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Email: jehr@um.uob.edu.pk

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“Media Representations of Male Abusive Behavior and the Normalization of Violence against Women”

Aqsa Mughal: *National Institute of Science and Technology (NUST Islamabad)*

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ABSTRACT

**Obsession,
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Masculinity,
Glorifying, abuse,
Drama industry
and possessiveness.**

Audience obsession with romance cannot be neglected in entertainment media and most of this category of content is watched by women, irrespective of their age, race, and geography. This study evaluates how the media romanticizes crime by men, these men are the majority of the time perfect definition of Masculine men and fix the standards of society for men and How the Pakistani drama industry has adopted the trend of glorifying the male abusive acts and justice for this behaviour by calling it act of possessiveness or affection. To examine the intensity of the issue we have conducted a quantitative content analysis of the Pakistani drama industry.

Introduction

Contemporary media consumption has an unquestionable impact on consumers' physical and mental health, as well as their behavior. The media has influenced communication patterns on a global and interpersonal scale. Romantic films, series, and soap operas were broadcasted for entertainment and education to counter social issues but now the entertainment media's portrayal of intimate partner violence (IPV) behaviors in young adults have idolized and justified toxic and abusive conduct (ADAMS, 2022,).

In a research program by *Emergence* is a journal, Jude Lammers (2022) explored how movies and television shows depict men's abusive behavior; the media had normalized physical, sexual, and mental violence. Series like *You* and films like *The Joker* have created a new and toxic standard of admiration between couples.

The previous research is conducted in America as they measure the impact of media glorifying crime. Kenady M. Strutz (2022) discussed The era of interest of research was more focused on the Psychological aspect and why audiences consume such content on daily bases and what disorders were the reason behind men's and women's obsession with abuse.

The gap in knowledge that the study explores is geography-based, the adaptation of the misogynist culture in Pakistani dramas. They identify that the previous knowledge was driven in a manner that researches and evaluates the media presentation of violence. This is more likely to focus on the normalization of Abduction in Dramas and Glorify the crime. The study's overall goal was to offer light on the complex relationship between media, abusive conduct, and the larger social and cultural contexts in which they function. It will help content creators and the entertainment industry to understand how intentionally or unintentionally the drama industry is justifying and romanticizing violence. To explore how some top-ranked dramas justify men abusing their companions and analyze the content on the basis of these questions .

1. How do media portray abusive male characters engaging in ill behaviors, and what types of abusive actions do these

male characters employ to establish dominance?

2. In what ways do media justify abusive male characters and their ill behavior towards female characters, particularly regarding their relationships, agency, and empowerment?
3. How does the media rationalize and romanticize toxic traits exhibited by abusive male characters, thereby perpetuating harmful relationship dynamics?

Literature review

The media has a significant impact on public perceptions and attitudes regarding violence. Unfortunately, media romanticization of crime is not a new phenomenon; it has been a source of concern for decades. We look at the concept of media romanticizing abuse in the entertainment industry and how it leads to the normalizing of Male Behavior in this literature review. We also look at the different types of misconduct that are acceptable in the entertainment industry and discuss some of the solutions. According to Merriam Webster dictionary the Word romanticize means to have a romantic idea, present detail in a romantic and glorifying manner .

Media romanticizing abuse refers to the portrayal of behavior in a way that glorifies it or presents it as something attractive or exciting. (Beres, 1999)This can be done through the use of language, imagery, and narrative techniques that downplay the negative consequences of criminal behavior and emphasize the thrill of excitement associated with it. Media outlets may use sensational headlines, dramatic music, and vivid imagery to create a sense of drama and excitement around crime stories. This can lead to the normalization of criminal behavior and desensitize the public to the harm and damage caused by crime.

In 2022 Jenna Isaacs discusses the intimate relation of Harley Quinn and the joker in her studyJenna Isaacs investigates the representation of Harley Quinn and the Joker's connection in various media, including comic books, television episodes, and movies. Using the Harley/Joker

connection as a case study, argues that the relationship between Harley and the Joker is an example of an abusive relationship in popular media. She emphasizes the importance of portraying such partnerships responsibly and accurately, as well as fostering healthy relationship dynamics in media representations (Isaacs, 2022).

The love story in the Dracula stories romanticizes control and abuse, as well as pity for the abuser, demonstrating how certain viewers may interpret them. Currently working will also include narration of abused women's negotiation of various discourses, including their involvement with popular cultural texts that romanticize men's authority over women. There are several reasons why media outlets may engage in the practice of romanticizing crime. (Beres, 1999)

The reason behind the male megalomaniac image in media is dependent on women, we know that our media is now creating content based on the liking of its audience due to its capitalist approach (Kenasri 2021). According to Lori Lawrenz in 2021 in Psychcentral address the reason behind the women's obsession with the abuse lover as we relate obsession with possessiveness, we count these acts as acts of possessiveness and attraction. (Lawrenz, 2021)

There are several measures that have been proposed to combat media romanticizing crime. One approach is to increase media literacy and critical thinking skills among the public. This can help people to recognize when media outlets are sensationalizing crime stories and to question the accuracy and fairness of their reporting (Anees 2021). Another approach is to promote responsible reporting practices. In AWARE Mental Health Awareness Zahra Jaber In a single year, 1.5 million high school students in the United States are physically abused by a dating partner. One in every three girls in the United States has experienced sexual, psychological, or verbal abuse from a romantic partner. Toxic abuse and violence observed in mainstream entertainment media should not be idealized instead, they should be used to learn from. TV shows are supposed to teach the youths. It is being romanticized in practically every media outlet, portraying it as this "hot" or "bad guy"

convoluted cliché when it is simply harmful. (Jaber, 2020)

According to The "Mainstreaming" of America The cultivation theory is based on the assumption that media exposure, particularly television, influences people's ideas of reality. According to cultivation theory, frequent and extended exposure to television programming, particularly fictitious content, can alter people's attitudes, beliefs, and values. (Gerbner et al., 1980)

Typically, media content is developed by a specific group of people who share a particular perspective.

The stories and messages conveyed by media content have the potential to affect viewers' perceptions of reality, particularly when it comes to social issues (Meise 2022).

According to Giles David C and Maltby John cultivation theory, media content, particularly the portrayal of social issues, can have a cumulative influence on viewers over time. This is referred to as "cultivation," and it refers to the progressive shaping of viewers' thoughts and attitudes as a result of continuous exposure to messages and pictures. (David C & John, 2004,)

The cultivation impact is particularly significant for people who watch a significant amount of media and are not introduced to a diverse range of real-world events. This is because these people rely more heavily on television information to shape their worldviews (Stacks & Li, 2015). This theory has been used to address a variety of societal concerns, such as gender roles, race relations, and political opinions. It has also been chastised for simplifying the relationship between media and societal views, as well as for failing to account for the diverse ways in which people interpret and respond to media information.

Methodology

The research utilized a quantitative methodology to collect data in order to investigate the spread of abusive behavior of male in the media. The research looked at how the media portrays and spreads abusive behavior, particularly in the context of personal relationships by evaluating the abusive scenes in pre episodes. The study sought to provide a detailed knowledge of how the media presents abusive behavior and how

media outlets can be more responsible in their portrayal of this important topic, content analysis of two highly ranked Pakistani dramas such as ‘Kesi Teri Khudguzri’ and ‘Hum Kahan Ke Sache Thy’ that portray the idea of masculinity and justify that abuse. As previous research of Muhammad Uzair Khan only focuses on the consumption pattern of violence in movie (Khan, 2021) whereas to adopt new path way we conduct the content analyses of two top ranked dramas from two different popular channels, in which male abuse behavior is justified and how this phenomena normalizes abusive behavior, reinforcing negative attitudes about abuse and creating an environment of fear and violence. Physical, mental, and psychic abuse are examples of severe conditions and abusive acts justified as romance in Pakistani drama, and these are reinforced by patriarchy views and societal standards. Breaking the pattern requires challenging these views and promoting healthy, respectful relationships that prioritize the safety and well-being of all those involved.

Because the study used YouTube content analysis, convenient sampling was used. The information to be analyzed may be limited because the research study would only look at two Pakistani dramas. As a result, the time required for data gathering and processing was reasonable. In reality, depending on the type of data and the methods used for analysis, the study might be completed in as little as 20 to 30 days, particularly if data is already available on YouTube. The study's time range should be properly researched and planned, as it would affect the precision and reliability of the data.

YouTube was the primary data collection and analysis tool for the study. YouTube provides scholars with a convenient and accessible venue for analyzing media content, particularly television dramas. Using YouTube, the researcher can easily obtain relevant content and analyze it using appropriate methods and tools. Furthermore, YouTube offers a number of features and tools that may be useful for content analysis, such as video transcription and playback speed adjustment. Data was disclosed through a coding sheet.

Results

Research question 1: How do media portray abusive male characters engaging in ill behaviors, and what types of abusive actions do these male characters employ to establish dominance?

Types of abuse that is presented in drama

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15	26.8	26.8	26.8
Physical abuse	9	16.1	16.1	42.9
Emotional abuse	26	46.4	46.4	89.3
Economical abuse	6	10.7	10.7	100.0
Total	56	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1.1 represents the types of abuse presented in ‘Kesi Teri Khudgurzi’ and ‘Hum kahan ke sache thy’

The representation of abusive male characters in drama can vary depending on the storyline, genre, and artists' aims. It is essential to remember, however, that drama portrayals are not necessarily accurate representations of real-life circumstances, but there can be significant differences in how abuse is portrayed across various kinds of dramas.

They portray abusive male characters engaged in horrific behavior in order to establish control. Here are some examples of abusive behavior by male characters in media: Physical Abuse (26.8%) is the use of physical force or violence to gain authority and control over another person. This includes hitting, slapping, kicking, and other forms of physical harm such as abduction. Emotional Abuse (42.9%): Emotional abuse is a type of psychological manipulation used to dominate and degrade the victim. To establish dominance, male characters may engage in emotional abuse by demeaning, mocking, ridiculing, or gaslighting their partners, torturing or others. Economic Abuse (89.3%): Controlling or restricting a person's financial resources in order to keep authority over them is an example of economic abuse. To establish dominance, male characters may utilize strategies such as limiting access to money, impeding career or schooling prospects, or imposing financial control.

Research question 2: In what ways do media justify abusive male characters and their ill behavior towards female characters, particularly regarding their relationships, agency, and empowerment?

How many times abuse was justify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	34	60.7	60.7	60.7
Abuse justify by abuser	11	19.6	19.6	80.4
Abuse justify by victim	2	3.6	3.6	83.9
Abuse justify by other supportive charaters	9	16.1	16.1	100.0
Total	56	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1.2 represents how many times abuse was justify in ‘ Kesi Teri Khudgurzi’ and ‘Hum kahan ke sache thy’

The representation of abusive male characters and the way they act towards female characters in the media can vary broadly and it is essential to address this topic with sensitivity. While it is important to acknowledge that the media can influence perceptions and attitudes, it is also important to note that the statistics provided (60.7% abuse justified by the abuser, 80.4% abuse justified by the victim, and 83.9% abuse justified by other supportive characters) are hypothetical figures mentioned for the sake of this context.

The representation of abusive male characters in drama, as well as the way they act towards female characters, is a complex subject. While drama can influence attitudes and perceptions, it is necessary to approach these portrayals with critical thinking and a grasp of media variety. Justifications for abuse in the media, such as romanticizing violence or victim-blaming, may propagate damaging narratives and reinforce negative stereotypes. Responsible media portrayals of healthy relationship dynamics, consent, and the consequences of abuse can help raise awareness and inspire constructive societal change. Audiences can also play a role in critically engaging with media and advocating for encouraging representations of relationships. to challenge and reject harmful narratives, and to fight towards a media landscape that promotes respect, empathy, and equality.

Research question 3: How does the media rationalize and romanticize toxic traits exhibited by abusive male characters, thereby perpetuating harmful relationship dynamics?

How many times abuse was romanticized/glorify

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Abuse romanticize by emotion/ verbal means	15	26.8	26.8	26.8
Abuse romanticize by music and scenography / non verbal means	41	73.2	73.2	100.0
Total	56	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1.3 represents how many times abuse was romanticized/glorify in ‘ Kesi Teri Khudgurzi’ and ‘Hum kahan ke Sache thy’

The media can occasionally justify and romanticize abusive male characters' toxic tendencies, sustaining harmful interpersonal dynamics. You stated two ways in which abuse is romanticized in this context: through emotions and verbal means (26.8%) and through music, scenography, or nonverbal means (73.2%). While these data are hypothetical for the purposes of this discussion, they do give a framework for investigating how the media may contribute to the romanticization of abusive behavior.

Emotional and verbal means of justification (26.8%): Media can justify abusive behavior by highlighting emotions and motives of the abusive male character. This includes portraying their strong feelings as a result of their love or passion for the victim. By stressing the abuser's within distress or personal issues, the media can convince audiences to empathize with them and overlook their acts of abuse. This justification by emotional representation might lead to a false perception of abuse as a sign of affection. To maintain control over their victims, abusive male characters in the media may use misleading strategies such as gaslighting or directing blame. The abuser may defend how they act or convince others that the abuse is justified through creative wordplay, compel speeches, or language manipulation.

Romanticization via Music, Scenography, or Nonverbal methods (73.2%): In Drama, we analyze the romanticization of abusive behavior by music, scenography, or nonverbal methods. Even in images exposing abusive behavior, music may evoke strong emotions and generate a sense of attraction or excitement. Media may build an emotional connection or sympathy towards the abuser male persona, despite their damaging activities, by coupling abusive actions with romantic or emotionally engaging songs. Similarly, scenography and nonverbal elements such as visually amazing cinematography, artistically pleasing settings, or artful lighting might help to romanticize violent behavior. These artistic skills have the potential to create an atmosphere of elegance and aesthetic appeal, thereby overshadowing the unpleasant parts of the abusive relationship. By portraying abusive behavior in visually appealing ways, the media may knowingly glamorize or romanticize the abuser's toxic behavioral patterns.

Discussion

In this chapter, we explore the study's findings and consequences with respect to the three study subjects posed. The research topics looked into the portrayal of abusive male characters in media, the types of abusive activities used by these characters for power control, and how dramas justify and romanticize their bad behavior. The presentation clarifies the rationalization and romanticization of toxic behaviors displayed by abusive male characters, hence prolonging destructive relationship dynamics.

According to the findings of the study, abusive male characters in dramas frequently participate in abusive behavior in order to establish authority. These representations can include physical (26.8%), emotional (42.9%), and economical abuse (89.3%). Direct assault, inflicting pain, restricting or confining the victim, and intimidating through bodily presence are all common depictions of physical abuse. Verbal insults, manipulation, gaslighting, isolation, and threats are all common forms of emotional abuse. Controlling finances, destroying work or education, abusing resources, and establishing dependence are all examples of economic abuse.

The study's findings show how these dramas justify and romanticize abusive male characters' behavior against female characters. This is performed through a variety of methods, including the abuser's (60.7%), victim's (80.4%), and other supportive characters' views (83.9%). Abusers may rationalize their actions by blaming the victim, questioning their autonomy, and normalizing abusive behavior. Victims may rationalize abuse as a result of fear, emotional attachment, or infused blame. Other supporting characters may enable or justify abusive behavior, lack awareness or understanding, or give emotional or situational context.

Moreover, the discussion reveals that these dramas use particular strategies to justify and romanticize violent behavior. Emotions are portrayed through sympathetic backstories, deceptive charm, and romanticizing possessiveness by (26.8%). Music is used to influence emotions, present false intimacy, and connect with the listener emotionally. Scenography and cinematography are used to create visually appealing locations, adjust lighting and color schemes, and highlight passionate moments, all of which help to justify and romanticize abuse by (73.2%).

These dramas representations of violent male characters can justify and romanticize negative characteristics, maintaining unhealthy interpersonal relationships. Although the supplied numbers cannot be generalized they do highlight potential media-related contributions to this problem. These representations conflate the concepts of love and control, normalize abuse, and minimize its negative effects. In order to challenge and reject these damaging narratives and promote better relationship dynamics, critical interaction with media and the promotion of media literacy are essential.

Conclusion

The study's conclusions have major implications for the entertainment sector has a significant influence on society attitudes and beliefs, and romanticizing and justifying abusive behavior can help to maintain unhealthy marital relationships. It is important to promote critical

media literacy among drama viewers so they can recognize and reject harmful portrayals of abuse. People can aid in the fostering of wholesome and respectful relationships by recognizing and challenging these representations. Drama writers have an obligation to depict abusive relationships with care and tact. They should make an effort to portray abuse in a truthful and nuanced manner, emphasizing its negative effects and underlining the value of consent, agency, and empowerment. The industry may aid in the reduction of harm and the promotion of healthy relationship dynamics by refraining from romanticizing and justifying abusive behavior.

It is essential to understand the study's constraints. The study largely focused on how media portrays violent male characters and how their negative behavior is rationalized and romanticized. Although the entertainment industry is diverse and not all representations foster negative dynamics. Further research is needed to determine how media literacy interventions might improve relationship attitudes and how alternative media narratives can challenge and disrupt traditional representations of abuse. The study's contribution to the study of how men behave abusively in the media and how violence against women has become normalized may assist in identifying the underlying causes of negative dynamics. The research can aid in supporting more ethical media practices and fighting for social change to end violence against women by bringing these issues to light. The Conduct of literature review to comprehend the body of research already done and to spot knowledge gaps. Investigate the information to find trends, themes, and underlying ideas that support the normalization of violence. Make recommendations for policy modifications or other initiatives to fight normalization based on the results. The study can help the cause of ending violence against women and fostering healthy relationships by doing in-depth research and promoting ethical media practices. The following suggestions are made for future researchers looking at media representations of male abuse and the normalization of violence against women: diversifying media analysis; using intersectional analysis; conducting long-

term and cross-cultural studies; looking at audience reception and effects; promoting media literacy and education; encouraging collaborative research; thinking about ethical implications; and evaluating long-term effects. By implementing these suggestions, researchers can advance knowledge of the subject, guide interventions and policies, challenge inaccurate portrayals, and encourage constructive change in society perceptions of violence against women and in media representations of the issue.

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