

MS Research Thesis

**REPRESENTATION OF TRANSGENDERS IN
CONTEMPORARY TV DRAMAS IN PAKISTAN:
A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF GURU AND JEEVAN NAGAR**



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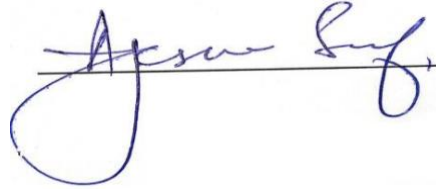
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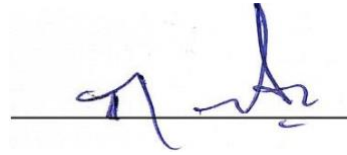
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Declaration

The thesis has been submitted as partial fulfillment of the MS in Media and Communication Studies to the Department of Media and Communication Studies. I solemnly declare that this is my original work and no material has been plagiarized, and my material quoted from a secondary source has been provided with proper citations and references.



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Acknowledgement

All praise and gratitude are due to Allah Almighty for bestowing upon me the strength to successfully complete my work. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all my teachers who have played a very important role in shaping my educational path.

Dedication

My heartfelt devotion is dedicated to my parents, who were always been there for me.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how transgender person is portrayed in the current Pakistani television drama serials by conducting a quantitative content analysis of two of the major serials, *Guru* and *Jeevan Nagar*. The study is based on the theories of gender performativity by Judith Butler, the theory of framing families by Erving Goffman and Minority stress theory. The study seeks to elaborate on how transgender identities are depicted regarding family life, mental health, and physical health. This discussion in the analysis illustrates that although the recent dramas have taken on the change of representing more humanized shared center transgender characters, the play and film roles continue to represent transgender characters in a marginalized context, most of them being illiterate of lower classes practicing traditional roles (Hijra). Even though there is a developing story of empowerment, hyper-sexualization and victimization is still common. It can be noted that the family bonds and family interactions are mostly non-existent, the emphasis is placed on selected groups, and the mental health issues can be underrepresented or poorly explained. The results highlighted the importance of difference and more advanced representation of Pakistani transgender people that advocated against stereotypes and promoted the complicated nature of the lives of transgender individuals. The research proposed an increment on the existing ability of critical engagement with media such that empathy, discrimination, and the shaping of the social environment can be encouraged by way of responsible storytelling.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It is crucial to evaluate how transgender people are portrayed in mainstream media because many Pakistani dramas are shifting away from earlier, happy narratives about them. change is important because television shapes our reality and audience expectations, and how transgender people are treated in society. The TV drama medium plays an important role in creating awareness, possibilities, and limitations about the rights and identity of transgender people.

Pakistani TV dramas struggle with showing transgender people in their stories. Issues such as predictable plots, constant stereotypes, and opposition from society are examples. Tales that include transgender people tend to have these characters as supporting or minor roles, rather than focusing on them. In many progressive presentations, transgender characters are most often shown as victims or people estranged from society. Despite these difficulties, TV dramas help to spread an understanding and acceptance of transgender lives.

Many conservative regions have slow uptake of transgender acceptance, with several viewers still expressing bigoted views or not being ready for equality. The journey to showing transgender characters in Pakistani TV dramas has only just begun. Still, people keep speaking out and telling their stories, and more appropriate and true-to-life depictions can happen. Real progress will be made through a variety of engaging transgender stories, changes in the law, and increased presence of transgender characters in the media. Highlighting true and full stories can help Pakistani dramas challenge society, encouraging more acceptance of transgenders.

In Pakistan, society and the media commonly depict men as the main idea, since men are considered the norm by most. Sometimes, transgender people are featured at local events and plays, but they have been mostly seen dancing in television programs and movies. Since the theater business in Pakistan mainly focuses on tradition and avoids anything controversial, it makes it hard to support transgender rights. In earlier years, transgender performers were unable to work in major TV and cinema, and their parts were usually comical. Showing respect for gender and importance in the media and teaching plays a big role in society.

1.1 Background of the Study

In media studies and cultural theory, representation is very important because it impacts how people interact with various groups, ideas, or events. This means showing a group, individual, or concept in different types of media, including TV, films, books, ads, art, and social media. Pictures and illustrations of a group or concept can affect the attitudes,

beliefs, laws, and actions of a society. Who creates media shapes its representation, which usually reflects social power structures and intentions. It helps walk the line between real life and how that life is interpreted culturally. One can talk about representational elements such as reflective, intentional, and constructed representation. With reflective representation, media reflects real life, but with intentional representation, creators decide how characters or happenings are shown to cause a certain reaction or opinion. Constructed representation argues that media help create reality, shaped by what it wants to promote and what it believes in.

Media help people notice and better understand issues concerning racial equality, discrimination based on gender or sexual orientation, disabled people and transgenders rights. Representatives of different backgrounds in important roles on screen can play a big role in driving fairness and change in the community.

“Representation matters” highlights how it feels important to spot oneself in stories, songs, films, or books. Many people from underrepresented groups find it uplifting to see positive and well-rounded roles in TV, movies, and the media, which can increase their self-esteem and make them feel like they are a part of a group. Gender representation, racial representation, and disability representation are types of media representation.

Presented at birth, sex does not always coincide with transgender identity, so some transgender individuals are assigned male but see themselves as women and vice versa. Several transgender people might call themselves non-binary or genderqueer, which means they do not identify as male or female, but might see themselves as having traits from both or neither gender.

Because of their transgender identity, many people in Pakistan experience discrimination as well as difficulties in economic, social, educational, safety, and health aspects of life. Groups such as Hijra, Chaka, and Khawaja Sara are usually faced with prejudice in medical, legal, and family settings. Some transgender people decide not to or cannot transition medically or legally. You could transition only on the outside or not at all, and you would still be transgender. Due to transgender issues in drama, they dealt with being rejected, including by others and by our society. The actors’ behavior toward transgender characters was very discourteous. They have a low position in our society.

In South Asia, the main name used for transgender people is Hijra, which is taken from Urdu and is most familiar in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. In Transgender culture, such people are recognized as women and are accepted by men. They do not identify as either male or female and both genders, male and female, are considered wrong in society. Transgender

people belong to sexual or ethnic minorities, and because of their unique cultural and physical traits, they do not get the same treatment in society.

There are very few transgender people who have appeared as main characters in Pakistani TV and films. Blue comedies often feature their characters, most of the time played by cisgender actors. The way women are shown in these dramas often looks silly, and they make it seem like the point is to laugh at them for acting according to stereotypes. The representation of marginalized groups, especially trans people, by the media has been studied carefully. Since transgender people in Pakistan regularly face exclusion, violence, and social backlash, the way the media portrays them is of great importance. In the past decade, Pakistani television dramas have shifted from portraying stereotypical and sidelined characters to showing people in more honest, thoughtful ways. Because of this progress in representation, we are now able to see how stories in the media can shape public attitudes towards transgender rights.

Transgender people are rejected by some, who criticize, taunt, mock, and laugh at them, while others welcome them with respect, admiration, and awe. People often believe that because they were created differently, these people are closer to God.

The shows are usually lighthearted and avoid dealing with difficult or disturbing topics. For this reason, before the 21st century, no one in the industry spoke up for transgender rights. Music and filmmaking, throughout history, have not allowed transgender people to work on screen as performers. In many visual trans media, these characters were included to provide comedic moments and were usually played by people whose gender matched their assigned sex. Transgender people were often mocked with unrealistic, inappropriate, and ridiculous portrayals. Usually, these characters are created for a cartoon style, and the author gives them rough language while trying to lighten the story. Usually, these primitive characters are meant to be entertaining and entertaining (Gohar, 2018).

After the year 2009, Pakistani visual media have begun to present transgender people in ways that are not as traditional. More and more television shows are including transgender characters. I argue that visual mainstream media is starting to show less stereotyping and a greater range of characters. The Khwaja Sara people, who are excluded from social life, struggle to get their human rights and respect. “Having the wrong body” is still the primary way trans* people are viewed and understand themselves. No stories that go against Islamic beliefs about homosexuality are included. It has also been noted by scholars that mainstream media is now displaying positive support for transgender rights and is criticizing unfair

economic and social practices, while stressing the need to provide human rights for transgender people.

Television is the most powerful tool for presenting gender, and it, along with radio, TV, newspapers, and movies, influences attitudes towards gender, referred to as institutional gender. Being aware of what images reflect and their reasons helps us see how they shape viewers' views of life.

Transgender people are being seen more and more on TV dramas in Pakistan, which is raising awareness throughout society. Such shows remove misunderstandings and open minds by letting viewers see that transgender characters face real challenges and experiences. They seek to make viewers see transgender individuals as accepted members of society. If transgender characters are written as real people, it creates empathy in viewers and makes them break from stereotypes. Such shows lead to discussions about gender, inclusion, and acceptance, which are important for a better society, although they may be sensitive or countercultural.

Dramas played on TV greatly shape how society views and understands different communities and problems. Representation normally focuses on matters of gender, race, ethnicity, disability and disability. Throughout history, shows have commonly shown men and women in certain clichés, and women have been shown on screen as independent and confident. Nevertheless, shows like *Black-ish*, *Insecure*, *Master of None*, and *Queen Sugar* have gone beyond stereotypes by presenting authentic, detailed portrayals of many kinds of people. In the past, transgender characters rarely existed or were depicted with stereotypes, but now shows like *Pose*, *RuPaul's Drag Race*, and *Orange is the New Black* show many forms of diversity among trans characters, helping to normalize such stories in mainstream media. People with disabilities are now seen more often on television, and programs such as *A Typical* and *Speechless* are accurate in showing their dreams, stories, and bonds. In general, TV dramas have a big impact on the way people in society view and practice different customs.

The dramas *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai* and *Alif Allah and Insan* represent the struggle transgender individuals face in getting jobs due to limited acceptance. Finding a job is difficult for them as eunuchs, as there are no special schools in Pakistan to help train people in their community and get proper jobs. The challenges that came from not getting an education led them to become street beggars, dancers, or prostitutes. If transgender individuals were valued by society and if their parents supported them as *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai* characters did (Waheed, Bajwa & Khushi, 2021), these difficulties would not happen to them.

Over the years, TV dramas in Pakistan have started showing transgender characters in a more realistic, human, and easy-to-relate way, compared to the stereotypical, forgotten roles they used to have. The change is mostly due to the rise in public attention, people's activism, and media-related shifts. Accounts involving transgender people appear in stories that deal with identity, kinship, and issues of right and wrong related to society.

In the past, transgender characters often appeared in movies only as humorous or unusual characters. Due to such limited representation, people thought transgender individuals were either ignored by society or just offered for easy entertainment. Still, today there is a clear move toward better and more sensitive representation of transgender individuals, mostly thanks to changes in society's view on gender diversity, the actions of transgender communities who are speaking up, and the efforts from forward-thinking writers and directors. Modern Pakistani TV dramas now often humanize transgender characters, give them central roles, represent transgender activism, explore gender identity and look at the effects on society.

Most of the time, dramas accurately imitate how society is. It is correct to say that dramas shape people's opinions through the way they present items, personalities, and characters, as advertising agencies do through what they portray or speak.

There are many examples from history showing that transgender individuals are often seen as dancers, beggars, and criminals. Numerous social challenges facing transgender people in Pakistan are caused by their gender identities that do not match the sex they possess. They have to deal with economic, social, educational, security, and health challenges. In fields like medicine, law, and family, they are usually not open-minded, and their fears about sexual and gender identity play a big part in taking away citizenship rights from people.

Before, transgender individuals in Pakistani TV shows were usually ignored, but today they are humanized and shown in realistic ways. Although there are more transgender characters on TV dramas, they still form only a tiny proportion of the shows. Stereotyping and tokenism persist, and the representation of transgender characters still emphasizes their struggles above everything else. In Pakistan, conservative or religious communities are still very resistant to transgender visibility. Presenting these characters as leading roles in TV series and including transgender activists among media professionals has played a big part in changing society's view towards transgender people, overcoming obstacles, and leading to more openness and support for them in Pakistan.

Shown on Pakistani TV today, transgender people look very different from the ways they were portrayed in the past, as the public has changed its opinion. Such changes have not

stopped researchers from failing to analyze these artworks and how they are portrayed. To address this issue, this study will analyze how transgender roles are shown and check if they are in line with what the community thinks and feels about gender. In gathering information about these parts, the study aims to make clear how the content of the media is evolving, how it includes various groups, and what differences this has on people's attitudes.

Media representations of transgender people have helped educate the viewer about what they go through in life. They can change the experience that transgender people go through. It is very important to change the representation of transgender people to support their acceptance by society.

1.2 Problem Statement

Earlier, how transgender people were shown in Pakistani serials included negative stereotypes and false education, which increased social prejudice. Most of the time, transgender characters are made into simple, two-dimensional figures who are laughed at or given compassion, promoting unfair stereotypes. Having a few transgender characters merely slowed progress and let society look down on those in the community, as they were often cast in a limited way.

Depicting transgender characters in Pakistani TV dramas could lead to a challenge of stereotypes and encourage many to take action. Such series often affect public views and help lead to changes in laws, just like the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act 2018. On the other hand, there is still not enough diversity, overused stereotypes, and opposition from traditional cultures. Even though there are attempts to make trans characters three-dimensional and realistic, there are still issues. When transgender activists are included more in the media and the media includes a wider range of stories, it can lead to a society that honors and accepts gender diversity.

In recent times, dramas from Pakistan have more positively featured transgender people, which is different from how things used to be. Currently, the production company is trying to overcome stereotypes and share a more real and detailed narrative. Nowadays, even more transgender characters are shown as having respect, adaptability, and are faithfully portraying their experiences. This will not only clear up some misunderstandings about the transgender community. Still, boost empathy and an understanding of everyone's role in gender identity and diversity by taking part in inclusive social communication.

Transgender people in Pakistan are social outcasts and secluded from the rest of society. The research findings mostly indicate that people in this group often feel neglected by

society. They were shown in their empty homes.

Examining how transgender people are shown in Pakistani dramas helps us look at the links between media, culture, and social trends. Previously, transgender individuals in TV were portrayed as sources of humor or strange creatures, with the roles often taken by actors not trans. In recent times, dramas such as *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai*, *Alif Allah Aur Insaan*, and *Dil Na Umeed To Nahi* have featured trans characters as important and complex people. The plots explore controversial aspects of life and help people relate to the main characters more. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the journey of transgender representations in Pakistani TV dramas and find out how they transformed from being limited and discriminatory to being more supportive and empowering. It carefully studies how the media shapes society's view of transgender people, what problems and limits exist in the current presentations, and what power TV dramas may have to bring about social change.

When positive roles are shown in Pakistani drama, it indicates society tries to eliminate stereotypes and support the full range of human diversity. This study attempts to discover how mainstream media has changed the way it represents transgender people in Pakistan, so that we can observe the misrepresented themes and find out the real story. It's easier to accept and consider how transgender women are represented in Pakistani dramas because they affect people's views more than other media or social platforms.

Pakistani TV dramas have changed a lot in the way they show transgender individuals over the past decade. It happens because of the growing acceptance of gender diversity, more activism related to transgender issues, and the impact of positive media. Many times, Pakistani television neglected transgender stories or presented them in a bad light. Recently, different media have focused on showing these three sides more often, which is breaking through traditional stereotypes and outdated concepts.

Various influences from society, culture, and laws have persuaded filmmakers to feature more real and involved characters. There has been a change in style, as writers and directors now show transgender characters with personality, wishes, and motivations as important parts of the plot. Some dramas, such as *"Alif Allah Aur Insaan"* (2017) and *"Khuda Mera Bhi Hai"* from 2016, include transgender characters, while *"Dil Na Umeed To Nahi"* (2021) addresses issues including human trafficking, exploitation, and pursuing justice by presenting transgender individuals.

These days, transgender characters are entering more important roles and telling stories that go beyond being victims, such as in *"Sar-e-Rah"* (2023) with Rimal Ali as Rameeza. More

transgender activists voicing their opinions in TV, film, and society have helped improve the representation of transgender people positively. Some common themes in current transgender stories are about respect for persons, their gender identities, family matters and acceptance, the struggle for legal rights, and the wish for equal treatment.

This research looks into the stereotypes that people have about them. This study aims to examine how the media, especially TV, portrays transgender individuals. Though there are many studies about television's effect on viewers and its content, the present study examines television's portrayal of transgender people.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Individuals make sense of their surroundings by seeing a variety of cues and symbols. Because gender roles in the media are tied to a group's social position, good coverage of transgender people can lead to higher social status and class. As the media plays an important role in shaping the narrative and disseminating information, television is the best medium for analyzing transgender rights and issues.

Dramas play an important but legal role in society in the case of transgender persons. Society forces transgender people to choose an identity based on their circumstances, while TV portrays them as taboo, placing them at the intersection of ethnicity and identity. It is crucial to examine how people are portrayed in mainstream media, particularly television, as this impacts viewers' perceptions of reality and reveals how various civilizations have seen the world over time. Although transgender representation in mainstream media has drawn attention to the real-life experiences of transgender people, representation needs to improve if transgender people are to be accepted and change their fate in society. This study explores the way transgender individuals are shown in popular Pakistani TV series to discover the common stereotypes present about and against them. To highlight balanced topics and promote greater acceptance of transgender people.

The purpose of this study is to look into the media representation of transgender individuals, who are often left out of society. The research explores how transgender people are shown in TV programs. The study is chosen because little research exists on transgender topics in Pakistan, helping to expand the body of knowledge. In society, transgender individuals are not supported and are sometimes treated badly. Because it is easy to obtain information and people can understand it in their language, Pakistani media has chosen this subject.

Transgender roles are often treated as weird and become the target of jokes by stand-

up comedians. It adds to the research on how transgender people are depicted in the Pakistani media.

This study is meant to discover if positive media representation of transgender individuals in Pakistan improves their situation. It will also look for opportunities for TV dramas to battle stigma and negative stereotypes about the transgender community.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The aims of the research are;

1. To explore the depiction of family life of transgenders in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas
2. To discover the depiction of mental health of transgenders in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas.
3. To explore the depiction of physical health of transgenders in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas.

1.5 Research Questions

RQ1. Whether and to what extend the family life of transgenders depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

RQ2. Whether and to what extend the mental health of transgender depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

RQ3. Whether and to what extend the physical health of transgenders depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

Transgender issues in modern media are complex in many ways. The goal of this research was only to observe the presence of transgenders in central roles in Prime-Time dramas. Series with drama, sit-coms, late-night shows and those where the transgender characters appeared briefly were not included in the sample.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Review of Related Literature

The transgender community exists all over the world with its traditions, culture, identity, and fundamental rights. The term “transgender” refers to people who overcome cultural barriers to embody a particular gender (Stryker, 2008). According to GLAAD's Media Guide (2014), transgender is "an umbrella term for people whose gender identity is usually tied to the sex they were assigned at birth". Trans is short for transgender, including variants such as transpeople, trans lady, transperson, and transman (Spencer, 2015). The marginalization and underrepresentation of transgender population in both academic studies and media narratives is alarming and requires immediate response. While tremendous progress has been achieved in recognizing varied perspective within the trans community, transgenders are sometimes downplayed. Because of this neglect, harmful stereotypes about transgender people become stronger and prevent broad acceptance. More attention needs to be given by the media and researchers to including the views and lives of transgender individuals. It allows for true representation as well as helps people feel for others, addresses common myths, and supports an accepting environment. Addressing inequality goes beyond giving each other our rights and helps us create a new culture where all kinds of gender identities are respected.

Stuart Hall's study *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* of 1997 looks at how representations influence both cultural meanings and social life. To represent something, language, symbols, and images are used to help society understand a meaning. Culture, beliefs, values, and ideologies greatly affect gender and also play a major part in influencing power expectations. Language is built from signs and symbols that give meaning, and it is where meanings are worked out and sometimes changed. How representation forms identities is linked to the way other individuals or groups see those identities.

Officials from the state provide most of the information for reporters, but transgender community members are not often included. According to the study, English publications see an outsized increase in news, and the vast majority of these articles – 474 out of 770 – are about topics with a global approach instead of a national or cultural one (Awan, 2018).

According to Asghar and Shahzad (2018), the media often associates transgender people with criminal actions like prostitution or theft. This form of exclusion and mistreatment forms a big part of what they go through. According to the paper, media should be fairer and more respectful in their reporting, journalists must practice ethics, include transgender

perspectives, and offer education to help others. Carrying out this research helps explain the effects on transgender communities in Pakistan and points out what changes are needed.

Many people believe that being transgender makes someone a criminal, such as a people trafficker, sex prostitute, drug user or pickpocket. Even though a neutral word, transgender, exists, publications have used terms such as "Khwaja, Mesopotamia and His Man". You can find these contradictory phrases in the media's reporting and its editorial pieces, too. Media profiles of transgender people sometimes link them to crimes. The survey showed that prostitution accounted for the highest percentage of responses (41%). Following that, drug addiction was identified by 10.5 percent of participants, and human trafficking was placed third with 6 percent (Asghar and Shahzad, 2018).

The transgender community is often seen more in news stories and from the words of state officials, which highlights a trend of biased reporting. Higher numbers in English media about transgender people cause us to question how similar stories are reported around the world. Many times, these expressions use hurtful words and sometimes present transgender people as being involved in crime. Because prostitution, drug addiction, and human trafficking are frequently associated with sex work, it gives people in society something to be ashamed of. There should be a stronger effort from the media today to be more understanding and speak fairly about the transgender community, preventing news only about crimes from representing the whole group.

Since 2009, transgender people have started to be more prominent in Pakistani Urdu TV shows. Still, drama shows on private television about being transgender should be corrected to omit those who are depicted negatively. In dramas including *Alif Allah Our Insan*, adult transgender characters are showing that they can succeed in their careers and relationships with people of any gender. Unlike the earlier film, *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai* addresses the issues of intersex children and Khwaja Sara's mental violence, urging everyone from early childhood to accept differences. All media should strictly check and guard against using stereotypes and unfair portrayals (Sarhat et al, 2024).

Often, television dramas in Pakistan use stereotypes to show transgender characters. These roles are usually played with extreme behavior, funny actions or as victims and this often helps maintain stereotypes instead of fighting against them. As Ahmed (2019) explains, having cisgender actors play transgender characters and missing authentic portrayals in movies maintains misconceptions about the transgender community.

C. Pamment wrote a study in 2010, titled "Hijraism: Jostling for a Third Space in

Pakistani Politics”, that looks at how Hijras carve out their place in Pakistani society. In South Asian countries, the Hijras are often considered a third gender and have for years been excluded from mainstream life, yet they actively take part in many religious rituals and festivities. Some key points are discussed in the study, such as Hijra identity and social exclusion, being active in politics, and the idea of a space reserved for third gender people. Being involved in politics allows Hijras to influence Pakistan’s gendered system little by little.

Even though Pakistan recognizes transgender people in law, the research points out that many face ongoing problems with acceptance and can still experience discrimination and social exclusion. Seeing that Hijra individuals often face challenges in getting accepted by society, his research warns against failing to recognize that gender identity is flexible within Pakistan.

According to a study done on Pakistani television dramas between 2013 and 2018, there was a noticeable increase in how the transgender community was depicted with more respect and sensitivity (Khalil et. al., 2020). At the same time, there were difficulties found in the number of positive portrayals of transgender individuals in the media. In addition, reviewing some Pakistani English newspapers showed that transgender people were commonly misgendered and not given the proper attention (Khalil, 2020).

Earlier studies have found the same result. Looking at media shows that, when gender and race are depicted unfairly, it often affects how people interpret and act toward those who are marginalized (Morgan & Shanahan, 2010). The development of wrong ideas about transgender people keeps them isolated from society, which makes it tough for them to obtain acceptance and equal rights.

Abbas (2019) analyzed five Pakistani dramas and telefilms with 24 transgender characters in the period of 2010-2018. His analysis indicates that in spite of the fact that the visibility of transgender in TV has grown throughout this time, the representations were still few and stereotypical. A majority of characters were depicted as beggars, dancers or social outcasts and their identities were frequently diminished to the concept of the wrong body. Though there were dramas which covered the human rights and equality, the story lines were normally superficial and founded on pity.

The importance of the current study lies in the fact that the visibility was enhanced, but representation remained one-dimensional. The results obtained by Abbas give a benchmark on how Pakistani dramas depicted transgender people prior to the adoption of the rights law in 2018, and they indicate that more detailed, varied, and real-life narratives should be told in

the future.

The author Jobe has examined the representation of transgender people in the media (Jobe, 2013). Because the media is the key way information is delivered to the public today. Those who work in the media are important and representative members of society. The researcher performed a qualitative study to examine the role of transgender individuals in American culture. The data user studied came from twelve stories about transgender issues on TV, in films, and in the news from 1975 to 2013. Transgender characters have appeared in media works, and how they are shown in TV dramas and other forms is of major concern.

Once the researcher had finished looking at the data, they found that the media exaggerates issues related to transgender individuals in America. There is a lot of harassment of transgender people by their community members. Television and movies present these figures as fools and a poor type of stereotype. Capuzza and Spencer (2017) look at the shift of American TV from big screens to the small screen, focusing on regression, progression, and transgression. They made a qualitative study of the presence of lead and supporting transgender people in seasons of scripted comedy and drama shows in the United States. Once the play's exchange ends, more detailed and diverse ways of thinking about transgender identity and subjectivity are added, which challenge the idea that transgender individuals are misunderstood.

The size of the transgender community means it can't be ignored. On the other hand, data proves that users avoid spending much time on them and are unhappy with them. The stories are about transgender people, but actors who are not transgender play those roles. His failure to perform well on television shows that several aspects of society hold him back. Transgender individuals are now more often seen in the media in the U.S., resulting from many well-known transgender individuals appearing in public roles and speaking out. Nevertheless, transgender people are frequently shown in a sensational and stereotyped way by the media, encouraging prejudice and stigmatization (Haider, Markel & Joslyn, 2018).

Sharma (2020) has done her research on how the role of viewers influences their beliefs about transgender people while watching drama. She believes that watching a show full of emotions can change people's views on transgender. She studies the qualitative approach to see if emotional and mental responses from viewers can change people's opinions on the transgender community. Pay attention to popular TV dramas, as the leading focus is often on evaluating the narrator's performance compared to other participants in the drama. An individual's opinion about transgender people is usually most impacted by their understanding

of the people around them. Such research proves that people think negatively about transgender people and imagine there will be a trick or drama soon.

The role of social media in supporting and confirming transgender identities and rights has been thoroughly considered by Arudiaraj (2020). It is his belief that the transgender community has also turned to social media. Sex is about biology, while gender involves culture and social factors. There is no common agreement on the size of the transgender population worldwide. Reliable numbers are rare, but some estimates based on this broad definition suggest transgender people are between 1 percent and 3.5 percent of the world population. In Pakistan, this same ratio is, for the most part, followed (Schwartz, Luyckx & Vignoles, 2011).

Because they suffer from being mistreated, discriminated against, and denied their rights. By applying a qualitative method and some safe applications that allow these individuals to communicate with each other. It reduces their shyness and supports them in becoming self-reliant and confident.

They earn money by using these applications. Media featuring transgender people works to correct the negative views the public has about them. Strong evidence suggests that television, movies, and news have a huge effect on people's attitudes toward transgender individuals. Analysis of several examples in television, the press, and movies reveals that transgender people are mostly presented as having negative traits and are often used as comic relief. Assessing these characters in television programs highlights how they are mostly depicted with limitations and inaccurately, which could mirror commonly held prejudices and biases. Differences in roles and the fact that not all performers are transgender reveal the challenges their community deals with. It explores how social media is changing things and creates a safe space for transgender people to state their identity and rights. Using qualitative approaches and having secure internet access works against bias and promotes empowerment and new financial chances. Reviewing the material allowed the researcher to discover the gap by noticing how the representation of transgender people has evolved in Pakistan-based dramas.

Waheed, Bajwa, and Khushi (2021) looked at how transgender issues were portrayed in two Pakistani TV dramas: *Alif Allah or Insan* and *Khuda Mera Bhi Hai*. They used content analysis as a theoretical guide and put together a chart that discusses transgender topics in the plays. After looking at the data, researchers Zaman et al (586) conclude that transgender characters in the serials are presented in positive ways. These dramas give attention to the rights of people who are transgender. They behave respectably so that their community looks

good alongside other communities.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 Butler's Theory of Gender

In the study, we used Judith Butler's theory of gender to examine issues related to gender. A literature review, explanations of the important terms, descriptions of the main themes, and unique case studies are all part of it. By critically interacting with Butler's theories, investigating interdisciplinary connections, and discussing the findings, it is possible to understand the performative role of gender and provide suggestions for future studies.

A famous feminist media critic, Judith Butler, introduced the concept of gender Performativity. She believed that, in reality, gender is not related to your body; it is made up by the repeated acts and performances that people show. She said that the characteristics of being male and female are what organized the binary gender system and made it legitimate, which made gender something that developed based on how someone behaved. The tradition of handling genders this way was passed from one generation to another in Butler's society, which meant that Gender in Butler's terms was constructed by society.

Using Butler's Gender performativity theory as a base, Hart & Lester (2011) conducted a qualitative study analyzing how gender was created in the women's college. This research was based on Judith Butler's work in 1990, featured semi-structured interviews from the staff, students, and faculty, which resulted in three major ideas: The transgender students were either invisible or hyper visible at the campus, or oppressed. To most of the students, faculty members, either the transgenders were invisible, or made hyper visible by the activist groups. Interestingly, the transgenders acted in feminine ways, as they suppressed their inner voices, so not to disturb the all-female notion of the women's college.

Shakeela (2020) has done a research paper on the portrayal of Transgender's in the play 'Seven Steps Around the Fire'. Her experience proves that the transgender identity is imported into India. People believe that joining marriage or giving birth to children with their presence is good luck. Even so, some argue that these are termed incomplete and third generation, as they can't get married and have their children. A qualitative analysis has been done and data is available from Mahesh Dattani's play Seven Steps Around the Fire. The issues faced by transgenders are highlighted in this play through the character called Kamla. Hamlet is called a tragic play due to the two tragic occurrences within it. First off, Kamla died as a result of being transgender and then Sabbu was killed too. Kamla is gorgeous and she has special feelings for the minister's son, Sabbu. As the result of transgender discrimination,

Kamla is murdered and Sabbu ends up dead. In this play, transgender characters are shown with feelings and emotions and the drama handles the problem of discrimination against transgenders.

In a study by Keegan (2013) about Transgender narrations in films and TV for transgenders that were shown as Moving bodies (a body that journeys from a negative mental state to mental health), his analysis indicated that the transgender character in fiction was represented by vulnerability/ extreme emotional state of the characters, instability and disruption or violence. He states that the transgender figure in itself is regarded as a product of feeling bad about themselves and their bodies.

In a very interesting study, carried out by Ton (2018) examined Judith Butler's claim that Gender is Performative, such as something done by repeated acts. He believes that Gender in itself is performative leads to the fact that gender is not a constant identity, but keeps on changing, as the society and culture changes. He has deduced the notion that Gender in performative, and the gender identity cannot exist prior to the gendered act, but they exist at the same time, as the acts shape the identity.

This theory guides research on transgender identity, focusing on equal rights and self-determination. Queer representations in the media and in the real and fictional world highlight the lack of adequate recognition of transgender existence. Butler's theory provides hypotheses for understanding the experiences of the Trans community regarding the nature of representation and their media treatment.

2.2.2 Framing Theory

Framing theory is a concept in media studies and communication that studies how information is presented and perceived by people. At times, it is referred to as media framing. It includes choosing which parts of a subject to highlight and which to ignore or minimize so that people's views of it shift. Various communication mediums, including news, TV shows, posts on social media and speeches done in public, rely on the use of frames. Experts look at public views and media information by using framing theory.

It was Erving Goffman who proposed the idea of framing analysis. He used the idea of a "Theatre" for his theory and compared actors who tell a story on stage: everything else in the theatre, outside of the stage-frame, would be left irrelevant. They depended entirely on the actors to understand the plot and see what happened from the actors' viewpoint. The actors on stage would set up a specific view and only the audience's view would be limited to that scene.

Erving Goffman (1974) stated that exposure to media influences not only people's

attitude and understanding of things, but also their identity. He said that how media report on specific communities can have an effect on people's feelings and beliefs. Using Goffman's framework, the author studied the depiction of transgender characters in Pakistani tv dramas to explore how structural frames can change people's views. This approach shows how media represents different people and groups.

It suggests that daily expectations affect the way we relate to other people. They may appear as simple stereotypes or a bias based on someone's race or ethnicity. The theory looks at communication in terms of social interaction and the role of symbols (Baran & Davis, 2011). This part of the analysis explains that real-life events are shaped by earlier experiences from dreams, fiction and media news which tend to create patterns found in some people in society (Goffman, 1974).

The main theme in Goffman's work was how an individual goes on understanding his surroundings and acts accordingly to meet people's expectations, situations and signals from the media and his experience. However, throughout time, framing has mostly been applied to frame news, influencing people's views about the world. According to Goffman (1976), people always try to relate their world to what they have learned through media, experiences, and events, and this affects their behavior. A large part of his work centers on the news function, which uses news as a basis to display people's ideas in reality. Media frames may not reflect the truth exactly, but they have a strong impact on how we see different events and situations.

Goffman examines how the media's way of showing things can affect our perception of society. The Framing theory intends to make it clear that people's perception of something is shaped by how it is presented to them. The influence helps to determine what people choose and how they view things. The media is mostly responsible for shaping the frame we use to understand things. It leads people to think certain things and occasionally informs their way of thinking. The theory was chosen as the basis for this research because the way media frames transgenders influences the views we have about them. Using framing theory, scholars are now able to analyze the depiction of transgenders in Pakistani T.V dramas.

Media Framing is a process where some information is highlighted rather than others and used to discuss, judge, and find answers to various matters (Entman, 1993). According to Giltin (1980) in his book, "The whole world is watching: Mass media in the making & unmaking of the new Left", Giltin claims that mass media was the main weapon in forming false ideas and thoughts in people's heads. They were polluting the minds of people,

journalists were just hired players, and the whole globe was following a fake version created by the media.

Media pictures were thought to be important in forming our views of reality, mainly through TV shows. Gamson and his colleagues' (1992) analysis looked at the political and economic side of media, such as who owns media networks and where their advertising comes from, and connected these factors to social and economic movements. He claimed that big businesses use media to set ideas in people's minds for their benefit. Issues in society are presented to fit certain needs and fit the company's main ideals, as seen with the nuclear energy case.

Framing theory, mentioned by Baran and Davis in their book *Mass Communication Theory*, makes the point that how information is communicated by the media affects how people see and understand things. It is argued that the way certain parts of a story are highlighted, presented, and the angle chosen all affect one's interpretation of the news. One of its main ideas is that the media shapes news stories by outlining them and choosing the main points. The way events or topics are covered by the media creates a particular message for the public.

Using framing theory, attention is given to some issues, events, or people over others, which can change how people in society think and act. It goes hand in hand with agenda-setting theory, which looks at how the media directs people's concerns. The way a news story reports an issue can affect the way the public thinks, feels, and acts. For instance, how political issues, social issues, or crises are covered in the media can impact how people regard them and decide if they can be solved, are a matter of urgency, or someone's responsibility.

According to Hertog and McLeod (2001), the intentions behind creating frames are metaphorical, and they spread messages with the help of well-known myths and metaphors. Also, they include "extra meaning" as they express known thoughts or concepts and have a familiar meaning in society.

Images are strong for framing since they involve less thinking and do not require people to read. For this reason, the audience might not question the setting in the film. There is proof that in such cases, visual cues overpower textual ones, making the image more convincing than words (Hertog & McLeod, 2001) because images present reality easily, and viewers can quickly grasp what is happening.

Framing analysis has also been employed by researchers to assess how society's underprivileged groups are represented by the media. Researchers Shaw and Giles (2009)

examined the way motherhood is perceived and how the idea of the “perfect” mother was used when discussing older moms. UK newspapers and feature articles depicted elderly mothers as the happiest mothers of all, which led mothers to feel anxious. Childless women were described as being too busy with other interests and often cold, selfish, and irresponsible (pg. 13).

Most of the frame analysis has been used in news framing and political hegemony. Still, the approach of framing analysis has yet to establish a firm and clear set of guidelines. Using framing analysis, studies looking at Transgenders and LBGT groups have primarily been done on news subjects. Billard (2016) reviewed mainstream media to see how transgender people were represented and understood that many negative comments had appeared for transgender individuals.

Media Framing is concerned with application, that is, how certain messages take hold in the mind of the public and then affect their views and actions as they develop their opinions (Zhou 2007 & Scheufele 1999).

2.2.3 Minority Stress Theory

Minority Stress Theory describes the way that marginalized groups are exposed to distinctive forms of stresses as a result of stigma, discrimination and exclusion. They may be external (distal) (verbal abuse, stereotyping or negative media depiction) or internal (proximal): self-censorship, internalized stigma or fear of rejection. Ilan H. Meyer introduced the minority stress theory in the year 2003.

The Minority Stress theory expounds on the negative effect of a chronic stress load of stigma and prejudice on the marginalized groups, especially in the LGBTQ+ community. It recognizes external stressors, e.g. discrimination and internal stressors, e.g. negative self-perception. Applied to communication and media, MST points to the role of negative representations of transgender people in the process of stress development: the discriminatory frameworks of dramas are distant stressors and silenced and hidden voices of transgender people are proximal stressors. It is specifically applicable in Pakistan, where television tends to recreate stereotypes, which does not provide much room in depicting positive and real images of transgender family life, further increasing marginalization in social relations and communicative space.

The theory of Minority Stress presents the psychological and communicative effects of such representations on transgender people. Collectively, these views allow an enhanced examination of the ways in which the Pakistani television dramas reproduce and reinforce

social perspectives on transgender individuals and how the mediated images about transgender people influence the lived experiences of stress, identity and family life among transgender communities.

Based on Minority Stress Theory, researchers have stated that the framework must also include structural forms of stigma. Hatzenbuehler (2016) defines structural stigma as a situation in the society, cultural beliefs, institutional provisions, limiting the opportunities, resources, and health of the stigmatized groups. This growth actually places stigma not only within the lives of individuals, but within the wider social structures that continue to reinforce disadvantage. To illustrate, structural distal stressors that influence the daily lives of the marginalized groups include discriminatory laws, exclusionary institutional practices, and negative media representations.

Structural stigma is a twofold way of prolonging Minority Stress Theory. To begin with, it offers macro-level backgrounds in which both distal and proximal stressors can work. Research indicates that individuals who live in high-stigma settings tend to hide their identities, are prone to rejection sensitivity, and have adverse health outcomes, even after controlling the individual-level factors (Hatzenbuehler, 2016). Second, structural stigma shows the interactions between societal conditions and individual stress processes in worsening health inequalities. As an example, interventions that can lower the internalized stigma on an individual level are less effective in those communities where the cultural norms are highly discriminative (Reid et al., 2014).

Media images are not a neutral space and cause stress and marginalization to transgender communities. MST can be combined with other theories, including gender performativity (Butler) and Framing Theory (Goffman) to comprehend the impact of negative frames on the transgender communities. When transgenders behave in a gender-deviant manner, they are pressurized with the epitomized actions. The negative frames in dramas do not only influence the perception of the audience, but they also contribute to the stigma, which increases stress levels in transgender communities.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

Research methodology is a systematic method used to investigate certain topics by describing the procedures for collecting and reviewing data. To do research, a researcher uses methods that allow them to discover new things about a subject and learn it all in detail. In this study, transgender characters in Pakistani TV serials were examined, and here, the sample group, instruments for gathering data, and methods used in the research were described. The purpose of this study was to see how transgender characters are represented on Pakistani television.

Content analysis was used for this thesis to examine the portrayal of transgender individuals in dramas. The researcher decided to use this method because it helped them systematically count and study how transgender characters were portrayed in the selected dramas.

3.2 Population

All the dramas with a major/supporting transgender character, which have been airing on mainstream TV channels in Pakistan, were included in the research population of the study.

Although there was a dearth of representation of transgender characters in the past. The trend has visibly shifted with many drama serials having transgender characters in minor or supporting roles (Shaffi, 2021).

3.3 Sampling

For the purpose of the present research, only those dramas that had aired in the last five years on leading public or private TV channels in the Prime-Time slot and also featured a central or leading transgender character were analyzed to understand how each aspect of the everyday life of the transgender character was portrayed. After a thorough review, it was found that only two drama serials, Jeevan Nager and Guru, fall in this category.

Both these drama serials contained multiple transgender characters of all age groups, which were studied in detail; however, Jeevan Nager had multiple story arcs, some of which were about transgender individuals while others were about cisgender individuals. However, the drama serial Guru focused exclusively on trans individuals, so for the current research, special attention was paid to all characters in the drama serial Guru. The unit of analysis was character traits and stereotypes and analyzed the storyline, character development, and presentation of negative stereotypes.

3.4 Operationalization of variables

3.4.1 Representation of the family life of transgender

The first variable in the thesis was the family life of transgender people. This included their family relationships with their family, including their friends and the trans community, as well as the adopted families of their gurus and disciples. The aim was to see how their interpersonal relationships with their family members were portrayed, whether they were healthy and positive or negative and toxic.

3.4.2 Representation of mental health of transgenders

The second study variable was transgender individuals' mental health. It was gauged by examining whether and to what extent mental health issues were addressed, including particular disorders, treatments, medications, cure, and effects on relationships and daily functioning. Operationalization also addressed the accuracy with which mental health conditions and their symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment were represented. In addition, the research analyzed how transgender characters with mental illness were constructed and represented. This included investigating the language and terms used, particularly if there was stigma associated with mental illness, as well as how the narrative connected with mental illness.

3.4.3 Representation of physical health of transgenders

The purpose of this study was to describe the measurable aspects of the portrayal of physical health of transgender individuals in television drama and to apply a systematic approach to measuring how physical health is represented. The focus was on how physical health issues were discussed, namely chronic diseases, acute illness, health behaviors, medical interventions, and the impact of health on individual and social life. The precise indicators applied to measure the representation of physical health emphasized accuracy, i.e., how well physical health conditions were presented, as well as their symptoms, diagnoses, etc. The research additionally examined how physical health was woven into a narrative and whether the terminology used to describe it was appropriate and accurate.

3.5 Instruments

The research tool was a coding sheet and coding rulebook. Preparing the coding rule book and coding sheet for carrying out content analysis on a drama serial that includes a transgender character included defining certain rules, categories, and variables in order to systematically study the representation of the transgender character.

The coding sheet had details regarding episodes, scenes, character names, and genders, and examined the representation of gender identity, depth of characters, character traits, and character development over time. It also checked the language employed and, in the case of transgender characters, their narrative inclusion, i.e., how integral they are to the story or subplot, number of appearances, interaction with other characters, occurrences of discrimination or support, representation of mental health issues, and representation of physical health issues, among other considerations. This structured approach guided a thorough and orderly review of how transgender characters were portrayed in the drama series and provided useful insights and recommendations to act upon.

3.6 Data Collection & Analysis

An analysis of what happens in the drama serial was performed by using a coding sheet and coding rules. The process had many steps that were done in an organized way. Originally, selected episodes were carefully watched and analyzed in terms of character creation, talk between characters, and how the plot is put together. Employing a coding sheet with many factors, every scene was coded in detail to measure aspects such as accuracy, respectful speech, and how characters related to each other. During the research, both the rate of certain themes and the details of interactions were documented. After collecting the data, it was studied to spot patterns, benefits, and challenges in the manner of representation. SPSS was used to analyze the data quantitatively, and all the necessary tests were applied.

3.7 Ethical consideration

The research focused on finding out how the media improved its treatment of transgender people by featuring true accounts, showing real lives, and making their viewpoints more noticeable. Even though there were improvements, more was required to ensure that media reports are friendly and open to all. The study looked at how media may oppose traditional views and try to establish a welcoming and equal world.

There is still progress to make despite all the achievements that have been made. Many forms of discrimination and marginalization affect transgender people, sometimes supported by the media. It was still important to keep putting in effort to show transgender people correctly and open-mindedly in the news media. This response covers only some parts of the subject and doesn't discuss all possible aspects of transgender representation in media. The way the media reported on migrant issues varied, and it required additional action to ensure all views were considered and shown correctly.

The way the media presents transgender people changes with the values, cultures, and

traditions of a given society. Media firms should consistently work on being better and more responsible to promote ethical and inclusive media images.

CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Demographic / Descriptive Statistics

The main aim of this research was to look at how transgender people are shown in prime-time dramas in Pakistan. Based on the study, I found that two of the dramas from my sample had scenes showing trans characters. That's why these age categories are followed;

Table 1

Drama

	Frequency	Percentage
Guru	383	64.6%
Jeewan Nagar	210	35.4%

According to the data presented in Table 1, the distribution of episodes with transgender characters for both television dramas, Guru and Jeevan Nagar, shows a clear bias towards Guru. Out of all the responses received, 383 (64.6%) chose Guru and 210 (35.4%) voted for Jeevan Nagar.

This result shows that Guru received significantly more votes than its counterpart, Jeevan Nagar, indicating that Guru is indeed more liked by the audience.

Table 2

Channels

	Frequency	Percentage
Express TV	383	64.6%
Green Entertainment	210	35.4%

Table 2 displays how scenes of transgender characters appear on Express TV and Green TV Entertainment. The outcomes point to Guru having more viewers' interest. The reason behind this choice may be because of various factors such as the story's strength, development of the characters, how culturally relevant it is, the production values, and its marketing approach. Since Guru has been offered more frequently, it means it has linked well with the audience, creating a greater emotional or entertainment effect.

Table 3

Character ID

The character of Guru Sattar received 170 responses or 28.7% of all preferences, which is indicated in Table 3. Since the characters bring about this change, it hints that leading

film characters encourage viewers to identify closely with them. Suraya's responses add up to 119, which is 20.1% of the total questions, while Laali Guru got 94 answers, or 15.9%. Three main characters make up 64.7% of all the responses, which highlights the audience's strong interest in a small group of characters.

Kashish was watched moderately by an 8.6% audience, and Bijli and Neelo gained 7.3% and 4.2% viewership each. A similar share was given to Palak, Payal, Bubly, and Naina with 3.7%-3.9%.

	Frequency	Percentage
Guru Sattar	170	28.7%
Suraya	119	20.1%
Bijli	43	7.3%
Kashish	51	8.6%
Laali Guru	94	15.9%
Neelo	25	4.2%
Palak	23	3.9%
Payal	22	3.7%
Bubly	23	3.9%
Naina	23	3.9%

Table 4

Age

	Frequency	Percentage
Infant	0	0%
Child (2-12)	0	0%
Teen (13-18)	0	0%
Young (19-34)	329	55.5%
Mature (34-49)	170	28.7%
Elderly	94	15.9%

Most trans individuals (55.5%) are part of the young adult age group which covers 19 to 34 years of age. The number of individuals in the mature adult group (34-49 years) comes to 28.7%. People aged 50 and above make up the last group which represents 15.9% of the population. There is no population of infants, children and teenagers.

It can be attributed to the way society and culture present transgender individuals at different ages, such as whether they are accepted or included. Since transgender acceptance is growing and the topic is being discussed more, younger transgender people tend to be seen more in stories than older transgender adults.

Transgender people may not be included among children and youth because many health care and society-based sources used for the sample are not relevant to them, or because it is tough to present the identities of younger transgender individuals due to their complex social and developmental matters.

Table 5

Education

	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	593	100.0%
Semi-literate	0	0%
Literate	0	0%

All transgender characters depicted in the selected TV dramas were shown as illiterate, which comes to 100% of the total sample. None of the characters depicted in the dramas were only semi-literate or only literate. All transgender characters in the dramas are written without any educational background, which suggests that they are portrayed as marginalized characters.

These dramas can be considered to highlight the social, economic, and educational problems faced by many transgender actors, especially in Asia, where society ostracizes them due to prejudice, and educational institutions do not support them.

Table 6

Occupation

	Frequency	Percentage
None	0	0%
Hijra	387	65.3%
Employee/Self-employed	206	34.7%
Criminal and Illicit Occupations	0	0%
Creative /Entertainment Industries	0	0%
Jobless	0	0%

Table 6 makes it clear that transgender characters are prevalent in movies connected to their occupations. The majority, i.e., 65.3%, 387, are represented in the traditional role of Hijra, which is an age-old identity of South Asian culture that is often associatively connected with ceremonial works, cohabitation in a community (guru- chela system), and in most cases, the informal working environment such as street performances, dancers or sex work.

Representations of the transgender group in the Hijra role as a prominent identity reiterate the inherited cultural perception of transgender persons by promoting more traditional and marginal roles instead of wider professional roles.

On the contrary, 34.7%, i.e., 206, of characters are portrayed as employees or self-employers. This indicates that there is a slight progress made towards a more modern and inclusive portrayal of the transgender group. These are roles that belong mostly to professions associated with the heteronormative workforce (such as owners of shops, laborers or providers of service), which somewhat reflect that narratives are beginning to consider the existence of transgender persons in other work domains too.

Interestingly, there are no transgender characters depicted as unemployed, in criminal or illegal jobs, or the arts and entertainment sectors. The TV screen shows how trans people go through many struggles due to unemployment and poverty by illustrating the personal challenges and achievements of artists, entertainers, and activists.

Table 7

Socio-eco class

	Frequency	Percentage
Elite	0	0%
Middle class	0	0%
lower / working class	593	100.0%

Table 7 indicates that 100% and frequency 593, of transgender characters in TV dramas are shown to be in the lower or working class, with no representation in the middle or elite classes. As a result, many TV stories portray transgender people as poor, isolated, and locked down without access to better opportunities. TV dramas popularize the idea that transgender people are likely to live in poverty, far from achieving any financial success. This ignores the challenges that some transgender people face in accessing education, employment, and housing because they still face discrimination. Despite this, many transgender people have taken on diverse roles, including activists, entrepreneurs, academics,

and artists, and have made meaningful contributions to society

Table 8

Type of Role

	Frequency	Percentage
Major	264	44.5%
Minor	329	55.5%

Table 8 explains how transgender characters are featured in television dramas based on what type of role they appear in. Almost all transgender characters in films are part of minor roles, as shown in the table, with 55.5%, while major roles only make up 44.5%. Because of this role division, we see how transgender characters are both shown on screen and included in the film's story.

Transgender characters are usually seen in small supporting roles, with few speakers and limited action in the plot. These appearances can be in the form of short appearances by famous guest stars, secondary characters with a small past, or supporting people who mainly back the main character in the story or push the subplots forward. Therefore, the lack of interaction with transgender people may not allow audiences to truly connect with them as conscious human beings.

4.2 Research Questions

4.2.1 Whether and to what extend the family life of transgenders depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

The first research question concerns examining the family life of transgender individuals, their relationships with friends, the trans community, their adopted family, stereotypes, and conflicts. Which are below;

Table 9

Family Type

	Frequency	Percentage
Not Present	0	0%
Chosen community	593	100%
Adopted family	0	0%
Biological family	0	0%

Table 9 shows that all 593 (100%) transgender characters in television dramas are depicted as belonging to a chosen community, whereas none of the characters have

biological, adopted, or no family presence. This means that instead of being a part of conventional family structures, most transgender characters are portrayed as having created their social and familial support networks within the transgender community.

This trend reflects a very special and mono-narrative choice of the content creators. The consistent rendering of transgender characters as being only part of chosen families often characterized by friendship bonds, shared identity, or the guru-chela kinship system brings forth the cultural fact that many transgender individuals, especially in a South Asian context, tend to get socially ostracized from their biological families and forge alternative settings for survival, emotional support, or identity affirmation.

Its complete dominance in the media demonstrates a lack of diversity of representation, although this image reflects some real-world situations. The complete lack of representation of biological or adoptive families suggests that transgender individuals are automatically alienated from their birth families and are unable to fit into traditional families.

Table 10

Family's Initial Reaction to Trans Identity

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	593	100%
Denial	0	0%
Rejection	0	0%
Conditional acceptance	0	0%
Full acceptance	0	0%

As shown in Table 10, all 593 (100%) of the transgender characters in the examined television series were placed in the category "Not Present" for the family's initial reaction to their transgender identity. None of them was depicted as having a family reaction, be it rejection, conditional acceptance, or acceptance. The null family reactions strengthen a general cultural silence, or denial, of the existence of transgender people in the family.

When the media does not show families dealing with, supporting, or even denying a trans family member, it means that such a person has no existence within the family—a message that can be alienating and harmful.

Table 11

Sibling Attitudes

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	593	100%
Hostile	0	0%
Neutral	0	0%
Protective & accepting	0	0%

The figures in Table 11 show that sibling attitudes were completely missing in all 593 instances studied; 100% of the transgender characters portrayed in any television drama had absolutely no siblings. This complete principled absence reiterates one that can also be seen in earlier tables of characters in television dramas, where the entire family setting (parents, cultural background, family reaction, and parental attitude) was absent from narratives about transgender characters.

When the transgender characters are shown to have no parents, no siblings, or the absence of an extended family, they are shown to be completely disconnected from any traditional family and social support system.

Table 12

Living Situation of the Trans Character

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	0	0%
Leaves home	593	100%
Stays at home	0	0%
Builds an alternative support	0	0%
Returns home after being away	0	0%

Table 12 indicates that every one of the 593 transgender characters experienced leaving the family and hardships in life. None of the characters chose to stay by themselves, but rather than join their families, return to the family later, or rely on other people for help during their journey away.

It is alarming that the media quota report shows all the transgender roles left home and had to deal with family difficulties, but there was no reflection on how they were helped or supported. It is almost always shown that transgender characters are rejected by their

families, and this leads them to find another place to live.

Table 13

Economic & Emotional Contribution to Family

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	0	0%
Expected to financially support the family	456	76.9%
Typical occupation	137	23.1%
Seen as a burden	0	0%
Recognized	0	0%

Notably, 76.9% of the characters are depicted as supporting their chosen family members financially, often in strange or unconventional ways such as begging, dancing, or working as sex workers. From this, it follows that most of the characters are considered useful primarily because of their economic roles in the family.

The data shows that 23.1% appear in standard working roles such as housekeepers, retail assistants, taxi drivers and in low-income groups. All characters are part of the family system and do not feel neglected, burdened or ignored by their family.

Table 14

Reinforcement of stereotypes

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	170	28.7%
Hyper-sexualization	240	40.5%
Victimization	125	21.1%
Criminalization	0	0%
Comic relief	0	0%
Empowerment	58	9.8%

Table 14 explains how these dramas portray transgender characters according to well-known stereotypes. Individuals belonging to the transgender community constitute 40.5% of the characters in hypersexualized roles, owing to the influence of stereotypes that create these roles for sex and side characters. Additionally, 21.1% were shown in victim roles which depict them as having no influence over their own lives and suffering from many hardships.

Representations as empowering were shown by 58 characters (9.8%), demonstrating

progress, yet there were fewer of them than those portrayed negatively. A third of the characters did not show any stereotypes, and these roles present transgender people accurately and regularly. Importantly, no criminals or comic characters indicated the creators' desire to get beyond harmful stereotypes.

Table 15

Family's Evolution Over Time

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	593	100%
No change	0	0%
Gradual acceptance	0	0%
Full reconciliation	0	0%
Full rejection	0	0%

The figures in Table 15 indicate that transgender characters are rarely shown in television dramas. Every one of the 593 characters in the study was present in the “not present” family evolution category. No character's family relationships changed or developed during the story. No answers in the survey fell under the “no change,” “gradual acceptance,” “complete reconciliation,” or “complete rejection” categories.

Table16

Social Support Outside the Family

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	343	57.8%
No support	125	21.1%
Limited support	125	21.1%
Strong support	0	0%

Table 16 shows that about 57.8% of transgender characters are shown without being supported in their lives by anyone apart from their family members. So, in most TV dramas, the existence of transgender people goes unnoticed or unexplained, and many narratives have them living alone and isolated.

Also, 21.1% of the characters are shown alone without friends, allies, or community contacts. A further 21.1% receive limited support, showing that only a few relationships exist and are either weak or unstable. This table points out a problem with how transgender stories

are presented in TV dramas. Because no characters have strong family or friends nearby, the tales are characterized by a strong feeling of separation and remaining unseen.

Table 17

Personality of a trans character

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	0	0%
Level-headed	138	23.3%
Kind Heart or protective	400	67.5%
Rebellious	12	2.0%
Grumpy, Not Loyal	43	7.3%

As shown in Table 17, transgender characters are depicted in dramas by different personality traits that affect how the audience views and relates to them. Virtually all transgender characters appear in a way that projects kindness and a positive image for everyone to relate to. Close to no celebrities are appreciated for being calm, sensible, and reasonable, showing them to be well-balanced. Grumpy or unfaithful traits make some of them more complicated, which can make them seem unfriendly or unreliable. Only some stand up, abiding by different laws to fight unfair actions.

Table 18

Primary Source of Conflict

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	284	47.9%
Gender identity disclosure	115	19.4%
Family reputation	0	0%
cultural expectations	187	31.5%
Financial dependency	7	1.2%

According to Table 18, the most common themes in dramas are a lack of serious issues for transgender characters, which may point to shallow representations. In contrast, 31.5% of the dramas mention cultural and honor-related difficulties, suggesting the presence of stigma surrounding transgender issues in some societies. Circumstances involving transgender people are often seen as damaging to a family's good reputation.

19.4% How the characters share their gender identity with others is a key feature that

reflects what many transgender individuals face in coming out. 1.2% Surprisingly, both characters and the story pay very little attention to the importance of money in transgender lives. Such implications may show that TV dramas do not always accurately portray economic realities.

Table 19

Conflict resolution strategy

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	379	63.9%
Tragic resolution	25	4.2%
Oppose the current situation,	165	27.8%
Permanent separation	0	0%
Forced conformity	24	4.0%
Reconciliation	0	0%

The data in the table shows that 63.9% of the series examined do not show trans struggles, suggesting that trans people always struggle, while 27.8% of the characters show strength and resilience but still fail to change people's mindsets.

A poor ending and robotic conformity, which together reach 8.2% of the scenes, show that the consequences of not following the rules are dire. The story does not show any examples of people getting back together or breaking up, so it does not show any improvement in how the family or society sees them. In these chosen dramas, people do not move away from their families, who may not be able to stand up for themselves.

Table 20

Resolution of the Character's Story

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	389	65.6%
Negative	17	12.0%
Bittersweet	16	2.7%
Transformational	116	19.6%
Positive	1	0.2%

Trans characters were left unresolved in 65.6% of the chosen TV dramas analyzed, probably because the media portrays them as minor stories without giving them much screen

time or serious development. This means that the audience doesn't get the whole picture about trans experiences, and it may make them less aware of trans issues in the community. In about 20% of these dramas, the characters are faced with significant changes in who they are or their society, for example, by overcoming identity questions or finding more self-respect. In 12% of cases, the problems lead to sad outcomes like death, violent situations, or being isolated and having the stigma of their identity fearfully confirmed. These dramas (2.7%) show that trans life is complex and addresses the tough aspects that many face.

Endings with a good outcome are rare (0.2%), and they usually stress acceptance, happiness, strong relationships, and success. These representations are important since they bring hope, introduce proper role models, make transgender lives seem ordinary, address stereotypes, and help create empathy.

4.2.2 Whether and to what extent the mental health of transgender depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

The second research question was related to examining the extent to which contemporary Pakistani TV dramas enhance the mental health of transgender people, and their treatment, medication, and impact on relationships and daily functioning.

Table 21

Types of Mental Health Issues Depicted

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	150	25.3%
Depression	129	21.8%
Anxiety	114	19.2%
Gender dysphoria	29	4.9%
PTSD	146	24.6%
Self-Harm	0	0%
Addiction	0	0%
Dissociation	25	4.2%

Most of the mental health issues depicted in this type of literature are depression (21.8%) and PTSD (24.6%). Most young people see anxiety as a typical concern, possibly due to widespread stress caused by the fear of violence, discrimination, or instability. Less frequently discussed conditions include Dissociative Disorders (4.2%) and Gender Dysphoria (4.9%), which proves that comics tend to generalize about mental health more than explore

individual conditions related to identity.

The TV dramas do not show Self-Harm or Addiction (0%), maybe because these aspects are ignored in a simple portrayal of trans lives. Mental health issues are absent from the stories of one in four, which may support seeing trans people like anyone else or put more focus on other parts of their life, though it could also minimize the challenges trans people encounter in society.

Table 22

Causes of Mental Health Struggles

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	158	26.6%
Family Rejection/Violence	0%	0%
Social Stigma & Discrimination	435	73.4%
Sexual Exploitation	0	0%
Internal Struggles	0	0%

Most of these television dramas deal with social stigma and discrimination (73.4%), so transgender mental health issues do not get as much attention. There are no cases in the sample of family rejection, sexual assault, or internal fights, which is unlike actual analysis.

In a quarter of the episodes, mental health was not present on which either showed a lack of character growth or their writers did not want to discuss the matter. This indicates there should be more realistic representations of transgender people's mental health issues.

Table 23

Coping Mechanisms Depicted

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	219	36.9%
Positive coping	75	12.6%
Negative coping	298	50.3%

This research reveals that the majority of transgender people use harmful coping strategies such as loneliness, taking risks, and substance abuse.

Most cases included in my thesis only mentioned positive means of coping, like therapy or social support, which reduced public awareness of how transgender people manage. It is also significant that in 36.9% of cases, no strategies for emotional management

are present, which may suggest that writers are avoiding exploring this side of trauma.

Table 24

Representation of Support Systems

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	138	23.3% ^S
Family support	0	0%
Medical/psychological	0	0%
Chosen family	455	76.7%
Religious guidance	0	0%

From Table 24, you can see that in 455 (76.7%) of the cases, transgender characters are represented by only having support from their chosen families. There is no medical, psychological, or religious counseling made available in professional support. In 23.3% of cases, no support system is mentioned, which means that mainstream institutions or biological families are mostly not included in the story. A lack of mental health or mental health care shows that society does not pay enough attention to healthcare issues.

4.2.3 Whether and to what extend the physical health of transgenders depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas?

The third research question queried about the physical health of transgender people depicted in contemporary Pakistani TV dramas.

Table 25

Depiction of Physical Health Issues

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	570	96.1%
chronic illnesses	23	3.9%
Violence & Injury	0	0%
Disabilities	0	0%

Of the many transgender characters, the majority, 96.1%, do not suffer from health conditions, which proves their low level of involvement in self-care. On the other hand, 3.9% deal with health problems that include malnutrition, liver diseases, medication-induced body aches, and major illnesses such as cancer and high blood pressure.

Although transgender individuals may be assaulted and abused, such acts are not

present in dramas. The lack of transgender characters for people with disabilities or chronic conditions shows how alienated and absent these groups are in the media.

Table 26

Depiction of Physical Decline

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	570	96.1%
Chronic illnesses	23	3.9%
Mobility issues	0	0%
Cognitive decline	0	0%
Vision/hearing impairment	0	0%

In the selected dramas, transgender characters did not face any physical issues like aging, limited movement, memory loss, or hearing or vision troubles. It was found that 3.9% of the characters had chronic conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, or arthritis. No characters had mobility, cognitive, vision, or hearing-related disabilities.

This could mean that there aren't enough transgender characters with elderly or disabled backstories in chosen TV dramas, which results in older and disabled transgender people not being presented in our media.

Table 27

Availability of Medical Care

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	578	97.5%
Easily Available	15	2.5%
Inaccessible	0	0%
unregulated treatments	0	0%

Table 27 reveals that fewer than 3 percent of the selected TV dramas mention medical care, so transgender people are rarely made visible by the media. The fact that only 2.5% involve everyday medical attention hints that they offer little positive representation. The novel does not mention any obstacles to healthcare, which may point to a lack of believable details in the story.

Table 28

Interaction with Medical Professionals

	Frequency	Percentage
Not present	588	99.2%
Respectful treatment	5	0.8%
Discrimination by doctors	0	0%
Medical exploitation	0	0%

Results in Table 28 show that 99.2% of depictions do not feature transgender characters meeting with specialists, and there is almost no representation of visiting a doctor. Only 0.8% of stories depict respectful treatment, making this portrayal of trans characters still quite rare. Furthermore, there is no indication of mistreatment or questionable actions in these narratives, suggesting that creators may tend to avoid such topics as well as straightforward representations of healthcare services for transgender individuals.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

As shown in the literature, the majority of representations of trans people are negative and simplistic. By concluding the research paper, it can be said that Pakistani T.V dramas focuses on representing real social issues that come across the way of transgenders such as discrimination, less occupational options, less educational opportunities, abandoning etc.

This work analyzes how transgender individuals are depicted in Pakistani TV shows and how these portrayals shape audience perceptions, social attitudes, and culture. It strives to understand how these representations challenge stereotypes and social norms, thereby influencing social conceptions of gender diversity. This research discusses how transgender characters are constructed in Pakistani television dramas, Judith Butler's gender performance, and Erving Goffman's framing.

The present research examines the portrayal of transgender characters in the Pakistani prime-time dramas *Guru* and *Jeewan Nagar*. It has uncovered a consistent pattern of reductive and stereotypical representations, where transgender characters are desexualized and primarily occupy peripheral social, educational, and economic positions. *Guru* is regarded as the more frequently referenced drama compared to *Jeewan Nagar*, with 64.6 percent of all references about *Guru* and 35.4 percent to *Jeewan Nagar*. *Guru Sattar*, *Suraya*, and *Laali Guru* are the series' most prominent characters, suggesting a correlation between a character's prominence and viewer interest.

Previous research aligns with Waheed, Bajwa, and Khushi's (2021) observation that respectful representation in the media increases public acceptance. Similarly, both Sharma (2020) and Arudhiraj (2020) found that the media, including social media, can inspire empathy and advocate for transgender rights when used responsibly. However, unrealistic and biased portrayals still dominate mainstream media content, highlighting the need for significant structural changes in the media industry.

Pakistani television dramas still lag in depicting transgender characters, with about half of the portrayals lacking conflict. The future of drama series should embrace authentic and inclusive stories, where transgender individuals are portrayed as main, active participants with a well-developed plot, and their experiences are framed within realistic social, economic, and psychological interactions.

Any of the transgender characters studied were depicted as illiterate and low class, most playing the role of the Hijra, a social category often associated with ritual performance,

begging, or even selling sex. None were represented as literate, with a viable occupation, or from the middle or elite social classes. Such tendencies forcefully remind us that transgender identity is being (narratively) paired with marginality once again, reinforcing the centuries-old problem of social discrimination.

According to present research, trans people are unfairly impacted by stereotypes on TV screens and within media content. Stories are still told from a limited perspective, and age, class, and visibility remain barriers.

This research noted that televised dramas from Pakistan rarely depict transgender characters as family members and seldom represent their traditions or emotions. As transgender individuals lack family connections, they are completely absent from the primary family structure and are instead found in closed communities, such as the guru-chela system.

When all transgender roles are depicted similarly, it suggests a common idea: that people in mainstream society are unable to accept them. Often, transgender characters are portrayed alone and without much support from those around them. Transgender characters in literature are mainly shown in unhealthy and stereotypical relationships, as the few who receive compassion are first depicted as sexualized or even as victims of transgender hate crimes.

It is evident that three-quarters of transgender characters strive to provide for their families, yet it is seldom apparent that they receive any respect or affection solely because they are transgender. In South Asian culture, family history holds such significance that transgender characters often cannot undergo the development or growth typically found in conventional narratives without it.

Since very few transgenders appear in public, it looks like they are outside of the mainstream things that others consider normal. To promote social acceptance, dignity, and understanding, there needs to be changes in the way transgender people are written into stories.

This thesis discusses a concerning way mental health is often treated for transgender people in Pakistani TV serials. Mental health issues are becoming more openly discussed, although their representation is usually restricted, usual, and leaves a lot out. Approximately one in five transgender characters has depression, and an even larger number has PTSD. Nearly one-fifth of those surveyed named anxiety as a problem, since transgender people often feel anxious and worried in real life. Still, the series does not cover illnesses like gender dysphoria or dissociation, and neither does it depict any instance of self-harm or addiction. More than one in four characters in the media do not face mental illnesses, which can make

trans lives seem the same as other people, but can also overlook the stress and anxiety caused by discrimination.

It seems the comic blames the community's stigma and harsh treatment for transgender characters' mental health troubles, yet it says nothing about family rejection, violent sexual acts, or their emotional issues. As a result, the subject of challenges for the transgender community in Pakistan is sidelined, given that stress within families, cruelty, and rejection generally make things very hard for them.

Because trans people commonly lack proper support systems, many depictions show them cut off from society and counting on their chosen family to pull through together. They are losing the opportunity to show how transgender people handle their lives and seek helpful mental health advice.

Scientific research shows that less than ten percent of transgender characters in Pakistani dramas receive basic medical care, and fewer still get regular check-ups. Because of this, a lot of the information about transgender health given by content creators is either incomplete or incorrect.

By avoiding health issues in stories, those stories portray unrealistic transgender characters and can leave the impression that trans people don't care about their health. Because trans people are generally described by their social circumstances, harmful stereotypes may be strengthened.

Stories of TV dramas should include descriptions of how patients relate to doctors, nurses, and hospitals in terms of discrimination or lack thereof, respect, trust, and fear. As a result, gender or personal experiences define the community entirely and exclude them from discussions about health and aging. Pakistani dramas stories about transgender people in the future should include input from transgender people, reach out to medical experts, and show both the truth and diversity in their health challenges.

The way transgender characters' conflicts are covered in Pakistani dramas is usually skipped, too simple, or heavily focused on sadness. Most conflicts come from concerns about social and family expectations, revealing their gender, which hardly explores the tough inner psychological problems that real transgender people often go through. Financial dependency is hardly depicted in the media; it appears in just 1.2 percent of all representations, contrary to what happens in real life.

5.2 Conclusion

The representation of transgender people in Pakistani TV dramas and their violation of

culture and gender stereotypes is a topic discussed in this thesis. Using Gender Performativity, Framing Theory and Minority stress theory, the research has been able to identify that there has been an increase in visibility of transgender characters, but it has been largely empty or devoid of meaningful interaction with the lives of the transgender community. All the other characters are either underdeveloped or viewed through the perspective of stereotyping, which implants a negative bias.

We are also able to see in this research how the transgender characters have been left to be framed in terms of victims, criminals, or comic relief, and this is one of the factors that led to the stigmatization effect on the population by the media Authority. The little depiction of transgender individuals as empowered, strong, or morally ambiguous characters highlighted that it is time to alter the approach to the narration. The research proposes ethically responsible, inclusive storytelling in Pakistani media where transgender individuals were represented in the content production and creation, including policy-making procedures. The future research should be guided towards the audience reception, production practices, and policy impacts to establish the full impact of media portrayals on the people and use it in influencing the attitudes of people and designing policies.

5.3 Suggestions

The research proposes several suggestions that can be used to portray transgender people in Pakistani TV serials. It suggests the hiring of transgender people in the development of content, policy changes in institutions, ethical guidelines, and subsidizing by the government. The gender representation and media studies coursework should be made available to the would-be content creators by media training facilities and university departments. Curriculum reforms, media literacy campaigns, and community-level campaigns have also been suggested. Publicity campaigns and capacity building of transgender youth are also suggested. Social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok are also ways to encourage transgender representation.

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APPENDIX 1: CODING BOOK

<u>Filing Date</u>	Coding sheet completion date will be filled in, according to the following format: Day/month/year (e.g., 15/01/2025)
<u>Drama</u>	1= Guru 2= Jeevan Nagar
<u>Year</u>	1= 2023 2= 2023
<u>Channel</u>	1= Express TV 2= Green Entertainment
<u>Episode Number</u>	The hour-long unit of a play that is aired on a single day.
<u>Scene Number</u>	The single unit of an episode where the character is present. If either the location or the time of day changes, it will be considered as a new scene. (A flashback within one scene will be counted as a new scene. The Scene number will be counted from the beginning of each episode.
<u>Character ID</u>	Each character will be given a unique ID, starting from 01 and proceeding to upwards without duplication. These IDs will be given according to the first appearance of the character. The first codable character will be given 01, the second codable character will be given 02, and so on.
<u>Name of character</u>	Name/Nickname of the character being analyzed
<u>Gender</u>	1= Male 2= female 3=Transgender
<u>Age</u>	1=infant, 2=child (2-12), 3=teen (13-18), 4=young (19-34), 5=mature (34-49), 6=elderly (50+)
<u>Education</u>	1= illiterate, 2=Semi-literate,

	3= literate
<u>Occupation</u>	<p>0=None,</p> <p>1= Student,</p> <p>2= Hijra / khawaja sira.i.e transgenders are usually feminine-identifying individuals who lives in communities that follow a kinship system known as the guru-chela system mainly because they have been rejected by or fled their family of origin. Many of them are street performers/ dancers and/or sex workers.</p> <p>3= A usual profession common amongst heteronormative individuals such as doctor, lawyer, business owner, Banker, Academic, Farm Manager, business owner/shop keeper, laborers, construction workers, mechanics, farmers, Electricians, plumbers, carpenters, auto-repair workers, Truck/bus/taxi drivers, chauffeurs, domestic workers, guards.</p> <p>4= Involved in Criminal and Illicit Occupations such as Gang member, fraudster, scammer, Contract Killer</p> <p>5= Creative and Entertainment Industries such as writer, poet, actor, director, musicians, model, singer etc.</p> <p>6= Jobless, somebody who has been fired or is actively looking for a job</p>
<u>Socio-eco class:</u>	<p>1=elite,</p> <p>2= middle class,</p> <p>3= lower / working class</p>
<u>Type of role:</u>	<p>1= Major,</p> <p>2= Minor</p>
DEPICTION OF FAMILY LIFE OF TRANSGENDERS	
<u>Family Type</u>	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1= Chosen family (friends, transgender community)</p> <p>2= Adopted family (legal or informal guardians)</p> <p>3= Biological family (parents, siblings, extended family)</p>
Family's Initial Reaction to Trans Identity	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Denial (ignoring or suppressing identity)</p> <p>2=Rejection (disowning, violence, abandonment)</p>

	<p>3=Conditional acceptance (acceptance but with restrictions)</p> <p>4=Full acceptance (loving, affirming)</p>
Parental Attitudes	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Abandonment (e.g., thrown out, cut off financially/emotionally)</p> <p>2=Controlling & coercive (e.g., forces gender conformity, conversion therapy)</p> <p>3=Selective support (e.g., mother supportive, father rejecting)</p> <p>4=Supportive & affirming (e.g., advocates for child)</p>
Sibling Attitudes	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Hostile (bullying, reporting to parents, physical/emotional abuse)</p> <p>2=Neutral (doesn't interfere)</p> <p>3=Protective & accepting</p>
Living Situation of the Trans Character	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Leaves home and struggles financially/socially</p> <p>2=Stays at home with conflict</p> <p>3=Builds an alternative support system</p> <p>4=Returns home after being away (reconciliation arc?)</p>
Economic & Emotional Contribution to Family	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Expected to financially support family (e.g., through begging, sex work, dancing)</p> <p>2= Typical occupation(shopkeeper, laborer, construction worker, mechanic, farmer, electrician, plumber, carpenter, car repair worker, driver, house helper.</p> <p>3= Seen as a burden (family ashamed, refuses to support)</p> <p>4=Recognized and valued as a family member</p>
Reinforcement of stereotypes	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Hyper-sexualization (depicting trans people as only entertainers, beggars or sex workers)</p> <p>2=Victimization (constantly suffering, no agency)</p> <p>3=Criminalization (depicted as deceptive, involved in illegal activities)</p> <p>4=Comic relief (mocked, treated as an object of humor)</p> <p>5=Empowerment (depicts success, resilience, breaking barriers)</p>

Family's Evolution Over Time	0= Not present 1= No change (family remains hostile or unsupportive) 2= Gradual acceptance (family slowly becomes more supportive) 3= Full reconciliation (family fully accepts and embraces the character) 4= Full rejection (family cuts ties permanently)
Social Support Outside the Family	0= Not present 1= No support (isolated, no friends or community) 2= Limited support (e.g., a few friends but no organized community) 3= Strong support (e.g., LGBTQ+ community, chosen family)
Personality of trans character	0= Not present 1= Level-headed 2= Kind Heart or protective 3= Rebellious 4=Grumpy ,Not Loyal, clever
Primary Source of Conflict	0= Not present 1=Gender identity disclosure or doubt about their lifestyles 2=Family reputation (izzat, societal honor) 3=Religious/cultural expectations 4=Financial dependency vs. independence
Conflict resolution strategy	0= Not present 1=Tragic resolution (violence, suicide, or forced marriage) 2=Oppose the current situation, Change their lifestyle 3=Permanent separation (cut off from family) 4=Forced conformity (character suppresses identity) 5=Reconciliation (family comes to accept the character)
Resolution of the Character's Story	0= Not present 1= Negative (e.g., tragedy, unresolved conflict) 2= Bittersweet (mixed outcomes, e.g., personal growth but lost relationships)

	<p>3= Transformational (character undergoes significant change)</p> <p>4= Positive (e.g., happiness, success, reconciliation)</p>
DEPICTION OF MENTAL HEALTH OF TRANSGENDERS	
Types of Mental Health Issues Depicted	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Depression (sadness, withdrawal, suicidal thoughts)</p> <p>2=Anxiety (fear, panic attacks, hyper-vigilance)</p> <p>3=Gender Dysphoria (distress due to mismatch between gender identity and assigned sex)</p> <p>4=PTSD (flashbacks, nightmares, hyper-reactivity due to past trauma)</p> <p>5=Self-Harm (cutting, starvation, substance abuse)</p> <p>6=Addiction (drugs, alcohol as a coping mechanism)</p> <p>7=Dissociation (feeling disconnected from reality or body)</p>
Causes of Mental Health Struggles	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Family Rejection & Violence (Emotional abuse, Physical abuse, Forced conversion therapy, Financial abandonment)</p> <p>2=Social Stigma & Discrimination (Bullying, Housing discrimination, Harassment by police or authorities)</p> <p>3=Sexual Exploitation & Violence (Depiction of sexual violence, Exploitation within transgender communities)</p> <p>4=Internal Struggles (Religious guilt, Self-hate, Fear of never being accepted)</p>
Coping Mechanisms Depicted	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Positive Coping Mechanisms (Seeking therapy or counseling, Finding support in transgender communities, Art, activism, , or career growth, Religion/spirituality as a source of healing, Acceptance from chosen family)</p> <p>2=Negative Coping Mechanisms (Self-isolation, Substance abuse, engaging in high-risk behaviors,</p>
Representation of Support Systems	<p>0= Not present</p> <p>1=Family Support</p> <p>2=Medical & Psychological Support</p>

	3=Chosen family (friends, Transgender Community Support) 4=Religious Guidance & Clergy Response
DEPICTION OF PHYSICAL HEALTH OF TRANSGENDERS	
Depiction of Physical Health Issues	0= Not present 1= health issues include malnutrition, substance abuse-related illnesses like liver disease, body pain, chronic illnesses like cancer and hypertension. 2=Violence & Injury 3=Disabilities & Long-Term Health Conditions
Depiction of Physical Decline	0= Not present 1=Chronic illnesses (diabetes, hypertension, cancer, arthritis) 2=Mobility issues (difficulty walking, reliance on support) 3=Cognitive decline (memory loss, dementia) 4=Vision and hearing impairment
Availability of Medical Care	0= Not present 1= Easily available and regular hospital visits or taking medicines 2= inaccessible and denial of care 3= Forced to rely on alternative/unregulated treatments
Interaction with Medical Professionals	0= Not present 1=Respectful treatment (doctors using correct pronouns, giving equal treatment) 2= Discrimination by doctors/nurses (refusal to treat, verbal abuse) 3= Medical exploitation (forced procedures, unethical treatments)