



INNOVATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

Peer Review, Refereed, Biannual, Social Science Journal, Open Access Journal

ISSN: 3107-5096(ONLINE)

VOL. 2, ISSUE 3 (SEPTEMBER) 2026

Impact of Crime-Based OTT Web Series on Perception of Law Enforcement in Mahendergarh: A Study of Narnaul and Kanina Blocks

*Dr. Amita Associate Professor DJMC, Central University of Haryana Mahendergarh *Ankita Yadav, Research Scholar, DJMC, Central University of Haryana Mahendergarh	Citation: Dr. Amita, & Yadav, A. (2026). Impact of Crime-Based OTT Web Series on Perception of Law Enforcement in Mahendergarh: A Study of Narnaul and Kanina Blocks. Innovative Research Thoughts in Social Sciences, 2(3), 54–71. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23259535
---	--

Abstract

In India, web series have emerged as a primary source of entertainment and crime web series are one of the most popular genres on OTT platforms. With COVID-19, OTT viewership has surged and a significant proportion of the current OTT users, around 53 per cent, are now in rural India. The increasing viewership led to raising questions, how are crime-based web series changing the public image of the cops and the judiciary in the rural side of the world? The field survey was conducted to 40 respondents in 22 respondents of the Narnaul block and 18 respondents of the Kanina block of Mahendergarh district of Haryana. The study employed a structured questionnaire developed based on the framework of Cultivation Theory, Social Learning Theory and Framing Theory to assess OTT viewing pattern and

perception of police and judiciary system. The findings reveal that trust in the local police is low (only 25 per cent of the respondents indicated that they trust police to effectively handle criminal issues), and that half of the respondents (50 per cent) stated that the web series based on crime has influenced their expectations of the courts, and 47.5 per cent indicated that it has made them more aware of their legal rights. Half of the respondents reported that reality and screens don't align with regard to the mechanisms of actual judicial proceedings, while the other half agreed that even if it is fictional, it still affects their perception. The findings are supportive of the notion that OTT contents based on crime have a genuine but intricate impact on the perspectives of the law enforcement in rural Haryana.

Keywords: OTT platforms, crime-based web series, law enforcement, perception, rural Haryana

1. Introduction

Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms are rapidly increasing as they deliver choice-based entertainment, with ads removed, and offer content that is growing on the variety of entertainment. OTT content is not just about entertainment; it also has a profound impact on consumer perception, attitudes, behavior, and psychology. When TV shows stopped producing new content during COVID-19, many people have passed from television to OTT. India's viewership has also seen an increase with platforms like Voot, Jio Hotstar, ALTBalaji, ZEE5 and MX Player hitting the jackpot during the pandemic (BARC), while Netflix saw a surge from 14 per cent to 58 per cent during the same period (PTI).

Indian audiences watch and like web series of various genres, with some of the most popular ones being crime-based. From gritty crime thriller, to police procedural, espionage, mythological, political crime drama, to crime/horror or supernatural. The penetration of OTT in the rural areas has also increased significantly, as around 53 per cent of India's OTT users live outside the cities, which is attributable to affordable smartphones, low subscription rates and

lower internet charges in rural areas (Press Trust of India).

For this study, the blocks of Narnaul and Kanina, Mahendergarh district, are of particular interest. Both are blocks located in rural areas, and have relatively high literacy rates, which means there are many potential viewers, as well as unique socio-cultural traits in which modern development is co-existing with longstanding local traditions and norms. In this environment, citizens might not have much first-hand experience of the police or the courts, but instead may have been influenced primarily by what they see on TV.

By conducting a field survey of 40 respondents, this study aims to provide empirical evidence of the influence of OTT web series on the perception of people in Narnaul and Kanina about law enforcement, judicial system and policing in general. The results will be used to ensure more equitable representation in media of law enforcement and to inform policies to counter the misrepresentation of law, and the judicial system, on screen.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this study, three theories of media and communication are considered to be able to

explain how the audience uses and is influenced by media content, namely Cultivation Theory, Social Learning Theory and Framing Theory. These theories were combined to inform the survey questionnaire's content analysis.

2.1 Cultivation Theory

The cultivation theory was first suggested by Gerbner and Gross (1976), which states that people view the world as what they see on television, especially if they watch a lot of TV. The theory, applied to the current study, implies that the longer crime-based OTT web series is watched, the more viewers' perceptions will be of the law enforcement, the police and the judicial systems as ineffective, unfair, misleading or corrupt.

2.2 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) states that people learn behaviours, attitudes, and social norms from the behaviors of others, including characters on screen, and from what is rewarded/punished. The theory implies that the attitude and behavioural patterns of the characters in OTT series, as captured by the director's lens, allow viewers to absorb and internalize their attitudes, behavioural patterns and assumptions about crime and the judiciary. This observation can

cause viewers to think that the same behavior will be observed in the real judicial system.

2.3 Framing Theory

The theory of Framing Theory (Entman, 1993) is applied to media texts, which select and emphasize aspects of a perceived reality in a way that makes them more salient and thus promotes a certain interpretation. In this study, it is suggested that the theory can be used to depict the law and the judicial system as heroic, powerless, corrupt or unethical as needed for the story line. Such a narrative has a profound impact on how audiences view policing in their everyday lives.

3. Review of Literature

Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011) found that fictional crime dramas led to a greater willingness to support punitive measures like the death penalty and non-fictional crime dramas led to a reduced willingness to support the criminal justice system through fear. This demonstrates that fictional and non-fictional crime content can impact attitudes towards the justice system in multiple ways, which may be pertinent to the present study's focus on fictional web series specifically.

In the Indian context, previous studies indicate that web series are highly addictive, leading to binge watching as all the episodes are released together, and thus, increasing their screen time use and the other concerns like health issues. The authors point out that OTT platforms effectively convey ideas to the viewer, and that the portrayal of law enforcement and the judicial system will shape them, and that content producers should include clear disclaimers where depictions might mislead viewers about law enforcement. Glamorization of criminals and criminal activities can also become a negative impact on the society, as people's attitude and behavior towards it can be shaped in a negative way if the content creators is being irresponsible (Rashmi & Jain, 2023).

Digital media has become one of the most influential aspects of mass media and one of the main things that points out issues in society that would not be highlighted. OTT platforms serve as the perception drivers, which often shape the psychology and behaviour of the viewers, as they try to mold their psychology based on the character and behaviour on the screen. This type of content can deceive viewers if it portrays social facts falsely, inaccurately or exaggeratedly, and

only when producers portray sensitive and real social facts with sensitivity and without exaggeration or sensationalism (Chattopadhyay, 2020).

According to a survey-based research study on the impact of crime thriller shows on crime and criminal justice system, OTT platforms are the main source of viewing crime-based shows. The study concluded that these programs can have a significant effect on younger audiences, potentially leading to a misperception of what the police or criminal justice system is like, with many respondents saying they learned useful information about police and the judicial system, and some saying that the shows were somewhat accurate in depicting real life crime and law enforcement (Kaur & Sharma, 2024).

Another study emphasizes the duty of the media, as a powerful tool in molding the public opinion on facts, rules, and laws. Most citizens have limited first-hand experience with crime and, therefore, see it through media. Media has now become more than a medium of information dissemination; in certain cases, it has been seen to play the role of a public court, and sometimes to disregard the rule of presumption of innocence and the rule of 'beyond reasonable doubt' as

described by scholars as a 'media trial' (Anand & Taneja, 2024).

The literature, both from western studies of crime dramas and from Indian studies of OTT web series, supports the notion that screen content, whether it be a crime drama or a web series on the same topic, can help influence public perceptions of police and the judiciary, but that the strength and direction of the influence depend on the type of content, the sincerity of the creators of the content, and the critical awareness of the audience. The present study extends this base by exploring the rural viewer population in the state of Haryana which has been extensively underrepresented in the existing literature.

4. Research Gap

Crime-based web series are becoming more and more popular in urban and rural areas of India. Although there have been several studies on the psychology and behaviour of viewers of crime TV shows and web series, very few studies have focussed on the perception of law enforcement among the rural population. A number of studies including the international and Indian studies discussed above have explored the effects of crime TV shows and web series on the psychology and behaviour of the viewer, fear

of crime and general perception, but not specifically on the perception of law enforcement among the rural population. The literature that is available tends to be for frequent digital content consumers, most often students, urban populations or metropolitan audiences and tends to focus on themes like media-induced fear, desensitisation, agitated behaviour, or the glamorisation and sensationalism of crime.

This study, however, looks into the impact of OTT crime content on perceptions of police procedure, investigation, violence and justice among rural viewers, an area that is largely untouched and yet 53 per cent of OTT viewers in India are currently residing in rural areas, according to Press Trust of India. With the increasing demand and viewership, rural populations may more and more be getting their understanding of law enforcement from a mediated, on-screen experience rather than direct experience. Unfortunately, there is a significant scarcity of empirical data specifically pertaining to rural Haryana where attitude and behaviour towards law enforcement, judicial system, and legal institutions are influenced by a unique local socio-cultural context. This study fills this gap with conducting a field survey in Narnaul and Kanina blocks of Mahendergarh district.

5. Objectives of the Study

1. To study how crime-based OTT web series influence the perception of law enforcement in Narnaul and Kanina.
2. To evaluate the impact of crime-based web series on the perception of rural population.
3. To access the behavioural changes occurred after watching crime-based web series.
4. To examine the expectations of people from the judicial system after watching crime-based OTT web series.
5. To examine how crime-based OTT web series affects trust, credibility and fear towards policing in rural regions.

6. Research Questions

1. How do crime-based OTT web series influence the perception of law enforcement in Kanina and Narnaul?
2. In what ways do crime-based web series impact rural population?
3. Does any behavioural changes occur after watching crime-based web series?
4. How do portrayals of the judicial system in OTT web series shape

public expectations of real law enforcement?

5. How crime-based OTT web series do affects trust, credibility and fear towards policing in rural regions?

7. Methodology

7.1 Research Design

The study takes a mixed method design, structured questionnaire plus some open-ended, qualitative questions in a single questionnaire. The study was carried out using field survey which was given to 40 respondents. This design enabled this study to record measurable consistency or inconsistency with responses to the statements pertaining to law enforcement, as well as participants' own words regarding the effects of the content on their perceptions.

7.2 Area of the Study

Both the Kanina and Narnaul blocks of Mahendergarh district (high literacy rate) in Haryana were selected for this study because literacy is an important factor, as literate people make up the pool of potential OTT viewers. Both blocks are predominantly rural with increasing digital access, and have their own unique and traditional social structure of Haryanvi. Kanina is essentially an agriculture

dominated region, with 52 Gram panchayats, popular for its mandi (marketplace for rabi and kharif crops) and sporting and education services to the armed forces. It is a developing region of Narnaul block that has 53 gram panchayats and is an educational and commercial base, connectivity and digital access is increasing rapidly. The most populous block in Mahendergarh is Narnaul with literacy rate 83.31 per cent while the second highest literacy rate in the district is Kanina (82.3 per cent). As per the Census of India (2011) data, literacy rate in Narnaul block is above the district average. Narnaul has the maximum population according to Census of India (2011) data and literacy rate is also above the district average, while Kanina has the second highest literacy rate in the district (82.3 per cent).

7.3 Sample and Sampling Method

A field survey was conducted with 40 respondents (22 respondents from Narnaul and 18 from Kanina). The respondents were people living in the two blocks who watch OTT content and the sample has been restricted to age groups 18-25 and 26-35 which form the backbone of the audience of OTT platforms.

7.4 Data Collection Instrument

The information was gathered using a structured online questionnaire that included four broad sections; (i) demographic information including age, gender, education, block and area of residence; (ii) OTT consumption behaviour including platforms used, hours watched per week, genres watched, frequency of watching crime based content; (iii) a set of 22 five-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) statements covering the perception of the police (7 items), awareness of fiction versus reality (5 items), the frequency of watching crime based content (5 items) and behavioural changes (5 items); and (iv) open-ended questions where respondents were asked to describe, in their own words, the impact of crime based OTT content on their perception of law enforcement.

7.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data, mean scores and frequencies were calculated for each of the Likert-scale statements (coded from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to describe the overall pattern of responses across the sample. Open answers were read and categorised into general common themes.

8. Findings

The results of the field survey conducted in the blocks of Narnaul and Kanina (22 respondents from each block) of Mahendergarh district are presented here.

8.1 Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of the 40 respondents is summarised in Table 1. The majority (77.5 per cent) were aged 18-25 and 55 per cent were male. The largest population of graduates was from the education sector (45 per cent) and the sample was slightly more representative of graduates from Narnaul (55 per cent) compared with Kanina (45 per cent).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Category	Group	n	%
Age	18–25 years	31	77.5
	26–35 years	9	22.5
Gender	Male	22	55
	Female	18	45
Education	Graduate	18	45
	Post-graduate	13	32.5
	Secondary (Class 6–12)	9	22.5
Block	Narnaul	22	55
	Kanina	18	45
Area type	Town	18	45
	Village	16	40
	Peri-urban	6	15

8.2 OTT Viewing Habits

Table 2: OTT Platform Use, Weekly Viewing Hours, Genre Preference, and Frequency of Watching Crime-Based Web Series

Category	Group	n	%
OTT Platform Used	Netflix	16	40.0
	YouTube	11	27.5
	JioHotstar	11	27.5
	Amazon Prime Video	2	5.0
Hours Watched / Week	2–5 hours	18	45.0
	Less than 2 hours	15	37.5
	6–10 hours	7	17.5
Most-Watched Genre	Crime / Thriller	18	45.0
	Comedy	8	20.0
	Romance	5	12.5
	Reality Shows	5	12.5
	Drama / Family	4	10.0
Frequency of Watching Crime-Based Web Series	Rarely	16	40.0
	Often	12	30.0
	Sometimes	10	25.0
	Very Often	2	5.0

Table 3: Crime-Based Web Series Named by Respondents

Crime-Based Web Series Named by Respondents	Mentions	% of Respondents (N = 40)
Mirzapur	7	17.5
Paatal Lok	6	15.0
Criminal Justice	4	10.0
The Test Case	3	7.5
Delhi Crime	3	7.5
Asur	2	5.0
The Family Man	2	5.0
Dhurandhar: Raw and Undekha	2	5.0
Mardaani	2	5.0
Others (Panchayat, Ashram, Money Heist, single mentions)	4	10.0

Netflix is the leader in platform usage (40%) followed by YouTube and JioHotstar, indicating OTT use is diversified even in this rural district. Most respondents report moderate weekly viewing (45%, 2-5 hours) indicating that they are consuming, but not excessive. The genre that's clearly preferred is Crime/Thriller (45%), which outstrips comedy, romance, reality and family drama. However, most respondents watch crime-based content selectively (65% combined),

not in a habitual way. The most memorable are Mirzapur and Paatal Lok, as well as good recall of legal/crime dramas made in India (India Crime, Criminal Justice), and it shows that there is a very active and discriminating rural crime drama consumer base in India.

8.3 Acknowledging police and law enforcement.

Table 4: Perception of Police and Law Enforcement

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Mean (1–5)
Crime-based web series have influenced how I think about the police in real life.	30	37.5	32.5	2.98
I feel the police in my area are more corrupt than I previously believed.	45	27.5	27.5	3.38
I trust the local police to handle criminal matters effectively.	25	25	50	2.65
Crime-based web series show police work in a realistic way that matches what I see locally.	32.5	35	32.5	2.92
Watching crime-based web series has increased my fear of crime in my area.	32.5	37.5	30	2.95
I feel hesitant to report a crime to the police after watching crime-based content.	42.5	22.5	35	3.1
Crime-based web series have made me more aware of my rights when dealing with the police.	47.5	32.5	20	3.4

Just over half of the respondents (52.5 per cent) said they knew that crime-based web series are fictional and thus may not depict law enforcement in an accurate manner. But half (50 per cent) of them who said they knew this still say that the TV shows affect their perceptions of real police and courts. The knowledge that content is fictional does not fully immunize viewers from being influenced by it, as it still is an important finding from the Cultivation Theory as used

in this study. Half of those who responded also said that crime-based web series make the world seem "more dangerous" than it really is, similar to the concept of Cultivated fear as described by Gerbner and his colleagues and as noted in subsequent studies like that of Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011). Fortunately, 52.5 per cent agreed this content has helped them to have a better understanding of the criminal justice system (which is the highest mean score across the

entire survey) and 45 per cent said they believe the producers of such programmes have a duty to present the law enforcement

system fairly, indicating that viewers are looking for some degree of truth even when they enjoy the drama!

8.4 Perception of the Judicial System

Table 5: Perception of the Judicial System

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Mean (1–5)
Crime-based web series have shaped my expectations of how courts should deliver justice.	50	25	25	3.25
I believe real judicial proceedings in India are exactly as shown in crime-based web series.	27.5	22.5	50	2.62
Watching crime-based web series has increased my expectation of a speedy trial and quick verdict.	27.5	37.5	35	2.88
Crime-based web series have made me more skeptical about the fairness of the judicial system.	42.5	32.5	25	3.25
I learned about legal procedures (FIR, bail, remand, habeas corpus) mainly through crime-based OTT content.	42.5	25	32.5	3.08

Half of the respondents (50 per cent) said that the crime-based web series have influenced their perception of the justice system and its expectations of how courts must function; 27.5 per cent of them said that crime-based web series have raised their expectations of a fast trial and quick verdict. The largest number of respondents (50 per cent) disagreed strongly that "real judicial proceedings are exactly like what is shown on screen," and that was the lowest mean score in the survey, even lower than the score for the trust-in-police item. This shows that

while viewers are influenced in terms of their expectations from the judicial system, most of them do not literally believe that web series present an accurate picture of real courts. A parallel finding is that 42.5 per cent of the respondents said they have got the information about legal procedures like FIR, bail, remand and habeas corpus mainly from content related to crime on OTT platforms, which suggests an important yet informal function played by entertainment content to promote legal literacy in this rural district.

8.5 Awareness that Web Series are Fictional, and Its Limits

Table 6: Fiction vs Reality and Awareness

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Mean (1–5)
I am aware that crime-based web series are fictional and may not show real law enforcement correctly.	52.5	27.5	20	3.48
Despite knowing they are fiction, crime-based web series still influence how I see real police and courts.	50	20	30	3.18
Crime-based web series show the world as more dangerous than it really is.	50	22.5	27.5	3.18
Crime-based OTT content has increased my awareness of the criminal justice system.	52.5	30	17.5	3.48
Makers of crime-based web series have a responsibility to show law enforcement accurately.	45	25	30	3.1

Just over half of the respondents (52.5 per cent) said they knew that crime-based web series are fictional and thus may not depict law enforcement in an accurate manner. But half (50 per cent) of them who said they knew this still say that the TV shows affect their perceptions of real police and courts. The knowledge that content is fictional does not fully immunize viewers from being influenced by it, as it still is an important finding from the Cultivation Theory as used in this study. Half of those who responded also said that crime-based web series make the world seem "more dangerous" than it

really is, similar to the concept of Cultivated fear as described by Gerbner and his colleagues and as noted in subsequent studies like that of Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011). Fortunately, 52.5 per cent agreed this content has helped them to have a better understanding of the criminal justice system (which is the highest mean score across the entire survey) and 45 per cent said they believe the producers of such programmes have a duty to present the law enforcement system fairly, indicating that viewers are looking for some degree of truth even when they enjoy the drama!

8.6 Behavioral Changes After Watching Crime-Based Web Series

Table 7: Behavioral Change Statements

Statement	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Mean (1–5)
Watching crime-based web series has changed the way I behave when dealing with the police.	37.5	32.5	30	3
I have shared legal-rights or police-procedure knowledge gained from OTT content with others.	27.5	27.5	45	2.8
Watching crime-based web series has made me more alert / vigilant about crime around me.	47.5	25	27.5	3.12
Crime-based web series have changed how I understand the difference between rural and urban policing.	45	25	30	3
Compared to books, news, school or community, crime-based web series are my main source of knowledge about law enforcement.	32.5	30	37.5	2.88

The most significant behavioural finding is the 47.5 per cent of respondents who said they were now more alert or vigilant to crime around them because of watching crime-based web series, with the 45 per cent who agreed that viewing the crime-based web series has led to a change in their understanding of the difference between rural and urban policing closely trailing. However, when it comes to legal-rights or police-procedure information acquired from OTT streaming, only 27.5 per cent said they had shared this knowledge with others in their community, the lowest of all items scored in

this section, which looks at where users are getting their knowledge.

In another question, participants were asked to choose the behaviour they personally witnessed with regard to crime based web series. Increased awareness of crime in the area and seeking information on the law or rights online were the most common responses (14 (35 per cent) and 10 (25 per cent) respectively), followed by growing distrust of the police (5 (12.5 per cent)) and discussions with family or friends or growing wary of people's intentions (4 (10 per cent)

each). Some fewer respondents (3, 7.5 per cent) stated that they had adjusted their daily routine or commuting for safety reasons.

8.7 The Block-wise Observations (Narnaul vs Kanina)

A cursory look at the two blocks reveals some differences, but the two blocks are not equally represented (22 from Narnaul, 18 from Kanina). 6 of 18 (33.3 per cent) of the Kanina respondents said they trusted the local police, while 4 of 22 (18.2 per cent) did the same in Narnaul. On the other hand, agreement with the statement that the web series, which are known as fiction, still influences the perception was equal in the two blocks, with 11 respondents from Narnaul and 9 respondents from Kanina agreeing with the statement (50 per cent in both blocks). In this regard, there is a genuine, ground-level disparity in trust in the police between Narnaul and Kanina, while opinions on the impact of fictional content have converged.

8.8 Views in Respondents' Own Words

The received responses were mixed when asked about the influence of crime-based OTT web series on the perception of law and order in Mahendergarh. Respondents were divided on the impact of crime-based OTT

web series on the perception of law and order in Mahendergarh when the question was raised directly. The most common group of responses was increased awareness, in terms of crime investigation methods, crime in general and "anything happening around us", indicating many believe an informational benefit exists in this type of content. What came across loud and clear in several of the responses was the fear that is generated by such shows, and the fact that they make people want to stand up against injustice, almost a campaigning for justice, with some of the respondents, less formally, repeating the sentiment almost word for word. People in a similar group said they were uneasy with officer presence and slightly uneasy toward the police, noting that these programs tend to show either corrupt and corruptible cops or cops who are really fast and solve all of the problems, but they know these are dramatizations. A few respondents said that the content has increased their expectations of swift trials and vigilant policing, while one respondent compared police officers in Mahendergarh to be more corrupt and careless despite the news coverage of their police work, and a smaller number felt that the police work was useful in maintaining law and order in the area. One-third of respondents said the impact was neutral or

minimal ("Neutral", "Nothing", "No") to them personally, reflecting that although this influence exists for many, it does not exist for everyone.

9. Discussion

The results support all three theories tested in this study. As predicted by Cultivation Theory (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1986), frequent viewing of crime-based content is associated with low trust in local police (only 25 per cent trust) and with significant skepticism about the fairness of the judicial system (42.5 per cent agree they have become more skeptical). Nevertheless, half of all respondents (50 per cent) indicate being influenced by these findings despite knowing they are fictional, which confirms the basic premises of Cultivation Theory that long-term exposure may have more of an impact than one's awareness.

The results of the study also support the concept of Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977) as 47.5 per cent of respondents indicated that they became more alert and vigilant about crime after watching OTT content, and a significant proportion of respondents stated that they learnt about legal procedures like an FIR and bail largely through OTT rather than formal channels.

The framing theory (Entman, 1993) is confirmed by the results of this study because 50 percent of respondents say they do not think that real trials are the way they are portrayed in crime-oriented web series, despite out-of-trial portrayals having helped shape the majority's expectations about how courts should operate. This demonstrates that viewers are not passive consumers of media, but interpret and question the frames that are being shown to them.

These findings are also related to the broader literature examined in this paper. The finding that fiction-awareness does not completely offset influence, in addition to the finding that half of the respondents do distinguish between fictional and real judicial proceedings, indicates that this relationship is complex among rural Indian viewers, as it is for fictional crime dramas and non-fictional crime programming in a Western context (Kort-Butler and Hartshorn, 2011). As Rashmi and Jain (2023) found, the glorification of crime and irresponsible portrayal by content makers can influence the attitudes of the public; several of the respondents in this study raised this concern, stating that the depiction of the police by the content makers was too one-dimensional –

either completely corrupt or a product of unrealistic efficiency.

10. Conclusion

This study is clear evidence of how OTT web series that are influencing the perception of citizens towards the police and judiciary in the resort block of Kanina and Narnaul in the town of Mahendergarh. Citizens' trust in the local police is low, their expectations have been formed by what they see on screen and the knowledge that the content is fictional does not prevent it from having an impact on the real world. Meanwhile, viewers demonstrate some critical awareness, and reject the notion that on-screen courts are a faithful representation of actual judicial practice — indeed, this is the one most strongly held opinion in the whole survey. At the block level, there is some more trust in the police in Kanina than in Narnaul whereas the trust that the same content can still create an impression even when it is known as fiction is same in both the blocks. The results validate the theoretical background of Cultivation, Social Learning and Framing Theory and it emphasizes the importance of responsible content production and more media literacy in rural India.

References

- Anand, A., & Taneja, M. (2024). *The influence of media on public perception of crime*. International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i02.15227>
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Census of India. (2011). *District census handbook: Mahendergarh, Haryana. Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India*.
- Chattopadhyay, A. (2020). *Web series and web movies and their psycho-sociological impact on netizens in India*. The Asian Thinker, (7), 46–57.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). *Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm*. Journal of Communication, 43(4), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>
- Gerbner, G., & Gross, L. (1976). *Living with television: The violence profile*. Journal of Communication, 26(2), 172–199. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1976.tb01397.x>
- Gerbner, G., Gross, L., Morgan, M., & Signorielli, N. (1986). *Living with television: The dynamics of the cultivation process*. In J. Bryant & D. Zillmann (Eds.), *Perspectives on media effects* (pp. 17–40). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Kort-Butler, L. A., & Hartshorn, K. J. S. (2011). *Watching the detectives: Crime programming, fear of crime, and attitudes about the criminal justice system*.

Impact of Crime-Based OTT Web Series on Perception of Law Enforcement in Mahendergarh: A Study of Narnaul and Kanina Blocks

The Sociological Quarterly, 52(1), 36–55.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.2010.01191.x>

Rashmi, C. P., & Jain, L. (2023). *An empirical study on Indian crime web series and its effects*. Journal of Communication and Management, 2(3), 21–26.
<https://doi.org/10.58966/JCM2023234>

Internet and Mobile Association of India, & Kantar. (2024). Internet in India report 2023. IAMAI.

Kaur, K., & Sharma, P. (2024). *Effect of crime thriller shows on crime and criminal justice system: A survey-based study*. YMER, 23(9), 77–78.

BARC India, & Nielsen. (2020, March 27). COVID-19 impact: What's happening in the TV & smartphone landscape.