

The Popularity of Supernatural Entertainment among the Young Adults in Bangladesh

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Economics and Social Science in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Social Science in Anthropology

Economics and Social Science Department
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September 2019

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except
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3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other
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Approval

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Ethics Statement

Before taking interviews, I have taken the consent of my interviewees. They were aware of the questions which I showed them beforehand so that they could read those before giving any interview. I have not revealed their actual name and identity, hence, I used fictitious names. I also made sure that my informants were comfortable about the focused group discussion (FGD). I took their consent before recording their discussion.

ABSTRACT

‘The Popularity of Supernatural Entertainment among the Young Adults in Bangladesh’, in this particular topic, the substantial role of body and mind behind enjoying the supernatural genre of movies and TV series is significantly being highlighted. Setting some objectives, I also tried to shed light on the matter that how the globalization, strategies of the producers as well as the faith system evolving this genre of entertainment over time. As many anthropologists worked on various issues so I thought to relate my thesis with those miscellaneous works on culture, individuality and belief system. A very interesting finding that I discovered is that most of the informants in their real life do not even believe whatever is being portrayed in the films/series. They rather like to enjoy this entertainment out of pure pleasure, excitement and for the sake of getting the conflated taste of mystery, adventure, thriller, fear and suspense at the same time. They are not negatively driven by the plots in any phase of their lives though they prefer the psychological or paranormal horror mostly as these two types could be linked with the reality, Therefore, to some extent this supernatural genre is a good source for getting excitement and frightening sense for a time being, unless and until it gets pernicious to the audiences psychologically or physically.

DEDICATION

To all the faculties of Department of Economics & Social Science

*The coolest faculties of
Brac University.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMNT

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who provided me the possibility to complete this thesis paper. A special appreciation I convey to my department chairperson, Professor ATM Nurul Amin who supported me by providing the opportunity to complete this paper. Furthermore, I would also like to acknowledge with much appreciation, the crucial role of Ms. Asmaul Husna and Ms. Ayesha Rahman Chowdhury who aided me by sharing their previous knowledge about the issue and strategy. Special thanks go to my department fellow, Mr. Yamin Rahman, who helped me to assemble the parts and offered suggestions about the issue. Moreover, for additional suggestions about this paper and making my thesis worthwhile, many thanks go to Ms. Mehetaz Chowdhury and Ms. Farzana Rahman Khan of BRAC Institute of Languages. Last but not the least, I present my utmost gratitude to my thesis supervisor Professor Samia Huq, who has a crucial role in completing this work and has invested her full effort in guiding me for the accomplishment of the task.

Finally, I would like to thank all the people who have given me their valuable time and helped me by providing all kinds of information that I needed to complete this paper.

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List of Acronyms

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HBO	Home Box Office
IMDb	Internet Movie Database
TV	Television
VFX	Visual Effects

CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

Lately, there has been a buzz witnessed around the horror movie 'Debi' which was released a few months back. The social media had been flooded with gossip, rumors, and predictions regarding its storyline (Shazu, 2018). Though Bangladesh's entertainment media industry is still focused on different genres of TV series and movies, the demand for horror and mysterious genres of entertainment has been growing tremendously since the last decade and most of the viewers of this category are the teenagers and the young adults. This category of supernatural/fantasy entertainment has recently become very popular in our country and the easy access of the internet and social media aggravated the desire for these sorts of enjoyment (Shazu, 2018).

Bangladesh is a third world country where supernatural and other-worldly issues are still believed widely among different classes and different groups of people (Rahman, 2016). Besides, sometimes this issue is the reason for generating superstitions among people as well. On the other hand, there is also a group of people who actually do not believe in this supernatural existence. Yet, they tend to enjoy a great deal of supernatural genre of TV series and movies, something related to psychological horror, paranormal, mysterious, and mythical though not believing anything otherworldly.

So far, many anthropological analysis, research, and various fieldworks have been conducted on magic, supernatural and theology mainly on the primitive culture and in the countries where these sorts of rituals are still being practiced. In the primitive culture, anything that went beyond simple explanation used to be considered as activities of magic, ghosts, spirits, witches and so on. The theological belief system was an explicit stimulus for this matter where most of the time notion like superstitions got entwined with people's faith system. Sometimes the unexplained occurrences used to produce fear in mind so greatly that people became compelled to believing other-worldly matters. People like priests, witches, sorcerers, necromancers, oracles had a dominant position in the society helping the general people with unconventional methods to solve various problems that we define nowadays as supernatural. However, in modern days science has the upper hand in every segment of life along with the charisma of technologies that

had gone beyond imagination. To add more, religious belief also got replaced by the idea of secularism, the education system became easily accessible and custom/tradition has turned into something occasional. Yet the concept of supernatural and paranormal still exists in modern society but in a completely different manner.

The word 'horror' itself derived from the Latin word 'horrere,' means an intense feeling of fear and tremble pertaining to the physical sensation as well. Once the body itself was fundamental for this supernatural context in the primitive society whereas, in the modern world, this supernatural context took a remarkable place in the branch of viewership. In the primitive world, people were inclined to experience supernatural situations like spirit possession, black magic, witchcraft, divination physically. Nevertheless, nowadays the present-day generation does not believe or experience these situations so easily rather they are more eager to 'enjoy' these states through watching TV series and movies. This is also deliberately made for a fixed amount of time in exchange for money for a certain group of people. Now they enjoy the fear produced by camera shots, acted scenes which are considered as a fine source of leisure and entertainment. People from this modern world do not like to experience fear and pain through the body as the disposition of modernity limited this scope. Similarly, in modernity fear could be generated only through dimensional existence. Therefore, we enjoy fictional, paranormal/supernatural stories via watching it which got no viability in the modern world.

Furthermore, the consumer culture of modernity which is contemplated to be a lifestyle made a perfect place for this sort of entertainment to come into limelight and become a way of the big business market. The TV producers and owners are investing a huge amount of finance behind this entertainment to attract more audiences as they know this is the current trend and the audiences will watch these shows. Now the people who are the audiences always look for new horror shows/movies and more horror than before. Therefore, the makers also ensure that the audiences always look at the advertisements, trailers, and teasers before the movies/series release. If the movies/series are created appropriately, then it earns box office success as well as high IMDb rate. This means the more a horror movie gets horrific with the precise direction, production, acting, VFX, it has a higher probability to receive praise and audiences in the movie theater. This also happens in the case of TV series as well. Through some media service providers like NETFLIX, Hulu, Amazon, people watch TV series and movies paying a

subscription for these sources on a monthly or yearly basis.

On the other hand, if we face any spooky occurrences, we prefer to simply shun it from figuring out because there might be actually no explanation of it, and we may not want to accept the actual situation if it is something paranormal. Meanwhile, we prefer not to call it something supernatural either because the concept of 'supernatural' is contradictory to science and science means being practical, which we cannot be if we accept the supernatural. However, the exact opposite scenario could be seen in the case of horror entertainment having no questions raised about believing or not believing. It is just about pure entertainment that we cannot experience in reality with our own bodies. We enjoy a made-up horror story entangled with fictional characters, horror events, and the flighty environment with ugly horrible-looking ghosts, spirits are not possible to exist in real life. In the era of modern consumer culture when the body itself becomes the sole target, in the horror/supernatural media entertainment the mind and psyche take the place.

1.2 Literature Review

Many anthropological works have focused on supernatural media entertainment relating to the influence of cultural variation, cultural ideology, and customs. Surprisingly, nationhood which is a distinct idea than entertainment, produces the same entertainment to boost up beyond imagination. In the era of the globalization, the consumer culture, along with the pop culture, market value and consumer choice, has become a trend/lifestyle for the people. To learn better about the current sensation of the young adults and the market of this supernatural entertainment, some previous works require to be explored about the linkage of the entertainment media and popular culture.

In the age of easily accessible internet with social and mass media, nothing remains a secret. Everyone gets to know about everybody around the world and people are constantly following something trendy. Popular or pop culture is being very famous every day due to easy access to media, internet, and social media, gaining immense marketability and sustenance for the long term. Every single issue within this pop culture such as fashion, lifestyle, entertainment, sports, and living patterns is being influenced by one another. This is the inherent nature of pop culture. In universal concept, Hall (2011) viewed this pop culture as 'a culture of the people' which is the production and the mixture of various cultures and leisure activities. The term 'pop' is also derived from the word 'popular'. According to Hall, the popular means something like the product of wide commercialism and circulation. This 'popular' may sometimes lead to the falsification or degradation of the authentic cultural context because popular culture embraces the manipulative consumerism to shape a trendy individual lifestyle for everyone.

However, Hall is critical about this view since it represents something between the 'the people' and 'the elite'. The current entertainment media can easily be looked at, for example, the horror entertainment where the main consumers of it are the elite, upper middle-class, middle class, and young people. This has turned into a never-ending process with time shifting paradigm based on trend and societal phenomena. He connects this 'elite vs people' relation with the idea of 'Hegemony' given by Antonio Gramsci and compares it with control and subordination. The elites are now designing this popular culture and entertainment, deciding what the entertainment should be, what to watch and how this entertainment will embed into the lifestyle. This culture of

the elites is denoted as 'High Culture' by Hall, which constantly changes its power relations. Hall being a Neo-Gramscian, viewed this high culture as the high hegemonic culture which often tries to subsume and sterilize the pop culture, signifying that the pop culture is not being shaped by the people anymore.

In this paper, my sole focus is the young people and their preference to watch the supernatural horror movies mostly from the Hollywood industry. Several reasons for this would be that the Hollywood films are always comprehended to be full of authenticity through special visual effects following a believable storyline with a scarier script. Besides, in the end, the movie always comes out to mean something or carry a message according to the viewers. But in the national boundary, our filmmakers are also trying to reach the standard level to make progressive and significant films based on the local phenomena that relate to our cultural context. German film scholar Siegfried Kracauer articulated that during the period of World War II, the German filmmakers used to make such cinemas when Fascism preceded Germany and those films would also reflect the national characters (1947: 5). The films were not made out of one's individual work rather it was about collective effort. Similarly, the horror and supernatural films currently trending are being made based on time, place and obviously the values and culture of the place from where it is being produced. As Geertz (1973) wrote, culture is "*a system of meanings embodied in symbols which provides peoples with a frame of reference to understand reality and animate their behavior*"; as well as "*stories we tell ourselves about ourselves.*" Deriving from this, the horror films and series of today also reflects the particular society and culture on the national and transnational level having audiences from all around the world.

On the other hand, in the European context, the popularity and influences of the movies/series especially among a particular group of people like young adults, women, and working-class are to be referred. Ang (1982), in her book mainly focused on the impact and popularity of soap opera 'Dallas' ¹among the female audiences of the Netherlands. Based on the 42 letters she received related to what the women audiences feel about this show and impact of an international import. She also analyzed how a soap opera from an elite culture like America had been a denigrating subject for the people as they were enthusiastically espousing a drama from such a culture which is not even their own. Ang exemplified 'Dallas' being one of the parts

¹ Dallas - American soap opera, aired from 1978 to 1991

of America's cultural control. Even though the nationalists detest this idea for being pernicious to their local culture, she tried to find out the complex enjoyment and pleasure that the audiences found overlooking their own cultural struggle. She emphasized that 'Dallas' is such a show where it was produced for sheer enjoyment for anybody across the world, simply because this show did not require any national context of understanding. Bearing in mind that popularity is not something unique, the people have gotten so accustomed to the American made movies/series that any recent movie/series gets immediate acceptance into the entertainment world.

A very common tactic nowadays the filmmakers follow is to make their works acceptable worldwide without any boundaries or regardless of any national cultural context. Ang also tried to find out what made Dallas so popular and how the respondents experienced Dallas. She highlighted that it was not the psychological, social or economic characteristics of the public rather the feelings that occurred during watching the show such as preference, love, habits, and experience. In the book, there is also the mention of how Dallas became so popular by the grace of wide promotion like Dallas book, cartoons, badges etc. But in this era, the advertising in a social group is more crucial than any press or media as people easily get pursued by one another to watch that particular show creating a trendy buzz. The horror movies/series today are getting the maximum promotion by posters, events, trailers, and characteristic souvenirs while this publicity is quite different from before, mostly done through social media. Social media are linking people in a virtual sphere all over the world without any censorship, creating an easy floor for this promotion. The audiences are mostly young adults who seem to have a lack of belief in supernatural events in real life but enthralled to enjoy the cinematic life for mental pleasure. The concept of pleasure is also presented by the author about the Dutch viewers of Dallas in terms of a certain fascination, attraction, political innocuousness that they felt towards it.

Nevertheless, according to Adorno and Horkheimer indicated by Ang in her book, the pleasure in popular culture is a false kind of pleasure created by the elites, beguiling the viewers and luring them into that specific entertainment with the help of mass advertising.

For another reason, the popular culture is very important to the capitalists and the

producers that it personifies the agency of the potential culture, which assists to provide profit for the producers. These producers use this contemporary pop culture theme in their show to make it lucrative and attractive to the viewers.

Moving to the entertainment culture of Africa, the work of Lughod is more intense about exploring how the soap operas, dramas, and melodramas are being authoritative in terms of forming entire nationhood. In her work Lughod (2008) showed how the Egyptian culture is being shaped and the society is being developed through these melodramas and soap operas. Similar to this, the supernatural media also depict the symbolic inner fear of humans, global phenomena and large-scale changes of society. The particular fears are reflected in those horror films providing the thrills, fear, and amazement offering a way to release our inner and outer collective/individual fears. The author described that the producers of these Egyptian shows are meticulous that they target a certain group of people of the society who are the main audiences for these shows. However, a gap between the purpose of the producers and the viewers seem to be examined by her. The Egyptian women were the primary audience of those melodramas compared to the current age where the young adults would be the predominant patronage for the horror films. The messages of the melodramas in Egypt are quite contradictory and dramatic to the realities of the people's everyday life so as the horror entertainment viewers. Neither these women are finding their stories in those melodramas nor can the supernatural fans relate the horror events portraying in the movie.

The supernatural films also took numerous scales of changes over time. During the 1940s and 50s, the horror films were all about war, nuclear warfare, mass annihilation, sexual psychopathy, animalistic desires. Nowadays the horror films are all about gore, violence, slaughter, psychosis, etc. The film/series contents evolved drastically over the period of time mainly based on the societal phenomena and cultural context.

Additionally, the horror films produced all around the world however do not even exhibit the occurrences of a young person's life. Most of the time the plots are about women, children, priests, exorcism and so on. Yet this certain category of people just likes to consume the mythos. In a similar fashion, Lughod's Egyptian serials are so focused on the concept of modernization that only can be related to the upper-class people, far detached from the women for whom their

programs got such popularity. The author also highlighted that the serials are influencing the audiences in two ways, either the audiences get attached to the serial emotionally or they get so absorbed in the plot. Though the serials emphasize on the message of patriotism and integration but they do not imply on how to transform and make a better nationhood.

Further, the melodramas mentioned by the author were all about the educated people eschewing the conditions of the women. In the case of the horror movies, the producers are representing women but in a completely different manner with the ingestion of fear, scary themes, and venerability to a specific power for enthusing the younger people. When these people express to enjoy the fear and myths, the body becomes an inferior state. Now, through the mind, people ingest fear by the myths as a source of pleasure. This myth and fear are not taken from any particular culture, but it is a conjuncture of several cultural/theological contexts.

Likewise, Asad (2011) presented that sometimes in the secular world, we tend to perceive objects within the external world or imagine something which really does not exist. The feelings like anxiety, fear, pain which do not have any rational existence are often considered as psychic, imaginary and not worthy to be taken seriously. In this context, pain is something real yet this has to have a practicality as well. Otherwise, the pain which is not curable or alleviated does not have any concrete basis of belief. But to many people that he called religious and non-religious, they prefer not to see pain as something that requires to be pragmatic. When felt, pain always does not need to be seen as a sign of adversity rather pain should be referred to as a source of encountering the complications faced in life.

1.3 Methodology

As this paper concentrates on the supernatural/horror genre of entertainment, I specifically chose 'movies' and 'TV series' and wanted to see the popularity of these two categories. Supernatural events in our daily life are not something common. We basically learn about this particular issue either from family/friends or by witnessing any evidence which makes us believe in this matter. However, as mentioned before, though we are scared of the supernatural event to happen to us personally, we like to watch or experience the same events once it is visualized in the form of film and TV. So, to relate my topic and to justify my purpose of choosing the topic, I included some previous works of a few academics and scholars. Among the several works that I used to defend my research would be of culture theorist Stuart Hall, anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod, and cultural studies academic Ien Ang and anthropologist Talal Asad. Apart from them, key points were taken from the works of scholars like Pierre Bourdieu, Linda Williams, Charles Hirschkind, Noel Carrol and Arjun Appadurai. Demonstrating the role of body and mind, I used the work references of Charles Hirschkind's writing '*The Ethics of Listening: Cassette-Sermon Audition in Contemporary Egypt*' for better understandings of mass people's adoption of a particular segment of entertainment. Linda Williams and Noel Carrol's citations are being used to specify the bodily and cognitive pleasure, stemming from the supernatural entertainment. Similarly, in the part of globalization and superiority of western media, I cited Arjun Appadurai's '*Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy*' and Pierre Bourdieu's '*Outline of a Theory of Practice*' for showing habitual practice that works in case of any trend for the people.

Behind choosing this particular topic for my dissertation, I had two main principal research questions such as how culture and globalization are motivating these young adults for watching the movies/series from this genre and do the body, mind and usual belief system matter or not. For this paper, the research includes two types of methodologies, like key person interviews and focus group discussion. Since the paper targets the young adults, I took eight key person interviews and a focus group discussion to understand their conceptualization of the horror/supernatural genre. This paper is principally centered on people from the age range of 18-25. Almost all of them are students residing in Dhaka city. However, due to ethical issues, I opted my informants' names and identity not to be disclosed. Thus, I only mentioned the age range and

profession.

I have this topic exclusively focusing on the young adults as the young people in these days are the primary audiences for this supernatural genre. I set the interview questionnaires in such a manner so that I could get sufficient knowledge from the interviewees not only about what or how they feel about the films/TV series but also their general understandings about the regular common supernatural issues. The questions were also made to pay attention on the vital elements of horror movies and their commonalities in every movie. The interviewees shed light on some relevant points like how women and children are mostly the target in those films, how sexuality/persona/psychology of a person are usually utilized in the plot of films and how the very indistinguishable background, theme, sound, and makeup are applied in almost every films and series. Through the answers from the interviews, I learned the variety of choices among the interviewees who prefer different sub-genres of horror films/series as their ideal entertainment.

The major difficulty that I faced while doing the thesis was to take interviews from the right informants. Since time was a crucial barrier for me, I could not reach so many people to conduct the interviews. Also, I had to select the respondents precisely since not all people are interested in this specific genre. Besides, as I am working on the young adults, I only had to select people from a specific age range that is to be within 18-25 years old. So, my informants were principally from my university and friends. Besides, the starting time of my thesis writing was during the semester break thus I faced some trouble to reach them and had to arrange special meetings with them for conducting the interviews which were not so easy. Also, my research informants were Dhaka-centric, all were from Dhaka and could not take subjects from the rural areas because I had the time limitation and lack of access to those places. Another matter is that I could not find any local writings or academic writings on this specific genre from any Bangladeshi scholar. Therefore, I had to stick with articles from writers from other states.

1.4 Brief Background of Supernatural/Horror Genre

Supernatural or horror films go back even a hundred years or more when introduced. Though over time, there have been drastic changes which could be spotted but it always had a substantial appeal. When these horror movies were introduced in the early periods, the movies portrayed monsters, animalistic horror, aliens, vampires, werewolves. Like mentioned before, these horror movies always changed concepts based on the existent societal phenomena. Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein* has been covered as a film in 1918 for the first time which later took several forms of other films as well (Grant, 2010). That movie was based on a book. After the sounds included in the films, the same novel *Frankenstein* took another form of a movie in 1958. Most familiar to the Americans were the Hammer Horror films² produced by the Hammer Studio during the 1960s went on to make a considerable number of horror movies revitalizing the stories of Dracula³, vampires, werewolves, mummies, Frankenstein's monsters, etc. In those films, we see the significant use of harsh music, bold colors and sexual contents making those movies as classic horrors comparing to today's films naming it as a Gothic genre. Other than America, horror films flourished in countries like Japan, Italy, Russia, Netherlands, Mexico, Australia tracing back from the early 1920s. The classic supernatural movies usually used spooky mansion, castles, and dark shadowy places as background themes that could be seen in today's films as well.

With time, the classic horror movies got divided into categories as there were increases in horror movies by the different production houses. These films normally use book adaptations or similar experiences of a person's life to be the plot of the movies. Now we see a number of categories like psychological horror, slasher film, gothic horror⁴, zombie film, natural horror, supernatural horror, science fiction horror, and comedy horror and so on. These genres switched over generations having a particular message in each movie focusing on different cultural contexts. For example, *Candyman (1992)* depicts the racial tension and anxieties of American culture as a form of the supernatural movie. Similarly, the movie *King Kong (1933)* replicates a story of a dark ape-like beast falling in love with white beauty. In films like *Dr. Jekyll and Mr.*

² Hammer Films - Films of British company Hammer Film Productions.

³ Dracula - A character created by writer Bram Stoker from Gothic novel 'Dracula'

⁴ Gothic Horror - A writing style with the combination of elements like fear, horror, death as well as romantic nature, individuality, and very high emotion.

Hyde or The Wolf Man, the tales reflect the repressed monstrosity of human beings representing the disguised human forms. After the 1960s we see the development of horror movies considerably being linked with religions, religious rituals, venerable women and children, pregnancy. Here the forms of exorcism, spirit possession, haunting ghosts, and witchcraft would be the vital elements for the stories. *The Shining*, *The Changeling*, *The Exorcist*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *The Omen*, *The Haunting*, *Suspiria*, these are some popular films considered to be the best supernatural films of all time. In recent years, the portrayal of women and children in horror movies got significantly escalated while the same happened from a very early period like the 1950s. Laura Mulvey, a British feminist film theorist in her work argued that the films subjecting women making them submissive to nature where the male control, gaze, fetishism, scrutiny are also involved generating gendered masculinity (1999: 833-44). Another film critic Robin Wood in his various essays during 1970s highlighted that these films emphasized on female subjective is about male anxieties where females are the victims. The audience for these movies is mostly the young adult males ranging from preadolescents to the mid-30s. These young audiences were dominant during the 1950s too. Doherty, a cultural historian noted that -

“The teen years became a unique transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, in some senses an autonomous and in most cases a privileged period in an individual’s life,” and that “their social position as teenagers was carefully nurtured and vigorously reinforced by the adult institutions around them” (1988: 44, 46)

This also includes the cinemas which sought to entertain them through making movies that they like to enjoy the most. The market seems to target this particular category of viewers strategizing on terrorizing the teenagers and young adults the most. The more terrifying a movie is, the more buzz, attention, viewership, box office it gets. Grants (2010) in his article further mentioned of Walter Evans who more convincingly claimed that in the state of self-consciousness the young adults and teenage male thoroughly enjoying these movies can easily relate to the evil character. Because they see themselves as social outcasts during the time of puberty and physical changes (1996: 54). Mysterious feelings and urges seem to be something fascinating and new experience to these young people constructing elements like mystery, fear, evilness, the darkness in horror entertainments. Evans further noted that the horror movies however, surely serve a form of rite of passage or socialization for these young people.

1.5 Categories & Sub-Categories of Supernatural Entertainment

(a) Movies: There are many genres of movies among this vast number of supernatural movies ever made. Those movies cannot be particularly put under a certain category as a movie can be a thriller, adventure, horror at the same time. Yet based on the movie/series characteristics, plot and visualization, movies/series are classified in few sites such as Popcorn Horror (2014) and Slideshare (2015) in different categories and sub-genres. I used the hints of the patterns for categorizing the genre from these sites to provide an idea about the sub-genres of the supernatural/horror movies such as -

- Gore & Disturbing – This category mainly focusses on the extreme bloodshed, gross images, mutilation, etc. and pain being an essential part of the characterization. There are four sub-categories from this such as i) Cannibalism, ii) Torture either for pleasure or goal oriented iii) Splatter and iv) Extreme.

Cannibalism	Torture	Splatter	Extreme
The sub-genre depicts the horrific side of cannibalism meaning human preying and feasting on the flesh of both living and non-living beings that could be humans, animals or the dead. Cannibalism is shown as an extreme form of degradation in human nature making the movie environment extra gory, humans eating another human flesh. Though this side of human nature is known as something usual lifestyle of a person and not a monstrous habit.	This genre shows that torture as an essential element for the movie could be either for pleasure or deliberate intention. Also, the antagonists are always to be insane people generally do the torture on innocent people who come to close contact with them.	Splatter films' plot includes elements like torture, but the forms of torture show bloodshed, disturbing scenes, and vulgarism.	Extreme category movies can be the sequence full of gore, torture or cannibalism which went too far to be easily comprehended. The scenes illustrate such scenes that just surpass every rational understanding. The scenes are too graphic, disturbing and too much to be taken by the audience.

Examples - Antropophagus (1980), Eaten Alive (1980), Cannibal Ferox (1981), Delicatessen (1991), Hannibal (2001), Wrong Turn Film Series (2003-2014), Saw (2004), Offspring (2009), We Are What We Are (2010), The Green Inferno (2013), Raw (2016)	Examples - Misery (1990), Hostel (2005 film), The Poughkeepsie Tapes (2007), The Strangers (2008 film), The Collector (2009), The Tortured (2010), I Spit on Your Grave (2010)	Examples - The Evil Dead (1981), Final Destination (2000-2011), Cabin Fever (2002), The Wizard of Gore (2007 film), Autopsy (2008)	Examples - Nekromantik (1987), The Human Centipede (2009)
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Table 1: Sub-categories of Gore and Disturbing Category

- **Killer** – This ‘killer’ category in general features thriller crime, home invading murder, slashing. This genre portrays psychopaths or sometimes any supernatural beings attacking on the other characters for a specific reason or for no reason at all. The protagonists just happen to be in the wrong time in the wrong place making them as victims. The purpose of those killings shown in the films intensified the storyline where the reasons for antagonists killing the characters might be revenge, out of psychopathy, pleasure or no reason whatsoever. This genre can be classified into three sub-genres like i) Slasher, ii) Crime and iii) Home Invasion.

Slasher	Crime	Home Invasion
This theme developed in the 1980s and till then the slasher movies have been considered one of the most popular sub-genres among other supernatural movies. Slasher movies present violence and aggression with sharp objects by the antagonists where gory scenes and gruesome graphics are common factors.	Crime related movies include all the contents like the thrill, suspense, uncertainty, fear. In these movies, both the professionals and the psychopaths could be the villain. The entire film continues to represent mystery hoped to be solved at the very end of the movie where the prediction of the crime by the	Home invading related movie focus on the killers who invade somebody's house and then murder them with or without any reason. Home invasion movies also maintain to have mystery, jump scene, dark background with chilling fear and frequent murders. This category is similar to the other two that just include a bit different

	audiences could be completely different. Films like this also include bloodshed, killings, breaking of the legal system.	type of storyline based on a house and the neighborhood.
Examples - Halloween Film Series (1978-2018), Friday the 13th (1980), A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984), Scream Film Series (1996-2011), The Texas Chainsaw Massacre (2003), House of Wax (2005), My Bloody Valentine (2009), Sorority Row (2009), Texas Chainsaw (2013)	Examples - Seven (1995 film), Jeepers Creepers (2001 film), Red Dragon (2002 film), Mindhunters (2004), Hide and Seek (2005 film), Perfume: The Story of a Murderer (2006), The Strangers (2008), A Nightmare on Elm Street (2010), The Snowman (2017)	Examples - When a Stranger Calls (1979), You're Next (2011), The Purge (2013), Sleep Tight (2013), Hush (2016), Keep Watching (2017), Us (2019)

Table 2: Sub-categories of Killer Category

- Psychological Horror – The psychological horror films and series are focused on the darker side and complexity of one’s psyche. Mental illness, paranoia, insanity, asylum, unstable identities are some common elements used for this category of movies/series. This category also has some sub-categories such as i) Phobia and ii) Madness & Paranoia.

Phobia	Madness & Paranoia
This sub-category uses the worst possible fear of human beings as storyline. The fear gradually turns into a phobia out of the isolation that the characters deal within the entire period. The plot is also focused on vulnerability, emotional breakdown, and extreme anxiety of the human psyche making the fear into a form of phobia. Some very common phobias utilized in movies are claustrophobia, arachnophobia, monophobia, and nyctophobia, etc.	This sub-category is very popular among the audience since this could be associated with the realities. These two elements are followed in the antagonist of the movie who usually is the victim of fanaticism and delusion. The madness and paranoia make that person to cause graphic violence, killing others even murder rampage. The person thinks of losing their sanity ultimately loses their mind in this way.

Examples - Arachnophobia (1990), The Descent (2005), Buried (2010), Frozen (2010), Silent House (2011), As Above, So Below (2014), Lights Out (2016)	Examples - Psycho (1960), Jacob's Ladder (1990), The Silence of the Lambs (1991), Session 9 (2001), The Others (2001), Identity (2003), Bhool Bhulaiyan (2007), Orphan (2009), The Gift (2015), Debi (2019)
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Table 3: Sub-categories of Psychological Horror Category

- **Paranormal** – This genre of supernatural movies has been made since the beginning and till now it has the same appeal, appearing with different contexts with different cultural phenomena. Paranormal movies follow the idea of antagonists who have no solid existence in the real world. Spirits, ghosts, demons, evil witches, occultism, possession, unknown entities, mysterious happenings would be the core features of this category. Unlike other genres, paranormal movies create certain variables to generate fear among the viewers. For this different unusual sound, visual effects, background, makeup are crucial to making it enough scary at the same time meaningful. Like other genres this genre too has several sub-genres, for example – i) Spirits/Haunted House, ii) Possession/Supernatural Power and iii) Demon/Witches/Occultism

Spirits/Haunted House	Possession/Supernatural Power	Demon/Witches/Occultism
Ghosts/spirit stories have been in human's life for a very long time. The movies belong to this sub-category always show mystic presence around those who cannot see any physical presence just feel this thus it terrorizes them with uneasy, ghostly menaces like sensitivity. These stories show ghosts who died but their worldly spiritual presence still remains either in any particular place or in a house. A lot of people today	Possession simply means somebody gets controlled involuntarily by a spirit, dark entity or supernatural power by approaching them. These possession based movies are always the same with a connection of religions and religious rituals performed by the religious doctors to get rid of that spirit that is always considered as bad and evil. These movies depict mutilation, rapid changes in behaviorism or murder.	This category is similar to the possession but here the witches play vital roles making the movie interesting. Occultism is thoroughly related with witchcraft, personifying women empowerment, women sexuality and deaths. Besides, the demon and monsters are also like witches who use others as servants by empowering over them. Demons could be terrible clown, ghouls, poltergeist etc.

believe that particular places and houses could be haunted where spirits cause fear, frights and chilly discomfort who approaches those places sometimes they could be hurt fatally even.		
Examples – The Haunting (1999), House on Haunted Hill (1999), The Skeleton Key (2005), 1408 (2007), Paranormal Activity Series (2007-2015), The Haunting in Connecticut (2009), The Conjuring Series (2013-2016), Hereditary (2018)	Examples – Rosemary’s Baby (1968), The Exorcist (1973), Stigmata (1999), The Exorcism of Emily Rose (2005), The Unborn (2009), The Last Exorcism (2010), Insidious Series (2010-2018), The Rite (2011), Deliver Us from Evil (2014)	Examples – Suspiria (1977), Poltergeist (1982 film), Annabelle Collection (2014-2019), The Witch (2015 film), The Lazarus Effect (2015), The Autopsy of Jane Doe (2016), It (2017), Verónica (2017), The Nun (2018)

Table 4: Sub-categories of Paranormal Category

- Monster – Monster horror movies are quite straight forward comparing to other categories since the monsters’ act as killers or antagonists. Monster films, unlike other movies, are enjoyed widely not only by the adults but also by the teens and young children. This category is also divided into several sub-categories like i) Zombies, ii) Vampire, iii) Werewolf, iv) Classic & Mythological & v) Aliens/Sci-Fi

Zombies	Vampire	Werewolf	Classic & Mythological	Aliens/Sci-Fi
Zombie movies created their own appeal over decades making it like the modern horror genre. Zombies are born either by viruses or undead corpses. Their movements are	The concept of vampires started with the Gothic novel of Bram Stoker's Dracula who lives on human blood. Also, the vampire related movies do not always stick to the usual nature	Werewolf means the hybrid of a wolf and a human. The moon is an important factor for these werewolves’ stories where the hybrids do not remain always the same	This category of movies is based on classic urban mythology and creatures. These creatures are timeless, universal and goths. Many remakes on the same classical monster or	Alien related movies are a type of science fiction where alien invasion occurs in his world or scientists from the earth explore other outer world regimes come in contact with the aliens. Films are

slow, usually crawls and do not have a rational mind. They seem to always attack on the human's killings them and eating their flesh and brain making the plot gruesome and gory.	of Dracula, altering the storyline where a bite of vampires could turn others into vampires. Vampires are usually seen to be creepy, pale faced and fangs, try to hide their true identities from the societies.	changing the shapes. The shapeshifting is vital since it made them to lose their humanly conscienceless making them murderous. This is where a film gets interesting.	mythological creatures have been produced so far	the only source that we get a view of how an alien looks like. Concepts of the movies also changed concerning alien experimentation, UFO or earth invasion.
Examples - Resident Evil Series (2002-2016) 28 Weeks Later (2007), Quarantine (2008), The Craziest (2010), Train to Busan (2016)	Examples - Dracula (1992), From Dusk Till Dawn (1996), Blade Series (1998-2004), Underworld Series (2003-2016), 30 Days of Night (2007), Fright Night (2011), Dracula Untold (2014)	Examples - An American Werewolf in London (1981), Wolf (1994), The Wolfman (2010), Red Riding Hood (2011 film)	Examples - Black Christmas (1974), Candyman (1992), Sleepy Hollow (1999), The Sixth Sense (1999), The Mothman Prophecies (2002), The Fog (2005), The Eye (2008)	Examples - Alligator (1980), The Fly (1986), Anaconda Series (1997-2015), Deep Rising (1998), The Host (2006), Slither (2006), The Mist (2007), Prometheus (2012), The Predator (2018)

Table 5: Sub-categories of Monster Category

(b) TV Series: Like the movies the TV series has become very popular among young people. Media services like NETFLIX, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, HBO made easier access to those TV series to reach the hands of the audiences. These media services are provided in exchange for monthly or yearly based subscription. TV series, as well as movies, can be enjoyed through these at any time anywhere. Some people use torrent files too where no subscription is required but the torrents are not authorized sources, but it still has great demand. However, this series could not be divided into the specific genre since a series contains two or more sub-genres in the plot. These TV series can be a season lengthy containing ten or more episodes based on a storyline

that can be extended into several further seasons. The extension of the series depends upon the audience's reception and TV ratings. There are some famous TV series which gained immense popularity and appreciation from the audience all around the world like -

- Psychological Horror - The Twilight Zone (1959–1964), Friday the 13th: The Series (1987–1990), Supernatural (2005), Castle Rock (2018)
- Monster - The Vampire Diaries (2009–2017), The Walking Dead (2010), Grimm (2011–2017), Teen Wolf (2011–2017), The Originals (2013–2018), Penny Dreadful (2014–2019), Stranger Things (2016)
- Killer - American Horror Story (2011), Scream: The TV Series (2015), Slasher (2016)
- Gore & Disturbing - Dexter (2006–2013), Hannibal (2013–2015)
- Paranormal - Channel Zero (2016–2018), The Haunting of Hill House (2018), The Terror (2018), Castle Rock (2018)

(c) Popular Supernatural Category in Bangladesh: In Bangladesh, recently a couple of multiplex cinema halls like Bashundhara STAR Cineplex, Jamuna Blockbuster Cinemas have been seen to release any international Hollywood movies including supernatural/horror movies at the same day of international release. Thus, a great way of enjoying the horror movies has come up for the viewers. But not all types of movies could be seen to be released in these cinema halls. Among the categories, psychological horror and paranormal seems to get the greater audiences as per the ticket sales, showtimes, reviews in social and print media. Not only from these secondary sources but also the interviewees whom I approached appeared to have been more tended towards psychological horror and paranormal genres, occasionally preferring the others. However, more or less all the genres appeal the audiences depending on the content, visualization and plot on a time basis.

CHAPTER 2: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

2.1 Cinematic Charm, Vulnerable Preys & Familial Conformity

Started with the question of preferred industry, most of the informants answered to the preference of Hollywood English movies though some of them prefer both Bollywood and Hollywood movies. Following these few of them even relied on watching a few box offices hit movies like 'IT', 'Orphan', 'Anabelle', 'The Exorcism of Emily Rose' 'Bhool Bhulaiyaan' including recent Bangladeshi film 'Debi'. These movies garnered a great deal of success as well as popularity. About the movie plot, the informants asserted on favoring the psychological horror movies since it could be related to our reality.

(a) Preferences and Beliefs

While interviewing the participants, most of them preferred psychological thriller movies instead of other categories. They commonly believe that in the psychological movies, the plots are generally exhibited in such manner which cannot be overridden to say that this is not feasible in real life. The plot might be a single case in a million, but it has relative possibilities to happen to ourselves and to others as well. Thus, psychological horror movies like 'Orphan', 'The Silence of the Lambs', 'Psycho' etc. are still admired among the viewers. Another issue regarding the belief is that among the contemporary supernatural events most of my respondents keep belief in 'jinn' as this is mentioned in the Holy Quran but not in the movie plot or whatever happens in the movie. One of them described like this that he does not believe in supernatural existence, but he is not completely denying the fact either. But if talking about movies, he does not entirely believe the movie plot because most of the time the movie depicts something that someone gets possessed by spirits and the spirit using the person as a host. It can happen in terms of 'jinn' because the notion of 'jinn' is mentioned in the Holy Quran but he does not believe that a dead person or a spirit is able to possess a human being like the movies to portray since 'jinn' and 'spirit' are completely two different beings. The belief on these supernatural issues also came from his family where he described like this -

"I can tell it from my family background where from my childhood, I used to hear from my mother that my grandmother could identify thieves if anything stolen from the house. She used to

recite some supplications (duas) to identify the thief. Regarding her matter, I can say that she was devoid of most of the immoralities thus it might have given her this psychic power. Though I never could experience this method of her since she passed away during my early childhood. By this, you can say this is somewhat interesting regardless of which direction we are taking it. Since this type of issue in my surroundings happened, it adds values to my thought process and my surroundings which are beyond explanation. So, I think they somewhat have significance in our lives."

To them, the movies are intended for profit, and box office success, so the storyline is also something fantastical, grotesque and wild where reality does not fit actually. On the contrary, apart from the movie plots, though my respondents claimed not to believe whatever is presented in a movie, they believe in some of the supernatural events generally heard from their friends and family. Thus they could not entirely deny the existence of supernatural beings or occurrences. One of the interviewees asserted on this like she has a friend whose grandfather used to assist a 'jinn'. Her friend's family still has this cage where the 'jinn' used to reside. Her family has lots of stories regarding the issue, and she is someone who the respondent really trusts. The same respondent also mentioned about her younger sister's boyfriend who got an experience of waking up from sleep with scratch marks on his back that literally has no valid explanation. One day he saw the plates were moving and it suddenly stopped when he entered the room. He was using the phone, so it was unclear to him whether it was his illusion, or this really meant something else. Adding more she does not believe in these odds but she, like my previous respondent does not comport of not believing these matters at all because when she sees something flick or something suddenly passes, she feels skeptical.

According to her, the supernatural activities stem mainly from the superstitions but sometimes she questions what if there might be paranormal beings, those could be true too. She highlighted on the fact that there might also be a biological explanation for why people enjoy this genre. She feels scared when her sleep gets interrupted in the middle of the night. She also thinks sometimes everything cannot be explained psychologically. She provided an example that in our country we do not see rituals of exorcism because the exorcist (widely known as *kabiraj* in our country) do not perform it in front of us, but we see other religious rituals through the horror movies which do not exist whatsoever in our religion. Yet we are watching these movies, loving

the plots and getting scared involuntarily for actually the contradictory visuals that exactly does not go with our own religion, rituals and cultural phenomena. People try to stay by their rules, but things can change leaving the door open where there could be any possibility, she argued.

If we talk about supernatural issues, another respondent said everything is not impractical every time. But the human mind is complex because if anybody thinks deeply about something, s/he generally starts to believe in objects which may lead to misconception like the past when people used to consider 'hysteria' as some acts of spirit possession. She added, in night or in dark if anything even slightly moves or makes noise people contemplate this as something unusual whereas this could be just the trick of the mind. She mentioned if we have not heard these types of incidents, we would not have thought about this either and would not have had any effect on our mind as well. For example, she expressed that in normally when a curtain moves, we usually consider it as a doing of wind but when you watch a horror movie and then see your curtain moving, you are compelled to think of it as something uncanny.

However, one of the informants was an exception as he denies accepting that there is anything called supernatural. For him, every incident has its own logical and scientific explanation. Nothing could be said to have happened without a reason and valid cause. He refuted his claim by sharing an incident like a few months back he was alone in his apartment and it was early morning. While he went to the bathroom the lock of the bathroom door somehow got jammed from the outside. Then he called for help and after much ruckus, he got out. Now if he believed that it was unusual and how this happened then he would have thought that this was something paranormal, but he knew that the lock was loose that jammed the door from opening. It was crystal clear to him that there was nothing unusual in this incident. Later he also checked the lock and made sure that it was actually his mistake so there was nothing unusual in it. Further, he does not believe in any faith system and reckons himself as an atheist. However, he added that his father is an assistant professor of a medical college who do believe in 'jinn' and do occultism (todbir) using the 'jinn' through another man for various purposes. Though his father is religious, as per the respondent, his father blindly trusts in this matter and believes that he got success by this particular process. One thing he confessed that what his father believes, he does not keep belief on that whatsoever stating his father's reliance as religious orthodoxy.

Another person from my interviewee pool remarked that she would not say that supernatural aspects do not exist at all because you never know what happens. Also, it would be too delusional for us to actually believe in them and think that whatever we do or happen has supernatural consequences. She personally believes that anything is possible, but she prefers not to focus on it. Besides, she thinks nothing is impossible and there might be supernatural elements in our surroundings, but we should not give into it. Because the moment we give in to this idea, we make ourselves vulnerable to it. About any paranormal incident has she ever faced, she confessed that sometimes she hears weird sounds from her bedroom at night, but she does not pay attention to it. She thinks if she pays attention to it or tries to get to know it then it is going to get worse for her. Whenever she hears any sound unsettling, she just goes to sleep avoiding those weird noises.

Likewise, two of my informants shared their maid stories where one of them specified their family maid's story who said to have been getting possessed by a jinn because sometimes she used to overreact or got angry reasoning that it's the jinn who caused this unusual behavior. The other one shared his childhood story of how he used to hear unusual incidents from his maid but gradually started to question all of them as he thinks superstition would be the root of these stories. According to another respondent, people are drawn to this genre because of the adrenaline rush, accelerated heartbeat where fear comes from an intangible object knowing that this is not true or never going to happen but again questioning 'what if'.

Additionally, the FGD that I conducted, one of the respondents shared a life story of her own which sounded relatively aberrant. Her story was like this that her father before her birth was an expert in black magic and necromancy but once something terrible happened with the rituals (she could not describe what). That was the time when her mother was expecting a baby boy. But after his father's rituals gone wrong, her mother a few days later went into labor and gave birth to a stillborn. Her family still blames his father's work for this accident and after this incident, her father gave up participating in the black magic. Following this incident, some of my respondents keep firm belief in supernatural existences where they simply think these issues are not something to get crossed with.

(b) Portrayal of Child and Female

Following this, about the protagonist of films, most of the respondents observed that the victims or the person about whom the movie is circumscribed upon, the person is either to be a child or woman. I also tried to find out what they think of this portrayal of this duo to be the prime victim of a film. As an answer, most of them think that the patriarchal system of the society is the ultimate reason for this victimization. The stories absolutely are stereotyped where the protagonists are someone vulnerable and mostly kids, one of the interviewees commented. In many society women and children are judged to be the most susceptible ones and therefore, the antagonist of a film/the supernatural beings easily target them as their vessel or prey. Because it is a society's perspective that women are vulnerable. They are depicted as mentally and physically weak and so, these women are easily targeted by the supernatural entities. Another respondent reasoned that common showing of any horror movies would be female portrayal where the females are shown to be evil because you would not see any male ghost. We generally see witch, female spirit possessing someone, female antagonist and these are done because they always have a story of themselves and it is easier to come up with a story of the women.

Moreover, they mostly think that it is the women who are sexually more attractive than men. Spirits are more attracted to women or female spirits are more prone to female bodies. Besides, they also explained based on the cultural and societal view, how women are seemed to be psychologically incapacitated, objectifying them as well as making them mainstream performers in a film/series. Women's sexuality is another factor where in the gory, brutish and slasher movie, sexuality is the predominant subject with parallel horror materials. One of the respondents blamed the existent patriarchal society's perception of this. She also added that our grandmothers always emphasized on the stories about seeing a woman near the pond, wearing a white sari. She thinks the village people were used to listening to the ancient manuscript of stories where the 'dark' was and still considered as something ominous. That something bad might happen in the dark. People think that woods are spooky too as well as the places with less human interaction and footsteps or the place which is yet to be explored. People think about these places and fantasize about these involuntarily. Religion and death, these two are also reasons behind this type of thought.

Further, about children, they could be manipulated very easily, and they are more vulnerable to the supernatural powers. Also, a child lacks the ability to describe of what s/he actually has seen. Most of the time people do not believe in what they say. Besides, they require the help of the adults which makes them defenseless. So, the portrayal of the kids makes the movie plot more enticing and real. When you put children as 'scary' settings, it manipulates them that whatever content is being executed is really scary even if it actually is not the scenario. To her, the horror movies/series also involves children, secluded houses, damsel in distress. Most of the times it is either a child or a woman who plays the supernatural being. They usually use the children to present them sometimes as zombies with bizarre makeup too.

(c) Movie Elements

Regarding the movie elements, the respondents proposed the unique visuals and sound effects mostly used in any paranormal film/series as well as the 'jump scenes. The combination of the audio and visual effects is quite different from the other genres. There are always dark, spooky rooms used in the movies to make it scarier. Besides, they portray a particular character so creepily which persists to be the center of attraction. Similarly, an informant highlighted the jump scares which is like very obvious and that she said to have been so used to it now that she now does not get scared of it anymore, she literally does not flinch anymore. An interviewee commented like this that horror movies are more manipulative in a certain way than actually the proper expression that they are trying to portray. You generally would not go to a haunted house at night or you would not get up at 3 o'clock in the morning to have some water in the dark. But if she is in that scenario than she would buckle up a little bit because whatever you hear you actually have to pay heed to it when you're living them.

Also, these movies are centered on doll or statues because dolls are often compared with human bodies especially women bodies as women are thought to be venerable. They make the movies and the elements based on to our assumptions of the scary portrayals of ghosts, spirits or supernatural beings. We are not even sure that a supernatural being would look exactly like the movie is representing. One of the respondents albeit answered interestingly that when a group of people is characterized in a movie, they seem to split up in the middle of the movie though they know they might be in danger. She talked about the stereotypes about the movie which would be

like we always see a group of people in the plot where they know something eerie is happening surrounding them yet they would split up and try to investigate by their own which is absurd because we do not do that in reality. It is like they are willingly jumping in the danger. Ultimately one by one dies over the entire film. That is a question that the interviewee asked that if I know that I am in imminent danger then why not stay with the group. If they are the group, then why do not they go around being in the group. Moreover, to her, the wimpy character seems to die at the beginning of the story whereas the courageous one tends to survive in the situation. She thinks that without the dark background and the split up of group the story will not progress and will not be scary enough.

(d) Aftermath of Watching a Movie

Another issue about the emotional/psychological upshot after watching a movie also came up while discussing this particular subject. One of the respondents replied that the soundtrack, horror environment makes her throat dry, adrenaline rush, heavy heart beating, feeling chilly so it is not only mental feeling but also it is physical. The story generally begins encompassing an existent situation where all sorts of people can access to the plot. One of my other informants said that Hollywood movies got success mainly by the jump scare scenes. These movies' main plot revolves around using jump scenes. He commented that this is the most common feature that they use in the movies is a story, but the slasher movies are not like that where the stories are different, varying from one to another. The patterns of slasher movies entail their own reasons for the antagonists to do the crime where themes of gore, bloodshed, and brutalities are vital elements.

Now about the feelings or sensitivity of the movie, some of the informants responded that they feel scary immediately after watching the movie, but this feeling is short termed. They feel like someone is watching over them, something is moving, or someone is standing behind them, but they also included this is a pure trick of the mind. Two of them said how they feel a bit scared after watching a movie so they either keep their lights on or watch something else to divert their mind from the horror visual experience that they had a few hours back. But, some of the other respondents replied that they actually do not feel anything scary after watching a movie/series. They just watch the movie for fun. I also asked them that why they would like this

supernatural genre since most of them do not believe whatever is presented in the movie. They said in response that they like to get scared in the films but not in real life. Another common reply was they watch the movies and series just as a source of entertainment because whenever they find something interesting, they just watch it just to pass time.

Besides, since the movies are fictional thus whatever happens there cause no harm to nobody. Thus, the movie/series become very exciting and enjoyable at the same time also the frights and chills that this entertainment provides do not harm us physically. We just take the stories mentally and enjoy it. In this way, we enjoy suspense, mystery, surprise, and fear at the same time which is not possible in real life and even if it is possible, this would not leave us without causing any detrimental effects.

2.2 Exploring the Scopes behind This Popularity

(a) Stimuli of Body & Mind

Horror movies are mainly consisting of suspense, fear, surprise, mystery, and spoiler. Supernatural or horror is such a genre conceived by the quick emotional response and meant to be advanced towards immediate intended effects. Feminist scholar Williams (2003) therefore referred this horror/supernatural genre as 'body genre' not in terms of the film contexts like body mutilation or 'body horror' rather meaning that it generates a strong psychological and physical response. Thus, a good supernatural/horror movie becomes successful by triggering the maximum measure of physiological and mental responses it can produce among the audiences from the entire film context. Usually, fear is meant to come out of violence or death, but it often gets entwined with terror. Prawer (1980), a German literature professor claimed that terror is the primary component of horror meaning that terror is also an essential form of horror. Besides, horror specifically refers to a matter of certain anxieties and not a topic to be easily comprehended. Therefore, horror movies are always focused on extreme violence, death and humans' inner brute nature which stimulate immense bodily sensation in the soul. It also self-confirms the fact that fear always resides in our collective consciousness. However, in this modern world, people are in such a position that now they like to enjoy the same fear and feeling of terror through the supernatural movies. It is also a product of popular and technological culture.

The audiences as well as my interviewees relive the feeling, sensation, adventure that they feel through a movie repeating the process one after another. This supernatural genre has created its own certain audiences and viewership by building an effective response involving the cognitive and bodily entirety. Hirschkind (2001), an anthropologist highlighted the scenario of popularity of the cassette sermon in Egypt. This sermon became so popular among people and became vital for Islamic revolution creating a certain type of Islamic public. The public created a certain kind of practice of this sermon hearing by repeated hearing which is subdued in their body. The most horror movies enjoyed by the young adults in Bangladesh are mainly from Hollywood and Bollywood considering the fact that both of these industries produce such movies completely different from our cultural, religious and social phenomena. Yet the young generation as well as my informants seems to be quite fine with it or they seem to be more prone

towards these movies. The audiences always look for horrific content intending to get direct pleasure from the content. Several hypotheses demonstrated the reason for people's engagement in supernatural genres because this genre offers some specific elements like mystery, suspense, violence, terror. The audiences leaned towards this genre more likely to get the attention either by curiosity or pure supernatural enjoyment. They can never enjoy these compositions in real life phenomena where most of them would not even want to enjoy those sensations even if they were given the opportunities either.

Now questions may come like why would anyone even want to enjoy these segments even in the movies? Answering this question, philosopher Carrol (1987) demonstrated that besides the unique cognitive pleasure, the horror movies are the combination of fear and terror related to such existences that are impossible in our normal subjective trajectories such as vampires, ghosts, werewolves, etc. The appeals of these beings can only be met in film life because in real life the existence of these beings is undiscovered, unconfirmed and mainly ludicrous to be believed. Moreover, the audiences as well as the informants do not watch these movies for witnessing and reliving murder, mysterious events, crime instead they watch the movies to have a certain level of pleasure. Besides, it is possible that the audiences watch the movies for the fascination and try to experience of how they could emotionally get affected by the horror imagery. Generally, they get easily disappointed with movies that do not come with enough shock, suspense, mystery and major fear segments. In this modernity, people express to have a liking and enjoyment for the fear and myths. In this way, the body becomes all invisible and it is all just the psyche. Now, through the mind, people ingest fear with the myths as a source of pleasure making the body as secondary with no role. This myth and fear are not taken from any particular culture, but it is a conjuncture of several cultural/theological contexts.

(b) Subordinate vs Expert Picturization

One reason behind the immense popularity of supernatural entertainment would be the superiority of the western media and the impact of globalization. Nothing is now limited within a border thus the young people think that those movies are something standard and worth watching. Appadurai (1990) in his writing mentioned about few elements essential for the linkage of global culture and one of them would be mediascapes. Mediascapes refer to the mass

distribution and production of information which could be newspapers, magazines or films beyond any national boundary fulfilling the public and private interests. The mediascapes are being able to provide the large and complex amount of films and cassette forms for the public and the appropriate audiences that the line between the 'realistic' and 'fiction' became blurred. The horror movie producers are exactly using the same tactics to get their movies to supply all over the world and make sure that the movie gets maximum box office reception. Globalization is the product of modernity that does not go parallel with a national boundary as it is meant to be everywhere without any barriers making the world like a global village system. The globalization works for the processing of something Appadurai called 'deterritorialization' constantly creating new market for the film companies.

The supernatural movies/series which were once upon a time limited to the local people now the same movies/series are being enjoyed by people all over the world via the internet, movie sites, entertainment hubs and so on. When somebody enters in this regime of globalization and consumer culture, it could be detrimental for the people and their lifestyle by creating such an image that there is no escape from it. This emphasizes self-indulgence, interest, and satisfaction of desire. Many young people in our country initially are not interested in this supernatural genre. However, they easily get manipulated to feel obligated to go along with the current consumer culture or 'trend' either by their peers or out of curiosity. In this way, the movies/series get the limelight that it required. The choice for enjoying this entertainment is not for use value or some acquisition but because of the sake of lifestyle that these young people eagerly desire to blend in. The idea of globalization is not intended for satisfying our need rather it intends to introduce a new lifestyle, a choice, and a fashion in our daily lives.

On the contrary, this globalization and popular consumer culture are the invention of the western world media or at least they are the principal operator of it, developing some kind of 'hegemony' over the world (Hall, 2011). These young people easily get biased towards the hegemonic glamour of the western media and lifestyle considering this lifestyle to be the standard one and worth adopting. As a result, in our country, the movies are now being released on the actual release date worldwide. It has been possible only because there is a tremendous demand created in the recent years for these movies/series.

Bourdieu (1972) mentioned about practice, doxa and habitus. In our daily life, consuming the lifestyle and entertainment became a practice for ourselves where it is now a daily situation for us. If this daily settlement is unquestioned and not disputed, it seems natural and called doxa. He included different types of alignment and possibilities that can be found in this practice and habitual field where all the alignment that happens is the power of alignment. Here power is capital that Bourdieu highlighted not the economic capital only rather it is symbolic and social capital. In this social and symbolic capital, the objectified symbolic social capital is important to be mentioned in this paper. Because this refers to the kind of lifestyle that we choose and own to have for ourselves. Moreover, the practice and everyday lifestyle that the people adopt to have shaped the social life which is known as habitus. Here, people strive to have a life that is available to them and has simple access to it without concerning that the available life may not be suitable for them. The western media, entertainment, movie world is also like habitus for us where we see the effortless availability all round ourselves. Thus, we doubtlessly adopt this foreign lifestyle.

Following this, as mentioned before, the western media introduced 'hegemony' and in this paper, I would say that in terms of entertainment that it is media hegemony or cultural hegemony. Now the western media producing films, various entertainment, commodities and they are circulating those through advertisements, feeding to the people all around the world. The entertainment does not follow our own cultural context whatsoever, yet we like to have those entertainments in our life regardless of the dangerous effects just because it is the product of the superior culture which seems completely a dignitary custom to have. Our young people are the primary customer of this entertainment who keep a lack of interest in the local entertainment. Prioritizing western entertainment, they often regard ours as meaningless, less shocking, and not scary at all with funny imagery.

(c) Magnitude of Usual Belief System/Faith Value

Our faith system is also an important factor for believing into supernatural occurrences/events leading us to enjoy the supernatural genre of movies as well. Sometimes, to watch or enjoy a horror movie, religious view is not necessary at all. Even the people who are not too much into religions may enjoy horror movies greatly or other way around. If we look

beyond our country then according to a survey by Chapman University (2015), half of the adult Americans believe in supernatural beliefs. Among them, 41.4 percent believe that certain places could be haunted by the spirits of dead humans where 26.5 percent think that the living human beings can communicate with the dead or can see its spirit. More astonishingly 18.1 percent believe in aliens as they think that there is the existence of aliens and they visited earth.⁵ However, on average 68 percent of adult Americans believe in at least one or two supernatural events. Comparatively, most of the people in Bangladesh belong to the religion of Islam thus they possess this string belief in 'jinn' as it is mentioned in the Holy Quran. There are both bad and good 'jinn' where the bad jinns are responsible for haunting a place, causing trouble for humans or making them frightened. Around 84 percent of people in this country believe in jinn, 9 percent believe in witchcraft, 22 percent believe in evil eyes where 26 percent use talismans to ward off evils. Also, 21 percent of Bangladeshi responded to have witnessed exorcism.⁶ Though the people in our country have a diverse arena of belief in supernatural existence sometimes, their faith or belief staggers based on different units like age, education, experience, profession. However, the young adults regardless of their age, profession or education level enjoy a great deal of supernatural horror movies no matter what their primary belief structures are so do the interviewees. They process the artificially generated fear, horrific backgrounds, scary movements and sounds through the movies/series stimulating their mind and body with the pure adrenaline rush, excitement, adventure for two or two and half hours. To relive the same experience, they repeat this enjoyment again and again.

However, the movies that they watch have completely different cultural, religious and societal context than ours. For example – the movies related to spirit possession and then exorcism shows a quite distinct level of rituals that is mainly followed in Christianity. But Bangladesh is mainly Muslim majority countries and Islamic rituals are totally different from any other religions. Therefore, it cannot be entirely said that the religious belief system influences the enjoyment of supernatural entertainment. Nonetheless, the usual faith value and spirituality

5 Waskul, D. D., & Eaton, M. (2018). *The supernatural in society, culture, and history*. Retrieved from http://tupress.temple.edu/uploads/book/excerpt/2466_ch1.pdf

6 Liu, J. (2015, January 09). Muslim Beliefs in the Supernatural and Related Practices. Retrieved from <https://www.pewforum.org/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-4-other-beliefs-and-practices/>

sometimes dominate the belief system and for that, a person does not necessarily require to be religious or to have firm reliance on religion.

CHAPTER 3: CONCLUSION

3.1 Further Research

Before choosing this topic, I wanted to work on the concept of black magic, witchcraft, and sorcery in Bangladesh and wanted to find out how the Bangladeshi people perceive these issues. From the very childhood more or less every people heard of this context either from family or friends. Even sometimes, there were incidents of this witchcraft, magic or sorcery in their own family. However, when looking for informants I hoped to get a good deal of subjects, but I was disappointed that almost all of the people I approached did not want to talk to me about these particular issues. All of them have experience or stories but they are too reluctant to share this with others. These certain topics are like taboos in this country and many people get too biased by the superstition that they cease to think rationally even. Besides, religion is a factor where superstition is also becoming entangled into religious matters. On the other hand, my thesis topic is on supernatural entertainment where I only focused on movies and series but there is another sort of entertainment that falls into this category like music, books, themes, attire which I could not include in my paper. But in the future, I want to work on these categories too since these topics are also popular and appealing to the people. I too intend to work on other genres of movies like fantasy, adventure, and crime where people are so engrossed in these genres too. These few genres of movies garnered too many audiences that people just expect this cinema hall.

3.2 Conclusion

Supernatural genre is a very good source of entertainment. For enjoying these movies nobody has to be specifically a believer or non-believer. This genre is a very good way to enjoy with friends and family when one is bored. Also, through these movies/series, the producers are making a good fortune where the market of this genre is growing constantly. This is the only category of movies where excitement, adventure, thriller, fear, suspense, mystery, surprise - all these elements can be found together unlike other movies. Though these movies are not

something related to our cultural or religious background, yet we can savor the films and series just for a good source of entertainment. However, we should be wary that these films or series do not cause any psychological or physical vexation for us. We also have to make sure that these films or series do not motivate us negatively. Any movies or TV series should only be adopted as a pure mode of entertainment and nothing more than that. Moreover, every movie or series has some specific rating for the suitable audience and the age that the film or series for which it is intended. So, the parents should be aware of this rating and keep the children out of those movies/series that are not appropriate for them. A good horror movie not only gives pleasure or entertainment but it also gives a better landscape of the difficult situation while teaching us the true inner meaning. On the other hand, this topic is basically a vast one to be covered fully within a paper. Many scholars, film critics, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists worked directly or indirectly in the supernatural phenomena, witchcraft, magic, sorcery that are essential contexts and can be found in almost all supernatural movies. Also, these contexts are not to be ignored simply because people who watch this are courageous and brave, thus giving this genre a mastery virtue to be savored for ages.

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