

## CHAPTER 6

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### Impact of Crime Based Television Series on Human Psychology: A Socio-Legal Study with special reference to State of Punjab

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*“Television enjoys a de facto monopoly on what goes into the heads of significant part of the population and what they think.”* - Pierre Bourdieu

#### 1. ABSTRACT

Across the world people; enjoy watching different television shows, especially crime-based series. In India, crime-based series, “*Sansanikhez Kahaniya*”, “*CID*”, “*Savdhaan India*”, “*Crime Patrol*”, “*Saakshi*”, “*Special Squad*”, “*Siddhant*”, “*24*”, “*Adalat*”, “*Powder*”, “*Suraag*”, “*Karamchand*”, “*Byomkesh Bakshi*”, “*Saboot*” gained popularity amongst the viewers. These series have been in trend and surprisingly, continue to grow in popularity, attracting all kinds of audiences irrespective of age group, sexes, religions, race, and cast influencing general perception, thinking cycles, and behaviours of the viewers on both aspects negative and positive. The present paper focused on the impact of crime-based television series on human psychology of the State of Punjab and suggested means and modes for ensuring the active part of Television Regulatory Authorities in crime prevention with the help of doctrinal and non-doctrinal research methodology.

**Keywords:** Reality Show, Victimization, Television Regulatory Authorities, Society, Crime, Behavioural outcomes.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Psychologist Professor Sarah Niblock, CEO of the UK Council for Psychotherapy, believes the “our obsession with true crime and drama comes from the vicarious thrill of experiencing someone else’s problems, without having to go through them ourselves” (Wright, 2018). Supreme Court of India also accepted “*The television is unique in a way in which intrudes into our homes. The combination of*

*picture and voice makes it an irresistibly attractive medium of presentation. It has tremendous appeal and influence over millions of people. Television is shaping the food habits, cultural values, social mores and what not of the society in a manner no other medium has done so far....”(J, 2018).*

Generally, crime-related shows depict a story of examination of a crime by the police and investigation agencies. Most of the crime based television series or shows viz., “CID”, “Dastak”, “Crime Patrol”, “Dail 100”, “Savdhaan India”, “Gumraah”, “Saakshi”, “Special Squad”, “Siddhant”, “24”, “Adalat”, “Powder”, “Suraag”, “Karamchand”, “Byomkesh Bakshi”, “Saboot” have been in the list of most-watched crime-based television series. However, the idea of such shows has always been for well being of the society but somehow eventually possesses a harmful side to the society (Nijhawan, 2015).

The general behavior of an individual is influenced by a crime-based television series, people found it difficult to act typical in their meetings with outsiders, and they do not trust outsiders or even their own neighbors' relatives. On the passing of a van or vehicle on the road by their sides, a threat of offense against body and property came into their mind. People hesitate even to drink water in an unknown place due to the impact of crime-based television series (Narahari& Mukherji, 2018).

How would you react to a situation? How do you take a matter? How do we lead our life? All our behaviours depend upon the surroundings and environment around in which we live. Our family background, friends, religion, and daily life leading affect our behaviour and dealing with the people. During the period, crime-based television series became one of the significant factors to bring behavioural change (either good or bad) in the viewers irrespective of their age, sex, religion, caste, or country. Crime-based television series have been more common among teenagers they believe easily what they see on television. They try to do what was being displayed before them. For instance, after getting influenced by a crime-based television series (*'Savdhaan India'*), a boy planned his fake kidnapping with his friends to celebrate Valentine's Day party in Goa. A sum of Rs. 1 crore was demanded from the father of the boy but, the deal settled at Rs. 60 lakh. A similar fake kidnapping was also planned after getting influenced by *'Crime Patrol'* again a crime-based television series (Misra, 2015) and many more.

Moreover, the young generation remained a victim of such programs; numerous marriages ended, and some are on the edge of their dissolution for the brainwashing of their partners. But, we cannot undermine the good effect of such crime series for making the people aware of their rights and providing ways to protect their life, property, reputation, and their dear ones.

However, a different study showed both negative and positive impacts of the series. This Paper focused on tracing the factors for the commission of a crime, accessing the impact of crime-based television series on human psychology particularly in the State of Punjab, and suggesting modes and means be adopted by the Television Regulatory Authorities to ensure their part in crime prevention. Doctrinal and non-doctrinal research methodologies were utilized for the study. Secondary data was

collected from textbooks, journals, newspapers, judgments, reports, and information available on various websites to study the concept. Primary data was collected with the help of questionnaires with random sampling to access the impact of crime-based television series on the State of Punjab.

## **2. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR CRIMES**

Generally, (i) poverty, (ii) peer pressure (iii) religion (iv) politics (v) unfair justice framework (vi) unemployment (**Nair, 2022**) had been one of the contributory factors to the commission of a crime. But, with time, crime-based televising series and crime-based movies played a vital role in the life of a person and become one of the significant factors contributing to the commission of a crime. In addition to this, different theories have also thrown light on contributing factors to the commission of crimes.

### **2.1. SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY**

Albert Bandura in his theory emphasized on the significance of observing, modeling, attitudes, and imitating behaviors with the emotional reactions of others people. The hypothesis of the theory proposes that “one of the ways by which individuals learn is by the method involved with displaying or reflecting other's activities” (**Garg, 2020**).

### **2.2. SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY**

This theory is built upon the social learning theory. According to the theory, “behavior of the people is guided by the cognitive scripts which are learned through experience and observation of other people’s behavior” (**Garg, 2020**).

### **2.3. CATALYST MODEL**

The catalyst Model explained the etiology (cause) of violence. As per the catalyst model, “personality is shaped by a combination of genetics and learning, in which family or caregiving influences are predominant” [8]. The Model accepted media as one of the causes of aggressive behaviors (**Garg, 2020**).

## **3. REGULATING AUTHORITIES**

Broadcast Audience Research Council found more than 197 million Indian families with television connections in the year 2019. On July 31, 2020, about 920 channels were allowed to operate by the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) (**Broadcast Audience research Council, 2019**).

### **3.1. CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (REGULATION) ACT, 1995**

All the programs on television are regulated by the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995, and Cable Television Network Rules, 1995 (**Jain, 2021**). Crime-based television series regulated by the

Act for their non-news television channels. The acts deal with program codes and advertising codes. However, due to an inadequate mechanism for redressal of grievance, new rules have been passed in the year 2021.

### **3.2. CABLE TELEVISION NETWORKS (AMENDMENT) RULES 2021**

Recently Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules 2021 passed by the Government to provide “a statutory mechanism for redressal of grievances/complaints of citizens relating to content broadcast by television channels following the provisions of the Cable Television Network Act, 1995” (**Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2022**).

A three-level redressal mechanism (i) Self-regulation by the broadcasters (ii) Self-regulating bodies of the broadcaster and (iii) Inter-Departmental Committee at the Union level have been established under the new rules. The Union level committee consisted of six members ahead (Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting) and a representative from the other ministries viz., Ministry of Home Affairs, Defence, Women, and Child Development, Electronic and Information Technology, External Affairs to hear the appeals regarding the complaint on any program.

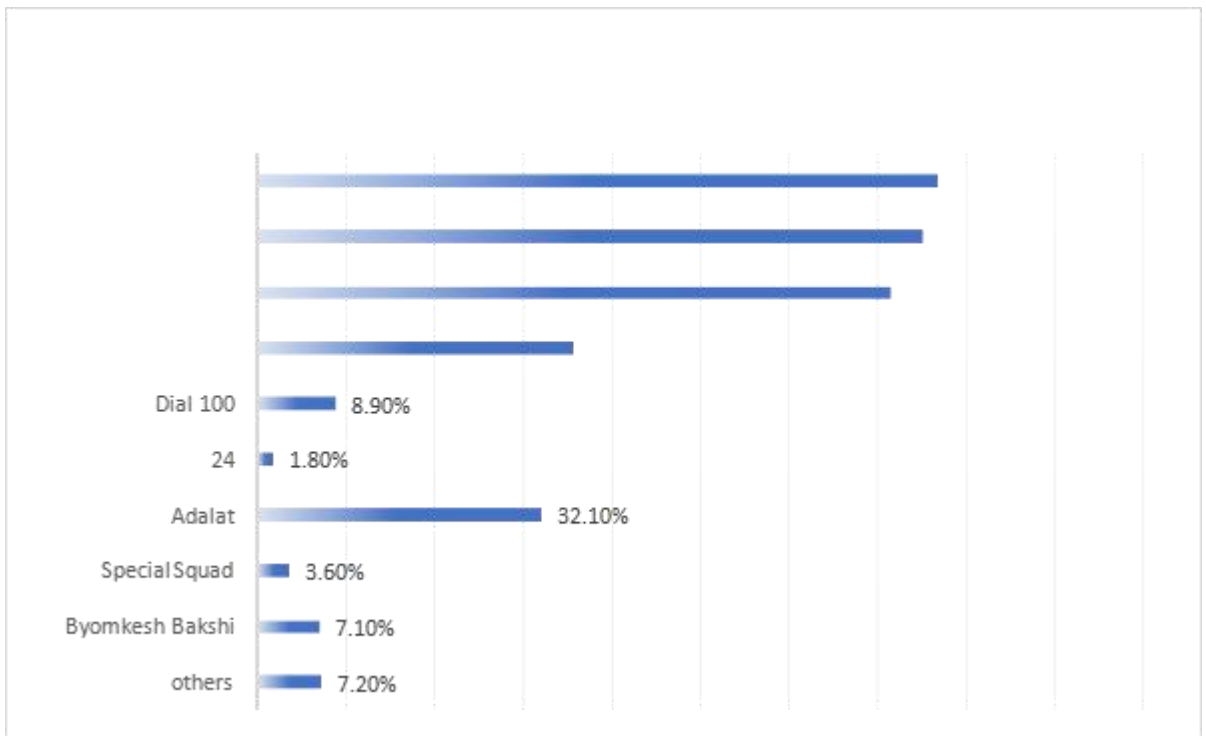
## **4. FINDINGS**

Details of the Respondents among which research was conducted:-

The questionnaire was responded by 55 respondents among whom 25 were males and 30 were female residents of Punjab. The respondents majorly consisted of youth, 89% belonging to the 18-30 age bracket, 6% from the 30 to 50 age bracket. Only 5% were above 50 years of age.

### **2. MOST VIEWED CRIME RELATED TELEVISION SHOW/ SERIES BY THE RESPECTIVE RESPONDENTS:- FIGURE NO. 1**

Among the famous shows related to crime, the most viewed among respondents standing at the top with 76.8% found the "Crime Patrol Series " followed by the Savdhaan India series at second position with 75%, and the CID series at third with 71.4% of the respondents viewing. These were the top three shows most viewed by the targeted audience as shown in figure No. 1



### 3. **FIGURE NO. 1 (MOST WATCHED CRIME TELEVISION SERIES)**

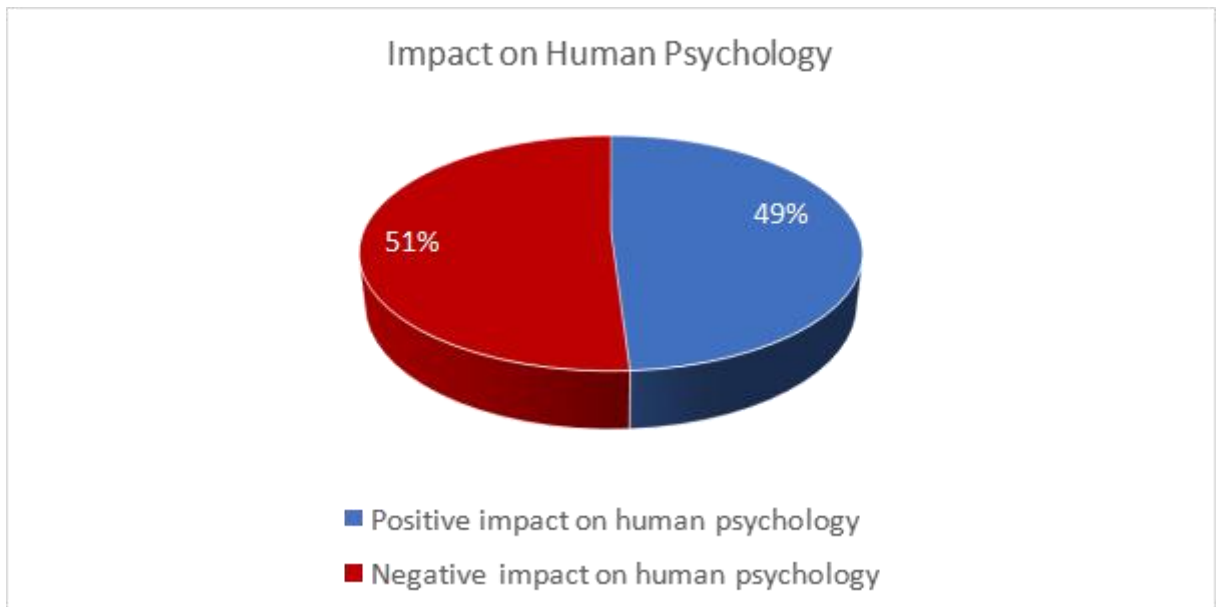
#### **Psychological impact of Crime based Television Series ( Figure No. 2)**

Responses received from the respondents between 18-30 years of age showed crime-based television series were from the entertainment industry depicting a story in such a way making people addicted to the series.

From the age group between 30-50 years, the negative impact of crime-based television series is found in society at large.

Age group above 50 years recommended for eradication of such series as soon as possible for their negative vibes ruining the environment in a well-cultured family.

However, both negative and positive impacts of crime-based television series were found with the help of random sampling from the State of Punjab. A total of 51 percent of respondents found the series with a positive impact on human psychology and 49 percent of respondents found the negative psychological impact of the series on the human psychology shown in figure No. 2.



**4. FIGURE: 2 PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF CRIME BASED TELEVISION SERIES**

### **5. Conclusion & Suggestions**

There is no doubt about the fact that crime-based television series spread awareness and make people alert about the commission of a crime against them. The problem comes when people choose the wrong way after getting influenced by these series. The present study showed both the good and bad impact of the series in Punjab. A positive impact of the series is found by 49 percent of respondents. On the hand, the negative impact of human psychology accepted by 51 percent of respondents in Punjab. A provision of filing a complaint in case of offensive contents of programs incorporated under the Cable Television Networks(Regulation) Act, 1995, and Cable Television Networks Rules, 1995. In the year 2021, of the inadequacy of earlier mechanisms to protect the larger interest of the society, the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules 2021 framed with the introduction of a statutory mechanism for redressal of grievances/complaints concerning the contents of television programs. The new rules are an appreciative initiative by the government in the area but, further there requirement for (i) a mechanism for regulating the program even without receiving any complaints about the contents of all the programs on television and (ii) additional responsibility on broadcasting agencies and distributors to measure the negative and positive impact of such programs on the society at large (iii) Filter for the contents of all the program on parameters of different age groups of the people. Hence, it is submitted that crime-based television series leave both a good and bad impact on human physiology in a given area. Therefore, with the help of suggested measures, the negative impact of crime- based television series may be lower with an increase in the degree of the positive impact of the television series on human psychology and society at large.

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