving in traffic, and a host of other daily activities that involve our social interpretation and related reactions. We consider the context; take in the thoughts, emotions and intentions of the people with whom we are interacting and use that information to determine how we respond. How we think about people affects how we behave, which in turn affects how others respond to us, which in turn affects our own emotional internal and external responses. It's an incredibly

complex process that most of us take for granted.” (Michelle Garcia Winner, May 2015). The study could have been done on all university students of Bangladesh. But the specification on private university students is because their thinking process and the knowledge they gather are a bit different from the public university students. Their curriculum of study and the environment and method the learning is more updated. They have more access to the modern world because sometime their assignment topics include study about cinema. Because of the globalization the world of media and art has an easy access everywhere. It is now possible to get a Hollywood film released in America the next day it was released in Bangladesh. Movies made in Hollywood shows a different society and culture than Bangladesh. This study aims to find out how these films not only Hollywood but other country’s film along with films made in Bangladesh has influences on their ability of social thinking.

II. METHODOLOGY

The instrument of this study is the use of survey design. Based on the survey, data has been collected from different private university students. Data related to the study concepts has been collected through integrating applicable variables that was present in the questionnaire and then examined and deduced using expressive procedures. The sampling technique for this study was purposive. The total sample size was 88. For interpretation the collected data from the sample, SPSS and Microsoft Excel software were used and for presentation, Microsoft Word was used. The Selected Private Universities are:- North-South University Dhaka, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, American International University, United International University, East West University, Independent University Bangladesh, Northern University, Southeast University, State University Bangladesh.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Because of the low number of studies done on the research topic which is the influence of cinema on social thinking among the Private University Students of Bangladesh, it was very hard to find any related literature. Only one related work done by a prominent filmmaker in Bangladesh named “Notun Cinema, somoyerproyojone” (2009), a book which is a collection of different newspaper articles which explains what types of films the youth of Bangladesh wants to see. The reason to review the book is because it has a direct connection with sample used for this study as they are also the youth of the society. The above study investigates the hidden factors about the topic by including direct contact with the private university students of Bangladesh.

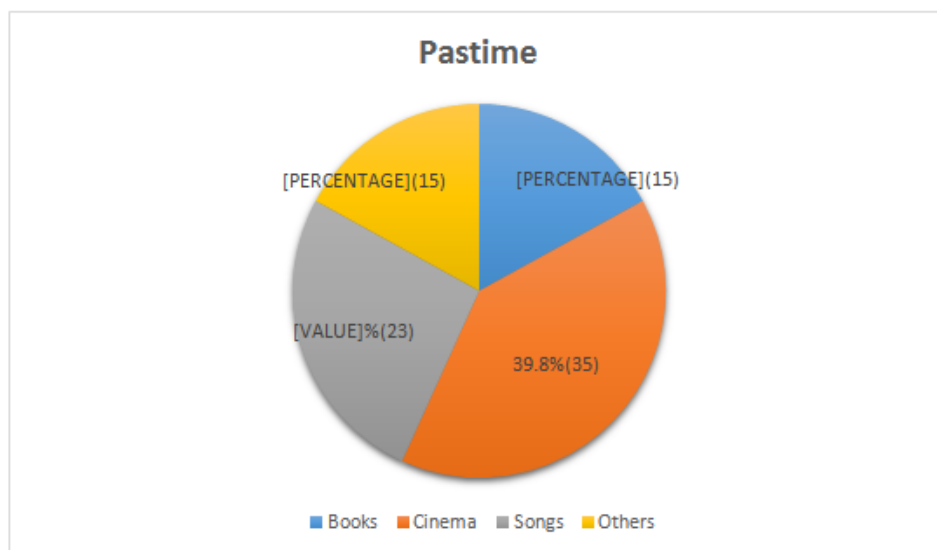


Chart 1: Pastime analysis

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

From the above chart we can see that among the 88 respondent, a big percentage of 39.8 percent watches cinema in their pastime, 17% reads books, 26.2% listens to some form of music whether audio or video and the rest 17% passed their leisure time by other kinds of activities. The students who did not chose watching cinema as their frequent pastime, does not mean that they are totally cut off from cinema, it just means that they prefer to do the other activities rather than watching cinema.

Many of the respondents said that cinema has impacts on the way the process their information about the surrounding. They can learn about other societies and culture which help them to construct their own reality of society and their surroundings. 86.36% of the respondents thinks that cinema or movies or films has somehow directly or indirectly influence their way of social thinking. The stories and images they on the cinema screen, helps them imagine about their own society and culture if it needs changes or not. They learn to identify the good and bad, the right and wrong of the society. From the table below we can see the clear indication to that.

Influence on social thinking	Number of respondents	Percentage %
Yes	76	86.36%
No	12	13.64%

Table 1: Response about the influence

The reason we love to watch movies cannot be described in words. It gives us joy, hope and many other humanly feelings. It also teaches us how to behave, how to react to certain situation, how to handle problems etc. The combined impact of image, music, background sound dialogue, lighting and special effects of the movies creates deep thoughts in our mind. They help us to understand the lives of us and those surrounding us, our society and our culture. Movies can provide perspective to spiritual and political matters too. It creates the pathways to thinking, feeling and pursuing our lives. Movies have the power that can be harnessed to heal grow and change. The private university students of Bangladesh is a group of people who a lot of variety in their economic, social and cultural sense. They are studying in the private universities because they want to fast forward their education life so they can catch up with the rest of the world as soon as possible. Private University concept was introduced in Bangladesh about 20 years ago and in general it assumes that the students study in these university mostly have a better economic condition in their family. They have better access to internet, technology and movie theatre because most of the good movie theatres are located in the capital Dhaka and almost all the private university are Dhaka based. Dhaka also have better broadband internet connection that other cities of the country. In this age of Netflix and YouTube, getting access to new and old movies is very easy. All you need is a good internet connection and a PC or laptop.

Based on the data and interviews taken while collecting data, we found clear indication that movies or cinemas have impact on their thinking specifically social thinking skills. They have learnt numerous thing from the movies they watch about their own society and the societies the movies represent whether it is from Bollywood, Hollywood, French, Korean or Japanese films. According to them, what they see in the movies, they try to connect it with their own reality and surrounding to create a meaning of their own. Bollywood films are concentrated to the Indian culture and society which is very similar to our own society and culture because Bangladesh used to be a part of India before 1947. They have similar social problem like us so it is easy for them to relate to those. Hollywood films use the most advances technologies and they represent the western society and culture which helps them to learn their norm, language behaviour and culture. Movies from other countries also reflect their cultures and society so it is easy to learn from them. Because of movies, to know about any country of culture or society has become very easy. These students take these chances to create and develop their own social thinking skills.

V. CONCLUSION

The history of Bangladeshi films has its own picks and drops. There have been so many good films produces after the independence in 1971. Most of the stories of these movies were based on the freedom fighters and the struggle of the country. During that time, America was facing some major change in values that gave the permit to films to flourish. By the end of 19th century, an individual's character and thinking was the most admired thing. After the end of the independence war of Bangladesh, the society was changing rapidly because before this time, the whole country was stuck under the misgovernance of West Pakistan. Films played a huge role in the way people were thinking at that time. People used go and watch cinema to learn about the history. Even the new generation, the one we are talking about now learnt many of the historical facts from movies. Movies made on the topic of this country's independence showed the before and after of the movement which shaped the country's societal thinking. The same way now movies are shaping the way they think now about their country, about other countries and societies and cultures.

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