

LANGUAGE STYLE OF HORROR MOVIES AND AUDIENCES' PSYCHOLOGICAL RESPONSE

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 DOI : <https://dx.doi.org/10.30983/mj.v3i2.8003>

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Submission: Agustus 07, 2023	Revised: Desember 27, 2023	Published: December 31, 2023
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Abstract

The development of technology in Indonesia has an impact on the development of the entertainment world, including movies. Movies consist of various genres, one of which is horror. Among Indonesians, horror is a popular genre, especially highlighting customs, rituals, and traditions. Horror movies aim to cause fear and disgust in the audience by providing entertainment. This study aims to determine whether horror genre movies are the favorite movies of Indonesian people. The method used in this research is qualitative research by interviewing respondents and distributing questionnaires online on social media. The results in the study reveal that the horror films use material and attributive processes in delivering dialog. In terms of psychological aspect, the horror genre in Indonesia is one of the genres favored by the audience. The large population in Indonesia and the culture and customs inherent in Indonesia such as belief in mystical or supernatural things in horror movies can be said to have various impacts. Impacts such as adrenaline, fear, and so on are what make it interesting so that the audience likes it.

Keywords: fans, horror, movie

Abstrak

Perkembangan teknologi di Indonesia berdampak pada perkembangan dunia hiburan, termasuk film. Film terdiri dari berbagai macam genre, salah satunya adalah horor. Di kalangan masyarakat Indonesia, horor merupakan genre yang banyak digemari, terlebih mengangkat adat istiadat, ritual, dan tradisi. Film horor bertujuan untuk menimbulkan rasa takut dan jijik pada penonton dengan sifat memberi hiburan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah film bergenre horor menjadi film favorit masyarakat Indonesia. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan cara mewawancarai responden dan menyebarkan kuesioner secara online di media sosial. Hasil dalam penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa film-film horor menggunakan proses material dan atributif dalam menyampaikan dialog. Dari sisi psikologis, genre horor di Indonesia menjadi salah satu genre yang digemari para penonton. Banyaknya jumlah penduduk di Indonesia dan budaya serta adat istiadat yang melekat di Indonesia seperti kepercayaan akan hal-hal mistis atau supranatural dalam film horor dapat dikatakan memberikan berbagai dampak. Dampak-dampak seperti memacu adrenalin, rasa takut, dan lain sebagainya inilah yang membuatnya menarik sehingga disukai penonton.

Kata Kunci: fans, horor, film

1. Introduction

In the era of technological development in Indonesia, of course, without us realizing it, it continues to experience many developments. Whether it's developments in technology, communication, facilities and infrastructure, entertainment media, and many more. One of the developments that we often encounter is in the world of entertainment such as films. Often when we feel bored, we fill our free time by doing various activities, such as watching films. According to experts, films are cultural products and means of artistic expression in audio and visual form (Effendy, 1986). Films do consist of audio and visual because both of these can affect the emotions of the audience (Firda Tsania & Fajar Adhi Kurniawan, 2023). Film also has various elements such as themes, styles, and forms of emotion called genres. Films are made in the genres with the hope that in the future it can more easily fulfill the audience's imagination (Rusdiarti, 2009 ; Paul M. Muchinsky, 2012). The genre itself generally consists of eight types of genres, namely action, drama, romance, animation, comedy, documentary, thriller, and horror. Films with their respective genre certainly have their own nuances and meanings. Films are not just made for the sake of it, but of course there are meanings and purposes to conveyed. The same goes for horror films.

Horror is a work of speculative fiction. A work of speculative fiction which in the broad sense of the genre has a meaning as a work that includes events, incidents, and creatures that do not exist in the real world at all or can be referred to as fiction and fantasy (Abedini, 2022). Horror genre movies that are often watched by the public have several subgenre divisions. This happens because each horror movie has a different story content, not always containing ghosts in the storyline. Some subgenres in horror movies such as horror drama, horror thriller, slasher horror, monster horror, supernatural horror, body horror, natural horror, found footage horror, and comedy horror. However, there is also an expert opinion who says that the subgenres of horror are generally divided into 3 namely psychological horror, ghost horror, and disaster horror (Dreams, 2010).

Someone who commonly has a hobby of watching movies has several genres that he finds interesting, but from various movie genres, there must be one genre that is the favorite one. Among Indonesians themselves, of course, the horror genre is one of the most popular genres. Horror genre movies or what we often call horror movies have spread and are known to the wider community in Indonesia. Jancovich states that the horror genre gives every evidence of being pleasurable to its audience, but it does so using trafficking in the very sorts of things that cause disquiet, distress, and displeasure (Reader et al., 2020). Then there are also other perspectives on horror movies such as in "A Dictionary of Film Studies", according to Annette Khun and Guy Westwell (2012) horror is a genre of movies that aims to instill fear and disgust in the audience with the nature to entertain (Bernadetta Yucki, 2022).

In this case, the increased interest in the horror genre began in the new era of the 2000s. The horror movies that reawakened the interest of the Indonesian public were Rizal Mantovani and Jose Purnomo's "Jelangkung" released in 2001. Then there is the movie "Pengabdian Setan" which was first released in 1982 and directed by Sisworo Gautama Putra, then remade by Joko Anwar. Joko Anwar took up to 10 years to seek permission to screen this movie again. His efforts were not in vain, because it was proven that there were 4.2 million viewers and the movie was even shown in 42 countries.

This movie trailer begins by displaying a pitch-black scene with the serene sound of a bell chime with static radio noises followed by a song. It shows a sick woman living with her family. The background music starts with a rather non-intense rhythm, engulfing the sense of care between family members, and the movie certainly continues until the end with various scenes (Noer, 2021).

There is also a movie called "Keramat 1" whose ending is still hanging, making many viewers curious about the continuation of the story. Finally, the publication of "Keramat 2: Caruban Larang" made fans of the first series interested in watching the second series to eliminate their curiosity. This movie had an audience of 235,989 in 3 days exceeding the first movies. Then followed by the publication of other horror movies that are no less interesting and popular such as "KKN di Desa Penari", "Bayi Ajaib", "Mangkujiwo", "Waktu Maghrib", "Sebelum Iblis Menjemput", and many more. Then, many movie critics commented that starting in 2001 a lot of new or new types of horror movies had appeared which were increasingly popular because their contents were not only about the dark and vicious world that was depicted but also delivered social criticism towards the culture that gave birth to it (Ndalianis, 2015). Indonesian horror movies often feature customs, rituals, and traditions that show the real circumstances experienced by the local community (Baksin, 2008).

Many other experts have an opinion regarding horror movies whose content is still attached to everyday life and if you pay attention, the development of horror movies in the world continues to grow. Facts about Indonesian horror movies, in Indonesia horror movies have been present and known for a long time and have a different concept from horror movies abroad such as countries in America and the European continent. America and Europe with the concept of rational horror movies and tend to lean more on horror commonly found in mythological history. Interestingly, horror movies based on urban legends are growing rapidly in Asia, Japan, Thailand, and Indonesia. Foreign horror movies are often associated with strange things beyond normal thinking, with various forms of characters depicted. There are vampires, zombies, gremlins, trolls, werewolves, Dracula, space monsters, and children who are possessed by a ghost (Carroll, 2020). Different from Indonesia, with its supernatural and superstitious concepts inherent in people's lives, has characters such as kuntilanak, jin, sundel bolong, pocong, and characters who are also possessed by ghosts. Ghosts such as pocong are not found elsewhere, because only Islamic societies and Islamic societies in Southeast Asia make them as horror characters. Then there are various scenes that contain illogicalities in horror movies that become an attraction for the audience. This is the relative difference between Indonesian and foreign horror movies.

Making a horror genre movie to be liked by other people will certainly go through a process because it is related to the interests and interested of each individual. Moreover, as explained earlier, a film has its own purpose and meaning which becomes the essence of the film.

Therefore, this research will examine the reasons why and how horror genre movies can become favorite movies by analysing various related documents and the final results of the questionnaires or questionnaires distributed. Thus, the researcher certainly conducts research related to the reasons why people like horror movies. Hopefully this research can prove that Indonesians people's interest in horror genre is real.

2. Method

This research was conducted with a qualitative method by describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, views, beliefs, and thoughts with words and language. Bogdan in Krisnan (2021), expressed that qualitative research is a research step that produces descriptive data in the form of writing or speech, as well as the behavior of people observed. This qualitative research aims to gain a general understanding of social reality from the perspective of the participants (Krisnan, 2021). In this study, researchers will also collect data with literature study techniques, namely by collecting various data by looking for written sources from several places that are still related to this research. The method we use in collecting data is internet searching, called internet searches because this method is carried out by searching sites or blogs for complete research data that is related to the content of the research and data collection by collecting and analyzing documents, both written and electronic documents.

Interviews and questionnaires were used to collect the data. The interview was conducted on Wednesday 20 March 2023 at Gazebo Economy, University Bangka Belitung. Structured interview was used as the interview method guidelines are guidelines that contain an outline of the interview. A structured interview is an interview process conducted between the interviewer and the informant by referring to a series of questions that have been made and arranged (Alijoyo et al., n.d.). The interview target was 10 people with a range of 18-20 years and finally conducted to 10 students of English Literature Department. Then for the questionnaire, we used the closed questionnaire method. A closed questionnaire is a questionnaire that is presented in such a form that the respondent only needs to provide an answer in the column that has been provided (Kurniawan Andre, 2021). The questionnaire was made with 11 questions and distributed on 21 March 2023 with a filling limit until 22 March. The target of filling in the data on the questionnaire was 50 people, but the final result of the amount of data obtained was 41 people. The subjects used as research samples were young people from the general public who were willing to fill out the questionnaire. we used the closed questionnaire method. This study employed various instruments to assist the research process, such as a mobile phone, google form, laptop, voice recorder, and interview guide.

3. Results and Discussion

The language is the performance of transferring ideas that have a purpose and meaning itself. Language itself is used more for interpreting stories than telling stories. The words and ways of our language show the self-representation and representations of ourselves and our personalities, so it's better to understand the language we have, so it is better to understand the language based on what they convey. Language provides a theory of human experience and certain resources in lexicogramatics of each language is dedicated to that function. The horror films use material and attributive processes in delivering dialog. Material clauses interpret actions and events. Mental clauses interpret a person involved in conscious processes, including the processes of perception, cognition, and affection. One of the inherent participants is sensing, sensing participant, i.e. involved in involved in conscious processing. In an attributive process, a property of one concept is attributed to another. With respect to the occurrence of rarely used processes in horror films, they have in common the use of behavior and meteorology in the lack of processes to be used in the film. The majority of horror films also have in common the identification of cognition, which indicates that these processes make heavy use of the sense of thinking. Horror movies also feature an array of character types through certain words in which

each playing a specific role in the story. For instance, hero is the character who confronts the horror and often survives, villain refers to the source of the horror, often a killer or a monster, victims refer to characters who fall prey to the horror, skeptic means refusing to believe in the horror until it's too late, innocent is a naive character who is usually the last to realize the danger, and etc.

Furthermore, interviews conducted by researchers with 10 informants from among university students, revealed the results that there are seven out of ten people who like horror genre movies, while the other three people do not like horror genre movies. The reason the seven informants stated that they like watching horror movies is because horror movies are interesting, can spur adrenaline, relieve stress, full of mystery, exciting, challenging, have jump-scare scenes, and have scenes that teach how to survive from threats. The other three informants who stated that they did not like horror genre movies expressed their reasons because they were afraid of watching alone and they would watch horror movies depending on how interesting the title of the movie was. At the end of the question, the researcher asked the informants to rank the movie genres from their favorite to their least favorite. The order of genres was horror, action, and drama. Horror came out on top with 5 votes, action with 4 votes, and last but not least drama with 1 vote. So, this of course means that horror movies are the favorite movie genre of movie fans.

Then, in the questionnaire session that the researchers distributed, 41 respondents had filled in all the questions in the questionnaire, and the following is a presentation of the questionnaire results.

Table. 1 Questionnaire results data

NO.	QUESTION	ANSWER	
		YES	NO
1.	The number of people who like to watch movies	90,2%	9,8%
2.	Frequent watch movies more than 2 times a week	53,7%	46,3%
3.	Interest in the horror genre movie	53,7%	46,3%
4.	The appeal that horror movies have	63,4%	36,6%
5.	Interest in horror movies in the present era	68,3%	31,7%
6.	Old-school horror movies were more interesting	51,2%	48,8%
7.	Horror movies are more flavored in Indonesia	70,7%	29,3%
8.	Have a favorite horror movie	61%	39%
9.	Watching a horror movie makes people feel better	31,7%	68,3%
10.	Would recommend a horror movie to watch	51,2%	48,8%

The table of research results above is certainly obtained by conducting research, where the research was carried out by distributing questionnaires. The evidence and explanation of the research conducted is presented below. Based on the respondents who filled out the questionnaire we gave, the researcher asked questions about gender from the results obtained that most of the respondents who gave answers were women, namely around 63.4%, while the remaining 36.6% of respondents were men. The research results we get are different from the

results of the statement made by Neil. Research conducted by Neil (Why Do You Like Horror Movie? A Review of Empirical Research on Psychological Responses to Horror Films, in 2019. Research conducted by Neil found that men prefer to watch horror films and enjoy the film more than women because women are more susceptible and quicker to feel disgust and anxiety compared to men. This could also be due to gender differences in enjoying horror films (Martin, 2019).

The first answer on the questionnaire that the researcher gave led to the respondent's interest or hobby of watching the film. The first question asked whether respondents like watching films. Based on the answers from the respondents, it can be seen that 90.2% or most of the respondents stated that they like watching films and while the remaining 9.8% of respondents stated that they did not like watching films. It is clear that there are now very many people who like to watch films. The films watched by them are of course very diverse. It turns out then that based on 90.2% of respondents who have stated that they like watching films, it turns out that they are also included in 53.7% of respondents who will watch films twice or more a week, and about 46.3% of the rest stated that they only watch films once or not at all in a week, according to the results of the questionnaire in table number two. It is true that if there are people who like watching films, it does not mean that they often watch films. There are those who watch films very often because it is a hobby that provides entertainment and can be a medium for learning and those who rarely or do not often watch films certainly have reasons, one of which is because they do not have free time. The analysis of why someone often watches films is supported by the results of a survey from one of the sources on the internet, the name of the site is rumahmillenials.com which apparently in essence also states that the frequency of reasons most people or respondents watch films is as a form of entertainment and hobby (Pratomo Rizky Ridho, 2019).

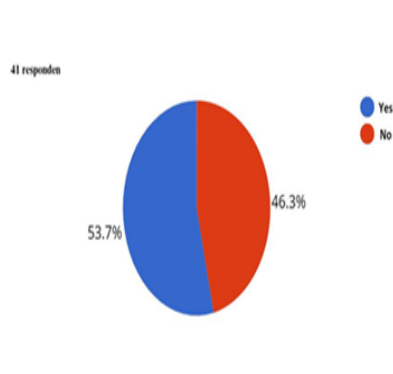


Figure 1 (Interest in The Horror Genre Movie)

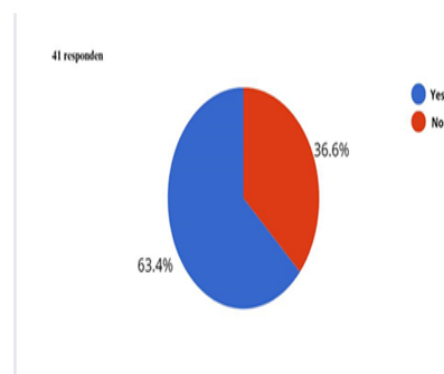


Figure 2 (The Appeal That Horror Movies Have)

Everyone has their own favourite genre, even more than one, and can even have several film genres that are their favourites. The respondents' answer that the researcher got regarding the horror genre is that about 53.7% of the respondents stated that they like watching horror films, and the remaining 46.3% stated that they do not like horror films, as shown in Figure 1. Actually, film genres in Indonesia are dominated by comedy, romance, and horror, and people can have any film genre they like. However, from the questionnaires that have been distributed, it can be seen that most of the respondents like to watch horror films. The respondents have various reasons why they like watching horror films. It could be that they like watching horror films because they think horror films have their own charm, because it is fun and so on. Evidence that horror films have appeal can be seen in Figure 2.

Films of any genre have an appeal that is one of the reasons why someone can like them, such as horror films. The attraction possessed by this horror film is an attraction in terms of psychology, namely regarding how a person's adrenaline can be played, and this becomes a

sensation of pleasure in watching horror films. The results of respondents' answers show that more than half or 63.4% of respondents stated that of course horror films have an attraction while the remaining 36.6% of respondents thought that horror films did not have an attraction. The appeal of horror films is the reason why people have an interest in watching them. They think that horror films are exciting, adrenaline-pumping, have elements of culture, tradition and mysticism in them that make the spirit of curiosity rise. They also think that when watching horror films, they can think about how to solve problems and mysteries, how to survive, and how to save themselves from various dangers that could come their way. Some people like to watch films because they feel the characters in the film, for example if the horror film is played by a beautiful woman, of course this will be one of the other attractions that attract the attention of both men and women, another example if the horror film is played by school students, of course this can also attract children and teenagers to watch it.

Indonesian cultural commentators tried to explain that the appeal of horror movies is closely related to the Indonesian psyche and identity and is generally associated with the mystical and supernatural (Heeren van, 2012). The analysis related to the respondents' attraction to horror movies is also supported by research conducted by Yohana Debby, Theresia Intan Putri Hartiana, and Nanang Krisdinanto with the research title *Desacralization of Indonesian horror movies in the study of reception analysis in 2020* with volume 4 No. 1. In this research journal, it also discusses the appeal of horror movies, but this research focuses more on how the audience can accept the desacralization of religious figures and symbols in Indonesian horror movies (Debby et al., 2020).

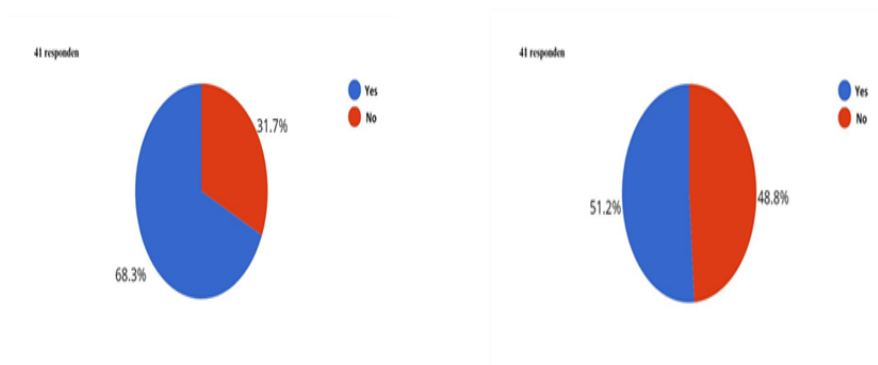


Figure 3 (Interest In Horror Movies in The Present Era) Figure 4 (Old-Horror Movies Were More Interesting)

In the next question, most respondents chose that today's horror movies are more interesting when compared to the horror movies of the past. Today's horror movies were found to be more interesting with 68.3% of votes compared to the previous era's horror movies with 51.2% of votes. This may be due to the old movie industry which still has many shortcomings in terms of quality, tools, and production compared to today's movies which are more advanced with more interesting stories and also stories that keep up with the times. Research conducted by J.B. Kristanto, stated that movies in 1991 apparently experienced a decrease in the number of productions, this was due to the sluggish public interest in horror movies at that time (Bestari Gisantia, 2018). The results of the questionnaire are provided below.

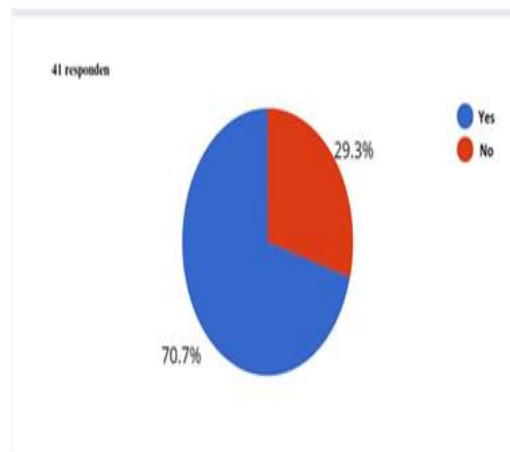


Figure 5 (Horror Movies Are More Flavored in Indonesia)

The interest given by the Indonesian audience to horror movies is quite a lot. Of the 41 respondents who filled out the questionnaire, most chose yes for horror movies to become the most favorite genre in Indonesia with 70.7% of the votes. Based on data from filmindonesia.or.id, in 2022 several Indonesian horror movies were very popular and even successfully broke through 1 million viewers such as the *KKN di Desa Penari* movie which reached 9,233,847 viewers, *Pengabdi Setan 2: Communion* which reached 6,390,970 viewers and the *Ivanna* movie whose audience reached 2,793,775 viewers. The reasons for the large number of viewers who are interested in watching movies are of course many as explained in Figure pie chart 5. Horror genre movies are considered to be the favorite genre of the Indonesian people and even have an allure not only in the national market but also in the international market because Indonesian horror movies are very scary (Uno Sandiaga, 2022).

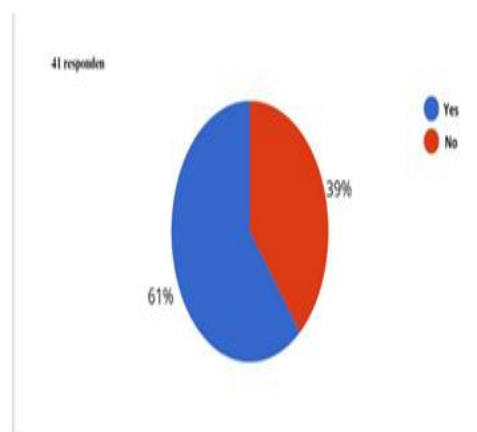


Figure 6 (Have Favorite Horror Movie)

Discussing movies, of course in a movie there must be its own attraction both in characters, storylines, music, cinematography, and so on, so that the movie, can get a good or bad reaction in the eyes of the audience. If the movie is a favorite of many people, then the movie can be considered the best movie and get an award at a competition. From the diagram above we can know that on average respondents have a favorite horror movie with 61% yes answers and 39% no answers. This is a very natural thing because horror movies have their own uniqueness by spurring the adrenaline of the audience, although not a few also dislike horror movies because they will provide fear and trauma for the audience. The fear that arises when watching horror

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movies is a form of strong emotion and a normal phenomenon that is often experienced by horror movie viewers (Nummenmaa, 2020).

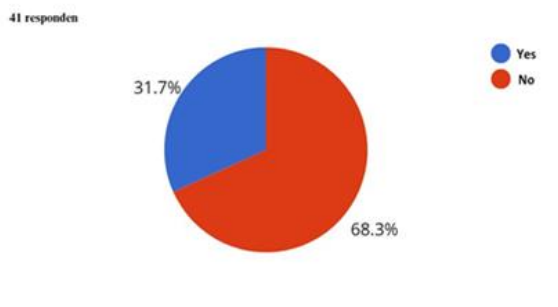


Figure 7 (Watching A Horror Movie Makes People Feel Better)

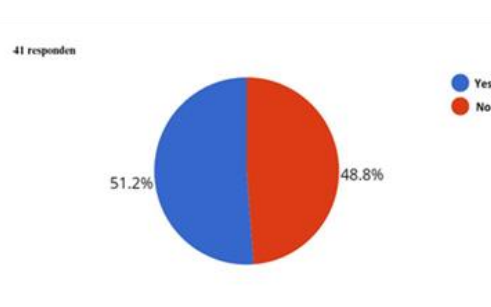


Figure 8(Would Recommend A Horror Movie)

Watching movies is one of the entertainments during free time. For people who like to watch, movies are entertainment that can play with the feelings of the audience. If someone starts to get carried away in the story, the audience will usually feel like they are playing a role in the movie. They start to imagine fantasizing; this situation is what makes the audience love movies. But what about horror movies, horror movies that have a scary story might give the impression of being wary. 66.3% of our respondents do not feel comfortable when watching horror movies, they tend to feel bad when they have watched horror movies. Research that supports the results of this statement is research with the “Effects of Horror Movies on Psychological Health of Youth” researched by Irem Sultana. In this study, Irem included other previous research conducted by (Baird, 2000). Research by Irem et al found the result that watching horror movies apparently can make someone shrouded in fear and discomfort (Sultana et al., 2021). Then, 31.7% feel better when watching a horror movie, the attraction to curiosity, adrenaline rushes, and a sense of alertness favored some people. There is a thesis, that included the opinion of a philosopher, namely Aristoteles. According to Aristoteles, a Greek philosopher, introduced “catharsis”, which is a process in which we release our negative emotions by watching violent (or we can call it) scary movies. In other words, they can help us to “cleanse” our aggressive emotions (Park, 2018).

Someone who watches a movie will feel happiness that can change the mood for the better. Shedding feelings in a movie becomes a pleasure in itself that makes it comfortable. Just like watching a horror movie, the audience will spill their feelings while watching various scary scenes in it. Horror movie lovers like to feel the sensation of tension in it. Then usually viewers who have a favorite movie will give impressions and recommendations to other friends. Advertising a movie can also be done by word of mouth.

Recommending a movie usually arises because the movie has advantages or disadvantages in it. A good movie will often be discussed and discussed and then recommendations will appear in response. The results obtained from the questionnaire answers illustrate a thin comparison of movie recommendations. From the diagram above in Figure 8, 51.2% of respondents answered that they would recommend horror movies as a suitable movie to watch while the rest answered that they would not recommend horror movies.

4. Conclusion

The results of data analysis from this study state that it is true that horror movies contain certain language style to create a psychological impact on the audience. In terms of psychological response, most Indonesians prefer the horror genre; one of the reasons for the encouragement of horror films produced in Indonesia is since there are still many people who believe in

supernatural things. Over time, the development of horror will also experience changes, either forward or backward. The development of horror films in Indonesia today must be recognized as progressing when compared to horror films produced in the past. In addition to the development of horror films in terms of production, storyline, quality, and so on, the number of horror film enthusiasts has also grown and increased. Nowadays, many people say that horror movies are their favorite movies. They believe that horror movies have their own uniqueness and appeal. The audience is interested in watching horror movies because horror movies are considered to be able to boost adrenaline, relieve stress, full of mystery, tense, full of challenges, there are jump scare scenes, and there are scenes that teach how to survive from threats. Although there are many jump scares and scary scenes, it is what triggers curiosity in individuals, and makes them feel better.

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