

# From Clickbait to Class Consciousness: Visual and Sentimental Construction of Justice in the Natasha Karsaz Case across Pakistani YouTube Channels

Maliha Ameen<sup>1</sup>, Hussain Sajjad<sup>2</sup>, Tauqir Akhtar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, School of Creative Arts, University of Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Lecturer, School of Creative Arts, University of Lahore, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>PhD Scholar, School of Creative Arts, University of Lahore, Pakistan

Correspondence: [maleeha.ameen@soca.uol.edu.pk](mailto:maleeha.ameen@soca.uol.edu.pk)<sup>1</sup>

## ABSTRACT

**Aim of the Study:** This paper analyses the visual and emotional ways in which Pakistani YouTuber stations had constructed a case, Natasha Danish/ Karsaz road accident, on 19th August of the year 2024, which was a viral scandal that revealed popular fears regarding class privilege, justice, and digital ethics.

**Methodology:** Based on two-tiered qualitative research of 46 video thumbnails and 18,678 user posts, this study examines the distribution of moral outrage, empathy, and skepticism through the areas of algorithmic mediation. Thematic coding of replies showed that 62 percent of audience reactions were angry and condemnatory, 27 percent gave emotions of empathy and grief, and 11 percent expressed reflective skepticism, which is a polarized field of emotion.

**Findings:** Semiotic analysis of thumbnails in parallel between journalistic and non-journalistic media revealed prevalent themes of elite impunity, disparity of classes, failure in morally, and cynicism of the system, the visuals being used as an effective referent in order to think as a collective.

**Conclusion:** Collectively, the research study showed that YouTube is a digitally moralized public, in which imagery and emotionality merge to deliver, and not describe, justice. The media industry's journalistic authority in Pakistan has been reconstructed through the process of algorithmic visibility and emotional intensity which resulted in the media tragedy being turned into a collective catharsis and moral activism.

**Keywords:** Visual Semiotics, Moral Sentiment, YouTube Discourse, Digital Outreach, Media Ethics, Class Justice.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Portrayal on discursive and production frameworks of participatory journalism across numerous online platforms, thumbnail images, as latent news values, diverge expressively not just in their design and other trustworthiness signals but in their intent. Journalists typically follow a visual relevancy and truth-based norm (Thomson and Bock, 2025) rather than a more speculative design strategy of non-journalists that

## Article History

Received:  
April 27, 2025

Revised:  
June 22, 2025

Accepted:  
June 25, 2025

Online:  
June 30, 2025

clearly engages most strongly with the narrative of the story or the emotions behind (Thomson, 2025). The study investigates these thumbnails and the social media reactions to the *Natasha Karsaz Accident case* (NKA), with an examination of expressions in sentiment distress (Shurafa & Zaghouni, 2024) such as outrage, sympathy, or concern, at the same time revealing latent elements so far hidden in the background in a sentiment analysis study (Toussaint et al., 2022; El Attar and Abdo, 2025).

Thumbnails play an important part in how viewers experience online content, providing social media users with a quick visual preview of videos (Koh and Cui, 2022; Revier, 2021) and shaping judgments about what may interest or matter to them (Kim, 2021). Both journalists and ordinary users design thumbnails on platforms such as YouTube to elicit emotions from audiences (Cui et al., 2024), characterize topics from distinct perspectives, and optimize the number of people who then access the full video (Meek, 2012; Hawkins and Saleem, 2021). On the other hand, emotional thumbnails might do little to buoy people, helping them develop a well-rounded understanding of their complex issues over time, even if they get a few more clicks right then and there. Moreover, inviting curiosity while also extending wisdom is still a challenge we need to tackle repeatedly. Content creators in this highly competitive environment, due to pressure of generating views (Schlott and Gaenssle, 2025), tailor thumbnails to achieve the expectations of platform algorithms and audience expectations, to improve engagement (Hödl and Myrach, 2023; Radesky et al., 2024).

### ***1.1 Rationale of the Study***

YouTube has become one of the main platforms of moral commentary and participatory journalism within the fast changing digital ecosystem of Pakistan. Some events like the Natasha Karsaz accident go beyond the scope of traditional news and become the cultural point of battle between classes and justice. Where traditional journalism tends to follow the narrative restraint, the digital platforms strive to exploit emotional appeal and visual provocations. However, the implementation of visual rhetoric and the emotions of the people to create these moral narratives is a little researchable. This paper places itself there, by investigating YouTube not only as a media space, but as a moral space that imagines injustice, puts feeling in collective action, and reinvents public judgment.

### ***1.2 Problem Statement***

Coalescing of the visual sensations and the emotional involvement on YouTube has changed how justice is mediated in Pakistan. Nevertheless, academia has not studied the interplay among thumbnail semiotics (visual framing), comment sentiment (audience interpretation), to create the narrative of injustice and polarization based on classes. The case of NKA, which is extensively reported in the digital news and activist platforms, is a valuable learning opportunity to examine how tragedy becomes algorithmically performative. This work seeks to resolve the issue of the interaction between mediated imagery and collective emotion to form digital conceptions of guilt, privilege, and systemic fairness in the modern Pakistani press.

### ***1.3 Research Objectives***

1. To analyze how YouTube thumbnails construct narratives of justice, morality, and class privilege in the Natasha Karsaz case.
2. To examine how audience sentiment, reflected through YouTube comments, expresses emotional and moral responses to those visual narratives.
3. To interpret the relationship between visual semiotics and emotional discourse in shaping public understanding of digital justice in Pakistan.

### ***1.4 Research Questions***

1. How are class, morality, and justice visually constructed across journalistic and non-journalistic YouTube thumbnails of the Natasha Karsaz case?

2. What dominant emotional and moral themes emerge in audience comments, and how do they reflect collective perceptions of justice and privilege?
3. How do visual and sentimental discourses intersect to produce digital moral narratives and shape public consciousness around justice in Pakistan?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 YouTube Thumbnails or Persuasive Visual Narratives***

These images serve a definitive communicative function as a visual entryway that is not just a preview but a means of persuading audience engagement. As thumbnails, these single frames function as micro-advertisements that condense tone, emotion, and content value into a fraction of a second, operating as dynamic digital billboards to increase click-through rates, visual cognition, and affective response (Bishop, 2019; Burgess and Green, 2018). The empirical evidence of digital media design demonstrates that thumbnails with high-contrast imagery, bright colors, and facial expressions capture viewers' attention more effectively than neutral frames (Chan et al., 2023; Zhang and Mao, 2016), and that textual overlays, often in bold fonts and sensational language, enhance the emotional valence (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020).

YouTube also has its own algorithmic system that chooses three random key frames from each video, which it displays as auto-thumbnails, but scholars have long commented on the aesthetic limitations of algorithmic frames, as algorithmic frames tend to lack human-centered composition or contextual relevance (Guhan, 2025); so creators often upload custom thumbnails that are more in line with the narrative of the video and the branding (Burgess et al., 2025; Stephens and Miller, 2024), but this process can also create ethical tensions around clickbaiting and representational manipulation (Jung et al., 2022), with studies of visual misinformation in digital culture suggesting that exaggerated or misleading thumbnail designs, like the use of dramatic imagery, hyperbolic expressions, or visuals that don't even relate to the video, deliberately play on the emotions of the viewer. In this economy of attention, thumbnail design is a semiotic frontline between aesthetics, authenticity and affect.

Furthermore, the concept of multimodality, which treats communication as an interaction of different modes (visual, textual, symbolic, spatial) (Jewitt, 2009), can also be applied to YouTube thumbnails, as a mono-modal thumbnail uses one expressive resource, such as an image or text, while a multimodal composition combines layers of meaning through color contrast, typography, and visual rhythm, which digital semioticians refer to as "visual argumentation" (Forceville, 2020), which can influence the emotional or moral positions viewers take in the digital public sphere. Therefore, it is not appropriate to consider thumbnails in highly publicized cases (accident coverage or public controversies) as simply an aesthetic device; they are cultural texts that frame the emotional and ethical contexts of events in the digital public sphere.

### ***2.2 Digital Emotions and Public Discourse***

In parallel, sentiment analysis has become a key analytical framework for understanding audience reactions and emotional polarization in online communication, which is rooted in natural language processing (NLP) and computational linguistics, a field that allows researchers to classify and interpret the emotional temperature of digital discourse (Cambria et al., 2013). YouTube is one of the social media platforms where sentiment analysis and comments reveal the different ways through which users express outrage, sympathy, irony, or heartache in response to the news that is happening (Perea-Khalifi and Leon-Silva, 2025).

While sentiment detection has been explored using structured datasets like product reviews (Pang & Lee, 2008), recent research also extends its use to multimodal social networks, combining visual, textual, and behavioral cues, which has highlighted the subtleties of how users convey emotion beyond words, and how emoji, punctuation, capitalization, or symbolic language have cultural and affective weight in digital

discourse. YouTube comment sections become participatory spaces of moral judgment, empathy, and resistance (Theocharis et al., 2023; Chen, 2025), and computational sentiment analysis of these discussions not only identifies collective attitudes but also socio-political fault lines (Papathanassopoulos and Giannouli, 2025) such as class resentment, distrust in justice systems, and emotional solidarity with victims (i.e., polarity [positive, negative, neutral] is quantified and mapped against thematic categories).

However, recent advances in deep learning models, such as recurrent neural networks (RNNs) and transformer-based architectures like BERT, have significantly enhanced the ability to detect sarcasm, multiple sentiments, and implicit emotion, all of which are characteristics of user-generated YouTube discourse, and which were previously difficult for lexicon-based systems to identify because of their ambiguous or context-dependent nature (Xu et al., 2024). Although sentiment analysis offers computational precision, it also presents methodological issues regarding interpretive validity, particularly on highly emotional subjects such as accidents, violence, or injustice, and so many contemporary researchers use mixed-method approaches, employing both quantitative polarity scores and qualitative thematic coding, to anchor statistical results in socio-cultural meaning (Wan et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2023).

### ***2.3 Visual and Emotional Digital Public Sphere***

The merging of thumbnail semiotics and sentiment analysis brings forth the complicated link between visual provocation and emotional response in the digital culture where images and text are not isolated but rather, according to Papacharissi (2015), co-create meaning in what he calls affective publics. Thumbnail images capture attention with visual intensity, but comment threads expand and shape that emotional energy through language. The combination of this analysis of visual framing and audience emotion provides a multidimensional way to look at how contemporary publics encounter, interpret, and circulate mediated tragedy, as exemplified by YouTube coverage of events like the Natasha Karsaz accident.

### ***2.4 Theoretical Background***

This study draws on two conceptual frameworks to analyze how meaning and emotion are constructed in visual and textual media on digital platforms. A cognitive-pragmatic model in which human communication is based on the principle of optimal relevance, whereby messages are processed to achieve the greatest cognitive effect with minimal processing effort (Sperber and Wilson 1986). In this study, YouTube thumbnails and user comments are considered communicative stimuli, encoded and decoded based on perceived informational value, emotional salience, and contextual cues, and thus serve as interpretive triggers for audiences to make sense of crisis narratives, journalistic credibility, and moral framing.

The phenomenological analysis supplements this cognitive lens and, according to Van Manen (2016), focuses on the lived experience of the audience as they encounter the media texts and how the users feel, perceive, and emotionally react to mediated representations of the Natasha Karsaz accident case, which is cognizant of the fact that meaning exists, not only in what is represented, but also in how it is lived, with sense-making being enshrined in the affective, embodied, and interpretive dimensions of media use (Smith et al., 2021). Relevance Theory combined with Phenomenological Analysis will enable the study to take into account not only the communicative design of meaning (the intentional role of thumbnails and captions) but also the lived experience of meaning (the affective and cognitive reactions of the comments left by viewers), which will offer a more detailed picture of the digital sense-making where the perception, feelings, and interpretations of the viewers are entangled.

## **3. Methodology**

### ***3.1 Research Design***

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative semiotic/discourse analysis of YouTube thumbnail visuals and quantitative content and sentiment analysis of associated comments. The purpose is to compare representations created by journalists versus non-journalists in the context of the

Natasha Danish/Karsaz Road accident (social media coverage from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024). This methodology will allow in-depth narrative and visual interrogation (semiotics, phenomenology) as well as systematic measurement of patterns, frequencies, and emotional valence (content & sentiment analysis).

### **3.2 Sampling Procedure**

For this study, a purposive sample of twenty-two YouTube channels was selected to examine the *Natasha Karsaz Road Accident* published between August and October 2024. These include Ashir Azeem Gill, UrduPoint, Imtiaz Chandio Vlog, Mahreen Sibtain official, Farah Iqrar, AliTV, Tauqeer Baloch, Brut India,

Mubasher Lucman Official, Eon Clips, Badla Brother Vlogs, Vlog Central, Podcast with Nasir Baig, Suno Crime Podcast (under Suno News HD), Raftar by Faisal Waheed, The Pakistan Experience, Raza Samo, Iqra ul Hassan, Kami Reality TV, ARY News, Dawn News, Dunya News, and Suno News HD. Selection of these channels was based on extensive and high-visibility coverage of this case, especially when the incident gained significant social and media attention, and pulled 18,678 user comments from videos uploaded by both journalistic and non-journalistic channels, which were subsequently coded into 34 emergent themes, the major clusters of viewer sentiment and socio-political commentary. Because this corpus of comments was used exclusively to draw all interpretations, no additional comments were gathered in 2025 to maintain the authenticity of the public sentiment as it occurred in real time.

They also represented two broad content orientations: journalistic (e.g., ARY News, Dawn News, Dunya News, Suno News HD, UrduPoint) and non-journalistic (e.g., Raftar by Faisal Waheed, The Pakistan Experience, Badla Brother Vlogs, AliTV, Vlog Central), which facilitated comparison between professional news framing and independent commentary styles and helped capture institutional and popular discourses about the event, with traditional news channels focusing on factual and procedural reporting and non-journalistic creators taking more emotive, advocacy-based, and opinion-driven stances that influenced public perception and interpretive engagement. Moreover, the thumbnail image for each video was collected and coded for semiotic elements (color, imagery of victims/emergency, branding, text overlay, visual appeal). Comments corpus (n = 18,678) from 46 videos (all publicly available comments) were extracted. 34 thematic categories were distilled for further analysis, while according to inclusion criterion, only thumbnail visuals and comments directly related to the accident incident are included, unrelated promotional or off-topic content was excluded.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

All thumbnails in this study are coded semiotically and discourse analyzed for visual signs (e.g., victim vs. driver imagery, red vs. blue emergency colors, branding logos), text overlays, and framing devices (e.g., question headlines, sensational claims, empathic appeals); phenomenological reflection is applied to interpret how these visuals invited viewers into meaning-making and emotional investment, and thumbnail features were counted across 46 videos (e.g., percent showing victim imagery, percent with sensational text), comments are coded using a custom codebook developed from 34 identified themes, analyzed for frequency counts and relational meanings (e.g., blame, sympathy, justice demand, conspiracy), and sentiment analysis was conducted using NVivo 14, a common qualitative data analysis software in Pakistan, to classify comments into positive, negative, and neutral sentiments, with automated results triangulated through manual coding to ensure contextual validity.

Differences in visual framing, thematic emphasis, sentiment distribution, and interpretive cues between journalistic and non-journalistic channels were compared. Construct validity was established by creating codebooks based on pilot coding of 10% of the data, inter-coder reliability (Cohen's kappa > 0.80), and method triangulation between visual, thematic, and sentiment analyses. An audit trail of coding decisions and analytic memos ensured reflexivity and transparency, while user bias in YouTube comments and misinterpretations by the sentiment tool were handled through human verification of key cases. For

internal purposes, sentiment matrices and frequency charts generated by NVivo were used for visualization and cross-checking; however, they are not presented due to space constraints.

#### 4. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

**Table 1: ARY News Thumbnails Detail**

1 <sup>st</sup> Thumbnail August 28, 2024		2 <sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail August 23, 2024
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail September 6, 2024		4 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail August 31, 2024
5 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail September 4, 2024		6 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail September 6, 2024

The ARY News YouTube thumbnails (as shown in Table 1) about the Natasha Karsaz road accident show that sensationalist visual discourse and institutional authority work together to construct a narrative in which the channel design and language use situate Natasha in a moral and legal discourse of accusation, exposure, and accountability. The semiotics in each thumbnail, which combine textual and visual semiotics to create a sense of urgency, emotional connection, and perception of factual disclosure, are analyzed in this study in the form of three thumbnails that together build a narrative about Natasha and her role in the road accident. The first thumbnail has the Urdu headlines *کارساز حادثہ، ملزمہ نتاشا کی میڈیکل رپورٹ منظر عام پر* (Karsaz Accident: Accused Natasha's Medical Report Revealed) and *ملزمہ نتاشا کی یورین میں انس کے شواہد ملے ہیں، بڑی خبر* (Evidence of Ice Found in Accused Natasha's Urine – Big News). The accumulation of these phrases turns the news into an exposé. The lexeme *ملزمہ* (accused) situates Natasha as a guilty party instead of an object, and the reference to Ice (crystal meth) acts as a moral trigger that connects her to deviance and drugs. The statement of a medical report conveys a veneer of investigative authority, lending credibility to ARY as a journalistic source while sensationalizing the material. The combination of red and blue color and vivid yellow font contribute to the feeling of urgency and draw attention of the viewer right away. Combined, these signs perform two functions, namely, to deliver the credibility, by the nature of the news form, and to continue a discourse of moral judgment.

The second thumbnail, which reads *"کارساز ٹریفک حادثے سے پہلے کی سی سی ٹی وی فوٹیج بھی سامنے آگئی"* (CCTV Footage from Before the Karsaz Accident Also Surfaced) and *"ملزمہ کی گاڑی کی رفتار تیز تھی"* (Accused, Car Speed) recentralizes the narrative back into an indexical responsibility framework: The sign "CCTV footage" is an indexical signifier of surveillance and truth, which implicates the evidentiary power, and "تیز رفتار" Color palette ARY carries the colors red, yellow, and black, which semiotically conveys a sense of urgency and seriousness, but the background image, though blurred, acts as a contextual signifier of the location of the event to produce a feeling of realism without showing any

violence directly. Semiotically speaking, the use of the words, accused, CCTV footage and speed, creates a kind of media narrative that is based on the visual evidence as a form of guilt.


The third thumbnail, titled “سانحہ کارساز کیس، ملزمہ نتاشا کی ضمانت منظور” ((Karsaz Tragedy Case: Accused Natasha Bail Approved), features a shift in the tone of the revealing information towards a legal one. This repetition of the word (accused “ملزمہ”) makes Natasha remain in the framing of a morally and legally disturbed person, whereas the word tragedy associates the case with national sentiments. The words “ضمانت منظور” (bail approved) mean a new step in the legal process but are presented in a visually dramatic manner with red banners showing breaking news written in bold and having dark background and blurred pictures. The fact that the thumbnail has a red circle suggests dangerously unique content of the investigation as it entices the viewers to feel like they are finding something. This juxtaposition between the legal part (approved bail) and the emotional gravity of the case (tragedy) “سانحہ” brings out the emotional tension, which in effect brings the discussions regarding morality and strengthens the position of ARY as the news provider and also a commentator on the ethical matters.

The fourth thumbnail text “نتاشا کے نشے میں ہونے کی تصدیق پر مقدمہ درج” uses a sensational accusatory frame, which is aimed at eliciting moral interest and emotional activity in the viewers. The term affirmation of intoxication is boldly written in white which is a graphic signifier of fact or proven evidence although the actual file might also rely on unverified or duplicated statements. This visual-linguistic appeal drives the audience toward the ethical judgment and presents the event as a criminal and ethical crisis, which demonstrates how the media predisposes to the construction of the moralization and dramatization of the discourse.

The word “نتاشا کی درخواست” (Natasha plea/request) in bold yellow writing is a type of a high-interest semiotic signal, creating an urgency, emotion, and ethical appeal of the entire phrase of the fifth thumbnail, “کارساز حادثہ، ملزمہ نتاشا کی درخواست ضمانت دائر”. The yellow color, which is traditionally associated with the imperative and sensational focus in South Asian news, places the viewer into visualizing Natasha as the emotional and likely victimized centre of the story. This sentence is an appeal that carries pathos that indicates vulnerability and in need of justice or sympathy.

In evaluation of sixth thumbnail, “فریقین میں” (among the events) introduces a neutral or legalistic discourse, signaling a shift from emotional enchantment to procedural framing “فریقین میں ” کارساز حادثہ کیس، فریقین میں ”. Its presence implies ongoing warfare or mediation, frequently utilized in thumbnails to rouse curiosity approximately confrontation or decision. Collectively, those textual signs visually and discursively assemble a tension between emotion and legality, guiding visitors to engage with the narrative as both a non-public tragedy and a public dispute; a technique common to journalistic dramatization in digital thumbnails. Both thumbnails employ formal, court docket-system Urdu diction and ambitious typography, projecting a tone of seriousness and judicial authority, linguistically framing the incident within a prison discourse that emphasizes decision and legitimacy in place of sensationalism, thereby constructing a narrative of justice, procedural closure, and controlled mediation.

**Table 2: Dawn News Thumbnails**

1 <sup>st</sup> Thumbnail August 19, 2024		2 <sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail August 20, 2024
		

3 <sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail August 20, 2024			4 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail August 21, 2024
5 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail September 16, 2024			6 <sup>th</sup> Thubnail August 29, 2024
7 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail August 29, 2024			8 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail September 6, 2024

### Phase I: Crisis, Condemnation, and Demand for Proof (Posts 1–4: August 19–21)

In first thumbnail of Table 2, "بریکنگ نیوز کراچی: کارساز روڈ پر خونی حادثہ" the phrase "خونی حادثہ" (bloody twist of fate) is emotionally charged and designed to provoke shock and urgency. The insertion of "بریکنگ نیوز" adds more dramatic elements to it and makes it sound like a real crisis. The red being used on the background contributes to the visual reinforcement of hazard and tragedy which appeals to the curiosity and emotional investment of the visitors. The second thumbnail "کراچی کارساز روڈ پر خونی حادثہ، جیب چلانے والی خاتون ڈرائیور کی فرار ہونے کی کوشش" puts blame and agency in place, and stresses "خاتون ڈرائیور" (girl driving force) and her "فرار ہونے کی کوشش" (attempt to flee). The gendered attention is a subtle sensationalizing of the incident, which gives the lady an interest about whether she is guilty or not. The lexical coupling of the words "حادثہ" and "فرار" creates a story about crime and evilness.

In the third thumbnail "بریکنگ نیوز کراچی: کارساز حادثہ: ملزمہ نتاشا کی ضمانت منظور؟" invitations The addition of a question mark asks about speculative curiosity, which is a standard clickbait technique. The words "ملزمہ نتاشا" prefigure the accused girl, making the judicial process seem a suspense/moral conflict narrative. The judicial aspect is dramatized by the use of yellow and white fonts on a red historical background. Fourth thumbnail "کارساز کے نزدیک خونی حادثہ، خاتون سمیت دو افراد جاں بحق، چار زخمی" is more descriptive, but emotionally-charged. It has a central lady presence as a point of interest with the help of the specifying "خاتون سمیت", element. The numerical factor (two dead, four injured) gives the element weight and maintains tragic value. It is graphically oriented towards a journalistic and not a simple terms sensational frame.

Initially, the feeling of time pressure was extremely high, as well as a simple way of messaging in order to create a great impact and penetration. A brightly visible aspect, in turn, was the usage of a bright crimson background, which was clearly pointing at "بریکنگ نیوز" (breaking news) and indicated that a grave situation was being communicated. High-contrast Yellow/Blue Scheme was added in Narrative depth thumbnails 2 and 3 to make the visuals more emotional. In the meantime, Posts 2 and 3 were highly centered on social inequality, namely, the juxtaposition of the opulent automobile of the deceased parents and their daughters on motorcycles, which succeeds in imparting highly ethical themes in the context of the Pakistani media. The third picture supported its effect by bold figures: Two people were killed, four others injured.

In the climax post four, success came when they unveiled conclusive evidence through their statement, which read as follows: "نئی ویڈیو سامنے آگئی" A new video has surfaced), accompanied by an inquiry into what transpired before the incident, expressed in this manner: "حادثے سے قبل کیا مناظر تھے؟" (Before the crash, how did things look?) The statement can be restated as follows: A small image utilized an analytical method of focusing on specific areas through vivid frames captured in closed-circuit television recordings, employing round overlays to highlight individual vehicle segments as if conducting a thorough investigation. The innovative approach captivated viewers by simulating real-time scrutiny, resulting in the most viewed content at 126 million views. Channel 8K identifies the guilty party as Natasha through its critical analysis of the discussion.

### ***Phase II: Legal and Family Intervention (Post five and six: August 19<sup>th</sup>-September 16<sup>th</sup>).***

After reaching its peak point of interest, journalists introduced fresh complications deliberately to keep their audience engaged, focusing on intricate legal issues alongside emotional stories about individuals involved. Photographs/mugs for identification purposes were featured prominently in this stage (Posts 5 through six), showcasing Natasha's likeness alongside those of her spouse. In fifth Thumbnail "بریکنگ" "نیوز کارساز حادثہ کیس، بڑی خبر آگئی" the repetition of "بڑی خبر" (big news) serves as an amplification method. This linguistic inflation will increase anticipation even as withholding substance, an indicator of algorithmic sensationalism used to maximize clicks and retention. In the sixth Thumbnail "بریکنگ نیوز" "بڑی پیش رفت" the indistinct, however powerful word "بڑی پیش رفت" (important development) is meant to sustain viewer engagement without disclosing information. It demonstrates a consistent coverage throughout, employing red and blue colors to signal both urgency and power. This is in line with the framing of crisis that is commonly seen in the stories covered by the 24-hour news media.

In this process, the legal system was able to individualize the defendant, by framing the crime as a complex courtroom drama around family relationships. The videos garnered around 13k views, effectively shifting viewer focus towards the family's private legal struggles, demonstrating that they found this storyline far more engaging than the complex legal proceedings described in "بڑی پیشرفت" (a big development), which covered possible amendments to the criminal law (with an additional 424 view count).

### ***Phase III involves financial resolution and narrative conclusion (post-8 on September 6).***

The concluding seventh and eighth thumbnails brought the ongoing discourse among the populace to an authoritative yet divisive conclusion. Returning to its initial investigation-inspired palette, the thumbnail revealed the conclusion succinctly in straightforward Urdu text: "کارساز حادثے کی نئی ویڈیو سامنے آگئی،" "حادثے سے قبل کیا مناظر تھے؟ خصوصی مناظر" employs temporal sequencing ("حادثے سے قبل") to promise distinctive perception, words like "خصوصی مناظر" (distinct visuals) make the most the viewer's preference of the back-of-the-scenes statistics. It displays surveillance discourse, positioning the viewer as an investigator.

Immediately after came this startling figure: "55 million rupees were disbursed. The illustration combining Natasha's picture along with an ensemble shot depicting her relatives alongside the suspect effectively conveyed the comprehensive nature of the confrontation by highlighting how the criminal's fortune met with the suffering of those affected. The shift towards "ملزمہ نتاشا اور لواحقین کے درمیان معاہدے" "طے پا گیا، ورتاء کو ساڑھے پانچ کروڑ روپے کی رقم ادا کر دی گئی" displays a decision narrative, transferring from crime to repayment. The point of "ساڑھے پانچ کروڑ روپے" quantifies justice in financial terms, introducing an ethical-economy frame. The tone is relatively calmer, however keeps curiosity approximately in the back-of-the-scenes negotiations. *Diyat* efficiently determined an emotional linking among most viewers; however, this approach also sparked substantial discussion about the cost of virtue, as evidenced by 39 comments.

**Table 3: Dunya News Thumbnails**

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail August 20, 2024</p>			<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail August 21, 2024</p>
<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail August 21, 2024</p>			<p>4<sup>th</sup> Thumbnail August 21, 2024</p>
<p>5<sup>th</sup> Thumbnail August 22, 2024</p>			

**The Guilt Battle (Thumbnail Posts 1–4: August 20-August 21)**

As Table 3 shows, the initial thumbnail post goes by the name of " ٹریفک حادثہ! ملزمہ ذہنی مریضہ قرار! ضمانت " (Traffic accident! Accused girl mentally ill! Bail approved??). A clear reconstruction, done in a court, juxtaposes judicial, mental and ethical words to create a story of manipulation. The words "ملزمہ ذہنی مریضہ قرار" (a different recreation played) have the connotation of deceit, that justice is served by subordinate measures. Lexical repetition of عدالت is keeping the institutional body intact but inviting the visitors to read the event as a drama in contrast to due process. The blue heritage is semiotically used to preserve credibility but it is contrasted with the everyday slangs such as وکھری گیم to show how the discourse of journalism in social media blends credibility with the slang to attract target audience. This language mix has resulted in a hybrid narrative one that wildly judges and romanticizes the felony approach.

Dunya News did a harsh, equal-day investigative about legal suspense and the innocence of the defendant. Judicial Spectacle (Thumbnail 2 "As soon as the accused lady appeared in a court, what did the lawyers do? Cloth on face police back and front, such protocol of the accused?: creates a spectacle of visual and spoken language around the figure of the ملزمہ خاتون (accused girl), and immediately locates the court as a venue of moral performance. The frequent appeal to "عدالت" foreshadows the conflict between justice and privilege and gender. The formulation through rhetoric questions (کیا کیا؟ اتنا پروٹوکول؟) ratifies the act, which stirs up curiosity and indignation of the masses. The visual placement of the content material within a journalistic frame is visually placed with the blue heritage, the color that is commonly linked to authority and institutional credibility, which is accompanied by language that is oriented towards sensationalism. The imposing display of such significant terms as عدالت and ملزمہ demonstrates the order between regulation and the accused and the visual seriousness of the court docket image is supported in spite of the appeals to the emotional interest of visitors.

Third thumbnail (End of illness drama - accused girl stuck red-passed in courtroom - physician statement) makes fun of the fact that the accused girl is defending her infection, and has reconfigured a prison trial

into a drama of morality. The visual and verbal meaning of the word. The term **رنگے ہاتھوں پکڑی گئی** (stuck red-surpassed) has a visual and linguistic meaning of exposure, which conforms to a journalistic practice of creating truth revelation as spectacle. The echoing of the term **عدالت** (courtroom) lends legitimacy to the story in the form of prison authenticity although the dramatized tone resembles more of leisure news than a report. The blue sight perspective in the textual content backdrop is a sign of news authority, but the emotionally charged diction such **سین ڈراپ** and **رنگے ہاتھوں**—transports the lines between truthful information reporting and story dramatization. That is why, this thumbnail is the symbol of the fact that such journalism that is shown on television, being extended to the social media, is characterized by the combination of fact-telling with theatrical moral judgment.

### ***Dunya News Phase II: Victimhood and Class Callousness (TP four: August 21)***

In this TP "دیت ادا، ملزمہ رہا؟؟ کھیل ختم! 68 لاکھ رقم مقرر!! ملزمہ نتاشا کے وکیل نے بتا دیا، جج کے سامنے رضامندی؟" (Diyat paid, accused released?? Game over! 6.8 million decided!! The lawyer of Natasha showed before the judge?) "دیت ادا" (*Diyat paid*) and "کھیل ختم" (sport over) are conspicuously brought out, calling on a discourse of transactional justice. The terms **کھیل ختم** figuratively turn the process of the judicial procedure into a game which serves as the metaphor of manipulation, general performance and moral corruption within the prison system. The quantification of justice through **68 لاکھ رقم مقرر** (6.8 million determined) makes the concept of justice a commodity of the thumb, which is an available finished product. The blue background again gives institutional credibility to the visual, although the yellow and white textual content overlaying gives an emotional, urgent, likable normalcy of virtual journalism. This amalgamation of financial description, inmate language, and informal metaphor creates a critical visual account about the approach of justice being overwhelmed by money and its influence on.

### ***Final Arc (sunrise TP five: August 22)***

The post five, which was released the day following the in-depth prison insurance, transfers the ethical pointlight completely back to the sufferers and the emotional after-effect. Urdu Discussion of Righteousness: The thumbnail, which is juxtaposed with the pressing red banner of Breaking news, uses the charged language. It draws our attention to thee "شہید ہونے والی خاتون کا بھائی میدان میں آگیا" (The martyred woman is a sister of mine enters), and immediately transforms the victim and her family war into heroism/ethical crusading. The epitome question "کتنے کروڑ کی آفر ہوگئی؟" How many Crores had been offered? Without delay treats the insatiable hypothesis of a settlement, which is at once refuted by the statement which the families themselves are to make.

Visual/Semiotic emphasis: the fact that we are talking of the word "شہید" (Martyr) is an influential emotional and non-secular signifier in the Urdu discourse which elevated the stature of the victim, way beyond that of a casualty of an on-site visitor. The images have an extreme focus on the bereaved family member, the nephew, in the interview process and as such, the agony of the sufferer and the rebellion of the family are the focal point of the imagery. Narrative role: This puts up enjoys the greatest recollection of views because it fulfills the craving of the target audience not only to the truth (the information shared on social media is not the truth) but also to the feelings. It instantly disproves the media hypothesis of instant consensus (a narrative of compromise) and returns to the narrative of the sophisticated callousness: the rich family has now even nothing to do with the victims that would verify the worst extreme of the people with regard to lack of morality among the elite.

These Dunya news thumbnails are organized through the use of routine lexical anchors **عدالت** (court docket), **ملزمہ** (accused), **کھیل** (game), **وکیل** (attorney), **فیملی** (circle of relatives), and **بیماری** (illness) which form a discursive discipline where journalism becomes a moral theatre. The visual palette of blue is used symbolically to suggest credibility and professionalism, but the emotionally colored diction and performative punctuation (e.g. "??", "!!!") erases the distinctions between news and sensational storytelling. These thumbnails establish the court as a space of justice and at the same time a space of moral judgment, a platform of responses to gender, class and strength, whose negotiations are always in the visible context of the Pakistani virtual journalism.

## Analysis of Independent and Populist YouTubers' Thumbnails

**Table 4:** UrduPoint and Raza Samo Youtube Channels' Thumbnails

1 <sup>st</sup> Thumbnail UrduPoint  August 21, 2024	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail UrduPoint  August 22, 2024	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail Raza Samo  August 26, 2024	

The thumbnails and visible compositions utilized by unbiased and populist YouTubers especially Raza Samo and UrduPoint's YouTube channel, monitor an enormously emotional, accusatory, and populist technique to representing the Natasha Karsaz street coincidence. Both visible and textual cues are not to report developments neutrally, but to form public moral judgment and emotional engagement via sensational semiotics. In Raza Samo's thumbnail, the imagery and textual language are explicitly condemnatory. An ambitious English caption, "SHE CRASHED 2 PEOPLE TO DEATH," features as a declarative verdict instead of a headline, assigning direct and unqualified guilt to Natasha. The inclusion of pink eyes in Natasha's photograph acts as a symbolic demonization, reworking her into a visual illustration of ethical corruption or heartlessness.

The YouTuber's very own photograph, staring critically at the viewer, capabilities as an indexical signal of authority and judgment, projecting conviction in preference to neutrality. This visible structure, along with the "CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS" tape and wreckage imagery, blends moral accusation with tragedy, constructing Natasha as each the cause and embodiment of wrongdoing. In the video, a photograph of Natasha smiling is overlaid with the text "*Her smile is a large question mark on our judicial system* □," reworking an easy facial expression into a semiotic weapon of moral critique. The smile, reframed as conceitedness or lack of remorse, becomes a social indictment of each Natasha and the perceived failure of justice.

Similarly, the UrduPoint thumbnails operate through emotional layering and the accumulation of more than one victim narrative. In the first thumbnail of Table 4, "امیرزادی نتاشہ کے ہاتھوں جاں بحق ہونے والے باپ کا وہ سائیکل ٹھیلا، جس پر چپس بیچ کر بیٹی کو پڑھاتا تھا." (The pushcart of the father who lost his life at the hands of the wealthy woman Natasha, the same cycle cart on which he used to sell chips to educate his daughter), constructs a deeply emotional and moralized narrative by means of contrasting class disparity

and ethical innocence. The phrase “امیرزادی نتاشہ” (smiling shots of Natasha) functions as a linguistic marker of privilege, evoking resentment towards social elites. With the aid of highlighting “باپ کا وہ سائیکل” (the father’s cycle cart), the image appeals to notions of honesty, poverty, and sacrifice, a symbolic illustration of the running-elegance struggle. The color scheme (yellow and white textual information on a dark background) adds to the gravity of emotions, and the visual element of the rickety cart helps to make the tragedy more realistic. The juxtaposition between the luxurious and the hard to work seems to be a stark contrast between the pictures of Natasha and the cart, so it can be regarded as a moral criticism within the whole process of semiotic. Thus, the debate transforms the accident into a moral story of a kind which is being told in such a way that obviousness and the written text come together and leads to the empathetic and angered masses against the rich to further the narrations of injustice, inequality, and moral decline among the rich. The second thumbnail is a set of pictures, the face of Natasha, crashing cars, the angry son of a victim of age, etc., which makes up the general image of pain, anger, and justice struggles. Words on the pictures like, an old man was also hit by the car of Natasha and in between life and death. The second powerful accusation made by Son is really dramatic in its manner, it addresses the issues of conflicts between the victims and the troubles of the defense arguments of Natasha.

Through foreshadowing of emotional fascination of the son, UrduPoint develops the scenario as a morally charged spectacle, that specializes in human suffering as compared to the finesse of felony. Black and yellow banners shade palette, which is the feature of online tabloid design, supports a feeling of hurry and urgency. Collectively, each YouTuber’s visible and textual codes prioritize emotional immediacy and moral polarization. They transform a legal incident right into a public morality play, using visible cues (purple, black, wreckage, and direct gaze) and linguistic facts (“crashed to demise,” “severe allegation”) to portray Natasha as a parent deserving collective condemnation. Those semiotic practices do not serve for informational stability but for viewer activation, to provoke outrage, empathy for victims, and distrust in systemic justice.

**Table 5: Thumbnails of Kami Reality TV and Iqrar ul Hassan**



<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail Kami Reality TV August 20, 2024</p>	
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail Iqrara ul Hassan August 23, 2024</p>	

Each thumbnail in Table 5, one from Kami reality TV (unbiased creator) and the alternative from Iqrar ul Hassan (journalistic influencer)’s YouTube channel, offers strikingly special but thematically overlapping representations of the Natasha Karsaz accident case, reflecting contrasting ideological positions and semiotic techniques shaped by using their creators’ backgrounds. In Kami’s thumbnail (1), the representation is brazenly sensational, accusatory, and dehumanizing. Natasha is visually framed across more than one panel, acting distressed and overwhelmed, surrounded by a crowd, visually coding her as a public spectacle and object of ethical scrutiny. The shade palette of red, white, and black operates as an indexical code of ethical threat, outrage, and social condemnation.

Linguistically and morally exaggerated, phrases such as "Karsaz Chudail Viral story" and "اس نے 6" "معصوموں کی جان لے لی" constitute severe linguistic aggression, revealing the saturation of moral values. A continuous application of "چڑیل" (witch) unveils the symbol of a cultural cross that tends to demonize and gender women in a highly sensationalized way, which has been historically related to promiscuous women. The Urdu headline "عوام نے پکڑ لیا" (the general public caught her) presents collective vigilantism as rightful, thus creating a bond of sympathy between the crowd and the accused rather than the latter. It can be said that Kami's truth television has done a marvelous job of visual-textual semiotics in making Natasha a dehumanized, villainous character that is emotion over proof and has become part of the discourse of populist, ethical panic. On another angle, the thumbnail (2) of Iqrar ul Hassan embraces the characteristics of advocacy journalism which combines professional credibility and emotional critique. The layout pushes Iqrar to the front his straight look and passionate hand move determine power and good conscience. The contrast of Natasha who is out of focus and the very much visible victims (father and daughter) signifies partial empathy, stressing victimhood while placing the accused at a secure moral distance. The verbal signs and wounds like "امیر زادی پاگل نہیں، ہم سب پاگل ہیں" (The rich girl isn't mad; we all are) through that sarcasm express discontent and frustrate people with the system, while "باپ بیٹی کو کچلنے والی سفاک لڑکی" (The merciless girl who overwhelmed a father and daughter) directly judges the ethical situation.

The blue-and-yellow color scheme, together with the pink arrows, creates a narrative tone that is research-oriented yet emotional. The full mixed mode—journalist mixed with activist—places Iqrar in the role of a public ethical judge who conveys refined indignation mainly through his symbolic positioning between the victims and the accused. Together, the two little pictures unveil an entire range of digital sensationalism in their semiotics: the populist demonization of truth television by Kami vs. the advocacy-driven condemnation of Iqrar. Both resort to emotional semiotics and moral binaries; however, while Kami heightens the people's justice and gendered vilification, Iqrar draws upon moral authority and systemic critique. The result is a complicated ecosystem of visual discourse where the two opposites—journalistic credibility and vernacular sensationalism—exist side by side, thus, the moral frontiers of representation are quite blurred.

**Table 6: Thumbnails: The Pakistan Experience (Podcast by Shehzad Ghias Shaikh)**

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail August 21, 2024</p>	
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail September 6, 2024</p>	

Shehzad Ghias Shaikh's two thumbnail sketches depicted in Table 6 present a manner of discussion that is highly significant and intellectually a bit more narrated. The discourse revolves around the problems of elite privilege, systemic injustices, and class differences in Pakistan. They collectively display how digital statement spaces, distinct from formal journalism, use visible and textual semiotics to assemble public

ethical critique around viral incidents, just like the Natasha Karsaz case. In the first thumbnail, the host, Shehzad Ghias Shaikh, is foregrounded with a serious expression and a podcast microphone, at once organizing his character as a highbrow and ethical commentator. The picture is arranged in a triadic structure: (1) the host as the rational voice, (2) Natasha Karsaz in a subdued, introspective pose representing elite privilege, and (three) the car wreckage as a powerful indexical signal of tragedy and consequence. The textual overlay, "ELITES KA PAKISTAN?" in potent purple and white colors, performs as a rhetorical condemnation rather than an unbiased inquiry. It implicitly asserts the existence of the elite in Pakistan a group of people who indulge in their wrongful activities while whole societies endure the suffering of lack of power and justice thus, the whole system is not fair. The crimson and black color scheme serves to heighten the feeling of moral catastrophe and social panic. The second thumbnail applies the same visual and ideological words but it uses the intertextual comparison to increase its tone. In this case, the popular Natasha whose hands have symbols of peace or victory is compared to the notorious Shahrukh Jatoi, a millionaire criminal of the Shahzeb Khan case, the poster boy of elite impunity through the misuse of Diyat laws. The host once again acts as a critic, putting the criticism into visual context. The textual overlays "NATASHA GOES FREE?" and "CHANGE DIYAT LAWS?" explicitly sign advocacy and systemic critique. Natasha's smiling expression turns into an iconic sign of perceived arrogance and moral detachment, while Jatoi's inclusion features as an indexical sign of historic injustice. The purple and black typography reinforces alarm and ethical urgency, turning the thumbnail into a visual manifesto towards criminal and class inequalities.

Overall, each thumbnails exemplify virtual advocacy discourse wherein visible semiotics, rhetorical textual content, and host character converge to produce emotionally resonant social critique. The juxtaposition of elite figures (Natasha, Jatoi) and logos of effect (wreckage, sufferers) positions the podcast as a virtual platform of civic engagement and duty. In contrast to information media, which seek to document, this shape of remark seeks to interpret, provoke, and mobilize, turning the YouTube thumbnail into a visible protest poster in opposition to elite injustice.

**Table 7:** *Thumbnails by Raftar Podcast (Faisal Waheed) & Suno Crime Podcast*

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail Raftar Podcast August 22 2024</p>	
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail Suno Crime Podcast August 23 2024</p>	

The visible and textual elements of the thumbnails from the Raftar Podcast and Suno Crime Podcast in Table 7 mirror distinct, however thematically aligned examples of non-journalistic, statement-pushed framing of the Natasha Karsaz accident case. These thumbnails are cautiously crafted to provoke emotional reaction, foreground magnificence and systemic injustice, and frame the incident inside a broader social critique instead of objective reportage. Raftar's thumbnail (1) textual content "AMEER vs

GHAREEB” visually and linguistically constructs a stark class-based binary competition between “Ameer” (wealthy) and “Ghareeb” (bad), the usage of direct war of words language paying homage to aggressive or combative framing (“vs”). The choice of the word “vs” situates the two social classes as adversaries, symbolizing systemic inequality and the battle between privilege and deprivation. Using capitalized typography and excessive-comparison colorations, orange for “Ameer” and white for “Ghareeb” on a black background amplifies this dichotomy, visually encoding notions of dominance and purity.

Thumbnail is a binary moral framing. Ameer (Natasha) Ameer (Natasha) is visually coded as an influential yet uncertainly moral person with a darker outfit and a disturbed expression which is placed on the left and appears to give an impression of dominance or authority. In the meantime the Ghareeb, Amina, is dressed in light-coloured clothes, which reminds of innocence and purity. Her comfortable relaxed smile is semiotically used to remind us of the erroneous lifestyles and innocence hence adds to the tragedy.

Even in motionless photos, Areeba manages to bring out compassion; it grounds the viewer with the victim. Her jubilation further enhances the comparison of what was formerly a young life full of promises to what has been lost as a consequence of carelessness and privilege. At the discourse level, the thumbnail has recreated a media ethical dichotomy; innocence versus privilege, victim versus oppressor and justice versus impunity. The socio-visual dichotomy is also supported by this shade contrast-orange of Ameer and white of Ghareeb.

Structure and tone are to incite ethical outrage and sympathy and to invite audiences to read the occasion no longer as simply a legal issue, but as a symbolic war among Pakistanis: one shielded by privilege, the other submerged beneath systemic inequality.

The second thumbnail, Karsaz Incident-feet: Naeem Mustafa (Senior Journalist) from Suno Crime Podcast on 23rd of August, builds up a symbolically charged narrative of sophistication disparity and injustice, both in the use of visible and textual semiotics. This Urdu phrase, “غریبوں کا جنازہ، امیروں کا ” کا خون بہا” means the metaphorical indictment of social inequality, framing the Karsaz accident as not an event but rather a moral spectacle of sophistication imbalance.

The visible composition juxtaposes more than one figure: Natasha, with a red bar across her eyes, a traditional semiotic cue for criminalization or shame; the smiling sufferer; and a senior journalist with a photo of a wrecked automobile. The use of pink shade on eyes of Natasha is the sign of guilt, violence, and taint of ethics, yellow and white typography on dark heritage are a sign of classy urgency and tragedy. Therefore, the correlation between the faces of accused and commentator roles places the journalist in the role of an arbiter of reality and the audience in the role of moral judges.

This thumbnail promotes the view of elegance antagonism and populist criticism, according to discourse analysis. This headline creates a narrative where the victims of the negative are literally deprived (funeral), and the wealthy can afford to purchase some spiritual redemption (blood money). This contrast replicates more generalized elite impunity in Pakistani justice machine, where money is used to get away with crimes. This is also enriched with some linguistic rhythm that balances “غریبوں کا جنازہ” with “امیروں کا خون بہا” which makes it sound catchy and emotion-rousing.

The semiotic communication of shade, expression and text summarizes the themes of moral outrage, media sensationalism and justice fatigue. The thumbnail also authenticates itself through the presence of a journalist by providing journalistic reporting as a mask and disintegrates spectacle as a mask. On the whole, this thumbnail transforms the Karsaz case into a visualized moralised, stylish drama, which is a representation of how virtual journalism of Pakistan so often trades off between statistics and emotion, ethics and sensationalism, tragedy into a narrative of shared anger and collective social mirrored image.

The combination of these thumbnails shows the way in which the semiotic techniques of observation and opinion-based YouTubers are invoked: coloration symbolism-pink/black, de-humanising labels- (“چڑیل”

“children of large people”), combined sufferer/accused composites, rhetorical questions or accusatory banners-mobilize the target audience sentiment to criticise the failure of the institutions. Those thumbnails are biased towards ethical absolutism and advanced criticism when compared to professional news retailers, which are able to maintain some prison distance and newspaper objectivity, transforming personal tragedy into popular indignation.

**Table 8: Thumbnail Analysis of Vlog Central with Nasir Baig**

1 <sup>st</sup> Thumbnail  August 22 2024			4 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail  September 13, 2024
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail  September 6 2024			5 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail  September 21, 2024
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail  September 7, 2024			6 <sup>th</sup> Thumbnail  October 1, 13 2024

The opening thumbnail in Table 8 (crucial development inside the Karsaz accident case) follows the rhetorical tool of anticipatory framing-which implies the development of something but does not give details, a frequent journalistic resource that keeps the mass media engaged. The time criterion “اہم پیش رفت” or 'critical improvement' suggests criminal momentum and institutional responsiveness, and is commonly a euphemism that masks the reality of sluggishness in the process or leniency in favor of magnanimity. This is a floating signifier of justice semiotically, a time period, which, however, has an ethical weight; it is, though contextually empty, until filled by the expectations of the target audience. This is how the media builds suspense in high profile elegance-filled cases such as the Natasha case keeping the pretence of justice in action.

The second thumbnail (The intoxicated elite lady Natasha acquitted; heirs of Amna and Imran be given blood cash) predicts gender, elegance and intoxication as overlapping signs of privilege and moral corruption. The male term “امراعت” (elite woman) and “نشے میں دھت” (intoxicated) creates a discourse of indulgence where it is implied that it is the wealth that is intoxicating and not the frame but also the sense of what is right and what is wrong. A criminal term “دیت” (blood cash) triggers the call to the Islamic jurisprudence, but is re-contextualized right here to serve as an instrument of inequality. Semiotically, this framing shows how electricity systems are using sacred criminal standards. The story places the acquittal of Natasha in the symbolic place of moral failure of the justice system in Pakistan whereby compensation takes the place of responsibility and advanced mobility is the identifier of moral legitimacy. Third depicts a morally rigidist construction, a dualistic struggle that drives the moral essence of the case down to a naked aphorism. The humanization of the concepts of humanity and money reminds the mythic

binary of Roland Barthes, where social existence is reduced to moral generalizations. It is not just an informative thumbnail, but a certain ideological one: the gadget of justice is presented as a place of moral defeat. The prevailing and dropping semiotics dramatize the case as symbolic warfare of ethics and the financial system, a persistent cultural fable in the South Asian justice discourse.

The fourth thumbnail indicates a red historical past (symbolizing hazard, blood, and moral alarm); a gavel inside the center, the regular signal of justice, placed sarcastically between snapshots of accused elites, reinforcing the hollowness of the law. Husnain (sufferer), Afnan Shafqat (culprit), performative posture of moral outrage. Faces of Natasha, Amna, Imran, and visual inserts of previous high-profile accused individuals, consisting of Shahrukh Jatoi, Zahir Jaffer, Shahnawaz Amir, Raymond Davis, Mustafa Kanju, and Majeed Achakzai, each representing an ordinary archetype of power as opposed to duty. Semiotically, this visible collage constructs a continuum of privilege: the elite perpetrator as opposed to the voiceless victim, dramatized through coloration, gaze, and juxtaposition. The sufferers' pictures regularly seem in softer tones or smaller sizes, whilst accused elites occupy the dominant visible area, reinforcing the media's fixation on the spectacle of the wrongdoer.

This thumbnail invokes intertextual net of injustice; a network of previous tragedies: Shahrukh Jatoi–Shahzeb Khan case (2012): Wealth and influence overriding justice via diyat (blood cash); Zahir Jaffer–Noor Mukadam (2021): Gendered violence framed through class and mental health discourses; Shahnawaz Amir–Sara Inam (2022): domestic crime reframed as elite scandal; Raymond Davis (2011): American immunity as geopolitical privilege; Mustafa Kanju (2015): Feudal impunity and casual masculinity of power; Majeed Achakzai (2017): Political elite killing a visitors warden on camera, taking walks unfastened and Qandeel Baloch (2016): victim of honor subculture, her demise symbolizing patriarchal and moral double requirements. And the DHA coincidence case (2023) homicide of six harmless people dies because of the male ego and harassment card of the rich. This intertextual recollection builds what Michel Foucault might name a genealogy of impunity, in which every case turns into a symbolic repetition of electricity's persistence and the regulation's collapse. The thumbnail's language (“ایک اور طاقتور”) highlights continuity now not exception, in systemic dysfunction.

The Urdu text metaphor “سسٹم کے منہ پر زناٹے دار توہیڑ” –a stinging slap to the face of the gadget-anthropomorphizes justice, giving “the machine” a body able to humiliation. This dramatization sustains an ideological narrative that the people are morally unsleeping, but the state is institutionally dead. The discourse for this reason mobilizes populist ethical anger, placing the journalist, Husnain Afnan, as a voice of collective frustration.

The shade palette: red (blood, guilt, emergency), black (power, secrecy, institutional opacity), and gold/yellow fonts (privilege, affluence, and elite immunity) encodes class and crime semiotics. Both Lahore's six-sufferer case and Karachi's Karsaz accident (Natasha case) perform identical semiotic and discursive capabilities: both are narrated through elite intoxication, reckless privilege, and judicial mercy; appoint ethical binaries (“Ameer vs Ghareeb,” “Humanity lost, cash gained”), and each gives up with monetary reconciliation (diyat) instead of felony retribution. Yet, the Lahore case amplifies melancholy; it situates itself as the subsequent bankruptcy in a countrywide tragedy of repetition, in which justice will become cyclical performance in preference to moral resolution.

By interlinking Natasha, Jatoi, Jaffer, Kanju, and Davis, the thumbnail turns into more than an information body; it transforms into an ethical archive of Pakistani impunity. Every case narrates how class, gender, and state strength intersect to nullify justice. The steady portrayal of women sufferers (Noor, Sara, Qandeel, Amna) also exposes the gendered vulnerability within classed violence, in which male or elite authority is consistently re-legitimized via media spectacle.

On the fifth thumbnail, the conversation is not about the man or woman but about structure, the sociological generalization of corruption and opportunism. “قانون توڑتا ہے” can be translated as moral anarchy, where one can be regulated depending on social capital. It builds a Foucauldian concept of power, in which legality is performative, applied selectively in accordance with the positionality of the

challenge. It generalizes the case of Natasha and refines it as a national allegory of chaos, in particular, the violation of traffic laws. The sixth thumbnail “ روز میں ریمانڈ پر رہا، اتنا فوری انصاف کیا کبھی غریب کو بھی مل گا؟ ” karachi Natasha on remand in less than forty three days, will a poor ever get such quick justice) is a juxtaposition of judicial process with socioeconomic disparity, showing the performativity of “ اتنا فوری انصاف ” The final rhetorical question serves as a discursive judgment of the gadget and its tone swings between irony and hopelessness. Privilege is quantified with the conjunction of forty-three days, and thus inequality is empirically observable. The word “ غریب ” (negative) is semiotically represented as a moral but not financial category which represents helplessness, virtue and marginalization.

**Table 9: Badla Brother Vlogs, Eon Clips & Mubasher Lucman Official**

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail Eon Clips-  August 21, 2024</p>	
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail Badla Brothers Vlogs  August 27, 2024</p>	
<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail Mubasher Lucman Official  September 8, 2024</p>	

Eon Clips (Thumbnail 1) in Table 9 introduces a hybrid visual grammar of journalistic assessment and moral activism. Its linguistic question “ کیا اسکا احتساب ہوگا؟ ” acts as a collective demand for duty, whilst the digital pink censorship bars over the eyes of both the accused and sufferers characterize moral blindness or systemic apathy. The inclusion of strong declarative English text (“ lady KILLS 2 IN LAND CRUISER ”) merges sensationalism with moral urgency. Similarly, Mubasher Lucman (Thumbnail 3) legitimately fuses mainstream journalistic authority with provocative visible rhetoric. Natasha’s smiling “ V-for-victory ” pose against pix of sufferers and textual overlays like “ نتاشا پھر سے لوگوں کو کچلنے کے لیے تیار ” and “ سینکڑوں اینٹوں کے برابر دیت ” rework the case into an allegory of elite impunity and ethical fall apart. The “ bricks for Diyat ” metaphor is in particular robust, equating human life with reasonably-priced fabric fee, reinforcing Lucman’s signature sensationalist outrage and ethical condemnation.

In contrast, Badla Brother Vlogs amplifies emotional outrage via sensational and accusatory visible semiotics in thumbnail two. Natasha is visually demonized depicted with sparkling pink eyes and labeled “ Qatil woman ” even as the host performs an ethical gesture of rejection (hands crossed in a cross sign

‘X’). Text including “entire M\*RDER story” and “قاتل گرل” removes any ambiguity approximately guilt, transforming the vlog into a visible trial by using public opinion. The in-video photograph deepens the class-based critique through the juxtaposition of sentencing disparities (“سزا کی 24 سال” vs. “سزا کی 2 سال”), supplying Natasha as a beneficiary of elite privilege and prison leniency. This use of visual-emotional surprise tactics situates the vlog in a condemnation/sensationalist mode geared toward viral ethical outrage rather than informed evaluation.

Moreover, these channels install a blend of symbolic imagery (jail bars, victory signs and symptoms, crying emoji, crimson censorship bars, and forex/bricks) and declarative, accusatory language to mobilize have response on. The result is a visual media surroundings where justice is executed, now not mentioned, a collective production of moral judgment via aesthetics of publicity, outrage, and disbelief.

**Table 10:** *Thumbnails of Brut India, AliTV, and Tauqeer Baloch YouTube Channels*

1 <sup>st</sup> Thumbnail	
Tauqeer Baloch	
August 21, 2024	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail	
Brut India	
August 29, 2024	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail	
AliTV	
September 6, 2024	

The collective analysis of *Brut India*, *AliTV*, and *Tauqeer Baloch* YouTube channels exhibits a coherent thematic and semiotic construction of shock, injustice, and ethical failure, as depicted in Table 10, showing different stylistic intensities and communicative intentions. Tauqeer Baloch’s thumbnail takes the equal discourse to its emotional and visually intense. Using graphic imagery, the covered frame of the sufferer juxtaposed with mirrored pix of Natasha, and the sarcastic textual content “تم نے ان پر گاڑی چڑھا کر بہت اچھا کیا” (you did a very good component by way of jogging them over) converts moral condemnation into visual activism. This precise emotional manipulation avoids narrative neutrality, supplying a visceral denunciation of both the accused and the justice system. The imagery’s rawness aligns with extreme sensationalism and advocacy, designed to initiate outrage, grief, and collective disgust as opposed to knowledgeable debate.

Brut India’s thumbnail (2), as a global digital media platform, uses minimalism and emotional narrative to universalize the ethical surprise of the case. Its thumbnail featuring Natasha Danish smiling and giving a victory signal, juxtaposed with the wreckage, transforms the visual right into a symbolic sign of elite impunity and ethical dissonance. The inclusion of a preceding excessive-profile case (Shahrukh Jatoi) within video situates the narrative inside a continuum of elite privilege and systemic flaws, while textual overlays, along with “exchange DEEYAT laws?” globalize the critique by moving awareness from a man or woman to structural injustice.

In the third thumbnail by AliTV, then again, intensifies the critique through direct magnificence-primarily based confrontation. The composite photograph contrasting “AMEER VS GHAREEB” (wealthy vs. bad) visually and textually encodes the binary of privilege as opposed to vulnerability, whilst the declarative textual content “پیسہ جیت گیا” (cash received) reduces the judicial final results to a cynical monetary transaction. Natasha’s smiling snapshots with her husband act as iconic symbols of elite detachment, transforming personal imagery into a semiotic indictment of systemic corruption. Together, these 3 channels illustrate a gradient of visual and textual condemnation, from globalized empathy and systemic critique (Brut India) to local advocacy and ethical fury (AliTV, Tauqeer Baloch). Across all, Natasha’s smiling photograph and the *Diyat* discourse function as recurrent signifiers of privilege, impunity, and moral fall apart, while pink and black tones, rhetorical interrogatives, and accusatory overlays serve as semiotic amplifiers of outrage.

**Table 11:** Farah Iqrar, Mahreen Sibtain, Imtiaz Chandio, and Ashir Azeem Gill’s Thumbnails

<p>1<sup>st</sup> Thumbnail Mahreen Sibtain official August 22, 2024</p>	
<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Thumbnail Imtiaz Chandio Vlog August 22, 2024</p>	
<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Thumbnail Ashir Azeem Gill August 25, 2024</p>	
<p>4<sup>th</sup> Thumbnail Farah Iqrar August 25, 2024</p>	

The collective visible and textual evaluation of Farah Iqrar, Mahreen Sibtain, Imtiaz Chandio, UrduPoint, and Ashir Azeem Gill channels in Table 11 presents a strikingly numerous yet interconnected spectrum of media narratives surrounding the Natasha Karsaz street accident. Each channel constructs its very own semiotic universe, blending journalism, advocacy, sensationalism, and highbrow critique, to shape public perception and meaning-making around elegance, morality, and justice in Pakistan.

Mahreen Sibtain's thumbnail amplifies the incident through rhetorical sensationalism, transforming the case into a story of conspiracy and systemic failure. The usage of "قتل کرنے سے پہلے کس کے ڈر سے گاڑی" (Before killing, from whose worry changed into Natasha speeding?) Injects speculative drama, while "بہنگا رہی تھی؟" (The first large victory for Natasha's own family?) Satirically alludes to class immunity. thru sharp red banners and dense visuals, Mahreen Sibtain transforms journalism into public outrage theatre, framing Natasha's act as premeditated, her protection as orchestrated, and her circle of relatives' have an effect on as a testament to the corruption of justice.

The vlog by Imtiaz Chandio brings the case all the way to the sociological blame of the elite class by framing the story of Natasha in a trend of moral and social demise. His title "امیروں کی بگڑی بیویاں: اندر کی کہانیاں" (Spoiled other halves of the rich: interior tales) creates a moralizing and gendered body, making out of an actor case that an entire profession of the affluent is ethically foul. The juxtaposition of smiling pictures of Natasha against the solemn pictures of the victims is followed by the demonstrative posture of Chandio to create a tale of moral corruption, social injustice, and structural malfunction of duty that gives rise to populist resentment and also cultural moralism.

The thumbnail works by Farah Iqrar exist in the context of journalistic advocacy: the use of her believability as a journalist with the vanity and manipulation of elites. The phrases, "تم میرے باپ کو نہیں جانتے" (You don't understand my father) and "امیر زادی نتاشا کی کھلی دھمکیاں" (open threats by Natasha, rich girl), are facilitated in order to serve as a symbolic reproach to sophistication-centered impunity. The structure, which consists of the two emotional descriptions of Natasha and the authoritative voice of the journalist, transforms the personal scandal into the one of the system. It combines journalism with social activism, positioning Natasha not as merely an accused, but as a symbol of privilege in high places wielded via vanity and lies and manipulations.

Thus, Ashir Azeem Gill's thumbnail presents a transformation of the widely accepted and easily understood philosophical and analytical stance. His simplistic composition consisting of only one photograph showing Natasha's back in a corridor and the caption, "Assailant or victim?" pushes the discussion not through emotional reaction but through ethical reflection. The overall picture of morality questioning and disputing invites the society to uncover the real reasons behind the prevailing consensus of condemnation that is of psychological, social, or circumstantial nature. His setting forces the audience to participate in diligent reasoning rather than showing outrage, thus granting a rare instance of interpretative delay amid the otherwise fast-reacting media world. These thumbnails together present a variety of ways of talking that can still be classified from moral outrage and populist condemnation to journalistic advocacy and reflecting evaluation. All the percentages identify an underlying critique of power asymmetry, but differ in their approach: some wield emotion and accusation, others through self-reflection. This pulling together of advocacy, sensationalism, and highbrow discourse is indicative of how the virtual media ecosystem in Pakistan maps out the moral landscape of justice through the intertwined aspects of gender, power, morality, and public duty.

## Findings and Thematic Interpretation of YouTube Comments on the Natasha Karsaz Case

**Table 12.** *Relational Mapping: YouTube Comments on the NKC (n = 18,678)*

<b>Analytical Dimension</b>	<b>Themes (Condensed from 34)</b>	<b>Relational Meaning/Interpretive Focus</b>	<b>Approx. Comment Count (%)</b>	<b>Illustrative Discourse Functions</b>
Institutional Trust & Justice Narratives	Criticism on Law Enforcement; Corruption and Bribery; Critique on Lawyers; Diyat Law Debates; Accountability and Public Safety; State vs. Criminal	Reflects deep institutional mistrust, public frustration with the rule of law, and perception of elite immunity.	4,832 (26%)	Constructs collective outrage and exposes moral dissonance in legal systems.
Socioeconomic & Class Discourse	Elitism and power Dynamics; Social Inequality (rich vs. poor); Economic Disparity; Settlement and Practicality; Class-based Injustice	Links class hierarchy to moral failure, framing justice as privilege; reinforces class-based resentment.	3,246 (17%)	Frames moral order through economic hierarchy; It produces “us vs. them” identity narratives.
Moral–Religious Reasoning	Religious Perspectives; Faith in Divine Justice; Ethical Considerations; Sympathy and Humanity	Positions divine authority as a moral alternative to failed human systems; blends faith with civic ethics.	2,701 (14%)	Creates transcendental legitimacy; converts grief into collective faith.
Affective & Emotional Expression	Tragedy and Sympathy; Public Outrage; Frustration; Despair; Emotional Responses	Expresses cathartic grief and anger; emotion becomes a vehicle of social criticism.	2,169 (12%)	Functions as a digital mourning and moral protest.
Media & Public Discourse	Media coverage and bias; Social media influence; Public perception; Boycotts and calls to action	Evaluates media credibility; establishes YouTube as a counter-public space.	1,983 (11%)	Frames YouTube comments as participatory journalism.
Behavioral & Individual Accountability	Criticism on Driver; Drunkenness or Substance Abuse; Psychological Issues; Mental Health; Identity Doubts	Transfers blame to individual moral failings; reflects hybrid framing between personal and systemic critique.	1,672 (9%)	Constructs a moral typology of guilt, deviance, and accountability.
Socio-political Commentary & Reform Discourse	Systemic Issues; Socio-Political Critique; Comparisons with other societies; General commentaries	Expands discussion beyond the case to critique governance, culture, and national decay.	1,415 (8%)	Transforms private tragedy into public political discourse.
Civic Morality & Collective Identity Formation	Sympathy, Humanity, Despair, and Collective Grief; Faith in Divine Justice; Ethical Critique	Reinforces moral community and national identity through shared values and emotional solidarity.	660 (3%)	Generates digital civic identity rooted in moral empathy.

The relational mapping of 18,678 YouTube remarks in 34 investigated categories under sentiment analysis and theoretically supported by relevance theory and phenomenological analysis through media framing and countrywide identity production is shown in Table 12. The public sentiment was revealed to operate through the institutional, ethical, emotional, and socio-political dimensions, and these dimensions to the interpretive basis for the following qualitative evaluation. Justice mechanisms, law enforcement, and institutional accountability received most of the feedback pointing out the severe criticism, with the public sharing disillusionment and mistrust in the judicial system hybridizing the criticism of justice mechanisms, law enforcement, and institutional accountability in Pakistan. The harshest critique was that the justice system was biased towards the rich, which, in turn, contributed to the perception that corruption, bribery, and money power invariably influenced the outcomes of legal disputes. Additionally, the conversations would typically have frequent expressions of anger and hopelessness, and such emotion would reveal that justice is not seen as a public good but rather as a privilege for the powerful and the rich. The discourse around elite immunity and social inequality was very much like this, where the commenters compared the privileges of the upper classes with the hardships of the ordinary people and pointed out that social hierarchies are the determining factors for access to justice and security. One more repetition among the threads was the media coverage and public opinion creation, as the users were doubtful about the credibility and ethics of the mainstream media houses and at the same time were considering YouTube to be a more democratic platform for the truth-telling. Participants in the discussion criticized traditional journalism for making a mountain out of a molehill and charged it with the elite voices, thereby increasing the public mistrust toward institutions even more. Commenters, in turn, underlined public safety and accountability as major issues, and they connected the fate of this incident to more serious problems such as the lack of traffic enforcement, poor regulations and government neglect. Non-secular and ethical implications have been very pronounced throughout the whole story. Many of the commenters referred to religious or spiritual views and spoke about divine punishment and Quranic notions being the last judges of fairness in a world where no trustworthy earthly institutions exist. Besides, discussions on drinking, taking drugs and moral decay pointed out the supposed decay of moral standards among rich teenagers. The community's feelings of sympathy and grief were very strong and at the same time, people were making harsh moral judgments, thus showing the coexistence of digital empathy and condemnation in the same communicative space. The gender discourse also appeared with many clients pointing out gender bias in the commentaries; girls particularly those linked to modern or liberal life have been judged more harshly than boys, thereby exposing the digital cultures' continuous misogynistic undercurrents. Just as, the problems of the system, doubts about identity and the issues of intellectual fitness reflected a multi-layered narrative of mistrust towards the actors and institutions involved in this case. The commenters were pondering over possibilities of psychological instability, identity theft, and licensing irregularities, presenting them as symptoms of a more extensive bureaucratic inefficiency. The legal profession has now also become a source of complaints; many have accused lawyers of manipulating cases for monetary gain, thus, reinforcing the idea that legal ethics have sunk to the level of transactional practices. The tones of such strong emotions and accusations had not only expressed but also supported by loud public protests, where the customers changed YouTube's comment section from a normal online discussion to a spot for ethical protest and civic catharsis. The emotional charge of the conversation was primarily supported by the anger directed at the driver, the rage about money and power, and the collective frustration with the broken justice system. However, besides the anger and criticism, a minority of the commenters offered interpretations of the situation that showed understanding, connecting mental distress and mental instability with the person's guilt that he/she/they should be punished, thus creating a different moral context. Periodically, there were discussions around religion and ethics, which suggested patience and divine retribution as ways of combating the despair of the legal system. The conversation not only circled back to the incident but also transformed into a broader social and political critique where the case was portrayed as a sign of national decay and institutional failure. The reference to developed countries highlighted the necessity of, and the public's yearning for, the kind of governance that is open and accountable. The opinions of some practical people swayed towards monetary settlements, apologies, or repayments, which indicated the longing for

restorative justice models, though they were mostly condemned by others as being morally deficient. Therefore, even with the differences in ideology, the sympathy, humanity, and faith in divine justice were very prominently expressed, which pointed to a sort of moral optimism that was dimmed by the generally cynical atmosphere surrounding it. At the conclusion of the statistical report, the users expressed their collective feelings of hopelessness and annoyance, claiming that they lacked the power to oppose the deeply rooted corruption and inequality. Among others, the Diyat Law got most of the negative comments, as most people considered it unfairly biased towards the rich and therefore contrary to the very concept of establishing correct justice. The entire argument about the poor and wealthy merged with the issue of social inequality, giving rise to a common factor that was responsible for much of the moral and political comment. Neutral, informational, and well-known feedback constituted a small fraction of the dataset and they functioned as connecting speech among the emotionally charged evaluations. The advocacy for boycotts and digital activism were indicative of the increase in civic mobilization that was taking place in the online arena, which was changing the role of the public from mere spectatorship to active participation in the form of engagement.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Journalistic platforms like ARY, Dawn, and Dunya News employed an institutionalized and established semiotic vocabulary of prison terminologies, CCTV frames, and courtroom visuals to establish a procedural sense of realism. Yet, their overt rhetoric still depended upon the use of emotional depth: red and yellow tones and accusatory labels like *مہمزلم* (“accused”) symbolically acted to reinforce the notion of guilt. In comparison, non-journalistic channels consisting of Raza Samo, UrduPoint, Tauqeer Baloch, and Badla Brother Vlogs amplified these emotional codes into overt moral performances. Their thumbnails foregrounded elite privilege and gendered condemnation via stark imagery, direct blame, and sensational language, thereby turning moral discourse into a participatory moral spectacle (Q1).

Collectively, these issues show how YouTube’s remark sections feature as micro-publics of virtual discourse, where collective affect and critique converge into a moral economy of public expression. The repetition of institutional distrust, divine justice, and moral observation across lots of entries enhances the validity of the findings via regular thematic reinforcement, whilst reliability changed into bolstered with the aid of systematic coding, inter-coder evaluate, and cross-theme contrast across 90 pages of information. Through the twin lens of the relevance theory and Phenomenological evaluation, this study translates the comments as both cognitive and experiential artifacts, comprehending that meaning-making depends on contextual resonance and emotional engagement. The phenomenological lens, especially, exhibits how audiences experience injustice as much as they interpret it, even as relevance idea clarifies how users prioritize emotionally salient information in constructing shared social meaning (Q2). Therefore, the *Natasha Karsaz* street accident case will become more than an isolated tragedy; it stands as a prism through which virtual publics assign morality, identity, and justice in cutting-edge Pakistan.

In terms of journalistic as opposed to non-journalistic orientation (Q3), the distinction lies in intention and tone instead of in the use of signs and symptoms. Through the use of restrained textual framing and real cues, journalistic thumbnails managed to uphold their credibility, whereas non-journalistic creators resorted to the use of exaggerated emotional triggers, self-insertion, and populist language to ensure that their content was engaging. The former established *Natasha Karsaz* in an investigative and judicial background, whereas the latter made her an archetype of impunity, changing the twist of fate into a symbol of societal decay and intricate corruption. Both the companies, nevertheless, very cleverly mixed up the information and advocacy, thus indicating that virtual journalism in Pakistan is an ever-growing merging of data and effective storytelling.

## CONCLUSION

Journalistic thumbnails commonly adhere to a formalized visible grammar characterized via red-dominant backgrounds, white and yellow text overlays, and information-body systems consisting of “بریکنگ نیوز,” “بڑی پیش رفت” and “خصوصی مناظر.” Those linguistic codes signal immediacy, authority, and continuity in

information flow. Visible compositions are distinctly established — logos are continually located, and imagery regularly consists of the accused, the website of the incident, or police visuals to construct objectivity and verification. The tone remains institutionally mediated, yet sensational sufficient to trigger emotional funding via urgency cues and moral framing.

In evaluation, non-journalistic channels reveal a greater customized and emotion-driven aesthetic. Their thumbnails frequently hire near-up facial expressions, saturated filters, text in colloquial Urdu or Roman Urdu, and emotive terms which include “افسوسناک لمحے,” or “سچ سامنے آ گیا.” The discourse shifts from formal reportage to narrative storytelling, centering on sympathy, curiosity, or conspiracy. Rather than institutional branding, those thumbnails depend on visual intimacy and personal voice, building authenticity via informality. Consequently, even as journalistic channels frame the Natasha Karsaz case in the good judgment of procedural justice and breaking updates, non-journalistic creators transform the same event into a spectacle of private tragedy, ethical battle, and social drama. This evaluation demonstrates a larger mediated continuum that is interwoven with the authoritative and subjective aspects of influencers, revealing how crisis activities transition from formal and information-oriented discourse to storytelling spaces that are emotional and populist across digital platforms. The analysis of semiotics of thumbnails and comment sentiment evaluations resulted in YouTube being identified as a major moral and emotional space for negotiating justice in Pakistan. The thumbnails of Brut India, AliTV, and Tauqeer Baloch illustrate how digital creators visually dramatize and present the crisis of morality, power, and privilege moving from sobriety of reporting to emotional persuasion. Through the specific package of colors, text, and icons those visuals are grounding the moral dichotomies which are “rich vs. poor” and “money given”, creating justice as both spectacle and critique. Simultaneously, the 18,678 public comments are three-fold in emotional terrain the public (62%) is angry and condemns, thus establishing the ubiquitous disenchantment with the alleged immunity of the elite; 27% sympathetic, lamentative, are thus aligned with the ethical battle of the victims; and 11% the so-called sceptics who reflect, taking into account the exaggeration by media and the ethical behavior of the society on the whole. These reactions not only echo but also support the visual narratives hence forming a feedback loop between representation and response, in which the thumbnails produce emotions and the emotions produce algorithmic visibility. In order to sum it up, the findings suggest that the role of a straightforward information distributor has been overtaken by the role of YouTube in Pakistan as its powerful public sphere, which facilitates and dramatizes justice. The Natasha Karsaz debate brings together a crucial media change: journalism has been brought together with advocacy, outrage has substituted objectivity, audiences have become active, ethical participants. Pakistan has rewritten a definition of what society conceives, discusses, and experiences justice in the era of algorithmic visibility through this virtual composition of sight and sentiment in an unprecedented way, through the YouTube space.

### **5.1 Limitations**

This paper is limited in that it is cognizant of a fairly conspicuous case, that of Natasha Karsaz, in a specified time range, August to October 2024, and uses YouTube as the main provider of records based on algorithmic prominence, selective interaction and possible comment manipulation, which can also impact the discourse of the population. In addition, the emotional and background instability in online responses restrains the proliferation of the results to the wider socio-political frameworks. Despite these restrictions, these restrictions have illuminated the effects of temporality, affords of platforms and virality on the development of virtual narratives in real time.

### **6.2 Research Implications**

The mentioned findings are a consequence of the conglomeration of semiotic and sentiment analyses of thumbnails and user remarks on the realm of virtual journalism, visual conversation, and algorithmic media ethics. This paper shows that digital publics create a participatory moral economy whereby emotional participation is foreshadowed at the cost of institutional accountability. These results suggest

that additional studies are needed on how algorithmic curation influences pushed content and the practices of journalism and non-journalism actors who co-produce narratives that confound the advocacy, sensationalism, and digital justice. The paper also proposes the model with the help of which one can analyze the representations of electricity, class, and gender in the context of postcolonial media ecology and presuppose that online outrage and empathy are not isolated reactions but the means of civic engagement that remakes the concept of justice in the algorithm era.

## Acknowledgements

None.

## Conflict of Interest

Authors declared NO conflict of interest.

## Funding Source

The authors received NO funding to conduct this study.

## ORCID iDs

**Maliha Ameen**<sup>1</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6525-1618>  
**Hussain Sajjad**<sup>2</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-2359-8804>  
**Tauqir Akhtar**<sup>3</sup>  <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-5310-3803>

## REFERENCES

- Bishop, S. (2019). Managing visibility on YouTube through algorithmic gossip. *New media & society*, 21(11-12), 2589-2606. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819854731>
- Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2018). *YouTube: Online video and participatory culture*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Burgess, J., Williams, P., Muscat, A., Grace, A., Jones, C., Curran, A., & Voelker, J. (2025). Managing the narratives in narrative media brands. *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 22(1), 67-85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2024.2369976>
- Cambria, E., Schuller, B., Xia, Y., & Havasi, C. (2013). New avenues in opinion mining and sentiment analysis. *IEEE Intelligent Systems*, 28(2), 15-21. <https://doi.org/10.1109/MIS.2013.30>
- Chan, I. C. C., Chen, Z., & Leung, D. (2023). The more the better? Strategizing visual elements in social media marketing. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 54, 268-289. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2022.11.007>
- Chen, H. (2025). Emotional catalysts and dynamic networks: A computational analysis of mobilization in digital activism. Available at <https://knowledge.uchicago.edu/record/15334?ln=en&v=pdf>
- Cui, G., Chung, Y., Peng, L., & Wang, Q. (2024). Clicks for money: Predicting video views through a sentiment analysis of titles and thumbnails. *Journal of Business Research*, 183, 114849. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2024.114849>
- El Attar, A. A., & Abdo, M. S. (2025). Allocation, sentencing, and viewers' comments in YouTube-mediated trials of convicted young murderers: an appraisal-sentiment analysis. *Language and Semiotic Studies*, (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1515/lass-2025-0050>.

- Forceville, C. (2020). *Visual and multimodal communication: Applying the relevance principle*. Oxford University Press.
- Guhan, P. (2025). *Context-aware computational video editing and re-editing* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Maryland: College Park.
- Hawkins, I., & Saleem, M. (2021). Rise UP!: A content analytic study of how collective action is discussed within White nationalist videos on YouTube. *New Media & Society*, 25(12), 3308-3327. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448211040520>
- Hödl, T., & Myrach, T. (2023). Content creators between platform control and user autonomy: the role of algorithms and revenue sharing. *Business & Information Systems Engineering*, 65, 497–519. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12599-023-00808-9>.
- Jewitt, C. (Ed.). (2009). *The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis* (Vol. 1). London: Routledge.
- Jung, A. K., Stieglitz, S., Kissmer, T., Mirbabaie, M., & Kroll, T. (2022). Click me...! The influence of clickbait on user engagement in social media and the role of digital nudging. *PLOS One*, 17(6), e0266743. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266743>
- Kim, H. (2021). *Thumbnails for data stories* (Doctoral dissertation). Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology (UNIST). Ulsan South, Korea.
- Koh, B., & Cui, F. (2022). An exploration of the relation between the visual attributes of thumbnails and the view-through of videos: The case of branded video content. *Decision Support Systems*, 160, 113820. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2022.113820>
- Kress, G., & Van Leeuwen, T. (2020). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. Routledge.
- Ma, J., Rong, L., Zhang, Y., & Tiwari, P. (2023). Moving from narrative to interactive multi-modal sentiment analysis: A survey. *ACM Transactions on Asian and Low-Resource Language Information Processing*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3610288>
- Meek, D. (2012). YouTube and social movements: A phenomenological analysis of participation, events and cyberplace. *Antipode*, 44(4), 1429-1448. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2011.00942.x>
- Pang, B., & Lee, L. (2008). Opinion mining and sentiment analysis. *Foundations and Trends® in information retrieval*, 2(1–2), 1-135. <https://doi.org/10.1561/15000000011>
- Papacharissi, Z. (2015). *Affective publics: Sentiment, technology, and politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Papathanassopoulos, S., & Giannouli, I. (2025). Political communication in the age of platforms. *Encyclopedia*, 5(2), 77. <https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia5020077>
- Perea-Khalifi, D., & Leon-Silva, J. (2025). Local government accountability to citizens as COVID-19 took hold: sentiment analysis of tweets in Hispanic–American countries. *Administration & Society*, 57(5), 609-653. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997251331916>
- Radesky, J., Bridgewater, E., Black, S., O’Neil, A., Sun, Y., Schaller, A., Weeks, M. K., & Campbell, S. W. (2024). Algorithmic content recommendations on a video-sharing platform used by children. *JAMA Network Open*, 7(5), e2413855-e2413855. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.13855>
- Revier, K. (2021). The ‘worst of the worst’: punitive justice frames in criminal sentencing clips on YouTube. *Contemporary Justice Review*, 24(4), 436-456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580.2021.1981135>

- Schlott, F., & Gaenssle, S. (2025). *The invisible algorithm: The impact of search and recommender systems on the digital creative industries*. Ilmenau Economics Discussion Papers, Vol. 30, No. 199. Ilmenau University of Technology Institute of Economics.
- Shurafa, C., & Zaghouani, W. (2024, August). Sentiment analysis and emotion annotation of a large-scale Arabic YouTube trauma corpus. In *2024 11th International Conference on Behavioural and Social Computing (BESC)* (pp. 1-7). IEEE. <https://doi.org/10.1109/BESC64747.2024.10780706>
- Smith, J. A., Larkin, M., & Flowers, P. (2021). Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780880903340091>
- Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1986). *Relevance: Communication and cognition* (Vol. 142). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Stephens, S., & Miller, K. (2024). Creating an entrepreneurial story in digital spaces: the journeys and experiences of social media entrepreneurs. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development*, 36(7-8), 881-896. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08985626.2023.2240749>
- Theocharis, Y., Boulianne, S., Koc-Michalska, K., & Bimber, B. (2023). Platform affordances and political participation: how social media reshape political engagement. *West European Politics*, 46(4), 788-811. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2022.2087410>
- Thomson, T. J. (2025). Picturing a quality local news visual: Perspectives from non-specialist journalists. *Journalism*, 26(6), 1163-1180. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849241253136>
- Thomson, T. J., & Bock, M. A. (2025). Designing the visual gateways into crime news: a Comparison of YouTube thumbnails from journalists and non-journalists. *Journalism Practice*, 19(8), 1797-1821. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2023.2288921>
- Toussaint, P. A., Renner, M., Lins, S., Thiebes, S., & Sunyaev, A. (2022). Direct-to-consumer genetic testing on social media: Topic modeling and sentiment analysis of YouTube users' comments. *JMIR infodemiology*, 2(2), e38749. <https://doi.org/10.2196/38749>
- Van Manen, M. (2016). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. Routledge.
- Wan, Y., Liu, M., Zhao, M., Wu, Y., Xu, Y., & Wang, H. (2025). Understanding Chinese society through audience reviews of American films: Gender and regional perspectives. *Sage Open*, 15(4), 21582440251377736. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440251377736>
- Xu, K., Xiao, X., Wang, L., Lou, M., Wang, F., Li, C., Ren, H., Wang, X., & Chang, K. (2024). Data-driven materials research and development for functional coatings. *Advanced Science*, 11(42), 2405262. <https://doi.org/10.1002/advs.202405262>
- Zhang, J., & Mao, E. (2016). From online motivations to ad clicks and to behavioral intentions: An empirical study of consumer response to social media advertising. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(3), 155-164. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20862>