



IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT UPCOMING INDIAN FILMS

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Abstract: In today's digital age, social media platforms have changed how people interact, seek entertainment, connect with each other, and choose the content they wish to view.

Individuals rely heavily on social media for even the smallest decisions. From selecting vacation destinations to choosing products, outfits, and determining what is best for them, as well as deciding which movie to watch. However, social media is effective in increasing cinema involvement. On the other side, social media is a major component contributing to the industry's decline. The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the different effects of social media on audience preferences and involvement in cinema. The study included both qualitative and quantitative research methods, including a survey technique. A diversified questionnaire was created to address the study questions and satisfy the objectives. The study's population consisted of college students who also used social media. Participants were picked using a non- probability sampling method, with a focus on relevant social media platforms. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The findings reveal that social media is an important source of information for people interested in watching movies. The study concludes by identifying the important factors that influence people's opinions about films, as well as using social media as a promotional tool and a means of changing people's perspectives and effectively engaging them with the movie.

Keyword: Social media, Films, Cinema, Instagram, Youth, Movie Promotion

Introduction

Social media can be generally described as a collection of interactive online applications that enable the creation and sharing of content generated by users. There are countless existing social media platforms, each with its own set of features. These include Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Although all social media platforms share the characteristics mentioned earlier, they differ from one another in numerous ways. Specifically, platforms are often different in their designs, structures, community norms, and audiences. But one thing which is common is that it has been used for sharing content on all types of subjects by millions of people on a daily basis.

Social media significantly influences various areas of life, including social, sports, commercial, intellectual and personal life. It impacts everything whether in a positive or negative way. In the context of the film industry or Indian cinema, Social media plays a crucial role, as trailers of any new movie often go viral on social media platforms immediately upon release. This can lead social media users to appreciate or criticize the film shortly after viewing it and sometimes these opinions develop into perceptions that spread among the public and shape their decision of watching the film.

In the domain of film industry, Nowadays Paparazzi sites and pages play a significant role in shaping public opinion about movies. Social media users follow different paparazzi pages and sites for viewing the content for new films or bollywood related information. Paparazzi are freelance photographers who catch celebrities in candid photos and videos. They often use their phones to record them. All the paparazzi associate with a specific social media page or independent media house. They use paparazzi pages as a PR tool for their upcoming movies. This is one of the forms of indirect promotion. 'Filmygyan', 'viral bhayani' and 'instant bollywood', 'Bollywood Now' are some examples of paparazzi pages on social media with millions of followers on each page. They maintain accounts on many social media platforms, including youtube, snapchat, and an independent website dedicated to current events and films related information. There are numerous other pages. From time to time, celebrities or filmmakers pay these pages to promote their upcoming film.

Filmmakers also have begun promoting their films on social media to enhance their audience's understanding about the film or sometimes to become part of the social interaction of people about the new film. There are many factors that become reasons for the audience to actually go and watch the film. Potential moviegoers are more likely to visit theaters after interacting with a film on official social media pages. Platforms like Facebook and twitter help audiences by facilitating conversation with friends and reels sharing with friends and encouraging followers to engage on Twitter hashtag movement, which in turn boosts interaction about film.

Public opinion about any film depends largely on the promotions and marketing of the film. The promotion of films plays a crucial role in the film industry, as it helps to raise awareness, spark interest, and boost ticket sales. Historically, film promotions have utilized a variety of methods, including trailers, posters, billboards, and media advertising. Nevertheless, the advent of social media has changed the landscape of film promotion, providing innovative and fresh approaches to engage with target audiences. Based on this premise, the researchers explore the influence of social media on the public opinion about new films within Indian cinema or Bollywood.

Significance of the study:

This paper explains how social media platforms influence the public opinion and preferences while choosing recent movies to watch. The researcher has basically analysed the social media elements that transform their decision making regarding any film that subsequently affect box-office performance, rating and overall reception.

Objective:

To study the different elements of social media that play a significant role in shaping public opinion related upcoming films.

Research Methodology:

The study focused on the young viewers of the films, who come under the age group of 18- 25 years. The study is based in the city of Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab and a sacred pilgrimage site of Sikhism in the Punjab. It has a literacy rate of 79.35% (Census 2011 report).

Research approach:

The research approach adopted in this study is Quantitative and Qualitative research approach.

Research Design:

A survey is done for this research paper. A diversified questionnaire was created to address the study questions and satisfy the objectives.

Setting of the study:

The study's population consisted of college students who are social media users. The accessible population for this research paper is student's who are studying in the area of Fatehgarh Sahib.

Sampling method:

Participants were picked using a non- probability convenience sampling method with a focus on relevant social media platforms.

Data Collection:

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The findings reveal that social media is an important source of information for people interested in watching movies.

Data Analysis and Discussion:

Table 1 : Gender of Respondents

Male	50%
Female	50%

The study included an equal gender distribution, with 50% male and 50% female respondents. This balance of representation ensures gender-neutral perspectives in the analysis.

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age	Percentage
18-20	62%
20-22	9%
22-24	20%
25 years	9%

The Majority of the respondents fall within the 18-20 years age group, indicating a strong representation of younger participants. A smaller but notable proportion belongs to the 22-24 years category, While the 20-22 years and 25 years groups each account for 9% of the total respondents.

Table 3: Social media platforms used by respondents regularly

Social media platforms	Percentage
Instagram	65%
Facebook	4%
Youtube	24%
Snapchat	7%

More than half of the respondents use Instagram regularly, while youtube stands at second with 25 %. On the other side fewer people use snapchat (7%) and Facebook stands for only 4 % . It clearly shows that Instagram becomes popular among youngsters while Facebook is losing popularity.

Table 4: Time spent by respondents on social media

Time		Less than 2 hours	2-3 hours	4- 6 hours	7- 8 hours
Respondents	Youth	36%	46%	16%	2%

The data reveals that a majority of respondents spend 2-3 hours daily on social media. Another significant portion (36%) uses social media Less than 2 hours, while the smaller segments (16 %) dedicates 4 -6 hours daily reflecting heavier reliance on these platforms and 2 % report spending 7-8 hours, which may indicate excessive or addictive usage patterns. This distribution shows that social media has become an integral part of youth's daily routine.

Table 5: Sources to learn about new films

Sources	Percentage
Social media	76%
Traditional media (TV, Radio & Newspaper)	8%
Friends	10%
Local Theater	6%

The analysis of respondent sources for discovering new films reveals a significant reliance on digital platforms, with social media dominating as the primary channel at 76%. In contrast, traditional media, friends and local theater accounts for 8%, 10% and 6% respectively. These results show that social media plays the biggest role in how people hear about upcoming films, while traditional ads and theaters have much less impact.

Table 6: Film Industry related accounts or Pages followed by respondents on Social Media

Responses	Yes	No
Respondents	37%	63%

The analysis of respondent's social media habits reveals that 37% follow accounts or pages related to the film industry, while 63% do not. Despite this, promotional reels about new films Frequently appear in their social media algorithms. Suggesting that platforms actively push such content regardless of users' preferences.

Table 7: Viewing Film reviews and film promotion on social media

Responses	Yes	No
Viewers	68%	32%

More than half of the respondents view\ watch film reviews and promotional reels on social media, while 32 % do not come across such content. This means film related content is everywhere online. Even if users are not looking for it, they still see posts about new movies, proving how powerful social media is in shaping opinions and promoting films today.

Table 8: Changes in opinion about a film after seeing reviews or discussions on social media

Responses	Yes	No
Viewers	63%	37%

The analysis of respondents reveals significant changes in viewers perception , with 63% of viewers changing their opinion after seeing such discussions and reviews online on social media, while 37% reacted negatively. In the digital age, social media has become a dominant platform for sharing opinions. This data proves that online reviews can shape how audiences perceive the upcoming movies.

Table 9: Importance of social media to make the final decision before watching a film

Responses	Most important	Important	Not Important
Percentage	53%	28%	19%

Half of the respondents with 53% viewers consider social media reviews very important when choosing a film, 28% say it is important, while only 19% do not rely on them. Combined 81% of respondents depend on social media opinions when deciding which movies to watch, demonstrating its crucial role in audience decision making. Most viewers trust online opinions, a smaller segment remain less dependent on them.

Table 10: Given review or opinion on social media after watching a film.

Responses	Yes	No
Percentage	40%	60%

The data reveals that only 40% of respondents posted film reviews on social media. On the other hand, 60% respond to No. This suggests that while some people actively discuss movies on social media, a larger portion either does not engage in such posts or prefer not to share their opinion online. It means casual viewers are less likely to share their opinions online but consistent online film analysis appears more common among those who do it professionally or for financial gain.

Table 11: Type of content from the movie influences the most to watch it .

Content	Percentage
Trailer	59%
Reality show visit clips	19%
Paparazzi pages	17%
Pre-release of BTS scene and songs	5%

60% of respondents citing trailers as the primary factor in their decision to watch a film. Reality shows appearance clips ranked second, influencing 19% of viewers, while paparazzi coverage accounted for 17%. In contrast, Pre-release behind the scenes (BTS) content and songs had the smallest effect, motivating only 5% of the respondents. This analysis reveals that the trailers remain the dominant factor. Seeing stars on talk shows or reality programs also gets them excited and draws them to the movie. Paparazzi pages and BTS play a special role for dedicated fans. These types of content keep fans updated and help them feel more connected to their favorite celebrities.

Table 12: Viewed a film of another language or country after seeing their reviews on social media.

Responses	Yes	No	Sometimes
Percentage	49%	12%	39%

Almost half of the respondents with 49% said they watch such films after watching the social reviews. 39% being occasionally influenced by online reviews, indicating that social media serves as an important factor. Only 12% of respondents stated that social media opinions do not affect their selection of films at all. This data reveals that social media helps audiences to discover films of other languages or countries. Audiences try such films after seeing their reviews online. Short clips of the movie, BTS videos grab attention. It means online buzz convinces many to watch and very few ignore social media suggestions.

Table 13: Respondents' opinions regarding Promotional messages from Celebrities and Influencers impact the choices for movie selection.

Opinions	Percentage
Strongly agree	32%
Agree	47%
Sometimes	17%
Disagree	4%

Regarding the opinions of the respondents on whether Promotional messages from Celebrities and Influencers impact the choices for movie selection. 32% of the respondents strongly agree that such messages have an impact on their movie choice. while 47% said such promotional messages impact their decision. Combining 79% of respondents agree on this, indicating a strong persuasive effect. Only 17% said they are sometimes influenced and just 4% disagree. This highlights that the vast majority of respondents acknowledge some level of influence from such endorsements.

Conclusion

Social media has a great impact on public opinion about upcoming movies, as most people rely on platforms like Instagram to stay updated. Many viewers check film reviews and reactions online before deciding to watch a movie, making social media a key factor in shaping their choices.

Trailers, especially when shared widely on these platforms, play a crucial role in attracting audiences and generating buzz. Additionally celebrities and influencers have a strong influence, as endorsements or criticism can sway public perception. Thus, it concluded that Social media allows us to share a multitude of content, from BTS footage and movie trailers, to release dates, instantaneously with each other. It helps build anticipation for a movie well before its release and keeps the audience engaged even after they have seen it.

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