



The Content Analysis of the Drama Serial “Razia” Focusing On Gender Stereotyping

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Abstract

The drama industry significantly influences the representation of a nation's culture and societal norms. This study focuses on the Express channel's influential drama serial "Razia," which illustrates how a patriarchal society impacts the well-being of women. By delving deeply into cultural and stereotypical norms, the study examines how gender roles and expectations are shaped by biological identification. It highlights the struggles women face against gendered stereotypes and patriarchal dominance from childhood through adulthood. Employing a qualitative research design, the study utilizes content analysis to interpret raw material into meaningful themes and subthemes. Data was analyzed through the content of the "Razia" script, revealing that patriarchy and gender discrimination are central to family dynamics and that misogynistic behavior undermines female identity. The findings emphasize themes of reawakening, resistance, and surrender to patriarchal norms, reflecting the challenges women face in voicing resistance against discrimination and humiliation.

Keywords: Gender Discrimination, Family Dynamics, Structure and Agency, Gender Stereotyping

Introduction

Since the second wave feminists used the phrase “describing personal as the political,” the idea that the production of gender in media representations and cultural discourses is a political act implicating power relations has gained widespread recognition. (Zulfiqar, & Barbary, 2015). “Before the 1980s, there was a general consensus that cultural study on gender would place a central focus on challenging media portrayals of women. But as the 20th century came to an end, gender scientists began focusing more on studying the settings in which masculine and male sex stereotypes were portrayed and on how communication structures and mechanisms contributed to the emergence of various forms of masculinity (Glacock, 2001). Conversely, there is less discussion about the assertion that mainstream media plays a crucial role in propagating dominant cultural norms, particularly in the maintenance of gender roles, distinctions, and disparities. Considering that gender inequality is perpetuated by the media's creation and usage of gender roles. The media is a major force in influencing public opinion and behavior in the twenty-first century. It's been claimed that “the media can make guilty innocent and innocent guilty,” and we have seen this often in both historical and contemporary instances. The government, influential individuals, and those who fund their operations are the ones who the media, particularly Pakistani media,

represents. It is present in news programs, the entertainment sector, and other mass media outlets (Haq,& Kausar, 2016). Using the Pakistani entertainment industry as an example, we can see that stereotypes and stories from fifty years ago are still prevalent, and that the people who create them continue to promote them by going on and on. In addition, even in the present, producers in the industry are pressuring people to watch their content (Krippendorff, 2004). Many people have expressed disapproval, with young people making up the majority, claiming that Pakistan's entertainment sector lacks high-caliber material worthy of our time or money (Gregory, 2002). The Pakistani audience only gives a project or two acclaim for their characterization or plot. A lot of individuals also assert that a monopoly of Pakistani producers has formed itself, controlling the entertainment sector, trapped in a cycle of commercial content (stories produced by Pakistani producers), and willing to continue producing the same stories in spite of opposition. In order to identify the issues facing Pakistan's entertainment sector, the study will examine the root causes and evaluate popular sentiment. In order to gather information that can either confirm or refute the critics' assertions, we will also examine some Pakistani dramas and the stereotypes that are present in them. In order to reduce cultural imperialism, the study will also draw attention to the flaws in the organization and substance of the Pakistani entertainment industry (Raza,& Noor, 2016). Television continues to be a potent medium that both reflects and changes society norms and views in the changing world of modern media. The representation of gender roles and identities is one of this influence's more complex facets. With an emphasis on how men and women are portrayed in modern television, this review research paper aims to explore the complex web of gender stereotypes in the medium. Television has served as a mirror reflecting cultural norms, values, and expectations over the years.

Still, most of the time what we see on our screens isn't real. We are inclined to trust what we are told, because reality is never depicted. The way women are portrayed in dramas and their actual roles are very different. In dramas, women are assigned distinct roles. They are either confined to the role of an Immoral mother-in-law in urban settings or have mind control over stay-at-home moms who will demolish anything that gets in their way. We see this particular kind of strong gender discrimination in our daily drama series (Raza,& Noor, 2016). Women's rights are the only goal that we really need to focus on. It is up to the woman herself to decide what she wants to accomplish, who she wants to marry, and what choices she needs to make in order to improve her own future. Our women have to deal with the stereotypical analysis on a daily basis. We have this mentality that a self-sufficient, independent woman can never settle down and be a good wife. In Pakistani scripts, two types of women are portrayed: one is silent, bows to her in-laws, hides her head, and the other is rebellious, puts herself first, and typically files for divorce when she feels harassed. Television is a potent and effective instrument for influencing viewers' attitudes. The way women are portrayed in Pakistani dramas is somewhat offensive since, for the most part, they are portrayed in weakened or bad ways that are not representative of reality. Negative projections of women have led to the structuring of negative representations of women. Our 21st-century drama industry is currently dealing with a great deal of criticism over the content, particularly in regards to how female characters are portrayed. Media plays a significant influence in society, and viewers of Pakistani dramas or the general public idealize the way that media portrays various facets of society.

About 80% of Pakistani dramas, particularly prime time dramas, feature women who are either crying or who are restrained by society and obedient to men (Eagly,& Wood, 2012). These dramas impose these stereotypes about women, who are frequently shown as the primary player in various conspiracies or as the source of issues. Men are portrayed as completely white or as being controlled by women for every inappropriate behaviour they take. Men are vicious tyrants who repress women and make all of the decisions in an attempt

to control society. In Pakistani dramas, guys are typically presented in this way. The public is being injected with the idea that they are the primary source of social imbalance and that they are oppressors who engage in cruel acts; the consequences of this are evident, primarily in the fact that the majority of feminist movement slogans are directed towards males rather than against unequal rights (Kang, 2019). Several studies, which the researcher discusses in chapter two, bolster these claims. There is evidence to support the claim that male undergraduates are more aware of gender-role stereotypes and rape myths when they are exposed to TV social drama and multiple advertisements that depict women as sexual objects. According to Media Report to Women (2001), regular exposure to TV formats like soap operas and music videos, which are typically about sexual content and thoughts or impulses, is consistently linked to more traditional sexual behaviors, unhealthy relationship values, and a greater degree of acceptance of sexual advances, particularly among women and adolescent girls.

Background:

The earliest TV dramas in Pakistan were aired in the 1960s, marking the beginning of the country's drama tradition. A 2010 Gilani Research Foundation Pakistan survey found that 87% of TV viewers watch dramas, with 68% of them favouring Pakistani productions. However, a comparison of the sexes showed that women prefer to watch television dramas over males. Plays were originally written for entertainment, but they have since developed into one of the most powerful instruments for revealing and motivating people's views and feelings in society. Additionally, a lot of dramas elicit strong emotional attachments from viewers, who watch them for entertainment purposes.

This media is essential for spreading knowledge and increasing awareness of numerous social issues, even in poor nations. Historical representational patterns that have consistently reinforced traditional gender norms are the root cause of the issue of gender stereotyping in the media (Zia et al., 2014). From the beginning of television until the present, certain themes and portrayals of masculinity and femininity have been used repeatedly, influencing society's expectations and reinforcing established power structures. Even though there has been a lot of progress in challenging old gender standards, it is still important to examine how gender is portrayed on contemporary television in order to identify any areas that may require further care and attention. Gender stereotypes in the media are a concern because of past depiction patterns that have perpetuated traditional gender norms. From the beginning of television until the present, certain themes and portrayals of masculinity and femininity have been used repeatedly, influencing society's expectations and reinforcing established power structures. Even though there has been a lot of progress in challenging traditional gender norms, Among the greatest opuses broadcast were "ankahi," "dhoop kinaray," "dhuan," and "tanhayian." Since this is an Islamic nation, media outlets typically aim to produce shows that both accurately portray the message through compelling plots and reflect Muslim culture. Haseena Moen and Ashfaq Ahmad are included in the list of outstanding creators; their works typically address modern social issues that affect a lot of people these days. Their experiences are advancing them to the point (Chaudhary et al., 2021).

Significance of the Study

By exploring the influence of media messages, we aim to contribute valuable insights to the existing body of literature on the role of the television industry in portraying gender stereotyping. These findings can be of great significance to educators, parents, and policymakers, providing them with informed perspectives to guide and support teenagers in navigating healthy and meaningful relationships.

Research question

1. How does drama portray the traditional representation of family dynamics?
2. How does drama “Razia” breaks the gender stereotyping that prevail in the society?
3. What societal and cultural dilemmas related with gender has been represented in this drama serial?

Literature Review

The Prevalence of Stereotypical Norms in Society: The Role of Media

The phrase goes, “The media can prove a guilty innocent and an innocent guilty,” and that is entirely accurate. We have witnessed such incidents in the past, which undoubtedly relates to the latter that worries us. The mainstream media is said to be a major factor in maintaining the cultural norms of today, especially when it comes to the representation of gender roles and differences. Given that the press constructs and uses gender roles to preserve gender inequalities, it is imperative to investigate how the gender-based position in culture is portrayed or effected by those dominant institutions, i.e., conventional media (Huda,& Ali, 2015). Today’s Pakistani dramas do not uphold the tradition for which they are renowned. Instead, they are attempting to imitate concepts, fill screen time with clichés, and repeat tales that revolve around domestic issues while introducing the idea of the ideal person into Pakistani culture. The entertainment industries around the world strive to dispel stereotypes and portray the true faces of society as well as the elements or individuals causing the problems; however, in Pakistani industries, the characters and plots, particularly the negative ones, are so glamorized that they actually serve to reinforce gender stereotypes, which are primarily directed towards women and are covered below. The media, the fourth pillar of democracy, is incredibly powerful in its ability to monitor society. It is a reflection of society and serves as a mirror for social events. It has the power to sway public opinion, and the convergence of the media has only made it more strong in shaping public values. Television, India’s most important medium of mass communication, plays an Important role in creating public opinion. Mass awareness by using the media on political, social, and economic issues holds the foundation of any democracy. Communication has developed as a discipline wherein media plays a role in the nation’s development (Hussain, 2008).News on political and economic issues dominates over social issues.

The Gender Stereotype

We define “gender” as the duties and obligations that society has established within a particular culture or geographic area. These positions are influenced by social, political, cultural, environmental, economic, and religious forces. “Gender stereotypes” are influenced by custom, legislation, class, ethnicity, and personal or institutional prejudice. It is possible to learn and modify gender attitudes and behaviors within the aforementioned framework. Women are perceived as being reliant, weak, incompetent, emotional, afraid, adaptable, quiet, modest, soft-spoken, and gentle carries, according to gender stereotypes. Men are simultaneously strong, decisive, rational, aggressive, focused, assertive, powerful, competent, and important (Kaul,& Sahni, 2017).Because gender stereotypes and gender inequality are so ingrained in society’s lengthy history, it is currently thought that the media, with Its enormous influence and power, is the best medium for enacting gender equality. Son preference is a long-standing gender bias in India, a country with a strong patriarchal culture, where the male member of the family is expected to “carry forward” the family name. It is his responsibility to care for his parents as they age and to carry out their final ceremonies when they pass away. Daughters are frequently viewed as a “economic liability” due to the notion that they are “Parayadhan,” or “someone else’s wealth,” and the fact that they are given to the groom as dowry. Gender disparity is strongly depicted in United Nations statistics: Women make up just 10% of the global workforce, although doing two-thirds of the work. They hold

less than one-hundredth of the world's property yet make up two-thirds of the illiterate population (Parvez,& Roshan, 2010).

Representation in the Media

Feminists around the world have long acknowledged that the media has a substantial and enduring impact on how gender is constructed, either by upholding or contesting preexisting ideas. Liesbet van Zoonen examines how feminist theory and research contribute to a deeper understanding of the various functions that the media play in gender production in modern society in her comprehensive overview, *Feminist Media Studies* (Amjad et al.,2021). The semiotics and content analysis are used to analyse media representations. Only until the complete impact of media on gender construction is recognized can it be effectively employed as a tool for gender sensitization. Women's representation is demonstrated by the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP, 2009–2010), the largest study on gender bias and related efforts in the news media. Following its collection of data and insights through media monitoring, the GMMP seeks to advance gender representation in the news media that is equitable. Women from grassroots communities, as well as college students, scholars, and media professionals, voluntarily participate in it (Rameez,& Amber, 2015).

Women's Portrayal as Sex Objects and Suppressed Controlled Individuals

Generally speaking, women are portrayed as repressed people who serve as men's objects of lust. There is proof to back up the assertion that men become more conscious of gender stereotypes and rape myths when they watch TV social dramas and endless ads that feature women as sexual objects. More exposure to TV formats such as soap operas and music videos, which often deal with sexual content and urges to engage in sexual activity, is linked to more traditional sexual behaviors, unhealthy relationship ideals, and a greater propensity to accept sexual advances, especially among women and adolescent girls, according to survey analysis (*Media Report to Women*, 2001). Similarly, Ward discovered that young women exposed to prime-time TV videos portraying women as sexual objects and men as sex-driven, regardless of exposure levels, had a greater tolerance for those stereotypes than did women exposed to control clips. The media has always had a significant impact on how we view certain people, and when it comes to women, it consistently portrays them as more beautiful, glamorous, and weak members of society than men. According to feminist studies, there is a vital link between women and the media since it has a big influence on how society views women. Stereotypes are formed and people's ideas, knowledge, attitudes, and actions are successfully shaped by television. The representation of men and women on Pakistani entertainment television serves as a medium for communicating gender issues. (Roy, 2016).

Depiction of Women as Individuals with Desire towards Money

Many studies have examined the portrayal of women in Pakistani plays as being avaricious. Women in Pakistani television shows are often depicted as materialistic and preoccupied with money, claims a 2018 study report published in the *Journal of International Women's Studies*. The study looked at the representation of women in 50 well-known Pakistani plays and found that they were usually shown as crafty and manipulative in order to gain wealth and power. The study also found that these negative stereotypes of women were often reinforced by speech and storylines that portrayed them as superficial and self-centered. Another study that looked at how women are portrayed in Pakistani soap operas revealed that they are frequently represented as being dependent on men for financial stability and seeking marriage as a means of achieving it (Shafiq,& Ashfaq, 2018). The *Journal of Gender Studies* released this study in 2016. The study also found that stories and speeches that represented women as materialistic and in need of financial security usually backed up these images of women. In 2017, the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* published the results of a third study on the representation of women in Pakistani television shows. It was discovered

that women are often shown as being driven by a desire for wealth and prestige and as utilising their femininity and beauty to get these things. The study also found that language and plots that showed women as crafty manipulators who exploited their femininity and beauty to get what they wanted usually supported these depictions. Overall, these results indicate that women are frequently portrayed in Pakistani dramas as being materially preoccupied and leveraging their beauty and femininity to acquire wealth and material belongings. These representations may perpetuate detrimental gender stereotypes and have a negative effect on how people view women.

Cultivation Theory and Women Representation

Professor George Gerbner created the cultivation theory method. In the middle of the 1960s, he started a study dubbed "Cultural Indicators," in which he examined the ways in which watching television affects viewers' beliefs and conceptions of the world as it is or should be. Television has minor, slow, and indirect long-term effects, but they are cumulative and substantial, according to cultivation theorists. Gerbner contends that the media reinforces attitudes and values that are already prevalent in a society. These principles are spread via the press, which unites people within a culture. Rather than changing, threatening, or weakening attitudes, conventional ideas, and societal habits, television preserves, stabilizes, and reinforces them. A "double dose" or "resonance" impact helps foster attitudes and values. The viewer feels a resonance effect that reinforces his attitudes and opinions if his real-life experiences match those portrayed on television (Ali,& Batool, 2015).

Distorted representations and their effects

The media's distorted portrayals of women harm society and its advancement.

The persistence of inequality inside the household

Studies and data show that women and girls are more prone than men and boys to be malnourished and neglected.

Making a false impression of oneself

Women's perceptions of themselves and society are shaped by media. It influences their decisions on what they dress, eat, and choose. It affects how kids learn, how they behave, and eventually, who they become. The rise of a new, self-assured, assertive woman has been opposed by the media. Such unequal treatment by the media deepens their isolation, weakens them, and disempowers them. They continue to be "incommunicable," unheard, and unrepresented" (Abbas, 2018).

Promoting prejudices in development plans

The media, in its conservative manner, downplays the contributions and economic involvement of women, particularly those living in rural areas. The media has perpetuated the dated notion that women are less valuable, submissive, and inferior rather than dispelling it. The man is always the proactive, opinionated doer. Women's needs and issues are either disregarded or not publicly expressed. Discussions, discussions, or public thinking on the actual issues facing women are discouraged. Development plans are neglected mostly due to the unmet needs and unspoken concerns surrounding women's difficulties (Awais et al., 2021).

Female Depiction In Pakistani Dramas

Revolutionary advancements have been greatly influenced by television. Within the realm of entertainment. Even with the digital media and internet revolution, television still has a significant influence on and balances our culture today. It is essential in influencing someone's beliefs and viewpoints. What we perceive, watch, consider, accept, and put into

practice. Indeed, television is a great tool for entertaining as well as for raising awareness, educating, and informing. However, it influences and sharpens the audience's cognitive abilities. Top of the list in the entertainment category are Pakistani dramas (Fatima, 2015). They are utterly engrossing, allowing the spectators to feel the emotions conveyed, and are typically family-oriented, offering a 30 to 40-minute emotional roller coaster trip. They are utterly engrossing, bursting with emotions, and they allow the audience to experience the emotions portrayed in drama. The entire premise of these dramas revolves around the concept of "women." The majority of plays in the last few years have presented women as stronger, more empowered, and more modern. In today's world, a professional woman ought to be a self-reliant, determined individual. Sadly, society does not accept them and harshly criticizes them. As a result, they encounter obstacles in their quest for success. Following that, working women experience discrimination and eventually become more and more isolated. If a woman earns more than her husband, for instance, her spouse may become uneasy and may even take the situation personally. The majority of Pakistani dramas portray the unfavorable perception of working women in our culture. Because it is abnormal in Pakistani society for someone to enter a career and become independent and powerful, people often fear being alone. This begs the question: shouldn't we be educating our women? Is it merely the dread of social rejection or isolation? (Babul & Niaz, 2019). The poor portrayal of women in Pakistani drama series goes against the actual cultural norms and values of the nation, claim (Ashfaq & Shafiq, 2018). In addition to being entertaining, TV serials like "Nand," which debuted in 2020, are based on Indian soap operas and family dynamics.

Role of Women in Pakistani Society

First, we need to comprehend Pakistani society in order to comprehend the status of women in Pakistani culture. Pakistan's social fabric is diverse, multilingual, and lacks commonality. The primary ethnic groups in Pakistan include Pashtuns, Balochi's, Sindhis, and Panjabi; many other smaller ethnic and linguistic groupings have also been absorbed into Pakistani society. On the other hand, people's minds become larger and society evolves throughout time. Pakistanis are more grateful to see a woman in the twenty-first century who is able to support herself. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of women working in journalism, despite all barriers and rivalries. Pakistan's population is composed of 48.76% women, according to the country's 6th Population and Housing Census (2017). In Pakistan, women are not regarded as autonomous human beings. Male family members including fathers, brothers, wives, and sons are in charge of them. The traditional belief that women who work or earn money are dishonorable to their families and their male members is challenged by the fact that women are often seen as valuable and respectable members of the family. They are not free to behave in the nation as they like (Hussain, 2008). Pakistani women who live in cities and those who live in rural areas differ greatly in their lifestyles. In urban areas, women are more likely to be able to vote and pursue higher education, where they can effectively complete master's-level coursework and get post-graduate degrees. Conversely, women are often denied the right to vote and an education in tribal regions. Large-city women in Pakistan are reported to be more independent. Their entire lives are devoted to their studies and careers. Even scholarships are given to them so they can study abroad. She might have been a doctor because, in the past, women could only choose to work in the medical field. But things have entirely changed now that women may apply for and even hold technical positions. (Ibrahim et al., 2020). There are good and negative categories in which to evaluate how women are portrayed in Pakistani media. Pakistani dramas are mostly focused on social and cultural themes pertaining to women, allowing viewers to witness the diverse roles that female actors portray. It's also fascinating to note that these plays gain high rating.

Traditional Honour discourses in Pakistan

The majority of the laws pertaining to women in Pakistan regarding marriage, families, inheritance, and divorce are believed to fall under the purview of religious authorities. Women thus challenge the religious establishment and impose order when they speak out against these laws (Bhasin et al., 1994). The “honour discourse” is placed in a larger religious context by the persistence and influence of Islamic ideologues, both at the state and cultural levels, who do not hesitate to dictate what “appropriate” roles women should play in society. This makes the concept of honour extremely relevant to the lives of women in Pakistan. According to Bhasin, women’s basic needs are connected to religion and community in addition to class and patriarchy, as suggested by Western feminists. In addition, religion has an impact on women’s daily lives and can be a powerful political weapon to maintain women’s subjugation (Zahra, & Hassan, 2019).

Women in Television

Women’s roles have been portrayed on television in a variety of ways worldwide in recent years, including politics, advertising, and other industries. Although modernism’s portrayal of women in society makes them appear inferior to men, women still face discrimination in many spheres of life as executives. According to Sharma (2012), women are portrayed unfavorably in drama because they are treated poorly in the genre. The media emphasized the importance of women’s roles everywhere in the world. While women are given the opportunity to advance in all spheres of life and contribute significantly to national development in other nations, such as the West, gender roles in Pakistan remain poorly understood. Pakistan’s 1973 constitution places a strong emphasis on the non-discrimination of men and women. This is stated in Article 25 of the laws, which affirms the equality of men and women. Article 34 further affirms that women participate in all spheres of life. Apart from this law, Pakistan is included in the global portion, and the UN is limited to adhering to international agreements such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this, everyone is allowed to experience appropriate human rights (Rameez, & Amber, 2015). The media took notice of the way that women are portrayed sexually, which leads to content that is unclear in meaning. Women are frequently portrayed in the media in terms of their appearance, physical attributes, and beauty standards, and they are also heavily marketed and ranked in the media. It’s widely believed that Pakistani women who present themselves both domestically and abroad are seen negatively. In addition, Pakistani societies uphold a patriarchal framework that grants independence to only men (Huda and Ali, 2015). The Pakistani television soap opera employs gender perspective and socioeconomic inequity as a means of storytelling. This makes one’s voice go silent. Sultana Siddiqui is a creative Urdu drama author and director of women’s soap operas. Her works, such as Haseena Moin, portray women as modern and educated, strong and independent, determined, and influential, challenging traditional beliefs in Pakistani culture.

Agenda-Setting Theory

According to agenda-setting theory, the media is perceived as entirely establishing plans for the advanced society by trivializing, emphasizing, ignoring, and focusing on any topic; as a result, a subject becomes an open motivator. According to theory, the media has a huge influence on viewers by choosing which stories to tell and how much space and distinct quality to offer them. This affects the overall conclusion. This theory also asserts that “people are influenced by the media not so much by what they think, but by what they consider.” Therefore, the images that the public sees in its crowds are the responsibility of the media. The media constantly dictates what people should think about and how important such reflections should be. The basic tenet of agenda-setting theory is the transfer of important issues from the agendas of the mass media to public agendas, so influencing people’s perceptions and worldviews, as figure 1 illustrates. According to the agenda-setting idea,

topics that are clearly stated and highlighted in large-scale communications are more likely to be acknowledged as significant by media consumers. A performance seems to open up more significance the more times a woman appears in it. The agenda-setting hypothesis has logically explained why people who are presenting the same subjects in tandem in the media will give them importance. Even if a wide group of people may feel differently about a nearby issue, the majority of people believe that the issue is important. Eventually, open motivation can also affect the media. In a similar vein, agenda-setting theory is somewhat illogical (Roy, 2016).

Discrimination ideology between genders

Pakistani dramas portray an antiquated society, giving the impression that we have regressed a hundred years. It is determined through an analysis of Pakistani dramas that an uneven representation of genders is given. Men are represented to have all authority and women to be missing from their rights. Discriminatory pictures even target children. Pakistani society is seen as being divided by gender. The concept of sex difference, or gender ideology, is frequently invoked to defend treating men and women differently. Gender ideology determines gender roles and gender order (Ullah, & Ali, 2012; Ullah, 2013). Women have traditionally been seen as having a valid ideological and physical space to carry out their reproductive functions as mothers, spouses, and sisters in the private sphere (the home) (Ullah, 2006). In the public sphere, or the world beyond the house, men predominate and play their useful function as breadwinners. The economy, including inheriting rights.

Reproduction of Gender Hierarchies through Television Dramas in Pakistan

Upon examining a range of Pakistani dramas, it becomes evident that the plays enforce specific characteristics and gender norms within the community. The typical portrayal of women is as ideal housewives. While they typically help out around the house and take care of the children, men's roles are presented in a variety of ways, with a focus on occupations that promote toxic masculinity. As previously said, "Despite the fact that female characters are substantially more likely to be seen caring for children or performing household activities, male characters are shown in a broader variety of vocations and occupations in the public realm than female characters." Male characteristics have been proven to possess traits associated with men, such as strength, independence, competitiveness, authority, controllership, and others. Mothers, wives, and daughters are the stereotypical roles that have been offered for women, according to a quick examination of the empirical findings. They are reduced to the object of desire and status of a sexual object in love. The conclusion drawn by most empirical research on the representation of women in advertising and television commercials is that "women are portrayed in television advertisements as sex objects" (Ullah, & Khan, 2014). They have been shown as a helpless, reliant being (Khan, 2010).

Building Gender Stereotypes Based on Social Roles

The activities "people do in daily life" are social roles. These jobs include everything from taking care of the kids to doing other household tasks and working. Previous studies have looked at how these roles' fulfilment indicates a preference for community as opposed to agentic aims. "Community qualities are characterized by selflessness, concern for others, and a desire to be at one with others, whereas aggressive qualities are characterized by self-assertion, self-expansion, and the urge to master". According to earlier studies, stereotypes are reinforced when women are seen in lower status roles than men the home and workplace (Hussain, 2008).

Methodology

Research design

Information gathered via content analysis. Media content analysis, first presented by Harold Lass in 1927, was a methodical approach to studying the mass media, and it was first used to examine propaganda. The use of content analysis in mass media can be attributed to its ease of description and inference, as well as its ability to scrutinize how women are portrayed and covered. Relational analysis and conceptual analysis are the two fundamental content analysis methods used to investigate the data (McQuail, 1993). Content analysis, from a qualitative perspective, includes the study of spoken, writing, text, interviews, photos, moving pictures, and classified and categorised communication content. The presence and frequency of concepts in a text are ascertained through conceptual analysis. By analyzing the connections between ideas in a text, relational analysis expands on conceptual analysis. Different outcomes, conclusions, interpretations, and meanings can arise from various types of analysis.

Data collection

Data is collected from drama serial “ Razia”. The researchers used purposive sampling to select a famous drama serial from express TV, which aired during prime time. The chosen drama were specifically focused on women’s issues and were popular among the viewers, allowing the exploration of women’s exploitation as portrayed in these serials (Krippendorff, 2004). The primary source used in this research to collect data is the drama serial ‘ Razia’ on Express TV will be examined in this study—the drama’s various characters examined by utilizing socio-cultural methods that are employed in our culture. The primary contention ,the purpose of this study is to support women’s productive roles in culture and to demolish the conventional stereotype of women’s of the family in modern society. It was used to gauge how the portrayal of women in Pakistani dramas are disrupting the stereotypes directed towards Pakistani women (Huma, 2015).

Sampling strategy

Since the study being undertaken is qualitative in nature, purposive sampling is the method of sampling that is employed. This approach was chosen because it uses non-statistical techniques and is flexible enough to accommodate the adjustments needed for this research because of giving the prevalence of women being portrayed in drama serials as weak characters (Fatima, 2019). A summary of the portrayal of women in Pakistani dramas and the ways in which their roles have been updated was obtained by analysing a number of conversations from “Razia” that had been chosen based on particular keywords. Keeping in view delicate nature of the subject, we made every effort to verify the paper’s legitimacy through an examination of reliable transcripts, reviews, and blogs. Conversations from the drama series “Razia” were examined in great detail, with particular attention paid to some of the crucial terms that were spoken in the exchange (Omari, 2008).

Data analysis

Content analysis is used to gather data. A range of levels, including words, word sense, phrases, themes, and sentences, are used to code data into manageable groupings. In order to organize the data in a way that makes it valuable for additional analysis, the process of coding involves assigning codes, words, or phrases that indicate to which themes or issues portions of the data refer. It is usually applied to a set of texts, such as blogs , dialogues or transcripts. The researcher closely examines the data to identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly (Braun & Clerke, 2006). The analysis is broken down into three sections:

- (1) Women’s rights awareness
- (2) Women’s representation in dramas

Data interpretation

In order to make sense of the information and arrive at a meaningful conclusion, the data is organized, categorized, and interpreted (Collins, 2011). The fundamental idea behind data interpretation is to examine the gathered data using analytical techniques and draw pertinent conclusions. One method for determining if specific words or concepts are present in a collection of texts is content analysis. In conversations, headlines, articles, theatre, dramas, casual conversations, or any other communication language occurrence, texts are defined by the analysis and quantification of the meanings, presence, or relationships of such concepts and words that draw conclusions about messages with the writer(s), texts, the audience, even the time and culture of which they are parts (Berger, 1991).

Content Analysis

The key aspect of Family Dynamics in “Razia”

The drama serial Razia poignantly addresses gender discrimination and patriarchal oppression as the prominent aspect of family dynamics. It illustrates how societal norms perpetuate the undervaluation of girls, evidenced by the preferential treatment of male siblings and the devaluation of girls' achievements. Razia's struggles reveal a deeply ingrained patriarchal culture that limits women's autonomy and enforces traditional gender roles, often resulting in emotional and psychological turmoil. The series also explores intergenerational conflict, highlighting the clash between older, more conservative views and the younger generation's desire for change. Despite these challenges, Razia's journey embodies resilience and resistance, as she challenges oppressive norms and asserts her rights. Her story ultimately underscores the need for societal change and the empowerment of women, reflecting a broader struggle against patriarchal constraints and advocating for gender equality.

Gender Discrimination

The claim that "no one cares about girls" perpetuates the notion that girls are not as cherished and appreciated in the home and the culture in general by exposing the sense of apathy and absence of care that they may encounter. The concept that though girls attain outstanding results, their accomplishments cannot be greeted with the same level of pride demanded of boys adds to this lack of compassion and acknowledgement. This is a reflection of a pervasive cultural prejudice that downplays the contributions made by women and perpetuates the idea that they are intrinsically less valuable than men. The instances when the father of Razia gives preference, love, and care toward his son, not to her, also symbolize the misogynist attitude in some societies toward the daughter. Before our Holy Prophet was born, people would bury their infant daughters to protect them from burdensome situations and execute their daughters out of respect. But now, some societies make their daughter suffer and expel them from the criteria of humanity. “Why don't you celebrate my birthday then?” in this statement, protagonist Razia was asking her mother why you don't make my birthday celebration just like my brother, and why her father always gave preference over her son and never treated me with care. Here it also symbolizes the preferences of society and conservative society that see the girl as a burden and a black hole because when she becomes older all his father's savings will waste on her wedding. With that fear, some families prefer to abort a baby if it is a girl. What shameful act or thinking to humiliate a person's identity and personality that even in existence have to face such discriminated circumstances that cause severe side effects. A person especially a woman loses her interest in world affairs and gets rid of all the opportunities she has accessed.

Patriarchal setting in the drama serial Razia

The patriarchal setting in which Razia's story is recognizable to viewers and resonates with them. The drama serial "Razia" deftly addresses hard facts while balancing graphic and gripping moments. It depicts Razia's head-on struggles, from failing to recognize oppressive limitations to her dreams. It provides a clear picture of her complex challenges. Razia has a very unique ability to question social norms. It bravely tackles touchy subjects, posing significant queries concerning gender disparity and expectations for women. The narrative is powerful and thought-provoking, serving as a reminder of the injustices and discrimination that many girls and women must contend with. When Razia challenges her father and demands answers, it is a pivotal moment that challenges the current quo. A patriarchal society serves as the backdrop for Razia's story, which strikes a deep chord with viewers because of how relatable and familiar it is. The show bravely tackles hard facts while maintaining a delicate balance that makes viewers wince and turn away just the appropriate amount before drawing them back into the narrative. It explores Razia's struggles navigating a society that enforces strict gender conventions with an iron hand without holding back. The show depicts her many hardships transparently and honestly, from widespread neglect to oppressive limitations on her goals and desires. Razia's extraordinary capacity to subtly subvert deeply ingrained social conventions makes it unique. It boldly takes on delicate subjects head-on, posing important queries regarding gender inequity and the restrictive expectations put on women. The narrative is powerful and intriguing without ever straying into insensitivity. It offers a sobering reminder to audiences of the inequalities faced by numerous girls and women in our culture as well as the deeply embedded double standards that still exist.

Gender Roles and Expectations

Gender roles are delineated within the family, with women being relegated to traditional roles such as caregivers, homemakers, and nurturers. These roles limit their opportunities for personal growth and independence. The pressure to fulfil these roles often leads to internal conflict for characters like Razia, who may aspire for more but find themselves constrained by their family's expectations. The statement that "You can see the girl is spoilt, she is not raise well by her mother," makes the assumption that any conduct displayed by a girl that deviates from traditional norms is an indication of a poor upbringing. This image feeds into the idea that females need to be shaped and controlled to conform to social norms, and that any dissent is necessarily a sign that their parents were not providing enough direction. The statements, "My God, girls aren't supposed to do that" and "She wants to ride a bicycle today, what if she chooses a boy for herself tomorrow?" highlight the restrictive gender roles imposed on women. In these statements, riding a bicycle—a simple act of independence—is portrayed as inappropriate for a girl, suggesting that even small acts of autonomy are dangerous and could lead to further acts of rebellion, such as choosing a partner or asserting independence in other ways. These roles dictate that women should remain passive, dependent, and within the confines of what is deemed "acceptable" by patriarchal standards. The line, "He will take care of me, Mom? This little one? He can't even take care of himself," poignantly reveals Razia's awareness of this inconsistency. She recognizes the absurdity of the expectation that her younger, less capable brother should protect her solely because he is male. This moment highlights the deep-seated belief in male superiority, even when it is not supported by actual ability or maturity. The dialogue is a reflection of traditional gender roles where males, regardless of age or capability, are expected to assume protective roles over females. This expectation perpetuates the notion that women are inherently vulnerable and require male oversight, even if the male in question is a child.

Inter-generational Conflict

The drama explores the generational divide within the family, particularly in how older and younger family members view the roles of women. While older members may strictly adhere

to traditional values, the younger generation, represented by Razia, may challenge these norms, leading to tension and conflict within the household. Here the quotes “Why are you being so stubborn? What are you going to get by getting an education? Mom, I won't have the fear that anyone can slap me anytime and throw me out of the house.” The dialogue reveals a clash between two generations with differing values and expectations. Razia's mother represents the older generation, which may hold more traditional views about gender roles, including the belief that education for women is unnecessary or secondary to other familial responsibilities. Razia, on the other hand, embodies the younger generation, who sees education as a means to gain autonomy and security in an uncertain world. "One more mistake, Razia, - and even I won't be able to save you. - Mom! I haven't done anything wrong. I have done which was my right" highlights the deep-rooted tension between traditional values upheld by the older generation and the desire for autonomy and rights expressed by the younger generation. Razia's assertion that she has done what was her right reflects her struggle to assert her agency within a family structure that prioritizes obedience and conformity to established norms. This conflict is emblematic of the broader societal tension where younger individuals, particularly women, challenge the restrictions imposed by previous generations. The older generation, represented by the mother, views Razia's actions as mistakes, revealing a fear of change and a desire to maintain control over the younger generation's behavior.

Emotional and Psychological Struggles

The women in Razia's family often face emotional and psychological struggles due to the lack of agency and autonomy in their lives. These struggles are compounded by the lack of support and recognition from their family members, who may view their desires and aspirations as secondary to maintaining family honor and tradition. The dialogue, "Ali is playing outside, too, Mom. Yeah, so? Everyone is playing outside like they used to, so why am I being stopped?" highlights the emotional and psychological struggles faced by girls in patriarchal societies where gender roles and expectations are strictly enforced. The girl's question reveals her confusion and frustration as she compares her situation to that of her male counterpart, Ali. She observes that Ali and other boys are allowed to play outside freely, yet she is being restricted. This disparity creates an emotional conflict, as she grapples with feelings of injustice and inequality. The implicit message she receives is that her desires and freedoms are less valid or important simply because of her gender. This emotional struggle is a direct result of internalizing the belief that she is being treated unfairly but is powerless to change it. The statement reflects Razia's confusion and frustration with the inconsistent expectations placed on her, which are rooted in traditional gender roles and societal norms. Her words, "What am I? I just don't get it. Sometimes, I'm a kid, and sometimes, I'm a grown-up," poignantly capture the internal conflict that arises when a young girl is caught between contradictory roles imposed by her family and society. Razia is grappling with the dual expectations placed on her. On one hand, she is treated as a child, needing protection and guidance, particularly from male figures like her younger brother. On the other hand, she is expected to act as a responsible adult, particularly in caring for her brother. This dichotomy reflects the conflicting gender roles that young girls are often forced to navigate in patriarchal societies. Razia's statement, "I am just trying to make you realize that I am your child too," underscores her deep need for validation and recognition within her family. It reveals her sense of being overlooked or treated differently, likely due to her gender, and her desire to be seen as equally valuable and important as other members of the family, particularly the male ones. The conversation hints at underlying gender disparities within the family. Razia's need to assert that she is their child too suggests that she feels a lack of equality, possibly in comparison to her brothers or male relatives. This feeling is often rooted in patriarchal family structures, where sons may be favored or given more opportunities, while daughters are subjected to stricter rules and expectations.

Since she was a little child, Razia has struggled with emotional and psychological issues brought on by patriarchal domination and the dominant society. She was fending against harmful prejudices that might otherwise stifle her ambition and aspirations. Razia has suffered emotional and psychological stress since childhood, and it has followed her into adulthood and her marriage. As a child, she faced gender discrimination that restricted her from playing games that were considered inappropriate for girls in her society. As an adult, her family and society continued to restrict her, which had a negative impact on her. She wondered how she could have grown up in this day and age, given the restrictions placed on her by her father, such as not being allowed to go out and play with neighbors. Her father's restrictions were not limited to her childhood. They continued into her adult life and affected her marriage. Razia's father did not allow her to go out and play with her neighbors, which she found very confusing and upsetting. She had no idea why her father would do this to her.

Resistance and Resilience

Despite the oppressive structures, Razia and other female characters exhibit resilience and resistance in various forms. This resistance may be subtle, such as asserting their opinions or making small choices that defy expectations, or more overt, challenging the family's norms and seeking a path that aligns with their own values and desires. The quote "You are talking back to your dad? For the first time in her life, Razia realized that she has grown up. The echo of the slap and the pain due to it convinced Razia that she is fragile. She is not allowed to ask for her rights and live her life on her own terms." Razia's attempt to speak up or "talk back" to her father represents a significant moment of self-assertion. However, this act of defiance is immediately met with physical punishment, reinforcing the strict, patriarchal authority that governs her life. Through this act, Razia is demonstrating her resistance to the patriarchal control that was placed over her in an attempt to deny her fundamental rights. Razia had her first spanking from her father for questioning the unfair treatment she endured in comparison to her younger brother, who receives their parents' undivided attention rather than their own needs. The slap is not just a physical act; it symbolizes the broader societal effort to silence and control women who dare to challenge the status quo. Razia's response, "I won't have the fear that anyone can slap me anytime and throw me out of the house," underscores the empowerment that education can bring. For Razia, education is not just about acquiring knowledge; it's about gaining the power to protect herself from the vulnerabilities that women often face in a patriarchal society. The statement "Means if a Marvi is awakening in her, we need to awaken our inner Khalil too" can be understood as a reflection of the struggle between progressive ideals and conservative values within a patriarchal society. In this context, "Marvi" a woman who is beginning to recognize and assert her rights, challenging traditional norms and expectations. Marvi's awakening represents a desire for autonomy, equality, and the rejection of oppressive gender roles. On the other hand, "Khalil" represents the conservative, patriarchal forces that seek to suppress this awakening by reinforcing traditional values and maintaining control over women. The statement suggests that if women like Marvi start demanding their rights and challenging the status quo, those who uphold patriarchal values feel the need to respond by doubling down on their authority and control, represented by "awakening the inner Khalil." This reflects a deep-seated fear of change and the potential loss of power that comes with women gaining autonomy and demanding equality. This dynamic is emblematic of the broader societal struggle where the empowerment of women is often met with resistance from those who fear losing their privileged position. The statement underscores the ongoing conflict between progressive movements for gender equality and the entrenched forces of patriarchy that seek to maintain the status quo. In the end, Razia's resistance reaches its peak when she finally refuses to endure further oppression, symbolically reclaiming her personal identity by

standing up against her husband and brother. This act of defiance underscores her ultimate victory over the forces that sought to suppress her, marking the culmination of her lifelong struggle for autonomy and self-respect.

Misogynist Attitude toward females

Divine Justification for Female Existence

The phrase "whose birth is God's will only" reflects a belief that the existence of daughters is merely tolerated rather than celebrated, implying that their lives are seen as burdensome and their birth is something to be reluctantly accepted, not cherished.

Historical Comparison to Female Infanticide

By referencing the "dark ages" when daughters were buried alive at birth, the passage draws a parallel to contemporary practices that, while not physically lethal, still spiritually and emotionally "bury" women every day. This metaphor highlights the ongoing oppression that girls face, suggesting that while they may be kept alive, their potential and spirit are constantly suppressed and devalued by society.

Perception of Daughters as Burdens

The idea that "a daughter is like a burden" on her father encapsulates the deeply misogynistic view that daughters are inherently less valuable than sons. Sons are seen as future providers and supporters, while daughters are depicted as financial liabilities, requiring years of care only to be eventually married off, often at great expense to the family.

Financial Burden and Dowry

The emphasis on and the expectation of providing a "considerable dowry" to a stranger reinforces the commodification of women. It portrays daughters as economic burdens that require significant investment with little return, further entrenching the notion that their value is tied to financial transactions rather than their intrinsic worth as human beings.

Pragmatic Misogyny

The suggestion to "start saving money for her marriage right away" reflects a pragmatic approach to dealing with the perceived burden of having a daughter. It indicates that the solution to this "problem" lies in early financial preparation, rather than challenging the underlying misogynistic attitudes that devalue women and perpetuate the dowry system.

Perpetuation of gender stereotyping

The father's response to Razia's request for a bicycle reflects the traditional gender roles that society often imposes on children. By questioning what Razia would do with a bike and suggesting she play with a doll instead, he reinforces the stereotype that girls should engage in more passive, domestic activities, while boys are encouraged to be active and adventurous. The refusal to grant Razia's wish for a bicycle, despite her demonstrated ability to ride it, reveals how gender stereotypes can restrict opportunities for girls. The father's insistence that she play with a doll, even though she clearly expresses interest and competence in riding a bike, reflects a broader societal tendency to discourage girls from pursuing activities that are traditionally associated with boys. When Razia confidently states that "she can ride a bike very well" on two wheels, unlike her brother Ali who uses four wheels," she challenges the stereotype that girls are less capable or physically adept than boys. However, her father's dismissal of her ability suggests that these gender stereotypes often lead to the undermining of girls' skills and confidence, limiting their potential. The father's decision to buy a doll for Razia instead of the bike she wants is a clear example of how gender norms are perpetuated within families. This not only reinforces the notion that certain toys and activities are "for

boys" or "for girls," but also subtly teaches girls to conform to these expectations, potentially stifling their interests and abilities outside traditional gender roles.

The interaction underscores how early exposure to gender stereotypes can influence a child's self-identity and future aspirations. By discouraging Razia from engaging in activities that do not align with traditional femininity, her father may inadvertently limit her sense of agency and self-expression, confining her within the narrow boundaries of gendered expectations. Razia also provided a poignant reminder of the importance of instilling the proper values and beliefs in sons. It refuted the widely accepted notion that spoiling and elevating sons to a higher social standing will inevitably mould them into admirable people. The author skillfully highlighted that raising kids with an entitlement complex—where they are insulated from responsibility or supposed to be superior—can have detrimental effects by using the protagonists of Razia's brother, father, husband, and father-in-law.

Alternative Identity of Dominative Masculinity

In an otherwise crudeness, Mannu's persona served as a lovely reminder that there are sensitive, caring men like him. It proved that males are not the enemy. Thus, it is good that the author included a robust male role model in the series! Like Mannu was for Razia, a well-raised guy would become a dependable friend and partner. One of the finest sequences from the most recent episode proved their connection. The final words Razia delivered to the audience were just as important as the ones that came before them. It underscored how crucial it is to assist the Razias worldwide. Razia's potential to go after her college degree was made possible by Mannu's assistance, demonstrating that every one of us can help young women like Razia realise their dreams. It is commended that the author chose to add a character such as Mannu since it provides a more complex representation of male characters in a setting where negative stereotypes are frequently prevalent. His function as Razia's loyal companion and partner shows how a well-raised guy can be a pillar of support, assisting in removing obstacles and empowering women to reach their objectives. The text also highlights the strength of Mannu and Razia's bond, especially in light their bond. This incident serves as a powerful reminder of the value of emotional accountability and shared duty in helping women like Razia—who encounter many obstacles in their pursuit of their goals. An actual illustration of how Mannu may support Razia in pursuing her college degree is shown.

Structure and agency

Positivist scholars have concentrated on finding circumstances where the agent and its owner are likely to possess divergent objectives and then explaining the regulatory frameworks that restrain an agent's gratifying actions. Principal-agent research is more mathematically rigorous than positivist research. Furthermore, positivist scholars have virtually only concentrated on the unique situation of the principal-agent connection between the managers and shareholders of sizable, publicly traded corporations (Berle & Means, 1932). Sociology aims to show how vital the social environment is to every human endeavor. Sociology has shed light on the remarkable power of human relations, that is taking part in often some of the ostensibly private individual actions. Sociologists today do not seem to be able to acknowledge the unique qualities of social reality. The term "sociology" has evolved to refer to a field of study no longer concerned with human social interactions. Social discourse's once-dynamic potency has been reduced to a depressing duality. Nowadays, sociologists divide society into two components: structure as well as agency. The innovative personality is in opposition to the rigid structures of contemporary civilization. Despite being discussed in philosophical discussions centered explicitly on the nature of social reality, this dualism is especially common in modern social theory. The emphasis is on the theory of sociology

called dualism but simply as structure and agency to relate it with it to the drama serial Razia where we can see the relationship of institution or environment and the use of agency, how the life of a girl changes when different factors of society act upon her life (King, 2004). Agency and structure theory, which investigates the constantly changing relationship between societal structures and people's agency, can be applied to study the drama serial "Razia" and its rich plot. Agency is the ability of an individual to act freely and make their own decisions. In contrast, structure refers to social, cultural, and societal frameworks that limit or shape individuals' behavior. In "Razia," the strict social networks that set cultural norms, obligations from family, and roles for women significantly impact the protagonist's life. These systems show up as patriarchal ruling, repressive customs, and restricted choices afforded to women. Razia's path demonstrates how these outside factors mold her experiences, limiting her autonomy and influencing her life decisions. But the story additionally looks at Razia's agency in overcoming these limitations. Razia challenges conventions and asserts her right to self-determination in various ways, exercising her freedom regardless of the immense stress she faces from the structures of society. Her acts reveal a fight for independence and a determination to make a name for herself in a system that aims to exclude her. The conflict between agency and structure in "Razia" highlights the challenges of achieving personal empowerment inside a constrictive societal structure. The play demonstrates how people, especially women like Razia, must continually negotiate their agency within the constraints imposed by traditional norms. The drama critically examines the idea of agency through Razia's character, highlighting its possibilities and limitations in the face of firmly held social conventions. She faced hardship and, in the end, ended the misery of her life herself. She raised her voice against all the prejudices before or after the marriage. She is accused of the guilt of his brother by running an affair with a girl and sold by his father in a family where his brother had an affair, to ensure his son's safety. She admits the reality fought for her and gave her life a new chance to change her life. When her daughter was, she was happy because she knew her husband would never let her come home after welcoming a daughter instead of a son. The custom of Vani has not presented on media due to honor issue but they are prevailed in every corner of family. Her father forced the Razia marriage in an effort to protect his son's life and their honor. In an attempt to absolve his son of his wrongdoings and expose her to danger, he sold her daughter.

Findings

Patriarchy and Its Influence

The drama "Razia" meticulously portrays the pervasive influence of patriarchy through its characters and narrative. From the onset, it becomes clear that male characters dominate the family structure, wielding power and authority, while female characters are expected to conform to predetermined roles without questioning. The character of Razia's father embodies this patriarchal dominance, where his decisions, often steeped in gender biases, remain unchallenged. This dynamic is reflective of broader societal norms, where patriarchal values are so deeply ingrained that they dictate the very fabric of daily life. The drama highlights the devaluation of women within this patriarchal framework. Razia's experience with her father, who clearly favors his son over her, serves as a poignant illustration of the misogynistic attitude that prioritizes sons over daughters. This preference is not just a personal bias but echoes a historical and cultural practice that has systematically marginalized women, perpetuating cycles of gender inequality. This structural favoritism toward male offspring underscores the systemic nature of patriarchy, where women are often relegated to the background, their achievements and existence devalued in comparison to men.

Surrender to Societal Norms

The theme of surrender is intricately woven into the fabric of the narrative, particularly through the experiences of Razia and her mother. Both characters find themselves repeatedly yielding to the oppressive norms imposed by a patriarchal society. This surrender is not portrayed as a choice but rather as a necessity for survival in an environment that severely limits the agency and autonomy of women. Razia's mother, for example, reflects this surrender when she discourages Razia from pursuing education, echoing the internalized patriarchal belief that women's roles are confined to the domestic sphere. Her stance represents a forced adaptation to societal norms that value obedience and conformity over personal growth and independence for women. This internalization of patriarchal values is a powerful commentary on how such norms are perpetuated not just by men but also by women who have been conditioned to accept their subordinate status. The drama further emphasizes this theme through Razia's experiences, where her attempts to assert herself are met with violent repression, symbolizing the harsh consequences of challenging patriarchal authority.

Reawakening and Resistance

Amidst the overwhelming presence of patriarchal oppression, "Razia" also tells a story of reawakening and resistance. Razia's journey is emblematic of the struggle against these oppressive norms and the quest for autonomy. Her determination to pursue education, despite the societal and familial expectations placed upon her, signifies a form of resistance that challenges the status quo. The drama presents this reawakening as a broader societal struggle, where progressive ideals clash with entrenched conservative values. Razia's awakening is portrayed as a threat to the patriarchal order, symbolized by the tension between the desire for gender equality and the forces that seek to suppress it. The character of Razia represents the possibility of change, illustrating how individual acts of resistance can challenge and potentially dismantle deeply rooted patriarchal structures. Razia's resilience is further highlighted through her relationship with Mannu, a character who contrasts the oppressive male figures in her life. Mannu's support of Razia's ambitions offers a vision of an alternative masculinity—one that is nurturing and supportive rather than authoritarian. This relationship serves as a counter-narrative to the dominant patriarchal themes in the drama, suggesting that change is possible when both men and women challenge the norms that perpetuate inequality. In the end, Razia's resistance reaches its peak when she finally refuses to endure further oppression, symbolically reclaiming her personal identity by standing up against her husband and brother. This act of defiance underscores her ultimate victory over the forces that sought to suppress her, marking the culmination of her lifelong struggle for autonomy and self-respect. Razia's life is marked by a continuous battle against the oppressive forces of patriarchy, showcasing her extraordinary resistance and resilience. From a young age, she confronts societal norms that seek to confine her to a limited role, challenging the expectations imposed upon her by both her family and society. Despite facing harsh criticism and even punishment, Razia remains steadfast in her pursuit of education and personal growth, refusing to succumb to the pressures that demand her obedience and conformity. Her resilience is further demonstrated in her ability to endure emotional and psychological hardships, all while maintaining her sense of self-worth and determination to carve out a future on her own terms. Throughout her life, Razia embodies the spirit of resistance, constantly pushing back against the constraints of her environment, and ultimately symbolizing the potential for reawakening and empowerment in the face of entrenched patriarchal values.

Discussion

The Drama "Razia" offers a contemptuous critique of patriarchal institutions and conventional family dynamics ingrained in Pakistani culture, effectively undermining gender

stereotypes and societal conventions (Khan, 2019). Through its compelling story, "Razia" challenges the existing prejudice women face in patriarchal environments, echoing the sentiments of feminist scholars who argue that such environments perpetuate gender-based oppression (Butler, 1990; Hooks, 2000). The drama's portrayal of a patriarchal family structure, where male members wield significant authority, resonates with the findings of researchers who have examined the impact of patriarchal norms on women's autonomy and identity formation (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982). The character of Razia, who aspires for more but finds herself constrained by her family's expectations, exemplifies the internal conflict that arises from the tension between personal desires and societal expectations (Herman, 1992). The suppression of female agency is a recurring theme in "Razia," echoing the arguments of feminist scholars who contend that patriarchal societies perpetuate the subordination of women's desires, opinions, and autonomy (Millett, 1969; Friedan, 1963). Despite the oppressive structures, "Razia" showcases the resilience and resistance of female characters who find ways to assert their agency, resonating with the findings of researchers who have examined how women resist and challenge patriarchal norms (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991).

"Razia" also explores the generational divide within families, particularly in how older and younger members view the roles of women. While older members adhere strictly to traditional values, the younger generation, represented by Razia, challenges these norms, leading to tension and conflict. This intergenerational clash highlights the evolving nature of gender roles and the resistance that often accompanies attempts to break free from traditional expectations. The suppression of female agency is a recurring theme in "Razia." The desires, opinions, and autonomy of women are often subordinated to the collective will of the family or the authority of male members. This suppression is justified by invoking cultural or religious norms, reinforcing the idea that women's primary duty is to the family rather than to themselves. The drama exposes how this suppression stifles women's potential and keeps them trapped in a cycle of subordination and dependency. Despite the oppressive structures, "Razia" showcases the resilience and resistance of female characters who find ways to assert their agency. Razia, in particular, embodies this resistance, challenging societal norms and seeking a path that aligns with her values and desires. The drama portrays these acts of resistance as powerful and transformative, highlighting the strength and determination of women who refuse to be confined by traditional roles.

The perception of daughters as financial liabilities is reinforced through the emphasis on the dowry system, which commodifies women and reduces their worth to economic transactions, illustrating the concept of "gendered economic inequality" (Fraser, 1989). The drama illustrates how gender stereotypes are perpetuated within families, particularly through the expectations placed on girls, echoing the sentiments of scholars who argue that early socialization is crucial in shaping gender roles (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982). Razia's request for a bicycle is met with resistance from her father, who insists that she play with a doll instead, reinforcing traditional gender roles and highlighting how patriarchal norms restrict girls' autonomy and agency (Herman, 1992; Ussher, 2011). In contrast to the traditional representation of masculinity, "Razia" introduces a character like Mannu, who serves as a reminder that not all men conform to the toxic norms of patriarchy (Kimmel, 2008). Mannu is depicted as a sensitive and caring man, providing a positive male role model who supports Razia in her pursuit of her dreams, exemplifying the concept of "positive masculinity" (Messner, 1997). This character challenges the stereotype of men as oppressors and highlights the importance of raising boys with values that promote equality and respect for women, echoing the sentiments of scholars who argue that men's involvement is crucial in achieving gender equality (Connell, 2005). Despite these limitations, Razia exercises her agency by challenging societal norms and asserting her right to self-determination,

exemplifying the concept of "resistant agency" (Sewell, 1992). Her actions demonstrate a struggle for independence and a determination to carve out her own identity in a system that seeks to confine her, echoing the sentiments of scholars who argue that women's agency is crucial in challenging patriarchal norms (Butler, 1990; hooks, 2000). The family in "Razia" serves as a microcosm of the larger patriarchal society, where traditional values and norms are passed down through generations, perpetuating gender stereotypes and suppressing female agency (Bourdieu, 2001; Butler, 1990). The drama illustrates how these values are internalized by family members, leading to the perpetuation of patriarchal norms and the restriction of women's autonomy (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982). The pressure to conform to these norms creates tension and conflict within the family, particularly for younger members like Razia, who seek to break free from these constraints, echoing the findings of researchers who have examined the impact of patriarchal norms on women's lives (Herman, 1992; Ussher, 2011).

The emotional and psychological toll of living in a patriarchal society is vividly depicted in "Razia." The women in Razia's family face a lack of agency and autonomy, which leads to feelings of frustration, despair, and helplessness. The drama portrays these struggles with honesty and sensitivity, showing how deeply these issues affect the characters' mental and emotional well-being. "Razia" offers a poignant exploration of the impact of patriarchal norms on women's lives, portraying the emotional and psychological toll of living in a society that devalues women and restricts their opportunities (Brown, 2006; Friedan, 1963). The characters in "Razia" grapple with feelings of frustration, despair, and helplessness as they navigate a world that seeks to confine them to traditional roles, resonating with the experiences of women described in feminist literature (Millett, 1969; Hooks, 2000). The drama highlights the importance of resilience and resistance in the face of these challenges, offering a powerful commentary on the strength and determination of women who refuse to be defined by societal expectations (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1991). The inclusion of a character like Mannu in "Razia" underscores the importance of positive male role models in challenging patriarchal norms, demonstrating how men can play a crucial role in promoting gender equality and empowering women (Connell, 2005; Kimmel, 2008).

Conclusion and Future Limitation

The drama *Razia* provides a profound and multi-faceted critique of the entrenched patriarchal norms within Pakistani society, underscoring the challenges faced by women who seek to break free from traditional gender roles. Through its rich narrative and complex character portrayals, *Razia* delves into the heart of patriarchal family dynamics, where male authority often goes unquestioned and women's autonomy is stifled. This mirrors the findings of feminist scholars who have long argued that such patriarchal structures perpetuate gender-based oppression, reinforcing the systemic inequalities that women face in both the private and public spheres. Central to the narrative is the character of Razia, whose aspirations and desires are consistently thwarted by her family's rigid adherence to patriarchal values. Her internal conflict between pursuing her dreams and conforming to societal expectations—serves as a poignant representation of the struggles faced by many women in similar contexts. Razia's experience is emblematic of the broader theme of suppressed female agency, a recurring motif in feminist discourse, which highlights the ways in which patriarchal societies undermine women's autonomy, relegating them to secondary roles within the family and society.

The introduction of a character like Mannu serves as a counter-narrative to the traditional portrayal of men as oppressors, offering a vision of positive masculinity that supports and empowers women. Mannu's character demonstrates that not all men conform to patriarchal norms and that there is potential for men to be allies in the fight for gender equality. This

aspect of the drama highlights the importance of rethinking and redefining masculinity in a way that promotes equality and respect for women. The application of structure and agency theory to the analysis of *Razia* provides a nuanced understanding of the protagonist's struggle within a patriarchal society. The drama illustrates how societal structures—such as cultural norms, family obligations, and gender roles—exert a powerful influence on individuals, particularly women, shaping their experiences and limiting their opportunities. Despite these structural constraints, Razia's exercise of agency in challenging societal norms is a testament to the resilience and determination of women who refuse to be confined by traditional roles. This dynamic interplay between structure and agency is central to the drama's narrative, as it reflects the broader struggle of women in patriarchal societies to assert their rights and redefine their identities. *Razia* offers a compelling and critical examination of the patriarchal norms that continue to shape gender relations in Pakistani society. Through its portrayal of Razia's journey, the drama highlights the challenges women face in asserting their agency and breaking free from traditional gender roles. It also underscores the importance of positive male role models in challenging these norms and promoting gender equality. The drama's exploration of gender discrimination, the commodification of women, and the intergenerational conflict over gender roles provides a powerful commentary on the need for societal change and the importance of resilience and resistance in the face of oppressive structures. *Razia* ultimately serves as a call to action, urging viewers to recognize and challenge the patriarchal norms that continue to constrain women's lives and to support the efforts of women like Razia who seek to forge new paths for themselves and future generations.

Future Limitation

While *Razia* offers a powerful critique of patriarchal norms and highlights the struggles women face in asserting their agency, there are several limitations and areas for future exploration that the drama does not fully address. One of the primary limitations is the lack of intersectional analysis. *Razia* predominantly focuses on gender oppression within the framework of class and family dynamics, but it does not extensively explore how other intersecting factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic status further complicate and exacerbate gender-based discrimination. Future narratives could benefit from a more intersectional approach, examining how these various axes of identity interact and contribute to the experiences of women in patriarchal societies.

Another limitation is the portrayal of male characters. While Mannu serves as a positive role model who supports Razia, the drama does not delve deeply into the complexities of male privilege and the ways in which men, even those with good intentions, may inadvertently perpetuate patriarchal norms. A more nuanced exploration of masculinity and the internal conflicts men face in a patriarchal society could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges in achieving true gender equality. Additionally, the drama primarily focuses on the struggles of women within the family unit, with less emphasis on the broader societal and institutional structures that reinforce and perpetuate gender inequality. Future work could expand on this by exploring how institutions such as the legal system, education, and the workplace contribute to the systemic oppression of women. This would provide a more holistic view of the challenges women face in their fight for equality and could highlight the need for structural changes at multiple levels of society.

Furthermore, *Razia* does not fully address the potential consequences of resistance against patriarchal norms. While the drama celebrates Razia's resilience and determination, it does not explore the potential risks and repercussions that women face when they challenge societal norms, such as social ostracism, economic hardship, and violence. Future narratives

could benefit from a more in-depth examination of these risks, providing a more realistic portrayal of the challenges women face when they resist patriarchal structures.

Finally, while *Razia* offers a powerful commentary on the importance of challenging traditional gender roles, it does not provide concrete solutions or strategies for achieving gender equality. The drama highlights the need for change but does not offer a clear path forward. Future works could explore potential solutions, such as policy changes, community initiatives, and educational programs, that could help to dismantle patriarchal norms and promote gender equality in a more actionable way. In summary, while *Razia* is a significant contribution to the discourse on gender and patriarchy, future explorations should aim to address these limitations by incorporating a more intersectional approach, exploring the complexities of masculinity, examining broader societal structures, and considering the risks and consequences of resistance. By doing so, future narratives can provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges and potential pathways toward achieving gender equality.

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