

The National Science Film Festival of India-Films on Life Sciences Is in High Demand

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Abstract

Films are the medium of choice since many years for communication of the messages. The impact of films marked on the mind and thoughts of the viewers. In the India the traditional education tolls includes books, black boards, reading, writing, reciting activities. But the scenario is shifting towards the technology intervention in education. The less numbers of teachers, difficulty in reaching to each student enhances the technology like films, video conferencing; online lectures to increase reach to each student. The film making learning is art and science collaboration. It need creative minds and scientific as well. The language of films is different than books. Films always need catchy titles, small dialogues to understand more in fewer words. This audio-visual medium connects the viewer more than text books. In Vigyan Prasar popular science film production started about two decades ago. To encourage science film making in India, the Vigyan Prasar came up with a science film festival originally titled as Rashtriya Vigyan Chalchitra Mela (RVCM) and at present National Science Film Festival (NSFF). The various films submitted by the national and international producers are categorized in various categories and screened in festival among viewers. The learning attitude enhanced by adopting the workshop along with screening of films. The event is educational, entertainer, and above that it enhances the scientific thinking among the participants. In the present study the films received during 2015 were analyzed. The comparative study is performed in between the NSFF and other Indian Science film festivals and competition. There are rising concern among the viewers about health, biology and others issues. Life science is responsible for genesis of interests and curiosity because the subject is about life.

Keywords: Education; National Science Film Festival (NSFF); Rashtriya Vigyan Chalchitra Mela (RVCM); Vigyan Prasar; India.

Introduction

The film festival phenomenon was historically originated in Europe in 1930s and spread worldwide. At present different types of film festivals operate in all countries. (Olga Bauer, 2006-07)

Science film making requires creativity and

science understanding. The thrust for understanding the concepts, principles, laws in science and visualization of each and everything in new innovative way is the basics of science film making. The Vigyan Prasar developed a guideline for making science films.

Guidelines for uses of visuals/shots in science serial/ science news/documentary films

As general guidelines while producing documentary films or news program the following points need to be kept in mind.

Repeat shot: If a visual was repeated in one episode of the news program twice or visuals of one episode in another episode is termed as repeat shot.

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As a general rule shots should not get repeated. But if the need arises then repeat shots should be used prudently. It is better that in such situations proper consultation is done with the relevant persons. There may be times when repetition can't just be avoided.

Some shots are of such a nature (like a big and visually interesting event) that their repetition can enhance the impact and comprehension of a particular story in the viewer's mind. In such cases also decision should be taken separately about the use of visuals.

Copyright violated shot: Shots downloaded from internet without proper permission will be treated as copyright violation and films producers will be responsible for that violation.

Archival shot: Archival shots are shot from history.

Stock shots: Stock shots means shots taken by the producer which is original and made a stock of it. Necessary but should be used judiciously.

The shots of space crafts, space mission and astronomical objects and others for similar kinds will be considered in this category.

Judicious use of shots needs to take care as well as producer may incorporate graphics and animations instead of repetitions of same shots many times. Freely available shots in open source need to be explored. Shots need to be selected before story telling.

Treatment of news: Each news shall have different treatment for variety of news, for example:

News can be started from particular and end in general (P to G mode) means start with the particular case and end with possible solution by this way public will be connected with the news segment.

News can be started with sound so that will attract the viewer and increase the curiosity about news.

News can be started with the best quotes/ words/sentence by famous personalities.

Story Treatment: Science Stories should be forward looking. - Stories should try to have a human angle otherwise viewer would not feel connected to it. - Stories should cite proper examples and case studies.

P to G format: Story should start with a particular example or examples and then go on describing the new scientific innovation addressing the problem. After that its impact on the General Public can be described

PPF format: In context of a scientific phenomenon the Story describes the present situation and then deals with the past experience and then carries on to speak for the future.

Use of Ambience: Science stories often have very good natural sounds. Like the sound of a machine, of an aeroplane, of a bird etc. These sounds can be beautifully integrated in the story to make it more impact full and meaningful as they create the proper ambience.

Voice over: Use of effective voice over with pause at proper place is needed. Avoid the bytes by experts/public unless necessary.

Audio and video errors in programmes: Any content error, pronunciation error, graphical errors should strictly be banned. It gives wrong impression of the programme as well as the owner of the programme.

Use of Voice Over: Narration is very important. Bad delivery of narration can ruin a good script. So voice over should be greatly taken care of. Separate stories should have separate voices to avoid monotony. If there is a crunch of voice over artists than at least two subsequent stories should not have the same voice over. Programme should contain both male and female voice over for greater impact, variety and balance.

Sludge in news programme: It can be allowed to use but care need to be taken that sludge may not be used to fill the need of graphics and animations.

Uses of bytes in news: Care should be taken to use short bytes less than 30 seconds and may be up to 45 seconds if some eminent personality is speaking. Shorter bytes

Bytes should normally be short, of not more than 15 to 20 sec duration. Longish bytes are monotonous and boring. But if a longer byte is unavoidable (like if the speaker is very important) then proper visuals should be used over the byte. Other important parts of the byte can be incorporated in the voiceover.

Animation & Graphics: Science stories should make maximum use of animations, graphics and

diagrams. It increases the comprehension of a particular process and makes greater impact in comparison to just dull visuals.

Methodology

The films to be invited for the competition pre-categorized as detailed:

The films were categorized in various categories like Films made by government and non-government institutions/organizations-category A, Film made by independent film makers/production houses-category B, Films made by college students-category C, Films made by students studying in minutes class 6th to 12th-category D, and Films made with foreign collaborations & Films from other countries Films made by host organizations -category noncompetitive. The analysis of the films is based on the data of 1 year of time.

Table 1: Showing various categories of films received

Competitive Category	Duration
Category A Films made by government and non-government institutions/organizations	15-25 minutes
Category B Film made by independent film makers/production houses	15-25 minutes
Category C Films made by college students	5 - 25 minutes
Category D Films made by students studying in minutes class 6th to 12th	upto 10
Category E Films made on spot mobile phone	upto 5 minutes
Non Competitive Category	
Films made with foreign collaborations & Films from other countries	
Films made by host organizations	

After the receipt of the films, first classified in various categories into various categories depending on the details filled up by the applicant. A jury comprising of well known scientists and film makers watch each film and shortlist them. The films then again critically viewed by the higher jury and selected the award for the films in each category. This activity held 1-2 months prior to actual festival. The shortlisted films

were then ready for screening in the festival. The film producers, directors, students all watch the films. After the film screening schedule there is workshop with nominated experts. The workshop includes lectures, critics about the films and panel discussion. The students directly interact with the film Producer/Director and solve their query related to the film making.

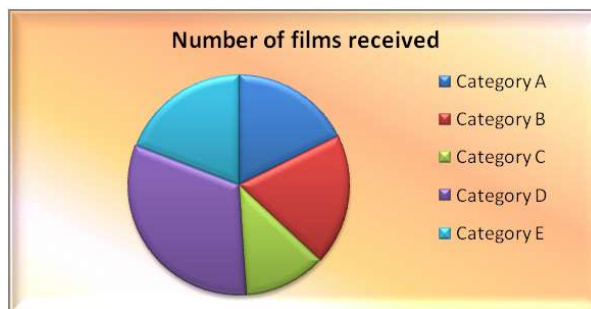


Fig. 1: Graph showing the numbers of films received category wise

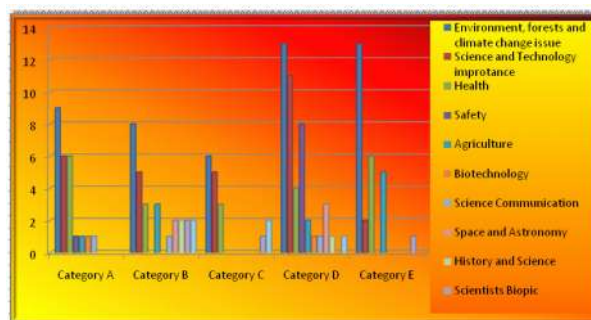


Fig. 2: Graph showing numbers of films (X-axis) and category of films (Y-Axis)

The films received in each category classified into the subject theme on which the film is based. The results observed are amazing and important.

The figure 1 revealed that the category D has highest numbers of films submitted from the film makers followed by the category B, E, and A respectively. The figure 2 results shows that there is more focus on Environment and Climate change subject among the Indian film makers followed by Health Sciences and Science and Technology importance.

Discussion

The film making in science is a challenging job which requires both skills and intellectuals. The students always learn the during film making in

science. The approach and the treatment of the films always changes with the topic of science and technology. The film on environment needs different types of planning and scripting as compared to health science or any other science subjects. The national science film festival is example for the encouragement of the science film makers. Those new in film making can obtain new platform for their creativity appreciation. In the student category the films are some time not properly edited, voice over with background noise may be the cause of the decrease in quality of films. Along with the NSFF, the India International Science Festival was also a major event which was held during the 2015 organized signifies a collective effort towards nurturing scientific temper at the global level. The aim behind organizing this festival was to provide a platform to thousands of young researchers and students across the nation and other neighboring countries for discussing scientific ideas and innovations on issues of global relevance. The event was inaugurated by Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister for Science and Technology, and Earth Sciences. The festival focused on the major scientific achievements by youth and future prospects in the scientific arena through Young Scientists' Meet (YSM), Mega Science, Technology and Industrial Expo, International Science Film Festival, Innovation Models and 'INSPIRE' presentations, IRIS National Science Fair (Initiative for Research and Innovation in Science), Scientist-Students Interaction, workshops and interactive sessions, and the largest collective science practical session 'Catalysis' with the aim to enter the Guinness World Records. More than 10,000 participants, including about 2000 students from different corners of the country as well as from foreign countries participated in this science festival. IISF 2015 had been the first science festival organized in our country to promote the 'potential benefits of science to the society', and simultaneously inculcating and nurturing the scientific caliber. (India International Science Festival 2015)

The second edition of Science Film Festival of India (SCI-FFI) was inaugurated in January 2017 at Goa. The four-day-long extravaganza had a range of blockbuster science-fiction films, interactions by experts and scientists from January 17-20 at Inox, Panaji. The festival opened with the films on mathematical extraordinaire Srinivasa Ramanujan 'The Genius of Srinivasa Ramanujan' and 'The

Man Who Knew Infinity'. The films focus on the life and academic career of the pioneer Indian mathematician.

The festival will focus on four distinct themes: mathematics, genetics, futuristic and space that will enthrall the audience. Each day has been carefully crafted with films and expert interactions and that will help the festival participants explore and enhance the themes and showcase what Science can bring to them. Conceptualized by Vidnyan Parishad the event's primary objective is to popularize science among the student community and urge them to take up a career in science instead of just engineering and medicine. (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>).

Summary and Conclusion

The science film festivals are best platform for the film makers. The films makers can meet discuss the challenges faced by them during their film production. The film makers always have ethical practice in production of films like follow guideline of film making, don't do copy paste jobs, films should not be another text book reading. The film must have ups and down, emotional balance in visual and voice. Judicious use of sound volume, different phases of sound, doesn't repeat same shots to fill the gaps. Always think from angle of viewer. In-depth research on the topic is always the main backbone of the science films. The results shows that there is many subject areas where lesser number of entries coming in festival. The regional science film festival in the regional languages like Assamese, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam is the present day need of the science film making industry. The promotion of science through films is well accepted approach as films directly touches our minds, heart and thoughts. The films have capability to transform the society towards the good and keep one away from the bad. The whole focus of audience shifted more on life science films side rather on other issues. The production of films always depends on the subject area in demand.

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