

Abstract

The study aims to close the literature gap, primarily based on Western viewpoints, by focusing on how married and single viewers perceive married life in TV dramas and how that depiction affects their perceptions. This study aims to investigate how TV dramas affect viewers' perceptions while highlighting the negative impact of media on family structures and societal values. Regarding TV dramas, the study focuses on viewers' expectations around marriage. The study intends to evaluate the impact of marital representations, reveal disparities in the married and single population's perspectives, and identify any gender-related changes. We can fully understand the domains of passive and active audience reception of media messages due to the ideas of Cultivation Theory and Social Cognitive Theory. Using a quantitative survey approach, males, women, and elderly single people contribute to the sample of 500 respondents in Lahore. The findings demonstrate that the various degrees of perception are caused by TV dramas, with married individuals and men being among the categories with greater than average levels of perception. These findings contribute to the limited literature on the subject, emphasising the importance of accurate media portrayals to counteract unrealistic expectations and preserve the sanctity of marriage as a social institution. The study underscores the need for targeted interventions to mitigate adverse influences on societal norms and promote a healthier media environment.