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# SHAPING CAREER CHOICES: A STUDY ON MEDIA'S ROLE IN FORENSIC SCIENCE COURSE ENROLLMENTS

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## *Abstract*

*Students' interest in Forensic Science has grown significantly in recent years, especially among undergraduates. The rise in popularity seems to be closely linked to the increase in crime-based media, including documentaries, television dramas, films, and live streaming content. The study "Shaping Career Choices: A Study on Media's Role in Forensic Science Course Enrollments," aims to quantify the degree to which media affects students' choice to select Forensic Science as a field of study and career. A formal questionnaire was used to gather data from a diverse group of individuals who are currently pursuing Forensic Science course. The questionnaire's main goal was to ascertain media influence patterns, the types of forensic information viewed, the perceived realism of these presentations, and the degree to which they have influenced students' academic decisions. The responses have been interpreted using both qualitative and quantitative analysis.*

*Forensic science is typically portrayed in various media as an exciting, technologically sophisticated, heroic profession that has the power to significantly influence audience expectations and viewpoints. According to the research, the media has the ability to create common misconceptions about the nature of the work, investigative timetables, and the function of forensic scientists in the legal system, even though it can also spark interest and curiosity in the field.*

*A smaller but no less significant percentage of students expressed dissatisfaction after learning about the discrepancy between media presentation and "real" procedures through formal education and/or independent research, but the data also supported the idea that students who frequently approach forensic media are more likely to express interest in enrolling in Forensic Science courses. This study acknowledges the significant impact that media has on educational and professional pathways, highlighting the importance of making sure that particular scientific domains are fairly portrayed. The findings have implications for educators, curriculum developers, and career counselors who want to provide realistic viewpoints on Forensic scientific practice and challenge expectations fueled by the media.*

***Keywords:*** *Forensic science, Media Influence, Career Choice, Student Enrollment, Questionnaire*

## INTRODUCTION

Forensic Science really blew up over the last two decades at different parts of India. Many students are pursuing Forensic Science Programme with high expectations now a days. Clearly, students are looking for a different domain for their higher education other than conventional subjects. Television programs, Series had a significant growth in recent years all around the world and has drawn the attention of lot of students. TV series, documentaries, podcasts, and YouTube videos on crime have contributed to significant rise in popularity of Forensic Science, which influenced young minds to an exciting career option. The portrayal of Forensic Science elements with some exaggerations created interest in many youngsters to think about studying Forensic Science in UG and PG Level.

The number of enrollments has been rigorously increased in Forensic Science after post covid era also. If look back to lockdown days people were used to get engaged with movies during that time. Many of

the Movies, Series, TV Shows got popularized or reorganized more during that time regardless of journaer. In that crime related shows also got more viewership more than previously. The theme, investigation pattern final identification of culprit gave some adrenalin rush to its viewers. Proper using of subtitles with customization in native languages also provided another level of satisfaction to the viewers. In this list youngsters are more used to be the consumers. So, Post Covid era was a game changer in every field including educational sectors also, many of the candidates stared to rethink before selecting a course.

While analyzing few years before, cinema or any other media haven't included Forensic Science related things not that much. There may be a main lead who do all with help of some people and found the culprit. But when a new gen wave started to flow in cinema, they began to include some limited Forensic techniques. The use of Diatoms, Fingerprint analysis were some of the frequently shown Forensic aspects in movies. In news papers also they won't give any Forensic Science related updates for cases. So, during that time it was a forbidden treasure for most of the people or the awareness regarding this was not known that much.

But the things gradually stared to change, the placement of Forensic Science and its procedure including analysis in movies are an inevitable part in movies and series which telecasting now a days. The problem coming up with this part, many of the things portrays through a movie or something begin to influence the users through some gimmicks and exaggerations. So many Forensic Science techniques has been misinterpreted through shows which lower the dignity and purity of this course and profession. The scariest part is in some extent it influences candidates to choose Forensic Science as a carrier option and they got confused about fantasy and reality. On other hand media popularized this course very much but some how it effecting negatively in a young mind who deliberately dream to be a part of Forensic Science profession. The makers should properly study each and every aspect of the subject before showcasing it to real world.

Imagination doesn't have any limits, so a person who imagine more and may dissatisfied after getting into the real world of Forensic Science. A video has more power it gets go deeper inside to a person's mind. Now many videos, podcasts, shorts are accessible to everyone which is related with crime solving. Films are not completely realistic; the makers should add some extra things to make viewers more attentive to their creativity. It is their right, but the thing is there are a particular group of people who may consider this as real and they may not adapt to reality even it put Forword to them. A child who is going through 14 – 18 years of age are in a stage of character development and they are more attracted towards these kinds of things. They also have some responsibilities before choosing the course in everyway to prevent an allegation in future.

The study focuses on the influence of films, shows, series etc. on young minds to choose Forensic Science as a carrier option. Mainly focused on children who is in the age of 14 – 18 and as an extra opinion point of view collected data from working professionals, academicians and possible resources who can contribute in this. It is an individual choice to study a course for a good secure carrier. In many places this course is running as a normal degree or post graduate course even without any instrumentations and all. Students with the above-mentioned mind set may have a chance to be victimized by the name of this subject. This should not be happened or need to be prevented in a capable manner. So, this study may be helpful as a solution for all these problems in future also.

## OBJECTIVES

- To Analyze the misconceptions about Forensic Science in youngster's mind showing in Films, Series and other Social Media Platforms.
- To determine the influence of Films, Series and other Social Media Platforms on Youngsters to choose Forensic Science as a career.
- To study the current perception among students about the course who have already enrolled in the program.

## METHODOLOGY

| Particulars | Methods |
|---|---|
| **Signification of Study** | Study is basically to done to; get an idea regarding how film, TV Series other social media influences a young mind to chose Forensic Science |

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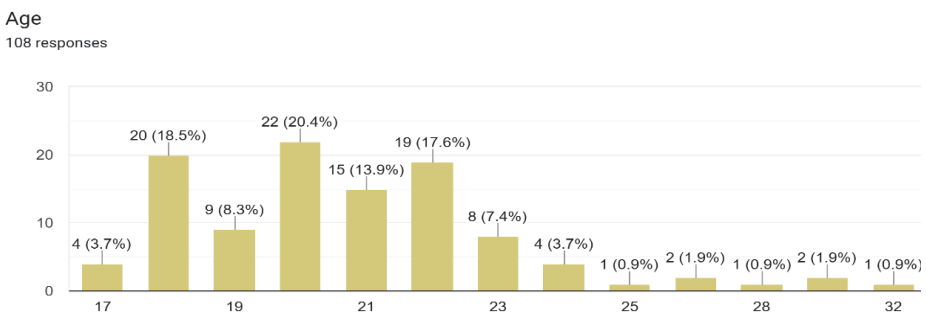
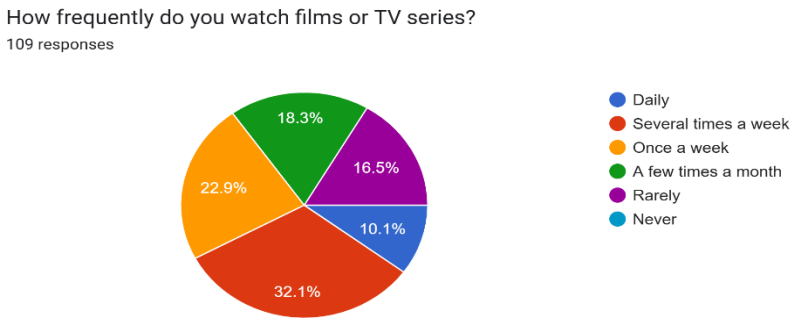
|---|---|
| **Universe of the study** | **Thirumalayampalayam, Chinnavadampatti, Mannarkadu, Thrissur**, some places in **Tamil Nādu and Kerala**. (Reason of this universe is because colleges with Forensic Science Course both UG and PG is more over here) |
| **Sample Collection** | Study conducted as a questioner method, through Google Forms 20 Questions were asked and collected more than 100 responses.<br><br>All over 109 responses received from students. |
| **Research Design** | Questioner and Descriptive |
| **Tools of the Study** | Google Forms |
| **Limitations** | This study can be conducted for a large group of people, but only collected some number of responses.<br>In some questions less than the targeted has received |

# RESULT




The bar graph displays the age distribution of 108 respondents. Most participants are between 18 and 22 years old. The largest shares are at ages 19 (20.4%) and 18 (18.5%). Participation decreases steadily after age 22, with only a small number of respondents aged 25 and older. This indicates that most respondents fall into a younger age group, mostly late teens to early twenties.




The bar graph shows the age distribution of 108 respondents. Most participants are between 18 and 22 years old. The pie chart illustrates how often 109 respondents watch films or TV series. The largest group, 32.1%, watches several times a week. This is followed by 22.9% who watch once a week. Around 18.3% view content a few times a month, and 16.5% do so rarely. Only 10.1% watch daily. This indicates that while regular viewing is common, daily watching is less frequent among respondents. The highest proportions are at ages 19 (20.4%) and 18 (18.5%). Participation drops gradually after age 22, with only a few respondents aged 25 and older.

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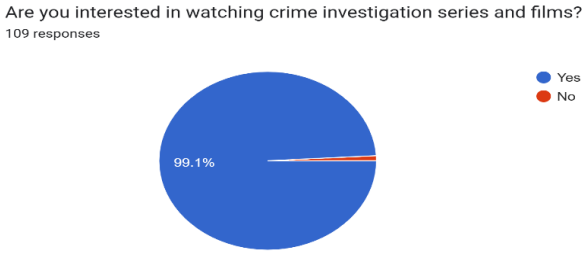
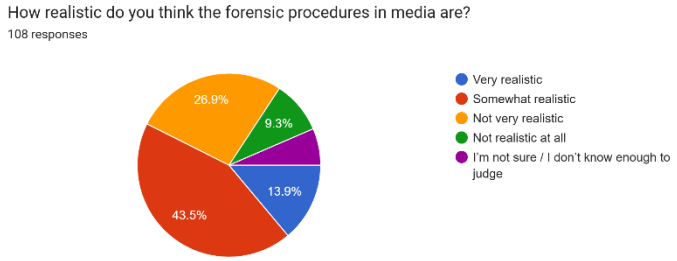
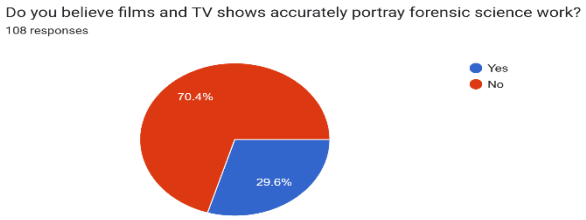


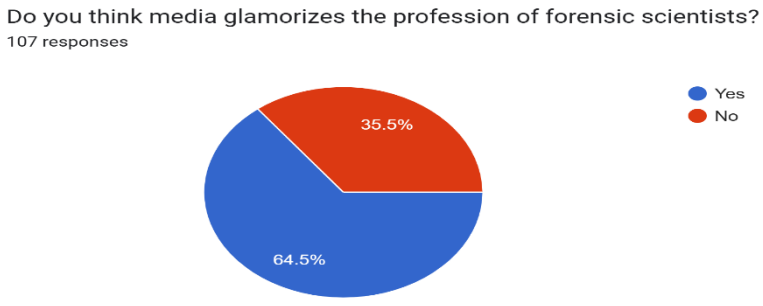

The pie chart shows the viewing habits of 109 respondents when it comes to films or TV series. A significant share, about 32.1 percent, tunes in several times each week. That edges out the 22.9 percent who stick to once a week. Then there is roughly 18.3 percent watching a few times a month. And 16.5 percent manage it only rarely. Daily viewers make up just 10.1 percent. This suggests regular consumption happens often enough. Yet daily habits do not appear widespread in this group.




The pie chart illustrates the opinions of 108 participants over the extent to which media demonstrates forensic procedures realistically. A very large part, i.e., 43.5 percent, rate these interpretations as somewhat realistic only. The evidence points to the fact that 26.9 percent are of the opinion that the media portrayals are not very realistic. The minority of 13.9 percent claim that the representations are very realistic. 9.3 percent, however, consider them to be completely unrealistic. An equal figure of 9.3 percent also expresses their uncertainty or inability to judge the matter due to lack of knowledge. In general, this implies that the audience acknowledges some truth in the forensic media. On the other hand, they are not completely convinced of the total accuracy.




The pie chart illustrates the opinions of a total of 108 respondents with regard to the accuracy of films and TV shows in depicting forensic science work. Among the total group, an overwhelming majority of 70.4% to the question "Do you think the films and TV shows reflect the work of a forensic scientist accurately?" answered "No," which was a clear indication of their doubts about the accuracy of such portrayals. On the other hand, a very small percentage of 29.6% claimed that forensic science is represented truthfully in the media. Most respondents, therefore, seem to consider the media arsenates of forensic work to be over-the-top or unrealistic as compared to what happens in real life.




The pie chart shows the opinions of 107 respondents about the media's role in glamorizing forensic scientists' profession. A large part, 64.5%, thinks the media does make this profession look better, while 35.5% disagree with this opinion. This means that the majority of the people surveyed think that media representations make forensic science seem more interesting or thrilling than it really is, maybe setting up people with unrealistic ideas about the job.

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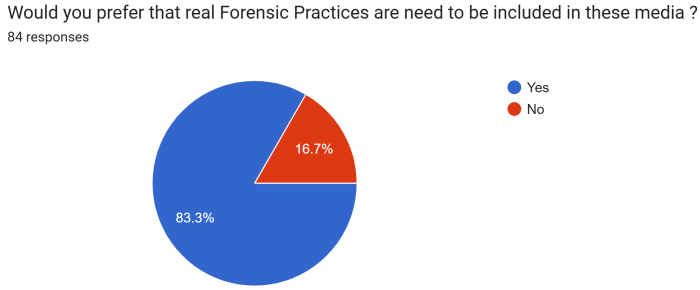
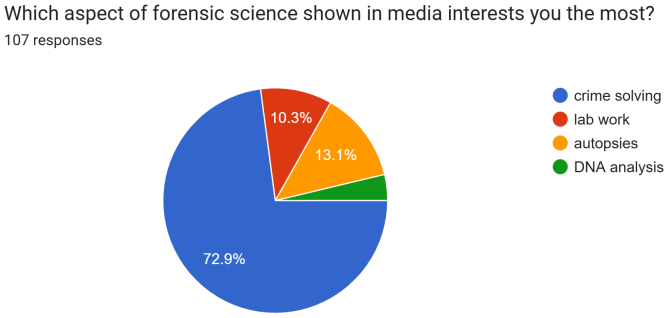
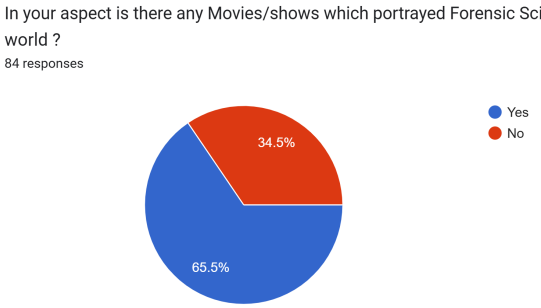


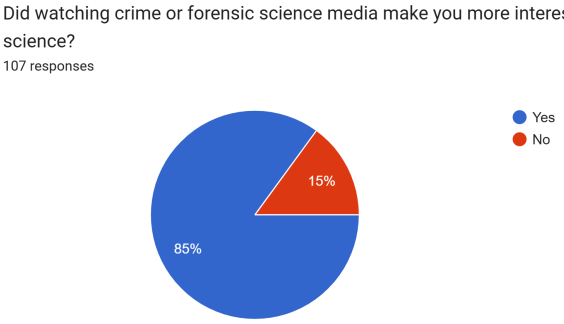

An octant chart illustrated the consensus of 84 individuals concerning the inclusion of genuine forensics in media shows. The outcome indicated that 83.3 % were in favor of the question. A good number of those who participated in the survey thought that this would make the representation much more realistic. The changes could also alter the extent to which the public understands forensic work. The data in the pie chart reveals clearly the overwhelming support for making the entertainment world more realistic. Conversely, 16.7 % rejected the idea. The opposite group claimed that it might be too much and hence choosing not to include it in the scripts would be better. Ultimately, these results indicate that the media should pursue more accurate portrayals of the forensic-semiology field. This point of view probably corresponds to wider discussions on the blending of entertainment with educational content.



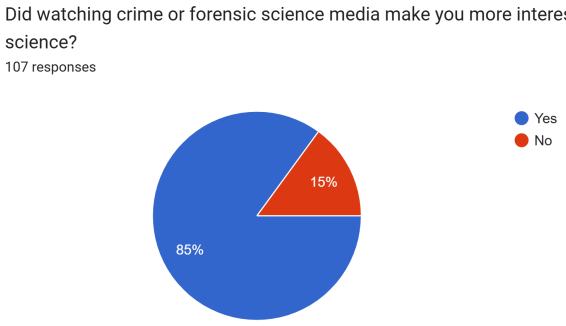

The pie chart shows results from a survey. That survey involved 107 people who got asked about the most interesting aspect of forensic science in media. Most respondents, a full 72.9 percent, picked crime solving as their top choice. This makes it clear that crime solving draws in viewers more than anything else. Autopsies ranked second place with 13.1 percent of the answers. Lab work came after that at 10.3 percent. DNA analysis ended up last, pulling in only 3.7 percent overall. All this points to audiences liking the detective side and story elements of forensic science. They seem less into the detailed technical or biological steps.




The pie chart presents the views of 84 participants on how accurately forensic science is depicted in movies and TV shows. A large majority, 65.5 percent, agreed that these representations are quite realistic. On the other hand, 34.5 percent disagreed, showing that more than a third of the respondents think the portrayals are not accurate. While many people believe these media representations are realistic, a significant number still question their authenticity.




The pie chart shows how crime and forensic science media affect people's interest in studying forensic science. The survey of 107 people revealed that 85 percent of respondents found these media to boost their interest in the field, yet 15 percent stated no impact on their interest occurred. Research shows these media types play a crucial role in guiding people toward forensic science career paths. The presentation style of this topic appears to directly affect how students develop their educational goals and professional ambitions in this field.

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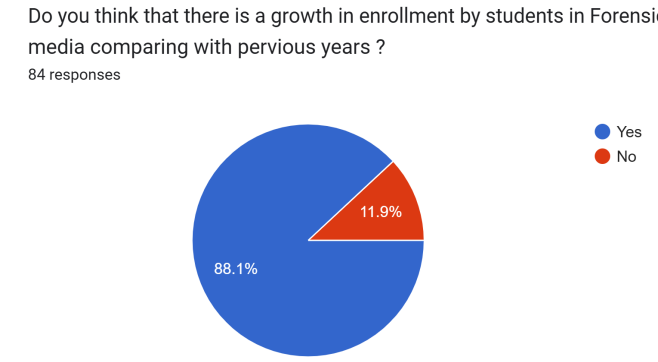
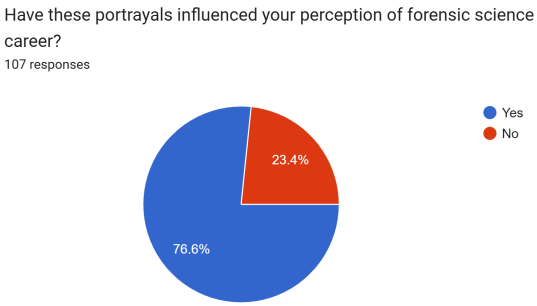
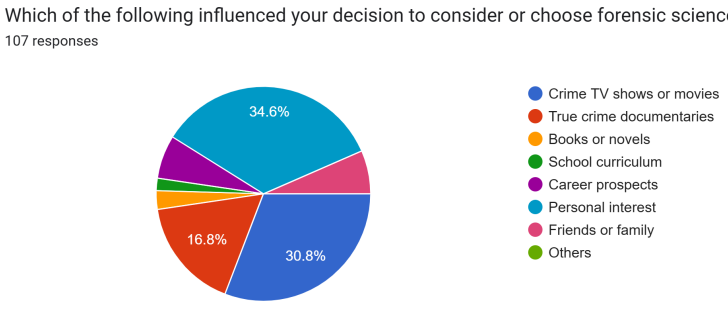



The pie chart shows results from a survey. It asked if student enrollment in forensic science has grown because of media effects, when compared to years before. From the 84 people who answered, most of them, that is 88.1 percent, feel media helped boost those numbers. Just 11.9 percent do not agree. All this points to a clear view among respondents. They see media images of forensic work, like those in television series or films and even news reports, as something that drew more students to the subject. Enrollment seems to have picked up from that kind of exposure.




The pie chart presents responses from 107 individuals asked if media depictions have shaped views of forensic science as an exciting or noble profession. A clear majority, at 76.6 percent, selected yes. This points to media exerting a notable positive influence on such perceptions. Meanwhile, 23.4 percent chose no. That portion seems less swayed by media in forming opinions




This pie chart interprets, Personal interest topped the list at 34.6 percent. Crime TV shows and movies came next with 30.8 percent. True crime documentaries had an impact on 16.8 percent of them. Career opportunities influenced 7.5 percent. Friends or family played a role for 6.5 percent. School curriculum and books made up even smaller portions. Other elements accounted for the rest. In general, it seems personal passion and depictions in media hold the biggest sway. Career options and influences from people around also matter quite a bit.

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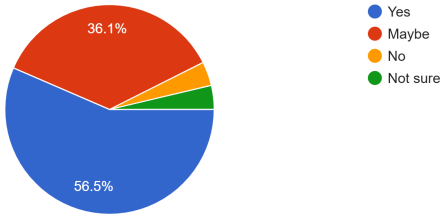
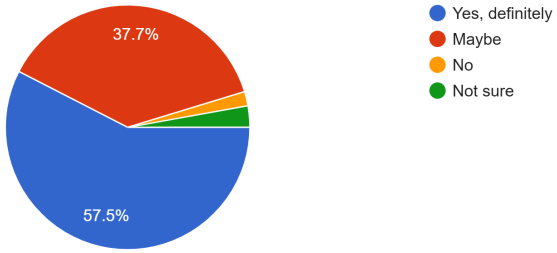
If you found out that forensic science involves more lab work and less field action than shown in media, would you still be interested?
108 responses




This pie chart is based on 108 responses. It looks at whether people would remain interested in forensic science if it involved more lab work and less fieldwork than what is usually shown in the media. The data shows that most respondents, 56.5%, would still be interested (Yes). A significant portion, 36.1%, said their interest would depend on certain conditions. Only a small percentage said they would not be interested.

Would you consider forensic science even if media had not portrayed it?
106 responses




The pie chart displays data from 106 responses on whether participants might pursue forensic science without media influences. Studies show that the biggest share, 57.5 percent, selected yes definitely. Their choices suggest an interest that stands on its own, apart from any shows or coverage. Then 37.7 percent went with maybe. That points to media playing some part, yet not the main driver behind the draw. Just a tiny fraction picked no or unsure. All this hints at a core pull in forensic science that holds up well, even if media takes a back seat for most responders.

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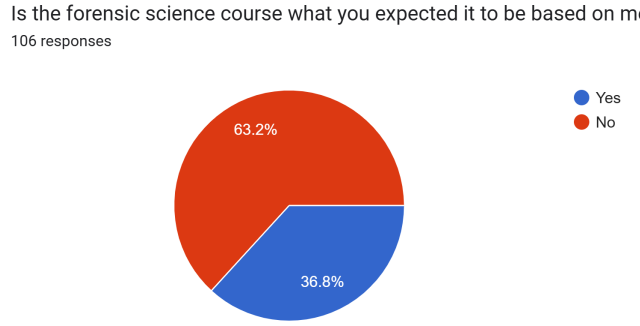
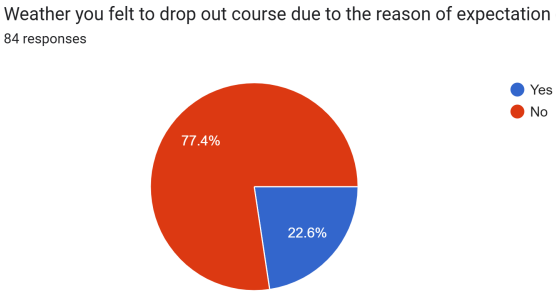



The pie chart summarizes data from 106 responses. It looks at whether the forensic science course met expectations set by media portrayals. The evidence shows that most respondents, 63.2 percent, found the course did not meet those media-driven ideas. In contrast, only 36.8 percent said it matched what they expected from those sources. These trends reveal a clear gap between the actual experience of forensic science education and how the field is presented in public media.




The pie chart is derived from a total of 84 responses. It examines if students considered withdrawing from their course due to thought influenced by movies and series. From the data, it is clear that the vast majority, 77.4 percent, replied in the negative. This indicates that media influences on these expectations have had little effect on the majority of students dropping courses. In contrast, a smaller but significant number, 22.6 percent, responded yes. These findings indicate a distinct disparity between what media presents of the life of an academic and what students encounter. This disparity appears large enough to lead some students to consider dropping out. As a whole, though some students were disappointed because of these expectations, most didn't perceive dropping out as an actual possibility because of it.

# DISCUSSION

In recent years, one very clear influence of media on career choices has surfaced, especially in specialized fields like forensic science. TV shows, movies, and even documentaries dramatize the jobs of forensic professionals-they make it all murder, espionage, intellectual challenges, and somehow all-so-resolute to criminal justice. Such glamorization has a great influence on the young population: most of them develop an interest in forensic science just because of what they saw on their TV screens. Media narratives highlight only the more glamorous side of forensics-.climaxing on crime solving using state-of-the-art gadgets or discovering crucial evidence for the prosecution-while neglecting the quotidian, particularly technical, and often emotionally draining aspects of the work. On the other hand, media exposure does stir curiosity and considerably boost student enrollments in Forensic Science Course.

But there is a flip side to the media portrayal of forensic science-as it also brings its own share of challenges. Some prominent movies, series has spawned some rather unrealistic expectations in the minds of students and also members of the general public about exactly how fast forensic work can be conducted, do it in the context of real cases and how much of an impact it actually has. Consequently, some students enter the forensic field with certain perceptions about the life that exists outside of the forensic laboratories, which can lead to disappointment and/or attrition once they face the real academic

and practical rigors of the discipline. Therefore, the educational institutions must play a calming role by integrating

## CONCLUSION

Movies, shows, series etc., does play a significant role in cultivating students' interest in Forensic Sciences by providing compelling and dramatic portrayals of crime-solving and scientific investigation. In this way, course enrollments are positively affected, and the field gains visibility and appeal. However, these shows may provide a view that might be at odds with the realities of the job and might cause unrealistic expectations. It is thus agreed the media is an alluring working tool. Still, we must complement the attraction by accurate, realistic information and practical experiences for students, maintain or aligning its perception somewhat with the professional realities of forensic science.

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