

**EXPOSURE TO DRAMATIZED ENTERTAINMENT AND  
VIEWERS' ORIENTATION TOWARD MATERIALISM:  
TESTING CULTIVATION IN THE NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

**Ph.D. Thesis**



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**INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD**

**2022**

Accession No. IH25492 <sup>VHM</sup>

PhD  
302.2365  
ADF

- 1 - Television - social aspects
- 2 - Dramatization - Society
- 3 - Media and entertainment
- 4 - (unclear)

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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy in Media and Communication Studies at  
the Faculty of Social Sciences,  
International Islamic University Islamabad**

**In the Name of Allah, the All-Compassionate, the Most Merciful**  
**Praise be to Allah for His bringing the most excellent success!**

## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work to my loving parents whose unconditional love, care, support and prayers have always been with me throughout my educational journey. Without their trust and investments in me, I would not have travelled that far and completed this dissertation successfully.**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation, neither as a whole nor as a part thereof, has been copied out from any source. It is further declared that I have prepared this work entirely on the basis of my personal effort made under the sincere guidance of my supervisor. No portion of work, presented in this dissertation has been submitted in support of any application for any degree or qualification of this or any other university or institute of learning.

  
Mr. Adnan Munawar

7-FSS/PHDMC/F16

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

All praise to Almighty Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, the Beneficent, the Merciful. May His eternal peace and blessings be upon His beloved last and final Messenger, Muhammad (PBUH), and his family and his company, and the community of those who follow his path – may they be greeted with peace.

My success in completing this dissertation has truly been a reaffirmation of my faith in Allah's infinite wisdom and mercy. It is from Him, I derive my self-concept, capacities and motivations; and unto His commands I turn in gratitude, and fully submitted.

I owe special thanks to all those who have helped me directly or indirectly in the completion of this dissertation. There have been many and the following deserve special mention:

Dr. Fazal Rahim Khan, whose invaluable guidance, deep wisdom and knowledge in the field, research expertise, precision in methodology, intellect, and prayers enabled me to undertake and complete this study successfully. I have benefitted immensely from his insightful comments and observations, his invaluable suggestions and prompt feedback. His unfailing eye for detail has removed so many errors and inconsistencies in my work and I am extremely grateful for his kind support and guidance throughout my doctorate program.

In addition, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all the faculty members and my doctoral advisory committee, in particular Dr. Zafar Iqbal, Dr. Shabbir Hussain, Dr Amrat Haq, Dr. Syed Inam-ur-Rehman and Dr. Rooh ul Amin Khan, for their invaluable suggestions, constructive feedback, ideas and comments aimed at improving the quality of work.

**I also would like to extend my personal thanks to administrative staff of the Department of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University, Islamabad, in particular Mr. Tahir Malik for his help and support in data collection and administrative matters; Shibzada Aziz Jibran for his invaluable support in analyzing the data; and Samra Khan for her endless support and wonderful company in this journey.**

**And a very special thanks to my parents, family members, and all my friends, colleagues and class fellows for their prayers, support and encouragement.**



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Dated: April 11, 2022

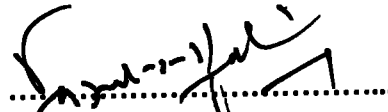
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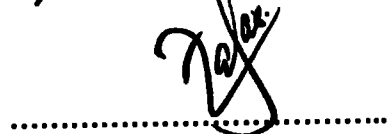
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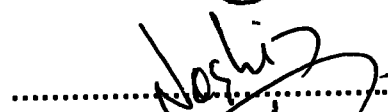
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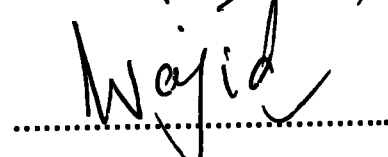
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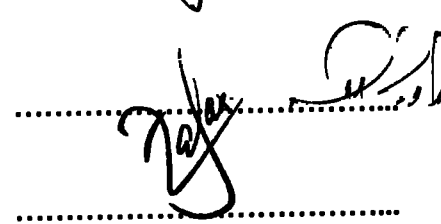
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## **FORWARDING SHEET**

The thesis entitled "*Exposure to Dramatized Entertainment and Viewers' Orientation Toward Materialism: Testing Cultivation in the New Media Environment*" submitted by Adnan Munawar as partial fulfillment of Ph.D. degree in Media and Communication Studies has completed under my guidance and supervision. I am satisfied with the quality of scholar's research work and allow him to submit this thesis for further process as per IIU rules & regulations.

**Dr. Fazal Rahim Khan**  
**Professor/Supervisor**

## **ABSTRACT**

For more than five decades, media scholars employed George Gerbner's cultivation research approach to understand and explain how exposure to the fictional world of television shapes audience members' conceptions of social reality. While there is still enthusiasm and interest among scholars to understand the effects of mass-produced messages on society, the core tenants of cultivation theory may be facing challenges in this ever-changing media landscape. The emergence of new media technologies, viewing devices and platforms is altering and transforming the traditional television experience, while making it more accessible and convenient for audiences to watch and consume more commercially-produced entertainment content. Therefore, it is imperative to examine whether the assumptions of cultivation research tradition still hold up in the new media environment. However, no prior study has subjected Gerbner's cultivation theory to examine materialistic perceptions and orientations in Pakistani society, a predominantly Muslim society. Likewise, no cultivation study to date has addressed the questions of whether exposure to the fictional world of dramatized entertainment ambiguate audiences' conceptions of social reality and whether cultivation theory is relevant in this era of audience fragmentation and segmentation. The present study fills these voids by examining these unexplored areas of cultivation research. A survey was self-administered to 631 senior-level students at the International Islamic University in Islamabad in which respondents filled out a questionnaire where they identified exposure to dramatized entertainment on a television set as well online on free and subscription-based platforms, materialistic perceptions and orientations, personal and social perceptions of the salience of entity God in society and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness, demographic control items and religiosity. Employing a cross-sectional research design, regression analyses were carried out to examine the relationships between dramatized entertainment exposure

and several dependent variables for cultivation and ambiguation outcomes. In order to examine the impact of online dramatized entertainment exposure, social media exposure and religiosity on the cultivation and ambiguation process, multiple hierarchical regression analyses were employed. Results reveal that exposure to dramatized entertainment cultivates and ambiguates audience members' social reality perceptions and orientations. Findings also provide evidence for the ways new media platforms and religiosity moderate the effects of television exposure to dramatized entertainment. This study serves as stepping stone for further analysis into the implications of cultivation in Muslim societies and provides foundation for further inquiry into differential impact of new media platforms on cultivation outcomes.

**Key Words:** Cultivation analysis, television, media effects, materialism, religiosity, salience, new media environment, social media.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

The study of mass media effects on culture and social reality perceptions of viewers has been the focus of cultivation researchers for several decades and there is still a craving zeal and curiosity among media scholars to investigate, understand and explain the effects of long-term exposure to commercial media-produced cultural messages. A plethora of prior studies on cultivation effects produced considerable volumes of findings, which have added value and expanded the existing body of literature in the field of mass media and communication.

Decades of studies seeking to understand the role of television in social life have provided evidence that the medium provides its audiences with important pieces of information about social reality. People make sense of the world, about social life, social roles and others through the lens of television (Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 2016) because “television is the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history,” and it is “the common symbolic environment into which humans are born and in which humans all live out our lives” (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002, p. 17).

While cultivation research framework continues to attract enthusiasm and draw interest from scholars about widespread cultural effects of exposure to cultural messages of entertainment media, the theory is yet to answer some critical questions such as to what extent exposure to fictional entertainment programming affects personal attitudes, values, and beliefs of audiences and whether the traditional cultivation analysis paradigm still has relevancy in today’s new media environment, and these are the main focus areas of this study.

Chapter one of the present study is divided into four related sections providing a general description of the theme of this research. That is, section one presents the introduction, section two

deals with the background and significance of the study, section three presents the research problem, and section four outlines the research questions.

## **1.1 Background of the Study**

The mass-produced stories that we consume as audiences have an impact on our perceptions, attitudes and behaviors toward different aspects of life and the larger social system in which we live our lives. The inescapable and ritualistic consumption of the commercially-driven stories not only shape our opinions and perceptions about different social realities (Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 2015), but also subtly cultivate a worldview that reflects the most common, recurrent and pervasive patterns of the fictional world of dramatized entertainment (Gerbner & Gross, 1976).

For several decades, the study of mass media-constructed social reality has been the focus of cultivation researchers, who departed from the early persuasion and propaganda research paradigm of analyzing media effects in terms of some short-term change in viewers' behaviors to long-lasting and ubiquitous effects of long-term exposure to the profit-driven symbolic cultural environment of fictional media on a societal level (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

Over the years, many researchers have demonstrated the cultivation effect in a variety of areas, with the earliest studies exploring the relationship between television exposure and audience members' social reality perceptions about violence and victimization, and the recent studies expanding to investigate topics such as religious and political orientations, minority and age-role stereotypes, sex and gender roles, environmental attitudes, health, science, the family, occupations, and numerous others, (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 2017).

Since its inception in the 1960s, cultivation theory produced a plethora of literature and earned a spot in the top three most-cited theories in the mass communication research from 1956

to 2000 (Bryant & Miron, 2004), which shows health, strength and applicability of cultivation analysis and indicates a promising future. Since 2000, over 125 studies relevant to cultivation have been published, which have added value to the existing body of mass media knowledge, (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Despite its ubiquity and robust generalization, the existing literature on cultivation is yet to address some important questions, including the question that to what extent exposure to commercial media-driven cultural environment affects deeply-held personal attitudes, values, and beliefs. While a number of researchers have investigated television viewing effects on first-order outcomes spanning from perceptions of crime and violence to occupational prevalence and affluence, (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999), not too many researchers have explored the influence of exposure to the fictional world of dramatized entertainment on second-order social reality beliefs and values. First-order cultivation outcomes deal with frequency or probability estimation of real-world facts or events, while second-order outcomes assess viewers' generalized beliefs about social reality or their attitudes toward it. According to Hawkins and Pingree (1990), second-order beliefs or attitudes appear to be separately influenced by exposure to mediated stories. Nevertheless, television research primarily examined and provided evidence for first-order cultivation outcomes (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Earlier, Hawkins and Pingree (1982) reviewed cultivation research and tentatively concluded that although television viewing affects societal-level judgments or first-order estimates, such effects were found to be minimal on personal-level judgments or second-order value judgments.

Some 15 years ago, Shanahan and Morgan predicted that "New media . . . do present measurement challenges for cultivation research" (1999, p. 218). At present, there are multiple platforms and devices that allow viewers to watch television. Viewers can now stream content on

their Internet-connected Smart TV or on their TV through a streaming media device, view content both live and time-shifted options such as DVRs, as well as access content on demand from cable, Telco, and other free streaming services such YouTube and Hulu and subscription video on demand service such as Netflix and Hulu Plus, using their smartphones, televisions, and computers (Prince, 2018).

This abundance of television viewing devices and platforms does not mean that the new technologies are replacing traditional television. Instead, these new ways of consuming television content are supplementing traditional television and offering more and more viewing options to consumers (Morgan, Shanahan & Signorielli, 2014). Research shows that the traditional way of consuming television content is still the most popular form of viewing and that consumers still devote their most of their free time to watching entertainment programming. For example, an adult in the U.S. spends an average of nearly a week out of every month (more than 149 hours per month) watching traditional live television, and another 15 hours on average watching time-shifted content (Nielsen, 2016). The fact that viewing dramatized entertainment still consumes so much of our time underlines the significance of understanding the continuing cultural dominance of television (Prince, 2018).

While there is still a curiosity among researchers in understanding the widespread cultural impact of long-term exposure to mass-produced stories and there continues to be a considerable number of new studies grounded in the assumptions of cultivation theory, the most pressing at hand is whether the traditional cultivation analysis paradigm still has relevancy in today's new media environment, which may be posing a challenge to cultivation's assumptions, premises and procedures (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). In particular, the current and future paradigmatic status of cultivation and its macro-level conceptions may seem less relevant due to the rise of fragmented

audiences and interpersonal communication in an era of convergence among different technologies and cultural forms (Morgan et al., 2015).

According to Gerbner, the fictional world of television makes clear and visible certain social reality perceptions and beliefs that may otherwise be blurred, hidden or opaque (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Based on the same assumption, the synthetic symbolic cultural environment also has the potential to blur, hide or opaque social realities that are otherwise salient and visible in the objective socio-cultural mainstream. For example, spiritual or metaphysical realities, including the entity God, are prevalent and salient in the socio-cultural environment of Muslim societies but are nonexistent in globally-produced messages, and are either rare or less common in the domestic entertainment fare.

Cultivation literature is silent on the potential role of television in ambiguating social reality perceptions, beliefs and values of audience members. Although Gerbner (1987a) pointed to the role of 3Bs (blurring, blending and bending) in the cultivation process, cultivation scholars have not looked into the ambiguation potential of the symbolic cultural environment. That is, the fictional world of dramatized entertainment is saturated with messages that cut across genres and television networks and that promote and maintains certain types of lifestyles, social realities, beliefs and values through its pervasive, recurrent and consistent themes, images and characters who dominate television screens.

The saturation and pervasiveness of certain messages and underlying lessons, worldviews and ideologies are coming at an expense (cultivation effects). For instance, the social elites-controlled media consistently portray black people in antisocial roles, and, exposure to which would cultivate negative perceptions about the black community (Punyanunt-Carter, 2008).

Interestingly, the flip side (objective portrayal) is systematically excluded from the mass-produced stories. Such exclusion also comes at an expense (ambiguation effects).

In context of this discussion, the present study is an endeavor to analyze the influence of local and foreign entertainment programming on viewers' social reality perceptions in Pakistani society. Grounded on the assumptions of Gerbner's cultivation theory, this study examined cultivation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on audience members' materialistic orientation, and the perceived prevalence of materialism in society. It also introduced ambiguation as another type of effect of dramatized entertainment by examining the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and the perceived salience of the entity God in viewers' consciousness and the perceived social salience entity God. Finally, this study explored the moderating role of online viewing platforms and social media platforms in both cultivation and ambiguation outcomes. In so doing, the present study extended cultivation research by introducing ambiguation as another type of effect of exposure to dramatized entertainment on the salience of social reality perceptions and deeply-held values and beliefs; by examining the relationships between exposure to entertainment programming and viewers' perceptions and attitudes towards materialism in a predominantly Muslim society; and by exploring the interaction effect of online viewing platforms i.e., YouTube, Netflix, Amazon, and Dailymotion etc., as well as social networking sites, i.e., Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram etc. in cultivation and ambiguation outcomes.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Cultivation research paradigm regards television, upon which George Gerbner conceived cultivation theory, as an overriding force in modeling contemporary society (Griffin, 2009). The medium supplies large amounts of shared images, outlooks and messages across history and shapes



the cultural environment in which people live and socialize (Signorielli & Morgan, 2001; Van den Bulck, 2012). People make sense of the world, about social life, social and gender roles and others through the lens of television because “television is the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history,” and it is “the common symbolic environment into which humans are born and in which humans all live out our lives” (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002, p. 17).

Decades of studies seeking to understand the role of television in social life have provided evidence that audience members construct their social reality perceptions and beliefs from the symbolic cultural environment. Over the years, researchers used the cultivation research paradigm to investigate the nature of mediated stories through messages system analyses and to analyze the effects of mass-produced stories on audiences’ social reality perceptions on a range of topics and to expand the cultivation analysis to political and religious attitudes and beliefs, gender roles, environment, health and family values etc. (Morgan, Shanahan, & Signorielli, 2012).

Keeping in view television’s dominant power in society due to its potential of telling most of the stories to most of the people in most of the time, it is important to understand the role of fictional entertainment programming in cultivating norms, rules, and values of a society (Henderson, 2007). A plethora of studies under the umbrella of cultivation theory indicates that long-term exposure to television programming shape viewers’ social reality perceptions and cultivates common and specific images, beliefs, values and ideologies that are congruent with the most pervasive and dominant themes of the mass-produced messages and images (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2014, 2015).

While some researchers applied the cultivation analysis to investigate the impact of television exposure on audiences' social reality perceptions and their attitude toward materialism, there has been hardly any empirical study on the effects of fictional entertainment programming in a Muslim society. Pakistan is predominantly a Muslim society, which came into existence on the basis of Islamic ideology and which draws its cultural references from the same ideology. Among other deeply-held values, attachment to God holds a central position in the common consciousness and daily interactions of Muslims (Ghobary Bonab, Miner & Proctor, 2013).

A presumptive profile of domestic and foreign media entertainment programming shows that there is an apparent absence of spiritual matters, including references to God, and a saturation of materialistic values, which may be having wide-ranging implications on standard cultural practices, outlooks and values of the society, as well as on viewers' social reality perceptions and lifestyles (Khan, Siraj & Soomro, 1999). Therefore, the present study attempted to investigate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and materialistic perceptions and attitudes of audience members in Pakistani society. Existing literature is also silent about the question like whether exposure to dramatized entertainment ambiguates deeply-held personal beliefs and values such as the salience of God as entity in viewers' consciousness? In light of the central cultivation hypothesis, it is important to investigate what type of materialistic values are becoming assimilated into people's personal value structures, as well as to assess whether exposure to entertainment programming ambiguates the salience of entity God in audience members' consciousness.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The key objectives of this study are:

- To examine perceptions and attitudes towards materialism among TV viewers
- To examine perceptions and beliefs about the salience of entity God among TV viewers
- To examine the differential effects of online and social media use variables on perceptions and beliefs

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The present study is significant in terms of its conceptual, operational, theoretical and methodological contributions to the existing body of knowledge on cultivation effects as follows:

Although new media technologies such as YouTube, Facebook, Hulu, Twitter, Netflix and TiVo etc. have changed the way audiences now receive and consume mass-produced stories, Morgan et al. (2015, p. 18) argue that important aspects of their content remain largely unchanged and that there is “more TV than ever before.” In some key respects, the stories are still formulaic and homogeneous in nature, regardless of whether consumed in an interactive, selective, or virtual environment. However, the new media environment could be challenging the idea of mainstreaming, as new media platforms appear to be providing greater diversity of channels and messages and giving rise to fragmentation of audiences. Therefore, the scholars emphasized the need for revising existing theoretical models to “consider the ways in which our new social media environments (and the shifting communities they give rise to) may intersect with and either bolster or shortcircuit the cultivation process,” (Morgan et al., 2015, p. 19).

Putting this into context, this study used new independent variables such as exposure to dramatized entertainment online at a macro-level, based on cultivation’s assumption that messages

are systems, which are by definition as macro as one can get; and social media use at a micro-level to incorporate mediated interpersonal communication and fragmented audiences in cultivation analysis. In this regard, online viewing platforms (i.e., YouTube, Dailymotion and Netflix etc.) and social networking platforms were used in this study to determine how and to what extent cultivation theory has become redundant in the presence of new media use. The application of these new variables provide interesting insights into cultivation effects, including the idea of mainstreaming, in a time of new technologies, more fragmentation and less collective consciousness.

According to Morgan and Shanahan (2010), the new media environment is actually making it more convenient and easier for audiences to access and consume dramatized entertainment content — meaning they may be spending more time than ever before in watching largely the same content. “As long as there are popular storytelling systems and purveyors of widely shared messages, Gerbner’s main ideas are likely to persist. If the storytelling *system* itself collapsed, it is difficult to imagine what would replace it: a world in which everyone is producer, distributor, and consumer of messages seems far-fetched,” (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010, p. 350). Moving on, some cultivation researches have explored viewing effects on prevalence perceptions or judgments (O’guinn & Shrum, 1997; Shrum, Wyer Jr & O’Guinn, 1998). However, not too many scholars examined the relationship between television exposure and more centrally-held personal values, which differ from prevalence outcomes in fundamental ways (Schnauber & Meltzer, 2016; Shrum, Lee, Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2011).

This study filled these gaps in literature and extend cultivation research in three ways: First, it examined the influence of exposure to dramatized entertainment on both first-order social reality perceptions and deeply-held second-order value judgments and attitudes. Second, the study

introduced ambiguation as a new type of media effects and attempted to de-westernize the concept of materialism in accordance to local settings. The process of conceptualization and operationalization of these variables helped find more knowledge and added to the overall body of knowledge, while serving as a reference point for future studies in a Muslim society like Pakistan. Third, the study tested the applicability of cultivation theory in the ever-changing media landscape by exploring the moderating role of online viewing and social media use variables in cultivation and ambiguation processes. Both online viewing and social networking platforms were applied as moderators employed as moderators to determine whether and to what extent these new platforms influence the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and social reality perceptions and beliefs of audience members.

Prior studies show that exposure to the world of television shapes viewers' social reality perceptions in the direction of the most stable and consistent content patterns (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Yet to date, little to no attention has been paid to examine ambiguation of certain beliefs, values and social realities, which are centrally-held in the common consciousness of people but are systematically excluded from the media message system. In light of cultivation's central hypotheses, the fictional world of television recurrently excludes certain values, beliefs and social realities from its cultural mainstream which appears to be having far-reaching socio-cultural implications for Pakistani society, including the potential to have ambiguation effects, which the present study has examined.

Similarly, some scholars (Fox & Philliber, 1978; O'guinn & Shrum, 1997; Potter, 1991; Shrum, O'Guinn, Semenik & Faber, 1991) explored television viewing effects on audiences' perceptions about other people's affluence within the U.S. society, only a handful of studies (Kang & Morgan, 1988; Moschis & Churchill Jr, 1978) explored the idea that the U.S. entertainment

industry may be cultivating capitalist values such as materialism among international viewers. However, there is hardly any traceable scholarly evidence of studies of comparable stature conducted in a Muslim society, or specifically Pakistan. Hence, studying cultivation theory's propositions in a different cultural and geographic context is considered to be an important scholarly initiative that subjects George Gerber's cultivation theory to an absolutely different socio-economic and media setup.

Elsewhere, mass media are often blamed for having an impact on Islamic values and norms due to their incompatible and incongruent contents (Khan et al., 1999; Olenick, 2000; Ullah, 2014). However, there hasn't been any formal attempt to document the effects of those contents on the audience under a social scientific paradigm. By testing cultivation theory's propositions in a Muslim society, this study undertook an important scholarly initiative that subjected George Gerber's cultivation analysis to an absolutely different socio-cultural landscape and media setup.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the theoretical underpinnings of the study and to present a comprehensive review of literature related to the present study, organized into three sections. Part one describes the origins and formative research and core concepts of cultivation theory, and provides a general overview of the literature related to the primary theoretical assumptions of cultivation theory. It also discusses a brief illustration of cultivation analysis and some controversial points revolving around this theory, as well as presents the refinements and growth of cultivation. Part two of this chapter discusses the existing research examining cultivation and elaborates challenges faced by cultivation theory in the new media environment, as well as offers a review of existing research on materialism, in order to contextualize the present study. The main themes of the materialistic values of interest to this study will also be presented here. The third and final part of the chapter presents the summary of the literature and hypotheses of the study. Finally, part three of this chapter provides a summary of the literature and hypotheses of the study.

### **2.2 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework**

Cultivation analysis is one component of the decades-long research program called “cultural indicators,” or CI program, which was developed by George Gerbner and his colleagues in 1960s (Romer, Jamieson, Bleakley & Jamieson, 2014) as a complement to the more common idea of an economic or social indicator, a kind of barometer of important cultural issues (Gerbner, 1969, 1970). The CI program of research is based on a three-pronged research framework: (1) the institutional process analysis prong, which looks into organizational structures of media

institutions, policy formation, decisions-making considerations and processes that produce cultural messages; (2) the message system analysis prong, which inquires into broad structures and consistent patterns in mass-produced messages in the aggregate, as opposed to in any particular program or genre; and (3) the cultivation analysis prong, which examines the cultural effects of fictional entertainment programming on viewers (Gerbner, 1970; Morgan et al., 2016, 2017; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

Although cultivation analysis examines the impact of cultural messages on values and beliefs of audience members, it is important to note that cultivation is not a cause-and-effect theory that views television as an agent of social change that has a unidirectional flow of influence on its audience. Instead, cultivation effects theory is about the implications of audience members' long-term exposure to stable, repetitive and pervasive symbols, images, lessons and ideologies ingrained in television stories. The theory views television as a socialization agency in modern societies that has a continual, dynamic and ongoing intrinsic influence on cultural identities and social realities through its reparative messages (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999).

Cultivation assumes that television, as a medium, is different from other mass media given its penetration and reach in the society and its power to pervade the cultural environment of the home and subtly shape how people conceive social reality over time (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1980). This assumption stems from Gerbner and his colleagues' view that television has become the cultural arm of modern societies, which receive most of the stories most of the time from this new message delivery system, (Gerbner et al., 1980; Morgan & Shanahan, 2009).

The synthetic environment so created by the fictional world of the dramatized entertainment on television, including plays, series, reality shows, game shows, movies, cartoons, comedies and



commercials, constructs and cultivates social reality perceptions, values, beliefs and attitudes of audience members. As such, television functions as an agent of the established social order that constructs, maintains and propagates the dominant cultural ideology and values through its recurring and ritualized messages and symbols, (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977).

The main proposition of the theory states that the more time audience members spend living in the dramatic world of television, the more likely their social reality beliefs will be compatible with fictional realities of television (Morgan et al., 2017). As such, heavy viewers of dramatic programming are more likely to establish assumptions about social reality different from light television viewers (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). In other words, cultivation theory suggests that the time people spend in the fictional world of dramatized entertainment and the experiences they gain from mass-produced fictional stories would influence their real-life experiences and develop and maintain their social perceptions and beliefs (Shrum & Bischak, 2001).

Cultivation is a media effects theory that looks at long-term relationships between exposure to fictional entertainment programming as a message system and audience members' social reality perceptions and beliefs about the world (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). The fictional world of television creates the common symbolic cultural environment that integrates dominant images, outlooks, and worldviews and messages into everyday life, creating and shaping common consciousness in the direction of the most recurrent and pervasive patterns of those mass-produced and mass-consumed fictional stories (Morgan & Shanahan, 1997; Morgan et al., 2016).

While cultivation research framework continues to attract enthusiasm and draw interest from scholars about widespread cultural effects of exposure to cultural messages of entertainment media, the theory is yet to answer some critical questions such as to what extent exposure to

dramatic programming affects second-order personal attitudes, values, and beliefs of audience members (Schnauber & Meltzer, 2016) and whether the traditional cultivation analysis paradigm still has relevancy in today's new media environment (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

### 2.3 Gerbner's Concept of Cultivation

George Gerbner's original conception (1958) of cultivation was an attempt to devise an approach to the social and cultural implications of living with the fictional world of television. Gerbner deviated away from the then-dominant paradigms of persuasion and propaganda as well as the effects tradition of scientism and positivism. Gerbner wanted to go beyond the traditional approaches to investigate cultural issues that could not be explained in or limited by such approaches that had been used "to find the most suitable ways of 'selling' (or disguising) policies which serve institutional objectives" (Gerbner, 1966, 1998a).

Gerbner suggested that the *object* of inquiry should be the institutional objectives of elites-controlled cultural messages and symbols. Instead of "serving institutional objectives," researchers should critically analyze the nature and consequences of those objectives in a democratic society (Gerbner, 1958). Gerbner viewed communication research as a basic *cultural inquiry* rather than as a tool for selling a product, or a political candidate (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Gerbner defined communication as "interaction through messages" and conceptualized mass communication as the mass production and distribution of messages with far-reaching social and cultural implications. Gerbner wrote:

"The cultural transformation of our time stems from the extension of the industrial technological revolution into the sphere of message-production. The mass production and rapid distribution of messages create new symbolic environments that reflect the structure and functions of the institutions that transmit them. These institutional processes of the mass-production of messages short-circuit other networks of social communication and superimpose their own

forms of collective consciousness — their own publics—upon other social relationships. The consequences for the quality of life, for the cultivation of human tendencies and outlooks, and for the governing of societies, are far-reaching.” (Gerbner, 1970, p. 71).

Gerbner’s conceptualization is based on six ideas that he said should be considered while subjecting cultivation research paradigm in examining the potential role and impact of television messages on society. Firstly, audiences spend more time in watching and consuming mediated stories on television “than all other media activities combined” (1977, p. 147). Secondly, unlike other media, television is available to audience members in their homes all the time just like a member of their families, enabling viewers to interact with the world of television and watch fictional entertainment content at their convenience with less activity. Thirdly, in contrast to newspapers, magazines and books etc., television content does not require its audiences to be literate, which makes it more appealing and accessible to all segments of society, creating a shared culture for otherwise heterogeneous audiences. Morgan et al. (2015) note that these assumptions see television as providing what appears to be an early version of today’s “feed” of stories on social media, which are ubiquitous, unified, and undifferentiated.

Gerbner’s fourth assumption sees the totality of television’s messages as a system that fulfills the socialization function previously served by religion, myth or legend. “It makes no sense to study the content or impact of one type of program in isolation from the others. The same viewers watch them all; the total system as a whole is absorbed into the mainstream of common consciousness” (1977, p. 147). The fifth assumption views television as serving the needs of all different audiences, i.e., such as children, parents and grandparents, all at the same time, with no separate story-systems existing within television. Finally, Gerbner assumes that the world of television further marginalizes minority groups by forcing them to see their portrayal and

**(mis)representation through mass-produced messages designed by the powerful elites for the majority population.**

**These assumptions became the foundation of cultivation research tradition that grew out of the long-term research project, called “Cultural Indicators,” or CI, which began during a time of turmoil, social unrest and violence in the U.S. in the late 1960s. Over the years, the CI project has mainly focused on carrying out message system analyses, capturing cultivation effects of mediated stories and carving out the socio-cultural implications of growing up and living with the world of television. As such, Gerbner’s cultivation theory attempts to tap broad consequences and implications of television and its messages. Specifically, cultivation is based on Gerbner’s assumption that television viewing is ritualistic, that is, audiences consume television content non-selectively (Gerbner, 2013), meaning that audience members are exposed to aggregate patterns of messages throughout their life and construct social reality perceptions and attitudes aligned with the dominant patterns of the symbiotic cultural environment (Gerbner, 1977).**

**As discussed earlier, the CI program is premised upon a three-part research framework for investigating the ownership structure, institutional objectives and needs, processes and influences that underlie the production and distribution of mass-produced cultural messages; analyzing the most dominant, recurrent and aggregate patterns of audio-visual cultural messages, images and symbols; and examining the cultivation effects of those mediated messages on social reality perceptions of audiences. However, Gerbner notes that a research inquiry any one of these three areas would have implications for the other two. Therefore, most cultivation studies have focused on analyzing the message system of television and cultivation effects of those messages on viewers.**

Gerbner and his associates posit that the symbolic cultural environment created by television has long-term cultural influences and consequences similar to other social institutions like religion. "Television provides a daily ritual that elites share with many other publics. The heart of the analogy of television and religion, and the similarity of their social factors, lies in the continual repetition of patterns which serve to define the world and legitimize social order" (Gerbner, 1998a).

## **2.4 First- and Second-Order Cultivation Effects**

Cultivation researchers initially focused on investigating the relationship between heavy television viewing and perceptions of social reality, referred as first-order outcomes in cultivation literature. First-order cultivation outcomes refer to the effects of television on audience members' general estimation of a phenomena i.e., violence in the society, or statistical facts about the real-world social reality. Over the years, this probe into cultivation effects of television advanced to the idea of distinguishing second-order cultivation outcomes from first-order outcomes (Gerbner et al. 1986). Second-order cultivation outcomes refer to general beliefs, values and outlooks that audience members imply from mediated cultural messages, images and symbols (Schnauber & Meltzer, 2016).

Long-time cultivation critics Hawkins and Pingree (1982) were first to argue that cultivation uses "demographic" and "value system" measures as two types of dependent variables. The first kind of demographic measures, generally referred to as first-order effects, tap the differential effect between real world social reality facts and television's social reality, using both real-world and television answers. As such, these demographic dependent measures are used to determine the extent to which heavy television viewers' conceptions of social reality, or facts, are closer to the real-world facts or to the television facts. Value-system dependent variable(s), or second-order

effects, capture general impressions including beliefs and values and other general aspects of the social world (Shrum et al., 2011).

In a nutshell, first-order cultivation effects probe the relationship between television exposure and viewers' social reality perceptions i.e., the frequency of violent crimes in society, or the probability estimation of becoming crime victims. Second-order cultivation, on the other hand, investigates the extent to which television viewing shapes audience members' beliefs, values and outlooks i.e., heightened levels of fear, mistrust and pessimism. Although scholars have distinguished first-order cultivation from second-order cultivation, the basic assumption is that these two distinct effects may interrelated. That is, second-order cultivation measures are inferred from first-order cultivation measures, implying that if heavy television viewing distorts viewers' estimation of real-world facts about a social phenomenon (first-order cultivation), heavy viewers are more likely to perceive the world as more dangerous and unsafe (second-order cultivation, (Miller, 2005: 287; Severin and Tankard, 2010:270).

However, Gerbner and his associates used the first-order and second-order measures in cultivation analysis mainly as methodological procedures and not as theoretical features. In other words, Gerbner et al. found no theoretical explanation for a link between the two dependent measures, given the nature and complexity of the relationship and differences between them. The first-order and second-order terms were coined primarily to categorize and clarify different types of methodological procedures as well as to enable researchers and audience members to make both qualitative and quantitative judgments. Potter (1991) supports this assertion and notes that the distinct nature of the first-order and second-order cultivation outcomes can be understood at the operational level, not at a theoretical level because Gerbner et al. did not develop theoretical

implication of such distinction. According to Potter (1991), audiences are likely to be subject to second-order cultivation effects if they are first-order cultivated.

On the contrary, Hawkins and Pingree (1990), Hawkins, Pingree, and Adler (1987) argued that first-order and second-order effects are distinct because of the differences in the processes involved in the learning of these two kinds of effects (Miller, 2005:287). Severin and Tankard (2010:270) point out evidence that link television viewing with first-order cultivation effects, and that other variables i.e., such as audience members' neighborhood, are at play with television exposure for second-order cultivation outcomes.

"Realizing that this apparently simple distinction generates distracting complexity (and since the issue is not really central to cultivation theory but is, rather, more germane to problems of cognition and learning in general), Gerbner et al. subsequently decommissioned the terms, leaving others welcome to explore these troublesome issues (and several researchers accepted the invitation)" (Morgan & Shanahan, 1999, p., 177).

## **2.5 Cultivation and New Media Environment**

The emergence of new media technologies, the abundance of television channels and the apparent diversification of television programs has led some to question the relevance of cultivation as a viable approach to studying television and its impact on viewers' social reality perceptions, outlooks and attitudes. The theory has been criticized since 1980s when the emergence of cable channels and VCRs challenged the central place of television in the society as the biggest storyteller, with critics of cultivation theory suggesting that Gerbner's message system assumptions may no longer be valid in the presence of more programs producers, content choices and the availability of more interactive and selective viewing devices and technologies. For example, Secunda (1990) saw the emergence and adoption of VCRs as a threat to the dominance

of big American networks and argued that VCRs have led to the end of the era of “watching TV by the clock.”

However, it did not turn out that way and the prediction by some cultivation critics that the emergence of new technologies such as cable and VCRs would make cultivation redundant proved to be wrong. The availability of more channels and apparently more diverse television programs actually resulted to new levels of violence and sex levels, far more than those offered by major television networks (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999; Shanahan, 2012).

For instance, Morgan and Rothschild (1983) found even stronger correlation between television viewing and sex-role stereotypes among audience members who had cable in their homes. Likewise, Morgan, Shanahan, and Harris (1990) found that VCRs actually amplified the cultivation effects by allowing heavy viewers to watch and consume “more of the same” content. Dobrow (1990) found that heavy television viewers used the VCR technology to extend their viewing habits, and lighter viewers, on the other hand, became even more selective their consumption of programming. Similarly, Perse, Ferguson, and McLeod (1994) found a strong association between heavy viewers of videotaped movies and interpersonal mistrust, compared to light viewers. In short, new technologies offered heavy viewers with higher doses of formulaic fictional entertainment programming, which actually intensified versions of traditional network fare. This led Gerbner and his associates to argue that new technologies should be viewed as new “delivery vehicles” for “more of the same” content, in particular for heavy viewers (Morgan et al., 2015).

Having survived the challenges and threats posed by cable and VCR technologies the theory now faces challenges from digital media technologies, which are not only challenging Gerbner



and his colleagues' assumptions of television, but also questioning the underpinnings, premises and procedures of the theory and its applicability in this ever-changing and ever-evolving media environment. The biggest question is whether the theory is still relevant in an era that provide more channel and programming choices, numerous content delivery devices, on-demand and streaming options and more fragmented audiences.

While new media platforms and the availability of more and more television channels appear to offer greater diversity in content and flexibility in consuming dramatized entertainment, the underlying themes, patterns, common messages and lessons have not changed and there's even more television than ever before and even more violence, sex levels and distortion of social realities. And because cultivation is more concerned about aggregate messages, it may be even more critical to analyze the impact of such messages in a time of more fragmentation and less collective consciousness.

## **2.6 More Television Than Ever Before?**

Although new media technologies and viewing platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, Hulu and TiVo etc. have changed the way mass-produced stories are received and consumed by audience members, Morgan et al. (2015, p. 18) argue that important aspects of fictional entertainment programming remain largely unchanged and that there appears to be "more TV than ever before." The mass media-produced stories continue to be formulaic, commercial and homogeneous in many aspects, regardless of the fact whether they are consumed in an interactive, selective, or virtual environment.

It is also important to note Gerbner's original conception of television. Gerbner and his team viewed television as a system in which the overall themes, patterns and images were of more

interest from the cultivation research tradition than individual programs and/or programming decisions by some big networks (Gerbner, 1998a). Gerbner conceptualized television as the dominant cultural force that produces a limited range of stories for diverse audiences and that shapes their social reality perceptions and worldviews, as opposed to focusing on analyzing immediate effects of television exposure on audiences (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan & Signorielli, 1986). Putting this into context, television continues to hold its central position as the dominant storyteller in today's societies and audience members continue to spend on average 7 to 10 hours a week watching television dramatic programming, in spite of all of the technological changes in the media environment.

“Although the way we now *receive* our “stories” (whether fiction, news, or reality programs) has changed, along with the ways we consume them, we tend to forget that important aspects of their *content* arguably have not” (Morgan et al., 2015).

However, the changing media landscape may be posing more challenges to theoretical assumptions of cultivation, especially the idea of mainstreaming, as new media platforms appear to be offering more diversity of channels and content, which may be giving rise to fragmentation of audiences. As such, cultivation scholars emphasized the need for revising existing theoretical models to “consider the ways in which our new social media environments (and the shifting communities they give rise to) may intersect with and either bolster or short-circuit the cultivation process,” (Morgan et al., 2015, p. 19).

Some 15 years ago, Shanahan and Morgan predicted that “New media . . . do present measurement challenges for cultivation research” (1999, p. 218). At present, there are multiple platforms and devices that allow viewers to watch television. Viewers can now stream content on their Internet-connected Smart TV or on their television set through a streaming media device,

view content with both live and time-shifted options such as DVRs, as well as access content on demand from cable, Telco, and other free streaming services such as YouTube and Hulu and subscription video on demand service such as Netflix and Hulu Plus, using their smartphones, televisions, and computers (Prince, 2018).

This abundance of television viewing devices and platforms does not mean that the new technologies are replacing traditional television. Instead, these new ways of consuming television content are supplementing traditional television and offering more and more viewing options to consumers. Research shows that the traditional way of consuming television content is still the most popular form of viewing and that consumers still devote their most of their free time to watching entertainment programming. For example, an adult in the United States spends an average of nearly a week out of every month (more than 149 hours per month) watching traditional live television, and another 15 hours on average watching time-shifted content (Nielsen, 2016). The fact that viewing dramatized entertainment still consumes so much of our time underlines the significance of understanding the continuing cultural dominance of television (Prince, 2018).

## **2.7 Cultivation of Materialistic Values**

Materialism may be one the most representative and pervasive capitalist values entrenched in elite-controlled dramatized entertainment content. This observation resounds in content analyses of television programming that show materialism is among the most commonly and favorably portrayed capitalist values in mass-produced cultural messages and symbols (O'guinn & Shrum, 1997). Studies also reveal that entertainment content is saturated with affluence, abundance and luxury lifestyles, linking success, happiness and satisfaction with materialistic values (Shrum et al., 2014).

The fictional world of dramatized entertainment is different from the real world due to its (mis)representation of both objective and social realities. The symbolic cultural environment created by mass-produced messages and images is saturated with capitalism-driven consumer and materialistic values (Kasser, 2011) such as affluence, prosperity, luxuries, material possessions and privileged social class. The saturation and pervasiveness of materialistic values in entertainment programs not only have wide-ranging effects and far-reaching socio-cultural implications (McDonald, 2004) but these values also become the yardstick through which audiences compare and judge the quality of their life and that of others (Kasser, 2002), construct perceptions about other members, their lifestyles and material possessions.

The recurrent and dominant pattern and program themes show characters living comfortably in spacious and luxurious homes, wearing expensive branded clothes, dining at large restaurants and driving in big cars. These characters are also portrayed as successful and happy individuals who always appear to have time to relax and enjoy given the abundance of money and possession in their life. As such, the fictional world of dramatized entertainment pulls over a world that not only distorts social reality perceptions of audiences but also further push away marginalized, and exploited minority groups and communities. Mass media scholars and commentators contend that the dominant representation of the privileged social class in television's message system develops, projects and cultivates capitalism-driven consumeristic and materialistic values, belief systems and conceptions of social reality (Bindah & Othman, 2011; Burroughs, Shrum & Rindfleisch, 2002b; Shrum, Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2005).

Cultivation literature provides evidence for the relationship between television exposure and social reality perceptions and judgments about affluence and possessions with heavy viewing positively correlating with exaggerated levels of wealth and affluence in society (Burroughs,

Shrum & Rindfleisch, 2002a; O'guinn & Shrum, 1997; Shrum et al., 2014; Shrum et al., 1998). Research also found evidence for the association between heavy television viewing and materialistic values of viewers (Shrum et al., 2011; Shrum et al., 2005).

For instance, Hennigan et al., (1982) note that wealthy characters, their professions, possessions and activities dominate television screens with entertainment content generally weighted towards upper- and middle-class lifestyles. Likewise, Leichter et al., (1994) analyzed prime-time entertainment programs on four major broadcast networks in the U.S. and found that there were more upper middle-class characters such as lawyers, doctors and business executives in those programs than in real life, with only one out of four characters having low-status occupations. Some researchers found income disparity between television characters and the actual U.S. population (Condry, 1989).

The prevalence of wealthy characters and middle and upper middle-class lifestyles and professions influence conceptions of social reality and value-system of audience members who spend more time in watching fictional entertainment content (Behal & Soni, 2018; Harmon, 2001, 2008). Several researchers have documented the effects of heavy television viewing on materialistic perceptions and values of viewers. For examples, Churchill and Moschis (1979) examined the relationship between television exposure and materialism and found that television, as an “outside-of-home” socialization agent, influence adolescents’ learning of consumer attitudes and orientations among U.S. adolescents.

Weimann’s (1984) carried out a study to analyze the effects of television viewing on Israel students’ orientation toward materialism. The researcher found that heavy exposure to U.S. television content positively correlated with respondents’ perceptions and worldviews about

affluence and prosperity in the U.S. with heavy viewers idealizing and overestimating standard of living, wealth and material possessions. Elsewhere, Cheung and Chan (1996) found that heavy television viewing cultivated mean world values among Hong Kong adolescents. The researchers defined mean world values as a combination of prevalence of materialism and declining moral values and used perceived realism in television programming and repeated exposure as additional variables in the analysis.

O'Guinn & Shrum, (1997), explored the relationship between heavy television viewing and audience members' perceived prevalence of affluence and wealth in the American society. Heavy television viewers were more likely than light viewers to exaggerate various indicators of affluence, including ownership of luxury cars, regular wine with dinner, and attendance of charity balls. In similar studies, Shrum, Burroughs, & Rindfleisch, 2005; Shrum, 2009; Shrum et al., 2011; Shrum & Lee, 2012, examined cultivation of materialistic values and found that heavy exposure to the world of television positively correlated with materialistic values of U.S. viewers.

However, not all studies on the topic found the posited relationship between entertainment media exposure audience members' perceptions about affluence. For example, Fox and Philliber (1978) did not find a relationship between television viewing and audiences' perceptions about affluence in the U.S. The effect disappeared after the researchers controlled for the impact of demographic variables i.e., age, gender, education and income, etc. Meanwhile, Carlson (1993) suggested that exposure to specific types of television programs, not global exposure to television, shapes and influences viewers' perceptions of affluence. Carlson's study found that heavy exposure to situation comedies and news programming significantly correlated with perceptions of affluence. Some recent studies on the topic of media exposure and materialism highlights media role in the consumer socialization process. The fictional world of dramatized develops, maintains

and sustains consumer perceptions. Audiences constructs and cultivates conceptions of materialistic perceptions and consumer values through their long-term exposure to television programming.

## **2.8 Cultivation Research in Pakistan**

A review of most studies labeled as “cultivation” by Pakistani scholars indicates a weak grasp of theoretical assumptions and research procedures of cultivation analysis, due the lack of published work in the peer-reviewed research journals. As such, most studies fail to make any contribution to the body of knowledge on media effects and more precisely on cultivation effects (Khan, Zafar & Abbasi, 1998). It is important to note that Pakistan has seen a rapid growth of media channels and mass media institutions in the past two decades (Rasul & McDowell, 2012; Rasul & Proffitt, 2013). However, there has not been a single message systems analysis study that applied the cultivation research tradition to document the aggregate patterns, themes and images of dramatic content produced by media channels. Also missing is scientific evidence for cultivation effects in the country, as most studies under the rubric of cultivation indicate misrepresentation and misunderstanding of cultivation analysis on part of the researchers on the following theoretical underpinnings:

- Contrary to what Pakistani scholars believe, cultivation is not about examining the effects of exposure to any specific genre and/or program type. Instead, cultivation is about examining the effects of overall message system on audience members’ conceptions of social reality (Morgan et al., 2016).
- Cultivation is not about studying short-term and direct effects of mass-produced messages on small groups of audience members. Instead, cultivation investigates long-term effects

of exposure to television messages on broad belief structures of large groups of viewers (Gerbner et al., 1986).

- Cultivation research does not focus on the effects of some political ad campaign or newscast on voters' perceptions and assumptions about a political figure. Nor does cultivation study the impact of commercials on consumers' buying behaviors.
- The theory is not about examining the relationship between children's exposure to violent programming and their aggressive behaviors. Nor does it study the relationships between exposure to foreign dramas and marriage ceremonies, food habits, language and dressing etc.
- Cultivation is not about asking audience members at the start of the questionnaire to indicate how many shows they watch regularly or what type of programs or channels they like to watch. Instead, Cultivation's research tradition has its own method of measuring exposure to dramatic content by asking audience members to indicate the average number of hours in a day they spend watching dramatic programming (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999)

The review also suggests weaknesses and shortcomings in terms of conceptual, operational, theoretical and methodological footings, as local mass media researchers do not pay much attention to applying standard research procedures and methods to formulate and identify broad research problems that have real social significance (Khan et al., 1998). As a result, those studies fall short of the established standard to make any independent contributions to the existing body of knowledge on media effects.

In sum, quantitative research inquiries labeled as cultivation in Pakistan suffer from numerous problems ranging from theoretical misunderstandings and misrepresentations to conceptual, operational, methodological and other technical issues. Barring a few exceptions,



most media effects studies in Pakistan have not generated any scientific body of knowledge in the field.

## **2.9 Presumptive Profile of Message System in Pakistan**

In the absence of empirical data on message system profile of locally- and globally-produced dramatized entertainment content in Pakistan, nothing definitively can be said. Therefore, the following may, be taken as only a presumptive profile of entertainment programming in the country. The symbolic cultural environment appears to be saturated with materialistic values, lifestyles and artefacts (Harmon, 2001). Of the materialistic values and lifestyles, expensive mobile phones, luxury cars and fast-food products, for example, are instruments of romantic exchanges between unmarried individuals (Zafar, Arafat & Sial, 2017). Most of the characters are young, handsome and physically attractive who live and interact in posh settings. Most of the women wear full make-up on most occasions, are young and dressy, romantic, authoritative and stubborn (Ashfaq & Shafiq, 2018). Headscarf is used but only by elderly women. Women rarely do house chores. Children rarely defer to parents who are mostly retrograde and backward-looking. Women empowerment verges on liberalism. Corruption and injustice are common, law enforcement tardy and criminals are not easily caught. Investments and rewards are unequally distributed. Status ascription is quite common, upward mobility and achievement rare, and wealth can only be generated through corrupt means. Love or pursuit of knowledge and science is either rare or the traits of the eccentric. Islam or muslimness is associated with the elderly or a retrograde mullah and mostly with poor classes, less educated, fatalist, and retrogressive. Spiritual or metaphysical realities are less common and the world hereinafter non-existent. Society is mostly Godless and engrossed in pursuits of material possessions, etc. (Khan et al., 1999).

The symbolic cultural environment is saturated with immodest and impudent values (Faiz, Khalid & Mahmood, 2020), obscene and absurd acts, emotions and thoughts embedded messages, images and characters who often involve in acts of adultery, fornication, rape, molestation, and other obscene or absurd actions. The forces of spirituality and goodness appear to be superseded by material interests and degrading impulses incongruent to the spirit of Islamic teachings and its normative code of public morality. Material objects and goods are linked with identity and wellbeing, and beauty and affluence are communicated as central goals of life. The symbolic cultural environment also defines what it means to be beautiful, attractive, happy and successful in life. In so doing, the line between good and bad, and right and wrong is blurred, while the intellectual and spiritual quest, the conception of this worldly life and the connection to God are excluded from commercially produced entertainment content. The overt de-Islamizing impact of such recurring patterns of television social reality in Pakistan, under the assumptions of CI social reality cultivation theory, is far from obscure.

Keeping in mind the prevalence and recurrence of these ideologically incongruent values and images in the mass-produced stories and the impact potential of these messages under cultivation research paradigm, the domestic and foreign message systems may be weakening the hold of Islamic ideology and its cultural impressions in Pakistani society, while maintaining and strengthening the manifestation of paradoxes between professed and practiced values and beliefs at both individual and societal levels (Khan, Zafar & Abbasi, 1998). For example, Pakistanis profess honesty but practice corruption; proclaim meritocracy but promote favoritism; profess religious tolerance but spread hatred on religious and sectarian grounds; profess Islamic cultural values but imitate Western ways of life; profess justice but practice injustice in daily routines; profess respect for human dignity but violate human rights; profess the supremacy of the

constitution but support violators of the constitution; profess respect for the law but violate the rules in everyday affairs of life; profess spiritual values but chase an easy worldly life; profess high moral values but aspire status, power and material possessions; profess cleanliness but pollute the environment; desire equitable resource distribution but indulge in hoarding; profess simplicity but desire lavish lifestyles etc.

## **2.10 Cultivation and Ambiguation**

Cultivation is about the implications of stable, repetitive, pervasive and virtually inescapable patterns of images and ideologies that the fictional world of television provides. Audience members live and die in the symbolic cultural environment, form impressions about themselves and others, and develop and maintain conceptions of social reality, worldviews, beliefs, values, attitudes. The central proposition of cultivation is that the more time people spend watching dramatized entertainment on television, the more likely they are to cultivate assumptions of social reality aligned with television's social reality (Gerbner, 1969, 1970). As such, cultivation demonstrates the ability of commercially-produced messages to shape social reality perceptions and attitudes of audience members in the direction of its most stable message patterns. In other words, the more pervasive and recurrently a social reality is portrayed in the symbolic world of dramatized entertainment, the more salient it would be in the consciousness of those audiences who spend more time watching television entertainment programming.

The salience and pervasiveness of certain types of images, beliefs, values and conceptions of social reality in the fictional world of dramatized entertainment comes at a cost of excluding some other types of worldviews and values which may otherwise be present in the socio-cultural environment of the society as well as in the common consciousness of its people. The non-existence or marginalization of those social realities also has the ability to ambiguate them in the

common consciousness of those audience members who are more exposed to the fictional world of television. Therefore, the world of television also has the potential to ambiguate deeply-held, personal-level assumptions of social reality, beliefs and values of audience members.

The term “ambiguation” originates in its antonym, the rhetorical device of “disambiguation,” which is the removal of ambiguity or uncertainty. In plain words, ambiguation is the act of ambiguating, or making a situation or something more ambiguous. While ambiguation is mainly used as a sociological and a legal term, it is also viewed as a kind of semantic negotiation that typically comes into play in an attempt to negotiate, evade, in some cases to explore the volatile interface of social interactions and cultural values (Wardle, 2002). Ambiguation is also viewed as an act of tying. That is, it functions to blur the link with some attributes, and emphasize the link with others.

In his detailed account of how social meanings are constructed, Lessig defined ambiguation as a technique in which the “the architect tries to give the particular act, the meaning of which is to be regulated, a second meaning as well, one that acts to undermine the negative effects of the first” (1995, p. 1010). To further clarify the process, Lessig quoted the example of Jews when they were forced to wear yellow stars by the Nazis and this gave the wearing of yellow stars a certain social meaning. However, ambiguation emerged when non-Jews such as Dane also started to wear yellow stars and thereby created an ambiguity about what it meant to wear a yellow star. In this sense, Lessig argued that while tying is about establishing that X is like Y, ambiguation is about establishing that X is like Y or Z. It simply adds a link without denying an existing link, and thereby blurs just what it is that X is (Lessig, 1995).

From the standpoint of cultivation, The saturation of culturally and ideologically incongruent values and images in media programming, in particular the prevalence of the portrayals of wealth, status, money, power, possessions and affluence, the underrepresentation of the less affluent and weaker groups or minorities, and the nonexistence of the spiritual aspects of the Islamic social reality, not only reflects the ubiquity of capitalism-driven materialistic values and beliefs in society but also indicates the inextricable commercial nature of foreign and domestic media institutions. In a sum, the mass infusion and consumption of hegemonic cultural messages has the potential of what Gerbner (1987b) called “blurring, blending, and bending” of standard cultural practices, norms and values of the society in the direction of its most stable, repetitive and pervasive content patterns.

## **2.11 Key Literature Themes and Gaps**

What follows is a summary of key points, themes and gaps that emerged from the foregoing review of cultivation literature:

- That cultivation is a media effects theory that looks at long-term relationships between exposure to fictional entertainment programming as a message system and viewers’ social reality perceptions and beliefs about the world.
- That the theory has expanded to provide framework for a variety of topics, including political outlooks, sex-role expectations, views about different social groups, and so forth, from its initial focus on relationships between violent television programs, and cultivation of fear and distrust.
- That televised fiction creates the common symbolic cultural environment that integrates dominant images, outlooks, and worldviews and messages into everyday life and that

**cultivates and shapes common consciousness in the direction of the most recurrent and pervasive patterns of those mass-produced and mass-consumed stories.**

- **That materialism is a capitalist value that is favorably and commonly embedded in all genres and formats and that may be becoming assimilated into the common consciousness of the people and their personal value structures and that may be running counter to the ideological premises of the society.**
- **That the relationship between media exposure and materialism is underexplored in cultivation scholarship, with only a handful of scholars examining the impact of commercial programming on materialistic perceptions, beliefs and values, and with some finding a weak support for cultivation.**
- **That there is no empirical investigation into the ambiguation of existing outlooks, beliefs and values of audience members or how does the process of blurring, blending and bending take place.**
- **That there is hardly any traceable scholarly evidence of cultivation studies of comparable stature conducted in a Muslim society like Pakistan, which have absolutely different socio-cultural, socio-religious and media setups.**
- **That a strong evidence exists for societal-level judgments or first-order type estimates, which require the frequency or probability estimation of real-world events or facts, but there has been little research on personal-level judgments or second-order value judgments, which differ from prevalence judgments in fundamental ways.**
- **That the technology-driven new media environment may be posing much stronger challenges to the classic assumptions of cultivation, especially mainstreaming, than those from cable and VCRs in the mid-1980s, as different viewing platforms with different styles**

of storytelling and outlooks in different formats and genres might be drawing viewers' worldviews and outlooks in different directions on a variety of issues.

- That television continues to hold its central position as the dominant storyteller in societies and audience members continue to spend on average 7 to 10 hours a week watching dramatized entertainment programming, in spite of all of the technological changes in the media environment.
- That a possibility exists for even stronger evidence of cultivation in the new media environment, as mass-produced stories continue to be formulaic, commercial and homogeneous in many aspects, regardless of the fact whether they are consumed in an interactive, selective, or virtual environment.

## **2.12 Research Questions**

This study focused entirely on finding answers to the following research questions:

**RQ1.** What is the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' beliefs and perceptions about materialism?

**RQ2.** What is the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' perceptions and beliefs about the salience of entity God?

**RQ3.** Whether and how time spent online influence the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and social reality perceptions and beliefs?

## **2.13 Research Hypotheses**

On the basis of research questions, it is imperative to examine the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' social reality perceptions and beliefs

materialism the salience of God, as well as to carefully examine the moderating role of new media platforms and religious attitudes in the cultivation process.

Cultivation theory is based on the proposition that heavy and long-term exposure to dramatized entertainment programs, including commercial fare, construct and cultivate viewers' social reality perceptions in the direction of the social reality promoted by such programs. Cultivation effects occur after persistent exposure to everyday media experiences (Riddle, 2010). The theory postulates that television cultivates a different social reality in heavy viewers, compared to light viewers or non-viewers (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Because the fictional world of dramatized entertainment is saturated with capitalism-driven materialistic values, and because it lacks recurrent references to spiritual or metaphysical aspects, it is argued that the Pakistani society may be "engrossed in pursuits of material possessions, etc." (Khan et al., 1999, p. 246). Therefore, it is hypothesized:

**H1: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will predict viewers' social reality perceptions and beliefs about materialism. Specifically, hypothesis H1 posits that:**

**H1a: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict the perceived social prevalence of materialism in society, after controlling for the relevant demographic variables.**

**H1b: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict materialistic orientation of viewers after controlling for the relevant demographic variables.**

Heavy and long-term exposure to the fictional world of the dramatized entertainment cultivate specific assumptions, beliefs, values, ideologies and perspectives, and create a relative homogeneity and a cultural mainstream regardless of viewers' membership in different demographic or social subgroups in a given social structure (Khan et al., 1999). It does so by



**“blurring traditional social distinctions, blending otherwise divergent groups into the mainstream, and bending the mainstream in the direction of the medium's interests in profits, populist politics, and power ” (Gerbner, 1987b, p. 4).**

**In cultivation, social reality perceptions tend to become exaggerated relative to social reality shown in media messages, whereas, in ambiguation, social reality perceptions become blurred. If cultivation of perceptions is considered as a continuum then cultivation would be a distal end, and ambiguation would be at the proximal or lower end of the continuum where the perceptions tend to become blurred and faded away, or less salient from human consciousness.**

**While scholars have studies cultivation effects of long-term exposure to the most recurrent and dominant entertainment programming on viewers’ social reality perceptions (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999), little to no attention has been paid on examining whether persistent exposure to entertainment programming ambiguates viewers’ existing perceptions, beliefs and values, which are centrally-held in their common consciousness but are systematically excluded from the mass-produced cultural messages. The absence of certain values, beliefs and social realities such as the salience of God from the cultural mainstream may have ambiguation effects. Therefore, it is hypothesized:**

**H2: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the salience of entity God. Specifically, hypothesis H2 posits that:**

**H2a: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the perceived social salience (mindfulness) of entity God.**

**H2b: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the salience of the entity God in viewers’ consciousness.**

The emergence of new media technologies and the ever-increasing variety of new media platforms may have altered traditional television viewing patterns and transformed the way audiences spend time in the fictional world of dramatized entertainment and consume cultural messages. The proliferation of new media devices, services and viewing platforms have given rise to content choices, selectivity, and fragmented audiences, with the potential of having far-reaching implications on the current and future paradigmatic status of cultivation and its macro-level conceptions (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010; Morgan et al., 2014, 2015). From the standpoint of cultivation theory, the new media environment is categorized into two types of platforms: (1) online viewing platforms which have the potential to amplify television viewing effects as these facilitate audiences to watch even more fictional entertainment programming than ever before; and (2) social networking platforms which have the ability to attenuate television viewing effects as these types of platforms enable users to interact virtually with others. Therefore, this study used online viewing platforms such as YouTube, Dailymotion (free streaming sites), and Netflix (subscription-based streaming platform) as a moderator that increases viewers' exposure to dramatized entertainment and that has the potential for both positive and negative interactions in cultivation and ambiguation outcomes. On the other hand, virtual social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp etc., appear to have the potential to neutralize or attenuate television viewing effects, as these platforms mirror the objective social world in terms of social relationships and interactions. As such, social networking platforms are used as a moderator in potentially attenuating the cultivation and ambiguation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on perceptions and attitudes of audience members. Therefore, it is hypothesized:

**H3: Type of new media use will differentially moderate the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainments on television and viewers' attitudes and perceptions about materialism and salience of entity God. Specifically, hypothesis H3 posits that:**

**H3a: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' materialistic orientation such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect higher materialistic orientation, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3b: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' perceived social prevalence of materialism such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3c: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect lower salience of entity God in their consciousness, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3d: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived social salience of entity God such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect lower perceived social salience of entity God, compared low online viewers.**

**H3e: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers'**

**materialistic orientation such that high social media users will reflect lower materialistic orientation, compared to low social media users.**

**H3f: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' perceived social prevalence of materialism such that high social media users will reflect lower perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to low social media users.**

**H3g: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness such that high social media users will reflect higher salience of entity God in their consciousness, compared to low social media users.**

**H3h: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived social salience of entity God such that high social media users will reflect higher perceived social salience of entity God, compared to low social media users.**

**Keeping in mind the prevalence and recurrence of these ideologically incongruent values and images in the mass-produced stories and the impact potential of these messages under cultivation research paradigm, the domestic and foreign message systems appear to be weakening the hold of Islamic ideology and its cultural impressions in Pakistani society, while projecting, maintaining and strengthening the manifestation of materialistic beliefs and values at both individual and societal levels.**

**There appears to be an undeclared, unrealized and unseen ideological and cultural war going on in our minds through the daily injection of culturally and ideologically incompatible and incongruent domestic and foreign media content. The mass infusion of commercially-produced**

cultural messages into Pakistani society could be tearing apart our social fabric by blurring, blending, and bending standard cultural practices, norms and values of Pakistani society, which came into existence on the basis of Islamic ideology and which draws its cultural references and philosophical underpinnings from the religious teachings of Islam. Therefore, the role of religiosity cannot be ignored in the cultivation process in a Muslim society like Pakistan. From the standpoint of cultivation effects in Pakistan, religious commitment is an important variable to specify when and under what conditions cultivation and ambiguation effects are likely to appear and whether the level of religious commitment of audience members moderate the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and social reality perceptions and beliefs about materialism and salience of entity God. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

**H4: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and their attitudes and perceptions towards materialism and the salience of entity God. Specifically, H4 posits that:**

**H4a: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' materialistic orientation such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect lower materialistic orientation, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.**

People with more positive attitudes towards religious values and higher religious commitment exhibit a lot of sensitivity towards materialism because it contradicts Islamic values and beliefs and runs counter the Islamic belief system about life in this world and the world hereafter. People with more positive attitudes towards religious generally tend to uphold their

religious commitments. As such, there is a likelihood that they may consider a smaller change perception about materialism to be higher due to their level of religiosity. Hence, it is hypothesized:

**H4b: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived prevalence of materialism in society such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.**

**H4c: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in their consciousness such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect relatively lower ambiguation effects, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.**

**H4d: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived social salience of entity God such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect relatively lower ambiguation effects, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.**

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This study uses quantitative analysis to investigate the effects of exposure to fictional entertainment programming on values and beliefs of viewers. The study employs survey research methods to measure viewers' orientation toward materialism and the salience of God as an entity in their consciousness. The researchers usually do many things in a single survey such as measuring variables and testing of hypothesis. The survey methods are often used to study the audience attitudes towards any trend, program preferences or their buying habits (De Vaus, 2002b). The data collection procedures and sample are described below, followed by a description of the items used to measure the variables of interest. In the final section of this chapter, the data analyses conducted to answer each research questions are presented.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is one of the key ingredients of research, as it provides a framework within which investigations progress from the preliminary research questions to a number of conclusions prompted by those questions (Yin, 2006). Research design organizes the research process in such a way that the collected data can conclusively and convincingly answer the relevant research questions of an intended study. Research design is a logical issue, and not an issue of logistics. It ensures that all the relevant concepts are included to collect relevant information for all the relevant variables and that hypotheses are tested validly. As such, research design is meant to ensure the internal validity of a study.

This study to employed a cross-sectional design where data was collected in one point of time and one point in time, (De Vaus, 2002b). The cross-sectional design is generally considered

as a more appropriate method for descriptive as well as explanatory research. The design helped to ensure that the distribution of variables in this study's population could easily be recorded and relationships between variables could be well specified.

For data collection, a self-developed questionnaire was used for data collection on materialistic values, beliefs and perceptions, as well as on the salience of entity God. In most cases, data collection using the survey method has been traditionally linked with cross-sectional, longitudinal, and panel study designs etc.

### **3.3 Research Model**

In view of the significance and hypotheses presented earlier, this study examined the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and several dependent variables. The three exposure variables are used as predictors: (1) time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day (2) time spent watching entertainment programming online in a day; and (3) time spent on social networking platforms in a day.

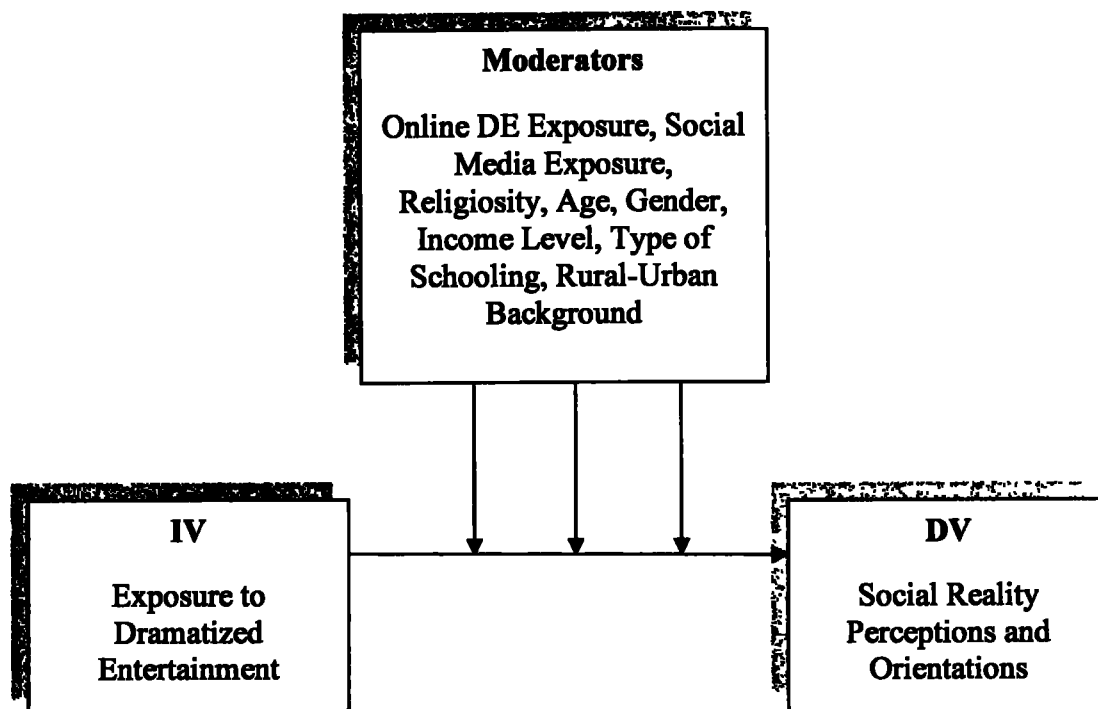
The present research specifically explores the direct relationships between (1) exposure to dramatized entertainment and perceived prevalence of materialism in society, (2) exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' materialistic orientation, (3) exposure to dramatized entertainment and perceived social salience of entity God, (4) exposure to dramatized entertainment and salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness and (5) the likely influence of several moderators that could help specify the nature of effects on selected dependent variables. The study's moderator variables included (1) online exposure to dramatized entertainment (2) exposure to social networking platforms (3) religious value orientation, after controlling for the potential influence of several demographic variables, namely (1) gender, (2) age, (3) education,



(4) family income, (5) type of schools attended, (6) ritual observance and (6) residential background of the respondents (rural-urban background).

The role of moderator variables in this study is in line with the argument of the original proponents of cultivation theory by specifying the main effects through moderators. They maintain that although the main effects, which are the impact of the independent variables on dependent variables, are equally important, they can only provide information about the presence of some general effects. Therefore, “finding an interaction between television viewing and direct experience is important to understanding the processes that underlie cultivation effects” (Shrum & Bischak, 2001).

Figure 1 A model describing the relationships between independent, dependent and moderator variables



### **3.4 Population of the Study**

The present study's population consisted of senior-level students enrolled in the 2020/2021 academic year at the International Islamic University, Islamabad. Specifically, the study's population comprised the seventh and eight semesters from undergraduate programs, and all the graduate and postgraduate-level students. These students represent a slice of the second-youngest population in the South Asian region (Dawn, 2018), who may be more vulnerable to the effects of fictional entertainment programming due to their tender age, the sociological changes in their lives, unsettled sense of direction and personal judgment. These students may also be more susceptible to entertainment industry's messages because of their ritualistic exposure to mass media, their presence on new media platforms, their reasoning abilities, hero worshipping of media celebrities, and lack of real-world life experiences (Gruber & Grube, 2000). The student population was selected due to feasibility reasons; viz, lack of funding support and time constraints. Since this study was aimed at finding the potential effects of mass-produced messages on audience members, the student population seems to possess the rightful criteria required for such type of studies. Moreover, social and behavioral scholars tend to contend that the audience members, rather than the media organizations or the message itself, should be the subject of media effects studies (Salwen, 1991).

Generally, university students, their gender notwithstanding, have been found to exhibit most robust cultivation effects across 20 years of research, with the undergraduate students watching huge amounts of television (Morgan and Shanahan, 1995). In essence the relationship between the youth, both males and females, and dramatized entertainment seem to possess the two possibilities as inseparable entities. The youth could also provide for the biggest audience for both social networking platforms and online entertainment viewing platforms (citation). Media scholars

have used youth in their studies as it provides the biggest television audience besides being the most vulnerable subgroup to cultivation effects, Khan et al. (1992).

### **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

The data used in this study was collected through multistage cluster sampling procedures. The methods are time- and cost-efficient and are useful in randomly selecting a sample from a large population size where sampling frame is not easily available. The sample comprised senior-level students enrolled at various departments of the International Islamic University, Islamabad, during the 2019/2020 academic year. These departments formed the basis upon which clustering was performed. The sample was drawn from an estimated total population of 28,000 students by using the multistage cluster sampling procedures.

Firstly, the researcher obtained the lists of all the departments along with their enrolled student batches to cluster the departments by size with the largest departments forming small groups and the smallest forming larger group of clusters.

Cluster I composed of the departments of Management Sciences and Shari'ah, with 25 and 22 batches respectively; departments of Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering formed cluster II with 20 batches each; cluster III comprised departments of Education and Computer Sciences with 18 batches each; departments of English (15 batches), Urdu (14 batches) and Electrical Engineering (15 batches) formed cluster IV; departments of Physics (10 batches), Economics (11 batches), Psychology (13 batches) and History (13 batches) were grouped into cluster V; cluster VI consisted of departments of Tafseer, Anthropology, Media, Politics and IR, and Dawah with 9 batches each; departments of Sociology (8 batches), Environmental Science (7 batches), Hadith (8 batches), Law (8 batches), Arabic (8 batches) and Aqeedah (7 bathes) formed cluster VII; and,

lastly, departments of Seerah and Comparative Religion (6 batches each), Islamic Arts (4 batches), Biological Sciences (4 batches), Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Basic Science (4 batches) and Persian (1 batch) formed cluster VIII.

In the next step, simple random method was used to obtain a final list of departments from each of the eight clusters by coin flipping. Hence, one department each was obtained from clusters I-IV: Management Sciences from cluster I, Mathematics and Statistics from cluster II, Computer Sciences from cluster III and English from cluster IV. Departments of Physics and Economics were randomly selected from cluster V; departments of Anthropology, Media and Politics & IR from cluster VI, departments of Environmental Science and Law from cluster VII and Biological Sciences and Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Basic Science from cluster VIII.

A total of 13 departments were obtained for the final sample. Next, the selected departments were stratified by gender to obtain a representative sample of senior-level student batches, comprising batches of BS VII and BS VIII from undergraduate programs and all batches of all postgraduate programs. In total, the researcher randomly obtained 14 BS-level and 29 postgraduate-level male student batches; and 20 BS-level and 30 postgraduate-level female batches.

A total sample of 750 male and female students was selected, allowing a sampling error of 5 percent. Students were used in this study because they represent youth more than any other groups in society. Also, it is the youth population that may be more vulnerable and exposed to potential influence the domestic and international entertainment media fare. Hence, the student population was selected in spite of some disapproval over the use of students as respondents in research work.

Critics argue that research findings connected to student respondents have been deficient of external validity mainly due to their inability to provide adequate substantiation for a representative sample of general population. Similarly, the atmospheres for data collection may cause bias to the findings. The above concerns were corrected through sampling students from the IIUI male and female campuses. The researcher supervised the entire data collection process and adequately briefed the respondents before distributing the questionnaire. The decision to self-administer data collection and collect in-person responses was intended to mitigate the likely influence of blind and/or incomplete responses.

### **3.6 Instrumentation**

In order to obtain the desired information on the study's constructs, a self-administered questionnaire was designed, and employed for data collection. The instrument was divided into four sections, with the first part consisting of the items pertaining to materialism variables, the second part contained demographic items, the third part of the questionnaire pertained to items about the predictor variables, and the fourth part contained ambiguation items. The main criterion variables for cultivation outcomes were included prior to the exposure items because cultivation studies have shown that if television exposure is measured prior to cultivation responses, the magnitude of cultivation effects may be seriously reduced (Shrum, Wyer, & O'Guinn, 1998; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). This sequence was designed to prevent a spurious effect from thinking about television while specifying views on other topics.

Items pertaining to materialism variables tapped information about respondents' materialistic orientation and perceived social prevalence of materialism. Respondents' demographic information was collected through items pertaining to gender, age, family income, religiosity, type of schooling, rural-urban background, and offline interactions. Inclusion of such

demographic variables is due to the fact that previous studies have always found gender, age and income to correlate well with other measures used in typical cultivation type studies (Shrum & Bischak, 2001). Items pertaining to ambiguation outcomes such as salience of entity God and perceived social salience of entity God were included in the final part because of the open-ended nature of one the variables. This was done to minimize the chances of incomplete responses.

The instrument was later pre-tested twice on a comparable group of undergraduate youth audience in order to determine the effectiveness of the items in collecting the desired information, gauge respondents' understanding of the questions/items, and estimate the time required to fulfill the questionnaires. The respondents of the two pilot studies did not constitute part of the final sample. Revisions were eventually incorporated into the final instrument as per the findings of the final pilot study. The final pre-test study was carried out on 44 cases to ensure that the incorporated revisions were appropriate, and the instrument was ready for use. Generally, the Cronbach alpha reliability test measuring the internal consistency of indices ranged between 0.7 and 0.95.

### **3.7 Data Collection**

After making the necessary changes dictated by the two pilot studies, the final questionnaire was used for data collection. The researcher went class-by-class and surveyed every second student present in the class at the time of the visit. The researcher first read the instructions, thoroughly briefed the respondents about the questionnaire and then distributed the questionnaires to the respondents of the selected classes. Participants were requested to complete the survey in class, and were further advised to return all surveys to the researcher who waited at the front of the room. The researcher collected the completed surveys and offered chocolates and candies to each of the respondents as a token of thanks.

A total of 750 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents at the male and female sections. Since all selected batches were not expected to converge at the same time for lectures, the data collection exercise was completed in four weeks from 15th November, 2020.

The response rate was overwhelming. About 91% (682) of the questionnaires across both campuses were returned out of a possible 750. The male respondents returned 305 out of the 350 questionnaires distributed with a response rate of 87%, while the female respondents returned 368 out of 400 questionnaires distributed with a response rate of 92%. The higher response rate at the female campus may be attributed to the support of their respective head of the department and a more disciplinary environment in the campus. A total of 281 respondents were picked from IIUI's male campus, and 350 from the female campus, after excluding 41 incomplete responses.

The collected data revealed a cross section of respondents' profiles across age, gender, marital status, education level, household income and residential background. The youngest respondent was aged 18 years old while the oldest was 56 years old, with the mean age being 22.97 ( $SD = 4.10$ ). For the purpose of convenience, respondents' ages were grouped. Hence, most of the respondents fell in the 21-24 age-group, typical of undergraduate university going students. The smallest numbers of respondents by age-group were in the 27-29, and 30 and above age-groups. Table 1 shows the respondents' profile.

**Table 1: Respondents' profile (N=631)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Valid %</b>
<b>Age</b>	18 – 20	127	20.1
	21 – 23	347	55.0
	24 -26	162	14.4
	27-29	30	4.8
	30 and above	36	5.7
	N	631	100
<b>Marital Status</b>	Single	560	88.7
	Married	71	11.3
	N	631	100
<b>Gender</b>	Male	281	44.5
	Female	350	55.5
	N	631	

Out of the total respondents, 281 (44.5%) were male and 350 (55.5%) were female (*SD* = .497). This distribution is broadly in line with the gender distribution at the International Islamic University, Islamabad.

### **3.8 Concepts and Measures**

This study comprised of the following concepts which are categorized as independent, dependent, moderating and control variables. The independent variables were time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment



online in a day. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day sounds more ritualistic from cultivation's point of view, while time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day presupposes audience activity. Further, from a theoretical point of view, combining these two exposure variables would lead to multicollinearity which, in turn, could suppress the effects of one of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

The dependent variables of this study were several first-order and second-order cultivation and ambiguation variables, namely materialistic orientation, perceived prevalence of materialism in society, salience of the entity God in consciousness and the perceived social salience of entity God.

Perceived prevalence of materialism in society tested the first-order cultivation criteria, as it examined estimations of frequency, beliefs about the everyday world, and societal-level knowledge about the real world, such as prevalence of materialism in society. According to Hawkins and Pingree (1990), first-order effects are "estimations of frequency and probability of aspects of social reality that seem to be empirically observable and verifiable in the real world" (p. 49). Likewise, the perceived social salience of entity God was first-order ambiguation criteria.

On the other hand, viewers' materialistic orientation was second-order cultivation criteria and salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness was second-order ambiguation criteria. These two variables were categorized as second-order items because they measured respondents' attitudes towards materialism and their feelings or thoughts about the entity God.

This study employed time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day, time spent on social networking sites in a day and religious values orientation as moderator variables. This study's control variables were age, gender, household income, type of schooling, rural-urban background, offline interactions and ritual observance.

### **3.8.1 Exposure to Dramatized Entertainment**

Cultivation literature defines television exposure as a non-selective exposure to television programming and it has been indexed through hours spent per day with the message system or week of viewing (Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, Morgan & Jackson-Beeck, 1979; Shanahan, Morgan & Stenbjørre, 1997).

From the cultivation perspective, the ideal measures provide estimates of the average number of hours the respondent watches each day, as opposed to how many shows they watch regularly or what types of shows or channels they like most, (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Cultivation researchers usually examine television exposure through several indicators of the amount of time respondents spend while watching television in a typical day. The relativity of the terms usage allows researchers to determine what constitutes heavy, medium and light viewing based on specific samples (Gerbner 2000). The present study uses procedures similar to those applied in prior studies (Nabi & Riddle, 2008; Nabi & Sullivan, 2001; Shrum et al., 1998) to measure the overall exposure to dramatized entertainment.

Therefore, exposure to dramatized entertainment is conceptualized as exposure to dramatized and fictional entertainment content, including TV shows, serial films, movies, dramas, soap operas, advertisements, cartoons, and any other commercially-produced entertainment fare etc., on a television set. Hence, exposure to dramatized entertainment is defined as the amount of time viewers spend watching dramatized and fictionalized commercial fare on a television set during a typical day.

In the same vein, exposure to dramatized entertainment online is conceptualized as exposure to all dramatized and fictional entertainment content, including reality shows, serial films, movies, dramas, soap operas, advertisements, cartoons, and other commercially-produced

entertainment fare etc., online on free streaming platforms such as YouTube and subscription-based sites such as Netflix. Hence, exposure to dramatized entertainment is defined as the amount of time viewers spend watching dramatized and fictionalized commercial fare online during a typical day.

The participants were asked to estimate the number of hours they spend watching dramatized entertainment on a television set in a day and the number of hours they spend watching dramatized entertainment online in a day. More specifically, the respondents were asked: "Usually in a day, how much time in hours do you spend with a television set for watching dramas, movies, seasons, TV shows, reality shows, sitcoms, and any other type of entertainment?" "Usually in a day, how much time in hours do you spend online (for example on YouTube, Dailymotion, Netflix, Amazon or any other such site) for watching dramas, movies, seasons, reality shows, sitcoms, or any other type of entertainment?"

The response option for the two questions were finalized by seeing the pre-test results. The following scale was created from zero hours or less to 8 hours or more.: Less than 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6 hours, 7 hours, 8 hours or more.

The findings indicated that the overall mean score for hours spent watching dramatized entertainment programs on television in a day is  $M=1.36$ ,  $SD=1.45$ . This suggests that the average time spent by the students watching fictional entertainment fare on a television set is slightly over 1 hour (1.36 hours) in a typical day. The distributions, means and standard deviations are presented in tables 2 below.

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviations of hours of watching dramatized entertainment on a TV set (N=631)**

No	Hours	%	Overall %	Mean	SD
1.	0	32.7	100	1.357	1.453
2.	1	32.8			
3.	2	18.4			
4.	3	8.5			
5.	4	3.8			
6.	5	1.7			
7.	6	1			
8.	7	.3			
9.	8	.8			

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

The set of distributions for online exposure to dramatized entertainment are particularly interesting because viewers do relatively more of their overall viewing on online platforms compared to traditional television set viewing. The overall mean score for hours spent watching dramatized entertainment programs online in a day is  $M=2.832$ ,  $SD=1.842$ , more than the overall mean score of  $M=1.357$ ,  $SD=1.453$  for television viewing in day. The distributions, means and standard deviations are presented in table 3 below.

**Table 3: Mean and standard deviations of hours of watching dramatized entertainment online (N=631)**

No	Hours	%	Overall %	Mean	SD
1.	0	4.6	100	2.832	1.842
2.	1	20.9			
3.	2	27.9			
4.	3	16.7			
5.	4	13.4			
6.	5	7.3			
7.	6	4.0			
8.	7	2.0			
9.	8	3.2			

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.2 Exposure to Social Networking Sites**

Exposure to social media platforms is defined as the amount of time users spend on social networking platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram and Snapchat, Skype, WeChat or any other such platform during a typical day.

In order to capture social media users' exposure, the respondents were asked: Usually in a day, how much time in hours do you spend on social networking platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, WeChat or any other such platform? A nine-point response scale was provided, with options ranging from 1= zero hour or less, to 9 = 8 hours or more.

The findings indicated that the overall mean score for hours spent on social networking sites in a day is  $M = 4.184$ ,  $SD = 2.011$ . This suggests that the average time spent by the students using social media platforms is more than 4 hours (4.18 hours) in a typical day. The distributions, means and standard deviations are presented in tables 4 below.

**Table 4: Mean and standard deviations of hours on social networking sites (N=631)**

No	Hours	%	Overall %	Mean	SD
1.	0	.2	100	4.184	2.011
2.	1	6.6			
3.	2	17.7			
4.	3	15.9			
5.	4	21.5			
6.	5	13.6			
7.	6	9.8			
8.	7	4.6			
9.	8	10.1			

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.3 Materialistic Orientation**

Materialism has been a much-studied construct throughout recorded history and it continues to be the focus of academic debate and discourse, with different scholars using varying conceptualizations for the materialism construct (Belk, 1983; Richins & Rudmin, 1994). Researchers from various disciplines define materialism from different perspectives such as a way of life, a value orientation, a cultural system, a personality trait, a second-order value, an aspiration (Bindah & Othman, 2011). According to Fournier and Richins (1991), the construct is best conceptualized as a value orientation in which materialists place a high value on acquisition as a means to reach important life goals. The consumer behavior literature describes materialism as the importance a consumer places on worldly possessions (Belk, 1985).

There are two main approaches to materialism in the contemporary empirical research. One that views materialism as the personality trait and other that sees materialism as a part of personal value system. According to Belk (1983), materialism can be defined as “the importance a person

attaches to material possessions and the belief that certain possessions are the primary source of happiness. At the highest levels of materialism, such possessions assume a central place in a person's life and are believed to provide the greatest sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction" (Belk, 1984, p. 291). Belk's scale relates materialism to the personality traits of possessiveness, non-generosity, envy, and preservation, which was added later (Belk, 1985; Ger & Belk, 1996).

Another widely accepted approach to materialism suggest that materialism can be viewed as a value that consumers gives to possessions. Proponents of this approach argue that materialism should be studied within the context of the larger value systems that individuals hold (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Richins & Dawson, 1990). Richins and Dawson (1992) defined materialism as "the importance a person places on possessions and their acquisition as a necessary or desirable form of conduct to reach desired end states" (p. 307). The definition features three domains: First, the "acquisition centrality" is the extent to which possessions and acquisition are a central focus of one's life. Second, the "pursuit of happiness through acquisition" is the belief that acquiring more or different things will increase happiness and well-being. The third facet, "possession defined success" is the tendency to gauge the success of oneself and of others by possessions (Richins, 2017, p. 484).

Thus, materialism is characterized as a set of value-laden beliefs that guide people's daily lives and their consumption decisions. Subsequent studies using the scale have exhibited high internal reliability (Richins, 1994; Roberts & Clement, 2007). As defined, materialism is a set of centrally-held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one's life (Richins & Dawson, 1992) or as an attitude orientation emphasizing possessions and money for personal happiness and social progress (Moschis & Churchill Jr, 1978). Materialism has received relatively little attention in the

context of cultivation effects. Scholars who did study the relationship between television exposure and materialism primarily used Richins' conceptual and operational definition of materialism.

In order to capture audience members' perceptions and beliefs about materialism in Pakistani society, the present study conceptualized materialism as an orientation that places more value in worldly life, its pleasures and comforts, wealth and material possessions and their acquisition. For the attainment of these objectives, a person with materialistic orientation is likely to give little consideration to the morality/legitimacy of the means adopted. A person with materialistic orientation is likely to give importance to a pragmatic approach in meeting the desired end goals of life in this world. Success and happiness for a person with a materialistic orientation may be considered as coterminous and synonymous states in this life contingent primarily on material possessions. It is also based on perceptions that materialism is predominant in society and is a prerequisite for success and happiness in life.

The differentiating aspects of this definition from others are that it (a) attempts to de-Westernize the conceptual and operation definitions of materialism to account for the cultural context of Muslim societies; (b) views materialism as an orientation that sees acquisition of wealth and material possessions as important goals of life; (c) gives preference to pragmatic approach to achieving material goals of life than moral and ethical approach and; (d) incorporates social reality perceptions about materialism in society.

In order to capture materialistic orientation of the respondents, a self-report format was deemed appropriate because it allows participants to report their attitudes, values, beliefs about a given phenomenon (Free, Boltan, & Kreps, 2000). The respondents asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to a set of statements on a five-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1= *Strongly disagree* to 5= *Strongly agree*. As such, a person's high score on the scale indicates



that the individual is more inclined towards materialistic beliefs and values, and a person's low score on the scale indicates the individual is less oriented towards materialistic beliefs and values.

The items were "Life rewards those people more who act more rationally than morally in life," "To get ahead of others in life, it is sometimes necessary to be an opportunist," "I would adjust my ideals if a situation demands for making immediate gains in life," "Being rich is important for living an ideal version of life," "My life would be better if I get filthy rich in the near future," "Success in life is determined by how much wealth one has got," "I'm more concerned with what salary I get from my work rather than what work I do," "Being wealthy is NOT a priority to me," "One's ability to buy anything one wants indicates one's success in life," "As far as material possessions are concerned, enough is never enough," "My life would be better if I owned a bungalow in a posh neighborhood," "I like to own things that signal prestige to others," "I am prepared to achieve my goals in life regardless of the means I adopt," "I would be happier in life if could afford to buy all the things I want," "It bothers me quite a bit when I compare my material possessions to those above me," "Achieving material success in this worldly life is very important to me," "It is important to me to live this worldly life to its fullest before it ends," "To me life without physical pleasures/enjoyments is empty," "I want to enjoy all the pleasures of life in this world unhindered by anything," "I would be happier in life if I have the freedom from any and all rules to pursue my desires," and "To me life in this world is more a festival than a place for moral discipline."

Before computing scale items to create an index of respondents' attitudes towards materialism, the items were tested for reliability. The 19-item yielded an alpha of .87 with corrected inter-item correlations ranging between .30 to .61. The findings indicated that, overall, the mean score for the respondents' materialistic orientation is  $M = 60.04$ ,  $SD = 11.52$ ). Table 5

presents the means and standard deviations for the respective items for the students' materialistic orientation.

**Table 5: Mean and standard deviations of respondents' materialistic orientation (N=631)**

No	Item	Level of Agreement %					Overall (%)	Mean	STD
		1 SD	2	3	4	5 SA			
1.	Life rewards those people more who act more rationally than morally in life.	2.5	20.1	17.4	45.8	14.2	100	3.51	1.04
2.	To get ahead of others in life, it is sometimes necessary to be an opportunist.	2.0	12.3	16.9	56.2	12.6	100	3.65	.917
3.	I would adjust my ideals if a situation demands for making immediate gains in life.	4.0	18.4	23.1	45.4	9.1	100	3.34	1.04
4.	Being rich is important for living an ideal version of life.	8.1	27.4	17.9	34.3	12.3	100	3.13	1.22
5.	My life would be better if I get filthy rich in the near future.	8.6	21.7	23.7	35.8	10.2	100	3.18	1.15
6.	Success in life is determined by how much wealth one has got.	16.4	33.0	21.2	23.1	6.3	100	2.69	1.18
7.	I'm more concerned with what salary I get from my work rather than what work I do.	15.1	30.8	22.3	25.5	6.3	100	2.77	1.17

No	Item	Level of Agreement %					Overall (%)	Mean	STD
		1 SD	2	3	4	5 SA			
8.	Being wealthy is NOT a priority to me.	9.8	32.0	29.0	24.0	5.2	100	2.83	1.06
9.	One's ability to buy anything one wants indicates one's success in life.	6.5	21.6	26.4	38.0	7.5	100	3.19	1.07
10.	My life would be better if I owned a bungalow in a posh neighborhood.	1.5	3.5	9.3	19.7	66.0	100	2.78	1.13
11.	I am prepared to achieve my goals in life regardless of the means I adopt.	11.9	30.5	17.3	30.7	9.6	100	2.96	1.22
12.	I would be happier in life if could afford to buy all the things I want.	8.8	21.1	18.4	37.3	15.4	100	3.31	1.21
13.	It bothers me quite a bit when I compare my material possessions to those above me.	9.6	28.2	22.9	33.0	6.3	100	2.97	1.12
14.	Achieving material success in this worldly life is very important to me.	11.5	28.0	20.2	32.0	8.3	100	2.96	1.18
15.	It is important to me to live this worldly life to its fullest before it ends.	7.1	15.6	14.8	44.6	17.9	100	3.49	1.17
16.	To me life without physical pleasures/enjoyments is empty.	4.6	16.6	19.8	40.1	18.9	100	3.51	1.13

No	Item	Level of Agreement %					Overall (%)	Mean	STD
		1 SD	2	3	4	5 SA			
17.	I want to enjoy all the pleasures of life in this world unhindered by anything.	5.0	16.5	20.1	42.6	15.8	100	3.49	1.09
18.	I would be happier in life if I have the freedom from any and all rules to pursue my desires.	6.0	20.6	20.6	38.5	14.5	100	3.35	1.14
19.	To me life in this world is more a festival than a place for moral discipline.	10.9	32.3	21.9	24.9	10.0	100	2.92	1.19

*Note: SD and SA are used to represent strongly disagree and strongly agree, respectively. STD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### 3.8.4 Perceived Social Prevalence of Materialism

Although perception has a different meaning for many scholars, almost all scholars regard perception by consensus as a process, or procedure. Perception is, therefore, the procedure by which the brain dynamically organizes, and construes sensory information. It relates to how people make sense of their environment (al., 2008). Perception involves the detection, and interpretation of stimuli, which are consciously recorded on people’s senses (Rookes & Willson, 2005). In the same way, it is considered to be a process by which a person chooses, assesses, and organizes stimuli from his or her external environment. In this respect, perceptions are those ways in which an individual experiences the world (Donsbach & Traugott, 2007).

According to Gerbner et. al. (1979), social reality is a “coherent picture of what exists, what is important, how things are related, and what is right,” signifying that social reality perceptions are general observations about socially shared beliefs in society. Generally, in most cultivation

studies, prevalence estimates are used to measure social reality beliefs or perceptions (Riddle, 2007), denoting first-order cultivation effects. In addition, the original social reality scale of George Gerbner tackled television violence (Griffin et al., 2009) with emphasis on the prevalence estimates of crime. A review of literature shows that prevalence is defined as dominance, pervasiveness, existence of a common practice, and behavior on a large scale (Insch & Florek, 2009).

Henceforth, in this study, the perceived prevalence of materialism in society means an individual's assessment of the pervasiveness of materialistic attitudes and behaviors in society such that materialism is predominant in society and the acquisition of wealth and material possessions is perceived as a prerequisite for success in life. In short, the perceived social prevalence of materialism is a person's perceptions of how pervasive or prevalent materialism is in society.

Respondents' perceptions about the perceived prevalence of materialism in society were tapped through three question items comprising: "In your view, about what percent of people in our society may be regarded as materialistic?" "In your view, about what percent of people in our society seek happiness in material possessions?" "In your view, about what percent of people in our society consider wealth/material possessions a sign of success in life?"

A nine-point response scale (1= 10% or fewer people to 9= 90% or more people with an interval of 10%) was provided, with a possible minimum score of 3 and possible maximum score of 27. These response ranges were developed from the focus group discussions conducted with the prospective population of this study. The items were tested for reliability, yielding an alpha of .77 with corrected inter-item correlations ranging between .55 to .65.

The data revealed that the overall mean score for the respondents' perceptions about the perceived prevalence of materialism in society is  $M = 21.11$ ,  $SD = 4.59$ , meaning that overwhelmingly majority of the respondents believe that materialism is highly prevalent in Pakistani society. Table 6 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the three items tapping respondents' perceptions about materialism in society ( $M = 7.036$ ).

**Table 6: Mean and standard deviations of perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $N=631$ )**

No	Item	Perceived Prevalence of Materialism in Society (%)									Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		10% or fewer	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90% or more			
1	In your view, about what percent of people in our society may be regarded as materialistic?	.8	2.7	3.5	5.5	11.3	10.9	22.2	17.9	25.2	100	6.86	1.94
2	In your view, about what percent of people in our society seek happiness in material possessions?	.8	2.2	4.1	5.6	9.8	12.8	18.7	23.9	22.1	100	6.86	1.89
3	In your view, about what percent of people in our society consider wealth/material possessions a sign of success in life?	.3	1.5	2.2	4.1	7.1	7.8	16.9	27.9	32.2	100	7.39	1.71

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.5 Salience of Entity God**

**Salience is determinant of attitude strength. It is the likelihood that an attitude will be automatically activated from memory on encountering the attitude object. Fazio (1990) depicts attitudes as structures in long-term memory, with the same properties as other structures in long-term memory. Meanwhile, Anderson (1983) sees memory as an associative network in which concepts are the nodes and the relations between concepts are the links. The links between two concepts become stronger when the concepts are activated together. Hence, salience is a cognitive process that depends on the strength of the associative link in memory between the representation of the object and the evaluation of the object. The stronger the memory link between the object and an evaluation, the more quickly the attitude will come to mind. On the contrary, if the memory link between the object and its evaluation is weak or is nonexistent, an evaluation 'may be constructed on the spot on the basis of whatever information and features of the object happen to be salient at that moment' (Dovidio & Fazio, 1992, p. 206).**

**Therefore, the present study sees salience as a cognitive process implying that the frequency and salience of a social reality in audio-visual inputs would determine the strength of the salience of that social reality in audience members' consciousness. The more prominently and frequently a social reality is entrenched and depicted in mass-produced fictional entertainment stories, the more salient and accessible it would likely be in the common consciousness of audiences. At the other end of the spectrum, if a social reality is nonexistent or is only located on the periphery of the fictional world of dramatized entertainment, it is likely to be less salient in the consciousness of heavy consumers of that entertainment content. For the purpose of the present study, salience of entity God is being used as a surrogate for ambiguity effects. It is defined as**

a deeply- and firmly-held value that refers to the ease with it comes to viewers' consciousness in daily situations of life.

Saliency of entity God in respondents' consciousness was indexed by asking them a set of open-ended questions that required them to list the first three thoughts or feelings that occurred to them in response to those questions. The responses were assigned a value based on the following criteria: 1= Not at all salient, 2= Sometimes salient, 3= Often salient, 4= Almost always salient. The scores were added to create an index. The lower the score on the index, the less the saliency of entity God in respondents' consciousness and higher the ambiguation effect. The items were tested for reliability, yielding an alpha value of .81, with corrected inter-item correlations ranging between .39 to .55.

The respondents were asked: What occurs to your mind "when you visit a beautiful place," "when you hear good news, when you serve guests at home," "when you get help," "when someone or something makes you very happy," "when you get some bad news," "when you succeed in solving some problem," "when you reach home safely after a long journey," "when you buy some expensive things," "when things don't go according to your plans," "when you or your loved ones recover from some ailment," and "when you see something very beautiful."

The findings indicated that, overall, the mean score for the saliency of entity God in respondents' consciousness is  $M=21.32$ ,  $SD=4.82$ , slightly above the middle point. Based on those results, it can be concluded that the saliency of entity God in students' consciousness is half split. Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations for the respective items for the saliency of entity God in students' consciousness.



**Table 7: Mean and standard deviations of self-perceived salience of entity God (N=631)**

No	Item	Self-Perceived Salience of Entity God (%)				Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		1 Not Salient	2	3	4 Almost always salient			
1.	When you visit a beautiful place	41.4	45.8	10.8	2.0	100	1.76	.732
2.	When you hear good news	41.0	43.1	13.1	2.8	100	1.81	.776
3.	When you serve guests at home	18.5	54.6	24.7	2.2	100	2.14	.718
4.	When you get help	25.7	48.7	22.4	3.2	100	2.04	.769
5.	When someone or something makes you very happy	29.5	48.9	19.4	2.2	100	1.95	.749
6.	When you get some bad news	59.5	30.8	7.5	2.2	100	1.56	.736
7.	When you succeed in solving some problem	52.4	38.0	8.6	1.0	100	1.59	.694
8.	When you reach home safely after a long journey	35.3	56.1	7.1	1.5	100	1.77	.648
9.	When you buy some expensive thing	71.8	24.9	3.3	0.0	100	1.37	.567
10.	When things don't go according to your plans	65.6	27.1	6.0	1.3	100	1.46	.667
11.	When you or your loved ones recover from some ailment	18.4	58.9	20.9	1.8	100	2.08	.686
12.	When you see something very beautiful	36.8	51.7	9.0	2.5	100	1.78	.714

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.6 Perceived Social Salience (Mindfulness) of Entity God**

This study conceptualizes perceived social salience of God as a person's assessment of the salience of entity God in the common consciousness of other people in society. That is, the more the people are perceived to be mindful of God in their daily affairs, matters and actions of both public and private life, as well as their inward states, the more will be the perceived social salience of entity God.

In order to tap respondents' perceptions about the salience of entity God in society, they were first sensitized about the perceived social salience (mindfulness) of God with a statement that some people are mindful of God in everyday affairs, situations and events of life while some are not. Then they were asked to report the extent to which they think that people in Pakistani society are mindful of God in everyday affairs, situations and events of life. A five-point response option was provided with the following options: 1= Not at all mindful, 2= Rarely mindful, 3= Sometimes mindful, 4= Often mindful and 5=Almost always mindful. The scores were added to create an index. The lower the score on the index, the less the perceived social salience of entity God and higher the ambiguation effect on respondents' perceptions about salience of God in society. The items were tested for reliability, yielding an alpha value of .78, with corrected inter-item correlations ranging between .29 to .58. All items were kept in the final index, as dropping individual items was meagerly improving the alpha value.

Specifically, the respondents were asked: "To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their daily routines and events?" "To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their relationships?" "To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their dealings with other people?" "To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their good times?" "To what extent do you think people

in our society are mindful of God in their bad times?” “To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their business/work?” “To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their dealings with relatives?”

The data revealed that the overall mean score for perceived social salience (mindfulness) of entity God is  $M= 2.87$ , slightly above the middle point, meaning that the perceived social salience of entity God is on the lower end of the spectrum. Table 8 below presents the mean and standard deviations of the respondents’ perceived social salience of entity God in society.

**Table 8: Mean and standard deviations of the perceived social salience of entity God ( $N=631$ )**

No	Item	Perceived Social Salience of God %					Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		1 Not at all salient	2	3	4	5 Almost always salient			
1.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their daily routines and events?	9.1	31.0	39.3	17.9	2.7	100	2.75	.941
2.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their relationships?	7.6	32.0	34.3	22.9	3.2	100	2.83	.979
3.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their dealings with other people?	11.3	34.5	36.8	15.1	2.3	100	2.64	.950
4.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their good times?	9.1	31.8	32.8	19.4	6.8	100	2.83	1.053

No	Item	Perceived Social Salience of God %					Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		1 Not at all salient	2	3	4	5 Almost always salient			
5.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their bad times?	6.6	14.9	17.7	36.5	24.2	100	3.58	1.19
6.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their business/work?	8.8	28.4	40.0	18.9	4.0	100	2.82	.976
7.	To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in their dealings with relatives?	12.2	32.0	37.8	15.1	3.0	100	2.66	.978

*Note:* *SD* is used to represent standard deviation.

### 3.8.7 Demographic Variables

Gerbner and his colleagues (2000) have stressed the use of various demographic variables as controls in several studies that they conducted. The most common variables that were used separately or simultaneously included gender, age, race, education, income, and political self-designation. Nonetheless, Gerbner argues that other variables could be added as determined by the nature of the study.

#### 3.8.7.1 Family Income

Social status is usually measured as information regarding education and income of the respondents (Chun & Sohn, 2009). This study, however, dropped education as a component of social status due to the nature of the respondents. The surveyed population comprised of university students whose education level was a near constant. As a result, the estimated monthly household

income of respondents was treated as the sole indicator of social status in the present study. Therefore, the respondents were asked to select the option that best described their estimated monthly household income.

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Rs. 30,000 or less    | Rs. 31,000 – 60,000   |
| Rs. 61,000 – 90,000   | Rs. 91,000 – 120,000  |
| Rs. 121,000 – 150,000 | Rs. 151,000 – 180,000 |
| Rs. 181,000 – 210,000 | Rs. 211,000 – 240,000 |
| Rs. 241,00 or more    |                       |

The results revealed that the overall mean score and standard deviation for income as a construct is  $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 1.94$ . These results imply that the average household income of 34.4 percent of the respondents is 60,000 or less. Nearly 32.7 percent of the respondents' estimated monthly household income is between 61,000 and 90,000, and 32.9 percent of the respondents' estimated household monthly income is between 91,000 and 241,000 or more. Table 9 below presents the information about the respondents' estimated household/parental income.

**Table 9: Mean and standard deviations of respondents' monthly household income (N=631)**

No	Household Income	(%)	Overall%	Mean	SD
1.	Rs. 30,000 or less	8.7			
2.	Rs. 31,00 – 60,000	25.7			
3.	Rs. 61,000 – 90,000	32.7			
4.	Rs. 91,000 – 120,000	7.1			
5.	Rs. 121,000 – 150,000	11	100	3.45	1.94
6.	Rs. 151,000 – 180,000	3.6			
7.	Rs. 181,000 – 210,000	3.1			
8.	Rs. 211,000 – 240,000	0.3			
9.	Rs. 241,000 or more	5.3			

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.7.2 Religiosity**

A review of literature showed that there is no single agreed-upon definition of religiosity with different scholars conceptualizing and measuring religiosity in different ways. Religiosity is broadly viewed as a person's religious orientation in terms of beliefs, norms, values, ideology, and rituals etc. Hence, many studies have consistently conceptualized religiosity in terms of respondents' religious affiliation, religious belief and religious activity. The present study conceptualized religiosity as a person's religious activity and operationalized the concept as information about respondents' observance of religious prayers, entailing that one fulfills certain ritualistic acts which God has commanded in the religion of Islam, whether they deal with the inner self or the outer body, and whether they be obligatory or voluntary.

The items used to measure ritual observance comprised statements concerning five daily prayers and recitation of the Holy Qur'an. For example, "I pray five times a day," "I recite some verses of the Holy Qur'an everyday" with response options ranging from 1= very rarely to 5 = almost always. The items were tested for reliability, with the two-item scale yielding an alpha of .74 ( $M = 6.87, SD = 2.09$ ).

The findings show that the overall mean score and standard deviation for respondents' ritual observance of prayers is  $M = 3.44, SD = 1.18$ . These results imply that most of the respondents' self-reported observance of daily prayers is above the middle point, meaning that the respondents consider themselves to be fairly religious. Table 10 shows the information about the respondents' observance of religious duties.

**Table 10: Mean and standard deviations of ritual observance (N=631)**

No	Item	Frequency of Prayers %					Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		1 Very Rarely	2	3	4	5 Almost Always			
1	How frequently do you offer the five daily prayers?	3.8	19.6	16.6	35.8	24.2	100	3.58	1.16
2	How frequently do you recite some verses of the Holy Qur'an daily?	5.5	26.7	19.9	30	17.9	100	3.29	1.19

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.7.3 Religious Value Orientation**

A review of literature shows that scholars do not agree on the concept of religious value orientation (attitudes towards religious values). Scholars also hold varied views on what are the important religious value orientations. For instance, some scholars view religious value orientation as the way an individual is religious in terms of their adherence to religious values and beliefs, while others contend that religious value orientation refers to the way an individual approaches or avoids religious values (Krauss & Hood Jr, 2013). As scholars hold different views on the definition of religious value orientation, the present study used the concept to refer to the way an individual approaches or avoids religious values.

Religious values orientation was tapped through a set of statements or propositions concerning values such as forgiveness, patience, courtship and dating, religious obligations, moral values etc. For example, "If someone misbehaves with me, I respond to him in the same manner," "I get irritated when things don't go according to my plans," "Premarital close relations with

opposite sex contribute to a happier marriage.” “I do not bring religious obligations in my worldly affairs,” “One can live a moral life without being religious,” and “I do not enjoy the company of religious people.” The respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement to these statements, with response options ranging from 6 = completely disagree to 1 = completely agree. As such, a person’s high score on the items means less positive attitude towards religious values and a person’s low score on the items means more positive attitude towards religious values.

Before computing individual items to create an index of respondents’ attitudes towards religious values, the scale items were tested for reliability. The six items yielded an alpha of .69 with corrected inter-item correlations ranging between .24 to .59. The alpha value of the scale improved after the item that had the lowest inter-item correlation of .24 (“I get irritated when things don’t go according to my plans”) was dropped, with the final five-point yielding an alpha of .71 ( $M = 14.46$ ,  $SD = 5.29$ ).

The findings show that the overall mean score and standard deviation for respondents’ religious value orientation is  $M = 2.89$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ . These results imply that most of the respondents’ religious value orientation is slightly below the middle point, meaning that the respondents consider themselves to be moderately religious. Table 11 below presents the information about the respondents’ religiosity.



**Table 11: Mean and standard deviations of respondents' attitude towards religious values (N=631)**

No	Item	Level of Agreement %						Overall (%)	Mean	SD
		1 CD	2	3	4	5	6 CA			
1.	If someone misbehaves with me, I respond to him in the same manner.	9.0	13.6	21.0	17.4	27.4	11.6	100	3.25	1.50
2.	Premarital close relations with opposite sex contribute to a happier marriage.	7.8	17.1	14.3	16.6	21.6	22.7	100	3.05	1.63
3.	I do not bring religious obligations in my worldly affairs.	7.3	14.6	14.4	13.6	22.7	27.4	100	2.93	1.60
4.	One can live a moral life without being religious.	7.8	12.5	14.4	13.6	27.4	22.7	100	2.85	1.63
5.	I do not enjoy the company of religious people.	4.3	7.4	9.4	14.9	29.8	34.2	100	2.39	1.44

*Note:* CD and CA are used to represent completely disagree and completely agree, respectively. SD is used to represent standard deviation.

#### **3.8.7.4 Type of School Attended**

In order to measure to the respondents' type of schooling prior to enrolling at the university level, a single item was included in the questionnaire. The respondents were asked to indicate the type of secondary school they attended at secondary and higher-secondary levels. The options they picked from included (1) Urdu Medium Only, (2) Both Urdu and English Medium, (3) English Medium/A/O Levels Only. The mean and standard deviation for the respondents' type of

secondary school attended is indicated, as per the results of the study ( $M = 2.38, SD = .607$ ). Based on the findings, the mean implies that, most of the students joined Urdu and English medium and English medium and A/O levels en route to enrolling for university education. The mean and standard deviation is presented in table 12.

**Table 12: Mean and standard deviations of type of school attended ( $N=631$ )**

No	Item	Type of School %			Overall%	Mean	SD
		Urdu Medium	Both Urdu and English Medium	English Medium and A/O levels			
1.	Type of school attended	6.5	44.1	49.4	100	2.38	.607

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.8.8 Residential Background of Respondents**

A single item was included in the questionnaire to tap information on respondents' residential background in terms of being rural or urban. This item was structured this way. "For the most part of your life, you have lived in," with the following three response options: (1) large cities, (2) small cities/towns, and (3) villages.

The collected data showed that the overall mean score for residential background (rural-urban background) is  $M = 1.70, SD = .751$ , meaning that majority of the respondents have lived the most part of their life in urban areas and only a small percentage of the respondents have a rural background. Table 13 below shows the mean and standard deviation for respondents' residential background.

**Table 13: Mean and standard deviations of respondents' residential background (N=631)**

No	Item	Urban-rural background			Overall %	Mean	SD
		Large cities	Small cities/towns	Villages			
1.	For the most part of your life, you have lived in	48.8	34	17.2	100	1.70	.751

*Note: SD is used to represent standard deviation.*

### **3.9 Preliminary Data Analyses**

Before proceeding to the final data analysis process, preliminary data analyses were carried out to ensure compliance with the key assumptions of multiple regression. Those assumptions usually focus on normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Of the total responses collected, 51 were not included in data analyses due to incomplete responses. Hence, the data analysis process involved 631 responses.

Residual analysis was conducted and the outliers were looked at to ensure that all the assumptions were met. Likewise, regression standardized residual histograms and normal probability plots of the regression standardized residuals were performed in order to test for normality of variables. According to Pallant (2013), a distribution is considered normal, if it produces a symmetrical and a bell-shaped curve on the regression standardized residual histograms. Such a distribution should be with a reasonably straight line on the normal probability plots of the regression standardized residuals. As such, all variables, in the multiple regression analysis were subjected to the normality test by examining the distribution of each variable.

Similarly, scatter plots were generated to ensure non-violation of the assumptions of linearity. In most correlation analyses, Pallant (2013) indicated that these correlations are expected to be linear. Hence, these scatter plots help to identify whether the relationship between two

variables is curvilinear or linear. The generated scatter plots helped the researcher to know whether the data generated linear relationships which could be relied on in the analyses.

One of the assumptions of multiple regression analysis is that the independent variables should not be highly intercorrelated. Multicollinearity, which is the existence of high intercorrelations ( $r=0.9\geq$ ) among independent variables, tends to lead to an unstable correlation matrix; the core of multiple regression (De Vaus, 2002a). Pallant (2010) argued that multicollinearity is considered to be present when the criterion variables are highly intercorrelated. De Vaus (2002a) explained that multicollinearity could be detected through examination of the bivariate correlations, multiple correlation analyses, and multicollinearity diagnostics within multiple regression procedures-variable inflation factor, and tolerance measures. De Vaus further suggested that multicollinearity could be dealt with by dropping the most problematic variable, and combining the variables that are highly intercorrelated. Besides those measures, and in order to mitigate the multicollinearity problem, the entire criterion variables were mean-centered by subtracting the mean of the variable from the variable itself.

Another violation of assumptions of multiple regression emanates from the existence of outliers. These are extreme values that inflate or deflate estimates. Outliers could be detected through the examination of the frequency distributions and standard deviations of univariates, and inspecting scatter plots of bivariate and multivariate.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This study was conceived to address three research questions: (1) What is the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' materialistic perceptions and attitudes? (2) What is the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and the salience of the entity God in viewers' consciousness? (3) Whether cultivation effects theory has become redundant in the new media environment?

In order to answer these questions, several hypotheses were developed and tested. In this section, data analysis and findings related to the stated research questions and hypotheses are presented.

### **4.2 Hypotheses**

At the outset, the present study primarily sought to test the following hypotheses:

H1: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will predict viewers' attitudes and perceptions about materialism. Specifically, hypothesis H1 posits that:

H1a: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict materialistic orientation of viewers after controlling, for the relevant demographic variables.

H1b: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict the perceived social prevalence of materialism in society, after controlling for the relevant demographic variables.

H2: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the salience of entity God. Specifically, hypothesis H2 posits that:

**H2a: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the salience of the entity God in viewers' consciousness.**

**H2b: Exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict (ambiguate) the perceived social salience (mindfulness) of God.**

**H3: Type of new media use will differentially moderate the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainments on television and viewers' attitudes and perceptions about materialism and salience of entity God. Specifically, hypothesis H3 posits that:**

**H3a: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' materialistic orientation such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect higher materialistic orientation, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3b: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' perceived social prevalence of materialism such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3c: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect lower salience of entity God in their consciousness, compared to low online viewers.**

**H3d: The amount of time spent with online entertainment platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived**

social salience of entity God such that high online viewers of dramatized entertainment will reflect lower perceived social salience of entity God, compared low online viewers.

H3e: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' materialistic orientation such that high social media users will reflect lower materialistic orientation, compared to low social media users.

H3f: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' perceived social prevalence of materialism such that high social media users will reflect lower perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to low social media users.

H3g: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness such that high social media users will reflect higher salience of entity God in their consciousness, compared to low social media users.

H3h: The amount of time spent with social networking platforms will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived social salience of entity God such that high social media users will reflect higher perceived social salience of entity God, compared to low social media users.

H4: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and their attitudes and perceptions towards materialism and the salience of entity God. Specifically, H4 posits that:

H4a: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and viewers' materialistic orientation such that

viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect lower materialistic orientation, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.

H4b: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived prevalence of materialism in society such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.

H4c: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in their consciousness such viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect relatively lower ambiguation effects, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.

H4d: Religious commitment of viewers will moderate the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and the perceived social salience of entity God such that viewers with more positive attitudes towards religious values will reflect relatively lower ambiguation effects, compared to viewers with less positive attitudes towards religious values.

### **4.3 Major Statistical Tool**

This study has employed the hierarchical multiple regression as the main statistical tool to test the stated hypotheses. Specifically, hierarchical multiple regression was applied due to its greatly tested potential in providing suitable ways of exploring a set of variables (de Vaus, 2002), in line with the assumptions of the present study.



Multiple regression is a host of techniques that can be used to explore potential relationships between a continuous dependent variable and several predictors. Since it is primarily based on correlation, therefore it has the ability to allow a more complex examination of the interrelationship amongst a set of variables (Pallant, 2010). Pallant argued that such prowess makes multiple regression ideal for addressing a variety of research questions, telling how a set of variables can predict a particular outcome, and investigating more complex real life research questions. Similarly, multiple regression has the ability to provide information on a model, and the relative contribution of each of the constituent individual subscales. Besides being used to control for an additional variable, multiple regression allows the researcher to test whether an added variable contributes to the analytical ability of the model. As such, multiple regression was found to be appropriate for the nature of the present research, hence it was duly applied.

All control variables, mainly demographic and social relations, with an apparent potential to exert some amount of influence on the dependent variables' social reality perceptions were entered as block 1 at step 1 of the regression. Subsequently, the two independent variables – time spent watching dramatized entertainment on TV in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day – were entered at steps 2 and 3 of the model, respectively.

#### **4.4 Zero-Order Correlations**

Before performing the multiple regression analysis, a bivariate, or zero-order, correlation coefficient was performed to have an early idea of the nature of relationships between this study's independent, dependent and moderating variables, in line with the assumptions of multiple regression equation. As indicated in Chapter 3, preliminary data analyses were conducted in order to avoid any violation of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. A linear regression equation is developed when the correlation coefficients are adequately large enough to illustrate a

meaningful relationship between variables (Sirkin, 2006). Usually, these correlations are used to demonstrate the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables (Pallant, 2010).

In this study, the zero-order correlation was performed for the predictor and criterion variables. Table 14 provides an idea of the impact of the predictor variables – time spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set, time spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day online and time spent on social networking sites in a day – on the criterion variables; the several social reality perceptions and attitudes. The findings demonstrate that all variables were significantly correlated in the expected direction.

Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on a television set in a day show statistically significant correlations with audiences' attitude towards materialism ( $r = .336$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .125$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .002$ ), salience of entity God in consciousness ( $r = -.260$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), and perceived social salience of entity God ( $r = -.140$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ).

Similarly, time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day also showed statistically significant correlations with respondents' attitude towards materialism ( $r = .334$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .155$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), salience of entity God in consciousness ( $r = -.355$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), and perceived social salience of entity God ( $r = -.156$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ).

In the same vein, time spent on social networking sites in a day showed statistically significant correlations with audiences' attitude towards materialism ( $r = .260$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .168$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .000$ ), salience of entity God

in consciousness ( $r = -.141, n = 631, P <.000$ ), and perceived social salience mindfulness of entity God ( $r = -.089, n = 631, P <.026$ ).

Elsewhere, religiosity variables exhibited statistically significant correlation with respondents' perceptions and beliefs about materialism and salience of entity God, except perceived prevalence of materialism in society. Ritual observance of daily prayers shown a statically negative correlation with audiences' attitude towards materialism ( $r = -.284, n = 631, P <.000$ ), and but is not significantly correlated with perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = -.019, n = 631, P <.635$ ). Ritual observance shows significant positive correlations with salience of entity God in consciousness ( $r = .314, n = 631, P <.000$ ), and perceived social salience of entity God ( $r = .208, n = 631, P <.000$ ). Likewise, respondents' attitude towards religious values is negatively correlated with their attitude towards materialism ( $r = -.326, n = 631, P <.000$ ), with a nonsignificant correlation with perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .042, n = 631, P <.295$ ); and shown positive correlations with salience of entity God in consciousness ( $r = .260, n = 631, P <.000$ ), and perceived social salience of entity God ( $r = .209, n = 631, P <.000$ )

Given the fact that respondents' education level, type of schooling, residential background and marital status did not show statistically significant correlations with perceptions and beliefs about materialism and salience of entity God, these variables were not included in the zero-order correlations table. The remaining demographic variables, namely age, gender and household income shown statistically significant correlations with dependent variables of this study. Respondents' age shown statistically significant negative correlation with attitude towards materialism ( $r = -.158, n = 631, P <.000$ ), and statistically significant positive correlation with perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .113, n = 631, P <.004$ ). The correlation between age and salience of entity God in consciousness is statistically significant ( $r = .087, n =$

631,  $P < .028$ ) and nonsignificant with perceived salience of entity God ( $r = .051$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .205$ ). Respondents' household income level flagged a statistically positive correlation with perceived prevalence of materialism in society ( $r = .104$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .009$ ) and a statistically significant negative correlation with salience of entity God in society ( $r = .112$ ,  $n = 631$ ,  $P < .005$ ).

Generally, the correlations between the predictor and criterion variables were significant in almost all circumstances. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television and online in a day flagged significant correlations with all criterion variables, while time spent on social networking sites in a day is also significantly correlated with all criterion variables. The direction of the correlations was in line with the study's expectation and predicted direction. Table 14 shows zero-order correlations between this study's variables. It should be noted that the significant correlation between exposure to dramatized entertainment and the five dependent variables fell in the direction of the first two hypotheses. The interaction patterns of the independent and dependent variables displayed in the zero-order correlation was further elaborated in the multiple regressions through which the hypotheses were put into rigorous tests.

Table 14: Zero-order correlations between the study's variables

<i>Predictor &amp; Criterion Variables</i>		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<i>Predictors</i>													
1	DE TV <sup>a</sup>	1											
2	DE Online <sup>b</sup>	.125**	1										
3	SM Use <sup>c</sup>	.171**	.423**	1									
<i>Criteria</i>													
4	M Perceptions <sup>d</sup>	.125**	.155**	.168**	1								
5	M. Orientation <sup>e</sup>	.336**	.334**	.260**	.068	1							
6	GS Society <sup>f</sup>	-.140**	-.156**	-.089*	-.097*	-.129**	1						
7	GS Self <sup>g</sup>	-.260**	-.355**	-.141**	-.015	-.419**	.191**	1					
8	Religiosity <sup>h</sup>	-.111**	-.227**	-.157**	-.019	-.284**	.208**	.314**	1				
9	RVO <sup>i</sup>	-.169**	-.201**	-.063	.042	-.326**	.209**	.260**	.354**	1			
10	Age	.037	-.141**	-.181**	.113**	-.158**	-.051	.087*	.054	-.020	1		
11	Gender	.187**	.156**	.113**	.041	.053	-.018	-.065	.107**	.051	-.135**	1	
12	Income	-.022	.045	.048	.104**	-.034	-.112**	-.018	-.057	-.002	.188**	-.012	1

<sup>a</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

<sup>b</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent on social networking platforms in a day

<sup>d</sup> Perceived prevalence of materialism in society

<sup>e</sup> Attitudes towards materialism

<sup>f</sup> Perceived social salience of entity God

<sup>g</sup> Salience of entity in viewers' consciousness

<sup>h</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>i</sup> Attitude towards religious values

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## 4.5 First Hypothesis

Multiple regression analyses were performed to examine whether time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day exert any influence on respondents' attitudes and perceptions about materialism and whether the relationships hold after controlling for demographic variables. Specifically, the analyses were aimed to find out the impact of the two independent variables on respondents' materialistic orientation and the perceived prevalence of materialism in society. Table 15 and table 16 summarized the results of these analyses.

Age, gender, income, residential background and type of schooling were entered at Step 1. However, residential background and type of schooling possessed betas, which were insignificant to the model, hence they were dropped. The remaining demographic variables such as age, gender and income explained a 2.4% variance in respondents' materialistic orientation. The two independent variables were entered at Step 2, and the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 21.6%,  $F(3,627) = 5.039, p < .002$ , with an  $R^2$  of .024. The two independent measures explained an additional 19.2% of the variance in materialistic orientation after controlling for age, gender and income  $R$  squared change = 21.6,  $F$  change (5, 625) = 34.39,  $p < .000$ . In the final model, only three variables were statistically significant, with entertainment TV time recording a higher beta value (beta = .32,  $p < .000$ ) than entertainment time online (beta = .29,  $p < .000$ ) and age (beta = -.12,  $p < .005$ ). As such, the results indicate that time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online a day is positively correlated with respondents' materialistic orientation, in line with the posited hypothesis (H1a) of this research that exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict materialistic orientation of viewers after controlling, for the relevant demographic variables. In

other words, exposure to dramatized entertainment is a significant predictor of audience members' attitudes towards materialism, implying that the more time people spend in the fictional world of dramatized entertainment, the more likely they are to form materialistic attitudes.

**Table 15: Regression of viewers' attitude towards materialism on demographic and entertainment exposure variables (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-50.6	14.6	-.14**
Gender (1=M, 2=F)	126.8	118.3	.04
Income	-4.8	30.5	-.01
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.4**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-44.6	13.3	-.12**
Gender	-174.7	109	-.06
Income	-12.9	27.5	-.02
DE Online <sup>b</sup>	285.7	36.4	.29**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	1978.9	228.8	.32**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	19.2**		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	21.6**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

The possible contributions to the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society by time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day were also examined using hierarchical regressions. Specifically, the analyses aimed at examining whether exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and online was separately related to the respondents' perceived prevalence of materialism in society and whether these relationships hold after controlling for demographic variables. The findings of the regressions are summarized in Table 16.

Age, gender and income were entered at Step 1, explaining 2.3% of the variance in materialistic perceptions. After entry of time spent watching dramatized entertainment online and time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole increased to 5.8%, and an  $F_{3,627} = 4.91, p < .002$ , and an  $R^2$  of .023. The two independent variables explained an additional 3.6% of the variance in materialistic perceptions after controlling for age, gender and income  $R$  squared change = 5.8  $F$  change (5, 625) = 7.776,  $p < .000$ . In the final model, only three variables were statistically significant, with entertainment exposure online recording a higher beta value (beta = .15,  $p < .000$ ) than entertainment time TV (beta = .10,  $p < .000$ ) and age (beta = -.12,  $p < .005$ ).

The findings presented in table 16 supported H1b that exposure to dramatized entertainment will positively predict the perceived social prevalence of materialism in society, after controlling for the relevant demographic, as exposure to dramatized entertainment explained a significant amount of variance in audience members' perceptions about the prevalence of materialism in society. That is, the more time people spent watching dramatized entertainment, the more likely they are to exaggerate the prevalence of materialism in society.



**Table 16: Regression of perceptions about perceived prevalence of materialism in society on demographic and entertainment exposure variables (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	10.24	3.96	.11*
Gender (1=M, 2=F)	44.97	32.11	.06
Income	17.5	8.29	.09*
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.3**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	11.59	3.95	.12*
Gender	11.86	32.41	.02
Income	15.87	8.18	.08
DE Online <sup>b</sup>	41.61	10.82	.15**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	171.78	68.0	.10*
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	3.6**		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	5.8**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

## 4.6 Second Hypothesis

Hierarchical multiple regressions were also performed to examine the ability of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day to ambiguate the salience of entity God in respondents' consciousness (H2a) and the perceived social salience of entity God (H2b), after controlling for the influence of age, gender and income.

Age, gender and income were entered at Step 1, and they explained 1.2% of the variance in respondents' self-perceived salience of entity God. The two independent variables, time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day, at Step 2, and the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 16.8%,  $F(3, 627) = 2.59, p < .051$ , with an  $R^2$  of .012. The two measures explained an additional 15.6% of the variance in respondents' self-perceived salience of entity God after controlling for age, gender and income  $R$  squared change = 16.8  $F$  change  $(5, 625) = 58.528, p < .000$ . In the final model, only two variables were statistically significant, with entertainment online time recording a higher beta value (beta =  $-.32, p < .000$ ) than entertainment time TV (beta =  $-.21, p < .000$ ).

The findings imply negative relationships between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day, and the salience of entity God in respondents' consciousness, meaning that higher the exposure to dramatized entertainment, the lower the self-perceived salience of entity God. This finding supports H2a that exposure to dramatized entertainment will ambiguate the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness, as shown in table 17.

**Table 17: Regression of self-perceived salience of entity God on demographic and entertainment exposure variables (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	.00	.00	.09*
Gender (1=M, 2=F)	-.01	.01	-.05
Income	-.00	.00	-.03
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)		1.2*	
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	.00	.00	.06
Gender	.00	.01	.03
Income	.00	.00	-.01
DE Online <sup>b</sup>	-.02	.00	-.32**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	-.09	.02	-.21**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)		15.6**	
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)		16.8**	

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

In the same vein, regression analyses were performed in order to examine the ability of the two independent variables; hours spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and hours spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day, on respondents' perceived social salience of entity God. Specifically, the analyses aimed to examine the impact of the independent variables on the respondents' perceived social salience of entity God after controlling for the influence of age, gender and income. Table 4.5 summarizes the results of these regressions.

Age, gender and income were entered at Step 1, explaining 1.4% of the variance in the perceived social salience of entity God. After entry of exposure to dramatized entertainment online and dramatized entertainment on a TV set at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 5.3%,  $F(3, 627) = 2.97, p < .031$ . The two control measures explained an additional 3.9% of the variance in the perceived social salience of God after controlling for age, gender and income  $R$  squared change = 5.3  $F$  change (5, 625) = 12.92,  $p < .000$ . In the final model, only three variables were statistically significant, with entertainment time online showing a higher beta value (beta = -.15,  $p < .000$ ) than entertainment time TV (beta = -.13,  $p < .000$ ) and income (beta = -.10,  $p < .005$ ).

As such, the correlation between the two independent variables and the perceived social salience of entity God is in conformity with the posited hypothesis of this study that exposure to dramatized entertainment will negatively predict the perceived social salience (mindfulness) of God, as shown in table 18. This finding implies that higher the exposure to dramatized entertainment, the lower the perceived social salience of entity God. Therefore, exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and online was a significant predictor of respondents' perceptions about the salience of entity God in society.

**Table 18: Regression of perceived social salience of entity God on demographic and entertainment exposure variables (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-.04	.04	-.03
Gender (1=M, 2=F)	-.20	.34	-.02
Income	-.23	.09	-.11**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)		1.4*	
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-.05	.04	-.05
Gender	.17	.34	.02
Income	-.21	.09	-.10*
DE Online <sup>b</sup>	-.41	.11	-.15**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	-2.24	.71	-.13**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)		3.9**	
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)		5.3**	

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

## **4.7 Third Hypothesis**

A hierarchical multiple regression was performed to examine the ability of the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day to exert influence on respondents' attitudes and perceptions about materialism. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered together with time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day at Step 2 of the model. The two variables an additional 14.8 percent of the variance in respondents' attitudes towards materialism after the effects of age and ritual observance of daily prayers were removed. It also registered a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=50.44$ ,  $p < .000$ , as indicated in table 4.6. Initially, gender, age, marital status, income, offline interactions, rural-urban background and ritual observance of daily prayers were included as control variables. However, gender, age, marital status, income, offline interactions and residential background the respondents were removed from the equation as they were not significantly correlating with the independent variable. The interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was entered at Step 3. It contributed a meagre 0.2 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=40.68$ ,  $p < .223$ .

Hence, no interaction effects were found in the process and H3a was not supported. This implies that time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was not strong enough to change the direction or add some power to the relationship between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and respondents' materialistic orientation. Table 19 summarizes the results of these regression analyses.

**Table 19: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on attitudes towards materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-46.8	13.7	-.13**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-7.7	1.1	-.27**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	9.5**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-40.7	12.7	-.11**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-5.2	1.0	-.18**
DE Online <sup>c</sup>	237.5	36.2	.24**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	1812.3	221.6	.29**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	14.8**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE Online <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-177.8	145.8	-.04
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.2		
<b>Total R<sup>2</sup> (%)</b>	<b>24.6**</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

Figure 2: Normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual for attitudes towards materialism

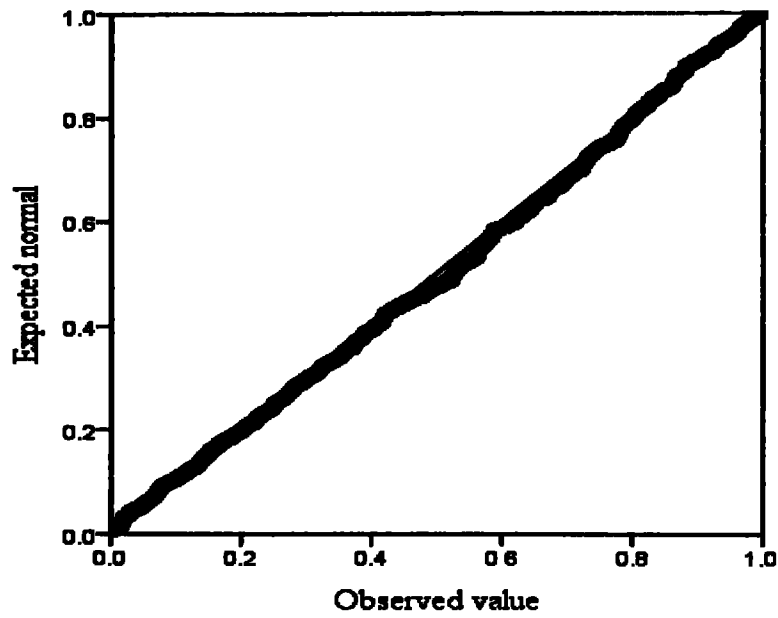
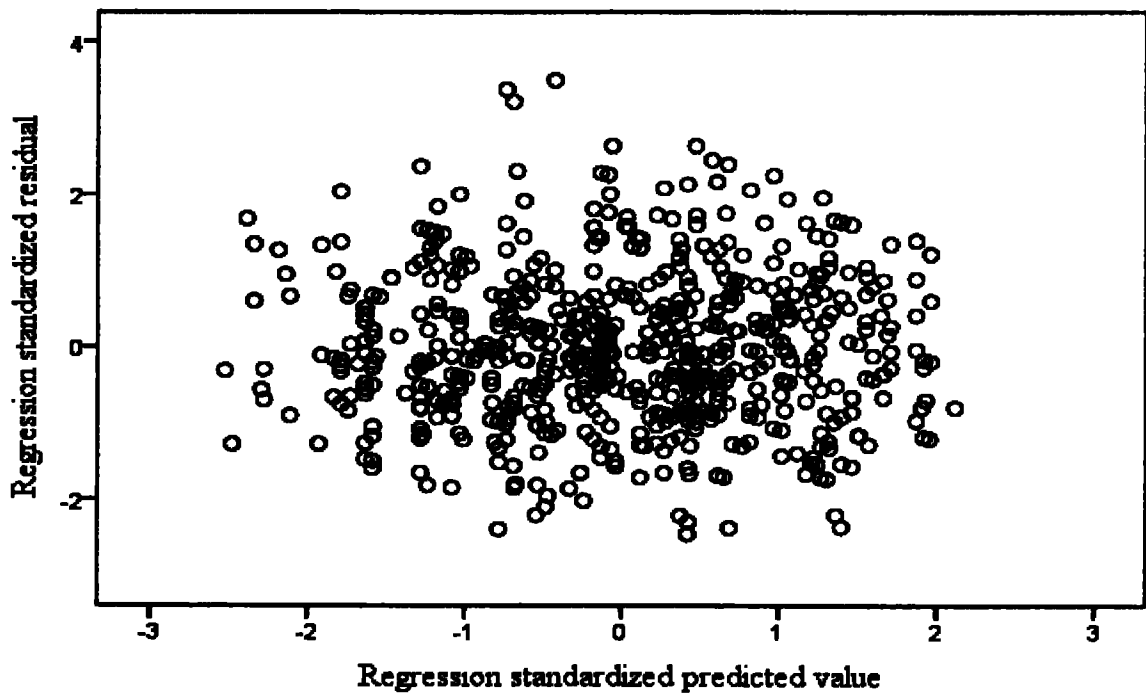


Figure 3: Scatterplot of attitudes towards materialism





Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online were also tested to establish their impact on the perceived prevalence of materialism in society. When the independent variable was entered simultaneously with time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day at Step 2 of the model, they both explained 4.0 percent of the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society with a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=8.83$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for the effects of age and religiosity. It is also worth noting that gender, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were also controlled for but later removed from the equation as they were not significantly correlating with the dependent variable. When the interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was entered at Step 3, it registered a mere 0.4 percent of the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=7.66$ ,  $p < .092$ , after removing the influence of age and ritual observance of daily prayers. Hence, no interaction effects were found in the process and H3b was not supported, as summarized in table 20.

**Table 20: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceptions about materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	11.2	3.9	.11**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-.16	.31	-.02
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	1.3*		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	12.8	3.9	.13**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.23	.31	.03
DE Online <sup>c</sup>	45.5	11	.17**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	175.8	67.3	.10**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.0**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE Online <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-74.6	44.2	-.07
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.4		
<b>Total R<sup>2</sup> (%)</b>	<b>5.8*</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

Figure 4: Normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual for perceived prevalence of materialism in society

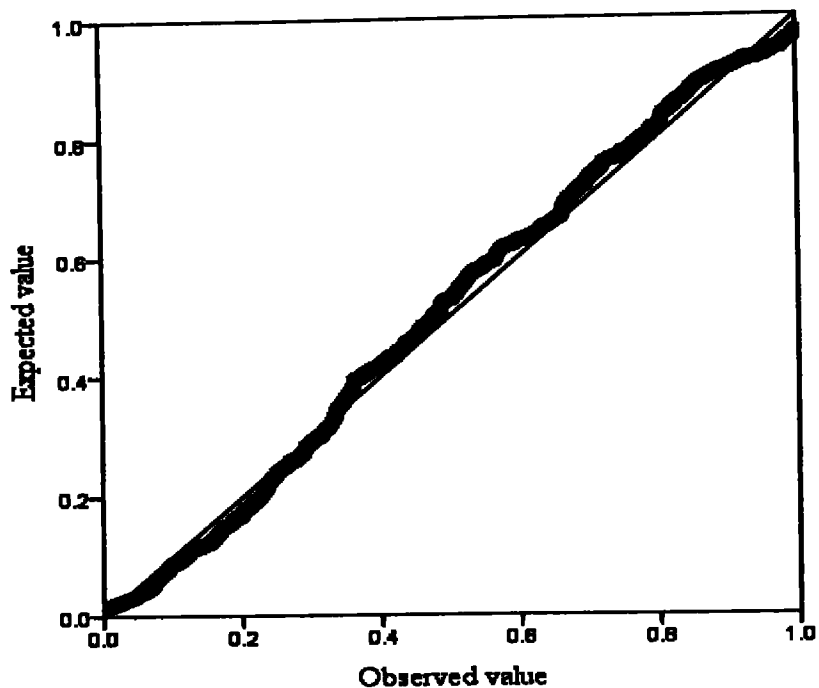
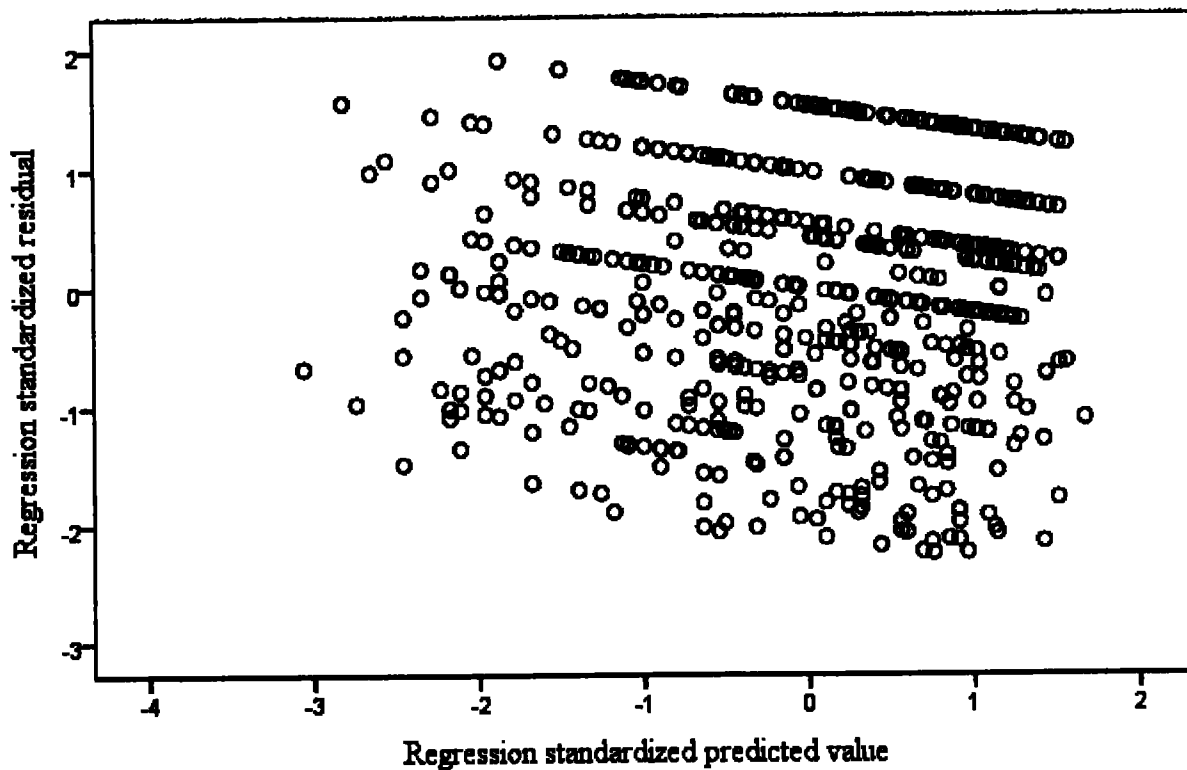


Figure 5: Scatterplot of perceived prevalence of materialism in society



A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the ability of the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day to exert influence on the salience of entity God in respondents' consciousness. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered together with time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day at Step 2 of the model. The two variables jointly explained 11.1 percent of the variance in respondents' salience of entity God after controlling for the effects of age and religiosity. It also registered a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=42.50, p < .000$ .

Initially, gender, age, marital status, income, offline interactions, rural-urban background and ritual observance of daily prayers were included as control variables. However, gender, age, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were removed from the equation as they were not significantly correlating with the independent variable. The interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was entered at Step 3. It contributed a 2.1 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=38.23, p < .000$ . Hence, the interaction effects were found in the process, meaning that the effect of television entertainment exposure on ambiguation is contingent on online entertainment exposure, in line with the posited H3c, as shown in table 21. It is not straightforwardly apparent in beta for the moderation term. However, when online entertainment exposure was split into two groups on the median value, the effect of television entertainment exposure on ambiguation became obvious.

**Table 21: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on self-perceived salience of entity God (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	.08	.05	.07*
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.58	.07	.31**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	10.2**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	.06	.04	.05
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.41	.07	.22**
DE Online <sup>c</sup>	-4.57	.73	-.22**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-.88	.12	-.27**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	11.1**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE Online <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	2.04	.48	.15**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.1**		
<b>Total R<sup>2</sup> (%)</b>	<b>23.4**</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

Figure 6 shows the interaction between television entertainment exposure and online entertainment exposure on the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness. The high online entertainment exposure group largely remained unaffected in terms of the salience of entity God by increasing television entertainment. The salience of entity God clearly decreases in the consciousness of the low online entertainment exposure group with increasing exposure to television entertainment, meaning that ambiguation was happening among the low online entertainment exposure group.

Figure 6: Interaction between television exposure and online dramatized exposure on self-perceived salience of entity God

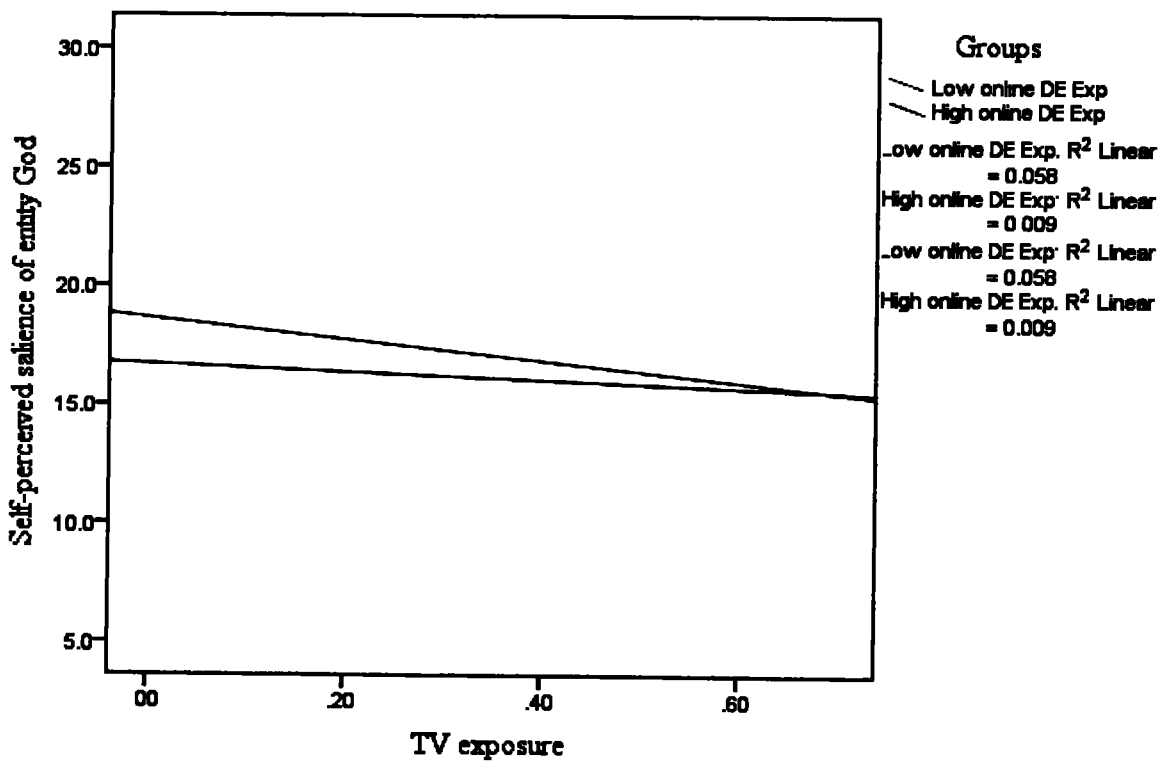


Figure 7: Normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual for self-perceived salience of entity God

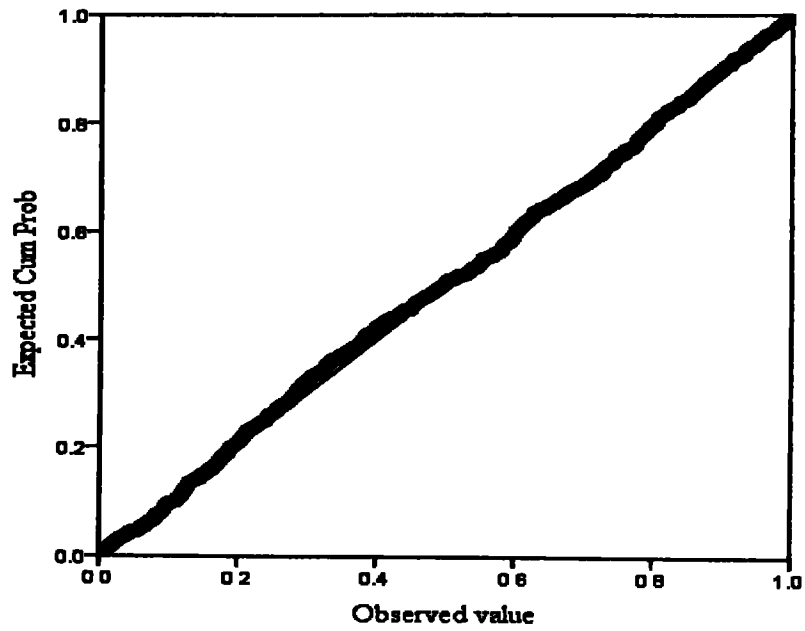
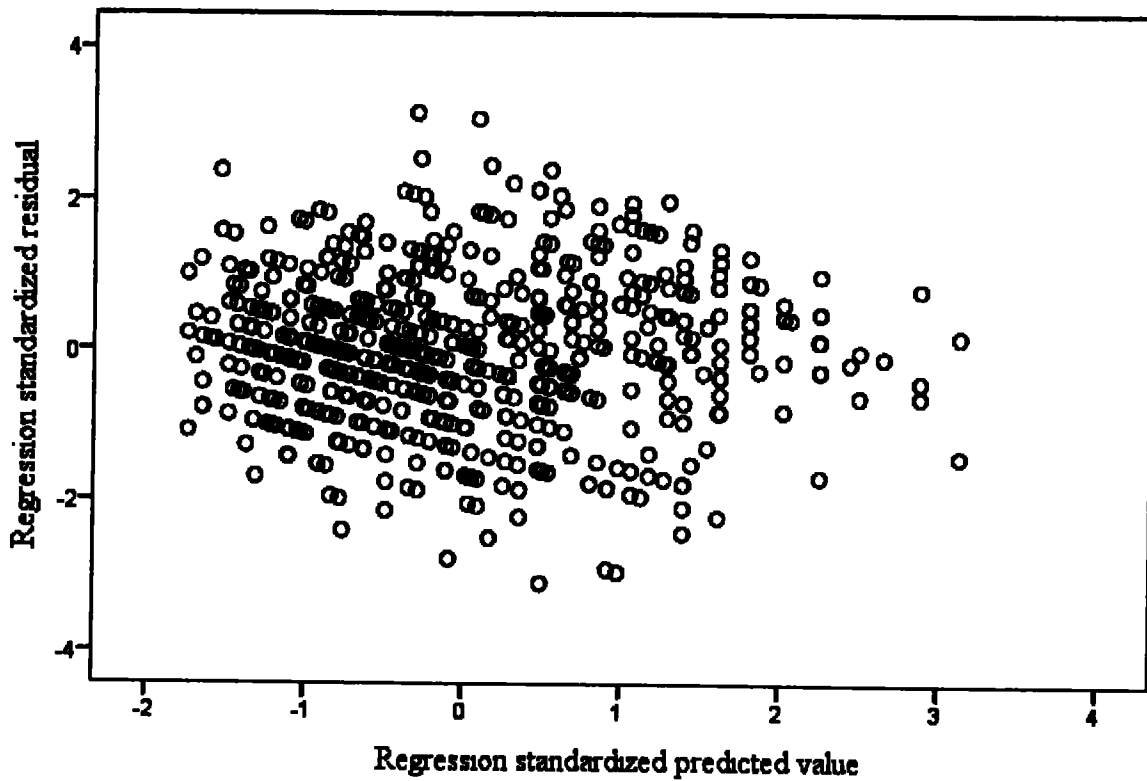


Figure 8: Scatterplot of self-perceived salience of entity God



Similarly, in order to examine whether the interaction variable exerts any influence on the perceived social salience of entity God, time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered simultaneously with time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day at level two of the equation. At this level, the two variables jointly explained 2.5 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation with a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=11.70$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for age and ritual observance of daily prayers. Gender, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were removed from the equation as contributed nothing to the equation. Nevertheless, when the interaction term between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was entered at Step 3, it contributed a 0.0 percent of the variance in the perceived social salience of entity God, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=9.35$ ,  $p < .979$ , after removing the effect of religiosity. In other words, zero variance in perceived social salience of entity God was explained by the two interacting variables and no support was found for H3d, as shown in table 22.



**Table 22: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived social salience of entity God (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-.07	.04	-.06
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.02	.00	.21**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.5*		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-.08	.04	-.07
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.01	.00	.17**
DE Online <sup>c</sup>	-.32	.11	-.11**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-1.8	.69	-.10**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.5*		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE Online <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-.01	.46	-.00
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.0		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	7.0*		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on online viewing platforms

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

Figure 9: Normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual for perceived social salience of entity God

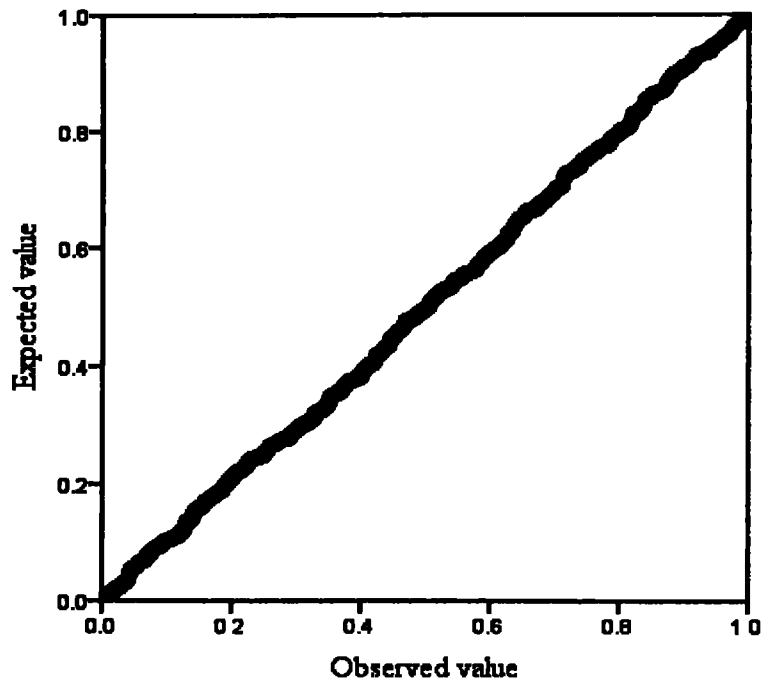
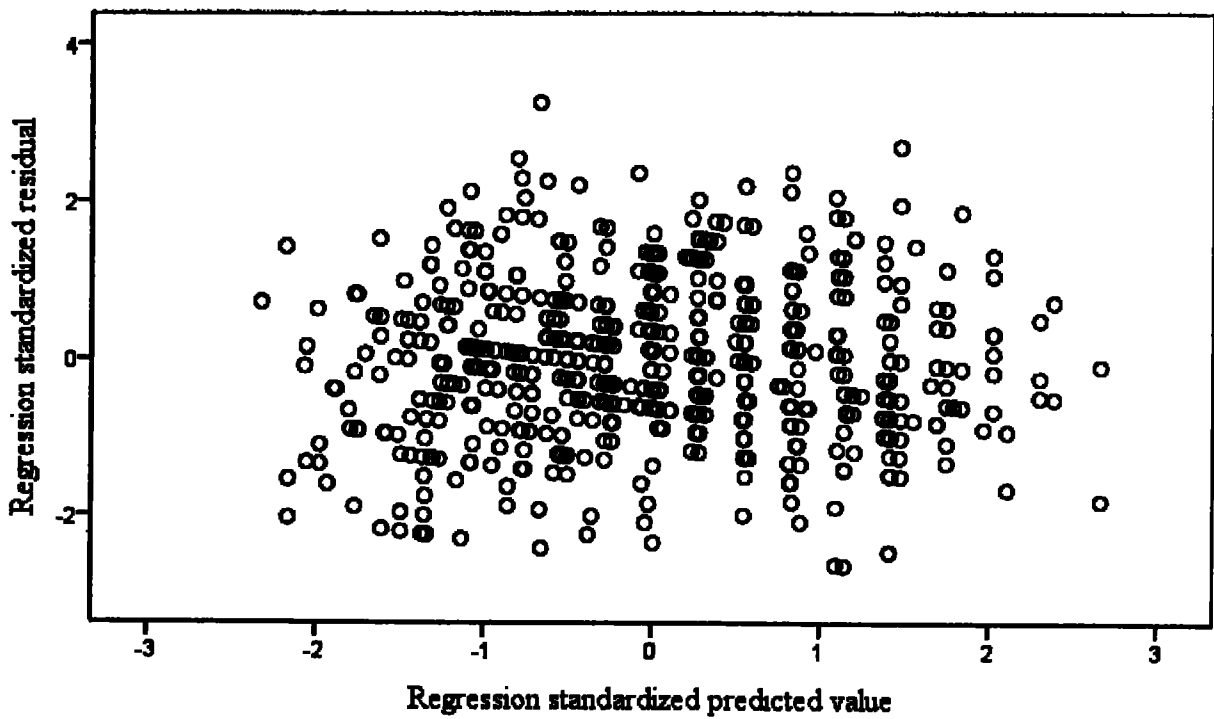


Figure 10: Scatterplot of perceived social salience of entity God



In the same vein, this study tested also whether the relationship between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and respondents' materialistic orientation was a function of time spent on social networking sites. In so doing, time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered simultaneously with time spent on social networking sites at Step 2 of the equation, as indicated in table 23. These two variables jointly explained 11.6 percent of the variance in the respondents' materialistic orientation, with a significant F value,  $F_{4,625}=41.67$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for the influence of age and ritual observance of daily prayers. Initially, age, gender, marital status, income, offline interactions, rural-urban background and ritual observance were included as control variables. However, gender, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were removed from the equation as they were not significantly correlating with the dependent variable. Later, when the interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day was entered at Step 3, it contributed a meagre 0.0 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation, with an F value,  $F_{5,624}=.33.29$ ,  $p < .938$ . This indicates that, the relationship between the amount of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and respondents' materialistic orientation is not a function of time spent on social networking sites. In other words, exposure to social networking sites was not strong enough to change the direction of the relationship between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and materialistic orientation of viewers. Therefore, H3e was not supported.

**Table 23: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on attitude towards materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-46.9	13.7	-.13**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-7.7	1.1	-.27**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	9.5**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-42.6	13.1	-.12**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-6.0	1.0	-.21**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	1816.8	228.3	.29**
SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	429.4	108.8	.15**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	11.6**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE TV <sup>c</sup> × SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	-35.5	457.7	-.003
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.00		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	21.1**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent on social networking sites in a day

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

In order to examine whether the interaction variable exerts any influence on the perceived prevalence of materialism in society, time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered simultaneously with time spent on social networking sites at level two of the equation. At this level, the two variables jointly explained 4.4 percent of the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society with a significant F value,  $F_{4,625}=9.53$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for age and ritual observance of daily prayers. Gender, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were removed from the equation as contributed nothing to the equation. Nevertheless, when the interaction term between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent on social networking sites in a day was entered at Step 3, it contributed a 0.0 percent of the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society, with a F value,  $F_{5,624}=7.61$ ,  $p < .924$ , after removing the effect of age and ritual observance of daily prayers. In other words, zero variance in perceived prevalence of materialism in society was explained by the two interacting variables and H3f was not supported, as summarized in table 24.

**Table 24: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceptions about materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	11.2	3.9	.11**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-.15	.31	-.02
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	1.3*		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	13.8	3.9	.14**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.16	.31	.02
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	154.3	67.7	.09*
SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	144.5	32.3	.18**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.4**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE TV <sup>c</sup> × SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	12.9	135.7	.004
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.00		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	5.8*		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent on social networking sites in a day

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

Similarly, a hierarchical multiple regression was also performed to examine whether the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent on social networking sites in a day exerts any influence on the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered together with time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day at Step 2 of the model. The two variables jointly explained 4.7 percent of the variance in the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness after the effects of age and ritual observance of daily prayers were removed. It also registered a significant F value,  $F_{4,625}=27.42$ ,  $p < .000$ . It is worth noting that age, gender, marital status, income, offline interactions, rural-urban background and ritual observance were included as control variables. However, gender, marital status, income, offline interactions and rural-urban background were removed from the equation as they were not significantly correlating with the independent variable. The interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent on social networking sites in a day was entered at Step 3. It contributed a 7.0 percent of the variance in the salience of entity God over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,624}=23.14$ ,  $p < .02$ , as shown in table 25. Hence, a positive interaction effects were found in the process. In other words, the result supports the posited hypothesis that exposure to social networking sites will moderate the relationship between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness.

**Table 25: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on self-perceived salience of entity God (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	.002	.001	.07*
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.001	.000	.31**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	10.2*		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	.002	.001	.08*
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.001	.000	.28**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	-1.9	.70	-.21**
SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	-.01	.01	-.04
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.7**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE TV <sup>c</sup> × SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	.071	.031	.09*
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	7.0*		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	15.6*		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent on social networking sites in a day

\*\* $p < .01$

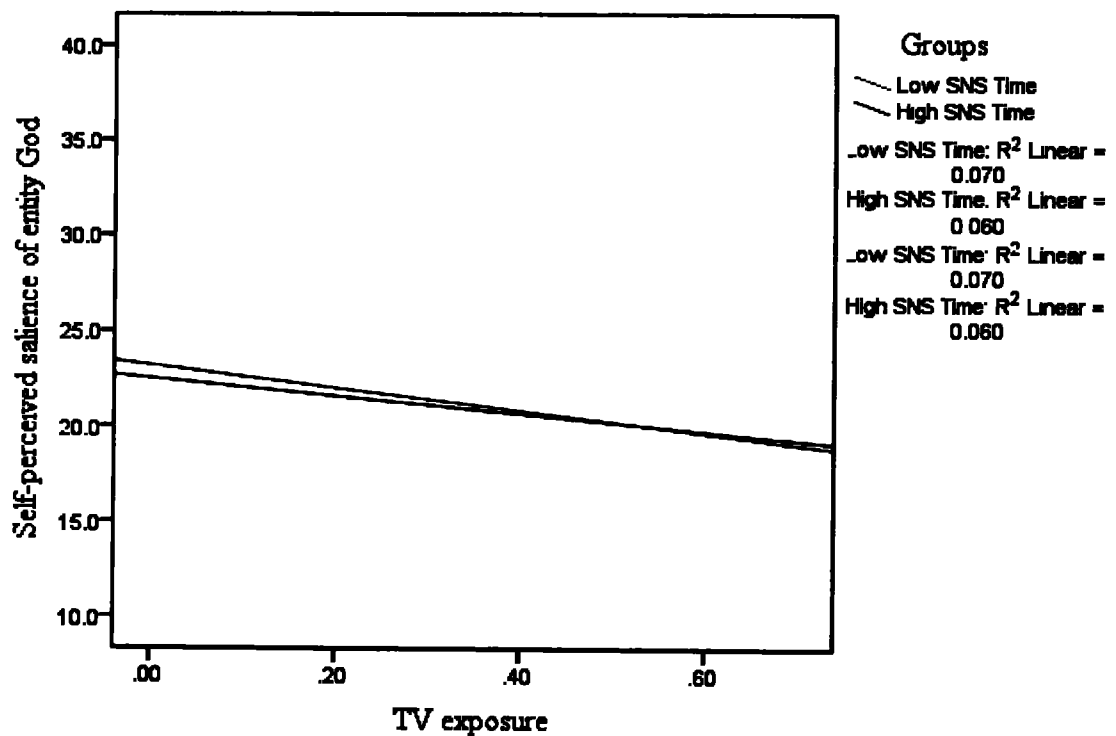
\* $p < .05$

Figure 11 shows the interaction between television entertainment exposure and social media exposure on the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness. Both the high and low social media exposure groups show ambiguation effects of television entertainment exposure,



although the salience of entity God decreases slightly more in the consciousness of low social media exposure group. Thus, H3g is supported.

Figure 11: Interaction between television exposure and social media use on self-perceived salience of entity God



A different scenario was observed when the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and time spent on social networking sites in a day were entered separately added to the equation at Step 2. Although these two variables jointly explained an additional 3.1 percent of the variance in the perceived social salience of entity God in society, with a significant F value,  $F_{4,625}=10.11, p < .006$ , an interaction between the same variables contributed an insignificant 0.0 percent to the model with an F value,  $F_{5,624}=.13, p < .609$ , as indicated in table 26. This implies that time spent on social networking sites in a day was not strong enough to change the direction or add some power to the relationship between time

spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and perceived social salience of entity God. This H3h was not supported.

**Table 26: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived social salience of entity God ( $N=631$ )**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-0.07	.04	-.06
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.02	.00	.21**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.5*		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-0.07	.04	-.07
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.02	.00	.19**
DE TV <sup>c</sup>	-1.9	.70	-.11**
SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	.43	.34	-.05
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	1.6*		
<b>Block 3</b>			
DE TV <sup>c</sup> × SNS Time <sup>d</sup>	.72	1.4	.02
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.00		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	6.1*		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

<sup>d</sup> Hours spent on social networking sites in a day

\*\* $p < .01$

\* $p < .05$

## **4.8 Fourth Hypothesis**

A hierarchical multiple regression was performed to examine the ability of the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation on respondents' orientation towards materialism. Television exposure variable was entered together with religious values orientation at Step 2 of the model. The two variables an additional 25.4 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation after the effects of age and ritual observance of daily prayers were controlled. It also registered a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=86.27, p < .000$ . The interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation was entered at Step 3. It contributed a meagre 0.8 percent of the variance in respondents' materialistic orientation over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=71.34, p < .005$ .

Hence, the interaction effects were found in the process. This implies that religious attitudes of audience members moderate the relationship between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and respondents' materialistic orientation, in line with the posited H4a, as indicated in table 27.

**Table 27: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on attitudes towards materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-.42	.11	-.14**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-1.29	.18	-.28**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	10.1**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-.50	.09	-.17**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-.38	.16	-.08
RVO <sup>c</sup>	11.68	.08	-.44**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-.99	1.69	.23**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	25.4**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
RVO <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	.87	.31	.09*
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	0.8*		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	36.3**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Attitude towards religious values

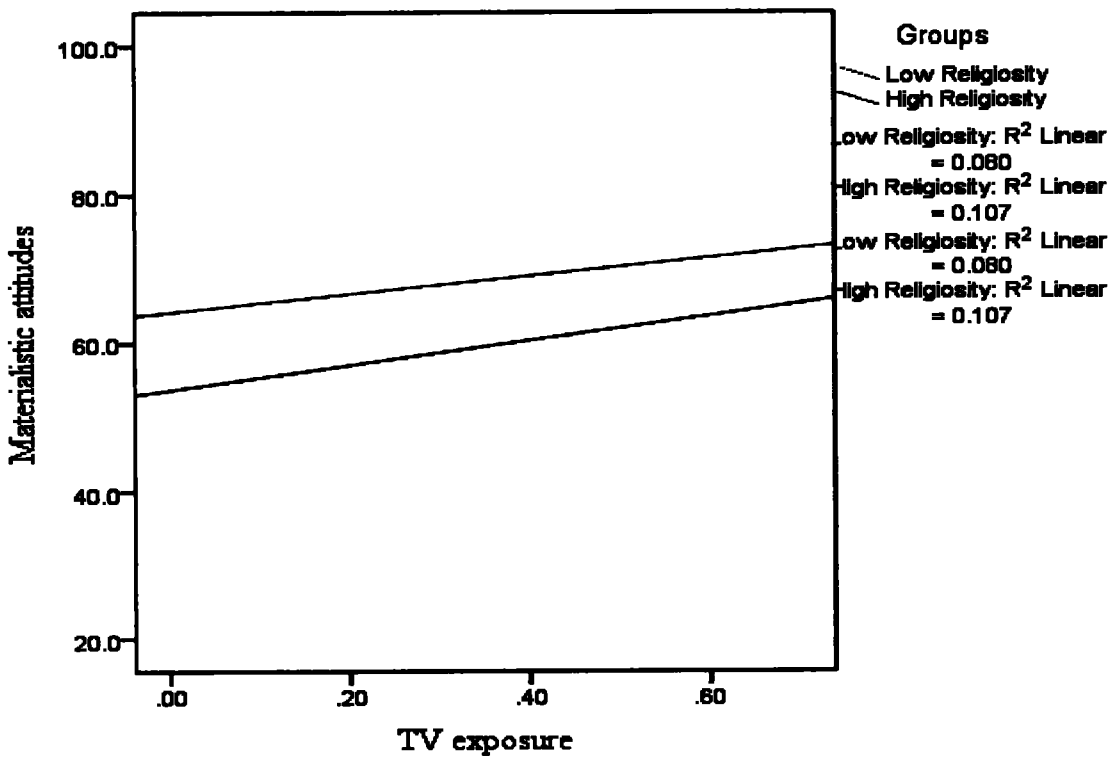
<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

The interaction term between religiosity and television exposure on materialistic attitudes is plotted in Figure 12. In this interaction plot, both low and high religiosity groups are showing cultivation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on television, with respondents' who have low religious values orientation reflecting higher orientation toward materialism. The interaction term also provides evidence for mainstreaming into materialism with both low and high religiosity groups moving closer to the symbolic cultural mainstream of the world of television, which is counter to the direction of our national ideology. While the likelihood of materialistic attitudes is higher for low religiosity group than high religiosity group, higher TV viewing strengthens the magnitude of the cultivation effect in religious groups.

Figure 12: Interaction between television exposure and religious values orientation on materialistic attitudes



The interaction effect of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation was also examined for the perceived prevalence of materialism in society. Television viewing variable was entered simultaneously with religious values orientation at Step 2 of the model, they both explained 2.1 percent of the variance in the dependent variable with a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=5.6$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for the effects of age and ritual observance of daily prayers. When the interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation was entered at Step 3, it registered a 2.8 percent of the variance in the perceived prevalence of materialism in society, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=8.4$ ,  $p < .000$ . Hence, interaction effects were found in the process and H4b is supported, as summarized in table 28.

**Table 28: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceptions about materialism (N=631)**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	.33	.11	.12**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-.00	.18	.00
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	1.4**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	.33	.11	.12**
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	-.17	.19	-.04
RVO <sup>c</sup>	.29	.09	.13**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	5.37	20	.11**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.1**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
RVO <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	1.54	.36	.17**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.8**		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	6.3**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Attitude towards religious values

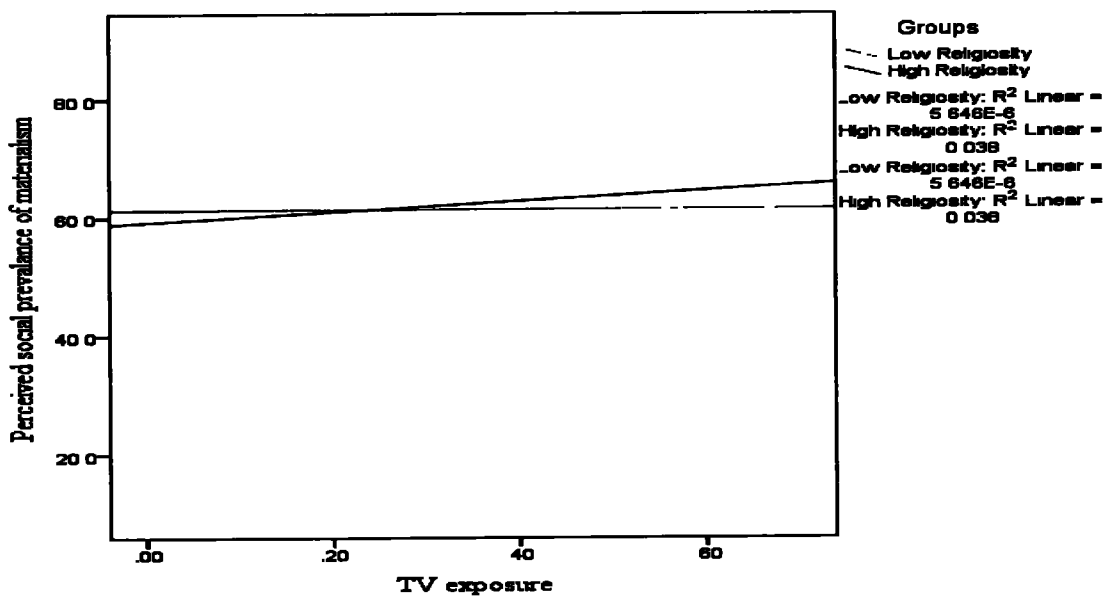
<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

The interaction term between religiosity and television exposure on perceived prevalence of materialism in society is plotted in Figure 13. In this interaction plot, both low and high religiosity groups are showing cultivation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on television. Interestingly, high religiosity group reflects higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to low religiosity group. In other words, exposure to dramatized entertainment on television is likely to cultivate materialistic perceptions such that people with high religious attitudes are more likely to perceive heightened levels of materialism in society, compared to low religious group. Therefore, the analysis reveals that high religious attitude predicts perceptions about the prevalence of materialism in society through its significant interaction with the independent variable of overall exposure to dramatized entertainment on television, with the likelihood perceived social prevalence of materialism higher for high religiosity group than low religiosity group.

Figure 13: Interaction between television exposure and religious values orientation on perceived prevalence of materialism in society





A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the ability of the interaction between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation to exert influence on the salience of entity God in respondents' consciousness. Time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered together with religious values orientation at Step 2 of the model. The two variables jointly explained 10 percent of the variance in respondents' salience of entity God, after controlling for the effects of age and ritual observance of daily prayers. It also registered a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=39.96$ ,  $p < .000$ . The interaction variable of time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation was entered at Step 3. It contributed a 1.6 percent of the variance in respondents' salience of entity God over and above what was already explained, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=34.86$ ,  $p < .001$ . Hence, the interaction effects were found in the process, in line with H4c, as shown in table 29.

**Table 29: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on self-perceived salience of entity God ( $N=631$ )**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	.08	.05	.07
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.58	.07	.31**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	10.4**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	.10	.04	.09*
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.37	.07	.20**
RVO <sup>c</sup>	.22	.04	.24**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-3.77	.76	-.18**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	10**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
RVO <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-.47	.14	-.12**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	1.5**		
Total R <sup>2</sup> (%)	21.8**		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Attitude towards religious values

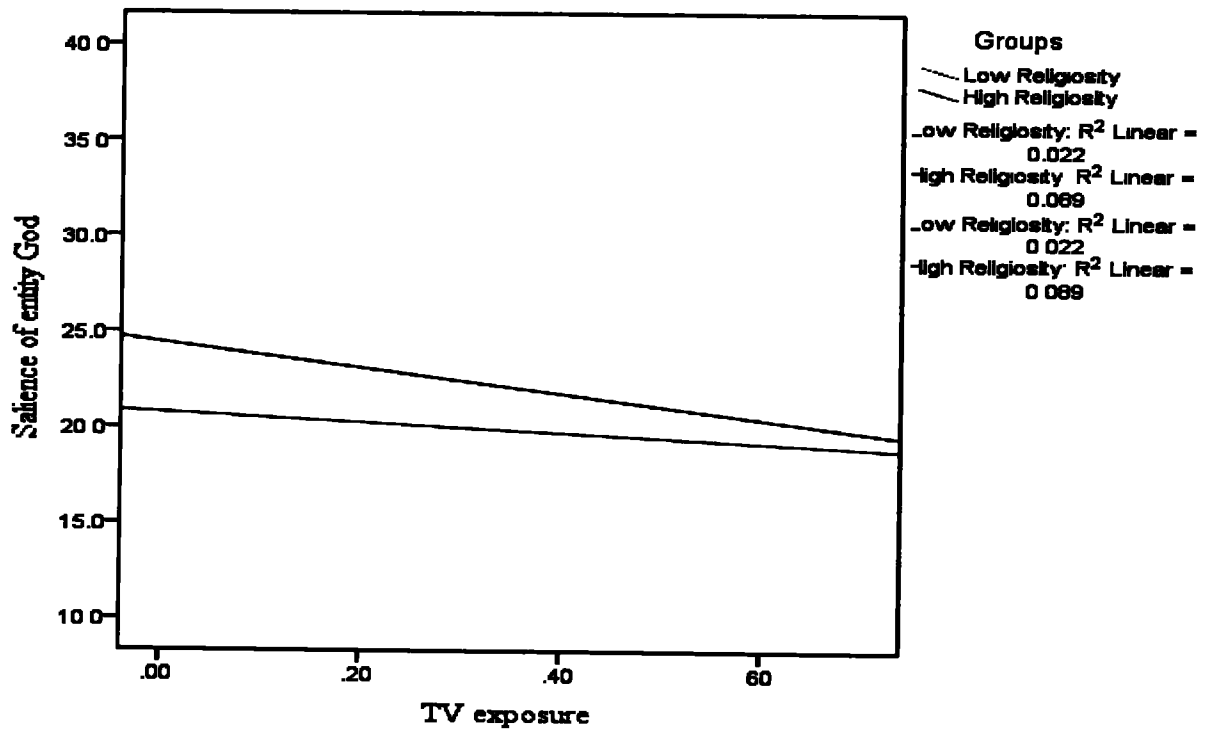
<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

The interaction term between religiosity and television exposure on salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness is plotted in Figure 14. In this interaction plot, both low and high religiosity groups are showing ambiguation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on television. That is, salience of entity God decreases in both low and high religiosity groups as their exposure to the world of television increases. While there is no difference in terms of the direction of this ambiguation outcome, there is pronounced difference between the strength of the effect in low religiosity groups. As such, the salience of entity God decreases more evidently in audience members with low orientation toward religious values.

Figure 14: Interaction between television exposure and religious values orientation on salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness



Similarly, in order to examine whether the interaction variable exerts any influence on the perceived social salience of entity God, time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day was entered simultaneously with religious values orientation at level two of the equation. At this level, the two variables jointly explained 3.7 percent of the variance in the perceived social salience of entity God with a significant F value,  $F_{4,626}=14.49$ ,  $p < .000$ , after controlling for the effects of age and objective religiosity. The interaction term between time spent watching dramatized entertainment on television in a day and religious values orientation was entered at Step 3, and it contributed a 2.2 percent of the variance in the perceived social salience of entity God, with a significant F value,  $F_{5,625}=14.90$ ,  $p < .000$ . In other words, the interaction effect was statistically significant and the effect of exposure to dramatized entertainment on the perceived social salience is contingent on religious attitudes of viewers in society. Thus, H4d is supported, as shown in table 30.

**Table 30: Regression results indicating impact of the control, predictor and moderator variables on perceived social salience of entity God ( $N=631$ )**

	B	Std. Error	$\beta^a$
<b>Block 1</b>			
Age	-.06	.04	-.06
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.34	.06	.21**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	4.7**		
<b>Block 2</b>			
Age	-.05	.04	-.05
Religiosity <sup>b</sup>	.22	.07	.14**
RVO <sup>c</sup>	.14	.03	.17**
DE TV <sup>d</sup>	-1.43	.70	-.08*
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	3.7**		
<b>Block 3</b>			
RVO <sup>c</sup> × DE TV <sup>d</sup>	.50	.13	.15**
Incremental R <sup>2</sup> (%)	2.2**		
<b>Total R<sup>2</sup> (%)</b>	<b>10.6**</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Final standardized coefficients

<sup>b</sup> Ritual observance of daily prayers

<sup>c</sup> Attitude towards religious values

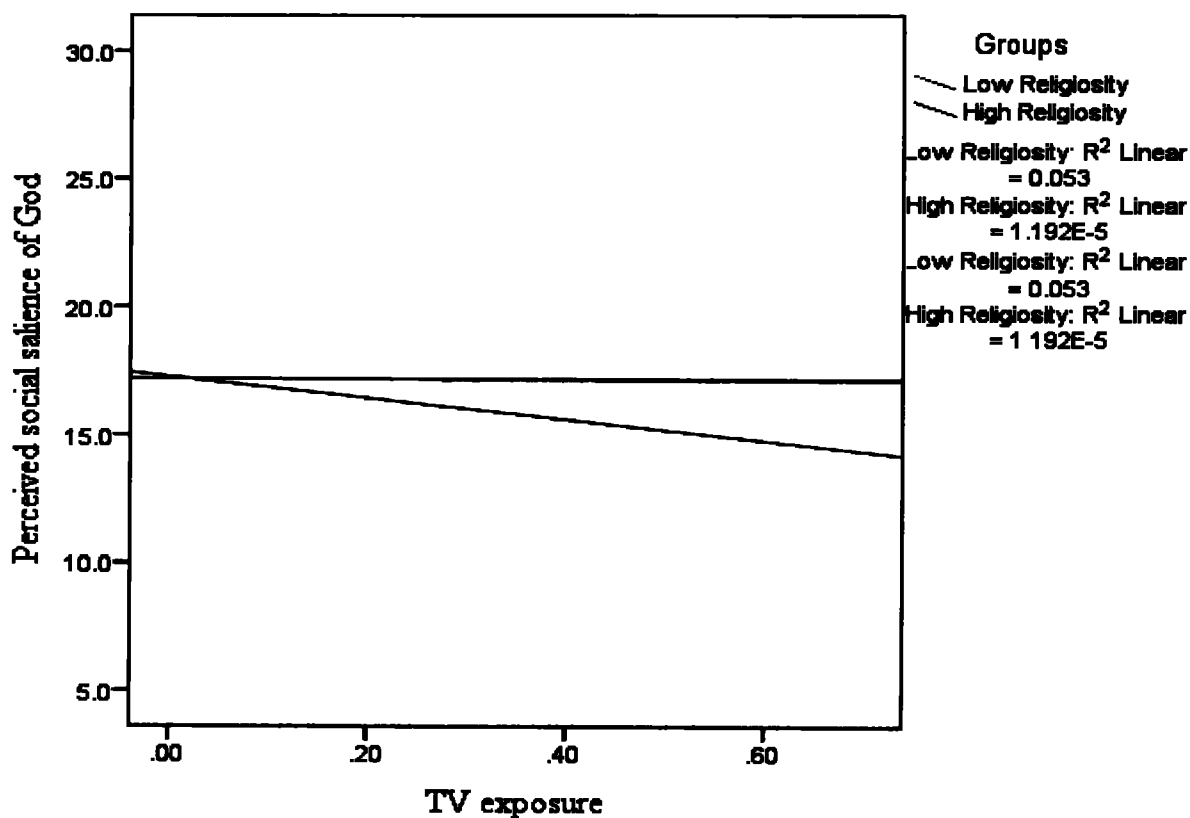
<sup>d</sup> Hours spent watching dramatized entertainment in a day on a television set

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*  $p < .05$

As is graphically represented in Figure 15, the result of the interaction between television exposure and religious values orientation on perceived social salience of entity God indicates that the ambiguation effects are markedly profound among low religious group, compared to high religious group. In other words, audience members from the low religiosity group are more likely to perceived others to be less mindful of the entity God than viewers from the high religiosity group.

Figure 15: Interaction between television exposure and religious values orientation on perceived social salience of entity God



## **4.9 Summary of the Hypothesised Results**

The summary of the reported findings of this study are presented as follows:

- 1. The research findings demonstrate the presence of cultivation effect of the fictional entertainment programming across all dependent variables of this study. More specifically, exposure to dramatized entertainment contributed significantly to materialistic orientation, perceived prevalence of materialism in society, salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness and the perceived salience of entity God in society.**
- 2. The findings also presented evidence for cultivation at both the first-order level and the second-order level. The findings provided strong evidence for first-order cultivation effect such as the perceived prevalence of materialism in society as well as for second-order cultivation effects such materialistic orientation. In other words, exposure to dramatized entertainment positively correlated with cultivation outcomes for both materialism variables, meaning that those who spend more time in the world of dramatized entertainment are more likely to have materialistic perceptions and attitudes.**
- 3. One of the focused areas of this research was to examine the ambiguation effect at both first-order and second-order levels. As such, the findings provided evidence for first-order ambiguation effects for the perceived social salience of entity God, as well as for second-order ambiguation effects such that exposure to dramatized entrainment negatively correlated with the salience of entity God, meaning that higher the exposure to dramatized entertainment, lower the salience of entity God in audience members.**
- 4. The analyses show evidence of main effects between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television in a day and the several dependent variables. Contrary to the posited**

hypotheses, this relationship does not seem to be influenced by time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in day. In other words, exposure to dramatized entertainment on television exclusively possesses the ability to influence respondents' materialistic orientation; perceived prevalence of materialism in society; and perceived social salience of entity God. Nevertheless, time spent watching dramatized entertainment online moderated the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and self-perceived salience of entity God. That is, there was actually no TV entertainment exposure effect in the high online entertainment exposure group, but ambiguation was happening among the low online entertainment exposure group.

5. Similarly, the findings fell short of providing evidence for the ability of exposure to social networking sites to moderate the relationships between TV entertainment exposure and this study's dependent variables, with the exception of one dependent variable. That is, time spent on social networking sites moderated the relationship between TV entertainment exposure and the salience of entity God. For the remaining dependent variables, the findings did not show any evidence of differential moderation effects across different types of audience. The predictor moderator was not able to change the strength or direction of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables.
6. Finally, the results provide strong evidence for moderation effects of attitudes towards religious values on the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment on television and all the dependent variables of this research, in line with the posited hypotheses. Religious attitudes of audience members moderated the relationships between TV exposure and cultivation and ambiguation outcomes. In other words, the analyses highlight the impact of cultivation and ambiguation effects of exposure to dramatized



**entertainment, regardless of religious commitment and attitudes of audience members, although the effects were more profound in respondents with less positive attitudes towards religious values than in respondents with more positive attitudes towards religious values.**

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

### **5.1 Summary of the Hypotheses**

The present study has examined the impact of domestic and foreign entertainment content on social reality perceptions and attitudes of Pakistani youth. Specifically, it has tested the relationship between overall exposure to dramatized entertainment and two different cultivation outcomes (perceived prevalence of materialism in society and materialistic orientation of audience members); and explored the relationship between overall exposure to dramatized entertainment and three different ambiguation outcomes (perceived salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness, and the perceived social salience of entity God). Furthermore, this study has examined the applicability of cultivation theory in the new media environment by analyzing online viewing platforms (YouTube, Netflix and "other" streaming platforms) and social networking sites (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc.) as potential moderators in both cultivation and ambiguation outcomes.

The global entertainment industry is often blamed for undermining the ideological foundations of Pakistani society with its audio-visual cultural artifacts that are presumed to be incompatible and incongruent to the spirit of Islamic teachings and that run counter to Islamic ideals, beliefs and values. Media critics, scholars, politicians and religious leaders cite domestic and foreign socio-cultural inputs for damaging the moral character of the society with its contaminated content. Over the past two decades, Pakistan has seen a mushroom growth of private media channels following the liberalization, privatization and commercialization of the media landscape in 2001 (Rasul & McDowell, 2012; Rasul & Proffitt, 2013). The privately-owned media institutions, combined with foreign entertainment industry, infuse high volumes of hegemonic

cultural messages into Pakistani society, with far-reaching implications for society. However, not too many researchers attempted to document the presumed harmful impact of domestic and foreign entertainment content on audience members in Pakistan under a social scientific paradigm. Also missing is any credible research that subjected cultivation theory to chart out the influence of commercial media products on this subject matter in Pakistan. There is also hardly any traceable research that tested the relevancy of cultivation in the ever-changing media landscape.

From the standpoint of cultivation's core assumptions, the mass production of repetitive, formulaic, and hegemonic cultural inputs form a symbolic world in which audience members live and die, form impressions about themselves and others, and develop and maintain worldviews, beliefs, values, attitudes and assumptions about social reality. The presumed saturation and prevalence of materialistic values and the absence of the Islamic worldviews and norms in domestic and foreign cultural messages and images called for a scholarly investigation into the potential impact on the Islamic social reality of Pakistani society.

The never-ending proliferation of entertainment channels, the ever-increasing production and infusion of their stable and recurrent cultural inputs, and the decadence and degeneration of the Islamic cultural identity made the inquiry into this area a necessity. In the absence of theoretically-grounded social scientific evidence, it is not possible to understand the nature, direction and dynamics of the presumed harmful effects and/or to formulate any theory-based response strategy to safeguard the ideological foundations of Pakistan society. In order to fill those voids, this study applied cultivation research paradigm to examine the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and first- and second-order cultivation outcomes for materialistic perceptions and attitudes, and first- and second-order ambiguation outcomes for the

entity God. Lastly, online viewing platforms, social networking sites and religious commitments were examined as moderators in cultivation and ambiguation processes.

The present study conducted descriptive and correlational analyses, analyses of variance, regression and moderation analyses in order to find answers of the posited research questions and to test the posited hypotheses. In the next section, the major findings from these exploratory analyses are presented with possible explanations and implications.

## **5.2 Discussion and Implication of the Findings**

The findings of this study provide suggestive evidence for the impact of commercially-produced and mass-consumed cultural products on society, in line with previous work in cultivation research. By testing cultivation in the “new” media environment and in a predominantly Muslim society, this study should provide the groundwork for more research in these areas. In particular, the findings should encourage Muslim media scholars and academicians to (re)consider the use and application of cultivation theory in studies on and about the impact of audio-visual cultural products in Muslim societies. The findings should also act as a stepping stone and foundation for policy makers to formulate a theoretically-grounded media policy to monitor and check the impact of media content on society.

Cultivation theory divides television viewers into light viewers and heavy viewers and argues that the individuals who spend a lot of time watching entertainment content are more prone to perceive the real world in the way it is depicted in the fictional world of dramatized content than audience members who spend less time consuming the entertainment content. Materialism, a capitalist value, is arguably one of the most distinctive, recurrent and stable value (Shrum et al., 2005) that is presumed to be prevalent in the overall pattern of programming across genres, global

media networks and viewing platforms and that is mass-infused into the common consciousness of otherwise diverse global cultures. In light of the presumed saturation and prevalence of materialistic images, values, outlooks and attitudes in the commercial entertainment stories and their ability to shape beliefs and opinions of audience members in the direction of the most stable pattern of these messages and images, this study examined the impact of exposure to symbolic world on respondents' perceived prevalence of materialism in society (first-order cultivation outcome) and their materialistic orientation (second-order cultivation outcome).

Most cultivation studies examined first-order cultivation outcomes such social reality perceptions involving estimates, frequencies or probabilities. For example, Cohen and Weimann (2000), Burroughs et al. (2002b), Shrum et al. (1998), Shrum (1998), Carlson (1993), among others, have all documented that the impact of television viewing on viewers' unrealistic perceptions of social reality. Second-order cultivation outcomes are different from first-order outcomes (Schnauber & Meltzer, 2016), as they measure deeply-held values and attitudes of audiences. The findings for cultivation outcomes were observed in the posited direction of the hypotheses and the results offer evidence for both first-order and second-order cultivation outcomes. The results support the core assumptions of cultivation theory that the symbolic world distorts viewers' perceptions of social reality and subtly cultivates beliefs and values in audience members, regardless of their geographical location and/or socio-cultural background.

The findings revealed that respondents who spent more time in the fictional world of dramatized entertainment exhibited higher levels of perceived prevalence of materialism in society and demonstrated higher levels of materialistic attitudes even after controlling for demographic variables. This was done to assess whether the posited relationship between the independent and dependent variables was a function of the demographic variables. The findings were above and

beyond the influence of control variables and open up the possibility of similar influences for people who were not surveyed in this study given the fact that they watch more or less the same content and are likely to exhibit similar social reality perceptions and attitudes. These cultivation outcomes exhibited the ability of the centrally-produced symbolic cultural environment in shaping social reality perceptions and attitudes of audience members in the direction of its most stable patterns and current, in line with existing findings in cultivation research (de Guise, 2001; Romer et al., 2014; Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). The fictional world of dramatized entertainment cultivated, maintained and strengthened materialistic perceptions and attitudes, which are already present in Pakistani society.

The results of this study provided evidence similar to those offered by decades of research in this field. For the heavy viewers of dramatized entertainment content, there is evidence for cultivation outcomes, regardless of whether the viewers watch entertainment programs on television sets or online viewing platforms. The findings also demonstrated the existence of cultivation effects in Pakistani society, implying that the synthetic symbolic cultural environment has the ability to shape conceptions of social reality and attitudes of audiences beyond the liberal, secular and consumer societies of the West to more traditional and religious societies like Pakistan. The replication of cultivation research paradigm in a new geographical location and in a Muslim society and the existence of cultivation outcomes provide interesting insights into the ability of the global entertainment industry to subtly cultivate hegemonic ideological and cultural values like materialism, which run counter to the native socio-cultural environment and its ideological foundations.

From the standpoint of cultivation, story-telling and advertising go hands in hands. Stories are continued to be produced and infused by a handful of institutions who do not have much to

tell, but have a lot to sell. In other words, the mass-produced stories serve as means to an end for profit-driven industries which are interested more in selling their products to audiences than storytelling (Gerbner et al., 1986). This transaction takes place not merely on the economic front but also in terms of cultural and ideological influences, given the unidirectional flow of cultural and consumer products from the developed core nations to the developing periphery nations, for that matter Pakistan. The audio-visual cultural products bring hegemonic value system, ideas and ideals from unknown territories and elites, with far-reaching socio-economic and socio-cultural implications. The materialistic value system is cultivated through story-telling and reinforced through advertising. Regardless of whether consumers buy the products or not, they consciously or unconsciously renounce their traditional tastes and values and subtly acquire all-powerful and superimposed tastes, identities and values (Özer, 2011). As such, the mediated stories act as agents of socialization and enculturation of capitalist values (Khan, 1992; Shrum et al., 2005) which, in turn, help maintain and strengthen the status quo.

The commercially supported global entertainment industry projects and maintains materialistic ways of life which not only pollute the socio-cultural environment (Kasser, 2002) but also have far-reaching implications for the physical environment given the never-ending production and ever-increasing consumption of consumer products. Furthermore, materialism has historically been characterized as a harmful value to both the individual and society (Kasser 2002). Some researchers view materialism as a human deficiency, a waste of valuable resources, a shirking of personal and civic responsibility, a deficiency in character, and a subversion of traditional values (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002; Mukerji & Schudson, 1991). A substantial body of research shows that materialistic values are associated with depression and anxiety, as well as destructive attitudes towards the environment and other people. Research also reveals that

materialistic people are perceived as selfish, self-centered, and extrinsically motivated. Prior studies also show that materialistic values are associated with depression and anxiety (Kasser, 2002). In other words, when people chase money and material things, they are less likely to be happy and satisfied with their life (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2002). Prior research also reveals a relationship between materialistic values and destructive attitudes towards the environment and other people.

While there is a possibility of some of the aforementioned individual studies as being wrong, a meta-analysis of statistical data provide evidence that materialistic values cause lower life satisfaction, lower self-esteem, depression and anxiety (Kasser, 2002). Materialistic people tend to feel sad more often, experience less joy and pleasure, and smoke and drink more, regardless of age, gender, social status or country. Based on the evidence of this study and the aforementioned studies, materialism may be creating a toxic culture environment which is not only detrimental to the well-being of individuals and society but also is causing harms to the physical environment (Hurst, Dittmar, Bond & Kasser, 2013). From the standpoint of cultivation theory, Gerbner and his associates argued that the fictional world of television is saturated with violence programming and that long-term exposure to these inescapable messages cultivate a cognitive bias, dubbed “mean world syndrome,” in audience members wherein heavy viewers perceive the real world to be more dangerous than it actually is (Gerbner & Morgan, 2010). On the same lines, the symbolic world is saturated with materialistic values, attitudes and behaviors and long-term exposure to these messages may be cultivating a “material world syndrome” wherein heavy viewers perceive others to be more selfish, self-centered and deceptive than they actually are.

“The repetitive pattern of television's mass-produced messages and images forms the mainstream of a common symbolic environment that cultivates the most widely shared conceptions of reality. We live in terms of the



stories we tell – stories about what things exist, stories about how things work, and stories about what to do – and television tells them all through news, drama, and advertising to almost everybody most of the time.” (Gerbner et al., 1978, p. 178).

Next, while cultivation literature discusses the ability of the symbolic world to blur, blend and bend viewers’ social reality perceptions, beliefs and values (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999), no prior cultivation studies pondered the ambiguation potential of fictional entertainment stories. To date, there is hardly any traceable empirical studies that explored the ambiguation effects of dramatized entertainment on social reality perceptions and beliefs. This study filled this void in cultivation literature and examined the ambiguation effects of exposure to dramatized entertainment on the salience of the entity God in viewers’ consciousness. This is the first study that explored and tested the ability of the symbolic world to ambiguate deeply-held values and beliefs of audience members.

According to Gerbner, the symbolic world makes clear and visible certain social reality perceptions and beliefs that may otherwise be blurred, hidden or opaque. Based on the same assumption, the synthetic symbolic cultural environment also has the potential to blur, hide or opaque social realities that are otherwise salient and visible in the objective socio-cultural mainstream (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). For example, spiritual or metaphysical realities, including the entity God, are prevalent and salient in the socio-cultural environment of Muslim societies but are nonexistent in global entertainment content, and are either rare or less common in the domestic entertainment fare. That is, the fictional world of dramatized entertainment differs sharply from the Islamic social reality.

Under the assumptions of cultivation theory, exposure to the mediated message system has the potential to ambiguate, blur, or attenuate deeply-held values and beliefs of audience members.

Therefore, it was hypothesized that exposure to the presumed Godless symbolic cultural environment would ambiguate the salience of the entity God in viewers' consciousness, as well as ambiguate the perceived social salience of entity God. The findings were observed in the expected direction and posited hypotheses of this study and exposure to dramatized entertainment content ambiguated the salience of the entity God.

From the standpoint of mass communication theory, salience is a cognitive process implying that the frequency and salience of social reality beliefs, perceptions and issues in audio-visual inputs would determine the salience of these beliefs, perceptions and issues in viewers' memories. In other words, the more prominently and frequently a social reality is embedded and depicted in mass-produced stories, the more salient and accessible it likely will be in the common consciousness of audience members. On the other hand, if a social reality is nonexistent or is located on the periphery of the fictional world of dramatized entertainment, it is likely to be less accessible and salient in the consciousness of heavy consumers of entertainment content. As such, mass mediated-stories not only have the potential to cultivate but also to ambiguate perceptions social reality, attitudes, values and beliefs of audience members. The findings of this study provide evidence for the ambiguation potential of the world of dramatized entertainment and offer new insights into the potential de-Islamizing impact of foreign and domestic message systems in Muslim societies, including Pakistani society.

Islamic ideology is the founding ideology of Pakistan (Al Mujahid, 1976). However, Pakistani society appeared to be drifting away from its ideological foundations and blindly imitating Western cultural and social forms. The social consciousness of Pakistani Muslims being socially and culturally different from liberal and secular Western societies appears to be fading away (Asad, 1999), the reality of Islam as a culture-producing force may be diminishing, and the

spirit of Islamic ideology may be gradually disappearing. Where does this decades-long decadence lead Pakistani society? How far does it fit into the cultural and ideological impressions of Islam? What mass-mediated storytellers and the symbolic cultural environment have to do with the weakening of the hold of Islamic social reality, so glaringly obvious today? These are important questions that need to be addressed and the ambiguous outcomes provide the foundation for further inquiry into these issues.

The findings of this study also suggest that the country's communication policy, if any, is not at all developing, maintaining or projecting the cultural impressions and ideological foundations of Pakistan. The state- and private-owned entertainment channels of the country have the capacity to act as a culturally enriching force. However, it may not be inaccurate to conclude that policy makers have never conceived, envisioned or realized such culture-producing and ideology-maintaining role of media in the nation's development plans. On the contrary, both domestic and foreign mass-mediated storytellers have uninterrupted, unchecked and unregulated access to public airwaves to breed what appears to be a toxic culture with their culturally and ideologically incongruent messages. In order for Pakistani society to be viable, well-ordered, progressive, forward looking, social-welfare oriented, and civilized, it cannot afford to be divorced from its cultural and ideological roots, norms and values.

Finally, addressing the question of whether new media platforms differentially impact the cultivation process, the results of the present study were not consistent and uniform across all moderation terms. In order to address this question, the present study examined the interaction impact of online viewing platforms (YouTube, Netflix and other streaming sites) and social networking platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram etc.) in cultivation and ambiguous outcomes. The findings provided limited evidence for the moderation impact of new media

platforms on cultivation and ambiguation outcomes, despite addressing all possible factors and issues. The present study found the interaction term only for the ambiguation of the salience of the entity in audiences' consciousness. In other words, time spent watching dramatized entertainment online in a day and time spent on social media platforms in a day were not strong enough to change the direction or strength of the relationship between television exposure and several dependent variables, with the exception of one variable.

For the dependent variable in which the moderation interaction did show up, it was not straightforwardly observable in betas. The moderation term only showed up when online entertainment was split up into two groups on the median value. In other words, the effect of television entertainment exposure on ambiguation is contingent on online entertainment exposure. There was actually no television entertainment exposure effect in the high online entertainment exposure group, but ambiguation was happening among the low online entertainment exposure group. Whereas, the high entertainment online group largely remained unaffected in terms of the salience of entity God by increasing television entertainment. The salience of entity God clearly decreases in the consciousness of the low online exposure group with increasing exposure to television entertainment.

For the remaining dependent variables in which interaction effects did not show up, there could be number of reasons. Jaccard, Turrisi and Wan (1990) identified multicollinearity, measurement error, inappropriate metrics, small sample sizes, and model misspecification as possible factors which could suppress the interaction effects. The present study, however, addressed all of the aforementioned factors in order to detect the interaction effects. Finally, other recommendations by de Vaus (2002) such as checking the data in order to deal with the possible

influence of any outliers, and transforming the variables to comply with the model requirements, were also followed to find the posited interaction term.

The inability of the present study to detect the interaction effects could be explained in four ways. Firstly, the interaction variables may not be strong enough, as compared to the independent variable, to hold up significant effects in the analyses, although these interaction terms were posited on the basis of common sense and a strong theory. In other words, the effect of the predictor variable on criterion variables was too strong for the interaction term to appear, subduing the effects of interaction variables in the process.

Secondly, the demographic composition of the sample might not have rendered information that would have shown up the interaction effects. The sample of the present study mostly comprised of young students, who are generally considered to be less independent and less mature due to their age bracket. The sample was overrepresented with urban participants, meaning they were likely to be more exposed to online viewing platforms and social media sites due to strong internet connectivity in the cities. Participants were also more educated and may be less religious than the general population. In summary, the sample did not approximate the demographic composition of Pakistan population, which might have contributed to the present study's inability to detect the posited interaction effects.

Thirdly, exposure to dramatized entertainment online and social media platforms was measured on a 9-point scale, with the highest value indicating eight or more hours a day, consistent with cultivation's classic television exposure measure. These single-item exposure measures for online and social media platforms could have made these variables vulnerable to measurement error. While efforts were made to avoid vulnerability of these exposure measures to measurement error, the availability of different viewing platforms, the nature of exposure to and use of new

media, and the lack of prior work on these variables might have limited the efficacy of the traditional television exposure measures.

Finally, there is also a possibility that the posited interaction term across all variables never really existed in the present study's population. While common sense and theoretical underpinnings pointed to the potential influence of interaction variables on cultivation and ambiguation outcomes, the results of the present study did not provide adequate support for all interaction terms, contrary to Baron and Kenny's assertion (1986) that interaction variables are always expected to influence the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Despite the lack of moderation relationships, the rationale for the interaction impact of new media platforms on cultivation and ambiguation outcomes may not be totally rejected out of hand given the possible existence of theoretical implications of the new media environment in cultivation research. While there may be many different explanations for these results, the findings do provide interesting insights into the cultivation process in the new media environment. For instance, the results of this study reveal that online viewing platforms appear to have changed the traditional television viewing landscape, at least in young heavy viewers who are increasingly shifting to online viewing platforms to watch dramatized entertainment programming, reflecting the abundance of new television technologies and viewing devices such as smart phones, tablets and laptops etc. which have appeared to make it much more convenient and easier for audiences to access and consume dramatized entertainment content. The shift could pose challenges to traditional television consumption and, in turn, may have implications for the cultivation process which assumes a ritualistic consumption of centrally-produced television content.

Online viewing platforms appear to be offering more content choices and making it easier and more convenient for audiences to access and consume audio-visual inputs due to mobility and

binge-watching options. However, the underlying patterns of messages, their production and consumption remain largely unchanged. For instance, in the case of the free streaming platforms such as YouTube, popular television dramas, television shows, soap operas, and other types of commercially produced stories are widely available and freely accessible with audiences having a greater flexibility in terms of time and space to watch their favorite content. Similarly, in the case of paid streaming platforms such as Netflix, there appears to be more or less the same fictionally-produced entertainment stories that big television networks broadcast during the prime-time hours, with the exception of commercial-free viewing experience.

From the standpoint of cultivation theory, as long as the stories are mass produced by commercial conglomerates and mass-consumed by audience members, cultivation effects will be in play regardless of when, where or how these stories are accessed and consumed by audiences. That is, the core tenants of cultivation will hold up in the ever-evolving media landscape, with the possibility of even stronger cultivation effects given the fact that there are more commercially produced cultural messages than ever before and heavy viewers are still exposed to more or less the same kind of content from more or less the same type institutions with more or less the same production formulas and profit motives.

Gerbner pointed out three kind of stories that animate the symbolic world of television and that perform three distinct but related functions. The first kind of stories are in the form of creative imagination and imagery, called fiction, such as fairy tales, novels, comics, plays, cartoons that build the fantasy called reality and reveal how things work. The second type of stories, according to Gerbner, are presumably factual accounts that describe what things are and that may confirm or deny some conception of how things work. Stories of the third type are mostly commercials advertising messages with certain values and choices for their consumers (Shanahan & Morgan,

1999). These stories tell audience members what to do by clinching lessons of the first two and turning them into action.

Like television, the new media environment, including online viewing platforms and social networking sites, is also animated with the above mentioned three types of stories. The important question would be whether the symbolic cultural environment still functions as an agent of the established social order in this ever-changing media landscape and whether it still construct, maintains and propagates the dominant cultural ideology and values through its recurring and ritualized messages and symbols like the institution of television, (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner et al., 1977; Shrum & Bischak, 2001).

Finally, this study examined the interaction between attitude towards religious values and exposure to dramatized entertainment and its potential influence on perceptions and beliefs about materialism and salience of entity God. In the context of cultivation, an individual's level of religiosity (attitude towards religious values) differentially moderated the relationships between exposure to dramatized entertainment and cultivation outcomes for materialistic perceptions and attitudes. That is, people with less positive attitudes towards religious values exhibited higher materialistic orientation, compared to people with more positive attitudes towards religious values. On the contrary, people with more positive attitude towards religious values reflected higher perceived prevalence of materialism in society, compared to people with less positive attitude towards religious values. These results came in line with the posited direction of the study's hypotheses. Similarly, for ambiguation outcomes, people with more positive attitude towards religious values reflected comparatively lower level of effects. That is, the ambiguation effect was more profound in respondents with less positive attitudes towards religious values. In other words, there is likelihood that higher exposure to the world of dramatized entertainment will ambiguate



the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness and the perceived social salience of entity God more profoundly among audience members who have a lower commitment to religious values.

These findings highlight the significance of cultivation that is happening in Pakistani society, regardless of religious commitment of audience members. While cultivation and ambiguation effects are more profound in people who hold less positive attitude towards religious values, these effects are also present among people with more positive attitude towards religious values. These findings imply that the world of dramatized entertainment may be creating a mainstream on materialism and ambiguation between people with low religious commitment and people with high religious commitment. The presence of these effects indicates the weakening of the hold of Islamic beliefs and values among young viewers who may be more exposed to values, beliefs and ideologies incongruent and incompatible to the Islamic ideology.

For instance, modesty is an obligation in Islam for both men and women to guard their bodies from the gaze of others and also not to express thoughtlessly, indecently or arrogantly. However, the symbolic cultural environment is saturated with immodest and impudent values, obscene and absurd acts, emotions and thoughts. Similarly, Islam treats idolatry, sorcery, murder, false witness, disrespect to parents and calumny etc. as cardinal sins and forbids adultery, fornication, rape, alcohol, extramarital relations, usury, interest or speculation. On the contrary, the fictional world of dramatized entertainment is filled with messages, images and characters involved in acts of adultery, fornication, rape, molestation, and other obscene or absurd actions. The forces of spirituality and goodness appeared to be superseded by material interests and degrading impulses incongruent to the spirit of Islamic teachings and its normative code of public morality. Material objects and goods are linked with identity and wellbeing, and beauty and

affluence are communicated as central goals of life. The symbolic cultural environment also defines what it means to be beautiful, attractive, happy and successful in life. In so doing, the line between good and bad, and right and wrong is blurred, while the intellectual and spiritual quest, the conception of this worldly life and the connection to God are excluded from commercially produced entertainment content.

Keeping in mind the prevalence and recurrence of these ideologically incongruent values and images in the mass-produced stories and the impact potential of these messages under cultivation research paradigm, the domestic and foreign message systems are weakening the hold of Islamic ideology and its cultural impressions in Pakistani society, while maintaining and strengthening the manifestation of paradoxes between professed and practiced values and beliefs at both individual and societal levels. For example, Pakistanis profess honesty but practice corruption; proclaim meritocracy but promote favoritism; profess religious tolerance but spread hatred on religious and sectarian grounds; profess Islamic cultural values but imitate Western ways of life; profess justice but practice injustice in daily routines; profess respect for human dignity but violate human rights; profess the supremacy of the constitution but support violators of the constitution; profess respect for the law but violate the rules in everyday affairs of life; profess spiritual values but chase an easy worldly life; profess high moral values but aspire status, power and material possessions; profess cleanliness but pollute the environment; desire equitable resource distribution but indulge in hoarding; profess simplicity but desire lavish lifestyles etc.

In summary, the results of this study corroborate the existing evidence on the role of media in cultivating materialistic conceptions social reality, worldviews and attitudes of audience members, as well as expand the existing body of knowledge by examining ambiguation as another type of media effects on social reality perceptions and deeply-held personal value orientation of

audiences. Besides making contributions to the existing body of literature on materialism and cultivation, the findings of this study should generate public debate on the potential socio-cultural, socio-religious, socio-economic and socio-psychological implications of domestic and foreign entertainment content in a Muslim society like Pakistan.

There may be a need to formulate theoretically-grounded communication and entertainment response initiatives to regulate foreign and domestic cultural transmissions in order to mitigate the cultivation of ideologically and culturally incompatible and incongruent values and outlooks, as well as the ambiguation of Islamic ideals among audiences. These response initiatives may also focus on using the domestic entertainment media to project, maintain and strengthen the cultural impressions of Islamic ideology as a response to the potential de-Islamizing effects of cultural imports. Fazal et al. (1999) suggested a theoretically-grounded policy initiative to safeguard the integrity and sovereignty of cultural policy decisions in Muslims societies aimed at protecting the ideological foundations of these societies against cultural domination and invasion through mass-mediated stories. That initiative, according to the scholars, should focus on carrying out message system analyses in order to document the Islamic-ideology congruence of existing fictional entertainment programming and using audio-visual cultural inputs to develop and cultivate Islamic cultural and ideological identity in Pakistan society.

Perhaps, there may be an urgent need for developing media literacy initiatives to educate audience members to reduce the negative impact of mass-produced stories in society and/or to empower audiences as critical viewers and active media users (Jeong, Cho, & Huang, 2012). These initiatives may be designed for all segments of the society, in particular teachers, students and parents, to increase awareness about media use behaviors, critical viewing and potential harmful effects of media consumption. The findings of this study shows that students may be more

vulnerable to media effects given the lack of direction and purpose in their age brackets and their increased use of different media platforms. Besides spreading awareness about the potential detrimental effects of commercially produced content, media literacy programs should highlight the findings of existing research to trigger social activism that challenges the use of public airwaves by a handful of domestic and foreign elites against public interest.

The results of this study also imply that there may be a need for reforming the media landscape or its content. The saturation of culturally and ideologically incongruent values and images in media programming, in particular the prevalence of the portrayals of wealth, status, money, power, possessions and affluence, the underrepresentation of the less affluent and weaker groups or minorities, and the nonexistence of the spiritual aspects of the Islamic social reality, not only reflects the ubiquity of capitalism-driven materialistic values and beliefs in society but also indicates the inextricable commercial nature of foreign and domestic media institutions. Therefore, media literacy programs should not only educate audiences about media institutions and their commercially produced stories but also promote critical thinking and attitudes among audiences to generate public debates about mass-mediated storytellers with an ultimate goal of reforming the monopolized, homogenized and globalized symbolic cultural environment (Lewis & Jhally, 1998). In this regard, George Gerbner's led Cultural Environment Movement, launched in March 1996 as a response to dominant perspectives and limitation of alternatives in U.S. television programming, may provide the foundational framework for coordinating and organizing a research-backed social movement to clean the toxic cultural environment (Gerbner, 1998b).

"The new globalized and centralized cultural environment demanded a new active approach. Working separately on individual issues, rallying to meet each individual crisis, was not sufficient. Treating symptoms instead of starting to prevent the wholesale manufacturing of the conditions that led to those symptoms was self-defeating. Dealing with systemic connections requires coordination and organization. Individual effort, local action and national and

international constituencies acting in concert can, together, help to begin that long, slow and difficult task.” (Gerbner, 1996, p. 136).

### **5.3 Limitations of the Study**

In spite of these valuable contributions in cultivation research, this study had several limitations that need to be addressed in future research undertakings.

First, the population and sample of this study composed of senior-level undergraduate and postgraduate students of the International Islamic University, Islamabad, whose demographic composition such as age range and educational background could be different from the general population. For instance, participants with urban background were over-represented in the sample, while rural backgrounders were under-represented. Thus, participants in this sample did not approximate the rural-urban demographics of the general Pakistani population. Further, the sample was more educated, younger, and may be less oriented toward religious beliefs and values than the general population. Combined, these factors mean the sample did not approximate the demographic composition of Pakistan population. Given the fact that cultivation outcomes have been observed to be different from population to population (Drew & Reeves, 1980; Lee et al., 2009; Rossler & Brosius, 2001), the findings of this study may not be generalized to the population at large.

Second, the demographic composition was also problematic because the university-going youth population may be spending more time online to consume entertainment content, compared to the general population who may still be watching entertainment programs on television. The youth population also spend more time on social networking sites than the mature general population. The distribution of the exposure variables may have been skewed because of the sample population. This, again, limits the generalizability of the findings to the demographics of

Pakistan population. Despite this limitation, the results are a proof that people who were not surveyed in this study are exposed to more of the same symbolic cultural environment and, therefore, are likely to share almost the same feelings about its content and hold similar orientation, beliefs, values and perceptions of social reality.

Next, although materialistic values, beliefs and perceptions have been explored in prior cultivation studies, this is the first cultivation study that used this specific measure of materialistic orientation and perceptions. Thus, the results of this study are not directly comparable to those found previously. Likewise, this is also the first cultivation study that explored the ambiguation effects of exposure to audio-visual products on the salience of entity God in audience members' consciousness and the perceived social salience of entity God. The measures developed and used for those new types of dependent variables were specific to this study and have not been validated in prior research work. In the absence of prior research work on ambiguation effects in cultivation research, the results are not comparable to earlier work.

Another limitation of this study was that the presumptive profile of audio-visual products did not allow for a more accurate analysis of the most recurrent and stable patterns of the symbolic cultural environment, as well as the consistent values and beliefs that cut across most program genres. This study also relied on existing content studies, which primarily analyzed the content in the U.S. The absence of message system analysis posed both conceptual and operational challenges for first- and second-order variables.

Finally, being the first cultivation study to examine the impact of dramatized entertainment in Pakistani society, it is believed that the findings of this study provide a starting point for future research into the implications of new and traditional forms of exposure to media content for the cultivation process. In the absence of any tested similitude to compare findings of this study, there

were no opportunities to learn from prior studies and avoid some of the foregoing limitations that were not envisaged at the planning stage of this research.

In view of the aforementioned limitations, several recommendations have been made for future studies.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Studies**

The present study and its findings offer opportunities for future research that will further test and expand theoretical underpinnings of George Gerbner's cultivation analysis in the new media environment. This study also provides a foundation for examining the impact of fictional entertainment programming on social reality perceptions of Pakistani viewers, with its findings offering an opportunity to use the locally-produced entertainment content to cultivate worldviews, perceptions of social reality and values that are congruent with the spirit of Islamic teachings and ideals. The Pakistani entertainment media receive a lot of criticism from politicians, religious scholars, media critics and academicians for undermining the socio-cultural environment of the society but that criticism lacks any scientific academic research and empirical evidence to build and support arguments against the ongoing cultural war in the society. In view of this, several directions for future academic studies are recommended.

Foremost, there is need for conducting message system analyses to examine the nature of domestic and foreign audio-visual cultural products and chart the most recurrent patterns, themes, images, portrayals and values presented in most program genres. The message system analysis prong of Geogre Gerbner's Cultural Indicators research program should serve as a guiding light for content analyses studies on entertainment fare. The message system analyses focus on illuminating four dimensions of the content: Existence, priorities, values and relationships of

things which, in turn, yield corresponding measures of attention, emphasis, tendency and structure. The first dimension focuses on the question what exists in the symbolic cultural environment; the second on what is important; the third on what is right or wrong, good or bad etc.; and the fourth what is related to what else and how?

Data from these message system analyses can be used to examine the similarities and differences, if any, between the patterns of domestic and foreign entertainment fare, to chart out whether mass-produced messages are congruent or incongruent to the Islamic society reality, and to formulate questions about cultivation analyses. In the absence of reliable information on the mass-produced domestic and foreign cultural products, it will not be possible to understand the nature of ideological and cultural infusions into Pakistani society and their potential impact on the Islamic social reality and worldviews.

Next, the findings of this study support the Cultural Indicators research tradition's assumptions about the impact potential of mass-produced fictional entertainment messages on audience members' conceptions of social reality and should serve as a stepping stone for further inquiry into the de-Islamizing impact of the present entertainment inputs under a theoretically-grounded social scientific research paradigm. The present evidence for the impact potential of the symbolic cultural environment on audience members' orientation, beliefs, values and perceptions should also draw attention of policy makers to devise strategies for using domestic media for cultivating the cultural identity of the audience members, congruent with the spirit of Islamic teachings and ideology.

The failure to find the hypothesized interaction effect of online viewing platforms in cultivation and ambiguation process across all dependent variables of this study calls for further inquiries. At the superficial glance, there appears to be more diversity and content choices in the



online world of fictional entertainment. However, the symbolic cultural environment appears to be saturated with more of the same stories from more of the same institutions with more of the same commercial interests. As long as the audio-visual entertainment stories are formulaic and commercial in nature, the assumptions of the cultivation research program will persist. Putting this into context, future studies could explore the independent contribution of different types of online viewing platforms in cultivation and ambiguation process. Since this study developed and used a measure of online exposure that had not been validated in previous studies, future research could look to further improve the online dramatized entertainment exposure measure to analyze the impact of the new media environment in the cultivation and ambiguation process.

Similarly, the failure to find the interaction effect of social networking sites in cultivation and ambiguation process across all dependent variables should also be further investigated. The virtual socio-cultural environment of social media platforms could be parallel to the symbolic socio-cultural environment of fictional entertainment media, as discussed above in the implications part. Again, at the superficial glance, the virtual socio world appears to be a replica of the real social world, social relationships and community groups, but from deep within the virtual social environment could be far away more the objective social world. Heavy social media users could also be heavy viewers of dramatized entertainment and they could be transporting worldviews and values acquired from the fictional entertainment world to the virtual social world. Together, these socio-cultural environments may be giving rise to a toxic cultural environment, with far-reaching socio-cultural, socio-political, socio-religious and socio-economic implications. Although social media content is outside of cultivation confines, future studies could further probe the interaction of social media platforms in the cultivation process and the independent contribution of social media exposure in first-order states.

Finally, the role of religiosity cannot be ignored in cultivation and ambiguation effects, especially in Muslim societies such as Pakistan which was founded on religious grounds and which draws its philosophical underpinnings from the teachings and principles of Islam, with audience members having a staunch religious sentiments, feelings and connotations. However, this study highlights the significance of cultivation and ambiguation effects in Pakistani society, regardless of religious commitments and attitudes of audience members. Although the effects were more profound in people with less positive religious attitudes, cultivation and ambiguation were happening even in people who reported to be holding more positive religious attitudes and a mainstream was being created on materialism and ambiguation between people with low and high religious commitments. The presence of these effects calls for further inquiry into the influence of the world of dramatized entertainment on Islamic values and beliefs, including the weakening of the hold of Islamic ideology in Muslim societies like Pakistan, as well as the intervening role of religiosity in the cultivation process.

Specifically, several possibilities can be suggested. Foremost, it is important to examine the role of different aspects of religiosity such as religious beliefs, religious commitment, orientation towards religious values, religious obligations in effects studies, in particular cultivation studies. Conversely, it is important to examine the influence of mass-produced messages on religiosity and whether and to what extent exposure to commercially produced stories creates a mainstream wherein audiences with different religious orientations and commitments are pulled in towards a symbiotic cultural mainstream of the world of dramatized entertainment.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

At the outset, this main objective of this study was to advance cultivation theory by exploring the relevancy of cultivation in the new media environment and by investigating ambiguation effects of fictional entertainment on viewers' perceptions of social reality and attitudes. First, prior studies to date have not explored the moderating role of online viewing platforms and social networking sites in the cultivation process, so, this study filled that gap by investigating the moderating roles of online dramatized entertainment platforms, chiefly YouTube and Netflix, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp etc.

Second, no cultivation study to date has investigated the effects of dramatized entertainment on audience members' materialistic beliefs, values and perceptions in Pakistani society. This study filled that void by investigating the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and viewers' orientation toward materialism and the perceived prevalence of materialism in society. Third, this study also introduced ambiguation as another type of media effect by analyzing the relationship between exposure to dramatized entertainment and the salience of entity God in viewers' consciousness and the perceived social salience of entity God.

Overall, the present study represents an initial first step in advancing cultivation research in the new media environment. While there were limitations, much of which are related to the exploratory and novel nature of this study, the findings do provide evidence that cultivation remains relevant in the ever-changing media landscape. The present study's findings offer opportunities for future research that will likely advance the theoretical tradition of cultivation.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE



Dear Respondent,

Assalam-o-Alaikum!

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this research that examines the effects of media exposure on society. This research is a part of my doctoral thesis at the International Islamic University, Islamabad.

This questionnaire asks about your personal perceptions and media use behaviors and does not require any personal identification from you. Please read each instruction and write your answers accordingly. This is not a test so there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. It should take between 15-20 minutes to complete this survey.

Be assured that all responses that you provide will be confidential and anonymous, and will never be linked to you personally. The results of this survey will be used only for research purpose so please give your answers sincerely.

Thanks again for your valuable time and participation.

Best Regards,

Adnan Munawar

Different people have different values and different perspectives on life in this world. The following statements represent some of those values and perspectives. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements, with options ranging from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree.”

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Life rewards those people more who act more rationally than morally in life.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To get ahead of others in life, it is sometimes necessary to be an opportunist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would adjust my ideals if a situation demands for making immediate gains in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being rich is important for living an ideal version of life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My life would be better if I get filthy rich in the near future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Success in life is determined by how much wealth one has got.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'm more concerned with what salary I get from my work rather than what work I do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being wealthy is NOT a priority to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One's ability to buy anything one wants indicates one's success in life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As far as material possessions are concerned, enough is never enough.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My life would be better if I owned a bungalow in a posh neighborhood.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to own things that signal prestige to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am prepared to achieve my goals in life regardless of the means I adopt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be happier in life if could afford to buy all the things I want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It bothers me quite a bit when I compare my material possessions to those above me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is important to me to live this worldly life to the fullest before it ends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To me life without physical pleasures/enjoyments is empty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I want to enjoy all the pleasures of life in this world unhampered by anything.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would be happier in life if I have the freedom from any and all rules to pursue my desires.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To me life in this world is more a festival than a place for moral discipline.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Achieving material success in this worldly life is very important to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate to what extent the following statements are most similar to your point of view – even if they do not precisely match your opinion.

	Completely Agree	Agree	Almost Agree	Almost Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
If someone misbehaves with me, I respond to him in the same manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Premarital close relations with opposite sex contribute to a happier marriage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not bring religious obligations in my worldly affairs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One can live a moral life without being religious.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not enjoy the company of religious people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The following questions ask about your different **Media Use Behaviors**. Please read each question carefully before responding.

Usually in a day, how much **“TIME IN HOURS”** do you spend on **“SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES”** such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, Skype, WeChat or any other such platform?

0 hour	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	5 hours	6 hours	7 hours	8 hours or more
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Usually in a day whenever you watch, how much **“TIME IN HOURS”** do you spend on a **“TELEVISION SET”** for watching dramas, movies, seasons, TV shows, reality shows, sitcoms, and any other type of entertainment?

0 hour	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	5 hours	6 hours	7 hours	8 hours or more
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Usually in a day whenever you watch, how much **“TIME IN HOURS”** do you spend **“ONLINE”** (for example on YouTube, Dailymotion, Netflix, Amazon or any other such site) for watching dramas, movies, seasons, reality shows, sitcoms, or any other type of entertainment?

0 hour	1 hour	2 hours	3 hours	4 hours	5 hours	6 hours	7 hours	8 hours or more
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In view of some people, there is a considerable amount of materialism in Pakistani society. To what extent do you think materialism is prevalent in our society? Please select a number that best describes your opinion on a scale of 1-9, where 1 means **“10% or fewer people”** and 9 means **“90% or more people are materialistic.”**

In your view, about what percent of people in our society may be regarded as materialistic?

10% or Fewer People	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	90% or More People
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In your view, about what percent of people in our society seek happiness in material possessions?

10% or Fewer People	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	90% or More People
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In your view, about what percent of people in our society may be regarded as greedy in their behaviors?

10% or Fewer      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      90% or More People  
People

We would now like to know just a little about your background so we can see how different people feel about the topics about which you have already answered questions.

How old were you on your last birthday? (Please write your age in the space given).

\_\_\_\_\_ years old

**Your Gender**

Male       Female

**Marital Status**

Unmarried       Married

For the most part of your life, you have lived in:

Large cities       Small cities/towns       Villages

Which of the following best describes the type of schooling you attended at secondary and higher secondary levels?

Urdu Medium Only       English medium or O/A level       Both Urdu and English

Which of the following degree program you are currently enrolled in?

Bachelors (BS, BSc., BEd., etc.       Masters (MA, MSc., MS, Mphil etc.       Doctorate (PhD)

Which of the following best describes your household monthly income?

Rs. 30,000 or less       Rs. 31,000-60,000       Rs. 91,000-120,000  
 Rs. 121,000-150,000       Rs. 151,000-180,000       Rs. 181,000-210,000  
 Rs. 211,000-240,000       Rs. 211,000-240,000

Some people regularly perform different religious obligations, while others don't. How frequently do you perform the following?

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Almost Always
I pray five times a day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I recite some verses of the Holy Qur'an everyday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From waking up to going back to the bed, we do many things and/or many things are done to us. These may include our ideas and ideals about the life in **Dunya** and **Akhirah**; our thoughts about ourselves, our loved ones, fellow humans; and about our responsibility to **GOD**.

Please list (in the space given) **FIRST THREE THOUGHTS** or **FEELINGS** that occur to you in each of the following situations:

	Please list any first three thoughts or feelings that occur to you.		
When you visit a beautiful place			
When you hear some good news			
When you serve guests at home			
When you get help			
When someone or something makes you very happy			
When you get some bad news			
When you succeed in solving some problem			
When you reach home safely after a long journey			
When you buy an expensive thing			
When things don't go according to your plans			
When you or your loved ones recover from some disease			
When you see something very beautiful			

Some people are “MINDFUL OF GOD” in everyday affairs, situations and events of life while some are not. To what extent do you think people in our society are mindful of God in each of the following situations?

	Not at all mindful	Rarely mindful	Sometimes mindful	Mostly mindful	Almost always mindful
In their daily routines and events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their dealings with other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their good times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their bad times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their businesses/jobs/work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In their dealings with relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your valuable and precious time.

