

Portrayal of Extravagant Visuals in Pakistani Media - Fantasy Vs Reality

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The aim of the research was to recognize how these visuals affect various aspects of life, such as societal values, gratification state, mental health, physical state, relationships, buying habits and cultural changes.

Methodology: Quantitative research methodology was applied, wherein, a pin pointed/ focused questionnaire was premeditated to collect data from 181 participants walking various walks of life in Rawalpindi, Punjab. The questionnaire included aspects including how often the participants equate media content with fancy portrayal, how it influences their thoughts, feelings, and behavior patterns.

Findings: It was found during the study that people watch media for the purpose of entertainment, however, end up getting connected with the fantasy. This leads to discontentment and a host of other factors.

Conclusion: Study established that fancy images in Pakistani media create a strong sense of fantasy, often making viewers compare their lives with the glamorous lifestyles shown on screen. Many participants reported feeling discontented with their own lives, leading to stress and anxiety, affecting their mental health. Societal values were also impacted, as traditional beliefs seemed to shift towards more materialistic goals. Relationships get stressed due to unrealistic expectations, while cultural changes were detected with a growing acceptance of luxury and glamour as normal ideals. The study highlights the necessity for a more composed media depiction to endorse healthier perspectives in the society.

Keywords: Extravagant Visuals, Fantasy, Reality, Societal Values, Gratification State, Mental and Physical Health, Relationships, Buying Habits, Cultural Values.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every morning, many Pakistanis sit in front of their TVs to watch colorful morning shows. These shows are full of smiles, fancy dresses, heavy makeup, and sparkling decorations. During special events like Eid, the shows become even more glamorous, with rich celebrations, expensive clothes, and luxurious sets. Similarly, TV dramas take viewers into a world of big houses, perfect families, and beautiful characters living dreamlike characters like Cinderella and other fairy tales (Jilani, Khan, et al., 2024).

Article History

Received:
January 04, 2025

Revised:
March 20, 2025

Accepted:
March 25, 2025

Online:
March 30, 2025

But these shows create a world that is very different from what most people experience in real life (UK Essays, 2018). Watching such programs can make people compare their simple lives to the fancy lives shown on screen. Think of a young girl watching a morning show during Eid. She sees the host wearing expensive clothes and showing off a perfectly decorated set. She begins to wonder why her own life isn't as shiny and glamorous (Latif, Malik, et al., 2021) or imagine someone watching a TV drama and feeling sad because their home doesn't look as grand as the ones on screen (Sarwar, Malhiand, et al., 2024).

This study will explore as how these glamorous TV programs and morning shows affect people. Do they inspire happiness, or do they make people feel that their lives are not good enough?

1.1 Context

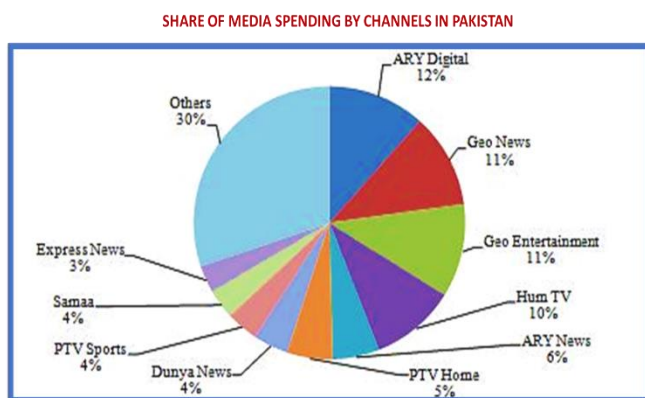
In Pakistan, TV dramas and morning shows are very popular. They are a big part of daily entertainment. However, these shows often focus on luxury, beauty, and wealth (Cole, 2019). For example, morning shows during Eid display beautiful sets, expensive clothes, and rich celebrations that seem perfect. Similarly, TV dramas mostly show rich families living in big, beautiful homes.

With the modernization of society and limited entertainment means, Media has overwhelming following as the major entertainment source. In our society watching dramas, morning shows and movies is considered an entertainment, however, there is a flip side which is quite often ignored. That is that these programs are portrayal of an imaginary/ fiction world who create a difference between fantasy and reality (Mills, Shannon, et al., 2017).

Most viewers live simple lives and can't afford the luxury they see on screen. But the constant exposure to such glamorous visuals can make people feel unhappy with their own lives (Jilani, Khan, et al., 2024) or push them to chase unrealistic dreams. It in this context this study is being undertaken to explore the effects of such portrayals on our society. It will help readers understand the difference between what they see on screen and the reality of everyday life and how we and media both can mutually mature.

1.2 Role of Media and Theoretical Underpinnings

Pakistani media, especially TV channels like HUM TV, ARY Digital, and Geo Entertainment, plays a big role in shaping people's lives and ideas. Popular dramas like Tere Bin and Meri Pass Tum Ho often show wealthy families living in luxurious homes, dealing with problems that are far removed from the realities of most viewers. Similarly, morning shows, particularly during Eid, display extravagant celebrations with expensive clothing, jewelry, and heavy decorations.



Source: The Electronic Media Economy in Pakistan; Issues and Challenges, *PIDE Knowledge Brief No. 35:2021*

According to George Gerbner in his Cultivation Theory, watching a lot of media can shape how people see the world. It makes them think that the world shown in media is the same as real life (Gerbner, 1976). This means that viewers may begin to imitate the glamorous lifestyles they see on TV, even if it's unrealistic for them. Over time, this can lead to dissatisfaction, stress, or unhealthy behaviors, as people

compare their real lives with the perfect lives shown on screen. Hofstede's (2001) Cultural Dimensions Theory also highlights how media can influence societal norms and values, changing what people see as important in life, such as beauty, success, and material wealth. According to Bandura's (2009) Social Learning Theory, people learn by observing others, including characters on TV.

1.3 Problem Statement

Media has a powerful influence on how people think, feel, and behave. In Pakistan, morning shows and other TV programs often display extravagant lifestyles, showcasing luxury homes, designer clothes and grand events. These portrayals create an idealized and unrealistic image of what life should look like which for many is out of reach and unattainable.

This study explores the impact of extravagant portrayal on people in terms of various aspects like satisfaction levels, gratification, mental/ physical health, buying habits and cultural norms/ ethos. Research will also look upon the aspect of relationships in the society.

By examining these issues, the research will aim to highlight the gap between the fantasy world shown in the media and the real lives of ordinary people. It will shed light on the broader impact of these portrayals on individuals, families, and communities. Ultimately, the findings will help us better understand the influence of media on people's perceptions, choices, and overall well-being.

1.4 Study Objectives

1.4.1 Main Objective

To analyze the effects of extravagant visuals portrayed by Pakistani Media in creating a world of fantasy and perceptions.

1.4.2 Sub Objectives

Sub Objective-1: To analyze the effect of extravagant visuals portrayed by Pakistani Media on our societal values.

Sub Objective-2: To explore, if the fancy depiction can make people happy or leave them discontented.

Sub Objectives-3: To investigate the effects of media show casing perfection vs reality on mental health of the society.

Sub Objectives-4: To study the 2nd order effects on physical health of the society linked with looking more beautiful and smarter (excessive dieting, use of products which may be harmful and unhealthy trends etc.)

Sub Objectives-5: To explore how these visuals impact family and social relationships, sometimes creating pressure to compete or focus on material things.

Sub Objective-6: To learn how these shows encourage people to spend money on expensive items like makeup, clothes, or decorations to match what they see on TV.

Sub objective-7: To find out how these glamorous programs affect Pakistan's cultural traditions, often replacing them with modern or unrealistic ideas.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will look at how Pakistani media shows glamorous and fancy lifestyles that often don't match reality. It will explore how these images influences peoples thinking and making of their perceptions. These artificial images make them dream of unrealistic lives. The study will also explore how these visuals affect our culture, spending habits, and how we feel about ourselves. It highlights how media can create false ideas about beauty, success and happiness. The goal is to help people realize and understand

the difference between what is real and what is made up by these extravagant crafted images by the media. This study will also encourage media to show more realistic and relatable content.

1.6 Research Gap

While many studies have explored how media influences people, most focus on Western media and its global impact. There is limited research on how Pakistani media with its unique cultural context, affects people's lives. There are limited studies on the influence/ effect of media on the mental health of individuals in the society, their relationships, habits and cultural ethos. This research will aim at bridging the gap by exploring the effects of these extravagant images on Pakistani Society.

1.7 Purpose of the Study

The study is aimed at developing an understanding of how these extravagant depictions can alter the people's perception about themselves and their lives. It explores as to how these movies, dramas, morning shows/ programs and advertisements influence the way public thinks and their choices etc.

1.8 Scope of the Study

Research study explores the causal relationship between the Pakistani Media/ its depictions and the audience. Research aims at highlighting the influence of these extravagant images on public feelings, mental health, family relations, habits of buying only expensive brands/ excessive make up etc and effects on cultural ethos. Research not only explores effects on individuals but on the complete society.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research published in UK Essays, (2018) on Effects of morning shows in Pakistan examined the influence of Pakistani morning television shows on society. It focused on their cultural, social, and psychological impacts on viewers. The research analyzed the themes and content of popular morning shows in Pakistan. It also gathered audience feedback through surveys and conducted qualitative assessments of these programs. The study revealed that many morning shows and tv programs promote materialism, sensationalism, and superficial drama. They were criticized for encouraging unrealistic beauty ideals, unhealthy competition, and trivial matters, which could negatively affect viewers, especially the youth. However, some programs were commended for addressing social issues and raising awareness. The research concluded that while morning shows have the potential to drive positive change, their current focus often undermines societal and cultural values, thus requiring media education and legislation.

Research by Jilani, Khan, et al., (2024) talk about how depiction of lavish life styles in Pakistani dramas affects young people's feelings of satisfaction in their lives. Surveys and interviews both were conducted. Population sample was focused on young people of Pakistan. Research focused on how youngsters reacted to exorbitant display of wealth and completeness in Pakistani dramas. This created a sense of dissatisfaction amongst the youth as an unending comparison starts, leading to feelings of deprivation. This creates frustration and may also lead towards wrong trends i-e acquiring wealth through wrong means. Research recommended a more balanced and responsible media approach to curb such trends.

Pellegrino, Abe, et al., (2022) studied how social media and its content affects the cultural values and infuses materialism. Research found that social media increases materialism by displaying lavish images. It concluded that social media increases consumption by promoting materialism. It also creates multiple psychological and mental issues.

Parveen & Showkat (2020) in their research on Visual Framing discussed the impact of visual media on public understanding of news stories. Study found that visuals have a long-lasting effect on people's perception. It can build and change the perception. Research has opened the Pandora box of ethics in media.

Latif, Malik, et al., (2021) in their article/ research on Perception and effects of dramas on university students talk about the effects of watching these dramas, especially in terms ethos and ethics of social life. The data was analyzed to find common trends. The study found that television dramas have a strong influence on university students. Many students said these shows affect their views on relationships, lifestyle, and societal norms. While some students watched dramas for relaxation and entertainment, others noted negative effects, like developing unrealistic expectations or feeling emotionally affected by certain storylines. The research concluded that dramas play an important role in shaping students' perspectives and behaviors. It recommended that drama producers create content that promotes positive values and shows realistic situations to reduce harmful impacts.

Study on Porridge and Misogyny by undertaking analysis of “*This Morning*” a UK’s morning show by Ridley, Huma, et al., (2024) was to explore how misogyny (dislike or prejudice against women) are depicted in the morning shows. Study analysed behaviours, comments and segments with hidden misogynistic attitudes are ignored or normalized by audiences and the show makers. The research concluded that this type of behaviours shown on media contribute to the negative portrayal of women. The study suggests for a need of understanding the content of the media portrayal.

Research conducted by Ahmed, Rehman, et al., (2020) titled Public Perception of morning shows on culture invasion: A case study of District Swat explores how our society is dependent on media and how its content can impact our culture. Survey was used as a tool to collect opinion from university students. Study was conducted in District SWAT where traditions and culture are considered engraved in a orthodox society. It focuses how intimation of foreign content can weaken a strong cultural system. It was concluded foreign culture has deep rooted on a depiction of our media content specially morning shows. Thus, effectively culture values and native beliefs and practices.

Research on Morning Shows and Ethical Considerations: A comparative Analysis of “Good Morning Pakistan” and “Dhanak” by Sarwar, Malhiand, et al., (2024) explored how a society’s ethics and cultural values are affected by morning shows. The method was quantitative content analysis of Two popular shows. Content analysis was carried out based on qualitative research to extract the themes, patterns and meanings. The finding indicated that Good Morning Pakistan was following more of social issues and highlighting social issues and ethical concerns in greater detail than T.V show Dhanak. Conclusion of the study was to promote more of ethical content to improve societies on media plat forms.

Article by Klmeemas, Daalmans, et al., (2018) titled Picture perfect: The direct effect of manipulated Instagram photos on body image in adolescent girls highlights the effects of manipulated Instagram photos on body image and social companion tendencies moderates this relation. Study is based on experiment of 144 girls (14-18 yrs). It was found in the research that exposure to manipulated photos can lead to lower body image. Moreover, the photos used with filters were rated more change the original picture. The study concluded that manipulated photos had a great effect on body image in adolescent girls.

Article on Positive and negative Media image effects on the self by Semesters & Mandel, (2006) was aimed at finding out how exposure to thin or heavy media image can affect either positively or negatively the self esteem of the consumer. Advertisement with image of very thin models were taken and opinions were taken from university students. Responses of the students were than compared to ratings. Heavy exposure to idealized body image effects the self esteem of individuals thus lowering satisfaction levels. The study concluded that media negatively affects the self-esteem of common people by exhibiting idealized images.

Mori, Mongillo, et al., (2022) studied the influence of body dissatisfaction of viewing image shown on mass and social media using experimental technique. Mills, Shannon, et al., (2017) studied on how mass media can influence people’s perception of beauty. Content analysis was under taken to carry out the research. Finding of the study was traditional media effects perception of beauty and appearance by leading audience specially women to believe only very slender body type is appreciated in a society. The

study concluded that only slender body type is appreciated thus negatively affecting the sentiments and satisfaction levels.

Research by Halman, Garfin, et al., (2024) concerning “It matters what you see: Graphic media image of war and terror may amplify distress” aims to explore how exaggerated images of wars and violence are proliferated in media contents. Method employed by the researcher was content analysis of how many hours are given to war image & news on media contents. It was found that such depictions of violence and exaggerated news leads to traumatic and stress symptoms in the audience. It was emphasized in the research conclusions and recommendations that media should act sensibly and should refrain in what to show on its platform and act as an advocate for media literacy to educate public how to identify misinformation and exaggerated content.

In research *Lying to Spice Up Life* Cole, (2019) asserts that exaggeration may be a social tool to spice up the content for ratings and profits. It was found that participants reported enjoyment and gratification on hearing exaggerated accounts. Study concluded that media content containing outrageous lies and exaggerations can lead to negative and stressed behaviors. Lies can lead to a number of cognitive & social factors. True stories may be slow & boring but can create a harmonious and an ethical society.

Latif, Malik, et al., (2021) in their research studied perception on university Lahore students about the Hum TV Dramas. Mixed method was applied: focus group discussions and self-constructed questionnaire was used for data collection. The study concluded that Hum TV dramas have an impact on both male & female students as it can influence their channeling and behavior patterns.

Perceptions and Effects of Dramas on University Students by Zheng, (2022) studied how a teenager would be influenced by the usage of social media. Data was collected by experiments and self-reports. Study found that media impacts both adults and teenagers. But teenagers are prone to media content influence because of their age. It was concluded that teenagers compare their lives with the contents shown & depicted on social media and mass media platforms.

Zahid, Arshad, et al., (2014) talks about *Perceptions and Effects of Dramas on University Students* and found how Indian dramas can influence people's lives and their social interaction. Survey method was used to collect data from females ages 16-35 from village Sehawal. Study concluded that use of “Hindi” words were increased during the interaction of these females. Popular culture (Indian) was getting more importance in the village Sehawal. Impact on language and dressing was observed.

The study on Impact of Indian Drama Serials on Bangladeshi Culture by Razu, Yasmin, et al., (2018) investigates how Indian TV serials can affect the culture of Bangladesh and it can influence lifestyles, relationships, other forms of art & culture & literature. It was found that Indian dramas have a significant impact on day-to-day lives of people living in Bangladesh. Study concluded to raise concerns among the society of how this dependency on Indian content can affect audience and may include risks of psychological disorders even suicide.

Sarker & Bakshi, (2025) in their study focused on how the growing popularity of Korean dramas among the Indian population can influence perceived stress, relationship satisfaction and body image. As Korean dramas portray unrealistic body images and set unattainable beauty standards. Data was collected from 204 students through survey. Study shows significant difference between Korean drama watchers and non-Korean drama watchers. Korean drama watchers were found to have less stress but more body dissatisfaction.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

For the research topic *“Depiction of Extravagant Images in Pakistani Media: Fantasy versus Reality,”* Cultivation Theory holds a good value. Cultivation Theory floated by George Gerbner, says that watching a lot of media can shape how people see the world. It makes them think that the world shown in media is the same as real life (Gerbner, 1976).

This theory is applicable to the research as it helps in explaining how the media's focus on luxurious lifestyles affects people's thoughts and expectations. Media often shows glamorous lives that may not match the real situations of most viewers, creating a gap between media and reality. This can be studied using observation and content analysis. Observing how viewers respond to extravagant content can show its influence. Content analysis of media programs can help identify patterns of luxury and glamour. These methods together show if media shapes unrealistic views, supporting the theory.

2.2 Study Variables

Independent Variable: Depiction of Extravagant Visuals in Pakistani Media

Dependent Variable: Fantasy VS Reality (Perception or Interpretation influenced by extravagant visuals)

Sub-Dependent Variables:

1. Societal values.
2. Gratification State.
3. Mental Health.
4. Physical Health/ State.
5. Relationships.
6. Buying Habits.
7. Cultural Changes.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study uses a quantitative research method, which means collecting and studying numbers and data. As explained by Creswell (2014) in research design: *QUALITATIVE, Quantitative, and mixed methods Approaches*, quantitative research uses tools like surveys to find patterns and understand relationships.

The study uses surveys with close ended questions. These questions have fixed answer options, making it easier to collect and understand the data. The survey is given to people who watch Pakistani media to learn how they feel about the difference between the fantasy and reality shown in fancy visuals. This method helps find clear answers about how these visuals affect peoples 'thoughts, spending and expectations.

3.2 Population

The population for this study includes educated men and women from different backgrounds in Rawalpindi city. It focuses on people who have completed at least a graduate degree, including those with PhDs. These individuals are chosen because they watch media regularly and can think critically about what they see. Their education helps them analyze media content in a deeper way, which makes their opinions valuable for this research.

3.3 Sample Frame

The sample frame for this study includes educated men and women from the Rawalpindi City to capture perspectives from both genders. The participants range in age from their early 20s to 40 years and above. They include graduates and professionals from various walks of life, ensuring a diverse group capable of providing broader insights into the topic.

This group is chosen to analyze how both men and women view the gap between fantasy and reality portrayed in extravagant visuals. The study focuses on how these visuals affect mental and physical health, buying habits, cultural changes, and levels of satisfaction. It also explores their impact on family relationships, spending power, and overall lifestyle. By including individuals from different life stages and experiences, the sample provides meaningful data on how such media portrayals influence personal perspectives and societal behaviors in Pakistan.

3.4 Sample Size and Technique

Sample covers 181 educated men and women from Rawalpindi City with varying age and experience. Why educated class because they have certain level of media understanding. Rawalpindi and Islamabad have been selected due to their diversity of population. Probability sampling has been used as it increases chances of selection and that an unbiased representation is ensured.

3.5 Data collection Tool

Data was collected through a close ended survey based on 14 questions. These questions cover all research objectives and their various dimensions, in and out. Close-ended questions are chosen to make responses clear and easy to compare, allowing for straightforward statistical analysis.

3.6 Structure of the Study

Media is increasingly affecting the lives of people and creating a fabricated version of reality. There is no denying the fact that the changes of technology are irreversible, however, media and viewers both need formal education and certain degree of maturity to understand the reality. The research study on "Portrayal of Extravagant Visuals in Pakistani Media: Fantasy vs. Reality" is organized into five sections. The Introduction provides the background of how Media grew and gained this much space, highlights the research problem, and states the objectives and significance of the study. The Literature Review examines 'Cultivation Theory' and past research on extravagant media portrayals and their effects. The Methodology details the research design, quantitative data collection method based on a general survey, and analysis process. The Analysis and Discussion presents findings, compares media portrayals with societal realities, and discusses their implications. The Conclusion summarizes key findings, suggests implications, identifies limitations, and offers recommendations for future research.

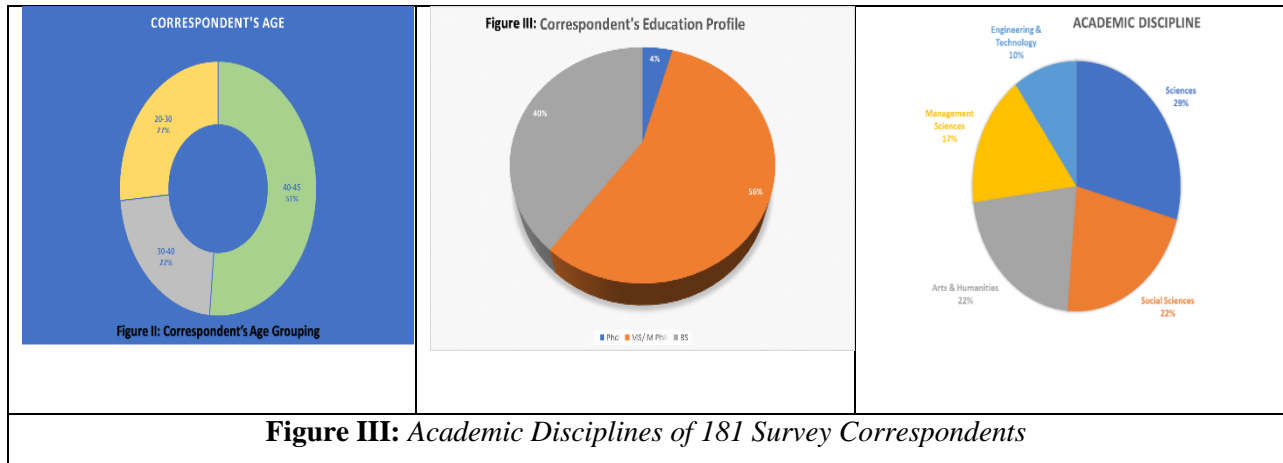
3.7 Research Statement

Pakistani media's portrayal of extravagant lifestyles through TV dramas, morning shows, and advertisements creates a significant gap between fantasy and reality. These portrayals affect societal values, relationships, and cultural traditions while influencing mental and physical well-being. By examining these effects, this study aims to provide insights into how media impacts viewers and suggest ways to balance entertainment with realism.

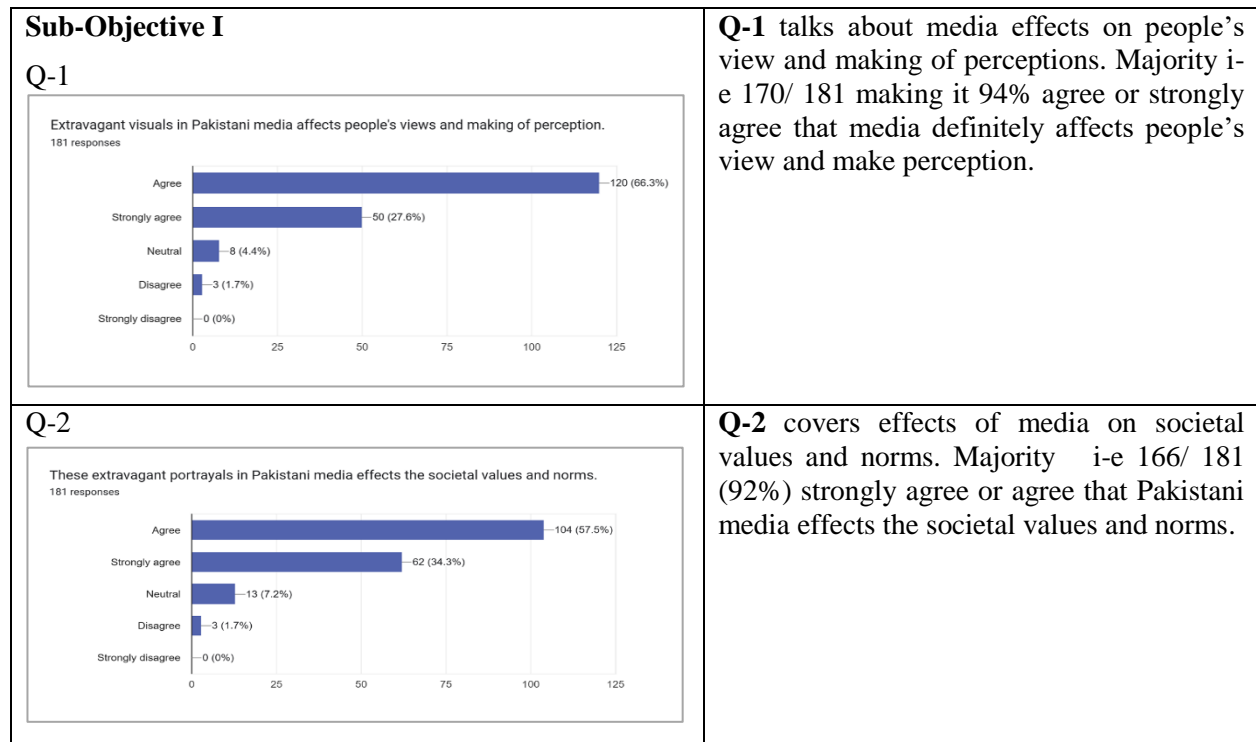
4 RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Results

Study was conducted based on survey conducted online. Sample includes 181 individuals almost equally distributed amongst male and female with some tilt in favor of female (75 male i-e 41.4%, whereas, 106 female i-e 58.6 %). A diverse age grouping was ensured so as to find the difference of opinion between young generations as well as relatively mature people who have established themselves in professional lives (Reference Figure I). Sample mostly covers educated strata of the society with better understanding of media and its implications (Reference Figure II). Moreover, individuals covered vast/ different academic disciplines.

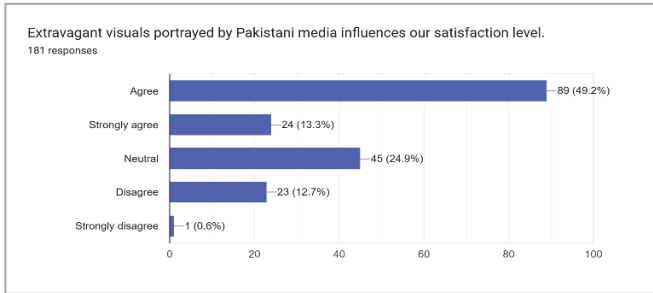


Survey also covered the important aspect of average TV shows/ dramas viewership in a week. Maximum i-e 51% were individuals who watch TV shows and dramas less than 2 hours a week followed by those who view it for 2-5 hours. An educated sample also gives us insight that most of the TV shows/ dramas viewership lies in less educated people. Results/ Findings of Survey are being covered in the succeeding paras:



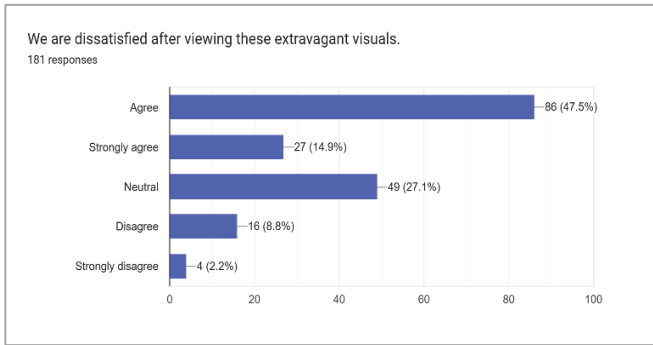
Sub-Objective-2

Q-3



Q-3 covers the satisfaction levels of the audience. 113/ 181 i-e 62.5% agree or strongly agree that extravagant portrayals affect the satisfaction levels, whereas, 25% audience gave a neutral stance.

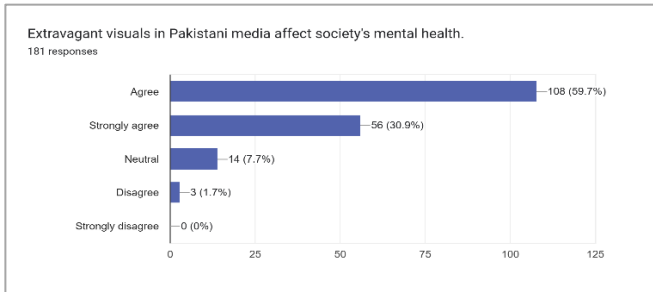
Q-4



Q-4 depicts dissatisfaction with extravagant portrayal or not? 113/ 181 i-e 62.5% agree or strongly agree that extravagant portrayals make them feel dissatisfied, whereas, 27% audience gave a neutral stance and 10% disagreed.

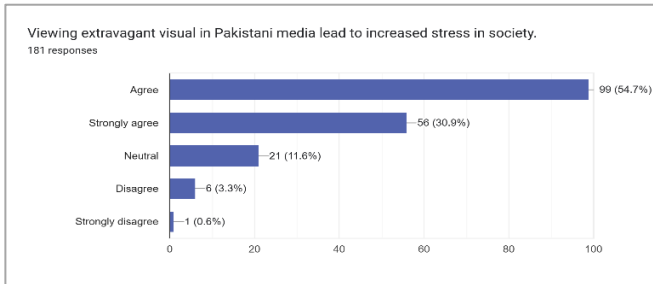
Sub-Objective 3

Q-5



Q-5 denotes how Pakistani media affects the mental health of audience. 164/ 181 i-e 91% agree or strongly agree that extravagant portrayals affect the mental health, whereas, 14 i-e 7.7% audience gave a neutral stance.

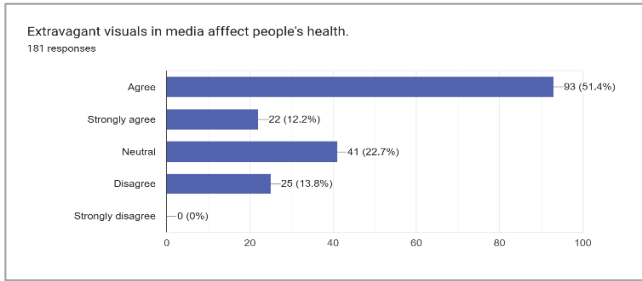
Q-6



Q-6 links extravagant portrayal with increased stress. 155 i-e 86% agree or strongly agree that increased stress is linked with extravagant portrayal.

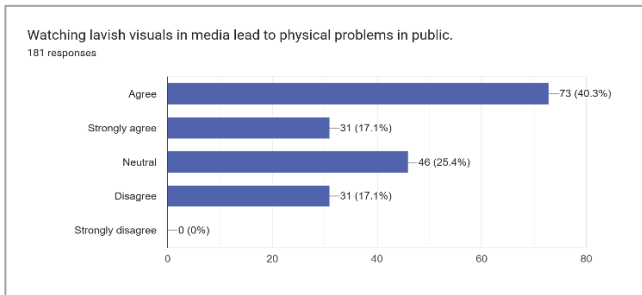
Sub-Objective 4

Q-7



Q-7 talks about health. 115 i-e 64% agree or strongly agree that extravagant portrayal on media affects physical health. 22.7% gave a neutral stance, whereas, 13.8% disagreed.

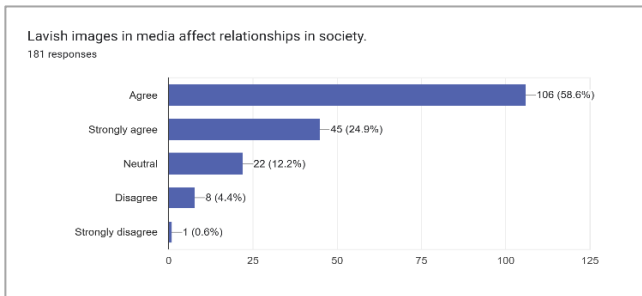
Q-8



Q-8 sheds light on physical problems in public. 104 i-e 57% agree or strongly agree that watching lavish visuals lead to physical problems. 46 i-e 25.4% gave a neutral stance, whereas, 17.1% disagreed.

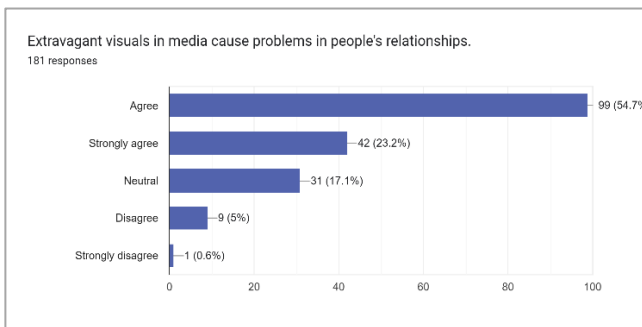
Sub-Objective 5

Q-9



Q-9 depicts effects on relationships in society. 151 i-e 84% agree or strongly agree that lavish images affect relationships. 22 i-e 12.2% gave a neutral stance, whereas, 5% disagreed.

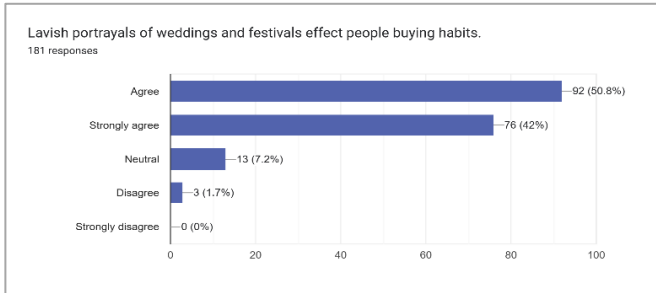
Q-10



Q-10 depicts effects on people's relationships. 141 i-e 78% agree or strongly agree that lavish images affect relationships. 31 i-e 17.1% gave a neutral stance, whereas, 6% disagreed.

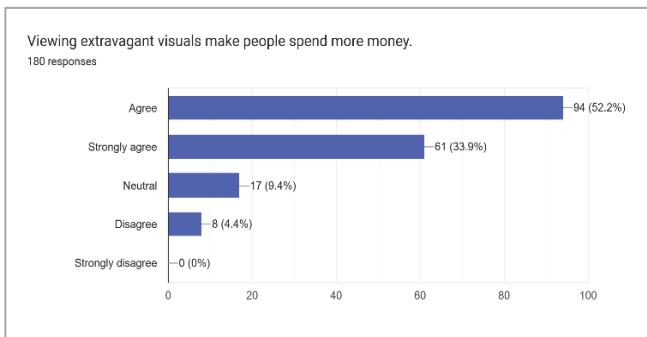
Sub Objective 6

Q-11



Q-11 depicts effects on people’s buying habits. 168 i-e 93% agree or strongly agree, whereas, 13 i-e 7.2% gave a neutral stance, whereas, only 3 individuals disagreed.

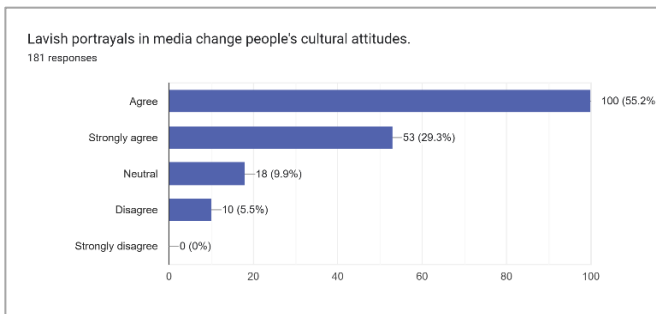
Q-12



Q-12 makes a relationship of spending more money. 155 i-e 86% agree or strongly agree, whereas, 17 i-e 9.4% gave a neutral stance.

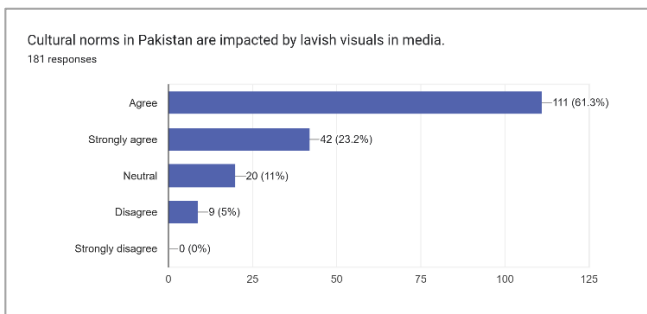
Sub Objective 7

Q 13



Q-13 gives views on change in cultural attitudes. 153 i-e 84.5% agree or strongly agree, whereas, 18 i-e 10% gave a neutral stance and 5.5% disagreed.

Q 14



Q-14 gives views on cultural norms. 153 i-e 84.5% agree or strongly agree, whereas, 20 i-e 11% gave a neutral stance and 5% disagreed.

5. DISCUSSION

Study was successful in establishing a direct relationship between Depiction of Extravagant Visuals in Pakistani Media (The Independent Variable) and Perception or Interpretation influenced by extravagant visuals (The Dependent Variable). Depiction of extravagant visuals in Pakistani Media creates a perception of fantasy or fallacy which creates multiple problems in our society including societal values based on materialism. It leaves the audience discontented as most of them belong to the middle class with average income, therefore, cannot replicate what they are shown. This in turn affects the physical and mental health of the society negatively; directly affecting the emotional quotient. Changes in the buying habits and cultural adaptations are also few of the byproducts. Survey conducted is supportive of the fact and effects.

As eluded in UK Essays published in 2018 many morning shows and TV programs promote materialism, sensationalism and superficial drama. Jilani, Khan, & Ali in their study found that watching dramas with luxurious lifestyles often made viewers feel unhappy with their own lives, creates unrealistic expectations and dissatisfaction among youth. Pellegrino, Abe, & Shannon, in their research “The dark side of social media: Content effects on the relationship between materialism and consumption behaviors” conclude that social media strengthens the link between materialism and consumption, leading to psychological and financial consequences. As per Parveen, & Showkat, visuals are used to promote specific view point or biases. Study by Latif, J., Malik, S., & Nadeem, M. asserts that dramas play an important role in shaping behaviors and perspectives of university students. As per Ridley, Huma, & Walz, shows like “This Morning-UK” contribute to negative portrayal of women. Study by Ahmed, Rehman, & Imran on Public Perception of morning shows on culture invasion in Swat describes the deep-rooted effects of morning shows on the culture and society. As per Semesters, D., Mandel, N. media negatively affects the self-esteem of common people by exhibiting idealized images.

Subject research was undertaken to establish the negative effects of extravagant visuals projected by Pakistani Media which has been confirmed through review of literature and survey from a diverse sample. Study is important as it can motivate policy makers to review the content and go for quality and constructive content rather than depiction of fantasy. Study will steer further research on specific channels and programs to establish the veracity of fact and facilitate the policy makers in law and constitution making.

6. CONCLUSION

It has been established through survey as well as literature analysis that portrayal of extravagant images creates a fallacy; thus, negatively affecting the society in general and individuals in particular, however, the question remains how we as a society will be able to grow out of this fallacy, how our policy makers will be able to cope up with this situation as on the name of freedom of speech we are destroying our society. Study established that materialism is creeping in our society, while at the same time we are drifting away from cultural ethos. However, this all is going on quite easily/ almost unnoticed like a slow poison which implies creation of a deeper understanding about media literacy. Findings of this research will aid policy makers and media community to formulate comprehensive media policies. At the same time future researchers will be able to further explore the topic channel and program wise and find ways to overcome the issue in a wholesome manner.

6.1 Recommendations

- **Promote Realistic Representation in Media Content:** Media producers and content creators should be encouraged to portray a more accurate and relatable version of Pakistani society. This includes showing middle and lower middle-class in actual terms rather than setting every drama in a mansion with ultra-rich community.
- **Encourage Media Literacy Education:** Incorporating media literacy in schools and universities can help students formally learn about media and critically analyse what they see on screen.

Workshops in schools can be conducted as well as organization of public campaigns to explain how shows are produced, advertising works and how it affects societal construct.

- **Develop Ethical Guidelines for Media Production:** Regulatory bodies like PEMRA or other media councils/ bodies to create ethical standards for media. These include guidelines on class/ wealth portrayal etc.
- **Promote Diverse and Inclusive Casting:** Media everywhere portrays the best -i-e in visual, outlook and standards. Increased audience engagement and promoting realism can reduce alienation, especially for underrepresented communities.
- **Encourage Independent and Regional Storytelling:** Support for regional content can lead to more grounded and culture rich visual story telling. These stories will reflect more realistic day-to-day lives and move away from fantasy.
- **Nationwide Media Impact Studies:** Limited studies have been undertaken to ascertain the psychological and social impact of media. Their should be more investment in studies that track the effects of media and its impact on physical, mental health as well as culture and societal ethos.
- **Introduce Awards for Realism and Social Cause:** Media should introduce awards for productions based on realism rather than fabrication and promote such content. This will encourage the producers and media houses to work on projecting reality.

Acknowledgement

None.


Disclosure Statement


No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding Source

The authors received No funding to conduct this study.

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