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Abstract

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Keywords: Netflix Effect, Exposure Frequency, LGBTQ Content

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Cite Us



Title

The Netflix Effect: Exploring the Influence of LGBTQ Content on Pakistani Young Adults

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Abstract

The study aims to investigate the exposure frequency of Pakistani young adults to LGBTQ content on Netflix and to examine the influence of Netflix's LGBTQ content on the future acceptance of sexual minorities among Pakistani young adults. The conceptual framework is developed around Cultivation Theory. The study also employs a rigorous quantitative method using a cross-sectional survey of 200 Netflix users between the ages of 18 and 26, 100 males and 100 females, through purposive sampling. The participants are selected from the media and mass communication departments of four universities chosen from the QS ranking 2024, with 25 males and 25 females from each university. The collected data is subjected to frequency, correlation, and regression tests using SPSS for further analysis. The findings of the study revealed a statistically clear connection between Netflix LGBTQ content consumption and a shift in attitudes among young Pakistani adults.

Keywords:

[Netflix Effect.](#)
[Exposure Frequency.](#)
[LGBTQ Content](#)

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Introduction

Human-media connectivity is not a new phenomenon. Despite this, the ongoing technological transformation has increased complexities and challenges, regardless of their interdependence in

contemporary society. With both positives and negatives, media consumption has inevitably revolutionized worldwide due to the proliferation of digital devices. The way in which people behave and interact with each other as well as consume media is a case in point.



Over the years, technological advancements have also altered the modes of entertainment, bringing in a new era of digital entertainment. Simultaneously, the mushroom growth of digital media outlets has led to a decline in linear television viewing that is struggling to cope with the emerging trends. According to a study, the viewership of linear television among the adult population exhibited a decline of 9% in the year 2020 in comparison to preceding years. Furthermore, it is projected that this downward trend will persist, with an anticipated annual reduction of 2.9% until the year 2025. On the other hand, digital video consumption increased by 7% in 2020 and is expected to continue to grow steadily (Cramer, [2021](#)).

In addition, popular culture is crucial in conveying and shaping dominant cultural values and belief systems of the audience it serves. The expansion of popular media has accelerated significantly over the past ten years, identifying an increase in the consumption of video content, thanks to the emergence of streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, and Disney.

Above all, Netflix is one of the most popular and rapidly expanding internet video streaming platforms worldwide. According to a survey, the percentage of internet traffic devoted to media consumption increased from 29.3% (2013) to 89.3% (2018). Netflix alone has seen immense growth in the number of paid subscribers, from 70.8 million in 2015 to 230.7 million in 2022 (Stol, 2023).

The platform has emerged as the most popular streaming outlet in numerous countries, including Pakistan. It is leading with the highest number of subscribers across 78 countries and over 220 million global customers (Rao, [2023](#)). According to these figures, a large number of individuals are likely to watch any media content that is uploaded to Netflix. Individuals, therefore, may potentially experience the influence of this phenomenon, precisely owing to a variety of possibilities, pleasure-seeking, enjoyable diversion, and flexible hours. Compared to adults, the younger generation consumes Netflix substantially more frequently around the world, and Pakistan is not an exception (Gajić, [2023](#)).

The Netflix streaming service provides an extensive collection of TV shows, stand-up comedies, documentaries, podcasts, anime, and movie specials that span multiple categories and genres. Among the genres available are action, drama, comedy, romance, horror, and sci-fi. It has provided a unique perspective by featuring content for and from all over the world.

Recently, Netflix has been exhibiting an upward trend towards incorporating diversity and inclusivity in its content. This has resulted in the establishment of an exclusive LGBTQ [abbreviation of *lesbian* (female sexually attracted to female), *gay* (male sexually attracted to male), *bisexual* (simultaneously attracted towards the same and opposite gender), *transgender* (an individual whose gender identity does not correspond with birth sexual identity), and *queer* (all those who are neither heterosexual nor cisgender)] content on the platform, which showcases a range of movies, documentaries, and TV shows that revolve around LGBTQ characters, narratives, and concerns. That incorporates a diverse range of genres, including romance, comedy, drama, etc.

According to a recent GLAAD survey, Netflix has emerged as a prominent service in terms of portraying a more significant number of homosexual and transsexual characters compared to other video streaming services. It has played an essential role in augmenting positive representation and increasing the presence of homosexual characters in its content offerings, particularly in the last few years (Towsend & Deepwater, 2022).

In addition, Opie ([2019](#)) states that the portrayal of positive media content depicting sexual minorities has played a crucial role in the gradual increase, acceptance, and support toward LGBTQ populations. It has helped normalize the presence of sexual minorities in society and disseminate awareness of their issues. Contrastingly, given Pakistan's cultural and religious background, which often stigmatizes and even criminalizes other gender identities than male, female, and intersex, it is essential to examine how favorable representations of sexual minorities affect Pakistani audiences. However, a shortage of research exists regarding the influence of this content, specifically on young adults within the country.

Previous studies predominantly concentrate on Western societies, thereby highlighting the necessity for culturally sensitive and context-specific investigations in this field. The study, therefore, intends to investigate the exposure of Netflix LGBTQ content influence on the attitudes of Pakistani young adults towards LGBTQ individuals, where sexual minorities are often considered taboo and met with resistance.

Contributing to this, “The Netflix Effect” has become a popular topic of discussion in recent years, as it highlights Netflix's impact on the entertainment industry. Netflix's marketing strategies have proven successful in rapidly increasing the value of products and actors. This term is also used in the retail sector to describe the phenomenon of products experiencing a surge in sales after appearing in a Netflix show or movie, as well as the increased search trends for these products on various platforms (Robinson, 2022).

In the realm of content, the terminology refers to the phenomenon of certain actors becoming overnight sensations due to their portrayals in Netflix films and shows. (Morgan, 2021). In line with the thesis title, “Netflix Effect” terminology accentuates the significance of the increasing presence of the LGBTQ community, especially in Netflix original productions, which phenomenon underscores its strategies to shape and facilitate the claim of inclusion and diversion for sexual minorities.

Research Objectives

- To determine the exposure frequency of Pakistani young adults to LGBTQ content on Netflix.
- To investigate the influence of Netflix's LGBTQ content on the future acceptance of sexual minorities among Pakistani young adults.

Research Hypothesis

- H₁:** The more frequently young adults use Netflix, the more likely they are to be exposed to LGBTQ content on the platform.
- H₂:** The more young adults are exposed to LGBTQ content on Netflix, the more it will favorably

influence their attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals.

Literature Review

The media history of the LGBTQ community worldwide spans decades, beginning with insignificant exposure and ending with significant exposure, especially after digitalization.

According to a report titled “*Where We Are on TV*,” issued annually by GLAAD, a well-known LGBTQ advocacy organization that focuses on media representation, the number of LGBT characters on Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms has been steadily increasing. Initially, in 2015, GLAAD focused on counting LGBT characters in original series that premiered on Amazon, Hulu, and Netflix and found a total of 43 series regulars and 16 recurring characters. As of 2023, the number of LGBTQ characters on these platforms has increased to 356, with 239 series regulars and 117 recurring characters on Netflix, Disney+, Hulu, Amazon Prime, HBO Max, Apple TV+, Peacock, and Paramount+ (GLAAD - *Where We Are on TV Report - 2015, 2017; Where We Are on TV Report - 2022-23, 2023*). This represents an increase of 43% over nine years. However, the analysis presented in GLAAD's report is limited to the representation of LGBTQ characters in original programming on the selected platforms. It, therefore, does not encompass the portrayal of LGBTQ characters in non-original programs.

However, Netflix has emerged as the most popular streaming platform in the world up till 2023 by leading with the highest number of subscribers across 78 countries and over 220 million global customers (Rao, 2023; Townsend & Deepwater, 20220)

Notably, the platform has actively emphasized the importance of homosexuals, transsexuals, bisexuals, and queer individuals' representation since 2013 more than any other video streaming platform. This is evident in Netflix's strategy towards sexual minorities' representation. Netflix has made a deliberate effort to adopt a collaborative approach by engaging the same community creators and talent to enhance the presence of LGBTQ characters and storylines in its

programming that have been produced and recognized for their realistic and multifaceted depictions of LGBTQ individuals (Manukriti et al., 2022; Creager, 2019).

Townsend and Deerwate (2022) argued that according to a recent GLAAD survey, “Netflix is the source of more homosexual characters than any other video streaming platform; it has more LGBTQ characters in non-stereotypical ways and has increased the overall number of such characters in its broadcasts just in the last few years.” However, enhancing the visibility and representation of the LGBTQ community in new media is considered a potential approach to alter societal stereotypes towards them. The inclusion of LGBTQ characters, storylines, and creative sides in media can humanize the community while showcasing the multitude of experiences and perspectives within it. Such representation can counteract detrimental stereotypes and misconceptions and, consequently, foster greater empathy and understanding.

Several researchers, including Gonta et al. (2017), Farr (2024), and Netzley (2010), have investigated the extent of support for the sexual minority community among heterosexual individuals. They evaluate the perception of LGBTQ characters on television while eliminating the influence of potential confounding factors, such as gender, age, ethnicity, religiosity, and interpersonal connections. The findings demonstrated that heterosexual viewers of television endorse homosexuality, even in the absence of direct personal relationships with openly sexual minority individuals, but solely through their exposure to such characters in media. Media interaction with sexual minorities has a significant impact on the attitudes and beliefs of heterosexual individuals.

Simultaneously, research on the attitudes towards sexual minorities in the media revealed that multiple platforms, rather than a singular one, hold the most influence. The study observed that college students’ media consumption varied across platforms when identifying influential media sources. Notably, different genres elicited diverse levels of acceptance towards the LGBTQ community, with music videos

yielding the most favorable attitudes (Fisher et al., 2007; Calzo & Ward, 2009).

According to a Brako and Oduro (2022) survey, 73% of the respondents viewed binge-watching as a favorable activity, especially among youth. However, it should be noted that Netflix regards binge-watching as its primary business strategy since it intends to cultivate viewers’ engagement with its content and encourage repeated usage of the platform. In other words, the company’s objective is to generate addiction to its shows and retain users on its platform (Castro et al., 2019; Matrix, 2014).

Netflix is renowned for its commitment to promoting diversity and inclusivity through its extensive array of shows featuring marginalized groups, including individuals belonging to the LGBTQ community. Excess usage of Netflix may result in an outcome akin to the uniformity of traditional prime-time television programming (Smith et al., 2021; Żerebecki et al., 2021; Creager, 2019).

According to Shrum (2009), when viewers watch more than one program, they build up mental images of the broadcast messages, which makes them easier to recall later. People may come to assume that minorities are more prevalent in society if they watch shows about them on a regular basis. This effect is most noticeable in countries where LGBTQ people feel uncomfortable coming out as openly gay or where people of different nationalities are isolated. As a result, watching a lot of minority representation on television may make viewers more conscious of the presence of minorities in society (Manukriti et al., 2022).

Enthusiastic platform users are more likely to watch varied shows that highlight underrepresented groups, which may encourage the emergence of positive views toward diversity. Frequent exposure to this kind of programming has the potential to shift public opinion in favor of an open and welcoming culture.

Researchers investigate how young people are affected by seeing LGBTQ content on Netflix. The findings imply that teens are aware of how much LGBTQ content is available on the site and that

repeated exposure to it raises tolerance levels. Additionally, the study discovered that teens' views of the culture have changed to one that is more welcoming, with the majority showing increased tolerance for the LGBTQ community's representation on Netflix. The results point to a positive change in teens' perceptions of LGBTQ culture (Muhammad, 2022; Musa et al, 2020)

Theoretical Framework

Cultivation theory first appeared as a framework for researching the effects of exposure to prime-time television in the 1970s. According to this theory, television programs can shape viewers' beliefs, leading them to perceive the natural world in a manner consistent with the portrayal of that world on television (Shrum, 2017; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

Smith, Pieper, Wheeler, and Neff (2023) explored two categories of cultivation effects: First-order effects and second-order effects. First-order effects involve estimating the prevalence and likelihood of events portrayed in the media. As viewers consume multiple programs, the mental representations of these televised messages accumulate in their minds, making them more easily retrievable from memory.

First-order effects are most pronounced when audience members make automatic estimations without careful consideration. For example, regularly watching shows featuring minority characters may lead individuals to believe that such groups are common in society. In societies where ethnic groups are segregated, or LGBTQ individuals do not feel comfortable being open about their identity, these first-order effects can heighten viewers' awareness of the presence of minorities.

On the other hand, second-order effects pertain to the development of attitudes and beliefs. Specific television messages have the potential to influence audience thinking and be incorporated into their belief systems. Viewers who pay greater attention to and engage more deeply with these shows experience more substantial second-order cultivation effects. It is possible that shows portraying ethnic or sexual minority members positively can persuade viewers that these individuals can contribute significantly to

society. However, it is essential to note that different audiences may process television messages in distinct ways (Humphries, 2018; Shrum, 2009).

Cultivation necessitates two fundamental conditions for its occurrence: Repeated exposure over an extended period and message consistency across various content pieces (Shrum, 2017; Morgan & Shanahan, 2010).

According to Hefner et al.'s (2015) study, there is evidence to support a positive relationship between increased exposure to diverse queer-themed television shows and improved attitudes towards gay men and lesbian women. Consequently, repeated exposure to consistent messaging concerning homosexuality fosters more positive attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals. Furthermore, the findings indicate a growing trend in American television to portray gay people in a positive light, which contributes to viewers' enhanced acceptance and inclusivity.

However, after the emergence of video-on-demand platforms such as Netflix, audiences now have the option to consume more content at their convenience and also have more chances to get frequent exposure to the same message.

There is a concern that extensive exposure to Netflix content could potentially lead to a situation akin to the lack of diversity prevalent in prime-time television broadcasting in the past.

Nevertheless, dedicated followers of the platform have increased opportunities to access a diverse range of series that highlight minority communities because Netflix takes pride in promoting diversity by offering multiple shows that explore the experiences of marginalized groups, including people of Colour and LGBTQ individuals. This exposure has the potential to foster positive attitudes towards diversity (Smith et al., 2023; Humphries, 2018).

The presence of algorithmic recommendation systems in online television platforms gives rise to targeted advertising, presenting challenges for the cultivation process. The selection of new shows to be promoted is based on viewers' watching history. Nevertheless, Netflix employs a strategy of fostering specific shows for all users through the Netflix Originals section or their social media channels. These

shows frequently feature cast members and characters from diverse backgrounds. Consequently, despite the reliance on algorithmic recommendations, VOD platforms can still contribute to the cultivation of positive attitudes toward diversity.

According to Zerebecki et al. (2021), the inclusion of non-stereotypical depictions of minority groups in online television shows has the potential to significantly influence the formation of promising perceptions toward others among viewers. Specifically, users of platforms such as Netflix, who are exposed to diverse programming featuring a range of characters, are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward diversity.

Research Methodology

This study was conducted within the media and mass communication departments of four universities (UOL, NUML, PU, COMSATS) in Lahore, as ranked in the most recent edition of the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Ranking 2024 (Desk, 2023). Purposive sampling techniques were used to choose research participants because the study only needed to involve Netflix customers.

Furthermore, the selected participants were ensured to fall within a pre-determined age range of 18 to 26, which was established through a comprehensive review of the relevant literature.

To reach a bigger sample size and obtain the required data from the universities, a Likert scale questionnaire was created. The study results were analyzed and the established hypothesis was tested using SPSS.

Findings and Analysis

In order to determine the links between the numerous components under research, the study's findings are carefully examined in this part. Analyzing the data carefully reveals patterns and trends that contribute to a greater comprehension of the phenomena being studied.

Reliability Test

A reliability test is useful in determining the research instrument's consistency. Maintaining consistency in the data collection is essential since it reduces errors and variations that the researchers may find (Aithal and Aithal, 2020).

Table 1

Research Instrument Reliability Consistency Overview

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of items |
| 0.954 | 40 |

The table affixed above demonstrates that the value of Cronbach's Alpha is $0.954 > 0.50$. This indicates that the data is highly reliable, as it facilitates the identification of the consistency of the research instrument and data collected. This 0.954 value of Cronbach's Alpha indicates that the researcher can conduct other statistical tests, including regression,

correlation, and others based on the research hypothesis.

Regression Test

H₁: The more frequently young adults use Netflix, the more likely they are to be exposed to LGBTQ content on the platform.

Table 2

Linear Regression Summary Depicting the Relationship between the Use of Netflix and Exposure to LGBTQ Content

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|---|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|------|------|--------|
| 1 | .804 ^a | .647 | .645 | .51985 |

Table 3

Predictors: (Constant), Frequency of Using Netflix

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|---------|-------------|--------|---------|-------------------|
| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Model |
| | Regression | 98.082 | 1 | 98.082 | 362.939 | .000 ^b |
| 1 | Residual | 53.508 | 198 | .270 | | |
| | Total | 151.590 | 199 | | | |

Table 4

Dependent Variable: Frequently Exposer of LGBTQ Content on Netflix

Predictors: (Constant), Frequency of Using Netflix

| Coefficients | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | .463 | .140 | | | 3.297 | .001 |
| | .763 | .040 | .804 | | 19.051 | .000 |

The regression test indicates a strong impact as the R-square value is 0.647 or 64.7%. This suggests that there are 64.7% variations in the dependent variable (exposure to LGBTQ content) due to the independent variable (frequency of young adults using Netflix). To explain the ANOVA out of regression test, it can be said that the sig value is 0.000 < 0.05. The sig value is presented based on the confidence interval that is either 99% or 95%. In the current study, the confidence interval is 95%. Therefore, the sig value is analyzed based on 0.05. This explains that the first hypothesis is accepted as well. The F-value is also greater than 2.5, indicating an impact among the research variables that is 362.939. The table of coefficients can be explained, as

it helps the researcher formulate the regression-based model, which depicts the impact among the variables of the study based on the hypothesis. The regression equation formulated for this hypothesis is given below.

$$Y \text{ (Dependent Variable)} = mx \text{ (Independent Variable)} + b$$

$$Y \text{ (Exposed to LGBTQ content)} = mx \text{ (Frequency of Netflix usage by Youth)} + b$$

$$Y \text{ (Exposed to LGBTQ content)} = mx (0.763) + 0.463$$

H₂: The more youth are exposed to LGBTQ content on Netflix, the more it will favorably influence their attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals.

Table 5

Linear Regression Summary Depicting Relationship between LGBTQ Content and Attitude Change towards LGBTQ individuals

| Model Summary | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .877 ^a | .770 | .768 | .43523 |

Table 6

Predictors: (Constant) LGBTQ Content on Netflix

| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|------|
| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| | 125.215 | 1 | 125.215 | 661.039 | .000 ^b | |
| 1 | 37.505 | 198 | .189 | | | |
| | 162.720 | 199 | | | | |

Table 7

Dependent Variable: favorable attitude toward LGBTQ Individuals

Predictors: (Constant), LGBTQ Content on Netflix

| Coefficients | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--|--------|------|
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | t | Sig. |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| 1 | .289 | .099 | .099 | | 2.918 | .004 |
| | .874 | .034 | .877 | | 25.711 | .000 |

From the model summary table of regression, the value of r-square is interpreted. For the second hypothesis, the value of R-square is 0.770, more significant than the threshold value of 0.40. This signifies a substantial impact on the variables of the study. As noted, the adjusted R-square is 0.768, which explains the goodness of fit. The standard error in the model is 0.435. There are 76.8% changes in the dependent variable (i.e., Favourable Attitude Change towards LGBTQ individuals) due to the independent variable (i.e., LGBTQ content on Netflix). The sig value for the overall regression model is 0.000, as mentioned in the table. The degree of freedom is 199, and the formula to calculate df is n-1. The f value for the two variables is also greater than 2.5, indicating a strong association between the two. The table of coefficients can be used to develop the regression equation, which is appended below. The overall regression model has an error of 0.034

$$Y \text{ (Dependent Variable)} = mx \text{ (Independent Variable)} + b + e \text{ (error)}$$

$$Y \text{ (Favourable Attitude change towards LGBTQ Individuals)} = mx \text{ (LGBTQ content on Netflix)} + b + e \text{ (error)}$$

$$Y \text{ (Favourable Attitude change towards LGBTQ Individuals)} = mx (0.874) + 0.289 + 0.099$$

Correlation Test

The Pearson correlation value was used to explain the linear relationships among the study variables. In this research, the relationship among the variables was analyzed hypothesis-wise. The two variables describing the first hypothesis are ‘frequent exposure to LGBTQ content on Netflix’ and ‘frequency of using Netflix’; the Pearson correlation value is 0.804 > 0 but closer to 1, indicating a strong relationship among the variables. This relationship is also significant at a sig value of 0.000.

The variables relating to the second hypothesis, ‘favorable attitude change towards LGBTQ individuals’ and ‘LGBTQ content on Netflix,’ correlate strongly with a Pearson value of 0.877. This indicates that attitudes towards LGBTQ have been shaped among young adults, as both hypotheses establish an association with one another.

All in all, the relationship among the critical variables has been proven, which clearly exemplifies that young adults' exposure to Netflix LGBTQ content enabled them to act positively toward LGBTQ individuals. They are likely to support them as they will develop empathy for them.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was based on assessing the influence of LGBTQ content on Pakistani young adults *via* the most popular online video streaming platform, Netflix. The research findings have highlighted the importance and effects of human-media connectivity on society.

Against this backdrop, the study proves that young adults in Pakistan are exposed to the LGBTQ content available on Netflix, which resultantly impacts their attitude towards that community. During the survey, the results indicated that participants make frequent use of Netflix, and they also think that the LGBTQ content on the platform is easily accessible, which has shaped their behavior and influenced favorable attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals. Percipients also believed that LGBTQ storylines available on Netflix are well-written and engaging, which encourages them to watch more of such content.

In addition, the students also regard Netflix as one of the key differentiators in terms of exposing LGBTQ issues and topics through its original series and films.

The outcome indicates a positive correlation between the research variables because the Pearson correlation coefficient was significant for every variable. It also signifies that the cultivation theory employed as the foundation of this study has successfully explained the 'Netflix effect' in line with its impact on Pakistani young adults.

Cultivation theory helps understand how long-term exposure to media content influences and ultimately changes individuals' behavior and attitude toward the content to which they are exposed. In line with the data collected, it was found that young adults frequently use Netflix and spend more time watching LGBTQ content for an extended period. Due to the availability and frequent exposure to LGBTQ content on Netflix, young adults are likely to develop a sense of connectedness with LGBTQ characters through their media representation.

Cultivation theory has successfully proved that constant exposure to LGBTQ content desensitizes

young minds to the existence of homosexuals, bisexuals, and transsexuals. That, in turn, makes them seem familiar and ordinary, thus reducing the stereotypes associated with the minority community and also prejudice against them. The theory suggests that if individuals are exposed to diverse and positive representations of the LGBTQ, this is likely to lead to the "cultivation" of their attitudes as they are likely to believe that these representations are reflections of the real world. As a result, this seeks to contribute to the favorable attitudes and acceptance towards LGBTQ by young adults in their lives.

According to the study findings, the more students spend time watching Netflix, the more they are likely to learn about LGBTQ culture, history, and issues. This is because various shows available on the online platform clearly deal with these subjects. Findings revealed that students are more involved in discussions about LGBTQ individuals with friends and other colleagues.

Cultivation theory also avers that the media has the power to homogenize opinions, which brings segments of the population closer to one shared view. In the given scenario, young adults are likely to embrace and support the rights of LGBTQ people.

The findings, nevertheless, have indicated positive results regarding the two hypotheses that were developed for this study, and the signings have clearly revealed that frequent use of Netflix exposes young adults to broadcasted LGBTQ content. It is also clarified that the more youth are exposed to LGBTQ content on Netflix, the more they are likely to hold favorable attitudes toward LGBTQ individuals. As per cultivation theory, if media content is present in the social realities, it will enable individuals to perceive things as usual.

Conclusion

The advent of technology and the rise of media platforms like Netflix have increased accessibility to such content. Overall results, therefore, have clearly pinpointed Netflix's importance in shaping youth perceptions of sexual minorities. Nevertheless, a shortage of research exists in this regard, with particular reference to Pakistan. This study, hence, has

uncovered the impact of Netflix's LGBTQ content on Pakistani young adults.

The literature surveyed in the preceding sections provides further validation, highlighting the substantial impact of media, particularly in the promotion of the LGBTQ community. Online video streaming platforms, such as Netflix, have been identified as instrumental in this regard.

The fundamental objectives of this study encompassed the determination of the frequency of exposure among Pakistani young adults to LGBTQ content on Netflix, along with an examination of the potential influence on the future acceptance of sexual minorities among Pakistani young adults. To achieve these aims, quantitative data was systematically collected through the administration of a Likert scale questionnaire distributed to 200 university students representing institutions such as NUML, COMSATS, PU, and UOL. The validation of research hypotheses was carried out through the application of a regression test, revealing a significance level below 0.05, with none of the hypotheses being rejected. Additionally, the researcher verified the correlation test, establishing a robust association among the research variables.

Analyzing the watching habits and attitudes of a sample of young Netflix users can yield empirical evidence in support of theories. It is clear from polls that people who use the platform more regularly are in fact more likely to be exposed to and influenced by LGBTQ content.

The entire study has been centered around the theory of cultivation, which has established the results of the accessibility of LGBTQ content on Netflix and its influence on the development of young minds. Based on the cultivation hypothesis, which argues that media plays a significant role in forming public opinion, this study emphasizes that the desensitization process not only normalizes the depiction of LGBTQ individuals but also cultivates a perception of them as inherent components of society, thereby fostering heightened levels of acceptance. Consequently, this phenomenon challenges and diminishes prevailing beliefs and stereotypes associated with the LGBTQ community.

In conclusion, the study shows that Netflix has a noticeable and favorable influence on youth perceptions, particularly when it comes to fostering a greater sense of inclusion for LGBTQ people. It's crucial to remember that this effect goes beyond just watching entertainment; it will also change how society views different sexual identities and orientations in general. This study emphasizes how important media sites like Netflix are for influencing cultural views and encouraging inclusivity among Pakistan's younger population.

Recommendations

A few recommendations are given to the universities, parents, and future researchers that are mentioned below:

- Universities may significantly contribute to the promotion of media literacy by including pertinent workshops and activities in all departments' curricula.
- It is advised that parents keep lines of communication open with their kids on the media they watch, especially stuff that deals with taboo subjects.
- Universities encourage cultural competency training for educators, media professionals, and community leaders. This training should focus on understanding diverse cultural and religious perspectives, allowing for a more informed and inclusive approach to media discussions.
- Media authorities play a crucial role in helping people understand intersex individuals in Pakistan. The media needs to share accurate information that explains the difference between intersex and transgender identities.
- The following study also highlights areas for future studies. Some grey areas that future researchers should investigate involve selecting a large sample size and using different research approaches, such as in-depth interviews.
- Future researchers can also examine the issue discussed in this study from the Islamic and cultural perspective. They can depict the portrayal of gay, lesbian, and other LGBTQ

community members' right or wrong from the Islamic and moral teaching point of view.

- Future scholars can also conduct interviews with easily accessible LGBTQ community members to make the study findings more credible.

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