



## Movie Violence and Its Impact on Youth: A Reflection in Social Media with Reference to Contemporary Tamil and Pan-Indian Cinema

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### Abstract

The portrayal of violence in movies has long been a subject of debate, particularly concerning its influence on youth. This paper examines the relationship between cinematic violence, its psychological and behavioral effects on young audiences, and its reflection in social media, with a focus on contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian films such as KGF: Chapter 2 (2022), Leo (2023), Salaar (2023), Animal (2023), and Jailer (2023). By analyzing the violent content in these films and its representation on social media platforms, this study explores how youth engage with and glorify such content, often treating it as a form of worship. The paper also discusses the ethical responsibilities of filmmakers and the role of social media in amplifying the impact of movie violence.

**Keywords:** Movie Violence; Youth Impact; Social Media; Tamil Cinema; Pan-Indian Films; Violence Glorification; Desensitization; Aggression; Ethical Filmmaking; Media Literacy

### 1. Introduction

Cinema, as a cultural and artistic medium, has the power to influence societal norms, values, and behaviors. However, the depiction of violence in films has raised significant concerns, particularly regarding its impact on youth. Contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema, including blockbusters like KGF: Chapter 2, Leo, Salaar, Animal, and Jailer, have been criticized for their graphic and often glorified portrayals of violence. These films, while commercially successful, have sparked debates about their societal implications, especially as their violent scenes are widely shared and celebrated on social media platforms. This paper investigates the impact of such depictions on youth and how these effects are mirrored and amplified in social media, where violent scenes are often edited into stories, statuses, and memes, signaling a troubling trend of worshipping violence.

## 2. Objectives

- To analyze the portrayal of violence in contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema (e.g., KGF: Chapter 2, Leo, Salaar, Animal, Jailer) using content analysis.
- To examine how violent scenes from these movies are shared, edited, and celebrated on social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.
- To explore the potential impact of this content on youth behavior and attitudes, focusing on normalization and glorification of violence.

## 3. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research design, with a focus on content analysis as the primary method. The methodology is structured as follows:

### 4. Data Collection

#### Film Content Analysis:

- Select key scenes from movies like KGF: Chapter 2, Leo, Salaar, Animal, and Jailer that depict violence.
- Analyze the context, justification, and consequences of violence in these scenes.
- Categorize the types of violence (e.g., physical, psychological, justified, gratuitous) and their frequency.

#### Social Media Content Analysis:

- Collect data from platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube where violent scenes from these movies are shared as stories, statuses, memes, or reels.
- Identify trends such as hashtags (#KGFViolence, #LeoFightScenes), fan edits, and challenges inspired by violent scenes.
- Examine user comments and engagement to understand how audiences interpret and respond to violent content.

### 5. Data Analysis

Use thematic content analysis to identify recurring themes in the portrayal of violence in movies and its representation on social media.

Categorize findings into themes such as:

- Glorification of violence (e.g., heroic portrayal of violent protagonists).
- Normalization of violence (e.g., violent scenes treated as entertainment).
- Imitation and replication (e.g., youth recreating violent scenes on social media).
- Analyze the language, visuals, and tone used in social media posts to understand how violence is framed and celebrated.

### 6. Ethical Considerations

- Ensure that all data collected from social media is publicly available and used in compliance with platform guidelines.

- Avoid identifying individual users in the analysis to maintain privacy.

## 7. Limitations

- The study is limited to publicly available content and does not include direct interviews with youth.
- Findings are specific to the selected movies and may not represent broader trends in cinema.

This research aims to provide a detailed understanding of how violence is portrayed in contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema and how it is reflected and amplified on social media, with a focus on its potential impact on youth.

## 8. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in Cultivation Theory (Gerbner et al., 1986), which suggests that prolonged exposure to media content shapes viewers' perceptions of reality. Additionally, Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) is employed to understand how youth imitate behaviors depicted in movies. These theories provide a foundation for analyzing the psychological and behavioral effects of movie violence on young audiences.

## 9. Violence in Contemporary Tamil and Pan-Indian Cinema

Recent years have seen a surge in violent content in Tamil and pan-Indian cinema, with films like KGF: Chapter 2, Leo, Salaar, Animal, and Jailer pushing the boundaries of on-screen violence. These films often feature morally ambiguous protagonists who use extreme violence to achieve their goals, blurring the lines between heroism and villainy.

**KGF: Chapter 2 (2022):** This pan-Indian blockbuster, directed by Prashanth Neel, depicted the rise of Rocky Bhai, a character who uses brutal violence to establish his dominance. The film's graphic fight sequences and glorification of vigilante justice resonated with audiences, particularly youth, who celebrated Rocky's ruthlessness as a sign of strength.

**Leo (2023):** Directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj, Leo featured Vijay in a dual role, with intense action sequences and a morally complex narrative. The film's violent scenes, including a gruesome fight in a café, were widely shared on social media, often without context, leading to their normalization.

**Salaar (2023):** Directed by Prashanth Neel, Salaar starred Prabhas as a violent yet charismatic protagonist. The film's high-octane action and graphic violence were praised for their technical brilliance but criticized for their lack of moral grounding.

**Animal (2023):** Directed by Sandeep Reddy Vanga, Animal starred Ranbir Kapoor as a deeply flawed and violent character. The film's unapologetic portrayal of brutality sparked widespread debate, with some viewers glorifying the protagonist's actions.

**Jailer (2023):** Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, Jailer featured Rajinikanth in a violent revenge drama. While the film was celebrated for its entertainment value, its graphic violence raised concerns about its impact on younger audiences.

These films often present violence as a necessary means to an end, with little emphasis on its real-world consequences. This aligns with the findings of Anderson et al. (2003), who argue that media violence is most harmful when it is portrayed as justified, rewarded, or devoid of consequences.

## 10. Impact on Youth

The impact of movie violence on youth is multifaceted, encompassing psychological, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. According to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020), exposure to

violent media can lead to increased aggression, desensitization to violence, and a distorted perception of reality. In the context of contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema, these effects are particularly pronounced due to the cultural relevance and popularity of the films.

Youth audiences, who are still in the process of cognitive and emotional development, are more susceptible to the influence of violent content. For example, the glorification of Rocky Bhai's ruthlessness in *KGF: Chapter 2* may lead young viewers to believe that violence is an acceptable way to achieve success. Similarly, the morally ambiguous protagonist in *Animal* can blur ethical boundaries, making it difficult for youth to distinguish between right and wrong.

Moreover, repeated exposure to violent content can lead to desensitization, where youth become less empathetic towards real-world violence. This phenomenon is supported by the findings of Funk et al. (2004), who found that prolonged exposure to violent media reduces emotional responsiveness to violence. In the context of contemporary cinema, this desensitization is exacerbated by the realistic portrayal of violence, which makes it more relatable and impactful.

### **11. Reflection in Social Media**

Social media platforms have become a significant space for the dissemination and discussion of movie content. Violent scenes from films like *KGF: Chapter 2*, *Leo*, *Salaar*, *Animal*, and *Jailer* are widely shared on platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, often in ways that amplify their impact on youth. Hashtags like #KGFViolence, #LeoFightScenes, and #AnimalBrutality trended for weeks, with fans and critics debating the merits and drawbacks of the films' violent content.

One concerning trend is the glorification of violent scenes through memes, reels, and fan edits. For instance, Rocky Bhai's violent monologues from *KGF: Chapter 2* were turned into viral memes, with users adding humorous captions that trivialized the violence. Similarly, the café fight scene from *Leo* was widely shared as a standalone clip, devoid of its narrative context, making it seem like a spectacle rather than a moment of moral conflict.

Additionally, social media platforms have become a space for youth to imitate and recreate violent scenes from movies. Challenges and trends inspired by movie violence, such as the *KGF* Dialogue Challenge and the *Leo* Fight Reenactment, gained popularity on TikTok and Instagram. These trends not only encourage risky behavior but also perpetuate the idea that violence is a form of entertainment.

The role of social media algorithms cannot be overlooked in this context. Platforms like YouTube and Instagram often recommend violent content to users based on their viewing history, creating a feedback loop that reinforces exposure to such material. This algorithmic amplification aligns with the findings of Zimdars (2020), who argue that social media algorithms prioritize sensational content, including violence, to maximize engagement.

### **12. Ethical Considerations and Policy Implications**

The portrayal of violence in contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema and its reflection in social media raise important ethical questions. Filmmakers have a responsibility to consider the potential impact of their work on vulnerable audiences, particularly youth. While creative freedom is essential, it must be balanced with social responsibility. This includes providing context for violent scenes, depicting the consequences of violence, and avoiding the glorification of harmful behavior.

Policymakers also play a crucial role in regulating violent content in movies and on social media. The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) in India has often been criticized for its lenient approach to certifying

violent films. Stricter guidelines and age-appropriate ratings could help mitigate the impact of movie violence on youth.

Social media platforms, too, must take responsibility for the content they promote. This includes implementing stricter content moderation policies, providing warnings for violent content, and promoting media literacy among users. Educating youth about the difference between fictional violence and real-world consequences is essential in reducing its harmful effects.

### **13. Conclusion**

The portrayal of violence in contemporary Tamil and pan-Indian cinema, as seen in films like KGF: Chapter 2, Leo, Salaar, Animal, and Jailer, has had a significant impact on youth, shaping their attitudes, behaviors, and online interactions. Social media platforms have amplified these effects, creating a cycle of exposure and imitation that perpetuates the normalization of violence. Addressing this issue requires a collaborative effort from filmmakers, policymakers, and social media companies, as well as a focus on media literacy and ethical storytelling. By taking these steps, we can ensure that cinema remains a powerful medium for storytelling without compromising the well-being of its audience.

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