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Exploring public sentiment on intimate partner violence in India

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Abstract

In India, literature suggests that 64.62% women face physical Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), 23.87% are victimized with severe violence, 2.15% are victimized by sexual violence, and 9.36% women face emotional violence. The current study aims to analyse the public's positive and negative attitudes, sentiments, opinions, and feelings towards IPV. To affirm the importance of dealing with and finding relevant solutions to such gruesome concerns, the study analysed 309,652 comments on Indian movie trailers depicting IPV, streaming on YouTube. Affective reactions, relational distress, activism, and social justice emerged as significant themes gathered from sentiment and content analysis through the lens of Aker's Social Learning Theory (SLT). The study revealed a dominant negative sentiment toward IPV through frequent use of words like "violence," "crime," "disgusting," "toxic," and "disrespect." A widespread disapproval of IPV perpetration is evident, highlighting the role of social media in raising awareness. Positive comments indicate the appreciation of the movie trailers for depicting the gruesome actions effectively through visual means, reaching a large audience. Moreover, cultural dynamics and patriarchy also contribute to accepting IPV in specific contexts. The study opens avenues for future research, particularly examining factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity, and exploring attitudes and sentiments over other online platforms while using objective measures explaining the causes of IPV victimization and perpetration, and an immediate need to prevent such occurrences.

Keywords Intimate partner violence, Sentiment analysis, India

1 Introduction and background

Violence is broadly defined as self-directed, interpersonal, and collective harm, causing a marital friction, due to physical (causing pain or injuries), psychological (humiliating, criticizing, and blaming in private or public space), or sexual harm (forcing sexual intercourse) to the victim in cases of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), [4, 46, 70]. In India, 64.62% women face physical IPV, 23.87% are victimized with severe violence, 2.15% are victimized by sexual violence, and 9.36% women face emotional violence [53]. On the other hand, in India, 51.6% men experience emotional violence and 6% experience physical violence [52]. IPV can be comorbid with substance abuse [69], criminally and sexually risky behaviours, and creates adverse outcomes in adolescence and adulthood [10,



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56, 66]. Furthermore, there is an inverse relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy, education levels, and the likelihood of approving and accepting IPV [25, 37, 65]. Other antecedents and outcomes of IPV victimization include an individual's age, deprivation, neglect, threats, intimidation, stalking, etc., to the victim [13], social inequities and disparities based on race, gender, education, legal systems [35], poverty, unemployment stress, hierarchical family structure [47], mental illness [2], and disorganized neighbourhoods [18]. Despite these factors, victims may still choose to stay in an abuse relationship due to low self-worth, fear of leaving, rationalizing the violence, minimization of the degree of violence, belief in changing their partner in the positive light, children, familial responsibilities, determination, finances, and lack of social support [21, 44]. Moreover, violence becomes an acceptable phenomenon when there is exposure to violence in the family, and thus results from social learning [20]. Thereby, a sociological lens to understand factors affecting IPV perpetration and victimisation is essential to steer model, intervention, and policy development. To expand the scope of research, the current study employs Aker's Social Learning theory to provide a holistic theoretical framework.

1.1 Attitudes and sentiments towards IPV on social media

During COVID-19, a surge in domestic violence cases evoked negative and neutral sentiments, while implementation of strategies for domestic violence awareness, support groups, and campaigns evoked positive sentiments (Usher et al., 2021). General positive sentiments or gay men's favourable attitudes towards IPV were found among those who possessed the necessary IPV knowledge, thereby putting them at a greater risk of perpetration and victimisation [1, 28]. Such opinions are easily voiced out through social media due to anonymity [68], and privacy protection measures that facilitate greater support and help-seeking among the youth defying traditional and cultural norms to voice against IPV explicitly [71]. Another example includes explicitly stating negative opinions towards older adults being victimized in their residential care facilities, as they perceived the old to be weak and powerless [49].

Social media sites enable networking by posting pictures of oneself [31], also evoking and escalating jealousy and creating a vicious cycle of violence [23, 27]. These ideas stem from traditional patriarchal ideas wherein men justify IPV as a combination of social, cultural, and religious factors, with rigid and distinct gender roles and men having full rights over women irrespective of their desires [61]. On the other hand, though there are negative consequences of social media, it has also opened communication between males and females, providing a space for emotional expressions for males, social support, thereby complementing face-to-face communication [11, 12, 54, 57].

Analysis of users' sentiments expressed over social media platforms such as YouTube portrays the real perceptions and attitudes towards global events [62]. Furthermore, concerning IPV and its types, approximately 53% social media posts depict physical abuse, 35% depict sexual abuse, and 50% depict psychological abuse [11]. While Indian metropolitan cities have a significant number of internet users, women in some rural areas may not even have access to mobile phones [38]. Similarly, poverty-stricken and illiterate women in Bangladesh, residing in rural areas, are married at a young age, not having access to media, and believing in male superiority, are more vulnerable to IPV [9, 37].

1.2 Sex differences

Sexual identity and IPV share a bidirectional relationship as both males and females can be victims and perpetrators of IPV [15], with differing interpretations of the act [60]. Feminists view men as dominating and controlling women by inflicting injury and preventing employment. The relationship is two-fold, where women also use physical violence against men [6, 8, 48, 67].

Around 27% of women across the globe, aged between 15 and 24 years, are victims of physical and sexual abuse [59]. Moreover, when independent women exit the abusive marriage, it shows a negative attitude towards abuse [37, 67], and they also experience severe mental, physical, and financial consequences when quitting the relationship [43]. Though females experience greater physical abuse perpetration than males [16, 17], men who are victims of IPV find it challenging to seek support as interventions are centred on female victims [42]. This is true despite evidence of males with depression, domestic violence, or parental separation reporting IPV victimization [41].

Contrastingly, in Germany, it is evident that males are more likely to perpetrate IPV without being a victim [14]. Additionally, though income, unity, and dominance by male members significantly impact IPV [19], males report more IPV perpetration than females [32]. Thus, with mixed findings in the past, gender differences about IPV perpetration largely remain unanswered, as though females have more self-control, they are more likely to perpetrate IPV [36].

On the other hand, men and women have also been found to similarly engage in threats and intimidation, possessiveness and jealousy, economic abuse, diminishment of partner's self-esteem, general control, stalking, passive aggressiveness, using children, and abusing the legal system [39, 45]. As both genders are affected by IPV, gender equality is mediated to some extent by a definition favourable to breaking the law, closely aligning with the component of Social Learning Theory [51]. Given the backdrop of the debilitating impact of IPV on the victims, it is essential to uncover public attitudes and emotions towards IPV, as the first step to curb the cycle of violence and further implement appropriate strategies. Moreover, it is essential to understand the perspectives of males, such that there is a coherent sense of understanding the reasons for IPV perpetration [61].

The current study, thus, employs sentiment and content analysis to unravel the public attitudes, opinions, sentiments, and emotions towards IPV portrayed through Indian movie trailers streamed on YouTube, from the lens of Social Learning Theory (SLT). The research delves deeper into understanding the depth and range of attitudes, sentiments, and emotions towards gruesome acts like IPV so that effective social, educational, and therapeutic interventions can be devised to minimize such actions and provide effective aid to the victims of abuse. An advantage of employing a sentiment analysis over the YouTube comments gives a larger picture of the glimpse of such horrific actions by exploring the suppressed voices that may find their outlets through anonymous expressions. Considering the diversity and the length and breadth of the Indian context, it would be difficult for a researcher to primarily cover all the regions for the study. This limitation is largely covered through the data gathered from the YouTube comments on Indian movie trailers that depict IPV.

1.3 Social learning theory (SLT)

SLT defines criminal activity in terms of an exposure to an environment that facilitates it [3]. The key concepts include definitions (actions that confirm or disconfirm a particular behaviour), imitation (observing, identifying, and imitating a role model), differential reinforcement, and differential punishment. The frequency of crime depends on the frequency of its reinforcement or punishment. Actions are termed as favourable or unfavourable based on their frequency, duration, priority, and intensity of the relationship [3]. Aker's SLT efficiently explains and predicts IPV perpetration and victimization, also challenging the existing theories that explain different pathways for men and women in terms of processes involved in IPV perpetration and victimization [58]. Additionally, social learning acts as a bridge that influences the relationship between self-control and the likelihood of an individual engaging in severe IPV [55].

2 Objectives and research questions

2.1 Objectives

The study aims to understand and analyse viewers' experiences and sentiments towards IPV through comments provided in Indian movie trailers on YouTube. The research questions outlined in the following section aim to analyse a larger section of people's attitudes and opinions towards IPV, who might belong to different strata and sections of the Indian society, by analysing suppressed voices and expressions that might not find their voice otherwise.

3 Research questions

- a. How do viewers navigate and express their experiences of viewing IPV through Indian cinemas?
- b. What are people's positive and negative sentiments and attitudes towards IPV portrayal in Indian movie trailers streamed on YouTube?
- c. What is the magnitude and frequency of emotional expression of individuals towards the portrayal of IPV?

4 Method

4.1 Sample

Data were collected through people's comments obtained from ten Indian movie trailers, depicting IPV released between 2014 and 2024. YouTube is one of the world's largest video streaming platforms, and thus, it was chosen for selecting movies over other social media applications like Facebook, etc. (Severyn et al., 2016). A total of 309,652 comments were obtained from the movie trailers streaming on YouTube and were qualitatively analysed through Atlas Ti Software [7], without filtering or sorting them in any way. The keywords employed for the search included "Intimate Partner Violence", "India", and "Movie Trailer". These keywords were chosen based on the literature previously cited and that seemed relevant to the objectives of the study. Around 2,30,000 videos appeared in the search using the keywords "intimate partner violence" and "India". Further, they were filtered based on the time frame and only movie trailers, which are limited to the 2014–2024 period. Only 29 videos appeared. Lastly, the 10 trailers that provided access to comments were chosen for analysis. The comments were exported as they appeared in the YouTube comments, using 'ExportComments' software [30].

4.2 Ethical considerations

Since the topic is sensitive, confidentiality and anonymity were ensured; that is, participants' IDs or usernames were not mentioned while extracting comments from YouTube. To eliminate researchers' bias [63] and ensure trustworthiness in the data, credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity were ensured.

4.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Since the data would have been voluminous and with limited knowledge of the researchers regarding the language, accessibility, and analysis of the dataset, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were set.

4.3.1 Inclusion criteria

Indian movie trailers were the primary inclusion criteria. Furthermore, the selection of the movies was based on a minimum number of likes, comments, subscribers, and views that the trailer for the movie received when streamed on YouTube.

4.3.2 Exclusion criteria

Movie trailers with fewer than 10,000 likes, 30,000 subscribers, 1000 comments, and 10 million views were excluded from the study. Furthermore, web series, movie shots or clippings, in non-Indian settings, and movies that did not portray any form of IPV were also excluded. Additionally, when the comments and words were repetitive and frequently occurred, other movie trailers were not undertaken.

4.4 Analysis

The data is analysed qualitatively, using content and sentiment analysis. Sentiment analysis was used to classify the comments as positive, negative, or neutral. Further, content analysis included analysing the most commonly or frequently occurring words by quantifying the comments in terms of their frequency of occurrence [Refer to Table 2] [63].

4.4.1 Operational definitions

The positive sentiment was operationally defined as comments expressing appreciation for the realistic depiction of IPV, empathy for victims, or support for anti-IPV messages. Negative sentiment included comments that justified IPV, minimizing its seriousness, blaming victims, or showing hostility toward IPV-related content. Lastly, neutral sentiment included comments unrelated to the IPV stance.

4.4.2 Coding process

Two coders independently reviewed and coded the dataset using a pre-agreed codebook developed through an open coding process on a pilot sample. Codes were applied for sentiment classification and for thematic categories emerging from the content. Inter-coder reliability was assessed on a random 10% subset, achieving 87% percentage agreement. Disagreements were resolved through consensus discussions.

4.4.3 *Atlas.ti* tools and analytical procedures

Code co-occurrence analysis identified relationships between sentiment categories and specific IPV-related concepts (e.g., "violence" + "justice" frequently co-occurring in

negative sentiment). Emotion detection was performed manually by identifying emotion-laden words and phrases (e.g., “disgusting”, “hope”, “terrible”). Aspect-based sentiment analysis was applied by linking sentiments to specific aspects of IPV portrayal (e.g., physical abuse, emotional abuse, legal justice) rather than to the overall movie.

4.4.4 Pre-processing

Common “stop words” (e.g., the, and, of, is) were removed from word frequency outputs to focus on meaningful terms. Comments were reviewed for contextual meaning to ensure words like “amazing” were coded as positive only if related to IPV depiction, not general film quality.

Both authors independently assigned codes to the same set of data, so that the coding scheme is consistently applied, ensuring trustworthiness, credibility, and inter-coder reliability [5, 26]. These codes were analysed using Sentiment Analysis or Opinion Mining, employing code co-occurrence, emotion detection, and aspect-based sentiment analysis to infer the frequency of positive, negative, and neutral emotions towards IPV. Through content analysis, the frequency of negative and positive sentiments was substantiated using participants’ verbatim. Finally, broader themes followed an iterative process of inductive coding [34].

5 Results

Comments from 10 Indian movie trailers were extracted using Export Comments software, and they were exported to Atlat Ti software, Version 9 (2021) for further analysis. Data were manually coded inductively to form codes and culminate them into themes and subthemes [Refer to Table 1]. Only 10 movie trailers, streaming on YouTube, were

Table 1 List of movie trailers chosen

Movie	Number of likes	Number of comments	Subscribers	Number of views	Video length (minutes)
Animal	1.3M	32,087	285M	81M	2.26
Darlings	183K	7245	25.8M	47M	2.34
Etharkkum Thunindhavan	673K	33605	29.5M	8.9M	2.12
Thappad	710K	36751	285M	29M	2.54
Kabir Singh	1.6M	69912	285M	110M	2.43
Secret Superstar	203K	7659	4.05M	27M	2.45
Humari Adhuri Kahani	2.6M	87362	53.9M	264M	5.45
Draupathi	255K	31272	18.4M	7.5M	2.31
Parched	44K	1169	2.4M	9.8M	2.31
Lipstick Under my Burkha	41K	2590	32.9K	11M	2.16

chosen because a few movie trailers did not entail comments or were not accessible to the researcher. When the comments appeared to be recurring, and no new data was sought, other movies were not considered for analysis. Cumulatively visualizing the data through content analysis, commonly occurring words include “violence, goosebumps, amazing, awesome, masterpiece, violent, justice, divorce, emotions, relationship, marriage, abuse, abusive, crime, excellent, happy, comedy, disgusting, toxic, disrespect, emotional, women, hope, and story.” Most of these words show a negative sentiment towards IPV by most of the viewers [Refer to Table 2].

The frequency of positive and negative sentiments through quotations from each video is elucidated [Refer to Fig. 1]. Overall, the frequency of negative sentiments is higher than the positive sentiments, as the frequency of positive quotations is 2475, and that of negative quotations is 3515, and the rest of the comments appeared neutral in nature. An example of a negative comment includes “*These acts with women r [are] leading to ectreme [extreme] consequences like divorce*”. Furthermore, it is negative because, not only is the comment opposing IPV, but it also propagates violence as a solution to a violent act “*Y [why] can’t a slap for a slap*”. Though such a comment substantiates the negative sentiment towards the depiction of IPV, the extraction of these comments is limited as the majority of them were not in the English language and were so short that their sentiment could not be considered for analysis. Across all the videos, a few words stand out quite distinctly and appear consistently across all videos. These words include “*happy, women, hope, and story*.” Elaborating these words, it is evident through comments like “*nice story....realistic*” as an appreciation towards IPV depictions. Most of these movies are about women, presenting the agony of IPV with the hope of reaching a large audience. This means that people are intrigued to know and learn about such bitter truths that might through cinemas [Refer to Appendix A for the sample codebook].

5.1 Emerging themes in the study

a. *Violence*

Across the videos, violence and similar words such as ‘violent’, ‘crime’, ‘justice’, ‘toxic’, ‘abuse’, ‘vulgar’, and ‘abusive’ appeared most often [Refer to Table 2]. Comments like “*this is not love!!! because love doesn’t hurt*” show the need for awareness in the common public to distinguish between true love and when that turns into a violent action against the other person through movies such as “Kabir Singh.”

b. *Affective reactions*

Frequently appearing words also depicted positive and negative affect. Positive affect is visible through words such as ‘amazing’, ‘awesome’, ‘masterpiece’, ‘excellent’, ‘happy’, ‘freedom’, ‘hope’, and ‘story’. Negative affect appears through examples such as ‘goosebumps’, ‘revenge’, ‘disgusting’, ‘brutal’, ‘shocking’, ‘terrible’, ‘disrespect’, and ‘emotional’ [Refer to Table 2]. Individuals show hope when movies help to create awareness on sensitive topics such as IPV, inferred through comments such as “*This is going to be a legendary movie on such a deep & profound subject*.” People relate to such content deeply, and this is visible in the verbatim: “*What a movie, man. A lot of people relate to this movie*.” Another comment, such as “*I cried and smiled, this movie is so beautiful*,” depicts the interplay of positive and negative sentiment attached to IPV depictions. Though the quotations show a positive reaction towards the movie, they refer to how well gruesome actions are adequately captured and shown to the

Table 2 Frequency of words depicting attitudes and opinion towards IPV

Words	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10
Violence	148	214	6	658	8	0	0	8	0	0
Goosebumps	70	1	13	16	39	6	6	2	5	0
Indian	67	42	9	222	42	110	8	28	21	156
Amazing	59	104	6	104	49	102	11	3	24	40
Awesome	46	42	16	72	70	174	4	16	43	46
Masterpiece	41	70	7	18	31	17	63	0	6	1
Violent	31	6	0	22	2	0	0	1	0	2
Negative	15	2	0	53	4	6	0	10	0	49
Revenge	15	35	1	5	0	0	0	3	0	0
Crime	14	10	0	22	5	4	1	2	1	11
Excellent	11	13	3	33	14	22	2	11	1	3
Happy	11	48	5	200	8	30	16	24	6	11
Comedy	10	118	7	21	3	9	0	8	1	18
Disgusting	10	10	0	14	7	5	0	0	0	9
Vulgar	10	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	2	5
Brutal	9	0	0	13	1	0	0	0	0	0
Feminist	9	2	0	126	7	0	0	0	0	19
Justice	9	0	12	63	8	0	0	10	0	8
Shocking	9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Terrible	8	1	1	11	1	0	0	0	0	0
Emotions	7	5	8	195	5	13	8	0	0	13
Incredible	4	9	1	13	7	6	2	0	2	1
Slap	0	8	0	1676	3	1	0	1	0	11
Divorce	0	8	0	821	0	8	2	2	0	11
Relationship	13	9	0	409	12	4	15	14	1	5
Marriage	7	7	0	325	1	14	4	46	2	19
Abuse	6	17	1	307	6	12	0	1	0	2
Abusive	5	15	0	99	4	1	0	0	0	2
Toxic	32	9	0	64	27	0	0	0	0	0
Disrespect	3	1	0	66	0	7	1	0	0	5
Freedom	0	0	0	9	1	11	0	0	4	79
Emotional	6	14	5	69	6	21	32	0	0	1
Women	51	89	27	1679	10	120	0	19	34	647

audience, which a few did relate to such behaviours happening in their daily life. Additionally, comments such as “*bitter truth of the society, must watch movie*” play a pivotal role in promoting awareness through such movies.

c. *Relationship distress*

Since IPV occurs in a relational context, words like ‘divorce’ depict relationship distress [Refer to Table 2]. “*A good message through this film to those men who indulge in the pathetic act of wife beating*” exhibits relational distress. Substantiating the

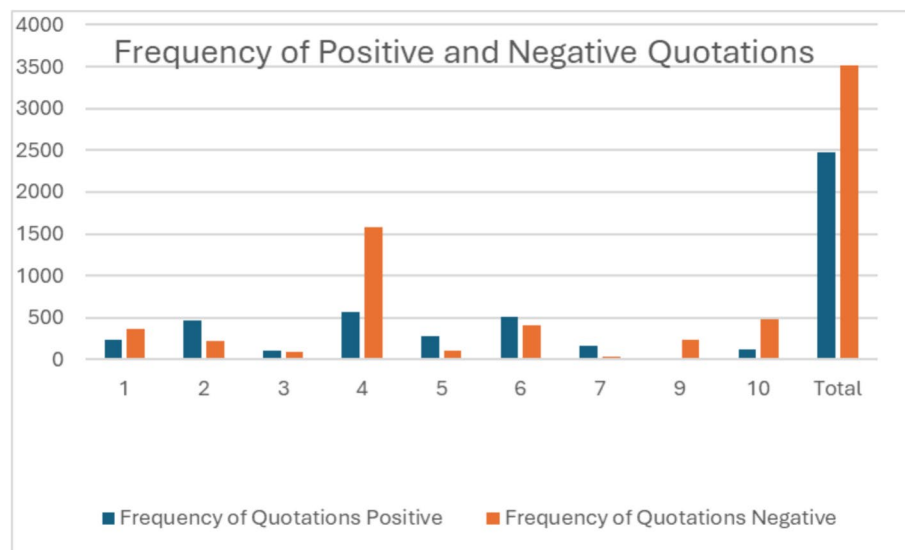


Fig. 1 Frequency of Positive and negative quotations per video

word ‘divorce’, a comment mentions “these acts with women are leading to extreme consequences like divorce.” A few other words, such as “relationship” and “marriage”, are also indicative of relational variables that might bring about distress if individuals engage in behaviours such as IPV. Comments such as “*As an Indian woman, I am outraged and disgusted by 99 percent of these male characters and feel so blessed not to know any men like these, I bleed for women who do.*” show the disgust of individuals towards such depictions of abusive relationship dynamics.

d. Activism and Social Justice.

A few words retrieved from comments include “feminist”, “freedom”, “empowerment”, “feminism” and “hope” [Refer to Table 2]. As showcased in the comments too, “Such movies and educational content emphasise the need for activism and social justice to curb IPV in India. *“Absolutely, a woman truly deserves love with respect”* is one fine example of how women should be perceived and respected socially.

6 Discussion

The current study infers the occurrence of negative sentiments more than positive ones towards IPV, depicted through Indian movie trailers. Through triangulation of data sources such as literature, data, and theory, the underlying phenomenon of IPV was studied holistically. People do not view IPV from an affirmative lens due to the frequent occurrence of words such as “*violence, violent, disgust, crime, etc.*” The risk profiles for men and women perpetrators provide support for IPV, and patriarchy is one of the major contributing factors to an increasing IPV perpetration [24, 61]. The findings align with those of [64, 71], wherein victims got a pathway to openly express their anonymous opinions towards IPV perpetrators by using a pseudonym and creating a huge fan base. Such pathways of expression become essential because some victims may still tolerate abuse due to low self-worth, fear of leaving, rationalizing the violence, minimization of the degree of violence, belief in changing their partner in the positive light, children, familial responsibilities, determination, finances, and lack of social support [21, 44].

Some positive emotions, such as “excellent, happy, hope, etc.,” are also associated with films depicting IPV in terms of the movie accurately depicting such gruesome acts and their impact on the victims. Comments such as “*Just finished watching this! And now one of my favourites!*” substantiate the above argument. Contrastingly, some cultures may view physical actions such as battering one’s wife in a favourable light, especially when there is illiteracy, poverty, or belief in male superiority [9, 37]. Individuals believing and favouring IPV are more likely to have positive views and, more so, engage in violent actions that lead to IPV perpetration [33].

Levels of education, self-esteem, and self-efficacy play a crucial role in acceptance or denial of IPV, and inverse relationship between these facets and IPV acceptance [25, 37, 65]. If education and wealth are higher, violence and justification of IPV are lower [37]. Defining boundaries, from the SLT perspective, becomes important as defining joking or mocking the other person as a playful behaviour towards each other, but causes harm to the victims, should also be deemed unacceptable [50]. Such rooted social and cultural factors need to be further identified and explored, while upholding blindfolded cultural practices, exploitation should not be accepted [72].

Violence has adverse consequences on mental and physical health, with escalating mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and somatization [29, 40]. Additionally, stalking, intimidation, passive aggressiveness, abuse of the legal system, etc., are not quite explicit [39, 45]. Though the study did not delve into identifying gender differences in the comments retrieved, past studies have identified males as showing social desirability and reporting less abuse than females [32]. These gender differences can be further explored in future studies. Females can also perpetrate IPV, but men cannot evidently seek support as services and interventions are more accessible to female than male victims [42], despite evidence of males with depression, domestic violence, or parental separation reporting IPV victimization [41].

Thus, content analysis complemented the conclusions drawn from sentiment analysis. Sentiment analysis focused on emotional expressions, which found that people had more negative sentiments about IPV. By complementing the sentiment analysis, content analysis helped to draw out larger themes with valid justifications, based on participants’ verbatim. The thoughts behind IPV depictions are seen as “*disgust*,” “*toxic*,” “*vulgar*,” etc., but their perception is inferred through sentimental analysis, complementing each other and providing a richer and deeper understanding of the occurrence and portrayal of IPV. “*India should make these kind of movies not like houseful, race and etc. type*” illustrates the need for awareness through visual media for dealing with sensitive issues such as IPV.

From the SLT lens, patriarchy, culture, learning systems, and peer influences affect IPV victimization and perpetration [58]. Movies serve as a platform for people to learn criminal activity and imitate it through ways such as reinforcing a particular behavior or through defining the appropriateness of actions [3]. SLT propagates that if an individual is exposed to violence at an early stage in life, they tend to imitate and accept it quickly, through observation and imitation [20]. On the other hand, as SLT propounds, an individual might internalize passive ways of dealing with the abuse. If the victim in the movie is helpless and unable to cope with the abuse, the viewer may internalise this and accept violence. Moreover, films that portray negative outcomes to IPV, such as justice to the victim or harsh consequences to the perpetrator of abuse, can empower the

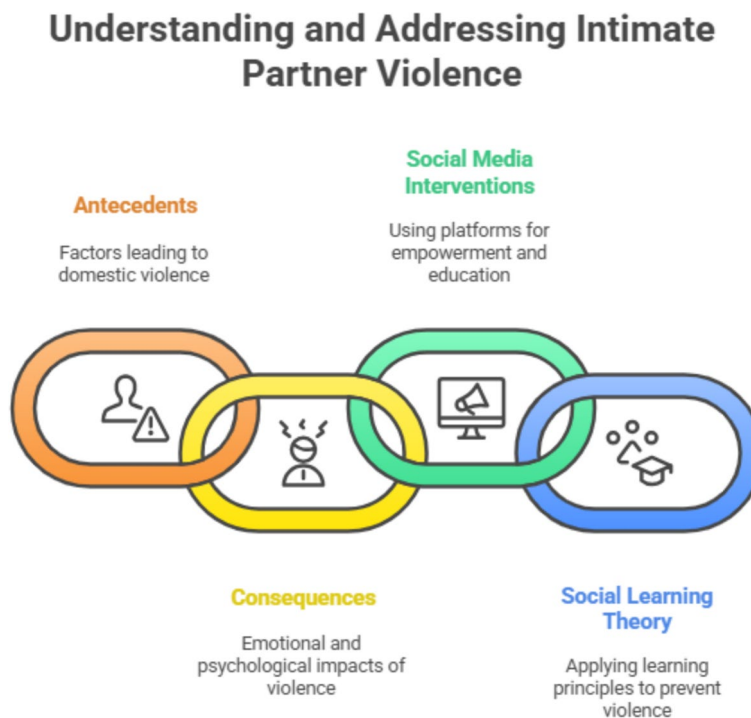


Fig. 2 Conceptual model to understand and address IPV

victim and instil a sense of fear in the minds of the perpetrator, articulated by differential punishment and differential reinforcement in SLT. Examples of such empowerment can be witnessed through movies such as ‘Thappad’ and ‘Darlings.’ Thus, movies can serve as an excellent medium for the audience to understand healthy attitudes towards relationships, emphasizing the importance of ‘consent’ even in a marital relationship.

IPV has associated antecedents and outcomes, and thus, needs timely and immediate attention as conceptualised through Fig. 1. Viewers use social media platforms such as YouTube to anonymously express their opinions, emotions, and sentiments towards IPV. Negative comments and word frequencies are higher than the positive ones, showcasing the need to develop such awareness modalities in the future (Fig. 2).

7 Implications

Findings of the study apply to social media content creators and movie makers, working to create awareness through visual depictions of media on sensitive issues like IPV. Online platforms should operate with care and caution, as they might be helpful at one end, but excessive negative comments and blaming can instigate public movements and incur political consequences [68]. Excessive depiction of abuse and vulgarity may create disinterest in the public, but when adequately portrayed, it can be educational to strengthen the demarcating boundary between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Pictorial and graphical content can aid the uneducated masses to gain awareness regarding IPV. Legal regulatory bodies also need to work towards anti-domestic violence laws and provide timely interventions in case of emergencies [71]. For example, international communities and human rights activists in Afghanistan advocate for raising these issues to improve their victims’ conditions and protect them from abuse [22]. Similar interventions and action strategies are required in India too, as noted by a few participants

who mention that *“Indian society needs a movie like this in the native language, so more people need to know what one slap means.”*

8 Limitations and future directions

The study incorporated the dataset from only ten Indian movie trailers on YouTube. Given the cultural and linguistic diversity in India, it was difficult to analyse comments in several languages other than English and Hindi written in English. The study did not segregate the extracted comments based on gender or age to analyse age or gender differences in sentiments towards IPV perpetration and victimization. Region-wise or state-wise analysis in the Indian context was not conducted in the current study. Moreover, the data was extracted from a secondary source. It did not primarily employ first-hand experiences of individuals from the field for analysis and interpretation. Additionally, the data analysis employed a pure qualitative methodology. Thus, studies in the future can complement the analysis by collecting primary data from participants and analysing it both qualitatively and quantitatively. Furthermore, future studies can look for age, gender, and regional differences to study attitudes, sentiments, and emotions towards IPV perpetration and victimization as portrayed by comments or movies in regional dialects as well. Future studies could delve deeper into exploring psychological/emotional abuse, physical violence, and sexual abuse separately portrayed through visual media. Studies could also explore IPV depictions in web series and on other social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Comparison of opinions obtained on movies depicting IPV in India and portrayal of IPV in movies abroad could also be a scope for further research. Gender differences in viewing and analysing IPV in movies and other social media platforms could be undertaken by future research. Moreover, movies also need to include men as victims of abuse so as to spread awareness regarding the antecedents and consequences.

9 Conclusion

The current study analysed sentiments regarding IPV as depicted in Indian movie trailers. The results show that individuals have more negative attitudes, sentiments, and dislikes towards IPV. With the evolving nature of social media, content creators and movie makers need to create psychoeducational movies that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in a relationship. Policy makers need to actively devise strategies to curb IPV, at the personal and societal front, enabling individuals to raise their voices and opinions through anonymized social media platforms. Future research needs to also focus on age and gender differences in IPV expression, including analysis of web series, blog posts, and focusing on the specifics of regional representation of voices on social media. This research also paves the way for more research in IPV, also focusing on steps to raise awareness and maximise individual, familial, and societal well-being.

Appendix A

Sample Code Book

Code	Definition	Example
Positive sentiment	Comments expressing appreciation for the realistic depiction of IPV, empathy for victims, or support for anti-IPV messages	"nice story...realistic" "Sometimes you stumble upon something that leaves a lingering smile on your face...this trailer was exactly that:)...Looking forward to watch it" "This trailer reminds me of the Lebanese film Caramel (Sukkar Banat). I like it!" "Great movie" "Awesome Ajay Sir—Our society needs this movie...Indeed an eye opener...Cheer for it's Success" "Movie contains many explicit and bold scenes... done by all three women... but there's nothing vulgar about those scenes. In fact, this movie has nicely exposed the so-called "marads" of our society that exists in every corner and lane of our 'mohallas' who make rules for the convenience of men, to prove their hierarchical machismo. Salute for all the ladies who have been a part of such a fantastic social movie... must respect them all"
Negative sentiment	Comments that justified IPV, minimizing its seriousness, blaming victims, or showing hostility toward IPV-related content	"These acts with women r [are] leading to ectreme [extreme] consequences like divorce" "These acts with women r [are] leading to ectreme [extreme] consequences like divorce" "This movie will say a hell of a lot of things that Muslim women can't say or do by any means. They stay in black every time they step out. They have a human body gifted by god, and they have the right to do whatever, it's just they are being moulded since their childhood for that outfit. Men can marry multiple times. Where is the sense? What are Muslim men scared of?" "I have nothing against Islam and never will. Let women live, just like Muslim men live." "No Thappad to women..no humiliation to man..no separation from in laws.. no fake defamation cases of harassment. Be fare and kind to each other no matter man or woman..."
Neutral sentiment	Comments unrelated to the IPV stance	"I am from Bangladesh" "Plabita is beautiful." "Where is summit vyaas" "Please Upload Full Movie"

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Author contributions

DI: Introduction, literature review, writing the draft, summarizing the results and discussion section and fomratting of the article VVN: Qualitative analysis and interpretation, supervision, reviews and revision, conceptualisation.

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Data availability

The datasets used and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Since the data utilized was taken from a secondary source and was anonymously chosen as names or identifying details were not taken for the analysis, ethics approval and consent were not necessary.

Consent for publication

Not Applicable.

Clinical trial

Not Applicable.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

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