

Effect Of Netflix Media Content on Popular Culture in American & Pakistani Society: An Analysis of *The Queen's Gambit* & *Dirilis Ertugrul*

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Abstract

This research study indicates that social discourses are impacted immensely by popular media. Through exploratory and explanatory research study, taking two Netflix shows; *The Queen's Gambit* and *Dirilis Ertugrul* as cases, through purposive sampling interviews of six females were conducted, revealing that the participants have their individual experiences regarding impact of selected cases' content on their lives and the culture or people surrounding them. Through a simple computer algorithm, Netflix as a media platform traces our tastes, preferences, likes and dislikes to recommend more personality-suited content, thus creating a popular culture community bubble where we all live today. The popular culture associated with the game of chess was highly influenced by *The Queen's Gambit* and eradicated gender stereotypes in the game culture. *Dirilis Ertugrul* influenced Pakistani culture through social discourses such as advertisements, celebrity-culture, food, social circles, marketing and clothes.

Keywords: America, Culture, Media Impact, Media Influence, Netflix, Pakistan, Popular Culture

Introduction

Popular culture is everything you see around today. From the branding on the coffee mug resting at the side of your bed to the billboard on the road, the culture that is popular is what is seen, analyzed, marketed and discussed. Entertainment is what inspires the current popular culture of the world. It is the content we get entertained by and the medium through which they reach us, what forms the social discourses in any society. “Entertainment informs audiences and shapes minds” (Duell, 2021). Netflix is the biggest indicator of popular culture today. This American subscription-based streaming and production company is integral to the understanding of digital media in the current era.

Our viewing habits changed with Netflix (Willow, 2019). The entire world changed its patterns regarding viewing and enjoying content with the rise of this media platform. Netflix’s marketing strategy is way ahead of its time (Rodriguez, 2021). With phrases like ‘Throwback Thursdays’ and ‘Flashback Fridays’, we can reduce the level of influence Netflix has on any society. American and Pakistani societies are not different in absorbing that Netflix effect on pop culture.

The Queen’s Gambit is a coming-of-age American period drama series released in 2020 on Netflix. This series is inspired from an American novel written in 1983 with the same name by Watter Trevis. Scott Frank is its writer and director. An orphan chess prodigy Elizabeth Harmon, who comes to glory and fame through her chess playing skills but struggles due to grief and alcoholism is the main protagonist of the series. Since its release in 2020, this series has gained immense popularity that has inspired American popular culture to a great level with regard to chess playing and other significant themes depicted in the media text.

A Turkish historical adventure and fiction drama series *Dirilis Ertugrul* translated as *Resurrection Ertugrul* is written by Mehmet Bozdog and

directed by Metin Gunay for Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT). Depicting the 13th Century Turkey, this show unfolds the life of the father of Osman I, who founded the Ottoman Empire. The show is mostly shot in Turkey, and it got translated into various languages globally. In Pakistan, this Netflix series influenced the popular culture significantly regarding national politics, celebrity culture, Turkish propaganda and various social discourses surrounding the themes that are depicted in the media text.

Objectives of Study

Following are the objectives of this research study:

1. To explore popular culture in the present era.
2. Compare two different societies through popular culture influenced by Netflix.
3. Assess social discourses through Netflix preferences.

Research Questions

Following is some of the research questions this research study aims to answer:

- RQ1: How people changed their recreational lifestyles after watching *The Queen's Gambit*.
- RQ2: How has *Dirilis Ertugrul* as a show influenced the Pakistani population?
- RQ3: To what extent OTT platforms, such as Netflix today impact the shaping of contemporary culture in American and Pakistani society specifically?

Statement of Problem

This research study aims to explore popular culture inspired by Netflix content through comparison of the phenomenon in American and Pakistani society based on analysis of two Netflix series as case studies.

Literature Review

Burroughs (2018) in his research study discusses Netflix as the rising nascent streaming media platform. On the other hand, Sim (2016) in his research study examines how television has been disrupted in an extraordinary way by Netflix. There was a sudden rise in the stock price of Netflix in 2014 of 21%. According to the news, more than 4 million new subscribers were added globally in the Netflix service as reported in its quarterly earnings report. These kinds of statistics reveal how big of a game changer Netflix is. Ken Auletta from the *New York Times* established on the global media that Netflix is the new media for blockbuster video.

Osur (2016) in his research explains how in its final development stage as a medium, Netflix has set a template for Internet TV in the 2000s. This is like NBC setting an example for the broadcast medium in the 1950s and HBO setting an example for cable TV in the 1990s. Some of the significant features that differentiate Netflix from other platforms today are consumer-centric practices, technology and personalized content. Amazon and Hulu as competitors, try to grasp Netflix's creative, financial and cultural model. Hence, Netflix became a prototype for the latest developing internet TV ecosystem, although it was not the only media model based on an internet network.

Rigby and his colleagues (2016) proved in their research study that Netflix enabled television and film content to come out of the television in households and reside in individual mobile devices. Individuals as viewers now had the advantage of choosing what they want to watch, when they want to watch it and where they want to watch it.

Cunningham and Craig (2016), in their research study establish that we are living in the world of the proto-media industry. In this world, there is non-traditional media ownership, unique content innovation and

disruptive platforms, which challenge our previous notions of media globalization.

Esack (2017) in her research explains that Netflix, from *House of Cards*, which was the very first show of the platform, achieved a milestone in culturally impacting the political and social discourses that followed building of audience's relationship with this new entertaining and informational medium. Dealing with a political melodrama in a highly charged American politics, the series undoubtedly entertained the audience but alongside entertaining, it also enlightened the audience regarding much complexed political scenarios, such as corruption. Hence, the first Netflix series attempted to affect the American political culture at that time by affecting every viewer and their individual opinions and activities.

Flanagan (2018) shared her personal experience regarding Netflix and binge-watching. It was when she, along with her friends, was watching an old series on Netflix from the first episode and it was when the second episode started without interruption. They realized that they, as a group, never decided how many episodes they would be watching before even starting but Netflix decided on behalf of them. This is the cultural power Netflix has over its viewers, which is its biggest effect. Binge-watching is the name given to this effect and it is through binge-watching popular culture shapes, constructs and deconstructs in all social spheres.

Pilipets (2019) examined that since the entertainment industry digitized, data science dominates every media encounter today. Economy in the digital age is driven by viewer-attention. Our lifestyle as consumers has become such that we have to constantly remain an active participant of the media. Binge-watching is based on layers and layers of user-engagement patterns. Quality and personalization are the main promotional sellers of Netflix. These are attained with binge-watching that directly connects with viewer's attachment, attention and recommendations. 'Netflix and Chill' is the viral copy line of Netflix that

was readily adapted by viewers on Tumblr, binge-watching technologies and bodies connect. Digital logic contact/capture holds the values of these dynamics.

Netflix has encouraged its viewers to have a tribal communal brain. This brain is based on significant cognitive abilities, where viewers unconsciously think as 'group think' rather than 'individual think' (Danesi, 2019).

Netflix has its 'effect' on its viewer, which Morgan (2019) describes as *The Netflix Effect* in *Forbes*. It is this effect that has revolutionized the world of Over the Top (OTT) platforms and media in general. Since its beginning, Netflix has always been in competition with traditional television. After 2013, the platform started creating its own original content, after which, all the other mediums started struggling with keeping themselves abreast with Netflix content. An astounding \$13 billion was spent on content in 2018 by Netflix. 85% of the spending was on the original shows. It is the money and time invested to this extent into creating original content that took the audience unaware and extremely affected all parts of their lives as viewers. The original movies and series at Netflix were watched way more times than the movies watched at the cinemas and hence, the platform profited immensely as well. Similarly, Fagerjord and Kueng (2019) also establish through their research study that streaming services like Netflix are the 'new beasts', strongly focused on technology.

Cero and Falligant (2019) conducted a research study where they utilized generalized matching law (GML) to chess matches after *The Queen's Gambit* was released. According to the observations, a player who is mostly white is dominant in the opening moves of a chess game. He/she offers a number of gambits, which are mostly about compromising a chess piece for an opponent in order to gain long-term strategic benefits. There was a white offering a pawn to Black, which will open a lane for White's Queen if accepted by Black in this series. Hence this research

work examines how this series became so popular after its release that it led to researchers being generally suspicious of chess as a board game and its winning patterns.

Cunningham and Scarlata (2020) analyzed the consequences of multinational subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) services in Australia. Similarly, Dottle (2020) describes 2020 as a big year for chess, crediting it to *The Queen's Gambit*. This Netflix series' influence is transformed into the rise of chess content online especially during the time this world experienced Covid-19 pandemic. Twitch, which is an online live streaming platform has grown its chess channels by conducting virtual tournaments between gamers, which have increased the subscriptions and viewers to the channels of renowned chess celebrities like American grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura. Around 1 million new members were added to chess.com. This is a chess server and social network website since the lockdown began in March 2020. In liches, more than 78 million standard chess games played out, which is a free online chess server.

Karimi (2020) describes the experience of 58-years old David Bradley, who spends most of his weekends playing chess matches with his 15-year-old daughter, Zoe. This father-daughter duo has found a new pastime after *The Queen's Gambit*, where they spend hours and hours sitting together, staring into the chessboard, planning their next move. Their recreational rivalry began after both watched the series together on Netflix. Surprisingly, unlike Bradley, Zoe had never played chess before but she developed an immense liking for it after she watched the series. She even learned quickly. Her father imagines her staring at her room's ceiling when she goes to bed preparing for the next day's game.

Bryant (2020) reveals that international grandmaster Maurice Ashley described that so many people, especially women, kept on asking him whether he had seen *The Queen's Gambit* yet. Ashley was the first African American grandmaster. She thinks that Netflix has played a real

instrumental role in creating awareness about the game. This kind of popularity can positively inspire American chess players to win the game just like when American Bobby Fischer defeated Russian Boris Spassky for the world championship in 1972. This actually inspired Tevis's novel (Bilen & Matros, 2021). With the kind of popularity Netflix is driving, young chess players may be able to surpass that golden chess time in American history and create new records.

Rashiti (2020) describes how *The Queen's Gambit*, alongside influencing other kinds of popular cultures in America and the world, influenced the much popular idea of gender stereotyping as well. Elizabeth Spiegel is a Brooklyn-based expert in chess and has taught it for two decades. She has won multiple national championships as well. According to her, cultural stereotypes influence people's style of learning and playing chess. She observes that boys are generally boastful at the game, which at times works best in their favor. On the other hand, girls are generally less confident and confused. She advises girls to continue playing chess in order to shackle the stereotypes related to the game just like Netflix did with this series.

Likewise, Ramasoota and Kitikamdhorn (2021) examined the technological, economic and cultural implications Netflix in Thailand caused on the regulators and local content industry. After the emergence of Netflix in the small market, such as Thailand, the regulatory and industry responses were worth studying. Even in a small market, Netflix is able to affect the industries' value chain, broadcasting and film.

Wu (2013) met with the CEO of Netflix Reed Hastings. What surprised him was the fact that Hastings did not refer to Netflix as a tech start-up or new media venture, but he rather called it a 'network'. In an economic mindset, this is not difficult to understand, since everyone in American or any other media-established society has witnessed how media enterprises merge within the same or different companies to form bigger industries and monopolies, ultimately making different names exist

under one umbrella organization. But Netflix has that effect on popular culture because of actually proving itself as a network, rather than just another media content producing company. It is how people talk about it beyond just the spectacle of watching its shows that makes it a social discourse or network.

Pauley (2021) deduced that binge watching episodic shows and watching more than one shows continuously in one sitting has multiple media effects on social perceptions and political attitudes.

Vishkin (2022) conducted a quantitative research study highlighting the effect of *The Queen's Gambit* on popular culture that affected society in a larger spectrum. According to his study, this Netflix series impacted people to think of gender-equality paradox. There were larger disparities around a series of phenomenon depicted in societies with more gender equality. These disparities were mostly among women pursuing degrees in technology, engineer, math and science. His research study found a direct correlation between societies with more gender equality more open to games like chess. This fact highlights how *The Queen's Gambit* affected American popular culture to put gender equality in games as an agenda.

Crosby (2021) describes that the show reached unprecedented popularity, as well as the sales of chess sets. After 23rd October 2020, the day *The Queen's Gambit* got released, sales of board games increased by 125%. Goliath Games also affirms that their sales of chess sets rose by over 1000% in comparison with the previous year. Moreover, even amongst chess sets, wooden and vintage styles as depicted in the series were more in demand. Not just the physical products of chess but after the debut of the series, chess.com, an iPhone app became the top app in the app chart.

Zhang (2021) asserts that global success of *The Queen's Gambit* readily caused an interest in the game of chess. People have become obsessed with online chess. He himself played around 375 rapid games and

received around 4 chess books for his recent birthday. There have been social conversations regarding chess, where his friends have talked about the show endlessly and even invited one another for a game. This realization has made him think of how rapidly the show series is inspiring popular culture and how the show must have driven the statistics around popularity of chess, chess players and the game in general.

Carney (2018) highlights that *Resurrection Ertugrul* or *Dirilis Ertugrul* is a Netflix series made by the Turkish broadcaster TRT. Their assignment was to produce a historical drama depicting the values of the governing AKP. Through this engaging series, the Turkish Government has attempted multiple between-the-lines engagements with the viewers. Thus, it is a series that has changed political discourse, ultimately through popular culture of Turkish society. The series also portrays necro politics as an intended political tool by the Government, making the viewers have fetishes about death as an ultimate victory for the nation, laying emphasis on the traditional Islamic concept of 'shahadat'.

Abdelfattah (2020) in his research tells how *Dirilis Ertugrul* gauged global audiences with its release on Netflix. This series immediately got dubbed in six languages and was broadcast in 72 countries. The show glorifies justice, romance, bravery and friendship in a culturally and religiously distinct society. The Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry states that it is because of this series, the first Ottoman capital is now a tourist destination. Some of the notable fans of the series include Nelson Mandela, Nicolas Maduro (Venezuela's President) and Imran Khan (Prime Minister of Pakistan). It is its influence on global popular culture that led to it being on-aired on Pakistan's state-owned television network PTV.

Talal (2021) in his research study investigated the influence of Turkish historical drama *Dirilis Ertugrul* on the way of life of Karachi-based youth. The study highlighted how much this Turkish series impacted their qualities and practices. It also had an extraordinary effect on

psychological thinking and perspective changing. Pakistan's population is majorly Muslim, who do live culturally by Muslim values, this show impacted how people generally lived by being more ostensibly Muslim like the characters in the show. From the lens of cultivation theory, the Pakistani viewership population generally likes Turkish Islamic culture and values and this likeness increased after watching *Dirilis Ertugrul*.

Khan (2021) states that *Dirilis Ertugrul* is like Turkish *Game of Thrones* dubbed in Urdu language for the people of Pakistan watching it on PTV. The series took the international audience by storm with audiences in Africa, Middle East, America and Asia. It has been watched in over 85 countries, in over 25 languages. The series entered the popular culture of politics and international relations when Venezuela's President Maduro was seen wearing a Turkish warrior hat while visiting Turkey. The series rightfully became popular with its intention to curb Islamophobia across the globe through innovative Muslim characters and storyline.

Isani (2020) describes that after its release, Prime Minister Imran Khan, while discussing Pakistan-Turkey relations, encouraged people to watch *Dirilis Ertugrul* in order to learn Islamic culture and values. In comparison to this series, he labeled Bollywood and Hollywood films as propagating vulgarity amongst youth. He played the morality card by making the public watch the show as an attempt to eradicate vulgarity from society. Hence, this series inspired Pakistani political culture to the point where it entered national politics and social discourses. Millions of Pakistanis watched the show after Prime Minister Imran Khan's recommendation. Endorsement on such a great level paved the way for more Turkish influence in Pakistani pop culture.

Haque and Meo (2020) described how *Dirilis Ertugrul* as significant features to inspire Muslim popular culture more than anything else. This is the reason that even without any political endorsement, this Netflix series became popular in India as well. In Kashmir, people named their newborn babies after the protagonist of the show. The people of Kashmir

valley wore similar fur-made caps during winters that characters in the show series wore. Muslims in India have reportedly searched the show to watch its episodes on various social media and streaming platforms. After the controversy that the show's writer and producer, Mehmet Bozdogan, is being connected to the Turkish President Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party so the show is produced with an intention of generating nationalism amongst Muslim population, more and more Muslims across the globe watched the show.

Khan (2020) describes *Dirilis Ertugrul* as a show with opulent costumes, immense romance, an enchanting musical score and battle scenes full of blood bath. It depicted Islamic rituals in positive light. There are philosophical words from one of the greatest Muslim scholars Ibn Arabi of Andalusia. In Pakistani local culture, we saw how his words of wisdom travelled from television sets to computer and mobile screens within days. This carried a global appeal to Muslim Diaspora. On YouTube, the show surpassed 1.5 billion views. TRT prophesied that the show will connect audiences globally due to shared values.

Youngblood (2021) stated that *Dirilis Ertugrul* led to the new awakening of modern-day Turkey. It emphasized national unity and basic compassion. While the series ended in 2019, it inspired various spin-offs, such as *Kurulus: Osman*. This Turkish series also inspired other Netflix series and more Turkish content to make its way towards Netflix and other streaming platforms. *Dirilis Ertugrul* is often discussed on international forums while discussing Turkish and Syrian refugees. The theme of compassion beyond humanity is often discussed in light of this series and its subtle messages while talking about world humanitarian or refugee crises at various platforms internationally.

Askari (2020) asserts that visual mediums have the power to influence the minds of people like no other medium. *Dirilis Ertugrul* as a Netflix series is enjoyed around the world even despite its language barrier because of the visual appeal the show has in terms of storyline,

characters, talent, humanistic themes and display of emotions. The show brought the Arabic word 'Ghazi' in popular culture, which means a religious or Islamic victorious warrior. The show has inspired people so much in Pakistani culture that it may offend them to know that it is a work of pure fiction, based on nothing more than the history extending to a few pages.

Farooqui (2020) states that *Dirilis Ertugrul* is a Turkish series created for a much bigger and larger pop culture game than any common person can understand. The show's presence on Netflix made it possible for any person; Muslim or not to watch it around the world. Critics describe this as a larger political game planned by Turkish and Pakistani heads of state to propagate nationalism throughout the world. Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan has always been quoted for building a state like Medina in Pakistan, hence critics believe that endorsing *Dirilis Ertugrul* is an attempt to make Pakistan's popular culture aligned with something Islamically charged than something foreign to make it look like his imagined state of Medina.

This idea is further studied by Yasin et. al., (2021) through focus groups and surveys. It asserts that many young people agree that this drama links more people with the history and culture of Islam. This drama-series educated the masses regarding Islamic history and its values. It also motivated youth to be passionate about their faith and identity. Moreover, it made young people be proud of their religious heroes. People also believe that unlike local Pakistani dramas that have more negativity to offer in terms of vulgarity, extra-marital affairs, domestic violence, *Dirilis Ertugrul* promotes positive social messages for everyone.

All this research highlights that popular Netflix's shows, such as the two discussed in this paper have an immense impact on the psychology, social behaviors and cultural discourses of Pakistani and American societies.

Methodology

It is going to be an explanatory research study. Two Netflix shows: *The Queen's Gambit* & *Dirilis Ertugrul* are used as case studies. Content Analysis of both the Netflix Series and Interviews from 6 viewers (3 from American and 3 from Pakistani society) were conducted. The interviews explored the viewers' interpretations, emotional responses, and personal connections to the series. The questions are designed to uncover how cultural background influences the perception and reception of the shows. Findings from their answers is going to be discussed.

Out of the 6 viewers, 3 American viewers interviewed online were Sarah, Elijah and Nora, Sarah is a final year Economics student, Elijah is Head of Content in a marketing firm and Nora is a receptionist at an advertisement agency. 3 Pakistani viewers interviewed in person are Samar, Beenish and Sabeen. Samar is a Freelance Journalist; Beenish is a Data Analyst and Sabeen is a Marketing professional.

Results

With extensive exploration of literature regarding the two case studies under review, it is deduced that social discourses are indeed impacted immensely by popular media. Interviews conducted revealed that the participants have their individual experiences regarding *The Queen's Gambit* and *Dirilis Ertugrul's* impact on their lives and the people surrounding their lives. *The Queen's Gambit* influenced the contemporary culture around the game of chess, eradicating gender stereotypes in the game as well. *Dirilis Ertugrul* influenced Pakistani culture through social discourses such as advertisements, celebrity culture, social circles, marketing, food, clothes, etc. The entire research also depicts cultural and social discourses that a society is capable of producing under the influence of popular Netflix content.

Findings & Discussion

The American music, movie and television industry emerged at such a significant time in world history that it made the environment conducive for large, highly profitable pop culture (Crothers, 2021). Building onto this idea, Jin (2017) in his research study examined the basic features of cultural flows in the era of digital platforms. During the era of rapid growth of local popular culture and its global penetration in the 1990s, intensified the disparities between non-western and western societies. Digital platforms like Netflix have deepened the asymmetrical power relations between a few Western countries, particularly America and non-Western countries.

Today, production methods of Netflix have forced television networks to become more aggressive and flexible in the recruitment and retaining of top talent (Investopedia, 2021). Beer (2019) explains that one of the significant ways Netflix content shapes popular cultures is through meme culture. There are highly paid teams and employees at the media organization, which actually concentrate on analyzing what and which media content keeps the show a part of popular culture. This popular culture is based on all kinds of funny, political, satirical, rhetorical memes and meme culture. Netflix keeps the fan happy through memes based on TV and movies. It does not promote its content through just marketing but rather collaborative marketing.

It is the idea of losing track of time while watching content on Netflix that is named 'The Netflix Effect' (Kelson, 2017). In every household, within every age group of Netflix viewers we see this constant dissatisfaction over watching content. As Sarah, one of the people interviewed from Pakistan shared that "people are spending hours and hours of their time trying to watch one episode after the another in order to know the ultimate climaxes of their favorite shows". Hence, Netflix has changed that culture of winding things up and going to bed after watching one episode of their favorite media content on television.

People are now interested in watching as much as they can watch in just one single sitting.

The 21st century is the century of social media networks, blogs and twitter. We live in an online global village, where tribes are based on opinions, lifestyles and ideologies. Maybe the www web address represents 'wild, wild, web' (Cross, 2011). It is the world of blogs, twitter and social media space that has enabled people, who are viewers at Netflix to give their two cents on every other show they are watching without any real gatekeepers. We generally see a pattern in people especially youth where they watch something and they post about it on social media, which gives rise to a series of events, actions or trends inspiring popular culture of a country or community based on a particular show.

Cox (2021) describes his experience as really staring into the ceiling of his wall to play chess smartly after he watched *The Queen's Gambit*. He suffered from haunting thoughts regarding the game of chess before he slept, which would actually lull him into sleeping. He believed that after watching the show, he started playing so much chess that it crept into his unconsciousness. This phenomenon is real and it is called 'The game-transfer'. What he found more hilarious is that he used to find chess boring in his childhood but watching this series completely changed his mind. He realized that there are not many modern games where every turn feels like so much pressure.

Keller (2020) researched that as the weather turned colder and most of the American population was preparing themselves for further lockdowns and quarantines, people picked chess playing as their favorite thing from *The Queen's Gambit*. Americans felt that not only chess was amazingly challenging and fun, it also looked good at home. Moreover, a chessboard was added to the interior decor of every exquisite American house. Elijah, one of the people interviewed online from America mentioned that "the American markets were full of chess boards that

come in all shapes, sizes, colors and prices. People who cannot afford too expensive ones even had good options with colorful less expensive ones to choose from for their home designs”.

Interview participants from America summarized their experiences as being greatly impacted by *The Queen's Gambit* Netflix show in their lives. They showed it to their parents and recommended it to their other family members, even elderly family members because the show is so 'clean' to watch. One of the participants confessed to having learned the chess tricks online after the show was released. All stores were full of chess boards on the street, they described after the show got popular. Girls at schools and universities even tried copying the protagonist's hairstyle and dresses to look 'cool'. Everyone around the participants was either playing or discussing chess after March 2020.

In Pakistan, according to the research conducted by Malik and Zia (2020), people have moved from the traditional media because there is no liberty at creative expression. Media owners dictate the audience in terms of moral policing, which does not allow the public to have better quality content to watch other than the traditional conservative media content. Likewise, Matrix (2014) deduced that there is a collective distaste for the cable amongst the millennials when it comes to the television platforms. This population does not want to watch anything that comes on television but switches to a more diversified range of media content, which is readily available on Netflix.

Nostalgia by serialization is a type of nostalgia coined for the Netflix content. This kind of narrative is based on storytelling, which is further based on the rehabilitation of a preexisting narrative ecosystem. Here the old media narrative is changing towards a more flexible model, which has certainly given the audience power and freedom (Pallister, 2019). *Dirilis Ertugrul* has this kind of nostalgic effect on its viewers, especially the people of Pakistan. According to Beenish, one of the people interviewed from Pakistan, “viewers have been able to relate to that

Islamic empire nostalgia, which they have always found in the stories and books. *Dirilis Ertugrul* has given a kind of practical shape to that idealistic nostalgia in a Muslim world.”

Interview participants from Pakistan revealed how suddenly Turkish culture entered Pakistani culture with the release of *Dirilis Ertugrul* on Netflix and its broadcast on PTV. All the participants confessed that their parents wanted to watch it after the Prime Minister’s recommendation. Saddar, a famous market in Karachi was full of Turkish fur hats worn by the male characters in the show and antique silver jewelry worn on the forehead became extremely popular once people got inspired by the lead female protagonist of the show. Sabeen, one of the people interviewed in Pakistan highlighted that the “people in Pakistan literally celebrated birthdays with the show theme, cutting birthday cakes with swords. Pop culture saga inspired by the show intensified when all big local brands approached the show talent to become their brand ambassadors.”

Conclusion

Results and findings of this research study indicate that social discourses are indeed impacted immensely by popular media. We live in times where the boundary between what is contemporary culture and what is not is blurred in terms of media content. Everything that becomes popular on any media platform has a certain level of impact on society globally. Interviews conducted revealed that the participants have their individual stories regarding *The Queen’s Gambit* and *Dirilis Ertugrul*’s impact on their lives and the people surrounding their lives. *The Queen’s Gambit* impacted the popular culture concerning the game of chess, eradicating gender stereotypes in the game as well. *Dirilis Ertugrul* influenced Pakistani culture through social discourses such as advertisements, celebrity culture, social circles, marketing, food, clothes, etc. Netflix’s features are based on the very idea of popular culture (Beer, 2021). In the past, we used to watch movies, listen to music or read books that were recommended to us by our family, friends, teachers or anybody

we interact with. Today, Netflix recommends us more than any other living person in our lives. Through a simple computer algorithm, this media platform traces our tastes, preferences, likes and dislikes to recommend more personality-suited content, thus creating a pop culture community for us whether we like it or not. Eventually, we recommend to people what Netflix recommends to us. So this research study should pave way for further research studies on other kinds of Netflix content and their effect as well.

Limitations

This research study was limited because:

1. The study cannot cater more Netflix shows impacting popular cultures.
2. Only two societies are analyzed for this research.

Future Recommendation

Explore popular culture in other societies with other Netflix content.

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Journal of Mass Communication, Vol. 30, May. 2024

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