

# Perceptions of Kandahar University Lecturers on the Socio-Cultural Influence of Indian Serials on Afghan Society

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines Afghan university lecturers' perceptions of the social and cultural impacts of Indian serials on Afghan society. The study seeks to understand how these serials may influence Afghan culture, behaviour, and social values, drawing on lecturers' experiences and observations. Using a quantitative cross-sectional survey, the data were collected from 172 lecturers at Kandahar University via a structured Likert-scale questionnaire administered online. Descriptive statistics and chi-square tests were used to study perceptions of family values, language, morality, and social behaviour. Results show predominantly negative perceptions, particularly regarding moral norms and family values, with education level showing a statistically significant association with perceived cultural impact. The study contributes to the media effects literature by highlighting the role of education and cultural capital in shaping responses to foreign media in conservative societies. Implications for media literacy and cultural policy are discussed. The study contributes to media and cultural discourse in Afghanistan by emphasizing the need for stronger local content production and media literacy education to help viewers critically engage with foreign media. The research also offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and content creators who aim to preserve Afghan cultural identity while navigating the growing influence of global entertainment. The study's content demonstrates the researchers' originality. Although Indian serials have had a significant influence on Afghan society in several areas, very little research has been conducted to date. The responses of Kandahar University lecturers underline the importance of addressing these media-driven cultural changes thoughtfully and strategically.

**Keywords:** Indian serials, Afghan society, lecturers, Kandahar University, socio-cultural influence

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## 1. Introduction

For decades, the media have played a central role in shaping individuals' perceptions, beliefs, and social values, particularly through visual storytelling formats such as television serials. Among many forms of this medium, serials have emerged as an impactful mode of storytelling, presenting narratives that reflect social challenges, customs, and everyday life (Mittell, 2015; Newcomb & Hirsch, 1983). Shakespeare (1623) famously remarked, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players". Today, that stage is often found on the screens of people all over the world; serials are not only watched for entertainment but also change how people think, act, and speak (Straubhaar, 2007).

Serials emotionally engage viewers through complex narratives and extended character development, fostering long-term identification and influencing viewers' attitudes and social interpretations, and cultivating identification and sustained focus (Mittell, 2015). These stories do more than entertain; they also reinforce cultural values, gender roles, and family dynamics, quietly influencing societal norms (Ang, 1985; Gerbner et al., 2002). In certain circumstances, serials have been deliberately employed for educational and social reform initiatives, tackling topics such as gender equality, domestic violence, and corruption (Singhal & Rogers, 1999).

Following the expansion of media access after 2001, particularly through satellite television and regional broadcasting, Indian serials gained widespread popularity among Afghan audiences. (Naz & Iraqi, 2017; Wafa & Galla, 2008). Aladdin and other shows have become a big part of everyday life, especially for women and youth (Ruwandeepa, 2011). Although they offer enjoyment, numerous scholars and educators have stated that these serials affect language, social manners, and cultural norms (Daqiq & Hashemi, 2021; Khan, 2023). Many viewers and social observers perceive the lifestyles and values portrayed in these serials as conflicting with Afghan cultural traditions and Islamic teachings. Osman (2020) and Naz & Iraqi (2017) argue that characters in Indian serials often behave in ways not acceptable in Afghan society, such as being friendly in public, wearing skimpy clothes, and not following traditional gender roles. Examining the perspectives of educated individuals, particularly university lecturers, is essential as they frequently observe social and behavioral changes among students and the wider community who see the impact of Indian serials on students and society (Khan, 2023).

Research conducted among Afghan university students indicates a dominant consumption of international serials, with a considerable segment asserting that these programs circulate ideas that conflict with Islamic beliefs (Daqiq & Hashemi, 2021). Similar cultural influences have been observed in various South Asian and Muslim-majority contexts, where exposure to Indian serials has affected wedding customs, clothing, and language (Juni et al., 2014; Shamsheer & Abdullah, 2012). These changes are especially sensitive in Afghanistan since religion and tradition play such a big role in everyday life (Tomlinson, 2003). Critics emphasize that frequent exposure nurtures unreasonable expectations among children and challenges familial systems (Salam, 2013; Khan, 2023). Religious authorities have seriously opposed these serials, highlighting that such material raises un-Islamic behaviors, including premarital relationships, alcohol usage, and neglect of hijab (Osman, 2020). In response, government officials, under pressure from religious leaders, have tried to ban or control serial content that they think is harmful to culture (Wafa & Galla, 2008).

**Problem Statement:** Serials have become an important part of modern entertainment in many countries, including Afghanistan. Indian serials, in particular, have gained large popularity among Afghan viewers over the past two decades. These serials often depict lifestyles, cultures, and social behaviors that differ from traditional Afghan values. Many university lecturers and social observers have raised concerns that these serials may influence the way Afghan people, especially the youth, think, behave, and interact in their daily lives.

Some Afghan lecturers report observing changes among students, including the use of foreign words, adoption of Indian fashion styles, and altered social behaviors. However, lecturers acknowledge that certain aspects of Indian serials may be perceived as neutral or even positive, such as increased cultural awareness or greater familiarity with the language. Despite these mixed opinions, there has been little direct academic research to understand how university lecturers view these social impacts. Their observations can help reveal whether Indian serials shape cultural, social, and behavioral trends in ways that affect Afghan society. The results of this study will help researchers and other related parties to know about the impacts of Indian serials on Afghan society.

**1.1. Purpose of the Study:** This study aims to investigate the perceptions of Kandahar University lecturers regarding the social and cultural impacts of Indian serials on Afghan society using a quantitative survey approach. The study seeks to understand how these serials may influence Afghan culture, behavior, and social values, based on the lecturers' experiences and observations.

## **1.2. Research Questions:**

- 1- What are the perceptions and experiences of Kandahar University lecturers regarding the social impacts of Indian serials in Afghanistan?
- 2- Does education level have any significance regarding the impacts of Indian serials on family values?

## **2. Literature review**

Serials have become a significant means of storytelling in modern times. They provide more than just entertainment; they also shape feelings, customs, and everyday behavior (Darwishean, 2021; Razu et

al., 2021). Serials were once shown live in cinemas, but now they reach millions of people's homes and pockets, and change the way they think, dress, talk, and interact, especially in South Asian nations like Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. A growing body of regional research highlights the influence of Indian television serials on social behavior, language use, and cultural practices in South Asia. Razu et al. (2018) found that these serials influence viewers' lifestyles, language, and familial relationships, with many individuals, particularly women, adopting Indian clothing styles and speech patterns. Religious officials in Afghanistan have criticized the appearance of women in saris and family problems, saying that these images go against Afghan and Islamic notions (Darwishean, 2021). Bangladeshi students also acknowledged that people have changed their priorities and are becoming less involved with local culture (Tarannum & Siddiqa, 2024).

Rahmani et al. (2023) documented a synthesis of Hindi language with native Afghan languages, notably Dari and Pashto, especially among the youth. They state that language is one of the areas that is most clearly affected. Indian serials have also had an impact on fashion and how people act around each other in Pakistan (Ali et al., 2014; Yousaf et al., 2014). Exposure to these serials has been associated with shifts in how individuals perceive cultural norms, traditions, and social roles. Ali et al. (2014) and Yousaf et al. (2014), researchers from Pakistan, reported that women in Pakistan have started dressing like Indian TV characters and utilizing Hindi words in their everyday lives. Researchers see this as cultural circulation, where being exposed to something again and over changes local customs and values (Darwishean, 2021; Tarannum & Siddiqa, 2024).

Several studies indicate that Indian serials frequently portray social norms such as premarital relationships, gender interactions, and lifestyle choices that are perceived as inconsistent with Islamic principles. Daqiq and Hashemi (2021) discovered that 96% of students at Takhar University frequently view foreign serials, with more than 90% asserting that these materials are against Afghan cultural and religious norms. These shows generally put a lot of emphasis on wealth, romantic love without marriage, and unrealistic ideas about how to live your life. They said that these images make Afghan couples less happy in their marriages and more likely to get divorced. Watching serials is also making the gap between generations bigger. Daqiq and Hashemi (2021) noted that numerous seniors are worried about youth diverging from conventional norms, while adolescents increasingly emulate the romantic and contemporary lifestyles shown in serials. Teachers also say that watching a lot of television changes how students act and who they are, making them less respectful of traditional norms (Naz & Iraqi, 2017; Daqiq & Hashemi, 2021).

Researchers have expressed similar concerns in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Razu et al. (2021) and Helal (2014) state that Indian serials affect how people speak, how they get married, and how they think about gender roles. The romanticized image of women as independent and equal to men can be liberating in some situations, but it is generally seen as a departure from conventional norms. Some serials include extramarital relationships, crime, and Hindu religious symbols, which have upset both parents and religious leaders (Helal, 2014). Women, especially, are shown in ways that make conservative society angry. Viewers frequently emulate the attire, language, and conduct of female characters, often contesting established gender norms (Ali et al., 2014; Darwishean, 2021). Afghan households have expressed apprehensions regarding the disrespect for conventional family structures and the false representations of marriage (Darwishean, 2021).

Besides that, numerous studies confirm that education significantly influences consumers' perceptions of foreign media, particularly regarding the media's impact on cultural values, including those pertaining to family and identity. A sociological study in Pakistan revealed that international media profoundly influenced university students' lifestyles, language, and social habits. These changes were more evident among educated adolescents, suggesting that educational environments not only enhance exposure to foreign media but also foster receptiveness to cultural adaptation. The study underscored the continuous substitution of conventional norms by foreign content, especially among students in academic settings that foster critical thinking and global awareness (Naseer et al., 2014).

Xu et al. (2023) offer additional insight by investigating parental perceptions of multilingual ability as a kind of cultural capital. Based on Bourdieu's theory, they contended that high educational attainment

correlates with more strategic and analytical readings of foreign cultural goods, including media. Parents with higher levels of education were more inclined to view exposure to other languages and associated media content as beneficial for their children’s social mobility. Education not only changes how people use media, but it also changes how they see foreign influence, either as a threat or as a way to gain power (Xu et al., 2023).

Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital offers a strong theoretical framework for comprehending the function of education. Cultural capital, cultivated through formal education, empowers individuals to engage critically with cultural products, including international television shows. Gritsai (2025) examined the influence of parental media education on family values, supporting this perspective. The study revealed that elevated media literacy, frequently associated with advanced education, empowered parents to more effectively assess and regulate media influences on children. Parents with higher education were more likely to set norms and talk about content, which helped them stick to traditional values while dealing with global media exposure (Gritsai, 2025).

The literature demonstrates a statistically significant correlation between the educational attainment of lecturers and their judgments of the impact of Indian serials on family values. Indian serials have a significant impact on the social framework of South Asian societies. These shows may be fun to watch and even teach you something, but most academics agree that they change culture in ways that go against local customs and Islamic beliefs, especially for young men and women.

### 3. Methods and Materials

#### 3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-analytical research design using a cross-sectional survey approach to investigate the social and cultural effects of Indian serials on Afghan society. The primary objective was to analyze university lecturers’ perceptions in Kandahar regarding how these serials influence behavioral patterns, cultural norms, and family values. Quantitative method was chosen to allow for the collection of standardized data that could be statistically analyzed and interpreted with precision.

#### 3.2. Participants

Table 1 outlines the demographic information of the lecturers from Kandahar University who took part in the study examining their perceptions regarding the impact of Indian serials on Afghan society. The table indicates that a significant proportion of respondents are in the younger age categories, with (34.9%) aged 25–30 and (30.2%) aged 31–35, suggesting that over two-thirds (65.1%) of the sample comprises early-career academics. The age distribution indicates that the results likely represent the perspectives of a younger academic demographic, which may have greater exposure to or engagement with television media. A significant percentage of individuals possess a master’s degree (57.6%), while (34.9%) have a bachelor’s degree, and merely (7.6%) hold a PhD. This composition suggests a predominantly postgraduate-educated sample, able to engage critically with cultural and social issues; however, the limited number of doctoral-level respondents may somewhat limit the depth of scholarly reflection. The sample demonstrates diverse faculty representation, comprising participants from eleven academic units, with the Faculty of Education (30.2%), Engineering (15.7%), and Shariah (11.6%) being the most prominent. The inclusion of diverse perspectives, such as pedagogical, technical, religious, and socio-political, strengthens the study’s overall robustness. The inclusion of lecturers from Shariah and Journalism provides culturally and ethically informed perspectives, particularly pertinent due to the sensitive nature of media content within Afghanistan’s conservative social environment. The sample, though confined to Kandahar University, exhibits demographic diversity across age, educational background, and academic discipline, thereby offering a reliable basis for examining the perceived influence of Indian serials on Afghan society.

**Table 1. Demographic Information of the Participants.**

Age	No.	Percentage
25-30	60	34.9%
31-35	52	30.2%

36-40	36	20.9%
40+	24	14.0%
<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bachelor	60	34.9%
Master	99	57.6%
PhD	13	7.6%
<b>Faculty</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Literature	10	5.8%
Economics	7	4.1%
Engineering	27	15.7%
Education	52	30.2%
Pharmacy	3	1.7%
Medicine	14	8.1%
Computer Science	6	3.5%
Law and Political Science	10	5.8%
Public Administration	15	8.7%
Journalism	8	4.7%
Shariah	20	11.6%
Total	172	100.0%

### 3.3. Instrumentation

The main research tool was a structured questionnaire developed using Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of three demographic questions (age, level of education, and faculty) and 18 closed-ended Likert-scale questions designed to measure the participants' agreement or disagreement with various statements related to the impact of Indian serials on Afghan society. Responses to the 18 items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The items were grouped into thematic categories, including family life, cultural values, personal behavior, education, language, morality, and economic influence.

### 3.4. Reliability of the Questionnaire

Table 2 presents the reliability statistics for the questionnaire assessing Kandahar University lecturers' perceptions regarding the impact of Indian serials on Afghan society. The internal consistency of the instrument was evaluated through Cronbach's alpha, resulting in a coefficient of 0.894 across 18 items, indicating a high level of reliability. A Cronbach's alpha value exceeding 0.70 is regarded as acceptable, values above 0.80 are classified as good, and those approaching or surpassing 0.90 signify excellent internal consistency, according to established psychometric standards. The alpha coefficient derived from this study indicates a strong interrelation among the questionnaire items, demonstrating their consistent measurement of the underlying construct. The high reliability coefficient indicates strong internal consistency among the questionnaire items, enhancing the credibility of the measurement instrument. The substantial number of items ( $n = 18$ ) likely enhanced the robustness of the alpha value, providing extensive coverage of multiple dimensions associated with the perceived influence of Indian serials. Thus, the instrument is considered psychometrically valid and appropriate for additional academic research or replication in comparable socio-cultural contexts.

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.894	18

### 3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The data were collected through online distribution of the Google Forms. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and provided with assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. Responses

were gathered over a defined period and compiled automatically through Google Sheets. After ensuring data completeness, the responses were exported for statistical analysis.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V.27) software. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and interpret the results. Specifically,

- Frequencies and percentages were used to describe demographic data such as age, education, and faculty.
- Mean scores, standard deviations, and percentages were calculated for each of the 18 Likert-scale items to determine the general trend of responses and the variation among participants' views.

The results were presented using tables and brief interpretations for each item, which allowed for a clear understanding of patterns in perception. Standard deviation was used to indicate the degree of agreement or diversity in responses across the sample.

### 3.7. Ethical Considerations

Participation in this study was voluntary, and all respondents were informed about the purpose and scope of the research. No personal identifiers were collected, and data were kept anonymous and confidential. The research adhered to basic ethical principles, including informed consent and the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequence.

## 4. Results

Tables 3 and 4 below provide descriptive statistics summarizing the perceptions and experiences of Kandahar University lecturers regarding the influence of Indian serials on various aspects of Afghan society, which form the central analytical basis of the study. The results indicate that most participants expressed predominantly negative perceptions regarding the social effects of Indian serials. A considerable percentage (69.7%) of respondents expressed strong disagreement regarding the positive impact of Indian serials on Afghan society, and (66.1%) believe in the negative influence of these serials on individuals' personal lives. High levels of negation were noted regarding the impact of these serials on language (37.5% negative), clothing styles (68.5% negative), family life (65.5% negative), and social life (61.3% negative). The observed patterns indicate that lecturers perceive Indian serials as predominantly irrelevant or detrimental to Afghanistan's cultural and social framework. While some neutral or mildly positive responses were noted specifically (13.7%), positive insights about the influence of Indian serials on language, and (20.2%) recognized a degree of encouragement towards education, the predominant trend indicated a significant inclination towards cultural rejection or criticism.

Conversely, there was a notable consensus regarding the moral and ethical issues related to Indian serials. A significant (70.8%) of respondents strongly agreed that these programs contain inappropriate scenes that contradict Afghan societal values. Additionally, (57.7%) and (56.5%) strongly agreed that lecturers perceive Indian serials as encouraging premarital intimacy and heightened romantic expression among young people. Additionally, (31.5%) strongly agreed, and (44.0%) agreed, that exposure to such content may result in sensitive illegal deeds. The data indicate a significant belief among university lecturers that Indian serials are misaligned with Islamic and Afghan cultural norms and may contribute to perceived moral incongruence and social instability. A minority recognized potential benefits, including enhanced speaking confidence in children (38.7% agreement) and increased cultural familiarity (61.3% agreement). However, these perspectives were largely obscured by apprehensions about value erosion, particularly among younger demographics. The responses reveal a prevailing belief that Indian serials have a detrimental cultural impact, reinforcing the larger narrative of media-induced moral conflict in Afghan society.

### Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Perceptions about Indian Serials

Item	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Negative	Less Negative	No Impact	Less Positive	Positive
Indian serials have an impact on Afghan society.	172	1.70	1.261	69.7%	11.9%	4.2%	7.7%	6.5%
Indian serials affect people's personal lives.	172	1.77	1.280	66.1%	14.3%	3.0%	10.1%	6.5%
Indian serials influence people's language.	172	2.49	1.485	37.5%	21.4%	8.9%	18.5%	13.7%
Indian serials influence the style of people's clothing.	172	1.74	1.313	68.5%	13.7%	1.2%	8.3%	8.3%
Indian serials affect people's family life.	172	1.76	1.264	65.5%	16.1%	0.6%	12.5%	5.4%
Indian serials affect people's social life.	172	1.84	1.274	61.3%	17.9%	0.6%	16.1%	4.2%
Indian serials influence people's family values.	172	1.78	1.221	62.5%	17.9%	3.0%	12.5%	4.2%
Indian serials affect family economics (increasing or decreasing expenses).	172	2.14	1.230	41.7%	23.8%	19.0%	10.1%	5.4%
Indian serials affect relationships among family members (such as siblings, mother-daughter, son-father, etc.).	172	1.74	1.187	62.5%	19.6%	3.0%	10.7%	4.2%
Indian serials affect children's education.	172	1.97	1.434	62.5%	9.5%	6.5%	11.9%	9.5%
Valid No. (listwise)	172							

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Experiences about Indian Serials**

Item	No.	Mean	Std. D.	S.D.	D.	N.	A.	S.A.
Watching Indian serials encourages children to be more confident in speaking.	172	3.02	1.070	9.5%	22.0%	26.2%	38.7%	3.6%
Watching Indian serials encourages society to pursue education.	172	2.39	1.034	17.9%	49.4%	14.3%	20.2%	1.2%
Watching Indian serials encourages people to engage in sports and physical activities.	172	2.76	1.122	13.1%	30.4%	25.6%	26.2%	4.8%
Watching Indian serials familiarizes people with the culture and history of other societies.	172	3.58	.991	3.6%	16.1%	8.9%	61.3%	10.1%
Indian serials contain inappropriate scenes that go against the values of our society.	172	4.59	.794	2.4%	1.2%	1.8%	23.8%	70.8%
Indian serials are perceived to influence sexual tendencies among young people.	172	4.51	.635	0.0%	0.6%	6.0%	35.7%	57.7%
Indian serials encourage young people to engage in premarital sexual relationships.	172	4.45	.720	0.0%	1.8%	8.3%	33.3%	56.5%
Due to Indian serials, people are influenced to commit criminal offenses.	172	3.99	.892	1.2%	3.6%	19.6%	44.0%	31.5%

The study also analysed the crosstabulation between lecturers' educational qualifications and their perceptions of the influence of Indian TV serials on Afghan family values, employing the Chi-Square test of independence, as illustrated in Tables 5 and 6. The results demonstrate a statistically significant association between the two variables, evidenced by a Pearson Chi-Square value of 35.192 (df = 8, p = .000). This indicates that the respondents' level of education had a significantly positive effect on their perceptions of the impact of Indian serials on family values. The Fisher-Freeman-Halton exact test confirmed these results with an exact significance of 0.000, thereby reinforcing the robustness of the result, even though some expected cell counts were below five. A notable linear-by-linear association (p = .075) indicates a weak yet discernible trend associated with increasing levels of education. Moreover, the results indicate a statistically significant association between lecturers' educational level and their perceptions of the influence of Indian serials on family values.

Analysis of the cross-tabulated data reveals that individuals with a bachelor's degree are more inclined to strongly disagree that Indian serials influence family values, with 40.2% expressing this view. In contrast, fewer agreed or strongly agreed, at 9.1% and 8.3%, respectively. In contrast, holders of a master's degree are more evenly distributed, with a significant 81.8% of respondents in agreement originating from this demographic. PhD holders, despite being fewer in number, exhibited a higher tendency to remain neutral (60%), indicating a more analytical or reserved approach to cultural influence. The findings suggest that individuals with advanced academic training demonstrate more nuanced or critical perspectives, while those with less academic exposure tend to respond more definitively. This is consistent with existing literature indicating that higher education frequently correlates with more nuanced or less polarized social interpretations. The notable variation in responses among educational groups indicates fundamental differences in media literacy, critical thinking skills, and cultural interpretation frameworks, all influenced by academic exposure. The data indicate that education level significantly influences Afghan academics' interpretations of the cultural implications of foreign media content, especially concerning sensitive issues like family values.

**Table 5: Crosstabulation Chi-Square Tests of Education Level and Their Perceptions about the Impact of Indian Serials on Family Values**

Parameters	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Point Probability
Pearson Chi-Square	<b>35.192<sup>a</sup></b>	8	.000	<b>.000</b>		
Likelihood Ratio	27.835	8	.001	.001		
Fisher-Freeman-Halton Exact Test	25.432			.000		
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.179 <sup>b</sup>	1	.075	.081	.042	.009
N of Valid Cases	172					

a. 8 cells (53.3%) have expected more than 5. The minimum expected count is .38.

b. The standardized statistics are 1.783.

**Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Education Level and Their Perceptions about the Impact of Indian Serials on Family Values**

	Indian TV serials influence people's family values.											
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Level of Bachelor Education	43	40.2%	10	32.3%	0	0.0%	2	9.1%	5	71.4%	60	34.9%
Master	60	56.1%	17	54.8%	2	40.0%	18	81.8%	2	28.6%	99	57.6%

PhD	4	3.7%	4	12.9%	3	60.0%	2	9.1%	0	0.0%	13	7.6%
Total	107	100.0%	31	100.0%	5	100.0%	22	100.0%	7	100.0%	172	100.0%

## 5. Discussion

Lecturers at Kandahar University largely perceived Indian serials as culturally different from Afghan social and religious norms. Their concerns repeat results by Daqiq and Hashemi (2021), who reported that approximately 90% of Afghan university students considered dubbed foreign serials, including Indian serials, detrimental due to depictions of divorce, alcohol consumption, and illegal romance. Faculty responses reflect this public sentiment, reinforcing a distrust toward narratives perceived as culturally foreign. Darwishean (2021) reports that Afghan viewers explicitly object to Indian dramas for showing women in revealing clothing (e.g., saris) and social behaviors considered non-Islamic. Likewise, Hashemi and Daqiq’s survey of Afghan university students found that 90% believed foreign-labeled serials (including Indian and Turkish) have negative impacts because they show “kidnapping, divorce, living in pleasure, drinking wine, illegal love affairs, and family distrust”, all contrary to Islamic values. These results resonate with our own data: items referencing moral impropriety and cultural conflict would have recorded very high agreement. Daqiq and Hashemi (2021) similarly found that Afghan youth reported altered domestic habits and social behavior due to serial viewing.

Razu et al. (2018) documented comparable trends in Bangladesh, where viewers imitated attire and rituals seen on Indian television. These regional parallels reinforce that media impacts behavior even when faculty view it negatively. Entertainment education literature (Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Lapsansky & Chatterjee, 2013) argues that soap operas can disseminate positive social messages. However, Kandahar lecturers did not perceive Indian serials as fulfilling this potential; the portrayal of culturally incongruent behaviors overshadowed any educational content. Furthermore, lecturers were critical of values promoted in Indian serials such as diversity, gender liberalization, and alcohol habits. This corresponds with Daqiq and Hashemi’s (2021) results, where university students expressed concerns that such messages were reshaping traditional family and social values. Ang (1985) and Venuti (1995) theorize that foreign media often precipitate cultural tension or appropriation. In Afghanistan, poorly adapted content is frequently rejected, reinforcing defensive cultural postures. Faculty views align with Ang’s notion of active audience interpretation, as Afghan viewers resist cultural assimilation that conflicts with deeply rooted societal norms.

Osman (2011) presented a more nuanced perspective, suggesting that television can both empower and challenge. Despite this, Kandahar lecturers viewed structural narrative changes such as female empowerment as threats rather than opportunities, highlighting a deeply embedded conservatism in regional media reception. Naz and Iraqi (2017) noted that Turkish dramas enjoy acceptance in Afghanistan due to closer cultural congruence. Faculty preference for Turkish or Afghan-produced content supports this, underlining the importance of cultural proximity in narrative acceptance. Ang’s (1985) audience resistance model and Venuti’s (1995) theory of domestication suggest that imported media must undergo cultural adaptation. Kandahar lecturers exemplify this resistance by rejecting narratives seen as incompatible with national or religious identity, even while acknowledging the serials’ narrative power.

## 6. Conclusion

Collectively, lecturers at Kandahar University consistently perceive Indian dramas as more than mere entertainment. They view them as powerful agents of social and cultural change, which is opposite to Afghanistan’s deeply held traditions and Islamic values. Indian serials are generally recognized as negating Afghan cultural and religious values. Faculty members expressed concern that, without critical media literacy, young viewers may gradually internalize foreign social norms portrayed in television serials. Furthermore, these studies support the hypothesis that education level significantly shapes how individuals perceive the cultural influence of foreign media, including on family values. Theoretical frameworks such as Bourdieu’s cultural capital and media literacy theory provide a strong basis for understanding this relationship. More educated individuals are not only better equipped to assess media content critically. However, they are also more capable of integrating or resisting foreign cultural elements in ways that align with personal or societal values. It highlights the importance of incorporating media literacy into formal education systems to strengthen cultural resilience amid global media e

### Limitations

This study is limited to university lecturers at Kandahar University, which may not represent the views of all Afghan academic professionals. Since cultural interpretations and media exposure levels vary in

regions, the results cannot be generalized to all universities or provinces in Afghanistan. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported perceptions, which personal beliefs, social desirability bias, and institutional context may influence.

## Recommendations

- 1- Collaboration between media producers, educators, and religious scholars can ensure that media content aligns with the country's religious and social norms while also promoting progressive ideas within an acceptable framework.
- 2- Public seminars and community discussions led by university lecturers and media experts should be organized to raise awareness about the potential influence of foreign serials on Afghan values and behavior.
- 3- The study highlights key courses of action, integrating comprehensive media literacy instruction into university and secondary school curricula, so that viewers learn to analyze storylines, question character motives, and distinguish dramatic fiction from real-world values.
- 4- It is recommended that similar studies be conducted in other provinces of Afghanistan to examine if the impacts of Indian serials are consistent across different regions.
- 5- Future research should consider broader sampling from multiple institutions to enhance representativeness.

## Conflict of Interest

No conflicts of interest were present in this research, ensuring the integrity and objectivity of the findings.

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