

Public Perceptions of Celebrity Cosmetic Treatments in Pakistan: A Corpus-Based Analysis of YouTube and Instagram Discourse

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ABSTRACT

This study employs corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS) approach to examine public perceptions of celebrity cosmetic treatments in Pakistan through comments on YouTube and Instagram. Drawing on a corpus of 33,705 tokens from 60 sources (30 videos/posts each platform) collected between 2018 and 2025, the research identifies three key themes: Unrealistic Beauty Ideals, Religion and Morality, and Success and Fame. Guided by theories from Baudrillard (1998), Bandura (1977), Goffman (1956), and Butler (1990), the analysis reveals mixed sentiments, with criticism often rooted in cultural, religious, and authenticity concerns. Findings highlight platform-specific differences, with YouTube fostering harsher critiques and Instagram more polite responses. This contributes to understanding how social media shapes beauty norms in South Asia, addressing gaps in linguistic research on non-Western digital discourse. Implications include promoting media literacy to counter unrealistic standards.

Keywords: *Cosmetic treatments, Pakistani celebrities, Corpus linguistics, Social media discourse, Religious morality, Beauty standards, South Asia*

INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms, especially Instagram and YouTube, are key spaces where people discuss beauty and appearance. On Instagram, influencers, bloggers, and celebrities share their daily routines, beauty practices, and cosmetic procedures to maintain their youthful looks. YouTube, on the other hand, provides a platform where ordinary people freely comment on, criticize, or praise celebrities who may have undergone cosmetic enhancements, such as Botox, fillers, rhinoplasty, jaw lifts, or skin whitening. These discussions shape public views on beauty, particularly regarding appearance-altering procedures. In Pakistan, this topic is sensitive because modern beauty trends often conflict with traditional cultural and religious values. When Pakistani celebrities appear to have had cosmetic surgery, people express their opinions in the comment sections of YouTube and Instagram, sharing praise, criticism, humor, or moral judgments. Analyzing these comments helps reveal how ordinary Pakistanis perceive beauty alterations, what they expect from celebrities, and how online spaces shape ideas about beauty and identity.

Self-improvement has been considered the commodification of beauty, and it has become central to influencer culture as well as celebrity branding (Banet-Weiser, 2018; Gill & Elias, 2014). In Pakistan, this global narrative is challenged along with being localized, as online public engage with, reject, or copy normative notions regarding femininity and self-worth. However, the desire for transformation by undergoing cosmetic treatments such as Botox, fillers, skin whitening and face procedures is marketed as

empowering. Such practices frequently provoke moral anxiety and critical public arguments (Qureshi et al., 2020). The concept of beauty in Pakistani social media offers a valuable space to explore how gender, consumerism, and power interact online. Cosmetic enhancements are common among Pakistani celebrities. However, little linguistic research examines how public discourse forms in digital spaces. YouTube comments are often dismissed as unimportant. Yet, they reflect authentic societal attitudes. Studying these comments systematically can show how language shapes beliefs about cosmetic treatments, body image, authenticity, and morality.

This study uses a corpus analysis approach. It examines curated YouTube and Instagram comments about Pakistani celebrities who have or are thought to have had cosmetic treatments. Through this linguistic approach, the study explores how public discourse addresses authenticity, self-presentation, and agency in celebrity transformations. The study employs an interdisciplinary theoretical framework. This framework guides a thematic analysis of the comment corpus. It is based on four major theories, which were adapted, and they together explain how cosmetic enhancement discourse is framed, performed, and interpreted in online platforms. Baudrillard's theory of consumerism (1998) takes cosmetic treatments as a sign or image disconnected from originality. It further produces that the human body becomes a consumer product or a commodity and is consumed through the media. Bandura's social learning theory (1977) reflects how individuals imitate behaviours, for instance, undergoing cosmetic treatments, all by observing celebrities who are famous on social media through their appearance. Goffman's self-presentation theory (1956) assists in the interpretation of how celebrities manage their image and 'perform' their identities for a digital audience by using cosmetic procedures and curated content. Lastly, Butler's theory of performativity (1990) explores that gendered beauty standards are not natural but are performed repeatedly through appearance, all framed through cultural expectations. These theories collectively contributed to the development of a conceptual framework which connects media influence, identity, beauty values, and public discourse in the context of Pakistani celebrity culture as well as cosmetic enhancements.

This study combines theoretical insights with corpus linguistics methods. It uses tools like AntConc for concordance, KWIC, and frequency analysis. The study examines evaluative language in audience comments. It highlights admiration, skepticism, and moral judgments. The research focuses on online publics in South Asia, particularly Pakistan. It explores how beauty, authenticity, and agency are constructed linguistically. These concepts relate to celebrity culture and cosmetic treatments. The study analyzes public discourse to show how social media, identity, and power interact in digital spaces.

The research investigates how public comments reflect views on cosmetic treatments. It examines perceptions of cosmetic enhancements among Pakistani celebrities. The study explores how these opinions shape beauty norms. Findings are discussed under three themes: Unrealistic Beauty Ideals, Religion and Morality, and Success and Fame.

Statement of the Problem

This research examines how YouTube and Instagram shape public views on beauty. It focuses on cosmetic treatments in Pakistani celebrity culture. Celebrities promote idealized, surgically altered beauty standards. These standards may influence societal attitudes. The study uses YouTube comments and Instagram posts as sources of public discourse. It aims to understand how these representations affect sentiments toward cosmetic treatments in Pakistan.

Research objectives

- To find out the impact of cosmetically modified celebrities on social grooming and how they reflect public perception regarding beauty standards in the society of Pakistan.
- To examine public views on cosmetic treatments through corpus analysis of YouTube comments about Pakistani celebrities.

Research Questions

- How does consumer culture shape audience views on beauty and self-worth in comments about Pakistani celebrities with cosmetic treatments?
- How do audiences evaluate celebrities' decisions to get cosmetic treatments, based on YouTube video comments and Instagram posts?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cosmetic treatments have changed from a specialized medical practice into a mainstream phenomenon over the past 20 years, ingrained in popular culture and everyday life. The rise of minimally invasive treatments, the commercialization of aesthetic medicine, and the increasing visibility of cosmetic transformations have all facilitated this change. Social media, or we can say the digital revolution, for instance, platforms like Instagram and YouTube have drastically changed how beauty is perceived and constructed. Such platforms not only emphasize idealized standards of appearance but also provide tools for users to transform and curate their digital identities, which blur the line between reality as well as representation. Interdisciplinary research shows social media increases body dissatisfaction. It also boosts interest in cosmetic procedures. Social media shapes public views on aesthetic enhancements. Surgical and non-surgical changes are now common. They are not limited to celebrities. These practices influence the daily lives and goals of youth worldwide. Past studies explored media's impact on body image. However, many ignored psychological, cultural, and linguistic factors. This is especially true in non-Western regions like South Asia. The cosmetic industry is growing there but remains understudied.

This section reviews literature related to this study. The study examines public discourse on cosmetic treatments in Pakistani celebrity culture. It uses a corpus-based linguistic approach. The review is organized thematically. It provides a clear overview of the field. It identifies specific gaps that support the research design.

Cosmetic Enhancement and Body Image

Sadick (2008) highlights those cosmetic interventions, including surgical and nonsurgical, significantly influence patients' psychological well-being besides overall quality of life, even though these effects have been underexplored historically. In recent decades, cosmetic treatments have increased significantly, particularly nonsurgical procedures like Botox and fillers. There is a growing perception that patient satisfaction not only depends on physical results but also emotional, social, and psychological developments. Studies have revealed that cosmetic surgery can result in marked enhancements in patients' confidence, psychology, and social interactions, with significant reductions in depression as well as anxiety. Treatments such as breast reduction and facelifts have been linked with enhanced quality of life and emotional stability. But there is not much good evidence on nonsurgical cosmetic treatments, such as those using hyaluronic acid or calcium hydroxylapatite. Most data for non-operatively performed treatments are only available in specific populations, including patients with HIV-related facial lipoatrophy, for whom injectable procedures have recently demonstrated increased self-esteem, psychological health, and socialization. Sadick suggests that quality of life should be a significant test of

the success of cosmetic treatments and that reliable, valid instruments to measure subjective outcomes should be created. Given that patient expectations are usually beyond physical appearance, to feel young, self-confident and even socially accepted, and for this reason, a more holistic view of everyday cosmetic dermatology is well justified.

Impact of Social Media and Influencers

Cazzato, Ellis, & Makris (2024) examine the impact of exposure to cosmetically modified images on self-recognizing and attitudes to aesthetic surgery. The researchers studied 30 young women ages 18 to 24, who were exposed to digitally altered images of their faces that had been transformed to include characteristics of other women who had received cosmetic procedures like lip and cheek fillers. Participants performed a face recognition task. They viewed faces for two durations: short (500 ms) and long (2000 ms). With brief exposure (less than 1 second), participants showed a self-bias. They identified morphed faces as themselves. With longer exposure, they identified the faces as belonging to another woman. These shifts were stronger in participants who accepted cosmetic surgery. They were also stronger in those with higher body dysmorphic concerns. The results suggest that enhanced facial images, including digital manipulations, may alter self-perceptions. These images may also promote cosmetic norms. The study highlights the psychological impact of cosmetic treatment imagery. It raises concerns about reinforcing appearance-based anxieties. It also addresses the normalization of body alterations. The findings show how visual exposure and beauty standards shape attitudes and identity in cosmetic culture.

Corpus Linguistics & Digital Discourse

Understanding audience views on celebrity cosmetic enhancements requires examining Eurocentric beauty norms in Pakistani skincare discourse. Mujahid and Kalim (2024) conducted a corpus-assisted discourse analysis. They studied 37 blogs from three Pakistani healthcare websites: Oladoc, Healthwire, and Instagramcare. Their research showed dermatological products and treatments promote skin whitening, fairness, and youthfulness. Holistic skincare methods were less emphasized. Using Sketch Engine and Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional discourse model, the analysis revealed blogs reinforced Eurocentric beauty standards. They portrayed skin as a beauty marker, not a vital organ. Words like "glowing," "radiant," and "white" dominated the corpus. These terms framed beauty as achievable only through commercial or medical interventions. This framework relates to our research on celebrity cosmetic choices. Audience comments likely reflect these internalized standards. People may praise changes aligning with Eurocentric ideals or criticize deviations. The monetization of skincare as aesthetic regimens suggests social acceptance requires such modifications. This shapes how audiences evaluate celebrities. Mujahid and Kalim's findings show healthcare media normalize these beauty norms. They present them as appealing and medically endorsed. This influences linguistic patterns of praise, criticism, or moral judgment in audience discourse about celebrity cosmetic treatments. The study highlights the ideological and sociocultural context of online discussions about cosmetic enhancements in Pakistani celebrity culture (Mujahid & Kalim, 2024).

Social Media Influence and Cosmetic Surgery Adoption in Pakistan

Social media platforms strongly influence beauty values and cosmetic decisions in Pakistan. Understanding this helps explain public views on celebrity aesthetics. Arif et al. (2022) conducted a quantitative study with 340 young women in Lahore. The study explored how social media shapes attitudes toward cosmetic procedures. It identified three key predictors of cosmetic treatment adoption: trust in practitioners, attractive promotional offers, and social media content influence. Women who frequently viewed beauty content on Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube showed greater interest in non-

surgical facial procedures. Many also adopted these procedures. Surprisingly, celebrity endorsements had little impact. They even showed a slight negative correlation with adoption behavior.

This finding contradicts earlier research from Western contexts where celebrity influence is often a dominant factor in cosmetic choices. In Pakistan, skepticism toward celebrity authenticity, especially in the wake of poorly executed or visibly altered appearances, may contribute to this resistance. Furthermore, the study links women's psychological engagement with social media content, such as before-and-after transformation posts and beautification filters, to increased internalization of idealized beauty standards. This digital setting nurtures a form of materialistic anxiety, wherein individuals compare themselves to curated images. Hence, the portrayal of celebrities undergoing cosmetic treatments becomes a site of negotiation between admiration, emulation, and critique. For corpus-based research into online public responses, this social media context offers fertile ground for exploring how language is used to reflect approval, disapproval, moral judgment, or aesthetic appreciation of celebrities' enhanced looks (Arif et al., 2022).

Religious and Ethical Discourse around Cosmetic Surgery

Fatima & Batool (2023) studied the Plastic Surgery from an Islamic and conventional perspective with special reference to Pakistan. The article talks about how the media endorses cosmetic and aesthetic treatment, which is against the teachings of Islam; medical and functional measures are permissible, while aesthetic surgery for beautification is forbidden as it changes God's creation. Cosmetic surgeries are only permitted and accepted when they are necessary treatments to prevent harm, but they are not for beautification, according to Islamic law. The article also details the history of plastic surgery in Pakistan, though it also focuses on ethical and regulatory issues within the specialty.

Beauty Ideals, Cosmetic Culture, and Consumer Safety in Pakistan

Khan et al. (2021) significantly investigate the growing trend of personal-care cosmetic usage within Pakistan, with an explicit focus on the lethal ingredients found in locally produced skin-whitening creams along with other beauty products. The study uncovers an alarming increase in the use of cosmetic products having mercury, lead, corticosteroids, besides other toxic chemicals, many of which far exceed internationally accepted safety limits. This rise is closely connected to cultural beauty values that compare lighter skin with attractiveness or social acceptance, particularly among women. Consequently, consumers, frequently unaware of the linked health risks, continue to use these products in pursuit of aesthetic enrichment. The authors highlight the serious medical problems linked to these ingredients, which include skin illnesses, hormonal imbalances, infertility, and several forms of cancer. Furthermore, the article focuses on the environmental outcomes of cosmetic waste, specifically how heavy metals and chemicals from cosmetic containers and residues play their role in pollution and impact marine life. Whereas regulatory efforts have begun, such as the participation of the Pakistan Standards and Quality Control Authority (PSQCA), also legislation targeting illegal cosmetic manufacturing, the authors claim that enforcement lacks consistency. They encourage Pakistan to promote more inclusive cosmetic safety regulations, developed after the European Union's standards, to protect both public health as well as the environment.

Media Representation and Normalization of Cosmetic Treatment

Media in Pakistan, mostly beauty and dermatology advertisements, play a key role in shaping public attitudes toward cosmetic treatments. Sarwer et al. (2024) analyzed ten beauty advertisements in Pakistan and found that they often use credibility, emotions, and logic to persuade people, mostly through celebrity endorsements like Shaista Lodhi, Fazeela Abbasi, Momina Iqbal, and Dananeer Mubeen. Cosmetic ads target youth, confidence, and beauty. They rarely address risks or ethical issues. These ads exploit fears of

ageing or inadequacy. They present cosmetic treatments as normal and desirable. This portrayal aligns with celebrity experiences. It influences how the public discusses and judges celebrities' cosmetic choices online.

Gaps in Literature

Many studies express that social media, influencers, and appearance-based comparisons affect body image and increase the demand for cosmetic treatments. While most of this work is based on Western contexts and focuses on psychology or marketing, however, less attention is given to how language shapes these ideas in everyday public talk. This gap is important in South Asia, where celebrity culture, cosmetic industries, and cultural sensitivities overlap. To address this, this study examines how online audiences on YouTube and Instagram discuss and judge Pakistani celebrities' cosmetic surgeries. Using a corpus-based discourse approach, it looks at hedging, evaluative language, identity construction, and key recurring themes in public comments.

METHODOLOGY

This study used corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS by Gillings, Mautner, and Baker, 2023) approach to explore how people in Pakistan talk about celebrity cosmetic treatments on social media. Unlike surveys or interviews, CADS captures natural and spontaneous reactions. The analysis was guided by four key theories, Baudrillard's consumerism (1998), Bandura's observational learning (1977), Goffman's self-presentation (1956), and Butler's performativity (1990), and focused on three themes: unrealistic beauty ideals, religion and morality, and success and fame. The data came from comments on 30 YouTube videos and 30 Instagram posts about Pakistani celebrities linked with cosmetic procedures such as Botox, fillers, rhinoplasty, and skin treatments, covering the last decade. Roman Urdu comments were translated into English and cleaned using Python, leaving 33,705 relevant tokens after purposive sampling. AntConc analyzed word frequency, collocation, and concordance to find patterns. Using both YouTube and Instagram improved reliability. Studying natural comments ensured authenticity. Careful translation preserved the comments' meaning.

Analytical Framework

The results were analyzed using four theoretical perspectives.

- Baudrillard (consumerism) 1998: cosmetic enhancements as symbols of value and success.
- Bandura (observational learning) 1977: normalization of surgery through celebrity modeling.
- Goffman (self-presentation) 1956: cosmetic procedures as intentional image management.
- Butler (performativity) 1990: repetition of surgical practices as identity construction.

These perspectives created a conceptual framework. They positioned cosmetic treatments as both a celebrity performance and a publicly debated practice in Pakistani digital culture.

ANALYSIS

This section examines how Pakistani audiences discuss celebrities with cosmetic enhancements. It analyzes comments from YouTube and Instagram. These comments reflect more than personal opinions. They reveal cultural concerns about beauty, identity, religion, ageing, gender, and success. The study explores word patterns to understand appreciation or criticism of these practices. Comments often connect

to morality and social expectations. The analysis uses four theories: Baudrillard's view of beauty as a commodity (1998), Bandura's idea (1977) of audiences imitating or resisting role models, Goffman's concept of self-presentation (1956), and Butler's theory (1990) of repeated gendered beauty practices. AntConc software analyzed keywords and patterns. Results are organized into three main themes. These themes show how online language reflects broader social meanings in Pakistan.

Corpus Description and Method of Analysis

The data for this study came from comments on 30 Instagram posts and 30 YouTube videos of Pakistani celebrities linked with cosmetic treatments for instance Botox, fillers, skin lightening, and rhinoplasty. Both male and female stars such as Hania Amir, Naimal Khawar, Alizeh Shah, Ayeza Khan, Mahira Khan, Mehwish Hayat, Fahad Mustafa, and Fawad Khan were included, as their changing looks attract wide public attention. The comments, collected from 2018 to 2025, reflect current views shaped by new beauty trends and influencer culture. The original corpus had over 53,000 words, which was later cleaned with Python to 33,705 words by removing emojis, duplicates, and irrelevant content. The final dataset was imported into AntConc for analysis. Tools such as frequency lists, collocates, and concordance helped identify common words (like "natural," "Botox," "fake," and "beauty") and their use in context. This mixed approach of numbers and meanings made it possible to see how online audience talk about beauty, morality, and identity, forming the basis for the following three themes in this study.

Unrealistic Beauty Ideals

This theme explores how the audience identifies and critiques Pakistani celebrities' cosmetic treatments as contributors to unrealistic beauty standards and artificial appearances. Many user-generated comments include words like "plastic," "unnatural," "artificial," and "fake." These words show discomfort with visibly altered appearances. The comments reflect a preference for "natural" beauty. They also express skepticism toward surgically enhanced looks.

The corpus data analysis shows how audiences view cosmetic enhancements. Keyword frequency and concordances reveal recurring terms. These terms include "fake," "plastic," "unnatural," "Botox," and "surgery." Each term carries strong negative connotations. AntConc's analysis highlights these patterns. Comments often judge the visible results of cosmetic procedures. Criticism is strongest when procedures seem excessive.

Words like *plastic* and *fake* were particularly common in descriptions of facial features, used to point out the loss of natural charm and beauty and the presence of artificiality. Collocates, for instance, *face*, *look*, *before*, *used to be*, and *natural* often complement these evaluations, signifying a narrative of decline. Celebrities who were once admired for their natural beauty are now tagged as having "ruined" their looks through over-enhancement.

The following table shows the key findings from AntConc data:

Table 1: Unrealistic Beauty Ideals – Frequencies and Collocates

Keyword	Frequency	Collocate
Surgery	338	Plastic, cosmetic, Allah, lip
Face	226	Ruined
Beauty	150	Natural, real, standards, lost
Plastic	88	Surgery
Botox	39	Fillers, preventative, cost, sir
Fake	28	-

Cosmetic	23	Procedures, surgery, surgeon
Artificial	20	-
Unnatural	16	Stiff, look
Enhancements	15	Naturally

The word “surgery” (338) has the highest frequency, frequently collocating with key terms such as *plastic*, *cosmetic*, *Allah*, and *lip*, showing that cosmetic treatments are often discussed along with both appearance as well as religious sentiment, illustrating public discomfort with bodily changes. Likewise, “face” (226) occurred often with negative collocates such as *ruined*, highlighting the view that such treatments lead to an unnatural result. The “beauty” (150) “, plastic” (88) and “Botox” (39) keywords further discuss the natural beauty ideals and artificial improvements, with common collocates like *real*, *natural*, and *standards* indicating a nostalgic or moralized preference for unaltered looks. The presence of terms such as “fake” (28), “artificial” (20), “unnatural” (16), and “enhancements” (15), even at lower frequencies, still contributes to the discourse of disapproval besides discomfort. The public's rejection of cosmetic enhancements as fake is also deeply intertwined with cultural and religious norms, stressing how beauty ideals in Pakistani society are constructed not just by media influence but also by collective moral frameworks.

This discursive pattern uncovers that cosmetic treatment is not only critiqued on a medical or aesthetic basis but also subjected to moral judgment and cultural policing. The comments carry a tone of sarcasm or disapproval, where the public expresses dissatisfaction not only with the practices themselves but with the broader beauty standards they symbolize. For instance, a comment said, “*Now his faces look stiff and unnatural, another influencer who ruined her natural beauty for the trend*”. The phrase “*ruined face*”, for example, acts as a condensed critique of the celebrity's decision, body autonomy, and submission to commercialized ideals.

Thus, the keyword data suggests that audience perception of cosmetic procedures is profoundly shaped by ideals of authenticity, and those who are seen as betraying these ideals are discursively marked as “less real,” “less beautiful,” or “less relatable or “artificial”” These findings provide a linguistic entry point into the larger ideological concerns that are further explored through thematic and theoretical interpretation in the following section.

Thematic Interpretation

Many people dislike when Pakistani celebrities modify their natural looks with cosmetic procedures. Comments frequently call them “plastic,” “fake,” or “unnatural,” showing that the public values natural beauty and sees surgery as a sign of insecurity. Baudrillard's idea explains this as beauty turning into a product linked with fame and success, while Bandura (1977) displays that people may copy celebrities but also reject them when the beauty feels fake. Goffman's theory (1956) suggests surgery is a performance to please the public. However, it is often seen as inauthentic. Butler's performativity explains how repeated acts like Botox and fillers shape beauty norms. When many celebrities look similar, audiences feel uneasy. They often complain that “everyone looks the same.”

Religion and Morality

The corpus reveals a key pattern linking aesthetic enhancements to religious and moral decision-making in Pakistan. Islamic values and ethical norms strongly shape public perceptions and decisions. Cosmetic treatments are often seen as more than personal expression. Many view them as spiritual sins. Public comments frequently cite Islamic concepts, Quranic references, and divine law. These are used to condemn or disapprove of cosmetic procedures.

AntConc was used for keyword frequency analysis. The analysis explored the theme of religion and morality. Religious language appeared frequently in the corpus. Terms like "Allah," "haram," "Islam," "modesty," "sin," "shame," and "punishment" were common. These keywords shaped moral judgments about celebrities' altered appearances. They were emotionally charged and critical. This reflects deep cultural and spiritual investment.

Concordance lines like "Allah made you perfect" and "Cosmetic surgery is haram" were common. These view cosmetic treatments as unnatural and against divine intent. The body is seen as a God-given entity. It should be respected in its original form. Changing the body is framed as rebellion against religious teachings.

Comments also tied cosmetic enhancements to moral degeneration. Words like "shameless," "sinful," and "deserving of punishment" were used. These terms show cosmetic procedures are not just aesthetic but moral issues. This is especially true for female celebrities.

The choice to undergo these treatments is not seen in isolation but as a moral failure or spiritual risk that has outcomes not only in this life but in the hereafter.

The keywords are often grouped around judgmental phrases and metaphors, for example, "*She will be punished for changing Allah's creation*" or "*Shameless display of vanity*". Such language explains how online discourse is based on religion to police behaviour, especially in public figures who are seen as role models.

Below is a table with the frequency of keywords and some of the most common collocates concerning the surrounding discourse:

Table 2: Religion and Morality – Frequencies and Collocates

Keyword	Frequency	Collocate
Allah	108	Made, given, created, perfect, will
Haram	92	Islam, totally, wrong, act, fake
Sin	76	God, shameful, punished, wrong, creation
Islam	61	Haram, Muslim, fake, values, forbid
Shame	52	Have, girl, modesty, fake, body
Modesty	35	Lose, woman, respect, Islam, should
Punishment	27	Afterlife, deserve hell, God, sin

The frequency table 2 highlights the core of religious and moral discourse in constructing public attitudes towards cosmetic procedures in Pakistani celebrity culture. The most frequently occurring term "Allah" (108), with collocates for instance *made*, *created*, and *perfect*, reflects the belief that modifying one's appearance interferes with divine creation. Likewise, "haram" (92) and "sin" (76) strongly link cosmetic treatments with moral and spiritual transgression, co-occurring with terms like *Islam*, *wrong*, *punished*, and *shameful*. This clearly shows the public's tendency to judge cosmetic enhancements as violations of Islamic teachings. The words "Islam" (61), "shame" (52), and "modesty" (35) reflect that the public frequently frames cosmetic treatments as a rejection of religious and cultural values, notably targeting women with expectations of bodily modesty as well as spiritual obedience. The key term "punishment" (27), with collocates such as *afterlife*, *deserve hell*, and *God*, illustrates a warning that those people who undergo these treatments may face divine consequences.

This lexical pattern aligns with Butler's theory of performativity. Religious identity is reinforced through repeated discourse. It also supports Goffman's concept of the moral self (1956). The self is shaped by community expectations. The data shows cosmetic procedures are not neutral choices. They are morally charged decisions. They are judged through a religious lens rooted in culture.

These collocates reveal how audience language shapes discourse. Beauty is framed as a moral issue under spiritual control, not a personal choice. Keywords like "Allah," "haram," "sin," "punishment," and "modesty" link repeatedly to cosmetic treatments. This reflects an ideology where aesthetics follow Islamic ethics. Celebrities' treatments become sites of ethical judgment, not just visual assessment. The body symbolizes divine creation. Modifications are seen as violating sacred boundaries. Discourse shifts from appearance to accountability. Public figures answer to fans and religious ideals.

This moral framing targets female celebrities most. Their bodies become public texts for judgment and correction via religious discourse. Terms like "shame," "modesty," and "punishment" cluster around their choices. This enforces religious norms and gender roles. The public acts as guardians of cultural-religious boundaries. Individual decisions turn into communal obligations. Language here is normative, not just descriptive. It dictates body changes, who can make them, and when they become sinful.

In Pakistani online comments, cosmetic procedures are often judged as religious and moral issues, not just beauty choices. Many use Islamic terms, calling procedures sinful, shameful, or against Allah's will. This shows religion's resistance to modern beauty trends. Baudrillard's view (1998) sees the body as a consumer product. Faith challenges this, labeling it false and immoral. Goffman's idea (1956) suggests celebrities should show modesty. Surgery leads to public criticism for losing respect. Bandura's theory (1977) indicates celebrities are role models. Audiences worry surgery normalizes un-Islamic lifestyles. Butler's performativity (1990) is seen in repeated words like "Astaghfirullah" and "shame." These guide how women should look and act. This theme highlights tension between consumer-driven beauty and religious values in Pakistani society.

Thematic Interpretation

In Pakistani online comments, cosmetic procedures are often judged as religious and moral issues, not just beauty choices. Many use Islamic terms, calling procedures sinful, shameful, or against Allah's will. This shows religion's resistance to modern beauty trends. Baudrillard's view (1998) sees the body as a consumer product. Faith challenges this, labeling it false and immoral. Goffman's idea (1956) suggests celebrities should show modesty. Surgery leads to public criticism for losing respect. Bandura's theory (1977) indicates celebrities are role models. Audiences worry surgery normalizes un-Islamic lifestyles. Butler's performativity (1990) is seen in repeated words like "Astaghfirullah" and "shame." These guide how women should look and act. This theme highlights tension between consumer-driven beauty and religious values in Pakistani society.

Success and Fame

This theme reveals the strong connection between cosmetic treatments and professional success in the Pakistani entertainment industry. The corpus uncovers that cosmetic treatments are often discussed not merely as tools for self-improvement, but as a strategy tied to fame, relevance, and career sustainability in the long term. Many comments portray the perception that celebrity resort to aesthetic alteration to remain competitive, relevant, and to gain public attention, specifically in a rapidly evolving media landscape that places a premium on physical perfection.

By using AntConc, words related to celebrity, professional advancement, and industry dynamics were explored to understand how the public linked success in the entertainment industry with cosmetic treatments. Even though some of these key terms, such as success, showbiz, career, and fame, did not appear very often, their discursive context was incredibly insightful and rich. Physical appearance was repeatedly conveyed in the comments surrounding these keywords as a professional tool that is important for determining identity, longevity, and relevance in a highly competitive industry.

The term *"industry"* was frequently used in expressions like *"this is what the industry demands"* or *"to survive in this industry, beauty matters,"* indicating that cosmetic change is not a choice but rather a requirement for professional growth. Similarly, the term *"fame"* was often related to *"face," "surgery,"* or *"beauty,"* suggesting that both skill and aesthetic conformity are credited with gaining public recognition.

Statements such as *"she became successful after her makeover"* or *"her career took off after surgery"* were among the comments mentioning success as well as career. Similarly, *"everyone already knows no actresses become famous without enhancements. Hania was naturally beautiful since birth"*, statements indicate a causal relationship between professional development and physical treatments. These connections propose that audiences are aware of and sometimes critical of how deliberate body alteration is used to maintain celebrity status.

The term *"showbiz"* was often linked to *plastic, fake, and pressure*, implying that the entertainment industry is identified as complicit in the promotion of unnatural beauty for celebrities. The discourse exhibits a cynical understanding of the visual economy of fame, which holds that being "marketable" is more worthy than having natural talent. Though the keyword *glow* often had sarcastic undertones, with the public signifying that the "glow" seen on celebrity faces was artificial and cosmetically enhanced. For instance, comments such as *"the glow comes from fillers, not happiness"* or *"her glow disappeared with her real face"* show how cosmetic procedures are usually viewed with suspicion and irony.

The table below summarizes the frequency and collocations of keywords:

Table 5: Success and Fame – Frequencies and Collocates

Keyword	Frequency	Collocate
Industry	37	Profits, inches, Pakistan, film
Success	34	May, give, change
Successful	29	Actresses
Showbiz	27	Haram, surgery, lifestyle
Famous	15	Actress, robots, overweight
Fame	14	Achieving, bringing, arrogant
Glow	13	Natural, surgery, disappears
Career	11	Ruin, rise, boost

Frequency Table 5 reflects how success, fame, and industry ambition are closely connected to cosmetic treatments in public discourse. The key term "industry" occurred 37 times, frequently alongside collocates such as *"profits," "Pakistan,"* and *"film,"* indicating that cosmetic treatments are considered as strategic moves within the media industry. Key terms like "success" (34) "successful" (29), and "career" (11), were related with notions of *"change," "actresses," "rise,"* and *"boost,"* supporting the idea that physical appearance is a crucial asset for professional growth. The occurrence of words like "showbiz" (27) and "fame" (14) and "famous" (15), collocating with key terms such as *"haram," "lifestyle," "arrogant," "actress," "robots," "overweight,"* shows a moral tension between ambition, religious and cultural expectations. Such patterns connect with Baudrillard's concept of consumerism (1998), where the body becomes a commodified object managed for visibility and value. The public's

comments show how beauty is perceived not only as aesthetic, but as a capital tool in achieving acceptance, success and longevity in a competitive media industry.

The above keyword in context reveals that cosmetic appearance is not just about personal satisfaction or self-esteem; it is often viewed as a professional strategy, specifically in celebrity culture. Through these patterns, the public creates a discourse in which beauty becomes a must for fame.

Thematic Interpretation

People frequently see cosmetic procedures not just as personal choices but as career tools in film, fashion, and television. Celebrities are expected to look young, flawless, and glamorous to keep their fame. Many comments emphasize that people believe success in showbiz depends more on looks than on talent, with remarks like “fame comes from surgery, not skill.” Theories help present this: Baudrillard (1998) reflects how beauty becomes a product to sell, Goffman (1956) enlightens how stars present a “perfect face” to the public, Butler points out that fame is kept through repeated acts like surgeries and makeup, and Bandura (1977) highlights how fans learn to connect beauty with success. Overall, cosmetic procedures are widely seen as a way for celebrities to survive and grow in their careers. In today’s media-driven world, beauty is not only admired but demanded, making it a symbol of success.

Platform-specific Dynamic: YouTube vs. Instagram

Let’s talk about how the public talks differently in the comment section on YouTube and Instagram. These two social media platforms have different styles of comments, and that influences how people share their views about celebrities and cosmetic procedures.

On YouTube, people often write longer, straightforward comments, and they keep it informal. People speak very openly, and they don’t hesitate if they use harsh or blunt words, specifically when talking about things such as fake beauty or religion. For instance, there was a comment, “*She looks like a plastic doll*” or “*they all have duck faces*”; moreover, “*now she looks like an old aunty*”. YouTube is a social media space that gives people the freedom to comment without showing their real identity, so they feel free to say whatever they like. We see, YouTube fosters more direct judgment. On the contrary, Instagram comments are shorter. Many include emojis and are not very direct. Publicly do criticize, but more softly or politely. “*You looked better before*” or “*Mashallah, natural beauty is always best*” similarly, “*she is just following the trend*” besides “*she is in showbiz, of course, she needs to look good*”. This is because many people on Instagram use their real names and follow each other. So, they don’t want to sound too rude. However, it is debatable still because people often make fake accounts and from that fake account, they can hide their identity, so they get the liberty to say anything, even use profane language. For example, one comment stated, “*Plastic face, what a joke!*” The three themes in this study show clear differences. YouTube comments are more open and critical. Instagram comments are more polite and show passive disagreement. This suggests the platform type shapes how people discuss cosmetic treatments and celebrities.

CONCLUSION

This study explores how people perceive celebrities who undergo cosmetic procedures. It analyzes YouTube and Instagram comments using corpus tools like AntConc. The research identifies various language patterns in these comments. Public opinion is mixed. Some praise celebrities for cosmetic treatments and view them as role models. Others criticize them for altering natural looks or violating cultural and religious norms. The comments show social media shapes beauty perceptions. People often imitate online trends. For example, if a celebrity gets a nose job, Botox, or lip fillers and is praised, younger audiences may feel pressure to follow. These actions set beauty standards and trends. This idea

supports Bandura's concept of observational learning (1977), where people learn by watching other people. Goffman's theory of self-presentation (1956) also helps in explaining in detail why celebrities might feel the need to look perfect all the time, this is because they are constantly being watched and judged online by the public. Moreover, the comments show Baudrillard's idea of consumerism (1998). According to it, People are manipulated by media images, and they frequently want to achieve an ideal appearance that may not even be real or natural, it's more like a copy of a copy, i-e a simulacrum. Likewise, Butler's idea of performativity can be observed in how women, particularly are expected to look in certain ways to be accepted or praised by the people in society. Overall, this study shows that cosmetic treatments are not just a personal choice. However, they are deeply connected to social media, public opinion, cultural expectations, and the pressure to meet unrealistic beauty ideals. The online discourse, which here is in the form of comments and the language used in it unravels the beliefs, values and the contradiction in perception of Pakistani society related to beauty and the celebrity culture.

Limitations

This study has following limitations:

- The study used a limited dataset, analyzing comments only from YouTube and Instagram, excluding other platforms like TikTok.
- There was also a language constraint, as only English comments were included; comments in other languages or Roman English were translated into English.
- Demographic Information isn't provided because we didn't know the age, gender, or background (actual ethnic background) of the people who wrote the comments, so we couldn't study those factors.
- The comments were made within a set timeframe, and this study is restricted to the year 2025. Future studies may focus on different time frame to study this topic because people's perception might change over time.

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