

Portrayal of Women as a Victim in Pakistani Private TV Channels: Perception of Women of
Twin Cities of Pakistan

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Abstract

This study explored the perception of women regarding portrayal of women as a victim in private TV channels i.e. ARY digital, HUM TV, URDU1 and GEO entertainment. The 200 questionnaires were distributed among 100 housewives and students. It was a survey based research study. The data for this study is collected from Rawalpindi and Islamabad only. Research finding showed that the respondent prefer watching female in a more independent, self-sufficient role. The outcome of the study showed disapproval on the behalf of respondents towards TV dramas that are depicting women as a submissive, helpless and dependent individual. The study conclude that drama industry should adopt more balanced approach in personating female characters and should depict true picture of society rather exaggerating. Respondent showed interest in plays that have been painting female as bold, confident, ethical and pro religions. Whereas disproving stereotypical character given to women and women objectification..

Keywords: Portrayal of Women, Victim, Private TV channels, purposive sampling method, Drama industry

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Introduction

Media plays significant role in development of any society. It has the power to change communal frame of mind. Media industry can render both factually and porky. There are several categories of media in Pakistan electronic/television is consider to be mainstream media as per popularity. Henceforth making it more influential in a society which has low literacy rate like Pakistan. The dynamics of TV industry has changed from past few decades as it is not limited to upper class only now it is available in every household making it one of major source of social cultural and political information. Viewers have access to all kind of channels and dramas. The drama industry has huge impact on viewers it can manipulate their way of thinking lifestyle cultural and political perceptives as well.

This study seeks to understand the portrayal of women as a victim in private drama industry and the demand of public. Pakistani drama industry is on its boom from past few year and gave numerous block buster dramas. The portrayal of female roles in Pakistani PVT Dramas has shown women as weak, oppressed entity of Pakistani society. This sensationalization of women as a victim in dramas can damage the image of female and manipulate the minds of audience. This study attempts to discuss what is the demand of Pakistani viewer's regarding portrayal of women. The roles that are given to women as a victim are true depiction of public's demand or not.

Pakistani private TV channels and women victimization

Pakistani media is actively playing its role. The main role of media can be defined in three ways to inform, educate, and to entertain. The entertainment part of Pakistani TV industry is powerful and influential. Pakistani media is impressed by western culture and neighbor country India (Nazir, 2012). Drama is another name of creativity. Dramas are watched by audience for the entertainment, in their leisure time and to escape from the tension . Drama is another way to educate and influence the audience. Drama industry has given awareness and introduced new trends and fashion in public. Raymond Williams says, access to dramas was not available to the mass audience in past, drama either serials or different genre has many

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morals and lessons in the story, Everyone has different taste and unique choices (Nazir, 2012). And, the victimization of women is defined as any act of gender based violence that leads to physical violence, sexual victimization, psychological pain or threatening, intimidation, restrictions for going somewhere or doing something, affecting someone's liberty. It also includes economic violence emotional victimization harassment and verbal point scoring. This kind of violent behavior is being practiced everywhere in the society in families and in communities (nations, 2015). In 21st century females are still struggling for equal rights and equally treated in western countries where they are thinking out of the box and giving opportunities to women Pakistan is the state which is still struggling for it. As in patriarchal society it is difficult for women to raise her voice and become independent.

Problem Statement

Role of media is pivotal than it has ever been particularly in shaping general public opinion. Media is considered to be fourth pillar of state (Ashraf, 2017) . Both society and media are inter related as either one can effect each other in many ways. The study focus to investigate that the Media in particular electronic media is essential in transformation of society as it effects and changes not only behaviour but also have a huge impact on thinking and formation of perception and ideas of people. In Pakistan last couple of decade witness the proliferation of private TV channels in-terms of news and entertainment, manifesting its importance. As cheap and widely available audio and video tool it has immense influence on Pakistani society where majority of population is illiterate. Hence forth making program content a very effective and important tool to communicate with public.

Significance

Literature regarding relation between media projection of women and public demand, is somewhat under explored except some researchers have done their researches on feminism, stereotyping of women, portrayal of women in media (body image or victimization and their roles but no research has been conducted on this theme. This study can be used by Media channels in near future while making the dramas regarding the role of females. And most significant part is either this projection of women in Pakistani TV industry is really as per popular demand. General public or more specifically female can relate and express themselves through this thesis.

Literature Review

Media has been a topic of interest among scholars around the world. Numerous aspects of media have been explored throughout the history and various facets are still unfolded including; how media aids in formation of certain perception (reference) in bringing change to society (reference)? The aim of current study is portrayal of women in media despite

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considerable work has been done in this field. Henceforth the scope of this chapter is to explore in detail how much work is done in this regard. The content analysis of women in Pakistani film industry from 1988 to 1999 proved that Pakistani cinema do not depict true image of Pakistani women and the roles given to women are somewhat biased. The portrayal of women is mostly based on assumptions which leave negative impact on viewer's perception (Arshad Ali, 2014). (Rizvi, 2014) Examine the portrayal of Pakistani women in Pakistani films before and after the motion picture ordinance of 1979. This study compared the traditional introvert shy girl in early films with the contemporary movies in which the middle class girl is confident and independent. With theories of Mulvey, deerrida, rosen and comolli and narboni it analyse the male obsession and fear is because of female independence. There is a change in pre and post era of zia in films as there was a censorship and now celebrities have more freedom of speech. (Shafiq, 2018) Explored stereotypes associated with perfect 'women' and imperfect 'women' in Pakistani dramas. This study was based on content analysis of six drama serials which were selected through purposive random sampling. This study pinpoint that women who are more submissive, simple, and home associated closely related to perfect women image contrary to women who is more outspoken and career oriented and educated. (Roy, 2016) Investigated female roles in three Pakistani dramas from 2011 to 2013. This study revealed that women can be successful and can attain respect by not giving up her goals and fight against all odds. The new trends in dramas portray women in the feminism perceptive. According to Johnston in (2010) examines the women role in films and television of different decades focusing on portraying the women in public relations particularly in UK and USA .argue the feminist and post-feminist perspective of professional ladies and changing trend in society about the women working in public relation sphere .(Yasmin, 2019) explicate the media role as opinion leader in Pakistani society. Further discusses the projection of women in crime news specifically English medium .also unfold the changing trend of media painting of women over the period of seven years by feminist approach .the study observe the gender representation of victims as in the women are described in terms of marital status and males victims portrayed on professional status .further explore slight shift in reporting the names and age of victims. According to Arcy (2015) work aim to identify the media's (television and digital) dedication towards women. Confers that via specific case study that media designed specific content (glamorous, melodramatic) that intended to develop the womanize culture to attract the audience .this womanize culture is socially constructed through incorporating the feminization

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practices, strategies and content to integrate women and named it as feminized convergence .the feminized convergence in this paper suggest that is the retrospective approaches and format like famous old movies and soap opra. therefore contrary to belief independent women character influence on society , these strategies contribute to stereotypical tends in popular women culture and amplifies the gender pigeonholes. Gallaghe (2005), argues that infotainment tools of media causes the immense influence on general public and must be decipher for their betterment .this is due to overcome the standardizing problem created by media .as in the media is elite tool to manipulate the public views ,It act as opinion leader that can lead in creating societal inequalities and biasness via transforming the virtual world into reality. Likewise creates social differences among the women community in beauty standard and their roles that also impede the social development .the objectification of women as in perfect body and facial contours in media cause the negative affect on real women life by constructing the desirable images for man for personal and professional demands.

This study is plan to analyze the ‘Portrayal of women as a victim in Pakistani private TV channel dramas; perception of women of twin cities’. The aim of this study is to analyze the demand of women of twin cities that either they want to watch presentation of women in Pakistani private dramas as a victim or not. And which type of roles they really want to watch of women in dramas. The framework of this study is based one theory i.e. Cultivation theory.

Methodology

This study was conduct to know the perception of people for the private TV channels dramas what are their demands either they want to watch the content which is shown on Televisions (more specifically victimization of women in dramas) now or they want some different content. For this purpose survey method is being used to understand and know public’s demands for the roles and dramas of Pakistani pvt TV channels. The population of the study were (female) students and housewives the viewers of private TV channels dramas (ARY digital, HUMTV, GEO entertainment, URDU1). This population is basically sample of twin cities (Rawalpindi, Islamabad). Further they are divided into two more categories Age and their education. The unit of analysis of this study is (female) students and housewives of twin cities. The researcher aims to gather data from the entire population to make the findings strengthen. But it is difficult for the researcher to collect the data from entire population as it is time consuming and a lot of money is require for this, so therefore the researcher take samples

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instead of whole population. For this study the researcher used stratified or quota sampling method. The researcher chooses purposive sampling method for data collection. The researcher to collect data from the large population of twin cities therefore two hundred respondents equally consisting females students and housewives, age 20-25, 20-30 and 30 and above, intermediate, BS and masters.

Finding

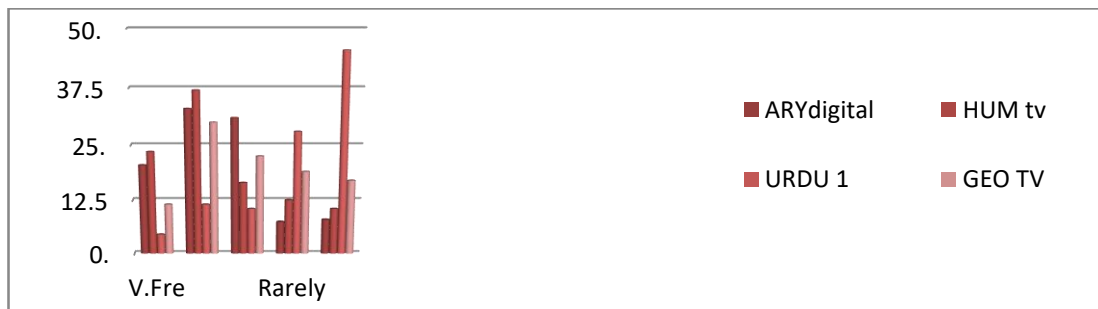


Figure 1

The Pakistani private TV channels have been gained a lot of viewer ship in past decades. Considering the particular audience that is females (Students, Housewives).These viewers expose to these private Drama channels for many purposes that are entertainment, information, etc. It is observed from the above *figure 1* findings that channel falls in very frequently watching category is graded as 23% ARY ,20% Hum tv,11%geo TV and 4% URDU1.Second category shows us that frequently watched TV channels i.e. 32% ARY ,36%hum tv,10%urdu 1,29%geo TV on the other hand the rarely watched TV channels trend suggest urdu 1 27% ,and ARY in this category graded lowest i.e 6%.audinece show least interest in watching urdu1 i.e. 45% and second graded channel in category geo news 16%.overall result shows that AR digital shows high accumulate result as mostly watched TV channel nevertheless URDU1 is least watched channel.

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According to you what percentage of Victimization of women is being shown by Pakistani drama industry?

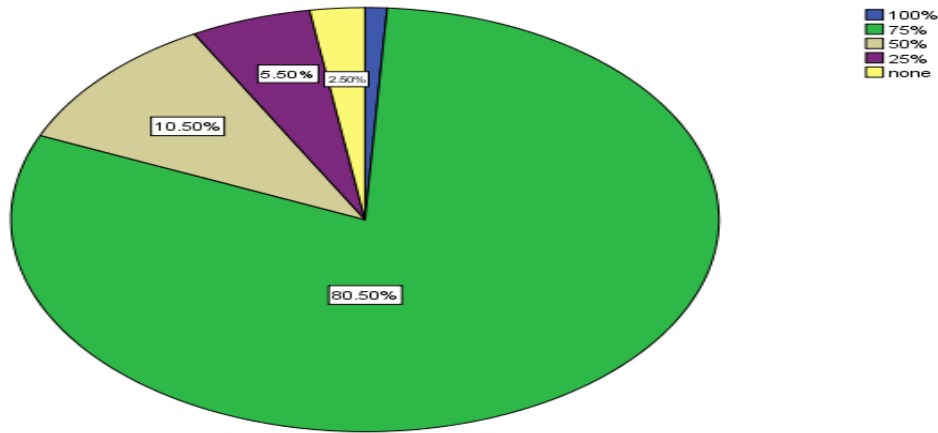


Figure 2

In the above figure 2 the findings revealed that according to the audience the victimization of women shown in Pakistani dramas have different results. 80.50% audience thinks that Pakistani dramas shows 70% victimization of women and 10.50% audience voted that 50% women victimization is being shown in Pakistani dramas industry. And 5.50%, 2.20% audience consider that 25%, no victimization is shown in Pakistani dramas.

How much do you like drama portraying a strong character of women?

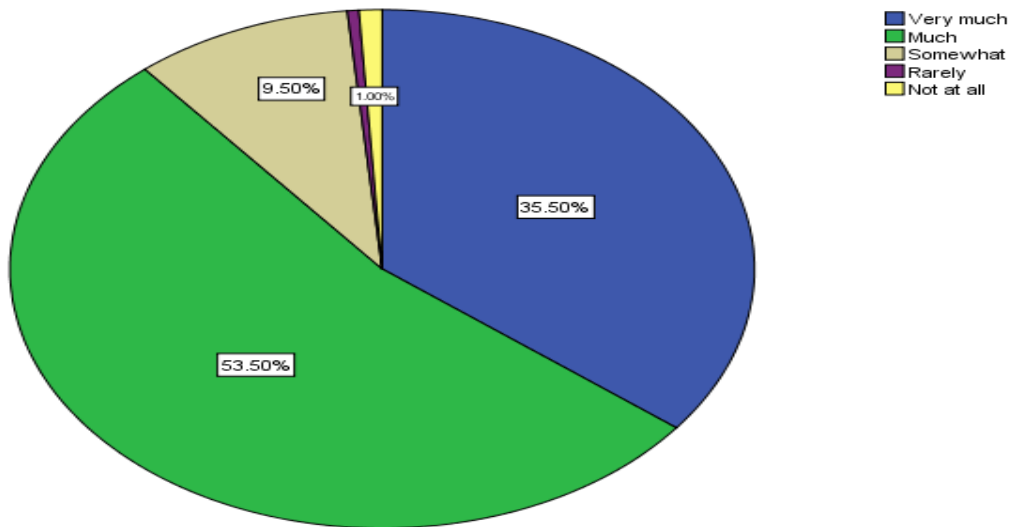


Figure 3

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Further results of the study revealed that 53.50% of respondents much like the strong character of women 35.50% voted for very much, 9.50% selected somewhat and 1.80% respondents rarely liked these kind of characters.

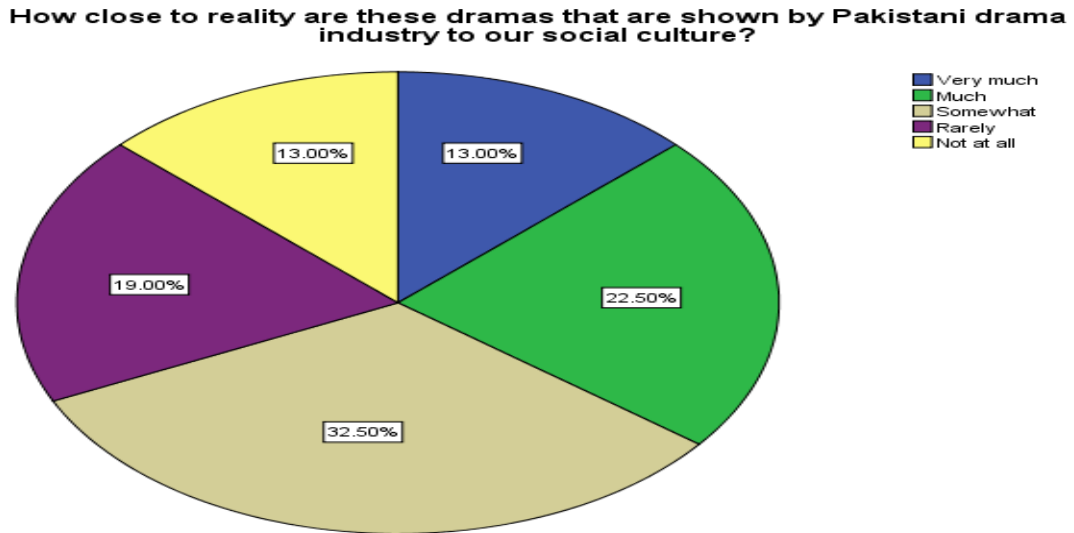


Figure 4

Figure 10 explains that how close to reality these dramas are close to our social culture. 13% people say that these dramas are very much close to reality, 22.50% says these are much close to reality, 32.50% says somewhat, 19% people thinks it is rarely close to reality and 13% people voted for not at all.

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Do you prefer dramas with traditional role of a woman over independent confident woman?

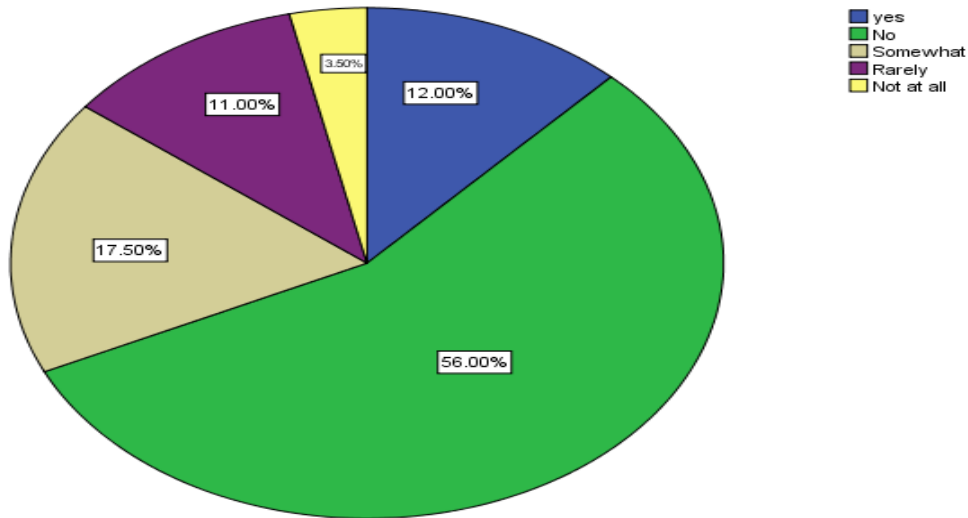


Figure 5

Further study revealed significant difference in the result that people prefer dramas with traditional role of women over independent confident women? 56% people voted that they do not prefer traditional role of women. 17.5% voted for somewhat, 12% says that yes they prefer traditional roles over independent roles of women and 11% says that it they rarely prefer roles and 3.5% voted for not at all.

It is observed from the findings that the respondent preferred watching female as more independent, self-sufficient beings. They show dislike towards TV dramas that are showing women suffering. dramas should adopt balance approach in portraying female character as not exaggeratedly feminist within cultural and social limitation. Respondent shows interest in plays that has been painting female as bold, confident, ethical and pro religions. Audience showed distaste towards stereotypical character and women objectification

Conclusion

Media plays important role in development of society. Media has power to influence and change the perception of people. It gives two types of images either complete reality or falsehood sensationalisation. In society like Pakistani where literacy rate this very low it can influence people easily and TV is most easy and accessible medium for Pakistani society which has important role in the societal awareness and development. This study was conceived to explore the Perception of females of twin cities about victimization of women in private TV channels. The respondents used TV as the source of information and entertainment too. And

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Pakistani private drama channels are mostly exposed to the respondents i.e. ARY digital, HUMTV, GEO entertainment, and URDU1. Their dramas and portrayal of women as a victim has been documented.

The findings of the study revealed that respondents watched private TV drama channels often. In *figure 1* the results shows that respondents watch these private channels frequently in the category of very frequently ARY digital has 23% and in the category of Frequently HUMTV has 36%. Other channels also have much viewership but these are the top rated channels from respondents.

This study further revealed that respondents who watch violent and submissive roles of women in Pakistani private TV dramas have much impact on youth in particular young girls in *figure 9* the results show that 42% respondents think that it has much impact, 22% thinks that it has very much impact, 30% respondents believes it has somewhat impact and 6% says it rare effect audience. This result justify and support the research hypotheses 'If female consumes portraying the victimization of women in dramas is more than the influence will be in greater extent'.

The empirical findings revealed that respondents believes that victimization of women in Pakistani dramas is being shown in the *Figure 5* the respondents have responded that according to 80.50% respondents 72% victimization of women in dramas has been shown. 10% respondents thinks that 50% victimization has been shown and 5.50%, 2.20% believes that there is 25% or rare victimization in dramas and these results are supporting the research hypotheses of study i.e. 'It is more likely that the Pvt TV Channels dramas portray the more victimization of women than the less'.

In further research of the study the results revealed that respondents want to watch more strong characters on women in Pakistani private TV channels. The results of *Figure 7* shows that 53.50% of respondents much like the strong character of women 35.50% voted for very much, 9.50% selected somewhat and 1.80% respondents rarely liked these kind of characters. This survey result justifies the research hypotheses of the study i.e. 'If public demand is empowering roles of female in Pvt TV dramas then the sensationalization of women as victim will decrease'.

The further results has significant difference in the results the respondents responds to the survey question that do you prefer dramas with traditional role of a women over independent confident women? In *figure 12* 56% people voted that they do not prefer

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traditional role of women. 17.5% voted for somewhat, 12% says that yes they prefer traditional roles over independent roles of women and 11% says that it they rarely prefer roles and 3.5% voted for not at all. This also justify the research hypotheses i.e.' If Pvt Dramas behave un biasedly towards presentation of women then it will promote the image of Pakistani women in society.

In the survey research it was asked from the respondents that which kind of roles of females they want to watch and why? It is observed from the findings that the respondent preferred watching female as more independent, self-sufficient beings. They show dislike towards TV dramas that are showing women suffering dramas should adopt balance approach in portraying female character as not exaggeratedly feminist within cultural and social limitation. Respondent shows interest in plays that has been painting female as bold, confident, ethical and pro religions. Audience showed distaste towards stereotypical character and women objectification.

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