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# From Friction to Fact: CSI Influence on Forensic Community

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## ABSTRACT

*The growing prominence of forensic science in the legal system has been mirrored by its increasing popularity in media, particularly through crime scene investigation (CSI) series and films. These shows have captivated Indian audiences with their blend of crime, mystery, and intellectual intrigue, sparking widespread interest in forensic science. A study conducted in Bengaluru involving 502 respondents from various professions-including students, researchers, academics, and forensic experts-across two age groups (18-25 and 26-40) explored the positive impact of CSI media on both the forensic community and the general public. The findings were telling: 87.6% of participants reported that CSI shows increased their interest in pursuing a career in forensic science. 81.7% believed that these shows positively influenced public perception of forensic science. 73.9% agreed that CSI series contributed to a greater demand for forensic evidence in legal proceedings. 71.5% stated that such content encouraged them to explore related topics and engage more deeply with forensic science and criminal psychology. These results underscore the significant role that CSI media play in raising awareness, shaping career aspirations, influencing legal expectations, and fostering curiosity about forensic science. The study highlights the potential of popular media to not only entertain but also educate and inspire interest in scientific disciplines like forensic science.*

**Keywords:** *Forensic science, CSI effect, media influence, career interest, public perception, legal impact, Indian audience, forensic awareness*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The present generation and era show a significant impact of CSI web series and films on public, law enforcement and criminal justice system. It is evident that in recent years this influence has heightened the expectations of both the public and the judicial system when it comes to the forensic community. This study focuses on advantages of CSI web series and films on forensic community.

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Crime scene investigation web series, often referred to as "CSI" or "Forensic drama," is a popular subgenre of crime and mystery television. These shows revolve around the detailed examination of crime scenes, the collection and analysis of evidence, and the subsequent efforts of forensic experts to solve complex cases. With the rise of streaming platforms and the increasing demand for unique and engaging content, crime scene investigation has emerged as a new and captivating genre for web series. (Call et al. 2013)

One of the significant factors contributing to the evolution of CSI in web series is the rapid advancement of technology. High-definition cameras, CGI, and computer graphics have allowed for more realistic crime scene reconstructions, enhancing the visual appeal and accuracy of these series. Writers and producers started consulting with real-life forensic experts to ensure accuracy in depicting investigative techniques, making the series more credible. (Kumar et al. 2017)

The evolution of crime scene investigation as a genre of web series has had a profound impact on both entertainment and real-life forensic science. These series have inspired a new generation of forensic scientists. Viewers are increasingly interested in the real science behind crime scene investigations, leading to a surge in forensic science education and career choices. CSI web series choices led a role in improving public understanding of forensic science. (Podlas et al. 2006)

The term "CSI Effect" is frequently used to refer to a number of theories regarding the impact of the increasing public's interest in forensic science and the growing popularity of television shows featuring forensic investigators (also known as "Forensic dramas"). Particularly some researchers and analysts claim that forensic dramas maintain an absurdly high bar for forensic science, leading to the innocence of the guilty persons. According to Cole and Dioso-Villa (2011), the phrase "CSI Effect" first appeared in a Time magazine article from 2002, which hypothesized that CSI would change how the public views forensic science. (Podlas et al. 2006)

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Bengaluru; it comprised of 502 participants.

**Table 1. Demographic details of the sample selected**

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Total		502	100.0
Age group	18-25	483	96.2

	26-40	19	3.8
Education	Graduate	306	51.0
	Post-graduate	191	38.0
	M. Phil	3	0.6
	Ph. D	2	0.4
Gender	Male	130	26
	Female	372	74
Profession	Student	470	93.6
	Researcher	10	2.0
	Academic	9	1.8
	Forensic Expert	13	2.6

**TOOLS EMPLOYED:****Data Collection Tool:**

- Structured questionnaire with both factual and perceptual items
- Likert-scale responses for opinion-based statements

**STATISTICAL TOOLS USED:**

- **t-tests:** To compare group differences in perception based on gender and age
- **Chi-square tests:** To assess associations between categorical variables such as gender, age group, and media influence

**Procedure:** The authors personally visited to all respondent groups consisting of forensic community and some by online mode data collected. After taking prior permission and consent from the respondent's, structured inventory was given to them along with demographic data sheet. Before administering the questionnaire, they were assured of confidentiality. They were asked to answer all the question. In case of difficulty in understanding the items in order to get good response, they were made clear in their local language. Once the data were collected, they were scored and fed to the software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) in computer. Both descriptive and interfacial statistics were employed for data analysis.

### III. RESULTS:

**Table 2. Frequency and percent responses of the samples and results of test statistics:**

ADVANTAGES		FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)	TEST STATISTICS
1.CSI web series and films have led an increased demand for trials	YES	371	73.9	$X^2(O)=386.06$ $P=.001$  $X^2(A)=3.106$ $P=.212$
	NO	31	6.2	
	NOT SURE	100	19.9	
2. CSI web series and films have led an increased in the number of people who want to become forensic scientists	YES	440	87.6	$X^2(O)=666.89$ $P=.001$  $X^2(A)=7.674$ $P=.022$
	NO	25	5.0	
	NOT SURE	37	7.4	
3.CSI web series and films have led an increased Technological advancement	YES	255	50.8	$X^2(O)=93.637$ $P=.001$  $X^2(A)=7.084$ $P=.029$
	NO	78	15.5	
	NOT SURE	169	33.7	
4.CSI web series and films have led an Increase in funding resources for research/education and infrastructure in forensic science	YES	214	42.6	$X^2(O)=218.526$ $P=.001$  $X^2(A)=10.323$
	NO	102	20.3	
	NOT SURE	186	37.1	$P=.016$
5. CSI web series and films have led an Increase in Career	YES	306	61.0	$X^2(O)=403.673$ $P=.001$  $X^2(A)=1.651$ $P=.648$
	NO	75	14.9	

application	NOT SURE	121	24.1	
6. CSI web series and films have improved public perception of forensic science	YES	408	81.3	$X^2(O)=521.550$ P=.001
	NO	33	6.6	
	NOT SURE	61	12.2	$X^2(A)=2.568$ P=.277
7.CSI web series and films promoted to exploration in related topics or seek additional information related to the field	YES	359	71.5	$X^2(O)=340.426$ P=.001
	NO	41	8.2	
	NOT SURE	102	20.3	$X^2(A)=.813$ P=.666
8.CSI web series and films have led to increase in the number of reforms in the forensic science process	YES	271	43.2	$X^2(O)=50.227$ P=.001
	NO	94	18.7	
	NOT SURE	191	38.0	$X^2(A)=.522$
9.CSI web series and films have led to better understanding of forensic science among the public	YES	347	69.1	$X^2(O)=289.489$ P=.001
	NO	80	15.9	
	NOT SURE	75	14.9	$X^2(A)=1.869$ P=.394
10.CSI web series and films have led to an increase in the number of people who believe that forensic scientist	YES	237	47.2	$X^2(O)=51.900$ P=.001
	NO	106	21.1	$X^2(A)=1.584$

are always right				P=.453
	NOT SURE	159	31.7	
11.CSI web series and films are have influenced in the advancement of forensic science and the development of new techniques	YES	265	52.8	X <sup>2</sup> (O)=88.378 P=.001  X <sup>2</sup> (A)=4.369 P=.113
	NO	103	20.5	
	NOT SURE	134	26.7	
12. CSI web series and accurately reflect multidisciplinary nature of forensic science and the collaborative efforts of various experts	YES	251	50.1	X <sup>2</sup> (O)=63.389 P=.001  X <sup>2</sup> (A)=2.822 P=.244
	NO	124	24.8	
	NOT SURE	126	25.1	
13. As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the the time required to process forensic evidence	YES	312	62.2	X <sup>2</sup> (O)=190.295 P=.001  X <sup>2</sup> (A)=5.541 P=.103
	NO	80	15.9	
	NOT SURE	110	21.9	
14. CSI web series and films have led to an increase in the number of people who believe	YES	341	67.9	X <sup>2</sup> (O)=271.940 P=.001
	NO	69	13.7	

that forensic science can always solve crimes	NOT SURE	92	18.3	$X^2(A)=2.843$ P=.241
15. CSI web series and	YES	359	71.5	$X^2(O)= 335.908$ P=.001 $X^2(A)=.301$
	NO	48	9.6	
into the motivation and psychology of criminals	NOT SURE	95	18.9	P=.860
16.As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the public perception of the capabilities and limitations of forensic science	YES	310	61.8	$X^2(O)=194.693$ P=.001  $X^2(A)=.077$ P=.962
	NO	64	12.7	
	NOT SURE	128	25.5	
17. As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the judiciary system in a positive way	YES	162	32.3	$X^2(O)=12.494$ P=.001 $X^2(A)=10.763$  P=.005
	NO	138	27.5	
	NOT SURE	202	40.2	

**CSI web series and films have led an increased demand for forensic evidence in trials:** On the whole, a large majority of 371 (73.9%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 31 (6.2%) of the sample indicated ‘No’, and remaining 100 (19.9%) of them were not sure. Chi square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O)=386.06$ ;  $p=.001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender a non-significant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have led an increased in the number of people who want to**

**become forensic scientists:** On the whole, a large majority of 441 (87.67%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 25 (5.0%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 37 (7.4%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 666.89$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, a significant association was observed between gender.

**CSI web series and films have led an increased Technological advancement:** On the whole, a large majority of 255 (50.8%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 78 (15.5%) of the sample indicated 'No' and remaining 169(33.7%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 93.637$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender a nonsignificant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have led an increase in funding resources for research/education and infrastructure in forensic science:** On the whole, a large majority of 241(42.6%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 102 (20.3%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 186(37.1%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 218.526$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed

**CSI web series and films have led an Increase in Career application:** On the whole, a large majority of 306 (61.0%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 75 (14.9%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 121(24.1%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 403.673$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender a nonsignificant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have improved public perception of forensic science:** On the whole, a large majority of 408 (81.7%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 33 (6.6%) of the sample indicated 'No' and remaining 61(12.2%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 521.550$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films promoted to exploration in related topics or seek additional information related to the field:** On the whole, a large majority of 359 (71.5%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 41(8.2%) of the sample indicated ‘No’, and remaining 102 (20.3%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 340.426$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have led to increase in the number of reforms in the forensic science process:** On the whole, a large majority of 217 (43.2%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 94 (18.7%) of the sample indicated ‘No’, and remaining 191 (38.0%) of them were not sure regarding their. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 50.227$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association.

**CSI web series and films have led to better understanding of forensic science among the public:** On the whole, a large majority of 347 (69.1%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 80 (15.9%) of the sample indicated ‘No’, and remaining 75(14.9%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 289.438$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a non-significant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have led to an increase in the number of people who believe that forensic scientist are always right:** On the whole, a large majority of 237 (47.2%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 106 (21.1%) of the sample indicated ‘No’, and remaining 159 (31.7%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 51.900$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a non-significant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films are have influenced in the advancement of forensic science and the development of new techniques:** On the whole, a large majority of 265 (52.8%) of the selected samples indicated ‘yes’, 103 (20.5%) of the sample indicated ‘No’ and remaining 134 (26.7%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion .Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 88.378$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further

confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement.

**CSI web series and films accurately reflect the multi-disciplinary nature of forensic science and the collaborative efforts of various experts:** On the whole, a large majority of 251 (50.1%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 124 (24.8%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 126 (25.1%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 63.389$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed.

**As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the public's perception of the time required to process forensic evidence:** On the whole, a large majority of 312 (62.2%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 80 (15.9%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 110 (21.9%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 190.295$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a non-significant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films have led to an increase in the number of people who believe that forensic science can always solve crimes:** On the whole, a large majority of 341 (67.9%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 69 (13.7%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 92 (18.3%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 271.940$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed.

**CSI web series and films provides insights into the motivation and psychology of criminals:** On the whole, a large majority of 359 (71.5%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 48 (9.6%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 95 (18.9%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 335.908$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a nonsignificant association was observed.

**As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the public perception of the capabilities and limitations of forensic science:** On the whole, a large majority of 310 (61.8%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 64 (12.7%) of the sample indicated 'No', and

remaining 128 (25.5%) of them were not sure regarding their opinion. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 194.693$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a non-significant association.

**As a result of CSI web series and films there are changes in the judiciary system in a positive way:** On the whole, a large majority of 162 (32.3%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes', 138 (27.5%) of the sample indicated 'No', and remaining 202 (40.2%) of them were not sure. Chi-square test revealed a significant frequency difference between responses for the statement ( $X^2(O) = 12.494$ ;  $p = .001$ ), further confirming that majority of the sample selected had agreed with the statement. Further, when the association between gender, a significant association was observed.

#### **IV. DISCUSSION**

Major findings:

1. The majority of our respondents 440 (87.6%) says that positive impact of CSI web series and films on forensic community has led to increase in the number of people who want to become forensic scientists.
2. Secondly majority of 408 (81.7%) of the selected samples indicated 'yes for the statement says that CSI web series and films have improved public perception of forensic science.
3. Overall, a large majority of 371 (73.9%) of the selected 'yes' to the statement that CSI web series and films have led to an increased demand for forensic evidence in trials.
4. The statement "CSI web series and films promoted to exploration in related topics or seek additional information related to the field" was answered "yes" by a large majority of 359 (71.5%) of the selected samples.

The aim of the study was to find be majority of our respondents 440 (87.6%) says that positive impact of CSI web series and films on forensic community has led to increase in the number of people who want to become forensic scientists. The CSI effect refers to the impact of popular crime dramas on the public's perception of forensic science. On the positive side, it has generated interest in the field of forensic science and inspired more individuals to pursue careers in this area. The majority of our respondents 440 (87.6%) says that positive impact of CSI web series and films on forensic community has led to increase in the number of people who want to become forensic scientists. These findings indicate that CSI web series and films have had a

substantial and positive impact on both the forensic community and the public. They have sparked interest in forensic science careers, improved the perception of the field, increased the demand for forensic evidence in legal proceedings, and promoted exploration and learning about related topics. Additionally, they are seen as valuable resources for understanding criminal motivation and psychology.

Similarly in other studies, Forensic science television shows, especially CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, have been said to influence the public's perception of how forensic science is used and create interest in studying forensic science and pursuing jobs in the field. (Mcmanus, 2010)

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