



## Violence Against Women Treated as an Act of Violence or as a Normal Practice: A Study of Pakistani TV Drama Serials

**Sajida Awais**, PhD Scholar, University of Central Punjab Lahore. Faculty of Media and Communication Studies.

[Sajida.awais@hotmail.com](mailto:Sajida.awais@hotmail.com)

**Dr. Atif Ashraf**, Assistant Professor, University of Central Punjab Lahore. Faculty of Media and Communication Studies.

[atifashraf@ucp.edu.pk](mailto:atifashraf@ucp.edu.pk)

**Dr. Taimoor-ul Hassan**, Dean, Faculty Of Media and Communication Studies, University of Central Punjab Lahore.

**Abstract-** This research investigated the representations of violence against women in violence based Pakistani TV drama serials. Quantitative content analysis was used in which 30 dramas from January 2018 to May 2020 were selected through non probability purposive sampling from three top rated Pakistani entertainment channels. 283 scenes from 842 episodes were analyzed for violence against women to explore whether the violence was represented as an act of violence or a normal practice. Findings show that representation through the writing, direction and shooting of the scenes, Pakistani drama serials show violent scenes as acts of violence and not as a normal practice.

**Keywords:** Representation, Violence against women, Normal practice, Act of violence

### I. INTRODUCTION

In today's society, mass media plays a critical role in people's daily lives. It provides individuals with access to information and entertainment. However, the prevalence of media may have a detrimental impact on how individuals form opinions and understand reality depending on the nature of the media they consume (Hu & Zhu, 2017). The mass media has a significant role in raising awareness, providing education, and being a powerful tool of communication for activists and advocates and this role can be extended to the problem of violence against women (VAW) (Baluta, 2015).

A common idea that is known to be rooted in our cultures is the abuse of women around the world. Such acts received attention after the United Nations Resolution on the Eradication of Violence towards women (DEVAW) in 1993 (UNO, 1993). Despite international attention (Bloom, 2008), the prevalence of domestic abuse still persists. Research found that 10% to 70% of women were confirmed to have been physically abused at some stage in their entire lives by their intimate partner (WHO, 2005). Definition of the Council of Europe (2001, p. 2) stated that Violence against women and children is "any action or violation carried out by people harming another's life, physical or psychological dignity or rights, and negatively affecting his or her personality's development."

Violence against women has been on the rise in Pakistan with Pakistan ranking at six on the list of the world's most dangerous countries for women. Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO) is an NGO who released its biannual paper reporting that domestic violence against women rose in the first half of 2020 and violence against women also rose in the second quarter of 2020. In the first half of 2020 alone there were 2148 cases of violence against women and media coverage of these cases was not adequate with only 495 being reported in the news (SSDO, 2020). However, there are other media arenas that may be playing a role in awareness about violence against women (VAW) or its glorification. This study addresses Pakistani drama serials as one such media arena. Many Pakistani dramas show violence against women and it is critical to understand how these scenes are represented and whether they show the violence as a normal practice or as violence.

There is ample evidence that shows that the type of representations of subjects showed in media can influence the behavior and opinions of its audience therefore, solidifying the importance of studying representations of VAW. It is also important to note that while in the past VAW was usually only depicted in daytime soap operas and dramas, even these depictions were considerably less graphic than the ones seen in similar shows today (Custers & Van den Bulck, 2013). Another issue associated with the representation of violence in mass media is that 71% of the violent scenes show no remorse, criticism, or penalty. Because there are no implications or consequences revealed in these violent scenes, the scenes

represent that violence is an activity that is not anti-social and is a part of the natural fabric of society. Similarly, approximately half of the violence on television shows no physical harm or pain on the part of the victim (Strasburger and Wilson, 2002).

Over the past 40 years there has been a drastic increase in television scenes that include acts of VAW as fundamental subplots in television (Jamieson, & Romer, 2014; Penfold-Mounce, 2016). Violence in modern film and television is almost hard to escape; what was once seldom represented on television is now a prevalent plotline (Cuklanz, 2000; Lee, Hust, Zhang, & Zhang, 2011). This increase in access to media, as well as, the prevalence of violence in media further intensifies the need for studies to address the representation of VAW in the Pakistani media. There is some international literature (Ward, 2014; Bronwyn, 2002; Ashley, 2010) that addresses the representations of VAW in the media; Research bodies endorse the persistence of abuse in television programmes (Gunter & Harrison, 2013; Goonasekera & Kam, 1990). However, Pakistani literature falls short in this regard.

With regards to Pakistan, the 3rd most dangerous country in the world (Reuters, 2011), there are limited studies addressing the specific representations of VAW in mass media. While Pakistani television has evolved into a powerful and influential part of the society (Ashraf & Muqem, 2014), the amount of Pakistani literature on the subject of representations of VAW in Pakistani media is not representative of the magnitude of the problem. In Pakistan, among the most-watched television programmes in Pakistan are episodic television serials popularly known as 'drama' (Ahmar, T. 2012). In Pakistani drama serials, women are mostly treated as less than, a burden on the family, and weak in terms of physical and emotional strength. This notion in Pakistani dramas strengthens the already existing stereotypical images of a male dominant society (Asif, 2010).

Ali and Khan (2012) argued that the drama serials of the Pakistan industry represent the image of a female character as feeble, unprivileged, dependent, and undeserving of basic human rights. The study added that women are rarely represented as strong or dynamic characters. The illustration of violence against women is common in Pakistani TV dramas. They commonly show occurrences of sexual harassment, rape, child marriages, and violence due to dowry issues (Ahmed, 2014). It has been observed that in patriarchal societies where men have the final say in all matters- like in Pakistan- families consider violence against women a personal issue. Such families suppress these issues and prefer not to discuss such violence publically (Ayesha & Zubair, 2018).

The available research on violence against women in the media is limited and rarely focused on the representation. There is also a limitation in up-to-date literature on Pakistani drama serials that accounts for the fast pace of the industry. This study attempts to address this information gap by studying dramas with violence between 2018 and May 2020 from the three most prominent TV channels in Pakistan and determining whether the violent scenes were represented as a normal practice or an act of violence.

With regard to representation, some producers purposely blur reality to encourage viewers to identify with scenes and characters that are presented in a certain light (Berger, 2002, p. 61). Similarly, some media normalizes violence as an ordinary or common occurrence. One variation of normalization is "routinization" which represents violence as commonplace and part of routine life (Kelman, 1973). This research is founded on these sound grounds as it breaks down the identification of scenes into either being represented as a "Normal Practice" or an "Act of Violence", where the first is considered socially acceptable while the latter is not.

By analyzing the representations present in primetime television within a cultural frame, the hegemonic thought of society can be revealed along with its means of distribution- popular television shows and films (Denzin, 1992). However, in order to break down the intended representation of violence in Pakistani dramas, a systematic method is required. Framing as a theory can explain the intended effects of a media. "The frame represents the way a means of communication uses to give a meaning and a particular point of viewing the theme" (Marini, 2006), framing can then be used to comprehend the phenomenon that is being represented which in this case is VAW. When it comes to gendered violence, the frame takes on the task to define the violence itself. (Giomi & Magaraggia, 2017).

This study utilizes framing theory by creating two possible frames for any given scene with violence- the scene can either be framed as a "normal practice" or as an "act of violence". The frames are further defined with coding categories that can point towards one frame or another as discussed in the methodology. For the purposes of this research, the ideological framework of Pakistani drama serials with violence against

women from 2018 to May 2020 will be analyzed in addition to separate analysis of each drama serial's programming.

Following the theoretical ideologies of literature discussed above, the objectives of this study are then to better understanding the underlying characteristics of violent scenes in Pakistani drama serials, as well as, to identify the scenes as either represented as an act of violence or a normal practice. The objectives are then defined as follows:

1. To examine the nature of violent scenes represented in Pakistani drama serials including the identity and social class of all characters involved, as well as, the reason and place of violence.
2. To examine whether Pakistani TV drama serials are representing violent scenes against women as a normal practice (NP) or as an act of violence (AOV).

In order to address the aim of understanding the nature of violent scenes, the study studies characteristics of characters involved in such scenes, as well as, some critical background information including the location and reason behind the violence. The study also addresses the categorization of violent scenes as NP or AOV by studying various pieces of information available within these scenes of violence. Following these guidelines, the research questions of the study are then broken down as follows:

RQ1. What are the characteristics of characters involved in violent scenes in Pakistani drama serials?

RQ2. Where and why do these violent acts take place as represented by Pakistani drama serials?

RQ3. Do Pakistani TV drama serials represent violence against women as acts of violence?

RQ4. Do Pakistani TV drama serials represent violence against women as a normal practice?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### **Research Design**

In this study, quantitative content analysis was used considering its appropriateness to study the ratio (frequency) and the rate (duration) of violence against women. The first two research questions were addressed by tracking location, character identity, social class and the reason for violence. Whereas, the third and fourth research questions were addressed by analyzing presence of victim, perpetrator and defender in the scene, type of camera angles, reaction of victim and defender (verbal or physical) towards the act of violence, total dialogues and space on screen.

### **Sampling Technique**

#### **1. Channel Selection**

This research was started after formal permission from advance studies and research board (BAS&R). After the formal permission, most popular entertainment channels were selected based upon rating, heavy viewership and general public perception. For this purpose, three sources were explored (i.e., Nayatel, Gallup survey 2017-2018, Aurora Dawn). The identified top rated channels with heavy viewership were PTV Home, ARY Digital, GEO TV and Hum TV. Out of these four identified channels PTV Home was further excluded due to unavailability of online content.

#### **2. Drama Selection**

In order to obtain the population of dramas from January 2018 to May 2020, a list of dramas manually was compiled from the respective websites of the three channels of interest i.e., HUM TV, GEO Entertainment and ARY Digital. No formal lists exist to indicate the names of dramas aired during this time period hence, the dramas available for online streaming on the official websites was considered the second best source and Wikipedia was used as a last resort to confirm the date and year that the drama aired in. Therefore, a list was derived by using a combination of Wikipedia and the official streaming sites of the relevant channels. The list is present as Annexure A. The drama serial selection process was as follows:

1. Drama serials from the three top-rated entertainment channels in Pakistan- ARY, GEO and HUM- were considered.

2. Only drama serials that started and stopped airing between January 2018 and May 2020 were considered.
3. Only drama serials with fewer than 34 episodes were considered.
4. 10 dramas were chosen from each of the three channels if they fulfilled the criteria and were expected to include violence.

Where the population was Annexure A, the sample included 20%, 26% and 23% of the dramas on HUM TV, ARY DIGITAL AND GEO DRAMA in the sample years respectively. Considering the subjective detection and inclusion of violence against women in the sample, it can be deduced that 20%, 26% and 23% of the dramas released between January 2018 and May 2020 on HUM, ARY and GEO contained a large amount of violence against women.

### **3. Drama Sampling and Review**

#### **II. Sampling Procedure**

All drama episodes were listed with serial numbers and to avoid biases every second episode was chosen to be coded and analyzed. Therefore, the population was cut in half using purposive sampling. The unit of analysis is the 283 obtained scenes.

Episodes of each drama were reviewed one by one for sections with male and female interaction. These were then further narrowed down to instances where these interactions were physically or verbally abusive towards the woman. All the scenes in this chosen sample were then further analyzed in their respective coding sheets where data on all relevant categories was recorded.

#### **Exclusion Criteria**

Only scenes that represented psychological, economical and sexual violence were excluded.

#### **Coding of Violence Scene**

Content analysis coding sheets were used to quantify the violence in each of the violence scenes. Inter-coder reliability was maintained for the pilot study and the coding procedure. All coding categories and sub-categories were selected on the basis of their importance in literature in which these were utilized for coding (O'Neil, 2016; Burt, 2013; Combs, 2010; De Ros, 2008; Ishiura, 2015; Persaud, 2014; RÚDÓLFSDÓTTIR, 2004; Scharrer, 2004).

#### ***Type of Violence: Physical or Verbal***

Physical violence refers to instances of physical contact that are not permitted by the woman and can potentially injure her. While verbal violence refers to sentences or words spoken in a degrading or defiling manner including curse words as well as demands in conversations that are spoken in a manner that incite fear in the woman.

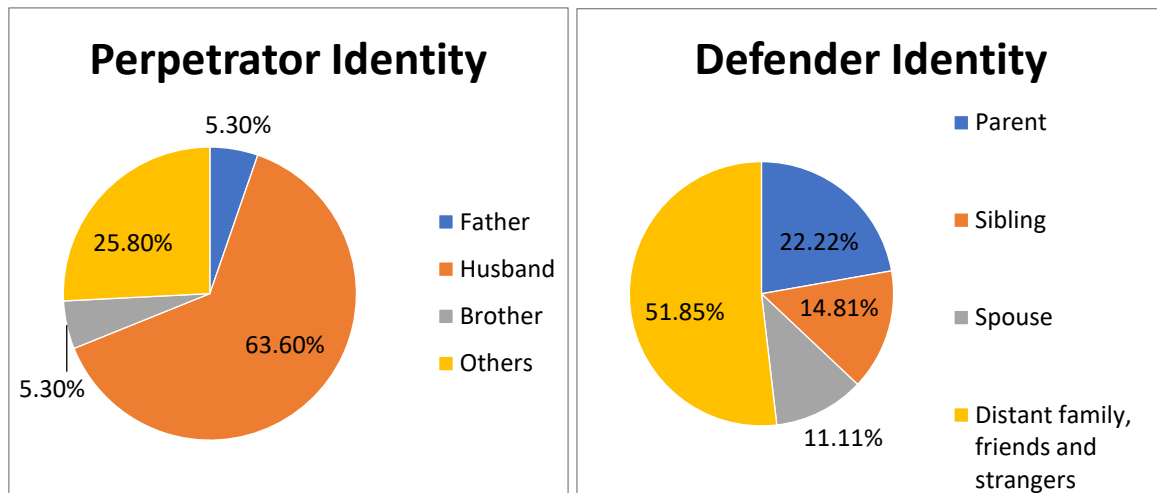
### **III. RESULTS**

Following the coding of each drama serial in the sample, the quantitative data was inputted into SPSS and formatted accordingly. For each of the hypothesis variables, frequency analysis and cross-tabulations were run where relevant. It was found that since most variables were either nominal (binary such as presence or absence) or ordinal, for analysis, all positive and negative were re-coded to 0 and 1 respectively, however, for consistency all such changes were reverted in the final results.

### Characteristics of Characters Involved

As shown above, the most common perpetrators were husbands. Both “Father” and “Brother” were included as two separate groups for identification so that the instances of perpetration on the part of direct

Figure 1: Defender and Perpetrator Identity



family members i.e., father, husband, and brother could be isolated. As shown by the data above, when combined direct family members make up approximately three-fourths of the instances of perpetrator whereas, distant family and strangers (encompassed by “others”) make up only one-fourth of the perpetrators. The data points towards more representation of direct family perpetration of violence against women in Pakistani drama serials in this period.

The group of identity “Distant family, friends and strangers” was clustered together to study the difference between the likelihood of a defender being from the victim’s direct family member or distant family and friends. Table 1 Demonstrates the fact that “Distant family, friends and strangers” was the most common occurrence which is representative of how direct family members are less likely to defend a woman against violence than other characters.

Another important piece of information can be found by cross tabulating perpetrator identity against defender identity as shown in **Error! Reference source not found..** The second highest frequency is 5 which are at the cross between husband and “Distant family, friends and strangers”. It shows that in the sample in instances of violence by the husband, there are fewer times that close family members have defended the victim and more instances that “Distant family, friends and strangers” have defended the victim further strengthening the idea that direct family members are less likely than distant family and friends to interfere in marital violence.

Figure 2: Social Class

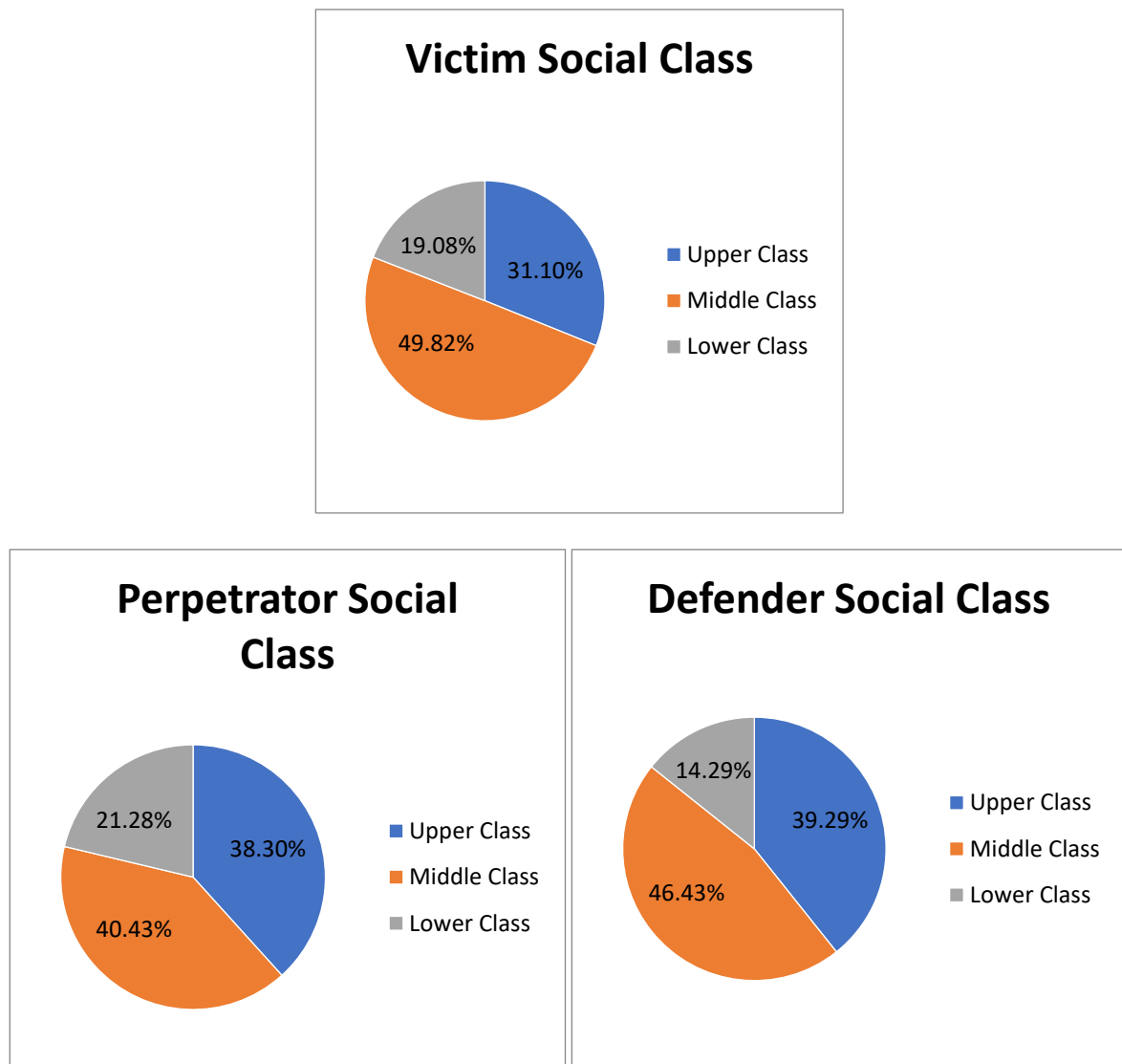
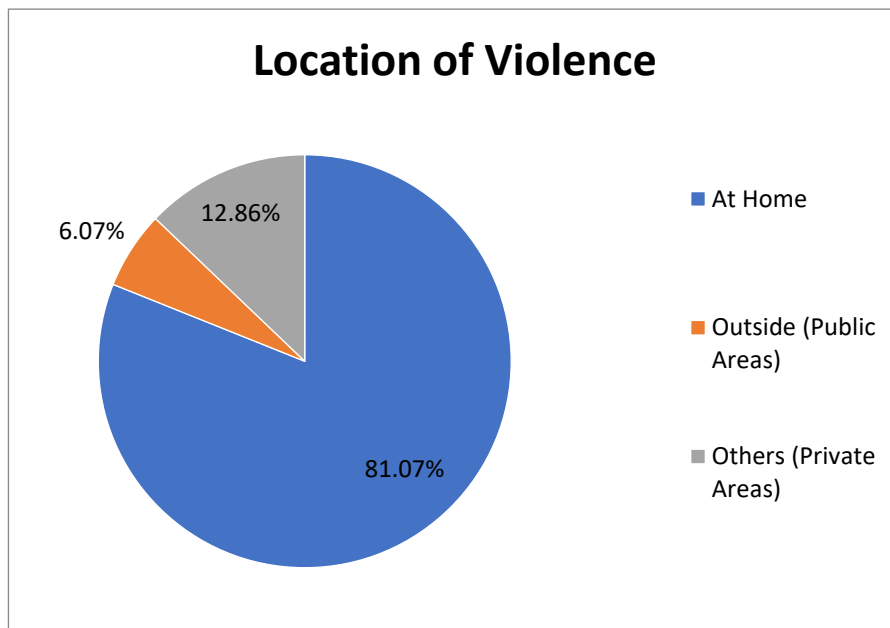


Figure 2: Social Class shows that in the sample set, all three characters belong mostly to the middle class. This may be attributed in part to most drama serials centring on middle-class families or that the drama serials in the sample were coincidentally skewed in that they represented more middle-class families. Close runner ups for Defenders and Perpetrators were instances in the upper class which can be explained by privilege obtained by belonging to an upper-class family- financial privilege may be what enable both perpetrators and defenders to be able to perpetrate violence and defend against violence respectively.

### The Location and Cause of Violence

Figure 3: Location of Violence



Results regarding the location of violence are as expected.

Figure 3: **Location of Violence** shows that the most common location for violence was “Home” taking up a large portion of the sample (81%). The location group “Outside” is defined as all public places and was created to understand the likelihood of violence against women in public places. The results for “Outside” are also as expected as there were considerably fewer instances of acts of violence against women being publically committed as opposed to at home or in other private areas (encompassed by “Others”).

Data then supports the ideology that perpetrators are more likely to commit acts of violence against women in private places as opposed to public places thereby reducing the chances of intervention on part of defenders and upholding their reputation in the community.

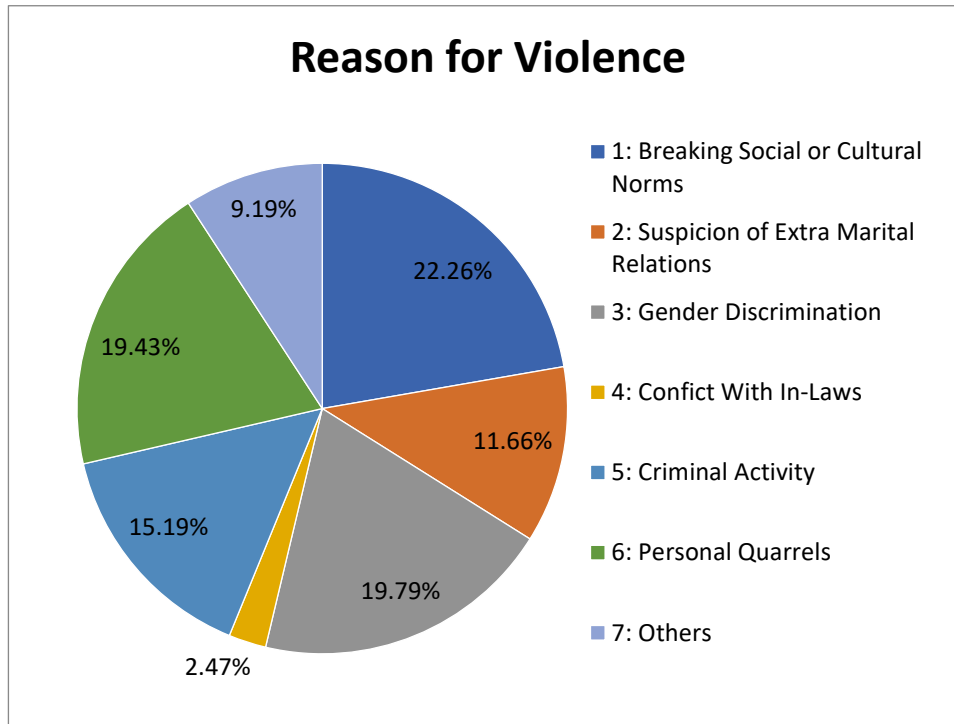
The results show that the data as represented in Pakistani drama serials are indicating a lack of safety against violence for women. It is also indicating that consequences against all perpetrators committing acts of violence at home must be lower than alternatives as it is the chosen location for violence.

The high frequency of at-home violence against women can also be further broken down with perpetrator identity. Cross tabulation between perpetrator identity and location shows that since the most common



perpetrators were husbands and they had the highest instances of committing acts of violence at home (151), the overall most prominent location of violence ended up being at home. Another critical point that shows up in this cross tabulation is that regardless of the identity of the perpetrator, the highest instances of violence were at home.

Figure 4: Reason for Violence



As represented by **Error! Reference source not found.** the most prominent reason for violence found in the data was “1” defined as “breaking social or cultural norms”. Of the other defined reasons, “3” defined as gender discrimination and “6” defined as personal quarrels came in a close second and third. The distinction between the “1” and “6” was that while “1” required the violence to be in response to a certain act (i.e., any act that broke norms) on the part of the victim, “3” was focused on discrimination against the victim based on their gender and violated the victim’s basic rights on the sole grounds of their gender.

Contrary to expectation, “4” defined as conflict with in-laws was the least prominent reason for violence. One of the reasons for this low value may be that even though there were instigations on the part of in-laws in many situations, this statistic highlights that these forces were often in the background and while they may rile up the situation between spouses they were unlikely to be the direct cause of a scene with violence. Another obvious reason is that “conflict with in-laws” is only applicable where the victim is the wife and the perpetrator is the husband or other (such as brother-in-law or father-in-law) since this reason cannot exist for other combinations (such as father and daughter) the statistic can be expected to be lower than the others which are applicable for all relationships.



## Representation of Scenes as Act of Violence or Normal Practice

### Total Space on Screen

Figure 5: Total Space on Screen

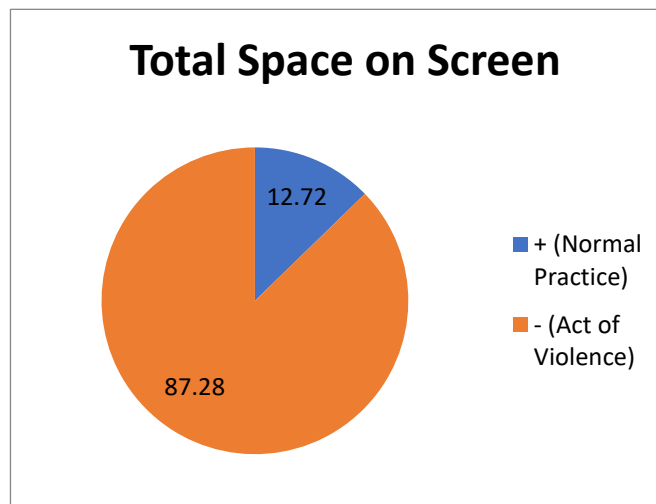
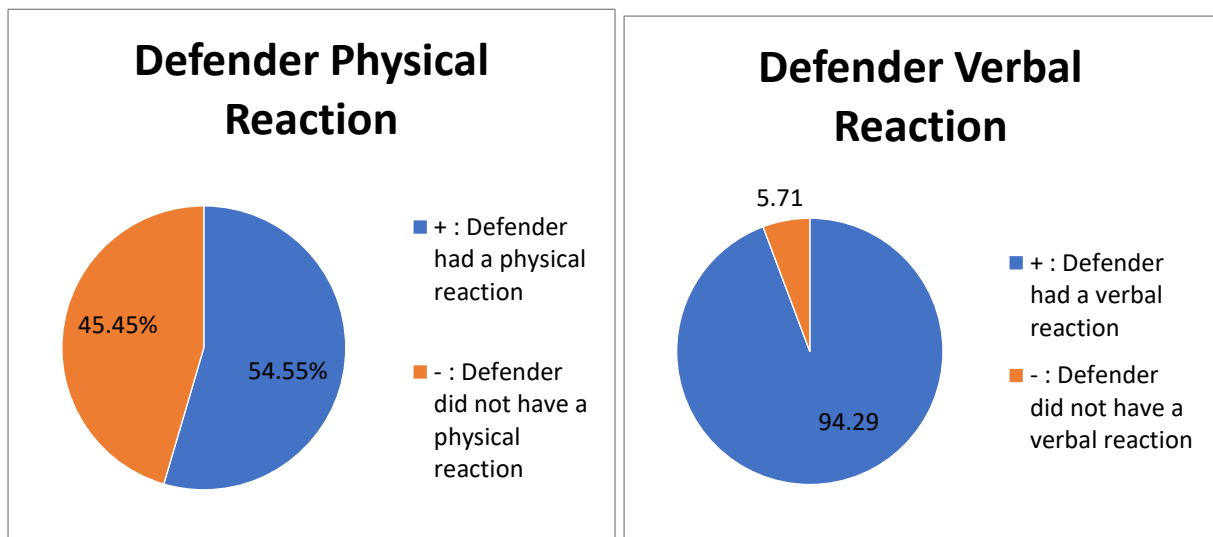


Figure 5: Total Space on Screen shows that 87% of Total Space on Screen is negative meaning that in 88% of the scenes the perpetrator had more space on the screen than the defender and victim. This overall indicates that according to the spacing on-screen, scenes were represented as an act of violence. Even when frequency analysis was conducted on verbal and physical violence separately, in both types of violence there are more instances of perpetrator taking up more space on the screen.

### Defender Reaction

As shown in Figure 6: Defender Reaction, defenders had more instances of verbal and physical reactions in

Figure 6: Defender Reaction



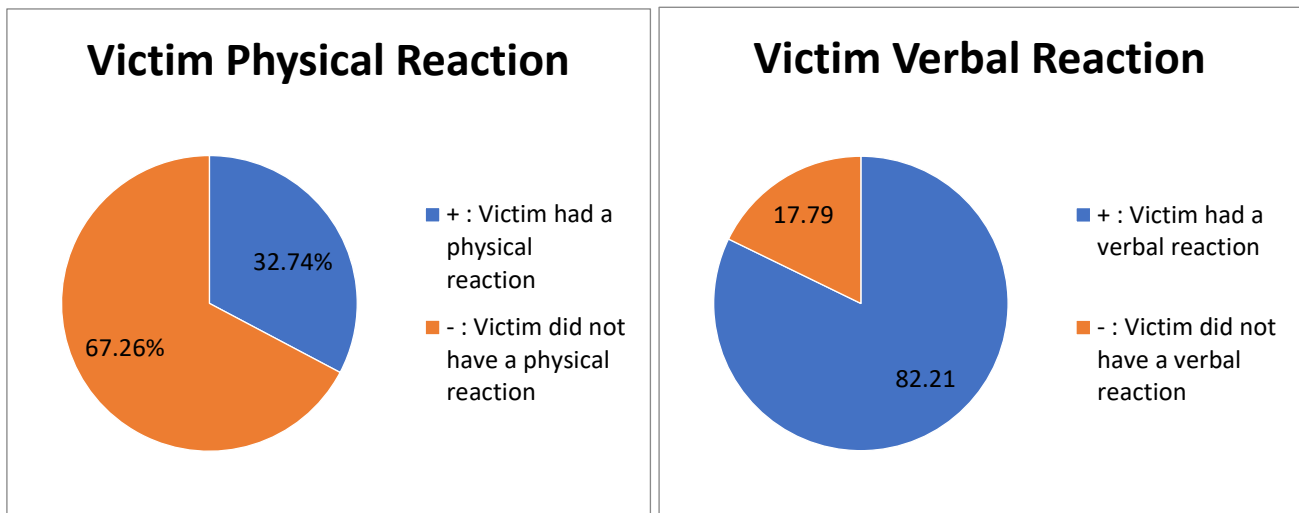
scenes than instances where they did not react. However, this is explained through the very definition of a defender. If a defender had neither a verbal reaction nor a physical reaction in a scene they would not qualify as a defender. Therefore, additional steps were required to see the relation of Defender's Reaction to the hypothesis.

A cross-tabulation between the type of violence and Defender Reaction gives a much clearer idea of the nature of the representation of violence in a scene. Defenders had a physical reaction to verbal violence 50% of the time which is a neutral state. However, defenders had a physical reaction to physical violence 58% of the time showing that overall, physical violence is shown as Similarly, defenders had a verbal reaction to verbal violence 94% of the time showing that overall verbal violence is shown as an act of violence. Defenders also had a verbal reaction to physical violence 95% of the time showing that overall physical violence is shown as an act of violence. On the whole, the reaction on the part of the defender shows scenes to be represented as an act of violence against women.

**Victim Reaction**

As shown in Figure 7: Victim Reaction, victims are less likely to have physical reactions as in 67% of the

Figure 7: Victim Reaction



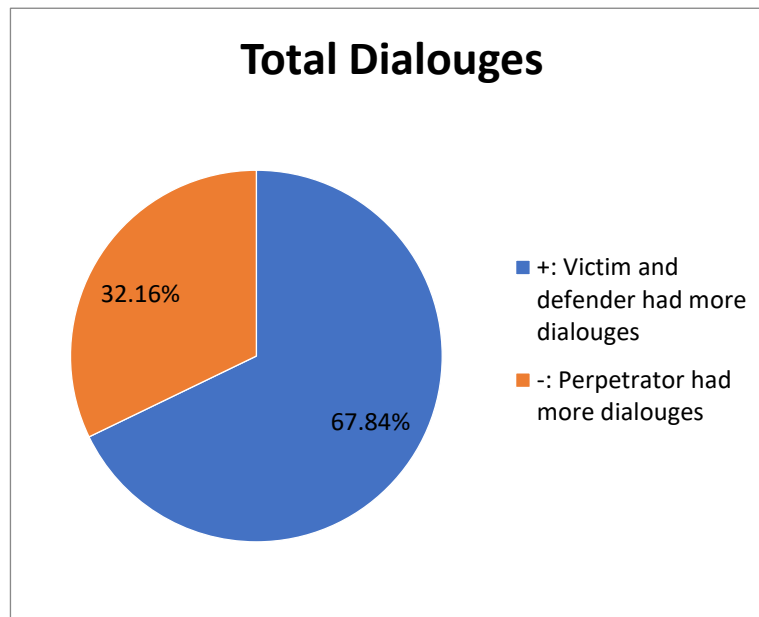
scenes victims did not have a physical reaction. This shows that violent scenes are represented as normal practice. The table also goes to show that victims have verbal reactions around 82% of the time which represents the scenes as acts of violence. Since both types of reactions show different results a cross-tabulation with types of violence was run to better understand the nature of these responses.

The cross tabulation showed that victims had a physical reaction to verbal violence only 16% of the time hence, overall verbal violence is shown as a normal practice. Similarly, victims had a physical reaction to physical violence 60% of the time – overall physical violence is shown as an act of violence.

Victims had a verbal reaction to verbal violence 82% of the time hence, overall verbal violence is shown as an act of violence and victims had a verbal reaction to physical violence 83% of the time - overall physical violence is shown as an act of violence.

## Total Dialogues

Figure 8: Total Dialogues



As per the results of Total Dialogues, 67% were positive meaning that in 67% of the scenes the number of dialogues of the defender and victim combined was greater than the number of dialogues of the perpetrator. Overall, Dialogues show that the scenes are represented as a Normal Practice.

## Camera Angles

Table 1: Camera Angles

<i>Up</i>	Freq.	Percent	<i>Over The Shoulder</i>	Freq.	Percent
+	1	2.0	+	28	19.0
-	17	33.3	-	2	1.4
Neutral	33	64.7	Neutral	117	79.6
Both Zero	excluded		Both Zero	excluded	
<i>Down</i>	Freq.	Percent	<i>Close Up</i>	Freq.	Percent
+	18	56.3	+	11	4.9
-	3	9.4	-	129	57.1
Neutral	11	34.4	Neutral	86	38.1
Both Zero	excluded		Both Zero	excluded	

Table 1: Camera Angles shows the breakdown of positive and negative camera angles where positive are the instances where defenders and victims had more of a certain camera angle and vice versa. "Both Zero" indicates the number of scenes where neither group had that specific type of angle and "Neutral" indicates that both groups had the same number of that specific type of angle, such states were considered to neither point towards an act of violence nor a normal practice.

Up and over the shoulder camera angle have more instances of neutral, Down camera angles are overall positive so scenes are shown as a normal practice and, Close Up camera angles are overall negative so scenes are shown as acts of violence.

The research relies on the outcomes of individual frequency analysis for the relevant variables i.e., Space on Screen, Defenders Verbal & Physical reaction, Victim's Verbal & Physical reaction and Dialogues in order to answer the last two research questions. Table 2: Results represent these results.

Key: AOV for Act of Violence and NP for Normal Practice

**Table 2: Results**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Dialogues</b>	<b>Down Camera Angles</b>	<b>Defender's Physical Reaction against Verbal Violence</b>	<b>Defender's Verbal Reaction against Verbal Violence</b>	<b>Victim's Physical Reaction against Verbal Violence</b>	<b>Victim's Verbal Reaction against Verbal Violence</b>
<b>Result</b>	NP	NP	Neutral	AOV	NP	AOV
<b>Category</b>	<b>Space on Screen</b>	<b>Close Up Camera Angles</b>	<b>Defender's Physical Reaction against Physical Violence</b>	<b>Defender's Verbal Reaction against Physical Violence</b>	<b>Victim's Physical Reaction against Physical Violence</b>	<b>Victim's Verbal Reaction against Physical Violence</b>
<b>Result</b>	AOV	AOV	AOV	AOV	AOV	AOV
	<b>AOV Total = 8</b>			<b>NP Total = 3</b>		

As the frequency analysis results show that more variables point towards the scenes represented as an act of violence, we can see that Pakistani TV drama serials are likely to represent violence against women as acts of violence.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The hypothesis as discussed in Results show mixed outcomes in terms of whether or not the scenes were represented as normal acts or acts of violence. Overall, however, the scenes lean towards being acts of violence. In context of Pakistani drama serials this indicates that in the process of writing (dialogues etc.) and shooting (camera shots, space on screen etc.,) these scenes did not intend to normalize violence and instead wanted to invoke reactions in response to acts of violence. Whether or not these were perceived as acts of violence by the audience is outside the scope of the study however, as understood by the data obtained from the sample drama serials it can be concluded that the scenes were shown as acts of violence.

The results bring to light many interesting insights about the nature of violent scenes in Pakistani dramas serials. Location of violence points towards the expected result of most violence against women being committed at home, this outcome is supported by previous researches that also point out that domestic setting for violence is the most common (Gerbner, 1970). Multiple reasons may be able to explain this relationship. For one, perpetrators are likelier to commit acts of violence in areas where there are fewer consequences such as intervention on the part of defenders and police and even consequences such as jail time. The most likely location for violence being at home can then be explained as "home" being a safe haven from such consequences. This demonstrates a lack of safety measures at home and may indicate that women are unlikely to involve third party defenders if they are victims to violence at home. Cultural factors

such as a sense of honour or family reputation being compromised in the society may also play a role in this factor as it makes external involvement in family matters scarce. Perpetrator identity shows that family members make up three-fourths of the total number of perpetrators. The same factors discussed above may play a role in this result as outsiders are less likely to intervene in family matters allowing violence against women at home to prevail.

Defender identity and their social class also give deep insight into the nature of informal defence systems in society as represented by Pakistani drama serials. As shown by the data, most defenders are not direct family members; this may show a hesitance on the part of direct family to intervene in violence against women (especially in marriages as the most common perpetrators were husbands). On the contrary, regardless of the nature of the perpetrator, distant family, friends and, strangers are more likely to intervene. Overall there were few instances of witnesses of the acts of violence defending the victim which is in-line with previous studies that show that witnesses are more likely to be passive (Gerbner, 1970). With regards to social class, defenders were mostly from the middle class however, this may be because most perpetrators and victims belonged to middle class families therefore it was likely that defenders that intervened were also from similar social classes. Upper-class defenders were second in running and privilege plays a part in this result as people from the upper-class are better able to intervene knowing that they can handle any consequences with financial means or through their standing in society.

Another unexpected finding regarding social class in general was the low number of instances of victims, perpetrators and defenders belonging to lower-class families. The expectation is for violence to be more prevalent in lower-class families however, results indicated otherwise. This result can be understood better if it is attributed to the fact that dramas are most likely to be based on middle-class families as those dramas target a wider audience. Therefore, this result is not necessarily reflective of what happens in society and instead should be understood in the context of Pakistani drama serials.

The most common reasons for violence were “gender discrimination” and “breaking social and cultural norms”. Both these factors encompass instances where women were either discriminated against based on solely their gender or when they acted against the expectations placed on their gender. These factors highlight that the most common reasons for violence were both based on a violation of human rights as women were either considered less than because of their gender (gender discrimination) or it was expected that women were to act a certain way and any deviation from such would be worthy of violence (breaking social and cultural norms). Previous researches also support this finding and discuss that in patriarchal societies such as Pakistan, gender discrimination is a major cause of violence against women (Ali and Gavino, 2008). This brings to light a disturbing element of violence against women as it goes to show that by being born a certain gender alone increases the likelihood that acts of violence will be committed. Asking for any basic right such as the right to speak out against injustice, have freedom of speech or the choice to marry who she pleases can result in violence against women. Since such basic elements of human rights are included in national law, it shows that in situations such as these perpetrators are taking law into their own hands and creating laws for convenience and control.

## V. CONCLUSION

Overall, the results point towards violent scenes being represented as an act of violence in Pakistani drama serials. As opposed to a normal practice, the data sides with the scenes being shown as acts of violence as defined through the variables. This means that the drama serials do not intend to normalize the acts of violence in how they are represented however, it does not necessarily mean that the acts are not normalized through their repetition and in the audience’s perception of the scenes. The sample Pakistani drama serials in this period represent these scenes as acts of violence therefore, it can be concluded that on the whole, acts at least in their representation through the writing, direction and shooting of the scenes Pakistani drama serials show violent scenes as acts of violence and not as a normal practice.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

The absence of a consistent and standardized rating system for Pakistani drama serials became a limitation within the study as it introduced subjectivity into the data collection process. In the future if such a standardized process is developed it could not only help indicate appropriate audiences for specific types

of violence in drama serials but would also been an asset to future research in this field. Future researches could be comparable over time if an external organization tracked drama serials in the market and rated them for various aspects such as presence of violence or crime as such standards would be objective and would not involve the subjectivity on the part of the researcher. Future researches could also include a larger time period in order to understand how the results relate over time or how instances and the nature of violent scenes have shifted in Pakistani drama serials.

#### REFERENCES

1. Anura Goonasekera, L. Y. (2019). Violence on television in Asia.
2. Barrie Gunter, J. H. (1998). *An Analysis of Amount, Nature, Location and Origin of Violence in British Programmes*.
3. Burt, K. W. (2013). Age, Gender, Race, and Culture in the ER: A Content Analysis of End-of-Life Issues in the Television Drama.
4. Cuklanz, L. (2001). Rape on Prime Time : Television, Masculinity, and Sexual Violence. *Contemporary Sociology*.
5. Denzin, N. K. (1992). *Symbolic Interactionism and Cultural Studies*.
6. ELISA GIOMI, S. M. (2017). *Brutal relationships*.
7. Ishiura, N. M. (2015). THE TELEVISED CONSTRUCTION OF CRIME: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF BROADCAST, CABLE, AND WOMEN'S ENTERTAINMENT NETWORKS.
8. Kathleen Custers, J. V. (2012). *The Cultivation of Fear of Sexual Violence in Women: Processes and Moderators of the Relationship Between Television and Fear*.
9. Kelman, H. C. (1973). Violence without moral restraint: Reflections on the dehumanization of victims and victimizers.
10. Moon J. Lee, S. H. (2011). *Effects of Violence Against Women in Popular Crime Dramas on Viewers' Attitudes Related to Sexual Violence*.
11. Muhammad Ashraf, M. u. (2014). Media Activism and its Impacts on the Psychology of Pakistani Society.
12. O'Neil. (2016). Approved for All Audiences: A Longitudinal Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Women in Movie Trailers .
13. P. Ali, M. G. (2008). Violence against women in Pakistan: a framework for analysis. *The Journal of the Pakistan Medical Association*.
14. P. E. Jamieson, D. R. (2014). Violence in Popular U.S. Prime Time TV Dramas and the Cultivation of Fear: A Time Series Analysis.
15. Penfold-Mounce, R. (2015). Corpses, Popular Culture and Forensic Science: Public Obsession with Death.
16. Persaud, S. (2014). Performing on the Screen: An Exploration of Gender Representation in Technology Video Advertisements .
17. RÚDÓLFSDÓTTIR, A. (2004). CONTENT ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE AND GENDER IN MEDIA AIMED AT YOUNG PEOPLE IN ICELAND.
18. Scharrer, E. (2004). Virtual Violence: Gender and Aggression in Video Game Advertisements.
19. Scheufele, D. (2006). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*.

20. Shaikh, M. A. (2000). Domestic violence against women-perspective from Pakistan.
21. SS, B. (2008). Violence Against Women and Girls: A Compendium of Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators.
22. Strasburger, V. C. (2003). Children, adolescents, and the media.