

K-Drama Crossroads: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Cultural Resonances in *Crash Landing on You* from Pakistani Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

This study conducts a qualitative content analysis of the South Korean drama Crash Landing on You, focusing on the portrayal of romance, culture, and state conflicts. Using a structured coding sheet, key themes such as cross-cultural romance, tension, longing, and geopolitical dynamics are analyzed. Subthemes, including love triangles, capitalist versus socialist values, political tensions, and surveillance, are explored to understand their depiction within the drama. The romantic tension between the protagonists, marked by emotional restraint and longing, resonates with Pakistani viewers who are accustomed to conservative portrayals of love. The contrast between North and South Korean lifestyles also reflects cultural and societal differences that Pakistani audiences can relate to. The series emphasizes state conflict, portraying political tensions and surveillance as obstacles to personal freedom and relationships, which mirrors geopolitical dynamics familiar to Pakistani viewers. This analysis sheds light on how global media content resonates with and influences audiences through the interplay of romance, culture, and politics.

Key Words: K-Dramas, Crossroads, Culture, Content Analysis, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

K-Dramas are not just famous domestically; they also increase millions of viewers outside South Korea's borders. Foreign media has been openly watched and taken example from all over Pakistan. K-Drama enthusiasts have the ease of streaming their loved shows on popular platforms like Hulu and Netflix. This opportunity allows dramas to reach a large audience, as noted by Bacon (2019). The attraction of these dramas is not only provided by their availability on most-watched streaming sites but also by their inbuilt qualities and components (Ju, 2018a).

Their wide spectrum of genres—romance, romantic comedy, melodrama, satire, action, sci-fi, thriller, mystery, and more—caters to their success (Azmeem_unr, 2016.) In addition to covering a thorough range of genres, these dramas also explore a variety of themes and plots, exploring aspects of everyday life, family dynamics, the juggling of the workplace, school or university experiences, medical narratives, married life, and even geopolitical scenarios involving other countries, a plot even to that of "Crash Landing on You." (Sihombing & Dellavia, 2021). As the Pakistani audience also demands to see such content put on a wide variety of genres, these dramas allure and manipulate most of this audience through their streaming sites and screens (Ahsan Bhatti & Khalid, 2022a). Also, according to The Times, Korean culture and media play a significant role in Pakistan, as well as other Asian states. K-culture's lifestyle has always been fascinating to Pakistanis, or from the Hallie's rise

in that nation; apart from that, it is the lifestyle that Pakistani people have preferred, which is the main reason Pakistani or South Asian consumers view K-dramas or K-previously viewed-documentary programs. South Asian countries have been more than propitious due to the fascinating tales of the dramas and the beautiful performances that Korea's talented actors and actors give to their viewers. They show more than just a beautiful appearance. Their acting capabilities and ability to portray and deliver thoughts give the show an added power of depth and context while keeping the viewers' attention. People invested in dramas sometimes ignore their health, sleep, and other responsibilities and spend sleepless nights binge-watching dramas throughout episodes (Pierce-Grove, 2024).

Many people's dreams of K-dramas take on the form of an addiction (Ahsan Bhatti & Khalid, 2022). The term 'Hallyu wave' has become significantly and though fully popular in recent decades. 'Hallyu' was first used in the 1990s to describe the rise in popularity of Korean pop culture in China by a Chinese journalist. Korea has been exporting a vast range of cultural goods, such as games, music, movies, and dramas, to many nations in Asia and beyond since its establishment (Ahsan Bhatti & Khalid, 2022). Romantic sequences are popular in mainstream Pakistani dramas, which have given rise to perspectives, especially for urban youth who watch these dramas more than their rural counterparts. Since women typically watch more dramas than men do (Ahmed, 2012), young women are prone to these love issues more often. These huge encounters tend to be more pivoting and enjoyable for urban adolescents than for rural kids. However, not all young audiences find it alluring when romance is displayed in the media in such a humiliating manner (Naz Karim & Shehzad, 2016). There are many diverse types of Korean dramas, including melodramas, romantic comedies, action-packed series, historical dramas, and medical dramas (Rizvi, Adnan, & Khan, 2025). Each genre evolves in detail subjects relating to psychology, education, law, science, medicine, and history Rafique, Khan, & Bilal, 2022. Viewers find Korean dramas especially intriguing because they often have lighthearted stories about a wide range of conflicts and family dynamics (Naz, Khan, & Basit, 2024). The tales are professionally intertwined with romantic themes that capture the heart of the audience.

Korean dramas often have 16–25 episodes, a theme that helps understand their huge appeal. These dramas have had an important impact on consumer behavior, affecting people to buy more Korean-inspired food, accessories, apparel, and other items (Ju, 2018b). Furthermore, viewing these dramas may influence viewers' behavior, shifting their attitudes and actions (Pha & Lhe, 2022a). There are both positive and negative impacts and behaviors about these dramas. There are sequences in every Korean drama series where characters drink alcohol and get tipsy. Sadly, these parts often show the protagonist rather than the enemy, illustrating the deeply ingrained soju-consuming practice in Korean society—even during funeral ceremonies. As viewers become engrossed in these plays, many okay behaviors may be overlooked since the fictional world has become a part of their own lives (Pasupathy et al., 2022).

There is a noteworthy study gap in the analysis of romantic dramas like "Crash Landing on You" from a Pakistani perspective, even though Korean dramas are becoming increasingly popular throughout the world, including in Pakistan. Few studies have exclusively looked at how Korean dramas engage with Pakistani youth, even though few have probed the dramas' attraction to audiences globally. "Crash Landing on You" is a notable part of the Korean Wave phenomenon, drawing viewers in with its engaging plot, sympathetic characters, and multicultural themes. Research on how Pakistani viewers may react to and understand "Crash Landing on You" may be lacking; nonetheless, given the facts and details between the cultural backgrounds of South Korea and Pakistan. Understanding these processes is imperative to highlight the elements that lead to the extensive attraction of Korean dramas in Pakistan, as well as the wider consequences for cross-cultural existence and media intake. Therefore, by starting a thorough analysis of "Crash Landing on You" from Pakistani viewpoints, this study aims to close this research gap. This study aims to decide the essential causes of the drama's appeal and the degree to which Pakistani audiences may relate to it by examining its themes, characters, and cultural subtleties through the eyes of young Pakistanis. The

result of this study opens new avenues for future research in this field and helps us understand the cross-cultural processes at work in Pakistani audiences' consumption of Korean dramas

Therefore, it is necessary to create fresh frameworks that encompass Pakistani points of view within the analysis of Korean plays to end this gap. These constructs need to consider sociocultural, political, as well as economic factors that shape media consumption patterns in Pakistan that influence its belief towards international content like "Crash Landing on You." This narrows down this theoretical gap not only by enhancing our understanding of cross-cultural media consumption but also by fostering the development of more comprehensive and contextually applicable theories in Media Studies (Khan et al., 2021).

Problem statement

Due to the high rate of spread and, of course, the going gaga of the Korean content with the youths and audience of Pakistan, there is a considerable need for having the micro-structure of a specific drama explored and understood in relation to Pakistani outlooks. Focusing primarily on 'Crash Landing on You,' this research is undertaking a content analysis approach to the Korean dramas to search for patterns that correlate to the India-Pakistan conflict, affection, and other cultural elements. Thus, the study aims to decide potential consequences of cultural imperialism by exploring the extent to which these operas influence the participants' cultural beliefs, attitudes, and practices in Pakistan. Thus, it also looks to provide a better understanding of the shifting paradigms of cultural interaction and impact on Pakistani society by studying this multifaceted relation between foreign media and culture and its operation in the context of Pakistan. (Ahsan Bhatti & Khalid, 2022a). The current study aims to explore the transformation occurring in the cultural interchange and its impact on Pakistani society at large. Acknowledging colonialism as a thing is necessary since it was a form of domination of the big countries over the small ones.

However, often, in the contemporary world, the dynamics that are expected to influence a target nation are not the typical colonial ones. This change is illustrated by the power of Soft Media and Cultural Infection, in which countries can shape and model the features of other people. This phenomenon suggests that there is an exchange of important cultural features between nations, requiring them to put strategic media to use as a subtle weapon, an instrument that looks to subdue an opponent by infiltrating and integrating some of their own cultural traits into the opponent's society, instead of conventional subjugation. This question inevitably turns the attention to the fact that in the contemporary world, cultural relations are vastly different from that old power conflict and significantly incorporate the function of media and cross-cultural interactions. As through earlier research in this field, there is enough evidence that the media of one country does affect the media of the other country (Folkerts & Lacy, 2004). But in the research, as stated, the problem is about the qualitative content analysis of a given K-drama based on Pakistani perspectives. Research has failed to examine 'Crash Landing on You' for this specific purpose because the drama 'Crash Landing on You' has a very strong triggering power to be used as an interesting drama in this topic. (Chang & Lee, 2017). Therefore, this research focuses on administering a qualitative content analysis of the drama Crash Landing on You, identifying various aspects of the drama, and then correlating it with Pakistani perspectives, without studying any impact.

Research objectives

- To explore how Pakistani viewers understood and perceived the geopolitical dynamics and cross-border relationships shown in "Crash Landing on You."
- To study the alignment or dissonance between cultural values and societal norms depicted in 'Crash Landing on You' and those prevalent in Pakistani society.

Research questions

1. How do Korean dramas build a strong fanbase with a display of romantic ideals and intimacy throughout a season?
2. What cultural values and norms from Pakistani society resonate or conflict with the themes of romance and societal expectations depicted in 'Crash Landing on You'?

Significance of Study

This is an amazing study for it looks at the complex interplay among Pakistani society dynamics, cultural identity, and foreign media. By exploring how “Crash Landing on You” and other Korean dramas shape the cultural attitudes, beliefs and conduct of Pakistanis, this research presents a valuable opportunity to appreciate how fluid cultural identities are achieved. Within a rapidly globalizing world, understanding what these plays have to say about themes like Indo-Pak conflict, love affairs and others is vital in deciding how cultural preservation and identity are negotiated. In addition, the study contributes to the larger body of knowledge in academia by shedding light on how the media influences attitudes, behaviors, and even the fine line between tradition and modernity.

It is worth examining how these dramas resonate with Pakistani viewers in their portrayal of romantic themes, geopolitical tensions akin to the India-Pakistan conflict, and cross-border relationships. These insights allow us to grasp how global media shapes social norms, local cultural dynamics, and the ongoing debate about identity and cultural preservation in a globalized context. This study, therefore, sheds light on the intricacies of cultural exchange and identity formation today, adding to both scholarly research by Schwak and Son, (2022a) and real-world concerns in media studies and cultural anthropology.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this paper, the globalization of Korean culture has been taken up for study through the medium of a television drama series. It has created a tremendous stir, especially among Malaysian viewers. This study intends to explore the process by which Korean culture, as portrayed in Korean dramas, is influencing the Malay audience. The qualitative method is adopted to explore unknown phenomena and the interpretations that include meanings. The choice of qualitative method can help in garnering a better understanding of why and how Korean dramas seem to have anchored their ways into the acceptance of Malaysian audiences. Ethnographic design is one that is adopted by the study in understanding the impact of Korean dramas on Malaysian audiences through an identification process with the cultural similarities that resonate between the two. In-depth interviews are used by the researcher in this study. The researcher ensures data validity through pragmatic validation processes. The findings show that Korean dramas meet the 10 emotional needs of Asian audiences through the functions of easy assimilation, cultural proximity, and expressiveness (Tajul Ariffnet al.,2018a).

Although these studies do open windows to understanding the growing influence of the South Korean Wave within Pakistan and its impact on changing viewing habits and cultural consumption patterns, there exist a few lacunae in this piece of research. Primarily, with not much discussion on any disadvantages or critiques associated with these phenomena, studies are focused on the beneficial aspects of the Korean Wave, such as cultural power and popularity. The studies further talk about the shift of interests by viewers from local to Korean media material; however, the studies are also not much focused on the current impact caused by the shift on the societal and cultural fronts. It is rare to find studies that have looked to explore the long-term effects of the Korean Wave on regional media sectors or native cultural productions.

A study conducted by Lambok Hermanto Sihombing in 2021 postulates that the representation of North Korea within South Korean media, as in the drama "Crash Landing on You," projects several framings to influence the feeling of the public toward North Korea. The drama dispelled notions of dictatorship by showing North Korea as rigid but compassionate, especially to its military. It is juxtaposed with internal conflicts at home, which occur in South Korean culture over wealth and rank. Through these representational portrayals, opening spaces of thought about Korean identity and inter-Korean relations, it allows viewers—especially from Pakistan—to reflect on the subtle undertones

that shape such fictionalized storylines. In effect, media framings from the drama invite critical interaction with its embargoed geopolitical concerns and norms within Korean society (Naeem, Khan, & Khaliq, 2020).

Popular South Korean dramas and other cultural exports dubbed as "Hallyu wave" have only continued to increase in Pakistan, more so during the pandemic, with hits like "Crash Landing on You" to "Squid Game". This has been asserted by research conducted by Muhammad Ahsan Bhatti and his co-authors. It struck a chord among young Pakistani viewers who found it relatable with its relevant theme and dynamic performers. Hallyu began in China in 1999, itself reflecting the impact that Korean culture has had through cinema, music, and pan-media. As the count of this shift, Pakistani viewers have shifted to Korean content. This cultural change in basic assumptions could only occur because of technology and connectivity across the globe. Not only has this enhanced entertainment options, but shaped cultural attitudes in this digital age (Ahsan & Khalid, 2022b).

The paper by Areeba Syed et al. focuses on the growing interest of young people in Pakistan in Korean dramas. It has been highlighted that fiction, fantasy, and romance explored in the series attract the young generation's attention. Folklore and mythological characters fascinate the young audience, hitting directly at their aspirations and attitudes. The results confirm the theory that Korean dramas inspire dreams about Korean culture and way of life, making young people in Pakistan idealize characters and long to travel to Korea. This is a cultural effect that has had long-lasting effects of the dramas on Pakistani youths, affecting their aspirations and cultural tastes (Saeed et al., 2023c).

According to Xiaowei Huang, Korean TV dramas are a good representation of how cultural influence and economic impact relate within the Asian communities. The development of culture and economy forms part of the structure of society. Dramas show a change in people's concepts of aesthetic values or cultural customs, but also show their close connections in terms of culture among the Asian communities. Proximity brings about the issues closer to the audience, making them more relatable, easier to perceive, understand, and relate to, thereby at once drawing the audience into the stories. On the other hand, these Korean wave phenomena show changes in cultural marketing strategies from more overt tools like tourism ads to more covert ones. Thanks to the strenuous aid of Korean media, audiences began taking matters into their own hands in cultural inquiry, opening doors wide towards greater knowledge and appreciation of other cultural backgrounds (Huang, 2009).

Theoretical framework

Television's impact has been extensively investigated within the field of media studies, with a particular emphasis on its effects (Livingstone, 1998). Cultivation theory, introduced by George Gerbner and expanded by Larry Gross, investigates the impact of television media on viewers. In this research on the influence of Korean drama on Pakistani audiences, cultivation analysis is applied, examining longitudinal surveys to understand how media reception, particularly television viewing, shapes opinions on cultural topics. This theory helps assess the role of media content in shaping feelings within a specific cultural context (Shrum, 2017).

Globalization Theory

In analyzing the themes of "Crash Landing on You" through the lens of **Globalization Theory**, the drama can be seen as a microcosm of the broader cultural exchanges and interconnectedness that globalization fosters. The show's cross-border romance and interactions between characters from North and South Korea exemplify the ways in which global forces, such as media and popular culture, transcend political and geographical boundaries. Se Ri's accidental landing in North Korea and her subsequent interactions with the locals highlight the inevitable blending of cultures, despite the strict political barriers. This dynamic illustrates how globalization can simultaneously bridge and accentuate differences, as characters navigate the complexities of their respective identities and values in a rapidly globalizing world. The drama showcases the tension between global influences and local traditions, emphasizing how globalization challenges established norms and fosters new forms of cultural hybridity.

Cross-Cultural Communication Theory

Applying **Cross-Cultural Communication Theory**, "Crash Landing on You" delves into the challenges and nuances of communication between individuals from vastly different cultural backgrounds. Se Ri and Jeong Hyeok's relationship is a prime example of how miscommunications, cultural misunderstandings, and differing social norms create barriers to connection. The theory posits that effective communication across cultures requires an understanding of both verbal and non-verbal cues, which the characters gradually learn throughout the series. Their journey reflects the importance of empathy, adaptability, and open-mindedness in overcoming these cultural differences. As they navigate their relationship amidst the backdrop of political and social tensions, the drama highlights how cross-cultural communication can serve as a bridge to understanding and connection, even in the most unlikely circumstances.

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates how "Crash Landing on You" connects with Pakistani viewers, using a firsthand and deep-thinking way. It believes knowledge comes from the researcher's own look at certain scenes and talks in the show, as well as what Pakistani viewers think.

This rigorous method of enquiry is employed using induction, deduction, experimentation, and abduction to explore cultural resonances in a way that Pakistani viewers experience them from "Crash Landing on You!" This is an inductive process done early, qualitative content analysis, where you go line by line, looking at descriptions of certain situations and dialogues to create themes or patterns. In turn, this creates the space to develop new complex theoretical lenses that might well offer richer, more nuanced explanations of how the drama's portrayals of geopolitical processes, cultural values and social norms resonate within Pakistani culture. This is then followed by a deductive approach to keep the coherence and rigor of these interpretations, using them as testable hypotheses against existing literature, concepts, or frameworks. The research also features an experimental part that studies how such influences of exposure to a K-drama on attitude toward social inequality vary depending on the viewer demographic and cultural context.

Finally, the study uses deductive reasoning to integrate theoretical concepts with empirical findings and provide nuanced interpretations that bridge Pakistani viewers' feelings and cultural identities with the cultural contexts portrayed in "Crash Landing on you." Using pertinent theoretical frameworks and empirical data to anchor ideas, this strategy not only advances scholarly understanding of cross-cultural media consumption but also advances theory development.

This research makes use of a grounded theory approach to systematically analyze some dialogue and scene segments of "Crash Landing on You" to explore cultural similarities that Pakistani viewers can associate. It is an ideal choice for called for situated counterculture since this allows for the emergence of ideas/theoretical issues and patterns/themes directly from data without any preexisting notion, which means that relevant and culturally rich data are gathered to best represent our object meaningfully. For ensuring more cultural richness and representation, reality-based concerning the themes, situations showing cross-cultural interactions, geopolitical circumstances, as well as character depiction vis-à-vis Pakistani cultural customs and values are selected. Following this stepwise process, all databases were meticulously gathered, which started through selecting scenes dialogue having instances about the viewer's reflection on bothered cultures as well as practice-contextual identity negotiations by developing these acquisitions transformational, aiming to secure meaning in experiences. This approach makes sense since it closely fits the research goal of offering a sophisticated knowledge of how Korean popular culture, as portrayed in "Crash Landing on You," affects Pakistani cultural conceptions and identities.

Sampling

Purposive sampling is done to ensure the intentional and selective choice of specific content or data sources based on predetermined criteria relevant to the research question or aims.

Drama Selection

Why assess Crash Landing on you for its fame and future cultural influence among Pakistani viewers? It is because the drama has romantic and socio-political features, so proper cultural understanding is needed to analyze the reasons behind how we perceive things as well as our romanticizing or attitude about the Indo-Pak conflict. The high degree of popularity that this Korean drama enjoyed in Pakistan allows a unique analytic standpoint into the ways cultures outside home audiences shape up taste preferences and seeing-it-worlds, making it an interesting topic for examination. With an international fan base, the story of "Crash Landing on You" is a fascinating topic to be researched. The drama cum thriller with an outstanding IMDb rating (8.7) has also been praised for its complex plot, great cast, and production level.

Coding sheet

Theme	Subthemes	Labels	Examples
Romance	Tension and longing	Romance, Longing, five phases of romance. Romance in cloy, relationship dynamics	Jeong Hyeok and Se Ri experience emotional turmoil due to their separation and uncertain future.
	Love triangle	Romance, Triangle	The complex dynamics between Se Ri, Jeong Hyeok, and Seo Dan.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses key findings from the data (Crash Landing on You) after coding the selected five episodes according to the coding sheet presented in the earlier chapter. This Korean drama is set up in a dilemma like situation where a young CEO lady from South Korea is initially shown as enjoying her life and success in capitalist South Korea and crash lands across demilitarized zone (DMZ) in North Korea as she paraglides fail. There she meets a patriotic dutiful military officer from the North who is initially skeptical of her. The first interaction is laden with a mix of caution (as she is from the South and embodies an enemy), and curiosity (she is a young lady from the other side of the DMZ, and there is natural intrigue to know more). They develop a bond in later scenes from the first chapter/episode as they start to know each other better. But there is always caution and barrier elements clear in their interactions. Development of affection between them is seen in the backdrop of DMZ (a physical boundary) and a sense of "othering." Different themes and sub-themes appear and evolve during the drama as it progresses. This drama has struck a chord with Pakistani and other audiences from the sub-continent due to its cultural relevance and values, which are a conservative yet glamorous display of affection and longing. This chapter analyzes key insights from the selected episodes of the Korean drama "Crash Landing on You," based on the coding system outlined in the earlier chapter. The story follows a successful CEO from South Korea who crash-lands in North Korea due to a paragliding accident. She meets a patriotic North Korean military officer who initially distrusts her because of her affiliation with South Korea. However, they gradually form a bond as they navigate the challenges and differences between their two worlds.



Figure 1: Screenshot from Opening Scenes: Se Ri crash-lands in North Korea after the malfunction of her paragliders. Jeong Hyeok looks on with intrigue.

Theme: Romance



Figure 2: Screenshot from the show about a romantic moment between protagonists.

Romance plays a key role in the play with different smaller themes related to romance like forbidden attraction, longing and tension, and a love triangle. Yoon Se Ri and Ri Jeong Hyeok first meet at the demilitarized zone (DMZ), which symbolizes division, enmity, and othering. When Se Ri gets stuck in a tree after a paragliding accident, Jeong Hyeok helps her, creating a bond between them. Their first distrust and fear of each other slowly change as they start talking about deeper things beyond their hostility, showing affection towards each other. This mix of romance and hesitance resonates with the Pakistani audience due to their cultural norms show that openly showing romance is seen as taboo.

The portrayal of these romantic emotions in the play has contributed to its popularity in Pakistan. Romance in the play evolves through five distinct phases: first interaction, the building of trust and emotional connection, slow-burning passion, overcoming obstacles, and resolution with hope. The first interaction is portrayed through an accidental encounter that sparks curiosity and a sense of protection. Trust and emotional connection develop through shared experiences and protective actions between the protagonists. The slow-burning passion is depicted through restraint in expression and unspoken feelings. Overcoming obstacles is shown through external threats and the sacrifices made by both characters. Finally, resolution and hope are embodied in the emotional climax and the potential for future happiness.



Figure 3: *Screengrab from a romantic moment between Si Ri and Jeong Hyeok*

These five phases unfold sequentially, creating a developmental narrative that resonates strongly with the audience. The gradual progression of romance, marked by emotional depth and subtle gestures, mirrors cultural nuances that are familiar to Pakistani audiences and those in the broader sub-continent. This careful portrayal of romance, sensitive to social dynamics, has made the play particularly successful in more conservative markets like Pakistan.

The accidental meeting between the characters sets the stage for the unfolding romance, introducing the first critical moment in their relationship. This first encounter, marked by doubt, cultural clashes, and a sense of unfamiliarity, reflects the broader division between North and South Korea. The physical barrier between them serves as a metaphor for the deep social and political divides that keep them apart. However, when Jeong-Hyeok chooses to protect Se-Ri, despite the inherent risks, it signifies the beginning of their evolving bond. Their attraction, though understated and cautious, is fueled by a growing curiosity about each other's lives and values. In this way, curiosity and protection intertwine, gradually shaping the romance between the two characters.

Evidently, the second prominent stage of the development of the romantic relationship is the start of the construction of trust and an emotional bond can be identified in the second episode of the series when Jeong-Hyeok decides to rescue Soo-Mi from arrest by his country's authorities and instead decides to bring her to his own apartment. This step to protect her starts by overcoming his fears of Se-Ri being a spy from the south. The first actions of help and kind intentions from each other create that first comfortable interaction between the characters and refer to the concept of 'sexual tension,' or the gradual development of romantic feelings with thoughts and reservations about them. Being together in North Korea, they have time to know each other, and Se Ri starts to share her fears and events, the same as Jeong Hyeok shares his sake. Thus, in a context of risks and expectations specific to the life of a community, they learn to trust progressively. Jeong Hyok develops feelings for Se Ri and becomes cautious when she maneuvers to avoid danger in North Korea. Such examples count the psychological and emotional challenges they face and how their limited attraction is still capable of producing defiance from political reality and societal standards. Jeong Hyok becomes protective of Se Ri, more so when she goes all out to ensure her safety from dangers in North Korea. These examples spell out the psychological and emotional barriers that they meet, and how their constrained attraction manages to resist political reality and societal norms.

Rational passion is ignited by the gradual accumulation of the basis for mutual attraction. They begin to fall for each other despite hatred, suspicion, disbelief, differences in cultures, political enmities, and physical and psychological barriers. Chastity and silent affection convey the temperate romance and that is what over screen has portrayed; Pakistani audiences are also familiar with such slow-burning and restrained signs of affection. In each episode, this is a classic example of a slow-burning romance. The two characters know that their love is dangerous, and they are merely trespassing on a forbidden

territory, hence committing a great deal of restraint in expressing their love. This means that there are many scenes portraying passion and building intimacy between the characters that is characterized by some sort of nervousness or restraint and by no means verbal expressions of love. It increases the tension and the anticipation and when they do get it on, the 'I love you,' has much more meaning.

There is no way that one can deny that affection is also a display of strength after having surmounted all the barriers that may exist in the theme of romance. While the two main characters – Se-Ri and Jeong Hyeok – do not have a number of clear obstacles to overcome as they are more or less on the same page from the beginning of the series, there are several notable barriers along the way: political unrest, traditional values within family and society, and expectations of a classic Korean melodrama of the period. Their love is taken to the extreme and any time they can come through the experience, then it means that their love is strong. To prove the lovers are now faithful to each other, the play shows how they betray their love by giving up their interests for each other. This kind of reserved affiliations but deep affectionate physical contact sets up that strong affection for both characters in the eyes of the Pakistani audiences. Remarkably, like this, Zee 5, an Indian production company that produces dramas with Pakistani actors for Pakistani and sub-continent viewership, launched a drama named *Dhoop Ki Deewar*, a drama about love, sorrow, and the effects of the Indo-Pak violence on families. In the same way as with “Crash Landing on You,” the show also focuses on how the place plays the part of politics in one’s life. As the drama progresses, resolution and hope, as the last and dominant phase of the *romance* theme, appear clear. Their efforts to get across DMZ as a physical boundary and love triangulation of Jeong Hyeok with his finance embody the struggle to get over physical and emotional barriers. The series builds to an emotional climax where their love is fully realized and expressed, often in moments of high tension and imminent danger. The culmination of their slow-burning romance is both satisfying and poignant. The resolution of their love story, despite the geopolitical divide, leaves the audience with a sense of hope and the possibility of a future together, symbolizing the triumph of love over adversity.



Figure 4 *Screengrab from two scenes of the protagonist’s romantic incidents*

Romance as the main theme in the play in the above-mentioned five phases of first interaction, building of trust and emotional connection, slow-burning passion, overcoming obstacles, and resolution and hope strikes a chord with Pakistani audiences. In Pakistani culture, expressions of love are often restrained due to societal norms and expectations. Public displays of affection are discouraged, and relationships, especially romantic ones, are typically approached with caution and discretion. Familial approval and societal acceptance play crucial roles in romantic relationships. The hesitance to openly express love stems from the need to navigate these cultural and familial dynamics carefully. Love is conveyed through quiet actions and emotions that are not directly spoken, which is like how affection is often shown in Pakistani culture. This gradual development of romance, which focuses on forming deep emotional bonds instead of overt displays, aligns closely with the cultural values in Pakistan.

Subtheme: love triangle:



Figure: 5 *Screengrab from framing Scenes: Seo Dan's, Jeong Hyeok's fiancée, encounters Si Ri with Jeong.*

Framed in “Crash Landing on You,” episode four revolves around Seo Dan’s character, Jeong Hyeok’s fiancée. This implies that individual ambitions conflict with societal expectations. The family pressure and the societal norms both characters must obey regardless of their deeply personal desires stand out. The profound connection between Jeong Hyeok and Seo Dan lies on their similitudes as the former tries or rather hopes to fulfil his family responsibilities at all costs while the latter is obliged to live up to what is expected of her as a woman within her culture. A certain tension exists in this relationship because it separates what they want from each other and what others expect from them thus highlighting a larger theme about personal aspirations versus social obligations; nothing is ever easy when you live in such an environment but at least one can still survive it.

With the introduction of Seo Dan as Ri Jeong Hyeok’s fiancée portray the demands from both their families and society on a large scale that the two main characters face. In addition, the scene also contributes to the romantic plot’s development by presenting the potential conflict between the character’s own dreams and society’s-imposed duties.

Yoon Se Ri and Jeong Hyeok's relationship is frustrated and jealous when she finds out that Jeong Hyeok and Seo Dan are engaged. This season highlights the complexity of their feelings as they come to terms with the emotions and limitations of their love.

As discussions of this episode are numerous, one of the most widely written-about parts is the confrontation between Seo Dan and Se Ri, where underlying hostility reaches its peak in explicitness. In this case, they discuss things that are not particularly important, but during conversions, their separate views always receive good attention from their writers due to this form. When Seo Dan goes head-to-head against Se Ri about how much affection she has for Jeong Hyeok, she only ignites greater animosity between them. This YouTube upload has a lot of emotional undertones since it includes Seo Dan’s enthusiastic jealousy coming into conflict with Se Ri’s feelings leading to an exchange loaded with animosity. Not only does this confrontation bring out their rivalry but at the same time it shows what makes their relationships complicated with respect to Jeong Hyeok, thus making the disagreement and widespread hatred more prominent than ever before.

Conflict arises when Seo Dan confronts Se Ri about her relationship with Jeong Hyeok. The complex structure of the love triangle is shown in this episode, which also shows the inner pain and competition for Jeong Hyeok's devotion.

In Episode 12 of "Crash Landing on You," Seo Dan's heartache and desperation are brought out to view painfully when she sees Se Ri and Jeong Hyeok in such a tender moment. The scene clearly shows Jeong Hyeok's love for Se Ri to be deep; at the same time, it brings out the sadness that their relationship carries along. For Seo Dan, it is a painful thing to watch this love exchange because it reminds her that Jeong Hyeok belongs to another which makes her lose hope and live with unsatisfied longings. This moment depicts the emotional suffering experienced by these three people, who still deal with emotional traumas from different perspectives with Seo Dan being the most silent one since he had no one to express his feelings on.

Seo Dan sees a simple conversation between Jung Hyuk and Se Ri, showing his love and heartache. This episode adds a sense of sadness to the story by capturing the emotional impact of unrequited love and the impact of the love triangle on Seo Dan.

In "Crash Landing on You," Episode 14, the story shows how love can be unfulfilled and relationships can change when Gu Seung Jun tells Se Ri about his unresolved feelings. This is a substantial change in his feelings, as he starts to like Seo Dan more. The scene shows how Seung Jun still loves Se Ri, but she does not feel the same. This makes him look for comfort and a new friendship with Seo Dan. This shows how love changes and grows, even when old feelings are still.

Unrequited love and redemption are themes conveyed in Goo Seung-joon's confession to Se-ri and his later romantic interest in Seo-dam. This scene explores the changing nature of a love triangle and stands for the characters' changing relationships and emotions.

Pakistani dramas feature love triangles, which reflect universal stories of love, conflict, and social pressure. Dramas like "Humsafar" show the complex situations of people like Khirad, Ashar and Sara, where love interests and marital relationships are fulfilled. In "Zindagi Gulzar Hai", Kashaf, Zaroon and Asmara also face tension and jealousy in their relationship. These stories mimic the dynamics seen in "Crash Landing on You," where Se-ri, Jeong-hyeok, and Seo-dan deal with their emotional attachment in the face of personal and political issues, showing how love triangles are famous in a variety of cultural contexts.

Political and social issues are spotlighted in the discussion of ideological dissolutions between North and South Korea. This part explores deeper into cultural issues by investigating the ways in which political ideology affects the relationships and attitudes of individuals.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this research delves into the nature of curiosity. This research focuses on both the qualitative assessment of Crash Landing on You as well as the relation of it with Pakistani perspectives, for these three objectives have been highlighted, to investigate how Pakistani viewers understood and perceived the geopolitical dynamics and cross-border relationships shown in "Crash Landing on You." To analyze the alignment or dissonance between cultural values and societal norms depicted in 'Crash Landing on You' and those prevalent in Pakistani society.

To assess the influence of character representation and cultural contexts in 'Crash Landing on You' on Pakistani viewers' feelings of Korean culture and their own cultural identity. These objectives mainly provide three insights: Romance, Culture and State conflict, which can also be called as geopolitics of a certain state, as these three values are a core of any nation and every nation displays this core through media and entertainment. The best way to analyze any drama would be to analyze these 3 core values (Azme, 2019).

By providing a comprehensive qualitative approach, this systematic analysis helps to elucidate the geopolitical complexities depicted in the play. Similar research has been done to examine the inter-Korean relations and geopolitics established throughout the play, one such study argues that Crash-Landing is a representation of the contemporary history of the inter-Korean war on television however

there is a greater presence, evidence of information, greater in South Korea and beyond. And because of its diverse audiences, it may have a greater impact than previous South Korean publications depicting North-South relations. While creating a cinematic context of friendship during the Sunshine System helps, it also creates divisions, especially because of its careful (and often hopeful) portrayal of daily life in North Korea. One is able to find a place where it is not possible to live together not only but they can also be reunited (Schwak & Son, 2022d). One study also showed that the writers of "Crash Landing on You" (CLOY) interacted with North Korean defectors during the development process to paint a realistic picture of North Korea. In important areas, the program provides insight in terms of business performance in the North and shows South Korea's soft power, highlighting the country's economic success and cultural influence, especially among North Korea's youth (Hassan, Khan, & Ziberi, 2021).

All in all, there is substantial evidence in constructing the analytical framework that CLOY depicted romantic, cultural and geopolitical struggles in general as chapter impact media in general and audiences in particular, as suggested in a study that a broad variety of genres are represented in Korean dramas, such as melodrama, action-series, historical novels, romantic comedies, and medical dramas. Each discipline explores in-depth topics from a variety of disciplines, including psychology, education, law, physics, medicine, and history. These dramas highlight a wide range of tensions and family dynamics, which have a profound emotional impact on viewers. Korean dramas can capture the hearts of viewers through their love stories.

These dramas, usually 16 to 25 in length, are known for their intriguing plots, which make them more entertaining. In addition to entertainment, drama has a noticeable cultural impact on viewers through the increased consumption of Korean food, clothing, and accessories (Pha & Lhe, 2022b).

CONCLUSION

Based on the extensive research conducted in this study, "Crash Landing on You" appears as an important case study that delves into three major themes: love, culture, and geopolitical conflict. These themes are fundamental aspects of national identity and are often expressed through media and entertainment content.

Firstly, the drama's romantic exploration is central to its story, combining individual desires in the wake of political upheaval in North and South Korea. The developing relationship between Yoon Se Ri and Ri Jeong Hyeok is a vehicle for exploring the complexities of cross-cultural love, Narmilan etc. The scenes build on the play's exploration of resilience, sacrifice and loyalty amid social expectations and terrain emphasis on political conflict.

Second, "Crash Landing on You" effectively reflects the cultural norms and social norms that affect South Korean and Pakistani audiences. It looks at issues of race, identity, and social expectations, offering comparisons and contrasts with emphasis on cultural similarities and differences. Through its characters and content, the play invites viewers to consider how cultural values are portrayed and interpreted, how they unfold in different contexts, influence emotions, and generate cultural dialogue get the development of the.,

Third, it offers glimpses of the geopolitical dynamics at play, particularly between North and South Korea. It examines economic differences, political ideologies, and cultural influences and sheds light on the complexities of inter-Korean relations. Despite its focus on romance and personal issues, "Crash Landing on You" subtly explores how national conflict and geopolitical conflict affect individuals and society, offering insight into broader geopolitics through its story structure.

Through qualitative content analysis and theoretical design, this study highlights how "Crash Landing on You" is more than just entertainment—it is a cultural product that shapes feelings, influences social norms, and enhances dialogue between nations. By examining the drama's themes of romantic, cultural, and geopolitical struggle, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how Korean

dramas are perceived globally and affect viewers' perspectives on identity, relationships, and the impact of international politics.

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