



The Indian film music industry and drug culture

Dr Vivek Ranga

Associate Professor of Music (V)

Govt. College For Women, Karnal

Introduction

The Indian film music industry, also known as Bollywood music, has been an integral part of Indian culture for many years. It has played a vital role in shaping the Indian entertainment industry and has been a source of inspiration for many people. However, in recent years, there has been an increasing concern about the drug culture prevalent in the Indian film industry. This paper aims to explore the connection between the Indian film music industry and drug culture and how it has affected the industry and society.

History of the Indian film music industry

The history of the Indian film music industry dates back to the early 1930s, when the first Indian sound film, "Alam Ara," was released in 1931. The film's songs, composed by Ferozshah M. Mistri and B. Irani, became extremely popular, paving the way for the film music industry in India.

In the early years, film songs were primarily adaptations of classical Indian music and devotional songs. However, over time, film music began to incorporate elements of Western music, jazz, and other popular music styles.

During the 1940s and 1950s, film music in India underwent a significant transformation, with the introduction of playback singing. This allowed actors who were not trained singers to lip-sync to pre-recorded songs sung by professional singers. Some of the most famous playback singers of the era include Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, Mohammed Rafi, and Kishore Kumar.

The 1960s and 1970s are considered the golden era of Indian film music, with legendary music directors such as S.D. Burman, R.D. Burman, Shankar Jaikishan, and Laxmikant Pyarelal produced some of the most iconic film songs in Indian cinema. This era also saw the emergence of new genres of film music, including the cabaret song, the disco song, and the qawwali.

In the 1980s and 1990s, film music in India began to incorporate more Western musical influences, such as rock and pop music. This era saw the emergence of new music directors such as A.R. Rahman, who revolutionised the Indian film music industry with his innovative use of technology and fusion of Indian classical music with Western musical styles.

Today, the Indian film music industry is a multi-billion dollar industry, producing hundreds of film songs each year in a variety of languages and musical styles. The industry



continues to evolve, with new music directors and singers emerging and new musical genres being introduced.

Drug culture in the Indian film industry

The Indian film industry is known for its glitz and glamour, but it has also been plagued by drug culture. There have been several instances of drug abuse in the Indian film industry, and it has become a matter of concern for the authorities and society.

The drug culture in the Indian film industry is not a new phenomenon. It has been prevalent in the industry for many years, and it has been kept under wraps for a long time. However, in recent years, the issue has come to the forefront, and there have been several high-profile cases of drug abuse in the industry.

Factors contributing to drug culture in the Indian film industry

There are several factors contributing to the drug culture in the Indian film industry. One of the primary factors is the high-pressure environment that actors and filmmakers work in. The film industry is highly competitive, and actors and filmmakers are under constant pressure to deliver their best. This pressure can lead to stress and anxiety, and many turn to drugs to cope with the pressure.

Here are some points:

1. **High-pressure work environment:** Bollywood is a highly competitive industry, and actors and other professionals are often under tremendous pressure to perform. This pressure can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, which may drive some individuals to turn to drugs and other substances.
2. **Glamour and party culture:** Bollywood is known for its glamour and party culture. Many actors and other professionals attend parties and social events, where drugs and alcohol are often available. This culture can normalise substance use and create peer pressure to indulge in it.
3. **Easy availability of drugs:** Drugs are readily available in many parts of India, including in Mumbai, the hub of the Indian film industry. The presence of a vast drug market and easy access to it can lead to drug use and abuse.
4. **Lack of regulation and enforcement:** The Indian film industry operates with minimal regulation and enforcement, which can make it easy for drugs and other illegal substances to enter the industry. The lack of proper regulations and enforcement can also encourage a culture of impunity, where drug use and abuse are tolerated or overlooked.
5. **Lack of awareness and education:** Many individuals in the Indian film industry may not be aware of the risks and consequences associated with drug use and abuse. A lack of



awareness and education on the issue can make it difficult for individuals to make informed choices and seek help when needed.

6. Influence of western culture: The influence of western culture on Indian society and its entertainment industry cannot be ignored. The glorification of drug use in western movies and music can have an impact on Indian filmmakers and artists, leading to the normalisation of drug culture in the industry.
7. Mental health issues: Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder are prevalent in the Indian film industry. These issues can make individuals more susceptible to drug use and addiction.

The drug culture in the Indian film industry has also had a significant impact on society. Many young people look up to actors and filmmakers as role models, and the prevalence of drug abuse in the industry can have a negative influence on the youth. It can also lead to an increase in drug abuse among the general population.

Measures to address the drug culture in the Indian film industry

There is an urgent need to address the drug culture in the Indian film industry. The industry and the authorities need to work together to tackle this issue. Some of the measures that can be taken include:

1. The link between drug culture and mental health: There is a strong link between drug abuse and mental health issues. The high-pressure environment of the film industry can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, which can increase the likelihood of drug abuse. The long-term use of drugs can also lead to mental health issues such as paranoia, hallucinations, and depression.
2. Celebrity influence: Celebrities in the film industry have a significant influence on their fans, and their actions can have a significant impact on society. The prevalence of drug abuse among celebrities can lead to an increase in drug abuse among their fans.
3. The role of media: The media has a significant role to play in highlighting the issue of drug abuse in the film industry. Media coverage can help create awareness about the negative impact of drug abuse and put pressure on the authorities to take action.
4. The impact on the film industry's financial health: The drug culture in the film industry can have a significant impact on its financial health. The negative publicity generated by drug abuse can lead to a loss of credibility and can affect the industry's ability to attract investment.



5. The need for rehabilitation: In addition to enforcement measures, there is also a need to provide support and rehabilitation to those struggling with drug addiction in the film industry. Rehab programs can help individuals overcome their addiction and can also help in reducing the negative impact of drug abuse on society.
6. International connections: The Indian film industry has strong connections with the global entertainment industry, and drug abuse is not limited to the Indian film industry. The issue of drug abuse is prevalent in many industries globally, and the Indian film industry can learn from the experiences of other industries in tackling this issue.
7. Impact on mental health: Drug abuse can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health. Actors and filmmakers who turn to drugs to cope with the pressure of the industry may experience depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.
8. Link to the entertainment industry: Drug abuse is not limited to the Indian film industry; it is prevalent in the entertainment industry worldwide. Actors and filmmakers in Hollywood, for example, have also been known to struggle with drug abuse.
9. Recent high-profile cases: In 2020, several high-profile cases related to drug abuse in the Indian film industry came to light. These cases involved actors and filmmakers, and the authorities took action against those involved.
10. Perception of the industry: The drug culture in the Indian film industry has led to a negative perception of the industry. It is often associated with partying and excess, which can be damaging to the industry's reputation.
11. Impact on creativity: Drug abuse can have a significant impact on an individual's creativity. Some actors and filmmakers may believe that drugs enhance their
12. creativity, but in reality, it can have the opposite effect and lead to a decline in quality work.
13. Need for support and rehabilitation: Actors and filmmakers who struggle with drug abuse need support and rehabilitation to overcome their addiction. The industry and the authorities need to provide resources for those who need it and work to create a supportive environment.
14. Role of social media: Social media has played a significant role in bringing the issue of drug abuse in the Indian film industry to the forefront. Many actors and filmmakers have been exposed through social media, and it has created a dialogue about the issue.
15. Strict enforcement of drug laws: The authorities need to enforce drug laws strictly and take action against drug peddlers and users in the industry.
16. Awareness campaigns: There is a need to create awareness about the negative impact of drug abuse on society. The industry can play a significant role



Overall, the issue of drug culture in the Indian film industry is complex and multi-faceted. It requires a collaborative effort from the industry, the authorities, and society to address the issue and create a supportive environment for actors and filmmakers.

In conclusion, the issue of drug culture in the Indian film music industry is a complex one. It has a significant impact on the industry and society and requires a multi-pronged approach to tackle it effectively. The industry and authorities need to work together to enforce drug laws, create awareness about the negative impact of drug abuse, and provide support and rehabilitation to those struggling with addiction. Only by working together can we hope to address this issue and create a healthier and more positive film industry for the future.

References:

1. Aggarwal, S. (2018). Substance use in the Indian film industry: A comprehensive review. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 60(1), 46-51. doi:10.4103/psychiatry.IndianJPsychiatry_155_17
2. Bagchi, A. (2017). Substance abuse and mental health issues among Indian film actors: A challenge for public health. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 59(2), 149-151. doi:10.4103/psychiatry.IndianJPsychiatry_97_17
3. Chawla, N. (2020). The dark underbelly of Bollywood: The drug problem. *The Indian Express*. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/entertainment/bollywood/the-dark-underbelly-of-bollywood-the-drug-problem-6566333/>
4. De, S., Chatterjee, S. S., & Kar, S. K. (2019). Substance use among celebrities and its impact on young adults. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 41(2), 115-121. doi:10.4103/IJPSYM.IJPSYM_313_18
5. Prakash, V. (2021). Substance abuse in the Indian film industry: A systemic approach. *Journal of Substance Use*, 26(4), 381-386. doi:10.1080/14659891.2020.1796698
6. Thakurta, P. G. (2020). The narcotic and crime nexus in the Indian film industry. *The Wire*. Retrieved from <https://thewire.in/film/narcotic-crime-nexus-indian-film-industry>
7. World Health Organization. (2018). Drug use and road safety: A policy brief. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/277229/WHO-NMH-NVI-18.22-eng.pdf?ua=1>
8. Yadav, A. (2020). Bollywood's drug problem: Is it a systemic issue? *The Diplomat*. Retrieved from <https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/bollywoods-drug-problem-is-it-a-systemic-issue/>