

**TRANSGENDER IN POPULAR CULTURE:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANS
REPRESENTATION IN PAKISTANI AND AMERICAN
MOVIES**

By

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Title: Transgender in Popular Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Trans Representation in Pakistani and American Movies

The present research is an attempt to explore the visual and verbal practices employed by the transgender characters in popular media such as movies to propagate certain ideologies. The analysis of the visual and verbal practices has been done to find out the implicature behind them. To investigate the ideologies propagated through the representation of transgender characters in popular culture, two recently released movies i.e. *Joyland* (2022) and *Anything's Possible* (2022) have been analyzed linguistically and semiotically in the research. The study in hand begins with the discussion on popular culture and how it shapes people's perception and attitude towards certain ideologies. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been employed to investigate the ideologies propagated through the representation of transgender in Pakistani and American movies. The first section is quantitative, where frequency of occurrences of visual and verbal practices based on various themes such as binary structure, political, social and gendered divisions have been documented by applying Content Analysis (CA) adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017). Whereas, the second section deals with qualitative analysis, which employs a triangular method by combining the Feminist Model of Text by Mills (1995), Kress & Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic approach and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) by Krueger (2000). Moreover, for the validation of the analysis of the selected texts and images, the researcher has conducted two focus group discussions: one with a group of linguists and one with non-linguists. The research indicates that there is a favorable change in transgender representation. Even with shortcomings, the two movies under consideration have improved transgender representation in popular culture which suggests that the better and positive media representation of transgender, can help break the stereotypes towards their existence.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Popular culture is generally referred to as the set of values, beliefs, customs, attitudes and objects that encompass the commonly shared meaning of a social system. It covers, among other things, linguistic norms, fashion and trends, leisure activities and media items. People's opinions, values, and attitudes are significantly influenced by popular culture. Popular culture, for instance, has the power to shape our perceptions of sexuality, gender roles, and beauty. It is typically distinguished from high culture and diverse institutional cultures by either being affiliated with mass culture or folk culture. Transgender individuals have become more visible in popular culture in recent years, which has boosted awareness and depiction of transgender lives. The work of transgender activists as well as their supporters who have tried to bring awareness of the problems encountered by the trans community has contributed to this heightened issue.

The most rooted values of a culture are reflected in popular media. A civilization's most salient and expressive attitudes about the outside world are expressed through popular culture, according to media content creators. This research aims at finding out how transgender people are portrayed through the popular cultures by analyzing the two popular movies that feature the characters and story lines of transgender: *Joyland* - 2022 and *Anything's Possible* - 2022 to understand how media narratives about transgender are constructed and propagated by audiences. One movie is taken by Pakistani film media, and the other is taken from American film media. Using a combination of Content Analysis (CA), and Discourse Analysis (DA) method used in linguistic studies, the discursivity of all these media representations- both linguistic and semiotic—and the discourses around them have been studied.

The term "transgender" is used to describe people whose gender doesn't fall into the traditional male/female categories. The term encompasses behaviors that are biological, individual, and cultural. The idea of transgender disregards the basic differences between the concepts of gender, sex, and sexual orientation (Halberstam, 2005). While sex denotes a biological category, gender is a social and cultural phenomenon. Around the world, transgender people are subject to a variety of prejudices and misconceptions,

and these prejudices can change according to culture and region. However, there are a few widespread misconceptions, such as:

- All transgender individuals are the same. The idea that all transgender persons are the same is among the most persistent prejudices about them. This assumption disregards the wide range of transgender identities and experiences, including those of non-binary individuals who do not exactly identify as either male or female.
- Those who are identified as transgender are either confused or mentally ill. Some individuals believe that transgender identity is indicative of mental illness or disorientation. Being transgender is not inherently dangerous or abnormal; rather, it is a common variant of the human experience.
- Some individuals argue that transgender people deliberately lie to others, either by concealing their real identities or by attempting to ‘trick’ them into thinking they are someone else. This stereotype is damaging since it can result in violence and prejudice against transgender persons. An additional widespread misconception regarding transgender persons is that their identities are twisted or sexually deviant.

Popular culture and representations have a dynamic relationship that encompasses four main aspects. First, cultural factors affect the types of television storylines, characters, and challenging elements that are deemed appropriate for a wide range of viewers. Second, culture also affects the questions that are posed to us as viewers. Stereotypes, also known as common tropes, help viewers relate to the content of the shows they watch. Third, how people are portrayed in popular culture impact the very society by tackling difficult facets of our lives. Fourth, the number of representations of the same group can outweigh any disparity in representation quality.

Morawitz and Mastro (2008) argued that popular culture has a significant influence on how people form their identities and helps them understand the gender roles people should play in the actual world. This is because the world of media has a significant influence on how people form their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors through socialization. The same idea has been reinforced by Holtzman (2000), when he states that "the culture of media produces powerful ideologies which establish a framework through which audiences interpret, understand, and make connection with some aspects of social existence" (Hall, 1993 as cited in Holtzman, p.34). Humphry (2016) asserts that transgender viewers frequently believe the media misrepresents them. Even though

McInroy and Craig (2015, p. 606) discovered that this population seems to be particularly well positioned to consider the impact of these representations on themselves and their peers in the LGBTQ community, relatively little focus has been placed on their experiences and perceptions (Humphry, 2016; McInroy & Craig, 2017). Moreover, the media serves as a primary informational resource for transgender problems for both cisgender and transgender individuals (McInroy & Craig 2015; GLAAD, 2019). Therefore, cisgender people's opinions towards transgender individuals and policies are linked to seeing media depictions of transgender people, according to research by Gillig et al. (2018). In result, transgender people can co-create their own gender identities by being able to observe important role models portrayed on TV (Berkovich, 2016). Berkovich (2016) noted that her research cannot be generalized, but she did discover that interacting with transgender role models can influence transgender individuals to adopt certain traits from them as well as exhibit more aspects of their own gender identity.

The way different populations are portrayed in the media is a damaging consequence of unrealistic representations. For instance, misrepresentation of transgender individuals and figures in the media is one way the transgender community fights prejudice in their medical, legal, employment, and social life. These characters are regarded as a joke as people usually refer to a transgender person with pronouns that imply, "Hey, this man thinks he's a woman." Isn't that humiliating? This is devastating at the part of transgender community as they are always hanging between the two identities: neither considered as a male nor a female.

Transgender people are discriminated on many grounds all over the world. In terms of how it treats transgender people, Pakistan seems to have a mixed record. On one hand, the nation has recently made some strides in recognizing the rights of trans people and offering them legal protections. Being one of the earliest nations in the world, Pakistan legalized the third gender, also referred to as "Hijra" or "Khawaja Sira" on national identification cards in 2009. And now, many rights and privileges, including the right to cast votes, seek employment and education, have become available to transgender people in Pakistan. While on the other hand, transgender people in Pakistan still experience significant harassment, discrimination, and violence despite these legal protections. Many are compelled to work as prostitutes or beg to survive, and they frequently suffer abuse and exploitation at the hands of the authorities. Moreover,

transgender people are frequently seen as social misfits in Pakistan because of traditional norms and views, and many parents abandon their trans children or make them leave the house when they are young.

While in United States, there has been a considerable change in attitude and behavior towards transgender people in recent years. Even though prejudice and discrimination persist, transgender people's rights and dignity are becoming increasingly acknowledged. Regarding legal protections, some states and localities have enacted legislation to forbid discrimination on account of gender identity in a variety of settings, including the workplace, housing, and public places. United States' Supreme Court declared in 2020 that transgender people cannot be subjected to workplace discrimination under federal law. Also, transgender people are becoming more visible in popular culture and the media, with increasing representation in books, movies, and TV series. This has helped in raising awareness about the challenges encountered by trans community. Yet, transgender people in the US continue to face many difficulties, such as high rates of assault and discrimination, restricted medical care, and legal restrictions on changing the gender identification on official papers. The struggle for complete acceptance and equality for transgender persons is still going on.

Since media is one of the main channels by which popular culture is disseminated and consumed, they are closely related because popular culture frequently reflects the values, opinions, and interests of society. Popular culture is greatly influenced by media, such as television, movies, music, and social media. Several aspects of popular culture are created and popularized by the media. For instance, the production and distribution of popular entertainment is heavily influenced by the television and cinema industries. Instagram and TikTok are two examples of social media platforms that have become the significant representors of popular culture. While in turn, the demand for creating content by popular culture influences the media.

The issue of transgender's media representation not only in Pakistan but other countries around the world is an ongoing problem (Vanlee, et al., 2018). Transphobia is pervasive in Pakistani and American print and electronic media, as it is across the rest of the world. A wide variety of hostile actions and attitudes towards trans individuals are referred to as transphobia (Eisner, 2013). One of the numerous forms of prejudice that transgenders experience on a regular basis is the negative portrayal of them in the movies.

The research reveals the ways how transgender people are depicted in Pakistani and American film media and demonstrates how media portrayals of transgender frequently reinforce negative stereotypes about them in the popular culture. In American and Pakistani films, transgender characters have frequently received stereotyped treatment. Transgender persons are severely stigmatized in both nations and experience widespread prejudice. The trans women, known as hijras in South Asia, have been portrayed as humorous characters or objects of mockery in Pakistani cinema. Recent initiatives to improve representation include the movie "Rani," which depicts the tale of a trans woman who aspires to be a dancer, although these movies are still very rare.

In American cinema, transgender representation has similarly been restricted, with transgender characters generally taken for supporting or minor roles. The highly acclaimed TV show "Pose," which focused on the lifestyle of transgender and quasi persons of color in the era of 1980s and 1990s in the city's ballroom scene, is one recent example of a breakthrough. Moreover, films like "Dallas Buyers Club" and "The Danish Girl" " which have drawn criticism for using cisgender artists in transgender roles, have raised awareness of the realities of transgender individuals.

The portrayal of trans people in the media has historically been problematic and frequently feeds into negative assumptions and biases. Yet, there has been a change in recent years towards a more favorable and accurate portrayal of the transgender population in the media. The 2016 Pakistani TV drama "Khuda Mera Bhi Hai" is a noteworthy instance of transgender individuals being positively portrayed in Pakistani media. The show examines themes of gender identification, prejudice, and acceptance while telling the tale of a young intersex child. The show received appreciation for its sympathetic depiction of intersex and transgender characters as well as for helping to spread awareness of the difficulties marginalized people in Pakistan confront.

The emergence of transgender people as public figures and activists is another promising development in Pakistani and American media. Kami Sid, a transgender model and activist who has campaigned to increase awareness of the problems the transgender population in Pakistan faces, is one such person. Sid has received recognition for her efforts to advance transgender visibility and rights after being profiled in several Pakistani media venues, such as news shows and magazines.

Nevertheless, there is still much work to be done in both American and Pakistani films to accurately and respectfully depict transgender persons. More authentic and diverse storytelling is required so that transgender persons can relate their personal stories and reject damaging misconceptions. The public's perceptions and attitudes regarding the trans population are significantly influenced by how they are portrayed in the media. To advance awareness, acceptance, and equality for all, it is crucial for media professionals to give transgenders accurate and respectful coverage. The representations of transgender characters from the Movies "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" have been analyzed focusing on their visual and verbal practices in this dissertation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Understanding how transgender individuals are portrayed in Pakistani and American movies, is the goal of the research. The ultimate objective of this study is to analyze the visual and verbal practices that how transgender persons are portrayed in movies and to look at how such representations affect the public views about transgender people. Understanding the historical and cultural context of both nations is necessary to analyze the visual and verbal techniques used in American and Pakistani movies. Throughout the past few decades, Pakistani cinema has seen substantial transformation, with the industry going through various fluctuations caused by political and societal causes.

On the other hand, the American Cinema has a lengthy history of creating films that significantly influenced world culture. The portrayal of transgender in film media all over the world is still constrained, stereotypical, and frequently harmful, perpetuating myths and unfavorable attitudes that lead to social stigma, marginalization, and discriminatory treatment. Despite rapid advancement, media portrayal of transgender people remains a pressing issue. Also, transgender persons find it more difficult to acquire acceptance in society and to access the resources and services that are crucial for their health and well-being due to the low visibility of transgender people in the film media, which supports the impression that they are aberrant or deviant. The study's goal is to look at how the political, social, and cultural contexts of both countries affect these behaviors. This study compares the verbal and visual techniques employed in American and Pakistani movies to highlight significant variations and parallels in how these techniques are applied to communicate messages and meaning to audiences. The

research has analyzed linguistically and semiotically one Pakistani movie “Joyland” and one American movie “Anything’s Possible” related to the representation of transgender at linguistic and semiotic levels. An attempt has been made to explore how same issues related to the representation of transgender persons are perceived and represented through the selected movies of Pakistan and America.

1.2 Significance of the Study

Film media plays a vital role in the social construction of reality. The characters presented in these films are intended to influence viewers' emotions in a way that they are found desirable. At the same time, these films begin to instill cultural expectations about transgender. The significance of the current study can be seen in the way that it can help viewers better grasp how the semiotics and discourses embedded in movies impact their viewpoints. By analyzing the two movies “Joyland” and “Anything’s Possible” both linguistically and semiotically to critically decode the visual and verbal practices used by transgender characters in the movies, an attempt has been made to explore how the ideologies related to transgender persons vary in two different cultural contexts. Additionally, it has made a significant contribution to the study of how transgender stereotypes in films are created, reconstructed, and disseminated through the widely used medium of film. The current study is helpful because there has not been much work done in this genre, particularly from the point of view of linguistics in understanding how these stereotypical images are spreading beyond Western culture and into other cultures, particularly Pakistan.

1.3 Delimitation

The research aims to determine the extent to which mass media, specifically film media is playing a significant role in undermining and spreading the established standards and portrayals of transgender community in movies. The objective of the present research is to investigate how transgender characters are represented in movies and decode the verbal and visual practices used by those characters in the movies. The delimitation is that only two movies, one Pakistani movie ‘Joyland’ and one American movie ‘Anything’s Possible’ have been chosen in this regard. These two movies have been subjected to linguistic and semiotic analysis for the stated goal. Also, focus group discussions have been used to incorporate the viewers' perceptions, which has helped corroborate the results of semiotic and linguistic analysis.

1.4 Research Objectives

Using Multimodal Discourse Analysis, this research aims:

- To analyze the visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters in the movies 'Joyland' and 'Anything's Possible' and how these practices contribute to the portrayal of transgender identities.
- To investigate the ideologies propagated through the analysis of trans characters in selected movies.

1.5 Research Questions

The research attempts to find out the answers to the following questions:

1. What visual and verbal practices are employed by transgender characters in the movies "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" and how do they contribute to the portrayal of transgender identities and ideologies?
2. How are ideologies related to transgender propagated through the characters of the selected movies?

1.6 Chapter Breakdown

The dissertation is organized into six chapters of varying lengths in accordance with the framework. Every chapter covers a significant aspect within the discipline. They are meant to stand alone, allowing for the provision of a strong and unambiguous theoretical foundation and the refutation of pointless claims regarding the discipline's viability. The following is the thesis's chapter breakdown:

Chapter 1: This chapter includes the introduction of research. It sheds light on an executive summary that provides the reader with an alluring preview of what is to come" (Perry et.al, 2006, p.658). Considering the assertion given, this chapter sheds light on a variety of topics, including introduction to the subject, the study's background, introduction to the movies, the problem statement, objectives, delimitations of research and significance of study.

Chapter 2: The work already done and relevant literature on gendered socialization and its various factors, popular culture, film media, social & gender stereotypes, transgender discrimination, films, and ideology in film are critically reviewed in this

chapter. Also, this chapter aims to create a theoretical framework to analyze the findings.

Chapter 3: An elaboration of the methods used for research is provided in this chapter. Content Analysis (CA) method adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017), Mill's Feminist Model of Text, Kress and Leeuwen's SDA, and Kruger's FGD are elaborated in this chapter, along with their analytical tools and stages of analysis. Also, it highlights the methods for gathering data, evaluating data, and research questions.

Chapter 4: This chapter is divided into two parts that deal with the quantitative content analysis and qualitative discourse analysis at linguistic and semiotic levels, in order to identify both implicit and explicit ideologies that are incorporated in them at the aforementioned levels as well as frequency of occurrence of visual and verbal practices employed by transgender. The study depends on Content Analysis (CA) adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017), Mill's (1995) Feminist Model of Text, to investigate the transgender representation in a specific context and Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic approach to examine semiotic representations of transgender people to break the stereotypes.

Chapter 5: Using Kruger's (2000) model at the level of words for context, reliability, and identifying the main concept, this chapter addresses the focus group discussion that is used to validate the study's analyses.

Chapter 6: This chapter provides a conclusion to the research's findings. Also, it makes some comments and recommendations for additional research in this field.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

This section presents the review of relevant literature to highlight the hypothetical systems that are used to analyze the two movies. In doing so, the numerous ways in which semiotic and linguistic theories are helpful to deconstructing the media discourse and the process of formation of a certain worldview or ideological perspective are highlighted. The study of related literature, the contributions of various theorists and linguists to discourses with ideological underpinnings and their relationship to power, and a description of the essential concepts to be operationalized in the research are all covered in this section.

2.1 Work Already Done

Transgender people have historically been portrayed in movies and television in a predominantly negative way. "When transgendered people do become mediated, they do so in a marginalizing way, marginalization becomes an attempt to restabilize gender binaries," as Mocarski, Butler, Emmons, and Smallwood (2013) investigate (p. 250). In other words, when filmmakers want to represent transgender characters, they typically portray them in a manner that upholds a binary understanding of gender. A gender binary itself might be called into question if transgender characters or individuals who defy gender norms as described by Stryker, were portrayed in nuanced ways as opposed to being marginalized. Consequently, the issue goes beyond whether transgender persons are fairly represented.

Rehman (2004) has done work on the issue of how language serves to exercise power. The research explores various concepts embedded in culture and distinguishes between coercive and discursive forms of power and control. He opines that language is used to manipulate power to exercise and maintain discursivity in modern societies. His findings are valuable for comprehending the ideological investments in the movies. Similarly, Reah's (2001) study emphasizes how media discourses are used to disseminate ideology among the masses. Compared to the other forms of media, movies are watched by millions of people worldwide. Several linguistic devices are employed to propagate different ideologies, including phonology, loaded words, the use of articles, action and non-action verbs, and intertextuality (the characteristics that

make the usage of one text dependent upon the comprehension of previously encountered literature) (Reah, 2001). This book explores the issue of ideological bias in the media. Also, it examines differences in how current events are portrayed, provides various examples of texts from a variety of broadsheets and tabloids, and contains a glossary of words.

Since this research is about the representation of transgender and the ideologies propagated through their representation in popular culture, the researcher has consulted the works of many researchers who have done remarkable job in this area such as research conducted by Susan Stryker who examines the history and representation of transgender people. Stryker has done a great deal of research in trans representation. In addition to TV series and films, she is examining news media portrayals of transgender people. In her work "Introduction: Trans, or Transgender (2008)," she presents the gender, political, racial, national, power and all sorts of inequalities with transgender people. Koch-Rein, A., Yekani, E. H., & Verlinden, J. J. (2020), through their work "Representing trans: visibility and its discontents (2020)", have reflected the notable changes happened in trans representation between the period of early 1990s and the present. Brief analyses of Pose (2018) and other seminal instances of transgender representation in films and television are provided by the researchers to demonstrate how these shifts bear witness to the intricate relationships between violence, visibility, and acknowledgment. One name that stands out in Pakistan is Dr. Nighat Said Khan. She is an activist who has spoken out against issues of gender and sexuality in addition to being a researcher. Dr. Khan has investigated the portrayal of transgender people in the media. These people are commonly known as "Khawaja Sira" in Pakistan. Faris Ahmad Khan (2014) highlights the social stigmas attached to transgender in his work "Khwaja Sir Khwaja Sira: Culture, Identity Politics, and "Transgender " Activism in Pakistan".

The gap for the present research lies because most probably no research has been conducted on visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters in the two movies Joyland and Anything's Possible. Moreover, most probably nowhere has been collected from Focus Group Discussions. This is how the present research is different from previous researches.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The existing data has been analyzed based on Theory of Representation by Hall (1997), Queer Theory by LaRetis (1991), and Semiotic Theory by Barthes (1957). The theory of representation and reality says that there is not a true representation of people or events in a text, but there are lots of ways these can be represented. It aims to explain how people see and comprehend their surroundings. It is focused on the underlying principles of knowledge, how the mind interacts with the outside environment, and how language and communication influence the way we perceive the world. One of the main reasons for using this approach is how our thoughts interpret what is being shown by the world. Queer Theory challenges traditional binary gender norms and emphasizes the fluidity of gender identities. In the context of transgender representation in film media, this theory has helped analyze how the media's representation of transgender individuals either reinforces or challenges traditional gender norms. The purpose of using Queer Theory is to examine the ways in which diverse media such films, both impact and are impacted by the larger cultural and social setting. Early images of transgender people in the media were frequently harsh or stereotyped, although they have changed with time. Yet, there has been an increase in recent years in the portrayal of transgender individuals in popular culture in an accurate and positive light. While the Semiotic Theory, also called semiotics, offers a framework for comprehending how meaning is created and conveyed through various kinds of language and communication, which makes it beneficial for data analysis. It has been used to find the hidden patterns and meanings in visual and verbal practices used by the trans characters in the movies.

By amending Content Analysis (CA) adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017), A Feminist Model of Text (Mills 1995), Social Semiotic approach of Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) by Krueger (2000), a modified model is devised in accordance with the data. The purpose of this amendment is to examine the chosen movies at linguistic and semiotic levels as well as through focus group discussions to examine how they portray transgender characters in different ways considering the perceptions of the general Pakistani public and to document the frequency of occurrences of different visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters in the two movies. Moreover, the Feminist Model by Mills (1995) and Social Semiotic approach of Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) are appropriate

for the current study because analysis encompasses gender representations at the linguistic and semiotic levels. The Mills (1995) model is important to present research because it examines how language choices can shape, adhere, and (de)construct stereotypes regarding gender discrimination.

2.2.1 Theory of Representation by Stuart Hall (1997)

The theory of representation and reality by Hall (1997) says that there is not a true representation of people or events in a text, but there are lots of ways these can be represented. It aims to explain how people see and comprehend their surroundings. It is focused on the underlying principles of knowledge, how the mind interacts with the outside environment, and how language and communication influence the way we perceive the world. One of the main reasons of using this approach is how our thoughts interpret what is being shown by the world. A significant attempt was made by Hall in the name of Theory of representation of Reality, in his essay “The Work of Representation – 1997). This theory has made an important mark in the field of Cultural Studies. One of the pioneers of the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies, Hall was a cultural theorist of Jamaican descent. Understanding the creation and propagation of meaning in society has greatly benefited from his work. The aim of using this theory is to decode the underlying meanings embedded by the trans characters of the movie. Hall’s theory is influential due to the following main reasons:

2.2.1.1 Representation as a Process

For Hall, representation is not only a reflection of reality; it is a process. In his view, representation is the process of communicating meaning through words, signs, and symbols. The construction of meaning is an active process not a passive reflection of an objective reality.

2.2.1.2 Encoding and Decoding

To explain how representation functions, Hall first presents the idea of encoding and decoding. He contends that meaning is not fixed rather is encoded by producers, those who create media content and decoded by audiences, those who consume it. Encoding refers to the decisions producers make about how to portray something, while decoding refers to the interpretation of those choices by the audience.

2.2.1.3 Preferred, Negotiated and Oppositional Readings

Hall specifies three sorts of decoding or reading techniques by audiences:

Preferred Reading When something is understood by the audience as the producers intended, this happens. The prevailing or favored interpretation is consistent with the author's intended meaning.

Negotiated Reading In this instance, the intended meaning is somewhat accepted and partially challenged by the audience. The viewer's personal experiences, worldview, and social setting all shape the interpretation.

Oppositional Reading This occurs when the depiction is interpreted by the audience in a way that is completely opposed to the prevailing ideology, entirely rejecting the intended meaning. This frequently occurs when viewers examine things from a different social or cultural perspective.

2.2.1.4 The Circuit of Culture

Hall's "circuit of culture," a more comprehensive framework, is closely related to his theory of representation. The five interconnected processes that are highlighted by this framework are representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation. It is believed that these processes are interrelated and have an impact on one another, impacting how meaning is created and disseminated in society.

2.2.1.5 Stereotyping and Essentialism

Stereotypes and essentialism in representation are criticized by Hall. Stereotypes reinforce dominant power structures by essentializing and simplifying complicated identities. Hall promotes a more sophisticated, multifaceted, and contextualized view of identity that takes complexity and diversity into account.

2.2.1.6 Power and Ideology

Hall (1997) highlights the part that power plays in the representational process. The interests of strong organizations are reflected in the prevalent ideologies that frequently shape media and cultural portrayals. He urges a critical examination of these portrayals in order to identify and address underlying power relations. Keeping in view these points, Hall's theory of Representation of Reality is appropriate for the present research to decode the underlying meanings propagated by the characters of the two movies.

2.2.2 Queer Theory

Queer Theory by Lauretis (1991) challenges traditional binary gender norms and emphasizes the fluidity of gender identities. In the context of transgender representation in media such as films, queer theory can help analyze how the media's representation of transgender individuals either reinforces or challenges traditional gender norms. The purpose of using Queer Theory is to examine the ways in which diverse media such as films, both influence and are influenced by the larger cultural and social setting. Early images of transgender people in the media were frequently harsh or stereotyped, although they have changed with time. Yet, there has been an increase in recent years in the portrayal of transgender individuals in popular culture in an accurate and positive light.

An interdisciplinary field of critical theory known as queer theory first appeared in the late 20th century, mostly in opposition to conventional views on gender and sexuality. To undermine and destabilize preexisting categories, it questions normative presumptions regarding sexual and gender identities. The goal of queer theory is to deconstruct gendered and sexual norms in society. It challenges the notion that binary classifications like male/female and heterosexual/homosexual are set in stone and inherent. It highlights how gender and sexuality are performative, drawing on the work of Judith Butler. It makes an argument that identities are created by repeatedly enacting cultural norms rather than being inherent. This approach holds that gender and sexuality are enacted, not innate. Numerous academic fields, including literature, sociology, cultural studies, and anthropology, have been significantly impacted by queer theory. It has also had an impact on activism and been crucial in forming conversations about social justice and LGBTQ+ rights. Remember that the discipline of queer theory is dynamic and ever evolving, with constant conversations and arguments taking place within its academic community.

The well-known cultural critic and feminist film scholar Teresa de Lauretis has significantly advanced queer studies and feminist philosophy. "Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities" (1991), one of her seminal books, explores its implications for feminist thought as well as various aspects of queer theory. By embracing queer theory, Lauretis questions established ideas about sexual identity. She challenges the notion that identities are clear-cut, unchanging, and complex, contending that they are socially produced and multifaceted. She proposes that sexuality is performative, drawing

inspiration from performativity and Judith Butler. This indicates that rather than merely expressing an innate or fixed identity, people "do" their sexuality in ways that are affected by societal standards. She also highlights that comprehending sexuality requires an awareness of desire and pleasure. She contends that comprehending sexual experiences in a more nuanced way that goes beyond rigid identity categories is made possible by concentrating on desire. De Lauretis examines how feminism and queer theory connect and how these two domains might learn from one another. She is a supporter of a wide and inclusive feminism that recognizes the complexity of sexual identities.

Queer theory offers an adaptable and analytical framework through which you can examine issues of representation, power, and identity. This theoretical framework in the present research is helpful to analyze the transgender representation in the selected movies.

2.2.3 Semiotic Theory by Roland Barthes

The Semiotic Theory by Barthes (1957), also called semiotics, offers a framework for comprehending how meaning is created and conveyed through various kinds of language and communication, which makes it beneficial for data analysis. It has been used to find the hidden patterns and meanings in visual and verbal practices used by the trans characters in the movies.

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, their meanings, structures, and functions. Barthes was interested in the ways that meaning is created and communicated in different cultural phenomena through signs. French literary theorist, philosopher, and semiotician Roland Barthes (1915–1980) made a substantial contribution to semiotics and cultural studies. A profound involvement with language, signs, and symbols is evident in his work. Barthes' semiological theory, elaborated in publications such as "Elements" and "Mythologies" of Semiology," examines how signs and symbols are used in a variety of cultural phenomena to create and convey meaning.

Semiotics, according to Barthes, is a science that studies the nature of signs and their roles in communication. The structuralist heritage, and especially Ferdinand de Saussure's language theories, served as a source of inspiration for him. According to Barthes, semiotics is the study of signs and their systems with the goal of identifying the fundamental structures that give signals their meaning. A sign is a combination of

the signifier and the signified, according to Barthes' semiotic theory. The signified is the conceptual meaning that the signifier expresses, whereas the signifier is the tangible representation of the sign, such as a word, image, or sound. Barthes maintained that social and cultural norms create meaning rather than being innate in signals.

Barthes explored the levels of meaning in signals by making a distinction between denotation and connotation. While connotation refers to the societal, symbolic, and emotive associations associated with a sign, denotation is the actual, factual meaning of a sign. He maintained that meaning has a significant influence on how we perceive and comprehend signs in various situations. Myth is one of Barthes' most important ideas, which he explores in his work "Mythologies." Barthes employed the term "myth" to describe the way in which commonplace items or ideas acquire symbolic connotations within a community. According to Barthes, myths convey certain cultural ideals, ideologies, or social behaviors as common sense, which naturalizes and normalizes them. According to Barthes, myth functions as a second-order framework for signs. In order to produce new meanings, it rearranges the first-order system, which consists of preexisting signals. Myth is used to create ideas that seem natural or universal, supporting particular beliefs. Barthes selected examples from popular culture, including mass media and commercials, to show how myth functions in modern society. With his emphasis on the dynamic, contextualized nature of signs and the role of implication and myth, Roland Barthes developed this semiological theory that offered a ground-breaking framework for analyzing the ways in which signs and symbols produce meaning in culture. His work persists to be influential in comprehending the complex issues of communication and representation in present-day society and has benefited the present research.

2.3 Key Terms

2.3.1 Discourse

Hawkes (1996) defines discourse as language in action. It can also be defined as a socially constructed way of speaking or representing something. Kaplan (1990) opines that discourse, whether it is written or spoken, is a multidimensional structure and is layered like a thick sheet of plywood. According to Kress (1989), the goal of discourse analysis is to better understand the socio-cultural components of a text. Discourse, according to Stubbs (1983), is language that extends beyond the bounds of a statement

or utterance. He argues that the term "discourse" relates to how language and society interact. By analyzing certain discourses, language use is viewed as social action, situated performance, connected to social relationships and identities, power disparity, and social conflict, and is primarily a matter of practice rather than just "structures." Discourse is a multidisciplinary area of study and discourse analysis is the process of linguistically analyzing a text at several levels.

Discourse, according to Bernstein (1990 and 1996), is a privileged and privileging term. Thus, it comes as no surprise that all individuals are doing discourse. The term "discourse" has many different semiotic meanings nowadays, all of which are directly involved in the creation of discourse. Discourse, according to some Linguists like Fairclough (1989; 1992), Coulthard (1977), Gee (1996) and Mills (1997) is a term used in a variety of contexts to describe how specific types of understandings are created and maintained within the various institutions of society. Such discourses are about concepts and interpretations, which become apparent through verbal and discursive practices. Discourse traditionally refers to the patterns of communication processes in education and in popular culture. Gee (1996) defines discourses as forms of existence that incorporate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities. Discourses are ways to interact with the world. The socially constructed way to speak or represent something is another definition of discourse. In other words, discourse is what changes our surroundings into one that has social and cultural significance. Discourse is the form in which language penetrates in our culture.

Therefore, discourse can be thought of as an identity kit that includes instructions about how to speak, act, and frequently write, as well as the appropriate wardrobe. Saying that the discourse represents a culturally acceptable relationship between language usage patterns. Other symbolic representations are thought to be artifacts. Discourses are constantly present since they are frequently observed to be connected to the hierarchical structure and division of social power in society. Having ideological dominance over discourses can result in gaining social benefits in society, such as wealth, position, and power. "Dominant discourses" are the discourses that give more power to a particular group of a society; the groups who use these discourses to their advantage and experience conflict are known as dominant groups.

2.3.2 Discourse and Ideology

Ideology and discourse are inextricably linked because ideologies are developed, propagated, shared, popularized, and loved on the one hand, while discourses are how they are propagated on the other. Yet discourse is a broader concept than ideology. Several social structures, such as the family, religious institutions, schools, etc., are ideologically infused discourses. Also acknowledging the similarity between these two ideas, Foucault (1972) believes that discourses are employed to give people a sense of "subjectivation." The ability to perpetuate certain discursive practices within a certain ideological commitment to domination over the other alternative (oppositional) practice is viewed as the power to govern discourse (Fairclough, 1998).

According to Foucault (1972), discourses and ideologies are directly correlated. He asserts that discourses function within a variety of human actions and structures. According to Hawkes (2003), discourses give us the impression that we are distinct individuals with autonomous consciousness. Discourse analysis gives the critic a tool for examining interaction within socio-cultural contexts when combined with an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language. Discourse is used to present social interaction. According to Kress (1995), discourse analysis aims at bringing linguistics into the realm of political and social relevance. As a result, it offers social criticism by identifying inequality-related structural elements. Discourse analysis, in the opinion of Wodak (2002: p. 12), links linguistic and social practices. Discourse, according to Fairclough (1995), is a social practice.

2.3.3 Discourse and Social System

Discourse is frequently associated with the development of a nation's ideology. The question of how discourse is employed in articulation and dissemination of certain ideologies and who gets benefitted from such practices arises in this context. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that discourse is directly related to many theories of power. Discourses are social constructs that reveal social hierarchies and pre-existing paradigms in all social systems. Discourses are typically thought of as collective social practices that are accessible to all its participants despite their socioeconomic statuses, although this is not the case. Within the same educational institution, not everyone from the same social strata has access to the same discourses.

Pecheux (1982) claimed that discourse is in fact conflictual, due to the distinctions with the social structure of the community. According to him, discourse shapes our perception of reality and the truth about who we are, and we tend to identify the truth within ourselves and our place in the social framework of society. Discourses and social perception are directly correlated, according to Foucault (1972). He asserts that discourses function within a variety of human actions and structures.

According to Hawkes (2003), discourses help us realize we are unique people with free will and a tendency to recognize ourselves as such. Discourse analysis by Kress (1989), views language as one kind of social practice among several that are employed for signification and representation. A multimodal approach to the exploration of language combined with discourse analysis gives the critic a tool for researching communication in socio-cultural situations. Discourse is the medium through which social interaction is presented. According to Kress (1995), the goal of discourse analysis is to elevate the study of language into a field with social and political significance. By exposing inequitable systems, it offers social criticism. Discourse analysis, according to Wodak (2002: p. 12), links the language and social elements. Discourse is seen by Fairclough (1995) as a social practice. Social structure and discourse are combined to create a dynamic connection. This means that discourse of any kind will always reflect social practice, and since social practices are always unstable because of shifting ideologies, so too are their discursive representations unstable.

Furthermore, it is a fact that discourses have a particular form when it comes to the use of language alongside other symbolic forms like visual representations. Discourses create and define social things and relations in addition to reflecting or representing them. A new complicated discourse is created when various discourses come together in specific social contexts. Not only does discourse reflect and describe social entities and interactions, it also creates and defines them. Discourse study is concerned with the way power relations or power struggles develop and modify the discourse practices of a society or organization, as well as how various discourses form important entities in different ways. The social, encompassing "objects" and social subjects, is comprised of discourse.

2.3.4 Discourse and Identity

Identity refers to the "Sense of self" that every person has. It is an ongoing state of self-awareness. Marx, however, criticized the notion that a person's personality could be created independently in the 19th century. He believes that the self is something that is created in isolation. Additionally, he believes that social interactions shape how one constructs one's identity. Therefore, it is important to consider personal identity in relation to the identities of larger communities or groups. Discourse, in my opinion, is the process of incorporating power into words to mold views and reflect the world appropriately.

The idea that there are only two genders, male and female, conceals gender variety and erases the presence of people who don't identify as being either. There is a gendered presumption in our culture that anyone who was given the gender "female" at birth would be identified as a woman since all women were given the gender "female" at birth. The umbrella term Transgender refers to the ones whose gendered identity, gender expression, or behavior do not correspond to what they had been assigned when they were born. Gender identification is the way a person shows their gender identity through their behavior, dress, hairstyles, voice, or physical attributes. Gender identification refers to a person's inner feeling of being male, female, or something else. "Trans" is the short term used for transgender.

2.3.5 Ideology

Destutt de Tracy, a writer, coined the phrase for the first time in France around the end of the 18th century. It originally meant a "study of ideas," but as time passed, the phrase started to refer to a certain kind of ideology. Eventually, the term "ideology" came to be used to describe any kind of belief system. According to Lorrain (1979), for thoughts and beliefs to be classified as ideological, three requirements must be met.

The ideas in consideration must:

- Form a coherent system that is shared by a sizable portion of the population.
- Have some connection to how power is used in society.

Rather than using phrases like positive and negative, Lorrain (1979) utilized terminology like negative and natural for ideology. Ideology's inherent meaning has frequently been connected to worldview (whole perspective). Marxist terminology

(1818–83) characterizes ideology as "forms of consciousness" that shape people's perspectives. Marx argues that there is a distinction between the ways in which individuals experience their actual interests and those forms that do not. Marx believes that because working classes seem to have the ability to transform society, they should continue to be the center of attention. It is important to remember that people are motivated by more than just their class; these include gender, geography, ethnicity, age, income, and religion.

These days, the concept of false consciousness is less common, in part because it is hard to define actual consciousness in a way that is practical. In summary, it becomes evident that people are motivated by elements other than class, such as gender, area, race, financial status, religion, etc. According to Lorrain (1979), ideology can also be found in the social structure. He goes on to say that ideology is "incomplete" for several reasons: first, it must operate at a level of abstraction of description because society is inherently contradictory and contentious; second, it must accomplish this at the expense of other elements of experience in the struggle to give meaning to particular events.

According to Kress (1989), language never manifests itself in isolation; rather, it always does so as a symbol of linguistic words that actualize discursive and ideological systems. Thus, ideologies serve as the "cognitive foundation" for the mindsets of different social groupings in addition to advancing their own objectives and interests. He proposes a schema that links discourse, ideology, society, and cognition.

While Van Dijk (2001) does not argue that ideologies are fundamentally false forms of consciousness, he does imply that privileged relations in society can also be perpetuated and legitimized at the ideological level given the possibility of a disparity between group interests and ideology. It is now established that the use of force in contemporary democratic countries is rarely used; instead, ideological persuasion is used instead of coercion. When examining underlying ideas, implicit analysis is a highly helpful tool. Ideology is a conceptual framework that shapes how people think and behave. Multiple relevant batteries of indexicality are available through ideology, providing semiotic opportunities.

Societies and ideologies are inextricably linked. If people can transcend such societies, which are defined by power dynamics based on factors like class, gender, culture, group membership, and so on, they will be able to transcend ideologies as well.

Thus, it is possible to draw the conclusion that ideology is a collection of ideas that are disseminated using discursive techniques to influence the target audience's perspective.

2.3.6 Semiotics

Semiotics, according to Saussure (1916), is "a science that studies the life of signs within society." Based on the Greek word Semeion (Sign), I will refer to it as semiology. Semiology would demonstrate what signs are made of and the rules that govern them. He goes on to suggest that language is only one sign system among many. Therefore, linguistics ought to be viewed as a branch of semiotics, the larger field studying sign systems.

It is undeniable that the creation, utilization, and interchange of signs underpin human cognitive and social existence. Something that has another meaning is called a symbol. Semiology gives us a de-naturalized perspective on language. In 1931, the American philosopher Peirce and the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure proposed an independent discipline. Semiology was the term used by the former, and "Semiotics" by the latter. "System of principles for the study of sign-based behavior" is how Peirce describes semiotics. Peirce (1998) argues in a similar manner that language cannot be explained in the absence of signals. Semiotics is also heavily referenced in the writings of French post-structuralist and literature scholar Barthes (1973), who examined fashion, boxing, and other mediums as sign systems. According to Fawcett et al. (1984), semiotics is culturally specific and contextual. When interpreting them, religious and cultural backgrounds have a significant role.

2.3.7 Culture

Culture plays a significant role in the creation of representations. According to Richardson (2016), "the dictates of culture forms or build the body" (p. 10). As a result, studying how transgender individuals are portrayed will probably reveal something about societal perceptions of gender and the body. Additionally, trans bodies "showcase the cultural dynamics that produce genders even as they may assure that one can ultimately 'come home to' or 'arrive at' one's true gender," as noted by Keegan (2013). This relates to the widely held belief that transgender individuals seamlessly transition from one gender to the next. The gender that one identifies with "on the inside" and the gender that one is "born into" separate at a certain time. There are very few instances in which transgender representations—not always actors or actresses—appear in films

or television shows. According to McInroy and Craig (2017), "LGBTQ people have historically been stereotyped as victims of violence, villains and/or criminals, both mentally and physically ill, and comic relief" (p. 34). In agreement, Rigney (2003) notes that "transgender characters in movies have a bad reputation for being portrayed as either funny and lighthearted characters or as psychotic serial killers" (p. 4).

In general, representation has the power to either challenge or strengthen cultural norms and ideas. For instance, Johnson (2016) explains that "transgender representations on screen serve as a mechanism through which transgender and cisgender people alike acquire a certain perception of what constitutes transgender authenticity, and these representations may affect the identity processes of trans people" (p. 486). These on-screen images can aid in the development of transgender people's sense of self as gendered individuals, particularly transgender youth who have not yet fully formed an identity. Cowan (2009) shows how the prevailing medico-legal and cultural discourses on all types of transgenderism are shaped by "constraining heteronormative beliefs and ideas about gender and sex that also affect the gendered and sex lives of non-transgender individuals (p. 96). This indicates that conversations regarding transgender persons have an impact on broader conversations about gender. A character that transitions 'neatly' from one gender to another offers the viewer a different story about gender than a complex, 16-year-old trans character with ambiguous traits. To reduce fear of the unknown and assist society comprehend what it truly means to be transgender, representation may serve as a very effective technique.

The idea that fair representation is not always guaranteed by acceptance in mainstream media is a relevant concern. It is crucial to address this issue since "transgender people are readily represented in the media, serving as the knowledge that is culturally relevant and shapes how we perceive transgender identities and experiences (Johnson, 2016, pp. 485–486). Both a fantastic teaching tool and a significant medium for the representation of transgender individuals can be found in films and television shows. Concerning transgender people specifically, Walters and Rehman (2013) investigate how "educational delivery or instructional tools affect learning outcomes" (p. 338).

2.3.8 Popular Culture

In Hall's (1983) opinion, popular culture is a scene of conflict between the dominant and subordinate cultures. It is a means by which the subordinate culture protests the dominant culture. In contrast to high culture, which is developed and enjoyed by the elites, Fiske (1989) describes popular culture as the culture created and consumed by the general public. According to Hebdige (1979), popular culture serves as a setting for the construction and propagation of social meanings and identities. It is a place of cultural conflict and resistance where weaker groups can oppose the prevailing cultures. Jenkins (2006) refers to popular culture as a culture produced and disseminated mostly by media industries. He places a strong emphasis on how technology shapes popular culture.

2.3.9 Representation of transgender in Popular culture

The representation of transgender people in popular culture, especially in the entertainment and media industries, has been extensively studied and analyzed. It shows how transgender people are portrayed in literature, television, and film, as well as how these representations affect the public view about transgender individuals. R. Bauer (2017) in "Becoming the Monster," explored how transgender characters are portrayed in popular culture and how these tales serve as a reflection of societal concerns about gender and sexuality. The author contends that whereas transgender characters are frequently portrayed as monstrous and frightening, cisgender characters are frequently characterized as sexually aggressive, maintaining negative stereotypes.

According to Macrae, Stangor, and Hewstone, 1996, it's critical to understand that stereotypes reflect a society's general understanding of its norms, myths, beliefs, religion, and disciplines. Every civilization has these stereotypes; hence they are universal. They form norms, and these norms do not require people to follow them to the extent; rather, they are socialized and orientated to do so. One of the most important tools to construct and (de)construct stereotypes is media, which is the key source of ideological investment. It functions as a subtle tool to instill common sense in a way that encourages individuals to internalize and act in accordance with the information provided to them.

Mocarski, Butler, Emmons, and Smallwood (2013) opine, "marginalization becomes a method to restabilize gender boundaries" (p. 250), when transgendered

people do become mediated. Most transgender persons have historically been depicted negatively in movies. When producers do make an effort to incorporate transgender protagonists, they are typically portrayed in a way that upholds a binary definition of gender. The concept of a gender binary may be questioned, if transgender people (or people who violate gender norms as described by Stryker) were shown in complex ways as opposed to being sidelined. Hence, there is a greater stake than merely whether or not transgender persons are fairly portrayed.

Richardson (2016). (p. 10) says, "The language is shaped and developed by culture." First and foremost, culture has a big impact on how representations are made. Hence, by studying how transgender people are portrayed in society, we get some insight into cultural attitudes around gender and physical appearance. In addition, trans bodies "show the social dynamics that construct gender even to reassure that one can ultimately "return home to" or "arrive at" one's real gender," according to Keegan (2013). (Para.1). This relates to the widely held belief that transgender people seamlessly keep transitioning between genders.

Pakistan is regarded as the second-largest Islamic nation in the world and Islam accords the same rights for everyone. It is discovered through electronic and print media that despite being an Islamic state, transgender people are ignored by the ruling class and the local culture in Pakistan. Several NGOs support human rights, but they also have liberated transgender community. In Pakistan, transgender persons are marginalized in many facets of society, including education, government employment, healthcare, and even security. Although Pakistani Supreme Court granted transgender people rights in 2013, these rights have not yet been realized on a communal level. In addition to society, their families also don't treat them like part of the family (Siddique et al., 2017).

Mamona et al., 2022 claim that transgender people face Five Faces of oppression proposed by as put forward by Young (2004). Transgender characters either the narrator or the fellows of the authors have gone through a myriad of oppression namely exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence. The researcher's textual analysis reveals that transgender people experience oppression in their lives and journeys as described in their autobiographies, and that the source of this oppression is hatred for transgender people. The identity of trans women is opposed by society. Traditional sexism and the oppositional sexism trans people experience are the

only causes of this transphobia. The study shows that transgender people are a sexual minority who are exposed to prejudice, hostility, and violence by exposing the types and scenarios of oppression they experience.

2.3.10 Transgender in Pakistani Media

Transgender people play significant roles in several festivals, such as marriage ceremonies, birthday celebrations, Eid festivities, and other major events, in Pakistani culture and tradition. Nevertheless, the terms "Murat, Hijra, Khawaja Sara, and Khusra" refer to Pakistani people who identify as third gender yet go by different names. These are the persons for whom Pakistan accords the least respect or dignity. Even they struggle to be accepted as human beings in Pakistani society due to the violent and ignorant mindset of some people. Additionally, they encountered widespread "ignorance" and "rejection" all over Pakistan. A recent transgender sex survey found that almost one-third of 50 youngsters exhibit obvious clinical tendencies or potential. Put differently, transgenderism affects or affects roughly 2% of Pakistan's population (Akhtar, 2016). The firstborn's gender is decided by the family. At first glimpse, the families go crazy, wanting to kill them or exclude them from their group because they feel ashamed that they are related to them. Who knows what sex you are when you are born? The reason Hijra experienced discrimination from birth in families, towns, social organizations, schools, and society is that it permeates all aspects of their lives.

Yaqin and Chambers (2017) argue that Hijras are frequently portrayed in Pakistani cinema as humorous or sad characters and are not given leading roles. Transgender people in Pakistan are referred to as "Hijra" and have historically been shunned by society. However there has been an increase in transgender people's media representation in recent years. Hijras are frequently incorporated into stories as comedic relief or to add a tragic tone. Despite an upsurge in Hijra representation in Pakistani films, the writers point out that this representation is frequently stereotyped and lacks subtlety.

The portrayal of transgender individuals in Pakistani cinema is also examined by Maryam Azam in the research titled "Transgender Representation in Pakistani Cinema: A Critical Study." The study looks at how transgender people are portrayed in movies and discusses how this has affected the transgender community. While there has been some improvement in the portrayal of transgender individuals in Pakistani films, the

study concludes that Pakistan still must do a significant work in terms of realistic and positive representation of trans community.

Khan, S. (2021) also examined how transgender people were portrayed in Pakistani news reports from 2017-2018 to 2020. To analyze news articles found in reputable publications, the author used a content analysis methodology. The research found that transgender people were frequently depicted as sexual objects and that their experiences were denigrated. Zeb, F.; Ali, R. (2020). Transgender individuals are shown in TV dramas in Pakistani media as a form of marginalized representation. 15(2), 23–38. Ten TV dramas with transgender characters were examined by the authors using a qualitative methodology. According to the research, transgender people are frequently portrayed as abused and violent victims, and their experiences are sensationalized for entertainment value.

2.3.11 Transgender in American Media

In contrast, transgender people have also been represented in American films, but in a different way than in Pakistani ones. Susan Stryker (2017) opines that transgender people are frequently portrayed in American films as "monsters" or "freaks." According to Stryker, this is a result of the transphobia that permeates American society. Transgender people are frequently portrayed as antagonists or as things to be laughed at, and their experiences are rarely properly represented. Yet, transgender people have been positively represented in a few American films. Yvonne Tasker (2010) states in her analysis of the film "Transamerica" that it positively presents a transgender lady while sympathetically noting her difficulties.

In the Journal of Homosexuality, author Drew Dalton looked at how transgender people were portrayed in American movies from 1914 to 2014. The study discovered that there has been little transgender representation in movies and that trans characters are frequently represented negatively. The survey also showed that, despite recent increases, there are still few films that accurately and favorably portray transgender people. Transgender people's portrayal in the media has generated a lot of debate throughout the years. These people have frequently been portrayed in the media through the medium of films. Though trans people can find a lot of representation in movies, yet a lot of movies support unfavorable preconceptions or negatively depict transgender people. For instance, the transgender character in the 1994 movie "The Crying Game"

is portrayed as cunning and manipulative. Films from more recent years, such "The Danish Girl" (2015) and "Dallas Buyers Club" (2013), have received recognition for their favorable portrayals of transgender people. We will examine several viewpoints on how transgender people are portrayed in movies.

Jenelle Leigh Campion and Brett Johnson, "Transgender Representation in Mainstream Hollywood Films: A Comparative Study" (2019) looked at how transgender characters were portrayed in popular Hollywood movies. The study's findings revealed that transgender people were frequently presented as victims or antagonists, and that their storylines centered on their issues with gender identification. The survey also discovered that transgender people of color were underrepresented in popular Hollywood movies.

Rachel M. Riedner and Jacob R. Miles (2020) looked at how transgender people are portrayed in independent movies. The researchers discovered that independent movies gave transgender characters a more favorable portrayal, showing them as diverse people with distinctive stories. The survey also discovered that transgender persons of color and transgender characters with varied experiences were more frequently shown in independent films. Relationships between queer cinema and Hollywood's industry awards can be advantageous to both parties. Academics like as Joanna Mansbridge have connected the 1990s New Queer Cinema movement's commercial success to the growing legal and acceptance of the LGBTQ community on a cultural level. However, the popularity of television programs like *LGBT Eye for the Straight Guy* and *Queer as Folk* (Davies 2000–2005) highlights how LGBT characters are becoming more visible in mainstream media at a time when discriminatory behaviors in the public and private sectors were first addressed by state and federal laws (Hunt). According to Halberstam, wealthy LGBT people started to be "described as part of a creative class that enhanced the city's social and cultural capital" in the 1990s. A refined, and knowledgeable elite gradually grew to be associated with queer or "gay" identity and aesthetics, and work that positively engaged with LGBT subject started to be considered as progressive and edgy. Expanding upon this change in culture, positive portrayals of LGBT characters made their way into mainstream Hollywood productions.

2.3.12 Transgression, Trans-normativity, and "Fixing" Transness

A significant subject in the research is the normative standard used to evaluate transgender individuals. In his exploration of the idea of trans-normativity, Johnson (2016) described it in terms of the “ideological accountability system to which transgender people are held accountable for their gender presentation and experiences.” Trans-normativity serves to both simplify (or lessen the transgression of) transgenderism and make it easier for viewers to understand. According to Johnson (2016), p. 466, the focus on this medical/surgery approach, particularly in movies, “creates a marginalizing effect for gender-non-conforming people who cannot or do not wish to surgically transition.” Because of trans-normativity, some transgender people’s experiences seem less real than others. A narrative of being “born in the wrong” physically reinforces the idealized version of “being” transgender. It is difficult for those with diverse gender identities or trajectories to obtain the same representation or societal understanding if this is the only story that people ever hear.

2.3.13 Issues Faced by Transgender

The transgender community is one that is marginalized in our culture. They have more obstacles to overcome than the average person. They are subjected to violence and discrimination by society. History demonstrates that during the Mughal era, transgender people were not marginalized on the subcontinent. They carried numerous tasks in the palaces. As time passed, they got banished from the palaces and forced to live in ordinary society. The subcontinent’s countries of Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan are currently dealing with socioeconomic problems. In Pakistan, transgender individuals and other marginalized communities deal with a variety of grassroots problems on a daily basis. These include not having access to good jobs, housing, healthcare, or education by Muhammad Saad Khan, an entrepreneur from AL Pakistan. Pakistan State Times in Article, published by Mehwish Akhter on Wednesday, April 20, 2016, as per the Pakistani English daily paper (www.pstimes.com) in which the answer is quite straightforward and appealing: transgender and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) individuals are acknowledged in Pakistani society as a source of shame and disgrace. Without their means of subsistence—dancing, singing, etc.—they will inevitably have to leave common societies and establish their own colonies. They also lack respect in society and personal safety in the event of any physical attacks.

2.3.14 Bathroom Problem

Choosing which restroom to use and the consequences that follow can be widely characterized as the "bathroom problem" for trans persons. As an example, if a 24 preoperative trans person who is not yet ready uses the loo associated with their preferred gender identification, they run the risk of being harassed. According to Sandercock (2015), gender minorities' usage of public restrooms is extremely political (p. 445). The two television programs that Sandercock examines, *Glee* and *Degrassi*, provide examples of this toilet issue. Given that both Adam and Unique are attacked in school restrooms, Sandercock claims that both exhibit "awareness of the political implications of public bathroom use" (p. 445). Adam, a transgender adolescent, gets attacked in the school restroom in the television program *Degrassi*. The staff at the school will accompany him to the handicapped restroom as a solution. Sandercock concludes the idea that Adam should be isolated because he is a victim subtly supports a system of legitimacy and acceptability in which heterosexual, gender-conforming men and women get privileges. While others' concerns and locations are marginalized, theirs are given priority along with their spatial liberties (pp. 447–448).

Since the toilet issue arises in daily life, transgender representation of the issue is commonly configured. Whether a trans person decides to have surgery or hormonal replacement therapy, it further complicates this issue.

2.3.15 Deception

A transgender person who blends in successfully with society is frequently portrayed in popular culture as dishonest. Transgender persons who "do not disclose their gender transition to new acquaintances or coworkers" are referred to as "passing" (Schilt, 2006, p. 15). Passing is also referred to as "going stealth." According to Schilt (2006), the term "stealth" encompasses "covert" and "clandestine," which are synonymous terms that align more closely with the idea that transitions are a part of a personal history that can be revealed in certain situations but not in others. Some people consider it "being deceptive" when someone is viewed as male or female but does not have the expected genitalia to correspond with that gender. In films with transgender protagonists, this feeling of hiding or going under the radar is frequently very common. This explains why the well-known "exposure" moment, in which the transsexual body is displayed to the audience and other characters, occurs so frequently in movies or

TV shows when transgender characters appear as a particular gender. The misleading transsexual is regarded as someone who “successfully presents as the desired sex but is consequently a very dangerous character” (Richardson, 2016, p. 128). In movies and television shows, heterosexual male characters find it especially unsettling when transgender characters go to considerable measures to "deceive" possible lovers.

2.3.16 Transgender Body Exposure in Movies

According to Keegan (2013), the exposure scene is any instance in the media narrative where the transgender identity is suddenly revealed by violent clothes removal or voyeurism, which is common in popular television shows and movies. According to Mulvey (2010), such scenes are framed with the audience's active gaze, the other characters that the audience is supposed to connect with, as well as the passive victim of the exposure that is being viewed. These scenes both fulfill the viewer's desire for enjoyable viewing and spark their curiosity. The actors in the exposure scenes and the transgender body are meant to be seen by the audience. According to Keegan (2013), using a scene like this leads to the "violent exposure and humiliation of the trans body." The scenario of exposure is both aggressive and encroaching. The desire of the general public to "know" what a trans person possesses under their clothes is the reason it is prevalent in transgender movies. According to Richardson (2016), there is frequently a "much too great of interest in the transsexual subject's genitalia, to the point where this interest frequently exceeds the bounds of public decency" (p. 129).

Another noteworthy difference is the politics surrounding exposure of FTM characters as opposed to MTF characters. According to Siebler (2012), unless the actor portraying the trans person is feminine, the "viewing of the trans characters' bodies is not central." Movies containing FTM trans characters serve as further evidence of this double standard about whose bodies are on display—those that the voyeuristic public is permitted to look upon—and which are not. It's a highly political matter as to which trans bodies are revealed and how. It is evident that sexism and other oppressive systems are at the basis of the politics around transgender exposure. The mirror scene is one of the exposure scenes associated with this theme. According to Keegan (2013), transgender characters constantly pose in front of mirrors, naked and in various stages of undressing, analyzing themselves while experiencing a spectrum of negative feelings ranging from dismay. This enables the viewers to look at the transsexual body in any way they choose. The following sections demonstrate how transgender characters are

objectified without necessarily being sexualized. Additionally, a distinct story is being produced when they are sadly staring into the mirror. Other than the transgender person believing they were born into the incorrect body, the unpleasant feelings connected to mirror scenes preclude any other option. Nothing about their physique could genuinely appeal to them. Consequently, this strengthens the trans-normative characteristics mentioned earlier and contributes to the myth that transgender individuals are not suitable as romantic partners.

2.3.17 Victimization of Transgender

Transgender characters in TV movies and television shows are frequently portrayed as victims of violence. According to McInroy and Craig (2017), viewers think that "LGBTQ young people are portrayed as weak, unreliable, and bullied in traditional media" (p. 39). It is rare to see transgender characters portrayed as resilient and strong. Suppression, sometimes known as complete omission, is another kind of violence. Acts of violence are committed when there is no acknowledgment or recognition at all. Bisexual and transgender identities were found to be "particularly recognized for being nearly invisible, particularly transgender men," according to McInroy and Craig (p. 40). Transwomen have tended to be the majority of transgender representation. The emergence of transgender male characters on television programs such as *Glee* and *Degrassi* is transforming the landscape. Sandercock (2015) has already addressed the prevalence of psychological, physical, and sexual assault against transgender characters. As previously said, both teenage transgender characters on *Degrassi* and *Glee* have been assaulted in school restroom. The issue with programs such as *Glee* is that, according to Sanderson (2015), "the excessive humor employed in portraying these acts as satirical commentary often undermines the gravity of discrimination in *Glee*." While preserving the integrity of the act, the humor depoliticizes the situation. Scenes that include an assault on a transgender character draw critical attention of the viewers. Violence serves as a warning to people who cross the gender binary, which is perhaps its most significant use. When it comes to their romantic relationships with others, they are most vulnerable. In their pursuit of someone they find attractive, they leave themselves vulnerable to abuse or rejection.

2.3.18 Transgender and Romance

One powerful feature of the depiction is the lack of any satisfying love or sexual storyline featuring transgender individuals. Abbott (2013) defines this gap as the "trans/romance" dilemma. Abbott believes that the director is to blame for this. According to her, "too often, romantic contact is hindered, and storyline expectations are subverted because the movie maker fears that viewers will interpret the trans character's gender identity as unreal and their romance as transgressive," (p. 32). Put differently, Abbott's study discovered that movie producers are reluctant to have their storyline questioned. The transgender romance dilemma is a powerful one in the realm of teenage LGBTQ depiction. "Dating is often challenging and awkward for teenagers; nevertheless, some shows reveal it can be more difficult for trans youth," as Sandercock (2015) investigates (p. 441).

2.3.19 Transgender's Desire for Surgery

As was previously said, fixing refers to the process of making something that is "broken" whole again. This connects to the notion that physical and gender identity misalignment can be resolved by surgery. For transgender individuals, surgery is frequently viewed as an essential stage in their transition. According to Keegan (2013), the film *TransAmerica* concludes by "problematically positing surgery as a solution to the negative emotions of being transgender, despite the stark economic and political inequalities." According to him, being transgender is equivalent to desiring surgery...dramatically reducing the complex issues of transgender experience and identity." Those who decide against having surgery have similar identities removed. The final crucial step in the transgender journey is surgery. According to Siebler (2012), we internalize the idea that taking hormone treatments and having surgery is necessary to "be a person who is trans-queer which means being either masculine male or feminine female" (p. 76), which is based on stereotypes about transgender persons. Most transgender portrayals in history has centered on people who either want to undergo or have already had medical transitions. People who are during a transition are rarely ever represented.

Ultimately, surgery gives the transgender individual the ability to feel like a feminine woman or a manly man. Butler (1999) drawing inspiration from Foucault (p. 25), asserts that the "category of sex is a production of a diffuse regulatory economy of

sexuality," As a transgender person, undergoing surgery is a component of the regulatory system of gender since specific physical attributes and parts are categorized as male or feminine. Transgender people who have had surgery are compelled into wanting to alter their bodies to match up to a gender norm.

2.3.20 Hope for Better Representation of Transgender

There's hope that transgender people will be portrayed more positively in the literature; Richardson (2016), for instance, points out that *TransAmerica* is one of the few trans films that tackles the "issue of transsexuality with a degree of sensitivity" (p. 132). The movie tells the story of Bree's struggles "in detail, rather than reverting to generalizations or stereotypes, while representing this within a classical narrative framework" (Richardson, 2016, p. 144). This permits a slightly more complex portrayal of Bree as a person, not just as a transsexual. Penn (2015) investigates how *Boy Meets Girl* is a more progressive transgender film than other transgender representations. Unlike other transgender movies, this one stars a transgender woman portraying the transgender character. A tiny community that embraces the transgender character and a transgender character that is "happy and well-adjusted" are two other noteworthy positive qualities (Penn, 2015, p. 142).

2.4 Summary

Some of the most pertinent studies on transgender representation in the media that have been published to date have been highlighted in this review of the literature. Numerous articles draw attention to the fact that transgender portrayal is still filled with stereotypes, excessive simplified concepts, and negative themes. The impulse to unveil or expose, the subversion of transgressive possibilities, and the enacting of violence on the transgender body are a few of the negative themes discussed in the literature. The transformative motif of adhering to a clinical framework that views surgery that is required to fix transness is evident in the majority of transgender portrayals. As the gender binary is an oppressive system, that has an impact on everyone. This research is crucial as we may start to understand how to combat this repressive system by dissecting the ways transgender persons are portrayed and policed in the media. However, all the aforementioned works and relevant literature have primarily used literary perspectives to discuss trans representations in films and other media portals, whereas this study employs linguistic and semiotic viewpoints to critically decode the

visual and verbal practices employed by the transgender characters in the mentioned movies. And the research compares/ contrasts the depiction of transgender in Pakistani and American movies by doing discourse analysis of the used practices.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter briefs about the methodological perspectives used during the research. The existing data has been analyzed based on Theory of Representation by Hall (1997), Queer Theory by Lauretis (1991), and Semiotic Theory by Barthes (1957). An amended research model has been created by combining Content Analysis (CA) method that has been amended by Capuzza and Spencer (2017), A Feminist Model of Text by Mills (1995), Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) Social Semiotic approach, and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) by Krueger (2000) to analyze the data. The following sections provide further details about this strategy and explain the rationale behind it. In addition, it lists the research questions and highlights the data collection tools as well as the details of the material to be analyzed.

3.1 Research Approach

As the research analyzes the visual and verbal practices employed by transgender in two movies, a mixed method approach has been used to document the frequency of occurrences of the practices used by transgender characters using Content Analysis (CA) and Discourse Analysis (DA) method used in linguistic studies, both at linguistic and semiotic levels using A Feminist Model of Text (Mills 1995) and Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) Social Semiotic approach; however, the researcher's analysis of semiotics is validated by conducting Focus Group Discussions (FGD) among the participants i.e., Linguists and non-linguists. As it deals with the ideological analysis of linguistic and semiotic discourses to expose ideologies around the representation of transgender people in popular culture, such as films and dramas as well as count the frequency of themes, the research has used a mixed method approach. The mixed research approach has shown to be more appropriate, according to the researcher, given that the current study examines the coded themes as well as people's perceptions and behaviors. However, the qualitative part is given more emphasis in this study because, as Maxwell (2005) states, it prioritizes participant perspectives and enables construction

3.2 Research Questions

The present research attempts to document the visual and verbal practices and analyze the linguistic and semiotic discourses employed by transgender in Pakistani and American movies along with finding out the stereotypical ideologies related to transgender characters depicted through the popular culture. For this, the research attempts to find out the answers of the following questions:

1. What visual and verbal practices are employed by transgender characters in the movies “Joyland” and “Anything’s Possible” and how do they contribute to the portrayal and representation of transgender identities and ideologies?
2. How are ideologies related to transgender propagated through the characters of the selected movies?

3.3 Tools for Data Collection

The following tools are used for data collection for this dissertation.

Two movies, one from Pakistani Media (Joyland – 2022) and one from American Media (Anything’s Possible – 2022) have been chosen for the present study to critically decode the visual and verbal practices used by transgender characters and investigate the ideologies propagated through the analysis of trans characters. The frequency of occurrence of the visual and verbal practices along with text and visuals selected from the chosen movies have been analyzed in chapter 4 at linguistic and semiotic levels respectively. The points to be considered while selecting movies are as follows:

- Both movies are released in the same year, 2022.
- Depiction of transgender characters from two diverse cultures

The analysis of the representation of transgender individuals in two movies is done keeping in view the cultural, social, and political contexts of each country.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

As the research is based on the analysis of visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters and the ideologies propagated through them in movies Joyland and Anything’s possible, the researcher has tried to use purposive sampling

technique during the selection of text and visuals (dialogues and images) and the selection of focus group interview participants so that the data can be validated.

3.5 Selection of Text and Semiotics for Analysis

The text and visuals have been taken from the selected Pakistani and American movies (*Joyland* and *Anything's Possible*). They are analyzed in detail using the amended model. Five scenes from each movie have been selected to be analyzed at linguistic and semiotic levels.

3.6 Methodology

The research aims to critically decode the visual and verbal practices used by transgender characters and investigate the ideologies propagated through the analysis of trans characters in the selected movies. For this purpose, the existing data is analyzed using the amended model of analysis by combining Content Analysis (CA), A Feminist Model of Text (Mills 1995), Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic approach and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) by Krueger (2000). This modified model is devised in accordance with the data.

3.7 Rationale Behind Amendment

The purpose of this amended model is to decode the visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters and examine the chosen movies at linguistic and semiotic levels as well as through focus group discussions, take into account the perceptions of the general Pakistani public about the transgender representation in the selected movies. Content Analysis (CA) is helpful in documenting the frequency of occurrences of the practices employed by transgender. The Feminist Model by Mills (1995) and Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic approach are appropriate for the current study because analysis encompasses gender representations at the language and semiotic levels. The Mills (1995) model is important to present research because it examines how language choices can shape, adhere, and (de)construct stereotypes regarding gender discrimination. Additionally, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) using the Krueger (2000) model aims to understanding how media representations of transgender contribute to shaping/breaking people's perceptions. This method reveals valuable detailed information and great insight helpful to

validating the observations of linguistic and semiotic analyses as well as help in adding up the number of different emerging themes.

3.8 Content Analysis (CA) adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017)

By using content analysis for portraying transgender, the researcher has explored the quantitative side of their portrayal in detail. The researcher has investigated the frequency of occurrences of verbal and visual practices based on various themes, as well as stereotypes towards Biba, and Kelsa's representation in *Joyland and Anything's Possible*.

The research process starts with quantitative content analysis which is a research method wherein the content is subjectively interpreted through a systematic process that involves topic identification patterns and coding (p. 1278 in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). As stated by Hsieh and Shannon (2005), the ultimate objective is to "provide knowledge and understanding" of the subject being studied. The researcher has created a coding schedule and handbook based on Capuzza and Spencer's (2017) model. This CA examines how the transgender characters are portrayed by their physical attributes, social cues, and societal classifications, as well as through the words and actions of other characters towards them.

The coding categories are:

Casting

Whether the character is portrayed by a cisgender or a transgender actor or actress was covered under the casting category.

Visibility

It includes the number of scenes in which the character physically appears, the number of scenes in which the character is mentioned, the total amount of screen time the character has when physically present, the frequency with which the character's transgender identity is addressed, and whether identity is addressed positively or negatively.

Identification

The character's name, gender identity, perceived or implied sexual orientation, age approximation, race/ethnicity, and manner of identifying are all included in the identification category.

Character relevance

The number of scenes in which the character's transgender identification causes narrative conflict and the number of scenes in which the character's identity significantly advances the plot. The transgender identity is the cause of tension in the narrative, which is known as narrative conflict.

Embodiment

The embodiment category includes the number of scenes in which the transgender character is mis-genderized in language, the instances in which the character is gendered correctly, the instances in which the character is referred to by their birth name, the scenes in which someone engages in a discourse about their "wrong body," the scenes in which the transgender character's genitalia are discussed, the occasions in which the transgender person's physical attractiveness is discussed, and the occasions in which the trans body is exposed.

Social interaction

The transgender person's social interactions include who they interact with, if they are in a sexual or romantic relationship, and whether they are the victim of psychological or physical assault at the time of the incident.

For the sake of this study, some of the questions used by these researchers are retained, while others are modified or removed. To make sure the categories are comprehensive and mutually exclusive, more questions are included to find the frequency of occurrence of the practices employed by transgender characters in the movies. The coding sheet adapted from Capuzza and Spencer's (2017) have two sides A and B, which are amended by the researcher according to the content of the movies selected for analysis. Some of the questions have been excluded and some are included in the given sheet according to the data under analysis for this research.

	1. Character played by transgender or cis actor/ actress	A. Casting
	2. How many times character physically appears	B. Visibility
	3. Total scenes character is mentioned in	
	4. Total screen time	
	5. How many times character's transgender identity is discussed	
	6. Character Name	C. Identity
	7. Gender Identity	
	8. Race/ Ethnicity	
	9. Age	
	10. Sexuality	
	11. Number of scenes when person's trans identity is source of narrative conflict	D. Relevance of Character
	12. Number of scenes when person's trans identity contributes to storyline in a major way	
Movie: Character		Basic Information

Table 1 Coding Sheet Side 1

	13. Number of times character is misgendered	E. Embodiment
	14. Number of times character is correctly gendered	
	15. Number of times someone engages in a wrong body discourse	
	16. Number of times character's birth name is used	
	17. Number of times character's genitals are discussed	
	18. Number of times character's physical attractiveness is discussed	
	19. Is the trans character's body revealed?	
	20. Are they in a romantic relationship?	F. Social Interaction
	21. Are they in a sexual relationship?	
	22. Are they victim of psychological violence?	
	23. Are they victim of physical violence?	

Coding Sheet Side 2

Table 2 Coding Sheet Side 2

Coding Questions	Biba	Kelsa
1. Character played by transgender or cis actor/ actress		
2. How many times character physically appears in the movie		
3. Total screen time		
4. How many times character's transgender identity is discussed		
5. Number of scenes when person's trans identity is source of narrative conflict		
6. Number of scenes when person's trans identity contributes to storyline in a major way		
7. Number of times character is misgendered		
8. Number of times character is correctly gendered		
9. Number of times character's genitals are discussed		
10. Number of times character's physical attractiveness is discussed		
11. How many times they indulge in a romantic/ sexual situation?		
12. How many times they become the victim of psychological violence?		
13. How many times they become the victim of physical violence?		

Table 3 Amended Coding Sheet to be employed for analysis

3.9 Feminist Model of Text by Sara Mills – 1995

The Feminist Model by Mills (1995) and Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) Social Semiotic approach are appropriate for the current study because analysis will encompass gender representations at the language and semiotic levels. The Mills (1995) model is important to present research because it examines how language choices can shape, adhere, and (de)construct stereotypes regarding gender discrimination. The chosen model has been selected because it considers several variables while analyzing literary work, including the text, context, and socio-historical elements. The model aims to recognize and enhance the text; additionally, this approach is applicable not only to

the analysis of women's work but also to that of men or any other third gender, providing a new perspective with fewer subjective elements.

The primary goal of the feminist stylistic model is to openly offer a new language viewpoint for examining gendered representation in the context of current socio-historical changes. As a result, it highlights instances of sexism in texts and examines how concepts like agency, point of view, metaphor, and transitivity can all be surprisingly tied to gender issues. In this sense, Mills employs a variety of literary and linguistic approaches to provide readers with a language to explain what's happening inside of them while they read the book (Mills, 1995, p. 1).

Mills (1992) in her essay 'Knowing your place; a Marxist Feminist stylistic analysis' further states that feminist stylistics is a shift from traditional stylistics that ignores the world beyond the text. She broadens the theory of stylistics to incorporate the contextual dimensions of traditional stylistic analysis, which include the text and its author in addition to its history, relationship to other texts, and relationship to readers, to elucidate her point of view. The model considers the interaction between lexical elements and their context to locate all the contextual characteristics stated above.

The fact that the production and reception of texts are viewed as components of context, and that the reader is therefore perceived as both impacted by and able to influence how the text is interpreted, is another significant aspect of the aforementioned model. During the interpretation process, the reader engages in a negotiation with the meanings being imposed onto them, challenging or rejecting certain interpretations. Furthermore, Mills believes that readers are free to interpret the text anyway they see fit and that the text itself could signify anything. As a result, the text positions the reader in several ways that they might choose to accept or reject, as Mills (1995) contends in the model. Nevertheless, the primary focus of this model is on the various production (textual, antecedents, literary conventions, current literary trends, affiliation, socio-historical factors, and authors) and reception (intended audience, actual audience, socio-historical factors, reader) factors that impact the reader's position. In summary, Mills' model allows for the analysis of texts to reveal the author's gender as well as the author's gender assumptions. More precisely, though, the model considers the interacting nature of the relationship between texts and their context and the portrayal of gender that the texts offer. Furthermore, Mills (1995) states that the authors also possess a reasonably clear idea of what kind of material is expected to be accepted by

publishers at any given time. The following illustration has been used to show the two contexts of the aforementioned model:

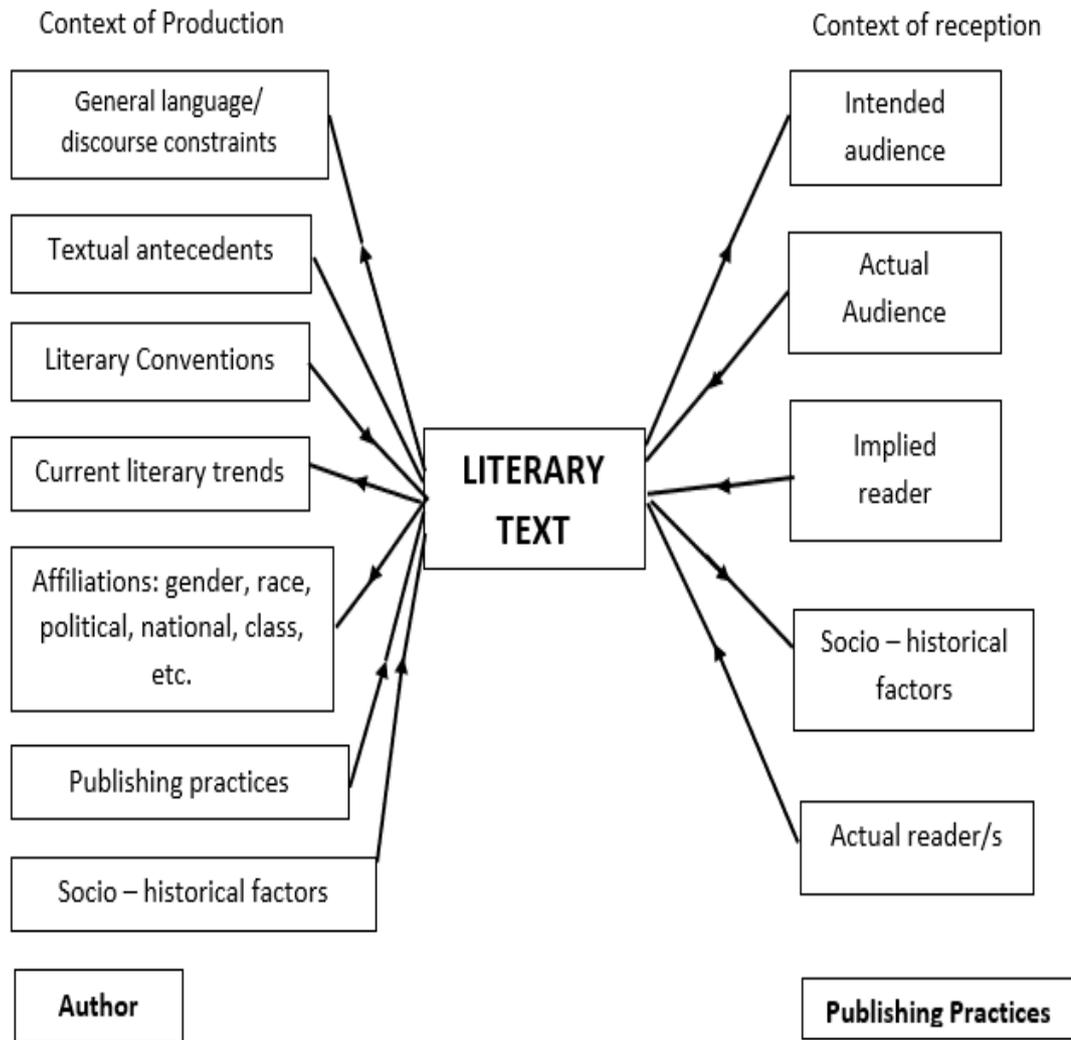


Figure 1 Feminist Model of Text (Mills, 1995, p.23)

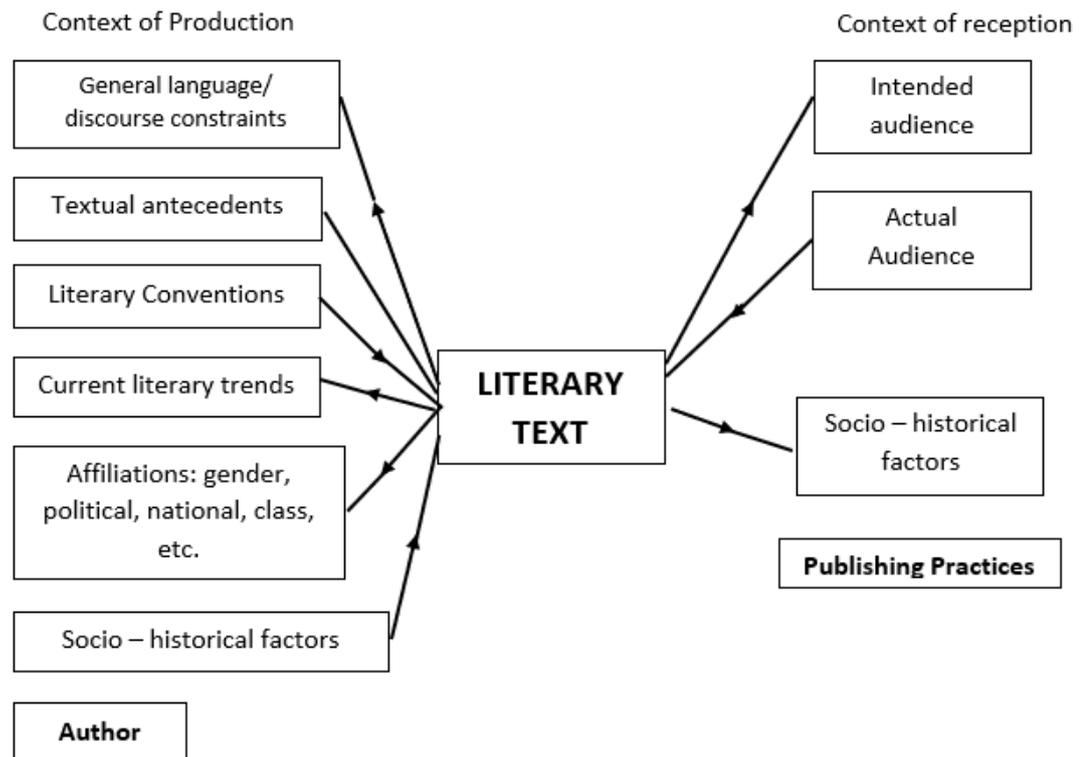


Figure 2 Amended Feminist Model of Text (Mills, 1995, p.23) to be employed for analysis

Following levels of Mill's Feminist Model of Text have been employed by the researcher to decode the verbal practices used by transgender characters in the selected movies.

Words/ Metaphors

To examine verbal practices at the level of individual lexical items, Mill (1995) asserts that the level of analysis of individual words is quite helpful in addressing the question of gender bias. Specifically, she has considered the use of words as generic pronouns, generic nouns, lexis referring transgender as a marked object or otherwise, and most importantly, the words acting as metaphors to see how gender stereotypes have been maintained or challenged.

Sentences/ Phrases

It has been noticed that focusing solely on words by themselves might occasionally reflect a specific interpretation of meaning, i.e., the meaning is included in the word itself. Although certain words have a usage history that influences how the hearer interprets them, words only make meaning according to their context. Thus, Mills is also interested in how language use might be examined at a level higher than

the word in order to perform a more focused and reliable analysis. For instance, the word "girl" can have a neutral meaning when used in a specific context, like "She goes to a girls' school." However, when used in a different context, like "Do not be such a girl," or "The school that she goes to isn't outstanding; it's only a girls' school," it can have a sexist connotation. It can be said in the same way as how words acquire a sense in connection to their co-text, that is, the words with which they occur and their context. The term "girl" in this scenario starts to acquire an adverse meaning in the later phrases. As the process of meaning-production is often not accessible at the literal level of the individual words that make up a sentence, the researcher's focus in the textual analysis of the chosen dialogues from the two movies has been on how sentences and phrases make sense in relation to their co-text, context, history of usage, and background knowledge that is necessary for their making sense.

Discourse

At this level of gendered discourse analysis, Mills (1995) looks at how feminists can conduct an analysis based on gender, focusing on the larger-scale structures at the discourse level, or above the level of the sentence, with the intention of viewing content, the substance of texts, as the exchange of textual elements, codes, and forces outside the text that influence how the text is constructed as well as how readers/viewers interpret what is written/said. However, because it is not regarded as a linguistic study as it is not limited to examining individual lexical items, the analysis of language at the discourse level is frequently disregarded in stylistic analysis (Carter and Simpson 1989). As stated by Carter and Simpson, "Discourse analysis should be concerned not simply with micro- contexts of the effects of words across sentences or conversational turns but also with the macro- texts of larger social patterns (Carter and Simpson 1989:16)", the discourse level is primarily concerned with larger structures and patterns that determine the occurrence of these individual lexical items as well as the effect of these items and larger structures on readers/viewers. This is how the analysis uses these textual structures and patterns to connect the word and phrase with a more general idea of ideology. Since these gendered discursive structures operate at a stereotyped level to dictate the kind of language that is produced to uphold or challenge these stereotypes, Mills (1995) has referred to these gendered discourses structures as "gendered frameworks" for analytical purposes. As a result, the primary focus of this level is on the creation and dismantling of characters in dialogue and texts in order to examine

how stereotypes regarding gender representations are presented while taking into account the linguistic decisions chosen by the author or director, paying particular attention to the roles that transgender people are assigned and structured in the manner that gender difference beliefs influence associations and narratives at both levels.

It's also important to note that meanings are not static and can change to meet the needs of speakers. As a result, institutionalized changes in language use have been brought about by increased awareness; many sexist and racist terms have disappeared from the media or are used infrequently. Even though these changes in usage do not result in a complete shift in attitudes, people are still forced to consider their own attitudes when they use these terms, as Jane Mills puts it: "With almost every word we utter, we have a choice." Consequently, the goal of using feminist stylistics in this study is to identify the subliminal ideological elements pertaining to transgender characters that are present in the movies. Because not all of the factors that contribute to differences are equally weighted, discrimination and unequal access to power and rights must be taken into account, feminist analysis goes beyond merely analyzing disparities. Because of racism, it is obvious that a Black woman's image in a perfume advertisement would not have the same meaning as a White woman's. By demonstrating alternate linguistic interpretations that can produce distinct and more useful meanings, language analysis can assist in challenging these ideas of 'normality'.

It is important to note that the set of gender-based social and linguistic interactions is the focus of feminist stylistics. Mills does not assume that all males, all women, or transgender people are the same; rather, she uses the term "gender" in a very broad meaning. The term "gender" has several theoretical drawbacks, chief among them the possibility that it could influence political outcomes. As a result, the oppression that transgender persons experience inside all systems is ignored.

Since the primary goal of the current study is to locate themes such as the negative portrayal of transgender people, Mills' methodology addresses both the implied and apparent implications of these topics. Feminist stylistics' goal, to put it briefly, is to identify the discursive techniques and methods used to uphold gendered relationships in terms of dominance and inequality through societal discourses. Mills uses word/metaphor, gendered sentences, and textual discourse analysis to unearth the roots of domination and inequality that exist in society.

3.10 Semiological Discourse Analysis

Additionally, the researcher has used the Social Semiotic approach of Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) to identify the linguistic and semiotic levels of social, political, hegemonic, representation, and the concept of alienation. Furthermore, considering different social levels of drawing meanings from the semiotic discourses of the chosen movies to see how words and visuals combine to form an ideology. A framework for examining how meaning is created and communicated through a variety of semiotic resources, including language, visuals, gestures, and other forms of communication, is provided by Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) Social Semiotic approach. The Social Semiotic Multimodal Analysis can be described as a process of description and investigation across three inter-connected levels:

Design

At the level of design, Kress and Hodge concentrate on the decisions made by those who create texts or messages. In order to construct certain meanings and representations, producers must choose and mix various semiotic resources (such as language, images, and design), which must be examined at this level. It looks at the intentions, plans, and techniques producers use to impact and spread messages.

Mode/ Representation

Examining the production and propagation of meanings via texts or messages is part of the representation level. This level takes into account how producers' choices for design relate to how consumers understand or read them. It examines how semiotic resources are arranged and set up within texts to specifically represent people, objects, situations, and concepts. This level also examines how representations affect perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, as well as their cultural, social, and ideological connotations.

Context/ Interaction

The relationships between written communications and their recipients are the primary focus of Kress and van Leeuwen's interaction level analysis. Analyzing how audiences understand, react to, and interact with texts or messages in particular circumstances is part of this level. It takes into account how meaning is made and how its context, comprehension, negotiation, and feedback play a part. Considering their

experiences, understandings, principles, and viewpoints, audiences are actively involved in understanding and negotiating meanings at this level.

These three level interaction, representation, and design—offer a framework for interpreting the many interactions that occur during meaning-making processes between producers, texts, consumers, and environments. Through an analysis of meaning-making at these interrelated levels, the social semiotic method of Kress and Van Leeuwen provides insights into the multimodal nature of communication as well as the influence of social and cultural elements on meanings, interpretations, and interactions. Multimodality is one of the fundamental ideas of Kress and van Leeuwen's social semiotic approach. They contend that the process of creating meaning is not exclusive to language and that it incorporates elements of the visual, auditory, tactile, and spatial domains. The interdependence of many semiotic resources in interaction and representation is highlighted by this viewpoint. Based on the concepts of visual grammar, Kress and Van Leeuwen create a framework for evaluating visual writings. To understand how meaning is created visually, they recognize a variety of components and patterns in visual texts, including gaze, design, framing, salience, and modality (directed lines). They stress in their analysis how crucial it is to take into account the social and cultural environment in which semiotic resources are created and understood. They contend that cultural norms, values, ideologies, and power dynamics all influence meanings, and they call on researchers to examine the ways in which these elements affect the creation and interpretation of texts. They contend that meaning is socially constructed that meaning is found in context, not outside of it, and that meanings are associated with social representations. Semiotics and linguistics are socially constructed.

3.11 Focus Group Discussion

Being aware of the limitations of this kind of research and the criticism leveled at semiotic analysis, the researcher has chosen five representations of transgender characters from each of the American and Pakistani movies "Anything's Possible - 2022" and "Joyland -2022" for focus group discussions of semiotics discourses. This has been carried out to recognize and identify different emerging themes by taking into account various levels with the aforementioned Krueger model (2000). The researcher needed in-depth conversations surrounding representations of transgender in semiotic

discourses of the movies. The following are the operational definitions of the Krueger - 2000 model's analytical devices used in this study:

Words

The terms used in the aforementioned mode have both positive and negative implications and are crucial to the development and dismantling of any ideology since they indicate support for or opposition to a specific group. The researcher has recorded the competing identities of the participants examine semantic range and the implications carried by the actual words used by the participants on the chosen dialogues and images from the chosen Pakistani and American movies. This will allow for an analysis of how the linguistic and semiotic practices employed by transgender in the selected moves contribute to portrayal and propagation of transgender identities and ideologies.

Context

Context in this instance refers to the responses triggered by a stimulus, such as a question posed by the researcher or a remark regarding the perspective of another participant. The researcher examined the context in order to conduct an analysis by finding the triggering stimulus, keeping in mind the current discussion surrounding the central theme—the representation of transgender people in popular culture.

Internal Consistency

A technique that is crucial to the validation of the opinions expressed by participants following their interactions with others on a specific issue (theme) under debate is internal consistency, whether it remains unchanged or changed. This strategy is used to determine whether or not participants' opinions regarding a certain theme have changed in response to remarks made by other participants. As this phenomenon may arise in focus group discussions with multiple participants, the researcher has operationalized the term cautiously throughout the analysis of the discussions to identify indications that might explain change. The researcher was able to determine the participants' level of consistency about the representation of transgender people in American and Pakistani films by observing and evaluating the internal consistency characteristics.

Frequency

Krueger (2000) claims that this phenomenon of frequency represents the frequency with which a remark is made about a certain topic that is being discussed. Since the frequency of occurrence of specific topics shows to be an indicator of their performance, the researcher counted how many times a given theme arose on the chosen dialogues and images in order to analyze their frequency in the conversations.

Intensity

Intensity, another key component of Krueger's model, is a measure of how much emphasis or stress a word or comment is given during a focus group discussion. It can be useful for identifying the main themes or big ideas that have come up during the participants' discussions of the theme.

Specificity of responses

This tool is highly helpful in determining whether a comment made during a discussion is relevant or irrelevant in light of the theme. It also aids in recognizing any distractions or instances of lack of attention that any participant may have experienced.

Extensiveness

The term is used by Krueger (2000) to show the number of participants that comment on a specific issue during a debate. Extensiveness has been a helpful tool in the analysis of focus group data since it tells the researcher whether the members agree or disagree on a given topic.

Finding the big idea

Finding the common themes that emerged during focus group conversations is the aim of this term. The researcher has attentively listened to the recordings and has noted the major concepts that emerged in the participants' conversations on each dialogue and semiotic. The assistant moderator reviewed and confirmed the researcher's major findings in more detail.

As words and visuals combine to build an ideology, focus group discussions were used as a way to assess how the chosen individuals (representatives of the wider universe) perceived and responded to the material, aside from the researcher. Furthermore, ideology can be characterized as a collection of implicit and explicit themes woven throughout popular culture discourses that aim to reshape people's

perceptions of gender and object representations. On the other hand, themes are the ideas or messages that are developed and disseminated through established discourses in popular culture. With the use of the loaded discourses of two distinct cultural movies, reality is created for the intended readership or viewership in order to shape people's minds in the desired manner. Semiotics also provides an abundance of information and a variety of interpretations since it is contextualized in nature. Two focus groups of an hour each, are held and audio visually recorded amongst two distinct participant groups to achieve this. These recordings are accessible in the appendix of the thesis.

3.12 Participants of Focus Group Discussion

In order to gather information about transgender representation in the aforementioned movies at the linguistic and semiotic levels, two focus groups were scheduled. There were two focus group discussions: one with linguists and the other with non-linguists. The following factors were taken into consideration while choosing participants for the focus group discussion.

There were eight participants selected in each group. The group of linguists was chosen from MPhil Linguistics students and teachers at the Department of English, National University of Modern Languages, Regional Campus Multan, Pakistan. A week prior to the focus group discussion, the participants were informed about it and given the movies "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" to watch. However, on the day of the discussion, only those who were willing were invited to participate in the discussions.

Whereas the non-linguists group belonged to different educational departments from NUML Multan Campus such as Management Sciences, Computers, Islamic Studies, Commerce, Urdu, and Business etc. Its purpose was to compile a range of viewpoints from individuals from various backgrounds. In order to prevent power imbalances, the goal of this diversification of mixed gender is aimed at gathering firsthand data on semiotics from other fields that should have equal educational competence.

3.13 Procedure

One week prior to the discussion, the participants were given the material and reminded of it several times. They were also asked five or six questions (the questions

are included in the appendix). During the discussion, the participants' types of lexical items and the frequency with which themes appeared were noted. Additionally, the responses of the focus group participants were transcribed (in their own words) in the relevant section of the analysis (Findings of Focus Group Discussions). The invited individuals in the focus group discussion were informed beforehand of the key points to be discussed regarding the movies, including language with semiotics.

The titles of the movies (Joyland and Anything's Possible), implicature, lexicalization, pronouns (I, We), and their frequency of usage, as well as their opinions on the image, were among the linguistic strategies that the group of linguists was asked to discuss. The same method was used to find out what they thought of the other dialogue texts. Participants who were not linguists were asked to maintain their primary attention on the semiotics. In any case, they were free to voice their opinions about the linguistic texts as well, and before the focus group discussion began, the majority of them requested permission from the researcher to voice their opinions about the language as well. The researcher conducted the conversations in a way that reflected her appreciation for their enthusiasm. A researcher named Mr. X served as one of the moderators and was very helpful in keeping the focus group discussion directed and fruitful within the allotted time of 60 minutes.

Focus groups with linguists and non-linguists were held in the English department of the National University of Modern Languages, Regional Campus, Multan, Pakistan. Refreshments were also arranged. Everyone felt delighted taking part in the discussion.

3.14 Analysis

The current study's analysis is divided into two chapters. The quantitative content analysis along with linguistic and semiotic analysis of transgender representation in American and Pakistani movies is covered in the first chapter, with a focus on the main themes that are mirrored in how they are portrayed in popular culture. In contrast, the second chapter examines how focus group discussion data might be used to validate the results of linguistic and semiotic analysis. This aids in exposing the underlying ideology around gender stereotypes in the representation of transgender people in American and Pakistani media.

3.15 Pilot Study

The initial part of the complete research protocol is a pilot study, which is usually a smaller-scale study that aids in designing and modifying the primary study. It is a kind of rehearsal that includes all the elements of the research. The researcher has used the short clips from the chosen movies i.e., *Joyland* and *Anything's Possible*, to analyze them at linguistic and semiotic level. The texts chosen from both movies are subjected to linguistic analysis at the micro and macro levels, i.e., word/metaphor, sentence, and discourse levels, in order to identify the key themes to decode the verbal practices used by transgender and other people in the chosen movies. And the analysis of semiotic discourses reflects versions of reality, their deconstruction, and the significant challenges that all societies confront nowadays about the perception and representation of transgender persons. It is therefore proved that semiotic discourses shape the understanding of the people. Regarding this, media, especially film media, is crucial in portraying social, discursive, and coercive practices, focusing on gender stereotypes. When readers or viewers interpret the information provided by cinematic discourses, this is how semiotic discourses convey the world to the readers or viewers.

CHAPTER 4

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Considering the modified model that is discussed in the research methodology chapter (Chap. 3), this chapter of analysis is split into two sections. The first section deals with Quantitative Content Analysis, which is based on Content Analysis (CA) method amended by Capuzza and Spencer (2017). While the second section comprises of Linguistic Analysis using A Feminist Model of Text by Mills (1995) and Semiotic Analysis by employing Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) Social Semiotic approach. The analysis of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) by using Krueger (2000) model is carried out in Chapter 5. The analysis using the devised models are covered section wise in this chapter.

4.1 The Movies

4.1.1 Joyland

Joyland, an award-winning Pakistani movie, released in 2022 is directed by Saim Sadiq. The movie depicts a patriarchal family from Lahore, where the father of two sons, Saleem and Haider is unhappy for not having a male successor yet. Due to this, there is a continuous rift in the family. Haider, being jobless, helps his sister-in-law (Nucchi) in taking care of her kids and doing other household chores. Haider's wife Mumtaz is a passionate beautician, who works at a neighboring beauty parlor and aspires to be a successful beautician. After a long wait and struggle, Haider, with the help of his friend, finally gets a job at a dancing theatre as a dancer, which led Mumtaz to quit her career and help Nucchi in household chores, which was quite devastating for her.

Meanwhile, Haider starts working as a background dancer for a transgender named Biba, who is passionate about making her name in a female heroines' dominant dancing theatre. She struggles hard for making her name but doesn't get the space or value of that of a female. Though being vulnerable, Biba is confident enough to fight for herself and oppose the ones who pull her down. Haider, despite being married, falls in love with Biba and they both develop ties in a sexual relationship, while on the other hand, Mumtaz, noticing her husband's detachment and sacrificing her passion, silently

fighters for her sexual, emotional and narrative space that goes unnoticed by her husband who is busy in his journey of self-discovery.

4.1.2 Anything's Possible

Anything's Possible, an American movie released in 2022 is directed by Billy Porter. The movie is based on a high school transgender, who is raised well by her mother and has got female friends at high school. Despite obtaining a nominal position in society and the confidence from her mother, she feels like sharing her trans stuff with people and creates a YouTube channel, hiding from her mother. The trans character, Kelsa and her classmate Khalid start developing affection for each other but are afraid of admitting due to social stigmas. Kelsa becomes worried as her friend admits her likeness for Khalid once in front of her. Despite all the societal taboos, Khalid is ready to own the relationship with Kelsa and talks to Kelsa about it upon which she also admits her feelings for him. Knowing this, Khalid holds Kelsa's hand, and they both appear in front of their classmates despite the fact they would lose their friends.

Kelsa's friend Em, who likes Khalid, indulges in an argument with her purposely which ended up Em falling and breaking her finger. After all this, EM goes to the principal's office and blames Kelsa for assaulting her. Despite Kelsa's negation to this accusation, she gets banned from using female locker room and bathroom, which is quite disturbing for her. She shares all this on her YouTube channel and due to some viral video link by Khalid, Kelsa's mom finds out about her channel and asks her to put it down. After a long argument between Kelsa and Em's mom, Em finally speaks up that she has exaggerated the situation, Kelsa didn't do anything. Returning from the principal's office, Kelsa and her mom indulge in a heartfelt conversation and reconcile. Kal and Kelsa spend the remaining time of high school together and show their gratitude to each other while parting their ways as Kelsa is moving to college and starting a new phase of self-discovery.

Section 1

4.2 Quantitative Content Analysis

4.2.1 Joyland

4.2.1.1 Transgender Character Biba

The character of Biba is played by Alina Khan, a Pakistani Trans actress, who gained recognition for her leading part in the 2022 feature film *Joyland*. She is the first transgender person to star in a high-profile Pakistani movie. She won the title of Miss Trans Pakistan 2023 in Lahore, Pakistan, in May the same year. She makes physical appearances in 24 scenes for around 38 minutes and 55 seconds out of 2 hours, 6 minutes, and 49 seconds of the total movie time. The research encompasses a total of 7 minutes and 58 seconds for analysis. There are 7 mentions of her transgender identification. Biba identifies as a transwoman who is passionate and strong to stand for herself. According to the portrayal, she is a trans woman in her 20s.

In 6 scenes, narrative conflict arises from Biba's transgender identity. Throughout the movie, her transgender identity plays a significant role in the plot. She is misgendered 3 times and correctly gendered 20 times throughout the movie. There are 3 instances where the character of Biba has been discussed intensively. The discussion about Biba's genitalia/ her body is one particularly striking finding of this investigation. Her genitalia are mentioned 1 time in the movie, but that instance is the most intensive scene of the movie. 4 times her physical attractiveness is discussed. There is a sequence where Biba's body is partially exposed. She indulged in sexual situations 4 times. She experiences severe psychological violence 9 times and faces kind of physical abuse/ violence 2 times in the movie. Despite all the violence or psychological torture, Biba stays strong headed and faces societal challenges with courage.

4.2.2 Anything's Possible

4.2.2.1 Transgender Character Kelsa

Kelsa, the transgender character in the movie *Anything's Possible* is played by Eva Reign, who is a writer, journalist, and actor from America. The American romantic comedy film *Anything's Possible*, which is released in 2022 on Amazon Prime Video, is her most well-known contribution. She appears physically in 34 scenes of a total of

1 hour, 38minutes and 14 seconds long movie. Her total appearance time in the movie is 1 hour, 5 minutes, and 15 seconds. 15 times in the movie, her transsexual identity is discussed. There are 30 major instances related to trans character in the movie that contribute majorly to the storyline. Her identity is misgendered 2 times however, it's correctly gendered for most of the times in the movie. Her genitals are never discussed. She has been the victim of psychological violence 8 times, when she feels really disturbed. Her major psychological instance is when she is banned from female bathroom and instead is forced to use the gender-neutral washroom. However, she never experienced physical victimization. There are 2 times when someone talks about Kelsa's transgender identification in an incorrect way. She gets into a romantic or sexual relationship with Khalid and gets into romantic situation 3 times.

For a comparison of the Content Analysis results, see table 4.1 below.

Amended Table for Content Analysis Result

Coding Questions	Biba	Kelsa
1. How many times character physically appears in the movie	24	34
2. Total movie time	2:06:49	1:38:14
3. Total screen time of trans character	38:55	1:05:15
4. How many times character's transgender identity is discussed	7	15
5. Number of scenes when person's trans identity is source of narrative conflict	6	10
6. Number of scenes when person's trans identity contributes to storyline in a major way	27	30
7. Number of times character is misgendered	3	2
8. Number of times character is correctly gendered	20	24
9. Number of times character's genitals are discussed	1	0
10. Number of times character's physical attractiveness is discussed	4	2
11. How many times they indulge in a romantic/ sexual situation?	4	3
12. How many times they become the victim of psychological violence?	9	8
13. How many times they become the victim of physical violence?	2	0

Table 4 Comparative results of both characters

4.2.3 Summary of Content Analysis

Since they both are the major roles in the movies, both have the most screen time, more than half of the complete movie. In *Joyland*, Biba appears 24 times that is comparatively less than Kelsa from *Anything's Possible*. Both are equally portraying the trans characters and are propagating different ideologies. According to McInroy and Craig (2017), who are cited in the literature review, many viewers feel that transgender depiction falls short when it comes to various identities. Being major characters, both Biba and Kelsa make a significant contribution to the plot. Both characters experience narrative conflict quite many times because of their transgender identity. As the literature has examined, a "the idea of transformative discourse employs the language of the "wrong body" to explain the transgender characters' feelings on their bodies. Both Biba and Kelsa face many societal and psychological challenges bravely to stand for their rights.

Section 2

4.3 Qualitative Analysis

This section deals with the qualitative analysis of transgender representation in the two movies 'Joyland' and 'Anything's Possible'. Common themes from both movies have been identified for the analysis.

4.3.1 Common Themes of Both Movies

1. Ironic Expression in Movies Titles
2. Thematic Unity
3. Projection of Transgender Characters in Both Movies
4. Symbolism and Metaphorical Representation
5. Identity and Self- Expression
6. Visibility vs Stereotypes
7. Intersectionality
8. Social and political context
9. Historical and Cultural context
10. Male Gender Representation
11. Love Relationships
12. Concept of Transgender Empowerment
13. The shift in Transgender Representation

Visual & Verbal Practices

Visual Practices	Verbal Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framing • Camera angle • Lighting and color • Appearance and clothing • Costumes, wardrobe • Mood and tone • Body language • Performance and movement • Cinematography • Symbols and visual representation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic devices • Choice of words and phrases • Dialogues and conversations • Language choice • Patriarchal dialogues • Humor, teasing, sarcasm • Conflict and prejudice • Self-assertion and resistance • Silence or pauses • Romantic and intimate language

Use of Linguistic Devices

Linguistic Devices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code Switching • Sarcasm and Irony • Hyperbole/ Exaggeration • Metaphor and Simile • Symbolism • Assertive speech acts • Analogies

4.3.1.1 Ironic Expression in Movies' Titles

4.3.1.1.1 Title of Movie 'Joyland'

Titles play a significant role in setting the overall mood and atmosphere of any linguistic or semiotic discourse, so is the case with movie titles. Movie titles are crucial while analyzing the underlying themes, expressions, plot and setting of the movie. Other than the linguistic implicature, the very title of the movie 'Joyland' is particularly significant from ironic viewpoint.

The words "joy" and "land" together form the compound noun "Joyland" - "Land" frequently alludes to a nation or a particular location, but "joy" represents a state of immense pleasure and happiness. When combined, they could allude to a happy place or a figuratively happy mood. The term is understood to refer to a place or situation where happiness or joy are of utmost importance. Metaphorically used, the title "Joyland" may be intended to convey a feeling of nostalgia or pleasure, indicating a refuge from the more difficult parts of reality. Despite its literal definition, the word has positive implications. It may conjure images of theme parks or settings of carefree delight. Joyland has a simple yet ear-pleasing phoneme as the title has a pleasant, welcoming feel to it because of the usage of the soft consonant sounds, "j" and "l." It is possible to purposefully employ this phonetic feature to draw attention to and remember the title. Joyland combines the traits of two morphemes: "land" and "joy" - by combining the meanings of the two original words, this new word has its own distinct meaning as a compound noun.

From a practical standpoint, the title 'Joyland' establishes expectations for the viewers to assume the narrative of the movie would be upbeat, enjoyable, or emotionally satisfying. Ironically, though, it can also be employed to contrast the movie's more nuanced, perhaps darker plot with the title's implicit optimism which actually depicts through the storyline of the movie Joyland. Contrary to the softness of the title, the movie is achingly gloomy as it holds the darker realities of life. Besides, the movie shows the setting near an Amusement Park – Joyland in Lahore, which makes the movie title more ironic.

The movie begins with a woman, Nucci, going into labor and delivering her fourth child—another girl, much to the dismay of her husband, Saleem and father-in-law - the patriarch of the family, who were expecting a boy based on the sex

determination reports. Realizing this, one would have likely aborted the pregnancy if the reports had indicated a girl. On the other hand, Haider, the youngest of Rana family, is compelled to kill a goat because the butcher is running late, while Abba, the grandfather, wants to celebrate the birth of a baby boy as he expected. However, Haider's wife, Mumtaz, steps in to save him because she can see that he is in trouble. As a result, the viewer is immediately immersed in these profound contradictions of life. A very delicate balance is struck when birth and death are celebrated or when masculinity and femininity are supported. While his wife works at a beauty parlor, Haider is content to take on the role of a homemaker and assist his sister-in-law in her household duties. However, neither society nor the rest of the family find these dynamics to be acceptable.

Haider gets a job as a backup dancer in an erotic theatre, leading Mumtaz to stay at home and give up on her dreams, which creates discord in the family. While forcing Mumtaz to sacrifice her dreams, Haider gets intrigued by Biba – the transgender character in the movie and gets into a relationship with her. It seems unusual for Haider to take odd jobs due to social pressure after years of unemployment, he is actually attracted towards Biba and feels compelled to defy societal norms. Biba, on the other hand, is portrayed vulnerable in terms of societal discrimination. She is passionate towards achieving an acceptable place in society and gather enough money to get done with surgery and transform into a female.

The relationship between Haider and Biba seems to be a cliché for comprehending gender, sexual orientation, and the body without trying to categorize or assign labels. These facets of existence are not just addressed separately; rather, they are seen as an essential component of a culture that is intensely motivated to stifle—or rather, manipulate—their manifestation. Moreover, the sincerity of the emotion is frequently lost when the expression is skillfully controlled. Even when he is ready to have sex with Biba, Haider's connection with her ends because he cannot see her for the woman that she is. Haider's confusion may have been sparked by his peers' remarks, who would frequently speculate about how Biba is like in bed. Furthermore, Biba is very interested in living her life as a woman and fails to realize that Haider likes her exactly the way she is.

While Haider's friends speculate about what Biba has inside her shirt or pants, Biba's appearance at the very moment depicts the ache and misery she feels. Though

keeping herself strong, she speaks up and threatens Qaisar - Haider's friend, her gloomy face portrays the intensity of pain she goes through, which negates the very concept of joy and happiness as the title suggests. It might be joy for others, who are interested more into knowing what the transgender has inside their pants, the ones who treat transgender like sex objects but not for the transgender themselves. Joyland is primarily concerned with the nuances of real experience, going beyond ideas and philosophies. As Mumtaz's death comes as a shock, and the dysfunctionality of the entire situation becomes evident in a way that is impossible to ignore which depicts the title 'Joyland' to be ironic for a movie this unsettling

In Joyland, adults may be taken as the intended audience by the producer, who wants to shape the stereotypical mindset of the society and bring change in transgender representation and acceptance. For this, the movie is an attempt to propagate the ideology based on acceptance, and positive portrayal of transgender characters.

4.3.1.1.2 Title of Movie 'Anything's Possible'

Contrary to the title of movie 'Joyland', the title of the movie 'Anything's Possible' carries positive connotation and the concept of possibility that goes well with the storyline and setting of the movie. The title suggests that in a world, full of stereotypes, hatred, and misery, where negative ideologies prevail and people do not accept the transgender characters the way they accept the other two genders, the confidence, persistence and support from family can help make anything possible.

The term "Anything's," an abbreviation of "Anything is," is used in the title that has a more approachable and conversational tone to appeal to a wider range of audience. It's fascinating that the apostrophe in "Anything's" personifies the idea of "Anything," providing it the agency to hold the characteristic of possibility. Personifying the term gives it more depth and raises the possibility that it may deal with issues of independence, potential, and the influence of possibilities. With its positive connotations of optimism and hope, the word "possible" inspires feelings of motivation and inspiration, raising the possibility that the movie has an inspiring or uplifting theme. Anything's Possible is an inclusive and broadly applicable phrase. Since movie titles are frequently used as marketing tools, it is crucial that they be remembered and catchy. The title 'Anything's Possible' serves as an inspirational quote that can be a useful tactic to draw in viewers who are searching for inspirational or uplifting information

because it is not only about transgender portrayal or their positive representation but also serves to uplift and inspire. The title is simple to remember and recognize because it just consists of two words. Effective communication frequently relies on simplicity, particularly in media like films where viewers must be able to rapidly comprehend and remember titles.

Despite the positive projection, still the irony lies in the very title of the movie as the transgender character in the movie deals with many challenges to survive in the society. Billy Porter's main character in *Anything's Possible*, Eva Reign's fascinating portrayal of Kelsa, a high school student amidst the turmoil of adolescence, seems to have the crucial things sorted out. She is aware of her affection for animals and grows closer to them every day as a result of their ecosystems and survival strategies. She is certain that she wants to major in zoology and work as a nature filmmaker when she grows up. Despite the fact that her name literally means "brave," she is aware that she prefers not to be called that because of her gender identification as a confident trans girl. Like any transgender, she faces a lot of issues studying in high school. She starts feeling attracted towards a boy, Khalid, in her class, who is liked by Kelsa's friend Em, but Khalid also starts liking Kelsa. Due to this, Em gets into a fight with Kelsa and complains to the principal about Kelsa assaulting her. There grows a tension between Khalid and his friend, Otis, and Otis tells the whole thing to Khalid's family creating doubts for Khalid's identity.

After the washroom scenario of Kelsa and Em's fight, Kelsa gets banned from female locker room and bathroom, which leads to a depressing situation for Kelsa. Sharing on her YouTube channel, that she hides from her mother, she says:

"Remember when I said not everything is about gender?"

Apparently, it is for me.

I got banned from the women's locker room and bathroom.

They're making me go to this dingy, gender-neutral bathroom that no one's cleaned since the '90s. Because when people look at me, all they see is gender."

This implies the fact that despite being a modernized nation, having her mother's support and being a confident transgender, Kelsa is striving to have an acceptable place in society. People only see the gender and accept only two genders

and the third one keeps hanging in between struggling to be accepted. However, later in the movie, she gets able to achieve what she wants with resilience and confidence proving the fact that anything in this world is possible if you stay persistent.

The universality of the phrase "Anything's Possible" can help the film appeal to a wide range of individuals because it does not specifically mention any group, circumstance, or setting, making it accessible to a wide audience. It is implied by the title that the movie examines subjects that push the bounds of what is possible. It also implies to viewers that they will be presented with a narrative in which characters may experience and overcome major difficulties or setbacks.

4.3.1.2 Thematic Unity in Both Movies

Rather than portraying a usual love story that ends 'happily ever after', both chosen movies' themes and narratives defy conventional gender stereotypes and demonstrate how movies can be a significant step away from patriarchy. The first and most crucial thing to observe is that, in contrast to other love stories, the two chosen movies' events are systematically arranged so that the relationship between a transsexual character and a male character—which is socially unacceptable—is at the core of the story. Despite having different stories, settings, socio-economic culture, the movies "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" have a number of themes in common.

The complexity of sexual orientation and gender identity are explored in both movies. Joyland is renowned for its investigation of a transgender woman's existence in Pakistan, a country where these identities are frequently disregarded. In the same way, Anything's Possible centers on a transgender adolescent who struggles with her relationships and identity. By questioning conventional ideas about gender and sexuality, these films advance a more inclusive perspective. Both movies strive to arouse empathy and compassion in their viewers by using powerful emotional content. They approach delicate subjects in a way that aims to be powerful and thought-provoking, inspiring viewers to consider their prejudices and perspectives.

One of the major challenges faced by both transgender characters is unacceptability at social space. In Joyland, when Biba travels in a public train, she is being asked to move to the males' section due to her unparalleled identity.

"Lady: You can't sit here

This is the women's section

Go to the men's section

Sit There

Hello?

I'm talking to you

You can sit down, but not here

Go sit in the men's section, that's it

Are you deaf?

Or do you speak a foreign language?

what a weirdo”

This depicts that transgender are not accepted in either way. If they use the females' public space, they are asked to use the males' one, whereas, the males, who are ever ready to take advantage of these marginalized individuals, don't let them live at peace. Same is the scene in *Anything's Possible*, in which Kelsa gets banned to use the female locker room or bathroom due to her male energy and she is forced to use the gender-neutral bathroom, which is not even maintained since decades.

“Remember when I said not everything is about gender?

Apparently, it is for me.

I got banned from the women's locker room and bathroom.

They're making me go to this

dingy, gender-neutral bathroom

that no one's cleaned since the '90s.

Because when people look at me,

all they see is gender.

It makes me never wanna step out of this room again.”

By showing the real-life experiences of transgender people and illuminating the difficulties of their paths to self-acceptance and love, both films probably seek to subvert these cultural norms and preconceptions. They could also stress how important it is for society as a whole to accept and recognize gender diversity.

4.3.1.3 Projection of Transgender Characters in Both Movies

Notable for their portrayals of transgender individuals, 'Joyland' and 'Anything's Possible' each tackle themes of gender identification and LGBTQ+ experiences within their own specific settings. The Pakistani movie 'Joyland' directed by Saim Sadiq, has won praise from critics worldwide for its innovative and empathetic treatment of transgender characters. The narrative revolves around a family in Lahore, where a male member pursues a career as a dancer in an erotic theatre and develops feelings for a transgender lady, an act frowned upon in their traditional community. In a society, where talking about love, gender, and social norms is generally frowned upon, the movie offers a complex portrait of a transgender individual. With a humane and nuanced portrayal, the character defies stereotypes and gives audiences a unique look into the everyday existence of a transgender person in Pakistan.

The words used to depict the transgender character Biba imply the inhumane attitude of community towards her. When Biba enters the scene where Qaisar is asking Haider to work as a dancer. He says,

“AA gai ay churail – Here comes the witch”.

He uses the metaphor witch to introduce her. Same is when Shabo makes fun with makeup artist and says,

“Khusry nu kon vekhna chanda ay? – Who likes to watch a Trany?”

It implies the fact that transgender people don't hold any position in society. People come to the theatre to watch dances, but they don't like to watch the dance of a transgender, they want to watch proper female dancing.

Billy Porter's American coming-of-age film "Anything's Possible" tells the narrative of a confident transgender high school student negotiating the challenges of identity and love. The movie is praised for its optimistic and upbeat depiction of a transgender lead character, providing a novel story that focuses on acceptance, hope, and the delights of first love. Anything's Possible is a breakthrough film for transgender portrayal in cinema because it highlights the possibilities for happiness and fulfilment in trans people's life, in contrast to many films that highlight the problems and adversity faced by transgender individuals.

In this movie, the Kelsa – transgender character’s mother looks after her really well. She raises her just like a girl and stays concerned for all the girlish things done by her. In a scene when she goes out with her friends, Kelsa’s mom asks her if she is wearing a bra, which Kelsa says she is not allowed to ask as per a few rules and laws set by both mother and daughter.

Are you wearing a bra?

What? Mom, law of averages.

Oh, it passes the law.

The average mom

would be concerned

that her average daughter was

properly covering the girls

Ugh.

Please don't call them that.

-That's what they are.

Both films offer different viewpoints that don’t accept conventional narratives. This is what makes them more worthy for their contributions to trans representation in movies.

4.3.1.4 Symbolism and Metaphorical Representation

Both movies explore issues various issues such as identity and acceptance for transgender individuals by using symbolism and metaphorical representation. In Joyland, the way that performance and space are used serves as a potent metaphor for what it means to be transgender. The theatre plays a great role in the movie, which represents a transitional area. It symbolizes the factor of finding one's place in a society that frequently feels unwelcoming by providing a space for characters to express who truly are away from society's critical gaze.

‘Ly aa gai ay churail’

‘Here comes the witch’

Here Qaisar uses the word witch for Biba because he thinks of her as a witchy character who doesn't deserve any respect or acceptance. Same is the case when Shabo says about Biba,

'Na dudh na dahi, niri yain yain'

'No milk in your breasts, only waffle'

It symbolizes that transgender character is always hanging between genders who can never be a female no matter how hard they try. She says that they can't have milk in their breast, they can just try to pretend to be females but fail badly.

Being a transgender performer, the character defies conventional gender norms and expectations by representing the flexibility of one's sexual orientation and the bravery required to be true to oneself. One might also interpret the main characters' path towards understanding and acceptance as a metaphor for the society's gradual acceptance and embracing of transgender people. The fight for acceptance that transgender people confront is highlighted by the disparity between the liberated atmosphere created by the theatre and the traditional household, which highlights the conflict between personal truth and societal expectations.

The story in *Anything's Possible* serves as a metaphor for the process of self-acceptance and self-discovery that many transgender people go through. *Anything's Possible*, the title of the movie, symbolizes hope and possibility. It gives an empowering message that transgender people have a bright future ahead of them.

There is a great use of symbolism in this movie. The movie starts with Kelsa speaking about her interest in animals, where she seems to be symbolizing them with humans. According to her, both humans and animals have some similar characteristics to help them survive in the world.

"I like animals so much is that they're all named after what makes them unique.

Here are some of my favorites. And they should pop up somewhere around here, I believe.

The pink fairy armadillo, the blue-footed booby, scaptia beyonceae or the Beyonc fly, and the blobfish.

What makes them unique is also what helps them survive.

And this is true for humans. We're a part of the animal kingdom, too, aren't we?

Take my mom. She's got this whole mother elephant thing going on. Mess with her baby and she'll trample all over you."

Both movies depict a deeper and complex representation of transgender by using symbolism and metaphor.

4.3.1.5 Identity and Self Expression

Identity and self-expressions are the major themes in "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" that provide deep insights about the lives and experiences of trans characters. These themes are based on self-acceptance and manifestation of one's true self within stereotypical societal frameworks. In the movie 'Joyland', the trans character Biba, serves as a central figure for examining issues related to identity and self-expression. In addition to rejecting social norms and expectations just by existing, Biba's character also does so in her professional capacity as a performer, as she personifies empowerment and resistance. Her personality captures the difficulties of being transgender in a culture that frequently rejects or misunderstands them. Joyland explores the intricacies of gender identity through Biba, highlighting the conflict between cultural norms and the fundamental need for honesty and authenticity in oneself.

"Mr. Ashfaq will raise my salary, so that I can finally get enough savings

What are you saving up for?

I save up for all my surgeries. Being a girl is hard work, baby"

And after all the struggles and hardships, Biba finally makes her place in the industry and starts doing shows on bigger level where she is treated like a celebrity.

"The princess is back"

Stay at your expense, guys, it better be a nice hotel. I don't live in a dirty guesthouse.

Of course, madam. Do not worry.

We have a budget for that, and it is sufficient.

And book for two people on everything.

I will be with her throughout the shoot.

He is my business manager”

Anything Possible emphasizes the positive parts of transgender identity and self-expression in a more welcoming and encouraging way. The movie depicts the journey self-discovery by a transgender high school girl, Kelsa. In contrast to Joyland, where characters' freedom of expression is severely restricted by the social setting, Anything's Possible depicts a world that values identity and self-expression. The two different stories depict the complexities and struggle for self-recognition, self-discovery and acceptance in different ways. Anything's Possible shows one side of a society in which transgender people can disclose their gender identity with support and affection, while Joyland, depicts struggling and humiliating side of society. With an emphasis on the value of integrity, support, and the freedom to express oneself, both movies offer insightful viewpoints to the discussion concerning transgender experiences.

I feel like for the first time

in my life,

I can just exist

in this world.

And...

I know it's gonna be hard,

but I don't want

to just exist.

I need to find out

what else I'm capable of.

The diverse stories of Joyland and Anything's Possible delve into the complexity of transgender identity and self-expression. While Anything's Possible paints an upbeat picture of a society where transgender people can disclose their gender identity with support and affection, Joyland offers a moving look at the struggles and victories of living truly in a conservative culture. With an emphasis on the value of integrity, support, and the freedom to express oneself, both movies offer insightful viewpoints to the discussion concerning transgender experiences.

4.3.1.6 Visibility vs Stereotypes

Both movies have contributed towards the visibility of transgender characters in popular media by handling the conflicts in different ways. These movies have provided complex representations of trans characters by depicting more realistic view of society that go beyond simple or stereotypical interpretations. As in Pakistani cinema, where transgender portrayal on media is not that common, Joyland has given prominence these marginalized creatures. By offering a complex portrayal of Biba, a transgender who dances in a dance theatre, the movie breaks stereotypes. The movie has presented Biba's character with depth, highlighting her wants, struggles, and challenges; provides a true depiction that transcends the common biases surrounding transgender people.

Highlighting transgender visibility, "Anything's Possible" sheds light on Kelsa, who is a self-assured transgender student, who deals with challenges and difficulties and enjoys the victories of adulthood. The representation of Kelsa in Anything's Possible offers a message of empowerment, affection, and self-acceptance in contrast to the sometimes depressing and tragic narrative surrounding transgender individuals in the media. "Anything's Possible" breaks down preconceptions to provide a more realistic and relatable portrayal of transgender lives by focusing the narrative on Kelsa's relationships, goals, and daily living.

4.3.1.7 Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that describes how the social elements such as gender, class and race are interconnected to each other and to a particular person or group. It results in interrelated and overlapping systems of discrimination. Themes of transgender in movies such as "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible," depict the idea of intersectionality that plays a vital role in comprehending the complex experiences and difficulties that transgender people go through. Movies like "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" explore the concept of intersectionality about transgender people in a subtle and complex way, examining the lives of transgender characters against a background of larger societal, cultural, and personal settings.

Transgender people most often negotiate for identities and acceptance from society. Their experiences are shaped differently due to different racial, social, or socioeconomic backgrounds. These movies depict how various sides of identity interact and impact a person's experience of gender expression or transition. Intersectionality

draws attention to the fact that transgender people may experience discrimination because of their various marginalized identities in addition to their gender identification.

The movie "Joyland," depicts the life of a transgender dancer in Pakistan, where transgender individuals are often referred to as Khawaja Sira. The movie describes the issues of gender identity, sexuality, and social conventions, highlighting the difficulties of being transgender in a stereotypical country. On the other hand, *Anything's Possible* represents a transgender high school girl, navigating her senior year, dealing with both the difficulties and rewards of falling in love. The struggles of young transgender people are highlighted in this movie in a more welcoming and transparent setting, but does not minimize the complex aspects of adolescence, identity development, and interpersonal interactions.

4.3.1.8 Social and Political Context

The film industry is constantly evolving, taking on the political and social context of this particular time. Movies like "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" have brought a great shift in trans representation. The Pakistani film "Joyland" delves deeply traditional societal issues of the time. The narrative describes the story of a young man, who is married and lives in a patriarchal society. After getting a dance job in a theatre, he develops some feelings for a transgender lady. This is not just a love story; it's a daring statement about gender and societal expectations in a nation where transgender individuals are frequently marginalized. The movie provides a unique way of looking into the struggles faced by Pakistan's transgender community.

Conversely, "Anything's Possible" is a contemporary tale that recounts the life of a transsexual girl, who fights bravely with the ups and downs of high school life. It's a breath of fresh air. Billy Porter's film is a celebration of struggle, identity, love, and youth, all in one brilliant package of modern America. It's a reminder that anything is achievable, even finding love and acceptance in a society that frequently seems to be more interested in drawing attention to differences than in celebrating them. "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" are notable because they offer more than just entertainment. They serve as cultural identifiers, reflecting and influencing social and political discourse surrounding the rights and representations of transgender people. Through their narratives, these films encourage compassion, empathy and above all discussion.

They urge viewers to see beyond appearances, discover the person hidden beneath the label, and acknowledge the humanity that unites all people.

4.3.1.9 Historical and Cultural Context

The cinematic movement, with its diverse and colorful palette, often mirrors societal shifts and cultural developments. This reflection is particularly evident in the lives of transgender people and their portrayal. Both movies, 'Joyland' and 'Anything's Possible' stand out in their unique representation of transgender characters against particular historical and cultural contexts.

The Pakistani movie 'Joyland' takes its audience to the heart of the city where there is a blend of modernism and traditional society. With the youngest son dancing in a theatre, the plot sheds light on a family living in the center of Lahore all caught up in societal norms. Additionally, falling for the trans girl, draws story's attention towards the challenges faced by the transgender community. The movie's historical significance cannot be overstated; Pakistani cinema, which was retrained to the conventional gender portrayals, is now making a huge shift.

In contrast, Billy Potter's inspirational American movie, "Anything's Possible", which portrays a young high school transgender girl, who deals with the difficulties of identity and love, is a positive and welcoming change to the cinematic portrayal of transgender character as it gets the same depth and complexities as any other character of the movie. This movie serves as evidence of how far we have come in representation of these characters. This movie is noteworthy not only for its beautiful creation but for its positive and hopeful message of hope, love and acceptance. Also, showing that anything is possible in this world.

4.3.1.10 Male Gender Representation

These movies represent the male characters in their unique and distinctive ways revealing the aspects of strength, sensitivity and transformation. The young man who was raised in a patriarchal society, enters a dance theatre as a backstage dancer and finds out how this world is far different from the one, he has been brought up in. This movie depicts the journey of self-discovery even for that young boy. The conflict between the protagonist's complex demands and expectations has been brought forward in the movie.

Anything's Possible introduces Khalid as a more inclusive, modern notion of masculinity. He is represented as a supportive male character, who is ready to do anything to accept his love for Kelsa in front of everyone and make it accepted by all. His character has given empowerment to the male character representation and has changed the perspective of being a man.

Through their own stories, Haider and Khalid both add to a larger conversation about masculinity in movies. The character development of Haider in "Joyland" illustrates the physiological and mental burdens associated with negotiating one's own identity within a constrictive cultural framework and represents a deeply personal conflict with societal expectations. In contrast, Khalid in "Anything's Possible" symbolizes a positive development of masculinity in which love and acceptance cross cultural barriers and point to a time when people would be cherished for who they are rather than for what they are expected to be.

4.3.1.11 Love Relationships

The representation of love affairs in "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" presents audiences with a diverse range of feelings, obstacles, and victories that resonate with the common desire for acceptance and connection. An unexpected and complicated encounter involving a transgender woman catalyzes the protagonist's quest for self-discovery and serves as the story's central theme. The audience is pushed to examine their assumptions about sexuality, gender, and love by the nuanced and complex portrayal of this relationship. The movie shows how love has the transformational ability to push limits and reshape them while balancing social responsibility with individual needs. In addition to being a moving reflection on the price of following social norms, "Joyland" uses its love story as a lens that allows it to examine and challenge the inflexible systems that control people's lives.

Alternatively, "Anything's Possible" offers a new and hopeful interpretation of love that breaks through conventional boundaries. The movie introduces us to a tender and uplifting love story, centered around a young transgender and a boy Khalid. The way this movie handles romantic relationships is a symbol of a larger movement towards tolerance and compassion, portraying a world where a person's love is determined by their connection with another person rather than by social norms.

4.3.1.12 Concept of Transgender Empowerment

The empowerment of transgender in film media has gained a notable attention indicating a positive shift in cultural advancement, acceptance and tolerance. The movies *Joyland* and *Anything possible* are powerful examples of how the media can portray trans characters' identities by presenting stories that not only break the stereotypes but also, highlight the journey towards self-acceptance and empowerment. By focusing major part of the plot on transgender character's life, *Joyland* has taken a daring move towards transitioning the landscape of Pakistani media.

On the other hand, 'Anything's Possible' is a happy story about a trans girl who is confident enough to take her decisions and find her ways through difficulties. The film offers a positive portrayal of trans character while examining the complexities of love, identity and acceptance. The movie serves as a beacon of empowerment by showing resilience and joy by the transgender character. The film not only encourages transgender individual to accept their identities with pride but also, contributes to normalize transgender representation in popular media.

4.3.1.13 The Shift in Transgender Representation

Movies like "Joyland" and "Anything's Possible" offer a striking example of how transgender representation has changed in the film media. In addition to becoming cultural symbols of their own times, these movies mark significant turning moment in the movement of transgender stories from the margins to the forefront of storytelling. These movies reflect a larger movement towards transgender representation that is more complicated, courteous, and uplifting. This change reflects an increasing awareness of the humanity and complexity of transgender people in both society and the arts.

The movie "Joyland," which is a landmark in South Asian film history presents a story that is revolutionary, bold and challenging. In a country, where transgender individuals are highly marginalized, this movie provides a window of hope for them. The movie narrates a story of love, acceptance, struggle, defiance of societal norms and desires that go beyond normal portrayal.

However, the American movie, "Anything's Possible," fosters the positive vibe of modern LGBTQ+ cinema. In contrast to conservative societal portrayal in "Joyland," "Anything's Possible" is set in a place where transgender narratives are increasingly recognized and valued. With the acceptance of transgender protagonist by her lover,

the movie leaves an undaunting mark of positivity and empowerment. This promotion of positive media portrayal of transgender individuals, particularly young people, and acceptance of diversity are two major trends in American culture that are reflected in the movie.

4.4 Linguistic and Semiotic Analysis of Joyland and Anything's Possible

This section presents the Linguistic and Semiotic Analysis of the purposively chosen dialogues and visuals from the mentioned movies (Joyland and Anything's Possible) at macro and micro levels i.e. word/metaphor, sentence and discourse level. The linguistic analysis is carried out to identify the verbal practices employed by transgender characters and the ideologies propagated through those practices at the mentioned linguistic levels. And Semiotic analysis is done to see the visual practices employed by transgender characters from both movies. Five scenes have been taken from each movie to analyze linguistically and semiotically.

4.4.1 Analysis of text and semiotics from Joyland

Popular media reflects a culture's most deeply rooted values. Popular culture serves as a vehicle for expressing a civilization's most prominent and expressive views about the outside world. The dialogues and visuals under analysis have been taken from the movie Joyland.

4.4.1.1 Scene 1

***Qaisar:** Here comes the witch*

(Ay aa gai hay churail)

Auditions for her boys are in the back row

(Aidy background wasty audition hory nay)

***Biba:** Why is everyone hiding from me?*

(Kyun meri wari sary mar Jandy nay)

***Qaisar:** Where are you going?*

(Tu kithy challa ain)

Biba, give us some privacy!

(Biba sanu gal karan dy)

Won't you take your noise elsewhere, please?

(Kidry hor ja k rola paa ly)

Biba: *Why should I?*

(Kyun main kyun jawan)

I'll stand here.

(Main tay ithy hi khalowan gi)

Qaisar: *Well, sure.*

(Khaloti reh fir)

Biba: *No, tell me, do you own this place?*

(Nai das, main kyun jawan?)

Qaisar: *I'm sorry. Please stay.*

(Khaloti reh)

Biba: *Who is this handsome?*

(Ay kon ay cheesa?)

Qaisar: *My friend*

(Yar ay mera)

He is auditioning for a group, your back row dancers

(Tuady background dy audition wasty ly k ayan wan)

Biba: *For me?*

(Mery Laye?)

Qaisar: *yes – (Haan)*

In these dialogues, the focus is on the word the 'Witch - churail' which is for the transgender character Biba. It depicts the attitude of society and their harshness towards this community. As Biba arrives at the theatre where Qaisar is persuading Haider to join as a backstage dancer, everyone starts hiding from her and Qaiser speaks the word 'witch' for her which shows the clear hatred towards this community. Such

words relate to society and are shown realistically by the filmmaker. The dialogues delivered in this scene represent their communication, social and cultural behavior. This community is deprived of their rights, and this pressure leads them to become harsh and disheartening to them as they face problems in society. Seeing such behavior, Biba gets annoyed and says why everyone starts hiding from her. Here in this scene, she is portrayed as a tough character who is concealing her feminine nature behind it. As Qaisar asks her to go somewhere else depicting her as an annoying character, which she confronts boldly saying she would stay there, why should she go away.

The majority of the dialogue is direct speech, in which the characters state their objectives, feelings, and thoughts out loud. As a result, readers are given a sense of immediacy and are able to relate with the characters' feelings and interactions firsthand. To assign speech to particular characters, dialogue tags such as "Qaisar:" and "Biba:" are utilized. This gives the conversation structure and makes it easier to understand who is speaking at any given moment. The speech of each character conveys their disposition and style. For instance, Qaisar's usage of the terms "witch" and "boys" in his opening statement alluded to Biba in a contemptuous or disparaging manner. Biba expresses confusion and probably a sense of exclusion when she asks, "*Why is everyone hiding from me?*"

Commands and requests are made using imperatives, such as "please take your noise elsewhere" and "give us some privacy!" They convey the characters' goals and provide a sense of urgency to the speech. "Where are you going?" is a question that can be used to get information, show surprise, or steer the conversation in a number of different ways. In this instance, Qaisar's query can allude to mistrust or anxiety regarding Biba's behavior. Exclamation points ("!"), like in "Here comes the witch" or "Why is everyone hiding from me?", highlight the severity of particular statements. This highlights important dialogue passages and more vividly portrays the characters' feelings.

Even during a heated conversation, phlegmatic statements like "please" and "thank you" are employed to uphold social decorum and demonstrate respect or regard for others.

A particular location (auditions, perhaps a theater or performance space) and context (a tense exchange between characters) are referred to in the conversation. This

makes the discussion more realistic and accessible for readers by placing it in a specific context.



Figure 3 Biba in conversation with Qaisar

Three people may be seen in the above visual appearing to be in a stressful or contentious scenario. The woman in the middle is leaning slightly forward and maintaining an authoritative stance, which could be interpreted as a challenge or a defensive stance. Her look conveys either frustration or determination. The woman is positioned as the main focus of the image since the two people facing her—one in a red shirt and the other in a denim jacket—have their backs partially turned to the camera. It is obvious that the words "Why should I?" are a part of a discussion or debate. It implies opposing or challenging a proposition made by other people or an authority. This is an open-ended statement that could be used to indicate a number of things, including a challenge to the status quo, a demand for explanation, or a refusal to cooperate.

The woman appears to be in a situation where she is either questioning someone or being challenged herself, thus it's paradoxical that the green color of her jacket is typically connected to safety or approval. One of the men's red shirts may allude to passion or anger, heightening the sensation of conflict. The angle of the shot puts the audience in a position where they are not directly involved but are still close enough to participate in the conversation, making for an immersive experience and possibly inspiring the audience to think about how they would react in a similar circumstance. The scene's tension and sense of unease are further enhanced by the viewpoint.



Figure 4 Qaisar introducing Haider to Biba as her backstage dancer

The first visual shows the three individuals out of which the central figure is a woman – trans woman standing while smoking a cigarette, holding a lighter in her other hand. To her left is a man in a denim jacket facing her, only partially visible. To her right is a man in a red t-shirt with text that includes "KEEP GOING." The woman is dressed in green jacket over a white top with dark jeans. The text at the bottom says, "He is auditioning for your dance performance", this seen appears to be with a building and a bench in distance.

The girl doing smoking can portray a variety of messages depending on the context. It might depict rebellion, stress, relaxation, or social status. The interaction appears to be informal. The woman's smoking may convey confidence, or casualness based on her stance and facial expressions. The man wearing a red shirt appears to be carrying a lighter implying that he helped lit her cigarette. Their attire may reflect their roles or way of life; the red shirt and denim jacket may refer to street or informal style. The text on the red t-shirt "KEEP GOING" could symbolize motivation or perseverance, perhaps related to the context of the scene (an audition for a dance group). The phrase about auditioning for a background dancers' group sets a context that might suggest they are involved in a creative or entertainment field. It might also establish a power dynamic if the woman is in a position to make decisions about the audition. Smoking as a myth may be connected to a stereotype of the "tough" or "cool" individual in certain cultures or genres of film and literature. The casual outdoor setting can be symbolic of informal gatherings, creativity, or the behind-the-scenes aspects of performing arts. The visible branding on the t-shirt can reflect a modern, perhaps Westernized culture that emphasizes slogans and branding.

With a serious expression on her face, the woman in the center faces straight into the camera. This direct look could convey either hostility or confidence. The

medium distance from which the picture was taken allowed for a feeling of intimate contact with the subjects without encroaching on their personal space. The woman's smoking motion and central posture draw attention to her. Her green jacket's color contrast with the surroundings grabs the eye as well. A relationship or connection between the characters is implied by the lack of frames between them.

The trans appearance in the second image appears to be reflecting or being detached because she is not looking directly at the observer and is instead staring off to the side. The woman's expression becomes more intimate and significant in a close-up view, emphasizing her emotional state. The woman's expression may convey an inward feeling or condition, such worry or reflection. The woman's face surrounded by swirling smoke could represent intricacy, bewilderment, or a feeling of being inundated. The woman has a high informative value due to the close-up, which highlights her psychological or emotional condition as being crucial to the image's meaning. The shallow depth of field that blurs the background draws attention to the woman's face, which is the most noticeable element. The close-up emphasizes her internal condition above her social situation by isolating her from her surroundings.

4.4.1.2 Scene 2

Mr. Ishfaq: *Bebba, there's a problem with the sound.*

Just go back

Biba sound khrab hogya ay, wapis aa ja.

Biba: *What is the problem with the sound? –*

Ki masla si sound nal

Mr. Ishfaq: *When you entered, didn't you hear the applause? You were amazing!*

Biba jy to enter hoi si ki clap ay ayy aye haye haye

Biba: *Tell that to the dogs outside.*

Ay jery bahar kutty pay hoin unan nun dasso

Mr. Ishfaq: *Listen to me*

Meri gal ta sun

Biba: *or to this bitch in there –*

Ya fir das en kutti nu

Shabo: *what did she say? –*

Ki kaya tun

Biba: *It's not all your business, Shabu.*

Tenu main kuch ni kaya Shabu

Mr. Ishfaq: *Can you both keep calm? There is an audience outside ...look at me*

Oye apna rola paya hoye ayy, bahar audience baithi ayy, acha meri wal wekh

I picked six dancers for your back row Should I call them?

Chay dancer ayy bethy ny tery, jay kendi ain ty bulawan?

Biba: *No. Just call them tomorrow*

Mr. Ishfaq: *But - Laikin*

Biba: *Enough, Mr. Ashfaq! - Bas kr dio tussi Isfaq sb*

Shabo: *Who wants to watch a transgender?*

Khusry nu kon wekhna chayga?

This scene deals with their professions which most of the transgender occupy. The dancing which is their core profession. The choice of words again triggers the emotions, and Mr. Ishfaq is the other character who is dealing with and representing the society as well. Even the transgender by themselves knows the harsh reality of discrimination. They call their gender fellow by the same words which society uses for them and also their arrogant behavior towards each other and towards society.

This scene shows an erotic theatre where most of the transgender work to earn livelihood for themselves regardless of facing discrimination and ill treatment by the audience. In this scene, when Biba appears on stage and starts dancing, the sound system starts disrupting which is done intentionally to get Biba off the stage so that the other lady Shabu can start her dance. Mr. Ishfaq trying to console her saying she did

really well and people were clapping for her, but she knows the reality of what is happening for real.

Direct speech makes up the majority of the discourse, as characters convey their objectives, feelings, and thoughts in plain terms. This heightens the sense of immediacy and lets readers actively participate in the feelings and exchanges of the characters. Every character's speech conveys something about their nature, outlook on life, and interpersonal interactions. For instance, Biba conveys a confrontational and forceful attitude with her use of crude language ("What the hell is wrong with the sound?") and a demeaning tone with Mr. Ishfaq ("Enough, Mr. Ashfaq!"). Shabo's harsh statement toward transgender people also reveals a disrespectful mindset. To get further information or elicit a reaction, questions like "What did she say?" and "What is the problem with the sound?" are employed. They keep the conversation moving along and propel the story along.

"Dogs": When Biba says, "Tell that to the dogs outside," she's probably referring to those outside who she considers impertinent, unimportant, or unworthy of attention in a metaphorical sense. The term "dogs" in this context implies that the people outside are unimportant and unworthy of attention. Because it minimizes the significance of the individuals being discussed, this kind of language may be seen as insulting or disrespectful.

While "Bitch"- in Biba's words, "or to this bitch in there," she is referring to the person who is in the room. The term "Bitch" is frequently used as a negative word that is commonly used to degrade and offend women, connoting feelings of disgust, rage, or disdain. By using this phrase, Biba highlights her unfavorable feelings towards the person she is referring to, implying contempt or frustration.

Exclamations, denoted by the symbol "!", are employed to highlight the force of specific statements, such as "What the hell is wrong with the sound?" and "Enough, Mr. Ashfaq!" This effectively expresses the characters' feelings and highlights important dialogue points. "Listen to me" and "look at me" are examples of imperatives that are used to provide directions. They emphasize the goals or aspirations of the characters and give the dialogue more immediacy. Sensitive subjects like gender identity and disparaging language are discussed in the conversation, reflecting taboos and cultural standards. This depicts the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and

exchanges and gives the characters and story more depth. Character power dynamics are shown in the discourse, when Biba commands respect from Mr. Ishfaq and Shabo. Power struggles inside the group are also evident in Mr. Ishfaq's attempts to remain composed and exert control over the situation.

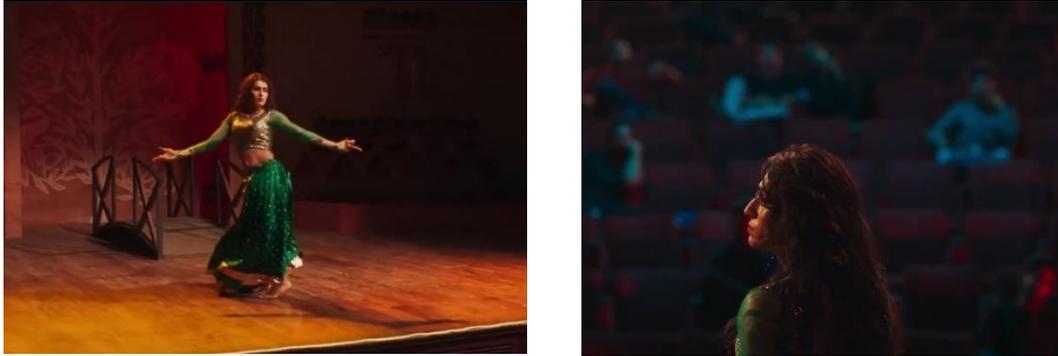


Figure 5 Biba's dance performance when the speaker gets distorted

It looks like the character is performing dance. A narrative framework is created by her stance and the way her arms are spread, which imply a dynamic movement. She is the main character and the action's focal point. In addition to suggesting cultural or symbolic meaning, attire and posture may also connect the various components to more general social or cultural notions. The dancer's clothing may represent a particular kind of conventional dance, possibly from South Asia, that is frequently used to tell stories and convey feelings. The dancer's lack of eye contact with the audience suggests that the performance is immersive for her and that we, the viewers, are merely observers rather than participants, creating a direct line of communication with the performer. By establishing a modest social distance, the medium shot invites spectators to concentrate on her and the performance without being overly obtrusive. The dancer appears to be on an equal footing with the audience, neither domineering nor submissive, as indicated by the direct angle.

As the focal point of the picture, the dancer is positioned in the center and so has the greatest informational value. The background is less detailed and more abstract, giving context without taking away from the main topic. The dancer is the most prominent element in the picture due to her elaborately crafted and vividly colored clothing. The dancer's performance and the surroundings are connected, suggesting that they are both a part of a greater story or cultural context, even though there isn't any overt frame to clearly separate them. Vibrant greens and golds set against a subdued background convey vitality and importance, while the spotlighting effect and staging

draw attention to the dancer, enhancing both her stature and the importance of her performance. The traditional clothing and decorations can point to a traditional performance where the dancer serves as a guardian of that cultural expression.

In the second image the dancer's profile is the main focus, with the crowd in the background appearing blurry. This implies a story; the audience's presence is incidental and denoted only as observers by their hazy outlines, but the performer's experience or emotional state is central to the story. A feeling of closeness is created by the closer framing of the dancer's face against the indistinct audience, emphasizing her inner experience or emotional condition during the performance. The dancer's warmer spotlight and the audience's colder, dimmer color scheme suggest a separation between the two, maybe emphasizing the performer's loneliness or the intimate nature of her experience. The dancer appears to be reflecting on or experiencing a moment of personal significance because she is not looking directly at the audience. It might also imply a wall separating the artist from the audience, highlighting the artist's emotional journey.

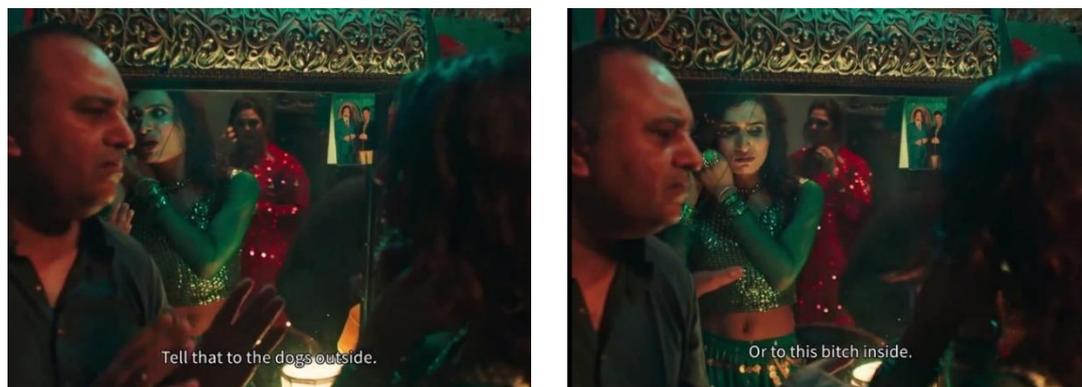


Figure 6 Biba in conversation with Ishfaq Sb after the speaker issue

The first image's composition is divided into two primary sections; the foreground and the background clearly distinguished from one another. This helps to set the characters apart, drawing attention to the person in the foreground who appears to be engaged in a conversation or dispute and the person in the background wearing a green dress who appears to be performing or speaking to an audience. The background person may be implying authority or public speaking due to their lofty position and use of the microphone.

A sense of drama or heightened emotion is usually conveyed by the warm and dramatic use of color and lighting. The primary characters' faces are the main focus of

lighting, emphasizing the significance of their interactions and expressions. With their back to the viewer and their seeming attention on something or someone outside the frame, the character in the foreground may be suggesting an unshown conversation or occurrence. The character in the green outfit appears to be ignoring or concentrating on her audience because she is not looking at the character in the foreground. Tension permeates the social engagement that is happening. A conflict is implied by the foreground character's strong facial expression and hand motion, which could be interpreted as a rejection or dismissal. This character's detachment from the audience gives the impression that they are not part of the action. A direct angle typically denotes a neutral position in the viewer's connection to the image. This implies that the viewer is neither directly interested in the event nor detached from it. The scene appears to be from a movie or a real-life occurrence since the background has a rich, lifelike feel. The image has a high degree of modality due to clarity and detail, which makes it believable and immersive.

The second picture appears to be a narrative since it shows interactions and events as they happen. The setting in which the characters are conversing seems to suggest a nightclub or theatre, suggesting a lively social setting. The audience feels like spectators since the characters do not look directly at them. We are not part of the scene; we are onlookers. The figures are arranged in the image so that the interaction takes place in the centre, which is important to its composition. The characters' interactions seem significant because of their centrality. Vibrant hues, like the reds and greens of the characters' attire, add to the sensation of energy and possibly even tension or conflict. The scene appears more dramatic because of the way the lighting is used, which tends to draw attention to the important subjects. Our eyes follow the characters' gazes as they go towards the centre of the picture, potentially to the focal point of their interest. The characters' close closeness denotes an intimate or personal distance, implying a close bond or intensive connection. The dress and decorations allude to a potentially celebratory or entertainment-focused environment, which provides additional background for the social dynamics in action.

Since no seated characters are visible, the analysis is more subtle and would concentrate on the standing figures' postures and facial expressions. If we picture a vertical axis, it would probably put the standing figures in a position of dominance over any seated figures. The characters are arranged roughly on the same horizontal plane,

implying social equality within the scene's framework. The language in the picture appears to be a subtitle from a video; it describes a line of speech that talks about a "bitch inside." This gives the audience a direct glimpse into the characters' minds or spoken words, adding a storyline and possibly even some tension to the scenario.



Figure 1 Biba feeling sad after hearing comments from Shabo and due to her performance being ruined

The composition of the first image, with the main figure seen in profile, evokes a feeling of reflection or introspection. Because the characters in the background are out of focus, the person in the foreground is highlighted and the other characters are given less significance. The characters' brightly colored clothing contrasts sharply with the dark background, suggesting a lively, energetic setting common in performance spaces. The serious facial expressions, on the other hand, clash with the mood and the environment. The downward stare of the dominant person may suggest melancholy, defeat, or introspection. This raises the possibility that the character will be stigmatized or marginalized because of their identification when read in conjunction with the line "Who wants to watch a tranny?"

The figures' separation from one another symbolizes a detachment or lack of engagement. While the primary figure appears emotionally detached from the others, she is physically near to them. The viewpoint from which the main figure is taken gives the impression that we are witnessing a private moment, as though the viewer is an inconspicuous bystander. It offers a curious glimpse into the character's weak point. The high modality of the scenario suggests an aspect of real life, and the rich detail in the people's attire and the surrounding area adds to its realistic appearance. The mirror reflects both the text and the main character, giving a metaphorical dimension of introspection or self-perception—possibly in response to the text's disparaging words. The text's usage of the negative term fosters a dynamic of power relations that may lead

one to view the main character as weaker or more marginalized. Given the disparity in power, the character's dejected gaze in the image suggests an emotional reaction to it. Through the use of these components, the picture conveys the narrative of a character who seems alone and possibly marginalized in a setting meant to be vibrant and joyous.

The trans woman from the earlier images, who is shown in profile in the second image, is the main character. Her earnest, thoughtful expression suggests that she may be thinking about the current circumstances or the conversation she just had. Her gaze is off-screen, thus there is no direct interaction with the audience. This alludes to reflection or a reaction to anything that happened outside of the frame. Her solemn expression and side profile could represent reflection or introspection. This could be a sign of her internal response to what the preceding images suggested were external happenings. The woman appears to be peering into the future or the unknown because of her left positioning and the space to her right. Her face expression is highlighted in the close-up, which helps viewers empathize with her emotional situation. Her face is emphasized by the lighting, which especially draws attention to her emotions. The depth and intensity of the shadows' atmosphere may allude to the seriousness of her circumstances or thoughts. The setting's ambiance is preserved by the green lighting that was present in the previous pictures. This image is linked to the story that was started in the earlier scenes by the color consistency.

Her emotional state is highlighted by the close framing around her face, which enables viewers to identify with her. The narrative is centered on her own experience rather than the social interaction because this frame lacks context. Her face is sharply focused against a blurry background, separating her from the outside world and implying that this is a very private time. The image tells a tale of introspection and emotional depth through these visual cues, which may be connected to the exchanges and tensions depicted in the earlier pictures. It invites the audience to consider the woman's viewpoint and feelings.

4.4.1.3 Scene 3

Mr. Ishfaq: Peppa, was this all some stupid drama?

Peppa, ay drama karan di ki lor si?

Biba: Obviously I'm not coming to the stage to recite the Quran

Zahir ay main kera ithy koi sipary parhan ayi aan.

Mr. Ishfaq: *I told you I couldn't afford your cut out*

*Main tenu pehly hi kaya ayy main tera cutout afford nai kar
sgda*

Biba: *You know, Mr. Ashfaq...*

Tanu pata ay Ashfaq sb

Mr. Ishfaq: *Again, the same thing? –*

Tu fir ohi gal kry ja ri ayn?

Biba: *Can we talk inside?*

Assi andar ja k gal krye?

Mr. Ishfaq: *Why don't we talk here?*

Ithy ki ayy?

Biba: *I want to talk inside*

Main andar gal krni ay

*What's the problem sir? I see you started ignoring me a while
ago*

*Ki gal ayy Isfaq sb? tussi bilkul liftan nai krandy, tusi menu
ignore kr ry ho*

Mr. Ishfaq: *Biba, no.*

Biba nahi

Biba: *That's okay, really*

Koi gal nai sach

Mr. Ishfaq: *"Biba"*

Again, the discussion is about the profession and the economic pressure that leads to such situations which result in harsh reality of wrongdoing. The intensity of the scene is very clear in the movie seeing the type of language being used and their actions for the sake of money. The characters Biba and Shabo represent the real picture of two different genders, one being a complete female and the other being transgender, still striving for their livelihood through the same theatrical dance. It highlights the genuine

issues faced by them with great artistry and the director also exposes the problem with great master stroke.

The speech patterns of the characters reveal their disposition, character traits, and interpersonal dynamics. Biba demonstrates her independence and disobedience, for instance, by her aggressive tone and reluctance to comply with Mr. Ishfaq's requests ("Obviously I'm not coming to the stage to recite the Quran"). Mr. Ishfaq's persistent questioning and attempts to direct the discourse are clear indications of his attempts to exert control and power. "Peppa, was this all some stupid drama?" and "Why don't we talk here?" are examples of questions that can be used to get clarification, convey uncertainty, or initiate action. They both advance the plot and contribute to the conversation's flow.

Imperatives are used to issue directions or instructions, bringing aggressiveness and urgency to the conversation. Examples of these include "Can we talk inside?" and "What's the problem, sir?" They draw attention to the goals or aspirations of the characters and show how they are attempting to steer the debate in their favor. Exclamations, denoted by the exclamation mark (!), highlight the forcefulness of some statements, as "That's okay, really." This highlights important dialogue points and makes the characters' feelings more vividly expressed. Characters try to preserve a degree of civility or respect even in the face of confrontation. Examples of these tactics include the use of honorifics "sir" and softer language "That's okay, really".

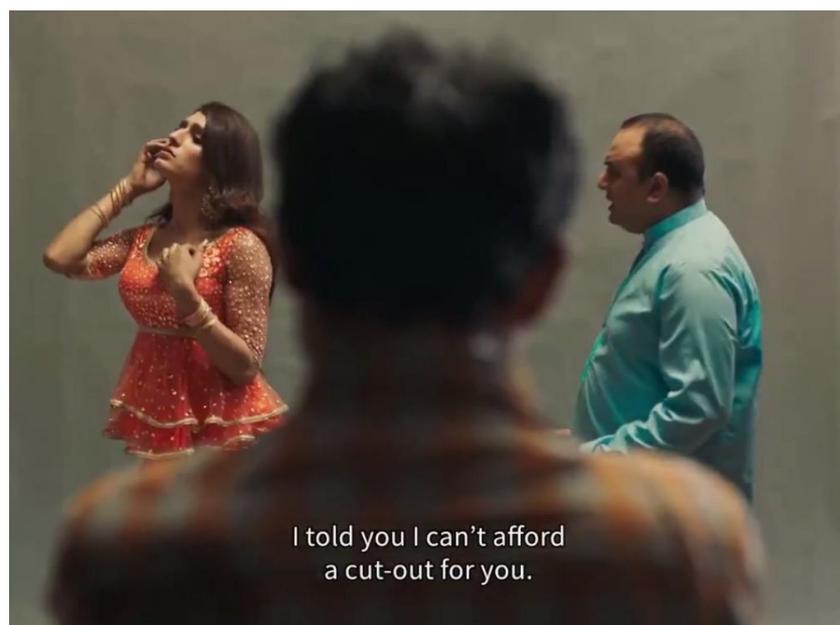


Figure 8 Biba posing for her cut out after creating drama with Shabo

There seems to be a narrative in this image as well. Though the relationship and positions between the two are unclear, there is a distinct interaction taking place. The male character's turned aside gesture denotes a detachment or separation from the interaction, while the female character's head angled upward, and closed eyes represent a focus on personal sensation or experience. Once more, the characters avoid eye contact with the audience, which emphasizes the viewer's observer function. Figure positioning implies a tension, with one figure at the centre and the other on the periphery, which could point to a dispute or conflict between them. The male character's back is turned away from the audience, which further prevents direct interaction and fosters a feeling of isolation. The female character's colorful attire and the male characters' simple attire contrast sharply, suggesting disparities in energy, emotion, or societal roles. All of the characters are equally highlighted by the neutral lighting, which enhances the scene's clarity rather than encouraging a particular interpretation. The gazes' direction suggests that the female character is focusing inward while the male character is avoiding the situation. The viewer and the characters are separated socially, but they are also psychologically separated by their turned backs and indirect looks. The characters' nonverbal cues have metaphorical meaning. The male's orientation away from her might represent avoidance or denial, while the female's upward gesture could represent aspiration or despair.

The characters lack a distinct vertical power dynamic because they are all standing. Because he is in front of the spectator and the other characters, the male character in the foreground may be seen as having a dominant position. The phrase that appears at the bottom ("I told you I can't afford a cut-out for you") most likely refers to a disagreement or argument between the protagonists about money or attention. Each of these components offers information about the relationships and stories that are being portrayed and helps to establish meaning within the picture. A further layer of context is added by the sentence "Can we talk inside?" which implies that additional privacy or a thorough conversation is required.

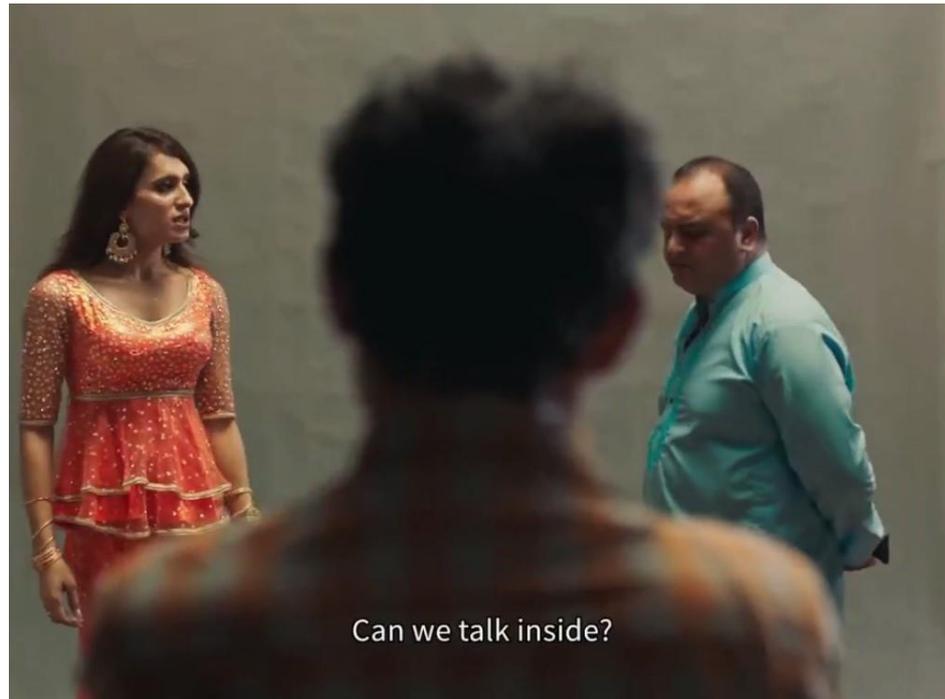


Figure 9 Ishfaq Sb getting annoyed due to all that drama

The characters are positioned along the vertical axis of the frame, creating a balanced composition. This equilibrium may suggest social equality for the man and woman or stability in the situation. By viewing the scene from the third person's point of view, the viewer is placed in the shoes of this character and becomes involved in it. Additionally important are body language, colors, and expressions. The woman is dressed in a bright, traditional manner, which could allude to the scene's place or certain cultural elements. The woman is dressed more casually and in a more western style than the man, which could be a sign of a personal or cultural difference. Although they are a little vague in the absence of further background, the posture and facial expressions will help determine the nature of the contact.

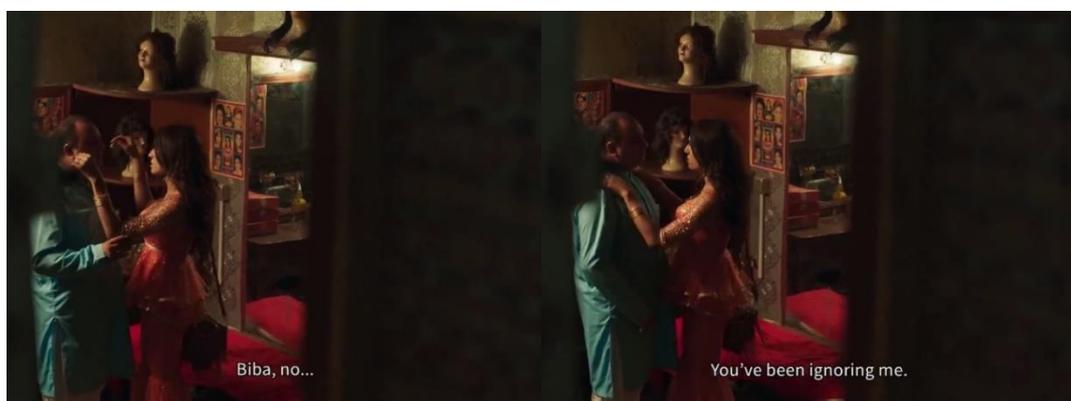


Figure 10 Biba trying to convince Ishfaq Sb

Characters interaction in the first image implies a plot or series of events, highlighting the strong narrative element. The physical proximity and body language of the female character suggest that she is facing the male character. The scenario is sexual, with none of the characters interacting with the audience; instead, it appears as though we are peering in on a private moment. The foreground of the composition is framed in a way that makes it appear as though the viewer is snooping on the action. By taking a middle-ground stance, the characters highlight the conflict. The setting is dominated by warm tones, which could suggest closeness or anxiety. A quiet, possibly hidden atmosphere is suggested by soft lighting. The protagonists' direct eye contact suggests conflict and interaction in the scenario. The characters' close proximity alludes to a private or tense encounter. Photographs and the background mirror are examples of objects that can represent reflection, recollection, or self-image and may be pertinent to the conversation. Since they are both at the same level, their conflict suggests equality. Direct confrontation and intimate involvement are indicated by the close proximity and face-to-face positioning. The line "You've been ignoring me" sets the scene for the female character's expressive body language and the male character's protective stance by implying emotional neglect or conflict. When viewed via the lens of social semiotics, this image tells a story of inner turmoil, emotional release, and possible power struggles, all of which are enacted in a setting that intensifies the layers of intimacy and secrecy.

The scenario in the second picture shows a possible argument or confrontation. The woman and the man's physical contact as well as the characters' placement allude to a potentially persuading or combative exchange. The way the woman touched the man's arm might mean that she was trying to halt him or make a point. Compared to the previous image, this one has a more nuanced interpersonal interaction. A relationship or an emotionally charged interaction is indicated by close closeness and physical interaction. "Biba, no..." implies a request or a dispute. Based on her body language and facial expressions, it appears that the woman is experiencing powerful emotions. She appears to be in a begging or commanding posture. The way a doorway or other opening is framed in the picture gives the spectator a sensual impression of intrusion into someone else's private moment. The characters are well-composed, positioned in relation to one another and the surroundings, heightening the tension of the action. Warm hues and low lighting create a cozy, private ambiance. The décor gives the

scenario a cultural depth that makes it clear that the discussion is happening in a particular cultural setting. The background mirror plays a reflective role; it could represent reflection or contrast between the characters or the scenario. The outfits of the actors, the interior design, and the gestures that are portrayed together convey a story that is deeply emotional and full of cultural resonance.

4.4.1.4 Scene 4

Lady: You can't sit here

Tum yahan nahi beth sakti

This is the women's section

Ye aurton ka section hai

Go to the men's section

Mardon k section main chali jao

Sit There

Wahan ja k betho

Hello?

I'm talking to you

Tumhary sy kuch keh ri hon

You can sit down, but not here

Tum yahan nahi beth sakti

Go sit in the men's section, that's it

Mardon k section main chali jao

Are you deaf?

Tumhay samajh nai aa rhi meri baat ki?

Or do you speak a foreign language?

Ya meri zaban smjh nai aa rhi kiya?

what a weirdo

Ajeeb bat hai

Look how this boy sat
Daikho kesy ye larka beth gaya
beside her, they rub their knees together
Usky sath jur ky apas main guthny mila ry hain
yeah, everyone is now publicly vulgar
Han, hr koi ab publically behaya ho gya hai
Do whatever you want in your bedroom
Jo krna hai apny bedroom main ja k kro
At least not in front of our children
Kam az kam bachon k samny tou na krain
Look, she's laughing. She laughs
Daikho, wo hans rhi hai, hans rhi hai wo
Of course, all of these are new fashion
Zahir hai, ye sb ab naya fashion hai
They want the attention
Inko tawaja chahyes bs
that's why they do it.
Tabhi aisa krty hain

The main depiction of the scene is the resistance of acceptance. The lady in scene is not ready to accept her as female or part of the community and is not allowing her to sit beside her. As soon as Biba sits with the lady, she starts forcing her to move to the men's section indicating towards her binary gender identity. The attitude depicts that the transgender can be accepted by male gender that too for their pleasure or some sexual actions, but they cannot be accepted by the women and can't sit in their section. Here comes the concept of social space that the transgender characters are socially unaccepted by the community they are living in. This is the true depiction of daily life of 'Khawaja Sira' as they have to face the issue of social space in their daily lives along with many other social stigmas. What the scene represents is the exact copy of the

psychology and philosophy of the people. If they don't do anything wrong, they are forced to do so.

The dialogue primarily consists of direct speech, where characters directly express their thoughts, feelings, and commands. This directness adds immediacy and intensity to the conversation. Imperatives such as "You can't sit here," "Go to the men's section," and "Sit there" are used to give commands or instructions. They demonstrate the speaker's authority and assertiveness in enforcing certain rules or expectations. Questions like "Hello?" "I'm talking to you" and "Are you deaf?" are used rhetorically to express frustration or disbelief. They are not intended to elicit a response but rather to emphasize the speaker's point or express exasperation.



Figure 11 Issue of social space faced by Biba

An instance of social contact is depicted in this picture, which is most likely from a train or other public transportation environment. An assertion of social norms or a disagreement is implied by the textual element "You can't sit here." Perhaps to depict the ordinary character of the setting, the colors are muted, and no single feature stands out. A setting that is ordinary and unexceptional, consistent with the everyday atmosphere of a train, may be indicated by the absence of saturation. The people are one of several central points. The placement of the seats and the standing poles convey

movement and the regular flow of activity on public transit by drawing the viewer's eye across the image in lines. The woman in the middle, who appears to be speaking, looks directly at the spectator, drawing us in and making us feel like we're part of the action. The younger girl's averted glance could be interpreted as avoidance or disengagement. The characters' close proximity to one another implies either forced proximity brought about by the public transport environment or tight social ties. The area surrounding them appears crowded, highlighting how open and public it is. An exchange that appears to be a confrontation or a boundary declaration is captured in the picture. This becomes the main story of the picture because of the text's presence.



Figure 12 Issue of social space faced by Biba

These pictures show how people interact with one another in a public transport environment over time, revealing a gender-based spatial divide that is a prevalent practice throughout cultures to protect people's privacy and comfort. The photos' successive captions, "This is the women's section" and "Go to the men's section," depicts a gendered divide of space within the train. The writings provide information as well as instructions in an explicit manner. The primary interactive participants are the woman and the person she is chatting to. Within the train's social space, the lady takes on an authoritative role, guiding the other person's actions. Here, the lady is having a verbal exchange that seems to be enforcing social norms. In this particular situation, this generates a transactional activity wherein a social norm is communicated. The performers are positioned in the centre of the composition, which suggests that their interactions are important given the situation. The second image's pointing gesture strengthens the communication's directed quality. The viewer is indirectly involved as a spectator of this exchange as the woman looks directly at the person in front of her.

The sitting passengers have an intimate social distance from one another, which may indicate familiarity or a setting-induced need for proximity.



Figure 13 Haider sitting next t Biba to accompany her

These pictures depict a scene inside a public transport system, emphasizing interpersonal relationships and personal space. People are seated on the bench in a way that indicates both social and physical proximity, which makes the composition noteworthy. The second image's composition highlights the relationship between two people by focusing on them. The photos show how close-quarters seating can encourage conversations between passengers that can be either pleasant or disturbing. This is further highlighted by the text overlay in the second image, which suggests discomfort, or a boundary being breached because of close closeness. The way the subjects' gazes are diverted from one another in the first picture may indicate that they are avoiding a public area or are lost in thought. In contrast, the second image depicts the man gazing at the woman, which is consistent with the text's suggestion that there has been a perceived invasion of privacy. The people portrayed serve as representational players, and their actions and duties further the story of social behavior and personal space in the crowded environment of public transit.

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Figure 14 Both of them laughing listening to the comments of the lady

These pictures show two people having a moment that appears to depict a lighter, funnier exchange while using public transit. "Look, she's laughing," the writing says. "Of course, this is all new fashion." is followed by "She's laughing," which suggests a joke or a playful moment. This conversation points to a social bond—probably a comfortable one where humor is exchanged. In the first picture, the man's gaze is lowered, which could be interpreted as shyness, shame, or attention to humor. On the other hand, the woman appears to be the target of a joke or lighthearted remark, as seen by her laughing and turning her head away from the writing. The man in the first image is the semiotic actor; his act is to react on the woman's laughter. In the second picture, the woman is acting and speaking back to the man's remark or the circumstance. The visuals, which portray an intimate moment between two people, are quite realistic. This gives the conversation an air of genuineness. The two people are closely composed, occupying the same physical area and appearing in the same frame, which highlights their interaction and common experience. The two people's close proximity to one another shows that they are comfortable and familiar with one another. The close social distance suggests a private discussion taking place in a public setting.

Instead of blatantly displaying power relations, the visuals convey a sense of equality and reciprocal participation in the exchange. Maintaining a natural and

ordinary aesthetic that puts the emphasis on the interaction rather than the surroundings, the colors are consistent with the rest of the series. When combined, these pictures tell a story about friendly, humorous social interaction. The research, which makes use of Kress and van Leeuwen's methodology, indicates that the visual components in this instance serve to portray a shared moment of humor that stands in contrast to the sometimes boring or invasive encounters that might take place in public transport areas.

4.4.1.5 Scene 5

Qaisar: What happened? Whose mother died?

Tanu sariyan nu ki hogya ay, tuadi keru koi maa mar gai ayy?

Hell, we were just telling jokes

Mazak kr ry aan ty asi ki koi ki kr ry aan

Biba: And what was the joke?

Ki Mazak si?

what was the joke?

Mazak ki si?

What's in my pants and under my shirt?

Meri shalwar chy ki ayy ty meri qameez chy ki ayy?

Was that your joke?

Ay tuady logan da Mazak si?

And you, have you lost your tongue?

Tu, teru mun chy zaban nai?

tell them

Bold nai

Why are you acting like a corpse?

Laash banya hoye ain, das na inan nu

I never wondered what was in your pants

Main tay kadi nai socha tuadi shalwaran chy ki ay

or how small your penis is

ya teri kinni choti lulli ayy

Qaisar: *Watch your mouth, or I'll break your teeth*

Bothi bakwas nak r main tery dand bhan dainy ny

Biba: *Come! And try that with me*

Tu bhan mery dand, tu hath ty laa

And then watch me smash your fucking face!

Main tera mun tor dewan gi

I suggest we both take off his pants

Main ty kendi dono shalwaran landhy aan

So, everyone can see

Taky sary vikhan na

What you have got and what I have got!

Ky tery chy ki ay tey mery chy ki ayy

Qaisar: *Fuck off!*

Kam kr!

Biba: *Stay right here!*

Ithy reh!

Joke with me

Kar na mazak

You love joking right!

Bara tenu shoq ayy mazak karan da

Tell me a joke,

Mery naal kr

I'll tell you some good ones too!

Main tery naal mazak karan gi pora!

Qaisar opens the conversation by inquiring, "What happened? Whose mother passed away?" This signals the start of the discussion and a change in subject or mood. Biba's hesitant response casts doubt, raising concerns about the accuracy of the joke being recounted. She establishes her control and power in the exchange with her response, "And what was the joke?". In a forceful reply, Biba questions the humor's validity and challenges Qaisar's authority. She uses aggressive rhetoric, asking questions like, "And what was the joke?" as well as "What's in my pants and under my shirt?" to establish authority and control the conversation. She calls into question the propriety of Qaisar's joke and demands an explanation, so undermining his authority. Biba and Qaisar get into a heated argument as a result of their conversation. Biba's aggressive remarks, including "Why are you acting like a corpse?" and "I suggest we both take off his pants," get Qaisar angry and make violent threats in retaliation.



Figure 15 Biba hears Haider's friend asking for her biological orientation

We feel more like spectators than participants in the scene because we are not looking directly at the viewer. The woman is standing at a doorway in the first picture, which could represent a turning point or threshold. The group's posture and facial expressions in the second picture might be interpreted as a response to something that happened outside the frame. The muted colors point to a realistic or even gloomy story. The main characters are emphasized with lighting, which calls attention to them and suggests their importance. The indoor environments in which the characters are depicted in both pictures provide the impression of intimacy or confinement. In the second image, the close closeness of characters conveys a shared experience or attention. The atmosphere and clothes could reveal details about the socioeconomic class, cultural setting, or time period, which could set the stage for the conversation.



Figure 16 Biba's reaction after hearing Haider's friends' conversation

The composition revolves around the woman, who appears to be conveying a meaningful message while she is caught in the middle of a conversation. By putting us in the shoes of the addressee, the viewpoint fosters a direct and passionate style of communication. The woman initiates a confrontational or difficult interaction by looking directly at the audience, who assumes the role of the character she is addressing in the scene. Being an exact quote, the writing in the picture intensifies the scene's confrontational quality. The woman's aggressive posture and attitude, along with the wording, alludes to a topic of privacy invasion or interrogation. The woman's face is the main focus of the warm, dim lighting, which draws attention to her emotions and amplifies the intensity of the situation.

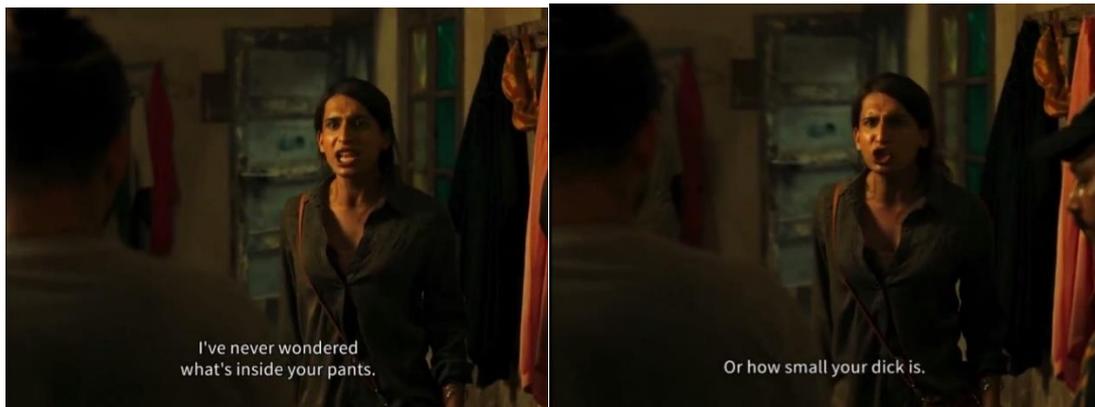


Figure 17 Biba's reaction after hearing Haider's friends' conversation

The two main characters in the first image are a partially visible man and a transgender woman. The woman's expressive hand gestures and facial expression suggest that she is engaged in a heated discussion or debate. Since the man is facing away, it is impossible to see how he is reacting, which could point to a power disparity or a lack of interest in the discussion. The woman's eyes are fixed on the man, not the observer. This gives the impression that you are seeing a private conversation or moment. The woman is shown in a mid-shot, suggesting a close but private distance. This may be seen as drawing the audience into the picture, though rather detached. The woman is the most prominent feature in the picture; her move and expression catch the viewer's attention because of how sharply and vividly lighted her form is in comparison to the background. The absence of distinct horizontal or vertical lines suggests a relationship or interaction between the two figures. The muted colors and low lighting can evoke a serious, even melancholy, atmosphere. A realistic, ordinary scene is suggested by the naturalistic color scheme. The picture looks to be a still from a movie or TV show that strives for a realistic look to draw the audience into the story.

The woman's action and expression are contextualized by the text at the bottom that blends in with the picture. It appears to be subtitles, giving the audience access to the spoken word that is essential to comprehending the circumstances. This study leads us to the conclusion that this is a dramatic and tense scene between two characters, most likely from a story that examines intricate social interactions. The lady appears to be a prominent communicator in this exchange, possibly confronting the man or taking a strong personal stand, based on her central posture, her passionate expression, and the contextualizing language.

In the second image, again the primary character is a lady – trans woman, depicted in a confrontational, frontal attitude, with an obscured masculine figure facing her. Her posture and open mouth give the impression that she is making a strong or assertive statement. The way the woman faces the man instead of the viewer suggests a conversation or conflict. The mid-shot offers an intimate viewpoint while maintaining viewer distance, enabling passive observation. The woman's expression and her obvious forward-facing position make her the main subject. There are no boundaries, suggesting that the actors converse openly with one another. Other objects in the backdrop imply a homey or familiar environment. Because of the woman's prominent position in the frame and the somewhat asymmetrical composition, the viewer is given a stronger sense of her dominance or power in this exchange. The setting is made more authentic and somber by the realistic and organic color scheme. A high level of realism is aided by the depictions of the actors and the surroundings. The image's meaning is greatly influenced by the thought-provoking wording in the subtitle. It draws attention to how tough the talk was and how hostile the woman's statement was. The woman is shown acting assertively in the picture, which depicts a conflicted or challenging time. Her stance, attitude, and the subtitle all point to a power dynamic in which the woman is clearly exerting herself in what looks to be a heated exchange of words. The subtitles' word choice suggests a theme of questioning social or personal conventions, possibly in regard to gender relations.



Figure 18 Biba's reaction after hearing Haider's friends' conversation

Two performers are interacting face-to-face in the first picture. The woman appears to be speaking boldly or assertively based on her open mouth and facial expression. The actors' closeness to one another implies a direct and potentially aggressive exchange. Both individuals in this picture are in an "offer" stance; they are

communicating with each other rather than the viewer, in contrast to pictures that "demand" that subjects gaze at the viewer. The viewer's experience is made more intense by the close-up shot, which gives them a sense of being close to the encounter. Once more, the woman is the main subject, and her expression is what stands out the most. The close framing of the two figures may allude to a connection or important exchange between them. Given that the lady is the main subject and has a stronger emotional expression, there is an uneven balance. The persistent use of subdued hues and realistic, low lighting suggests a somber and possibly tense story context. A real-life situation or a scene from a movie that strives for a genuine portrayal of characters and emotions is suggested by the high level of visual detail.

Understanding interaction requires reading the subtitle text. It indicates that the discourse has taken an unexpected or provocative turn that could be amusing, confrontational, or both. These components work together to create an image that captures a heated discussion between people and may even be a key scene in the story. Due to her well-known status and the audacious declaration in the subtitle, it appears that the woman is questioning accepted wisdom or putting out a compelling, if unusual, argument. The intimate and private exchange pulls the audience into a story that probably deals with issues of gender, power, and social expectations.

In the second visual, the male and female actors are in close physical proximity to one another, which suggests a direct and strong exchange. The woman appears to be making a bold or important remark based on her active and strong facial expression. Both subjects are absorbed in each other and are not glancing at the observer. Instead of "demanding" the viewer's attention outright, this maintains the "offer" part of the encounter by offering it for observation. The close-up shot draws the audience even closer to the action and suggests that the dialogue is more intensely personal or emotional. Though the two actors are sharply focused, the viewer's attention is drawn to the woman's face because it is brighter and takes up more space in the frame. There are no obstacles between them, suggesting a relationship or conflict. Visual energy is created by the tension between the two figures, resulting in a dynamic imbalance. Warm hues and dramatic lighting amplify the scene's intensity and reinforce the exchange's emotional impact. The image emphasizes the authenticity of the expressions and scenario with a high degree of realism befitting a scene taken from a movie or real life.

The woman's speech appears to be a challenge or comparison, maybe of a personal nature, based on the subtitle text. It gives the visual elements' important context for interpretation. The woman is assuming a prominent, assertive position in this image, which depicts a time of conflict or intensive discussion. The wording, which frames the discussion in a way that probably aims to elicit thinking or cause the reader to consider the narrative's issue, draws the spectator into the scene in addition to the visual aspect. The woman plays a crucial part in this exchange, as seen by the constant attention on her in each shot.



Figure 19 Biba's reaction after hearing Haider's friends' conversation

The actors in the first image are shown as being very intimate, with the woman's hand resting on the man's neck. The proximity alludes to a close or passionate exchange, potentially with some tenderness or confrontation. Once more, the subjects are locked in a mutual gaze and are not looking at the observer. The woman's hand on the man's neck, which could be interpreted as a sign of dominance or closeness, highlights the interpersonal connection. The viewer is able to feel the closeness or stress of the situation because of the proximity to the subjects, which depicts a personal encounter. The woman's gesture stands out, highlighting its significance in the exchange, and both people exhibit a comparable degree of concentration. There is a relationship between the two characters because there are no dividing factors. With both characters positioned in the center, the composition strikes a balance that suggests a reciprocal engagement in the encounter. The naturalistic and subdued color scheme is still the same as in the earlier pictures, suggesting a somber and possibly emotionally intense setting. The scene is more credible because of the high level of realism provided by the surroundings and the performers' facial expressions.

The words "You love joking, right?" in what is likely a subtitle at the foot of the paragraph seem to indicate a change in tone, perhaps to one that is more humorous or inquisitive. This contrasts with the woman's grave countenance, implying a complex emotional background. With hints of intimacy and tension, the picture depicts a complex moment of bonding between the two individuals. The woman appears to be having a layered conversation where comedy is utilized to address a more serious or delicate problem, based on her hand gesture and facial expressions that seem to contradict the textual message. The way that word and image interact encourages the audience to think about the scene's underlying meanings and emotional currents.

The woman touches the man's face in the second picture, indicating an even more personal exchange. Depending on the narrative's context, this gesture could be seen as either gentle or domineering. The 'offer' component is maintained because, like in earlier pictures, the subjects interact with each other rather than the observer. The viewer feels more intimately involved in the moment since the shot is closer than in earlier pictures. The woman's action commands a lot of attention, but the actors' faces are the most noticeable aspects. The two are closely framed, highlighting their relationship and exchange. The two faces evenly fill the frame, creating a sense of equilibrium in the picture. The persistent use of soft, muted lighting lends credence to the scene's cozy atmosphere. The scene's lighting, attitude, and surroundings all continue to evoke a high level of realism. The viewer's interpretation of the interaction is entirely dependent on the visual signals in this image, as there is no text. Since there is no writing in the scenario, the viewer's interpretation of the story and the relationships between the individuals is crucial. The two characters' intimate bond is strengthened by the image. The woman's close contact with the man's face implies a momentous occasion of love or declaration. The scenario is very captivating and subject to interpretation depending on the spectator's contextual awareness because of the near proximity and absence of words, which encourage the viewer to concentrate on the nonverbal cues.

4.4.2 Analysis of text and semiotic from *Anything's Possible*

4.4.2.1 Scene 1

*Kelsa: I've been thinking a lot
about dating, like,
whether or not I want to,
because, like, when exactly
am I supposed to disclose
that I'm trans?*

(DISTORTED) Trans.

Trans.

Trans.

(SCREAMS)

(LAUGHS)

*CHUCKLES) Like, it's not
really a personal thing,
but it's also something
that just wouldn't
naturally come up.*

*And I'm not even worried
about harassment
or anything like that.*

*I'm worried about people
only pretending to like me
because they wanna be woke
or something.*

As the identity issue discussed in the analysis of the movie *Joyland*, this scene here from the movie *Anything's Possible* also related to identity. Recognition is the major problem we are dealing with in this research. The discrimination becomes complex, and the character Kelsa tries to discover her identity and social acceptance in society having revealed her identity. The scene depicts the depression and problem of acceptance of human rights. Is being transgender a fault? She is confident enough or maybe has been harassed a lot so that now she is not afraid of being harassed anymore. This scene begins with Kelsa making her YouTube video for her channel that she is running secretly to share her feelings and emotions with the trans community out there. In the video she shares that whenever she thinks of dating, she ends up thinking when she should reveal her true identity. Whether she would be accepted or rejected or she would be liked only for sympathy or time pass.

In this scenario, Kelsa shares her worries about dating as a transgender person, specifically about knowing when and how to tell prospective partners that she is transgender. The conversation addresses the social and personal facets of transgender identification, emphasizing the challenge of handling disclosure in close relationships. The emotional tone swings between reflective and jovial. Thoughtful and reflective, Kelsa's early consideration of dating and openness reveals a degree of sensitivity. This analysis enriches the conversation and invites consideration of how society views transgender people. The exchanges do a good job of expressing Kelsa's feelings and worries about dating while transgender. It draws attention to the difficulties and complexities of managing relationships while addressing questions of acceptance and identity.

The subject of the conversation is left open-ended as Kelsa shares her concerns at the end of the exchange. This raises questions and calls for continued reflection on relationships and transgender identity. All things considered, the conversations provide light on the challenges transgender people confront in managing their identities and relationships in modern society, both internally and externally. The discourse is made more complex by the emotional depth and cultural references, which emphasize the complexity of transsexual experiences.

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Figure 20 Kelsa sharing what she thinks about dating

The top is typically thought of as "ideal," and the bottom as "real." The subject's face is centered at the top of the frame, implying that the person's expression and emotional condition are significant or idealized. The information on the left is regarded as "given," known and accepted, while the information on the right is regarded as "new," and this is where our focus is focused. The way the character looks and feels seems to be aimed directly at the spectator, suggesting that they are in direct communication with them and offering them 'new' information or opportunities for involvement.

The background is blurry, but the face is sharp. The face is highlighted by the contrast in color and lighting between the subject and the background. The most prominent element is the face, which takes up a significant portion of the frame and is positioned in the center. Strong framing elements, like a window frame surrounding the face or other items enclosing it, are absent, which emphasizes a relationship between the subject and the spectator. The composition's 'openness' suggests accessibility and an opportunity for engagement. The photos have a high modality, which makes them

seem genuine and credible in the context in which they are shown. They seem realistic in terms of color saturation, lighting, and detail.

Both pictures have direct eye contact, suggesting a social dynamic between the person and the observer. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen, the character appears to be speaking directly to the audience, generating a "demand" image in which the topic asks for the audience's attention or a reaction. Since close-up photos are typically saved for people, we are socially or emotionally close to, the close-up photograph conveys a sense of intimacy or connection with the viewer. The static images themselves don't have a clear narrative structure, but since the play bar suggests that these are screen grabs from a video platform, we can assume that they are a part of a larger narrative that is connected to the video's content—as suggested by the title, "Dating While Trans." Because the subject and the viewer are on the same social level, there is equality. The character's expressive facial characteristics bolster the direct and honest conversation that the straight-on position conveys with the spectator. All things considered, these pictures involve the viewer in a communication experience through the subject's facial expressions, direct stare, and central placement. The title "Dating While Trans" implies that the viewer is invited to engage in discussion on the subject matter offered by the vivid and lucid visual elements. In addition to evoking an emotional response and suggesting a conversational tone that would probably correspond with the video's content, the expressive characteristics and direct address encourage viewers to think about the experiences and viewpoints of the topic.



Figure 21 Kelsa's reaction upon sharing her identity being a trans while dating

Western cultures view the right side of the frame as "new," and the left as the "given." The subject stays in the center of these pictures, keeping her the main subject and implying a continuous story. The subject remains in the 'optimal' portion of the frame with no discernible change in her vertical posture. Every picture has the subject's face in clear focus, grabbing the viewer's attention right away. Her expression is highlighted by the stark contrast between the subject and the indistinct background. The topic is presented in a way that emphasizes the significance of her experience and narrative. The addition of a cracked screen effect, which denotes an interruption or narrative breaking point, disturbs this arrangement.

With realistic, detailed pictures, the modality maintains its high level. The story is made more authentic by the subject's realistic emotional expression. The observer is placed in a social relationship with the subject in the first and second photographs due

to the direct eye contact. The close-up image suggests closeness and a powerful bond with the viewer. The video's likely topic is supported by the way in which the emotions and effects—such as the cracked screen and the "TRANS" text—are added in a sequential manner to create a narrative trajectory that suggests an impactful story of disruption or transformation. The right angle alludes to a fair exchange with the observer. Since the subject and the audience are at the same level, communication is encouraged to be open and honest. An abrupt pause or challenge in the narrative about the subject's experience is symbolized by the cracked screen overlay, which also represents a breaking of the usual. In the third image, the text "TRANS" is added across the subject's face, adding another level of meaning. It not only clearly identifies the subject matter but also perhaps represents an identity that is important to the story, as well as a barrier or label that is placed on them.

4.4.2.2 Scene 2

***Khalid:** So, what do you wanna remember from high school?*

We could live our own life, right now,

or do what people expect of us and (SIGHS) spend the rest

"What if?" (KELSA CHUCKLES)

Yes! (CHUCKLES)

(UPLIFTING MUSIC PLAYING)

(STUDENTS CHATTERING)

-BOY: Come on. Come on!

(GIRL GIGGLING) (IN BRITISH ACCENT)

In a daring move, the human mates publicly display their affection.

References to high school experiences and the presence of students conversing in the background give the impression that the scene is in a high school. The dialogues imply pausing for thought and making decisions regarding one's post-high school course of action. At least two people appear to be involved in the conversation: Khalid and someone who is called "Kelsa". With a contemplative tone, Khalid opens the discussion by asking what the other person hopes to remember from high school. The

dilemma between living one's own life and fitting in with expectations is brought up, as Khalid touches on themes of uniqueness vs society standards. The conversation makes reference to accepting independence and having the ability to make decisions free from social pressures. The characters seem to be joking about and having a lighthearted tone. The use of upbeat music playing in the background gives a sense of excitement or expectation. It deepens the setting and makes the reader feel more fully immersed in the narrative. Funny things like the reference to a British accent and the dramatic story about a human partner lighten the tone of the conversation and keep the audience laughing. Humor draws the reader in and enhances the enjoyment and relatability of the discussion. Sound effects such as "(GIRL GIGGLING)" and "(YELLS)" are used in the discourse to improve its aural experience, making it livelier and engaging. These audio elements enhance the mood and give the scenario more life. "Okay" denotes the courteous farewells that end the conversation. I will, I guess. (CHUCKLES) Goodbye. This brings the exchange to a close and indicates that the talk is coming to a conclusion. The characters' speech skillfully creates a lively and captivating exchange. In order to improve the reader's experience and move the story along, it makes use of comedy, descriptive language, and paralinguistic elements.



Figure 22 Kelsa and Khalid deciding to take the step and face the challenges of society together

In these visuals, color is used quite strategically. An atmosphere of intimacy, intensity, or even tension could be suggested by the heavy usage of red and purple tones. Since colors can have symbolic connotations, in this case, red could stand for passion, danger, or love, and purple for sophistication or mystery. The placement of the two people within the frames of these pictures can provide details about their relationship. What looks to be a slice of citrus in the third image could represent freshness, energy, or spending a simple yet private moment together. It's crucial to remember that interpretations of social semiotic readings might differ greatly based on personal experiences, cultural circumstances, and the story that these images are a part of. This study is predicted on broad semiotic concepts and the visual data that is available.



Figure 23 Kelsa and Khalid decide to take the step and face the challenges of society together

There is a sense of depth and concentration in the picture because of the contrast between the lighter background and the darker foreground. The centrally placed hands serve as the main focus point because of their positioning and the lighting, bringing the viewer's attention to the act of holding hands, which is commonly connected to unity, partnership, and connection. With the hands in crisp detail contrasted with the background's softer focus, the picture demonstrates selective focus. This draws attention to and highlights the act of holding hands, implying that it is significant within the scene's emotional or narrative context.

Warm colors that heavily feature orange and yellow tones imply coziness, warmth, and closeness. The contact places between the fingers are further highlighted by the way the light passes through them; this could represent a spark or connection between the two people. In social semiotics, the act of holding hands denotes a personal relationship, which in turn denotes the degree of social intimacy or distance between participants. The gesture suggests a closeness in their relationship because it is intimate. The hard yet soft touch conveys mutual respect and trust. The way the fingers interlock might signify a close relationship, assistance to one another, or show protection.

This idea relates to how realistic or true the depictions are. The high modality in this picture implies that the connection between individuals is real and important. The handholding in the picture suggests a narrative of reconciliation or connection, implying a pivotal point in the characters' relationship. The image uses action to

communicate part of a story. By concentrating on these social semiotic components, it is possible to deduce that the picture is narrating an intimate, trustworthy, and emotional relationship between the two people. Together, the visual components build a strong portrayal of a relationship tie.



Figure 2 : Kelsa and Khalid deciding to take the step and face the challenges of society together

Two main characters can be seen in each of the three pictures strolling down a school hallway. They appear to be traveling or progressing because of the way they are positioned in the center of the frame, going from one side to the other. Their positioning in relation to other pupils who are motionless or hazy establishes a focus point and highlights their significance within the scene. The hallway and other students frame the two primary protagonists, drawing attention to their acute focus and pivotal placement. This establishes them as important subjects, possibly in a social or narrative context.

These pictures have some striking color contrasts. The corridor and other students' more subdued hues contrast sharply with the vivid, warm outfits of the two main protagonists. This contrast could represent their originality or the special nature

of their bond. The third image shows the female character looking directly at the camera, a behavior known as demand in social semiotics. By allowing the audience to enter the story or the characters' emotional space, this establishes a connection with them. The two main characters' remoteness from the other people in the corridor symbolizes a private area between them, signifying a tight bond that is distinct from their interactions with those around them. This is a nonverbal depiction of interpersonal relationships.

The two main characters' lines of sight and body orientation combine to form a vector that directs the viewer's attention through the picture and suggests movement and direction. Within the storyline, this can suggest a common route or objective. The main characters' intimate and companionable body language is conveyed via their hand holding. In contrast to the other students who are more scattered and immovable, their onward mobility suggests movement and possibly a shared goal or objective inside the story. The images are quite realistic and provide a sense of the genuineness of the setting and the activities inside it to the spectator. With their vivid clothing and intimate body language, the two main actors distinguish themselves from those around them and are interpreted by the semiotic resources employed in the images as partners or close companions setting out on a journey or facing an issue together. The school's immediate surroundings refer to ideas about youth, education, and the social dynamics that exist in these settings.



Figure 25 Kelsa and Khalid deciding to take the step and face the challenges of society together

The central aisle in both images, which depict a school setting, directs the viewer's attention to the characters. In addition to giving the story direction, this physical arrangement may represent a journey or a turning point and perhaps refer to a typical school-related coming-of-age design. The first image highlights the importance of the central hallway by framing it with a group of kids on either side focusing on the

two main characters' interaction. The first image has a lively, young vibe due to the bright and varied colors of the outfit. The characters' presence is emphasized by the contrasting hues between them and their surroundings, which can represent their distinct identities or emotions. A 'demand' relationship is created in the first image when some kids are staring directly at the observer, inviting them into the situation. In the second image, on the other hand, the spectator is an observer of the interaction between the actors as they are actively interacting, implying an "offer" relationship.

With a medium shot that makes the viewer feel included in the group, the first image places the viewer centrally within the scenario. The intimacy of the two characters' conversation is emphasized in the second image, as the viewer takes on a more detached observer role. The first image's checkered floor suggests depth and perspective by drawing the viewer's attention to the end of the hallway with leading lines. The characters' body language and direction of look in the second image generate a vector that draws the viewer's attention to the characters' faces and subsequent interactions. The relaxed smiles and postures in the first picture point to a laid-back and cozy social setting. The characters are facing one another in the second picture, suggesting interaction and dialogue. While the second image clearly shows an active exchange, suggesting a time of narrative growth, the first image suggests a pause in action, with the pupils gathered and possibly waiting for something. These pictures provide a meaning that is probably connected to relationships, social dynamics, and personal growth in an educational setting by utilizing a range of semiotic tools. The audience is guided in understanding the social connections, context, and potential storylines at play by the visual aspects.

4.4.2.3 Scene 3

Em: It's our space.

A women's space. And she brought her socialized male energy into it.

And I'm okay with her lifestyle, I really am, but it stops being okay when she enters our space to assault us.

Kelsa: Remember when I said not everything is about gender?

Apparently, it is for me.

I got banned from the women's locker room and bathroom.

*They're making me go to this dingy, gender-neutral bathroom
that no one's cleaned since the '90s.*

Because when people look at me, all they see is gender.

It makes me never wanna step out of this room again.

The conversations that are provided explore issues related to gender identity, prejudice, and the fight for acceptance and inclusion. The main topic of discussion is Em and Kelsa's experiences, who are subjected to discrimination because of their gender identities. It emphasizes gendered spaces and limits; Em expresses irritation over Kelsa entering their women's area with what she sees as "socialized male energy". As a result of others viewing her only through gendered prism, Kelsa was prohibited from using the women's lavatory and locker room.



Figure 26 Kelsa facing issue of social space

In the first image, the figure is standing on the stairs, which could signify a change in level or state. One might represent change or progress using stairs. Although the left-right dimension isn't as obvious in this instance, the images seem to flow into one another and suggest a story. The way the figure is positioned within the frame and how her colorful attire contrasts with the subdued background in both photos makes her stand out. The absence of a narrative or frame around the subject implies openness and continuity with the surroundings, which could indicate that the subject's path or trip is part of a larger context or plot. The photos have a high modality because of the realistic backdrop and meticulous attention to detail, which suggests that the portrayal is very "real-life." The girl is interacting with her surroundings, implying a "offer" rather than a "demand" image in which the spectator is given the information to observe rather than engage with. There is no direct engagement with the viewer. A somewhat intimate look at the woman is given in the medium shot, which also contains enough environmental

surroundings to put her predicament in context. The images in the sequence and the subject's movement through the building allude to a story that might be about a daily routine, a quest, or a personal trip.

As the subject is positioned at an angle to the camera, it may suggest a story that is unfolding or a single moment that was caught during a series of events. In the first image, the camera is positioned slightly above, suggesting a position of observation or quiet authority, but it's not noticeable enough to imply a strong power dynamic. The fact that the subject of the photos—the actor—is depicted as moving gives the composition a dynamic quality and suggests a narrative that is developing. Subdued color and lighting choices may suggest a sad or contemplative atmosphere.



Figure 27 Kelsa facing issue of social space

The left-hand sign that reads "GENDER NEUTRAL RESTROOM" is highlighted and creates a familiar atmosphere. The figure's connection with the door on the right presents fresh details or the next development in the story. The topic and the signs are positioned in the center, showing their current importance, thus they are not greatly explored here. By being positioned and sized prominently, the signage highlights its significance within the setting. Another focus point that directs the viewer's interpretation of the story is the figure's movement as she reaches for the doorknob.

A concept of accessibility or inclusivity is suggested by the absence of frames around the sign and the subject, which is an open door, suggesting a lack of obstacles. The photos have a high modality and realistic, precise depictions that support the setting's authenticity and the situation's relevance to real life. This is a "offer" image, where the viewer is an observer of the action, because the subject does not interact directly with the spectator. By striking a balance between closeness and distance, the medium shot enables the audience to watch the action without getting involved. Accessing a gender-neutral restroom is a gesture of inclusivity and advancement in

society. The topic is viewed from an angle that suggests a story that is still being told. Because of the direct angle, which puts the observer on par with the subject, neutrality and objectivity are suggested. The procedure is reaching toward and maybe opening a door, which is symbolic of entering a clearly inclusive place. The topic is the actor. The scene's excellent modality and realism are enhanced by the subdued color scheme and realistic lighting.

4.4.2.4 Scene 4

Kelsa: *Thanks for everything today,*

but you didn't have to.

Mother: *All I wanna do*

is be here for you.

Kelsa: *I get that,*

but I don't want you to feel like you have to protect me just because Dad refused to.

Mother: *Kelsa, the mess between me and your dad, you can't think that's because of you and being trans.*

Kelsa: *I mean, yeah, of course it is.*

I was such a burden on you both that your marriage just couldn't take it.

Mother: *You know our relationship was cracking long before any of that.*

Kelsa: *And I was*

what finally broke it.

Mom, it's fine. This is just what happens when you're trans.

Mother: *Our relationship fell apart*

for a million reasons that had everything to do with me and him and nothing to do with you.

Nothing!

You are the one thing we got right!

The dialogues offer a moving look into the intricate complexities of family connections, especially when it comes to a transgender child navigating their parents' acceptance and support. Throughout the conversation, Kelsa thanks her mother for her support but also shares her worries about feeling burdened since she is transgender.

To show the conflict between seeking support and wanting autonomy, Kelsa compares her mother's desire to protect her with her yearning for freedom. Their relationship dynamics are further enhanced by this disparity. Kelsa expresses a sense of guilt or responsibility by saying that she thinks she is to blame for her parents' marital issues. Their internal conflicts over acceptance and self-worth are reflected in this statement. Kelsa's mother disputes her notion that she was the reason of their marital troubles, claiming that the problems in their marriage had nothing to do with Kelsa's identity. This debunking provides comfort when contesting Kelsa's unfavorable self-perception. Using expressive language, Kelsa's mother emphasizes that her daughter is "the one thing we got right." This heartfelt affirmation strengthens their relationship and dispels Kelsa's self-doubt. Reiterating, "You know our relationship was cracking long before any of that," is how Kelsa emphasizes that their parents' marital issues were not exclusively caused by her identity. The argument is made stronger, and the message is reinforced by this repetition.

Kelsa and her mother reiterate their love and support for one another as the conversation comes to an end. This conclusion brings the discussion to a close and is a step in the right direction toward acceptance and understanding. They emphasize the value of honest communication, compassion, and unwavering support in creating strong family bonds in the face of societal obstacles and individual hardships.



Figure 28 Emotional moments between mother and daughter

Two people are shown in a car in the first picture. The woman on the left is the center of attention since it looks like she's speaking, based by her open lips and interested gaze. Although the woman on the left is not looking directly at the viewer, there is still an interaction going on in the scenario because of the way she is looking and paying attention to the other person. A horizontal frame conveys steadiness. The fact that the woman on the left is in the forefront could indicate that she is significant to the story. The characters' distance from one another suggests a relaxed yet interesting exchange. Soft interior lighting gives the space a natural, somewhat less dramatic feel. This may refer to a more widespread, sympathetic circumstance.

The woman on the right is now the main subject in image two. Her gaze has become more expressive, suggesting that she is experiencing more emotion or worry. As with the prior picture, there's no interaction with the spectator directly. A conversation between the main characters is captured in the scene, highlighting the narrative and interpersonal elements. Despite being somewhat turned away, the woman on the right is given importance in the picture due to the camera angle. This stance implies participating actively in the discussion. The mood and setting are maintained by keeping the color tone consistent with the preceding image. The figures and their reactions remain the main focus due to the emphasis on natural colors.

These pictures show instances of how body position and gaze can establish interpersonal meaning. The fact that neither character is staring directly at the viewer suggests that this is a "private" exchange, and that the spectator is merely observing rather than taking part. The arrangement implies a story. The subjects' placement and the harmony between them suggest a lively conversation or exchange that is kept inside the car boundaries, a private area. The combination of color and lighting produces a cozy, lifelike scene that is probably meant to make the observer feel sympathetic or relatable. Though not unduly dramatic, the talk seems serious or emotionally charged due to the muted tones and soft lighting.



Figure 29 Emotional moments between mother and daughter

The woman's face in the first image, with the tears in her eyes, the furrowed forehead, and the downturned mouth, all convey anguish or grief. The way she looks gives the impression that she is having an emotional moment. Her head is turned away, not making eye contact with the audience. This creates a narrative moment by implying reflection or a reaction to something unseen in the situation. With a shallow depth of field that blurs the background, the woman is framed in close-up. This draws the audience's focus to her and her feelings. Her placement slightly to the left of the composition allows the viewer to follow her line of sight, creating a balanced picture.

The emotional state of the first image is carried over into the second one. She appears to be in a state of contentment, assurance, or even surrender because her eyes are closed, and she is hugged. Her closed eyes convey an interior attention; the woman is not making eye contact with the viewer. A bond or connection with another character is indicated by the act of embracing. The woman in the foreground is given more emphasis because the second figure is only half visible and out of focus. The hug is tightly framed, highlighting the emotional closeness of the situation.

With the use of visual cues, the image sequence tells a story. The woman's expressive glance in the first image suggests that she is reacting to something that happened off-screen, adding to the suspense and passion. This tension is slightly alleviated in the second image, which depicts an emotional release through an embrace that suggests warmth or connection. The woman's face, which is the most intricate and well-lit area of the frame in both photos, is what stands out and draws attention to her feelings, which serve as the story's main focus. The closeness created by the close-up shots allows the audience to feel as though they are closely observing her emotional journey. The blurring of the background further guarantees that the audience's focus stays on the characters' emotional responses as opposed to the environment. The

natural, subdued hues prevent the viewer from being drawn away from the emotional subject matter.

4.4.2.5 Scene 5

Kelsa: I feel like for the first time

in my life,

I can just exist

in this world.

And...

I know it's gonna be hard,

but I don't want

to just exist.

I need to find out

what else I'm capable of.

The provided dialogues depict Kelsa's moment of self-discovery and empowerment, during which she exhibits a renewed sense of agency and resolve to realize her full potential. According to Kelsa, there has been a significant change in how she views herself and her role in the world. She conveys a feeling of possibilities and emancipation, demonstrating a willingness to actively participate in life rather than just existing.

Clear and direct communication is made possible by Kelsa's dialogue's comparatively plain and uncomplicated sentence structure. This clarity helps the audience understand the message and amplifies its impact. The dialogue portrays Kelsa's feelings, goals, and determination. It emphasizes themes of personal development, empowerment, and self-discovery, which helps Kelsa's character evolve throughout the story. The conversation documents Kelsa's journey of self-discovery and embrace of who she is, marking a turning point in her personal development.



Figure 30 Emotional moments between Kelsa and Khalid

Due to their central placement, the two characters are given equal weight. In Western societies, the lady on the right symbolizes "new" information, while the male on the left is typically thought of as "given" or familiar information. Their interaction appears to be balanced as well, given their central placement. The lighting and focus are used to highlight the characters. The audience is drawn in by their body language and facial expressions. The lack of a physical frame between the characters suggests that they are related to one another.

The man appears to be reflecting or disinterested in the talk because he is not looking at the woman directly or interacting with the audience. The way the woman is looking at the man shows that she is interested in and actively participating in the conversation. The two are close to one another, suggesting a personal distance and a close relationship or important interaction. The image's high modality is conveyed by its realistic quality, which implies that the representation aims to be an authentic and honest portrayal of a situation. The scene's ambiance is enhanced by the lighting and color selections. Intimacy is heightened by the use of shadows and soft lighting, which also suggests that the picture is set in the evening, a time when seclusion and private chats are common. The woman appears to be trying to connect with sincerity based on her open stance and expressive hand motions toward the male. On the other hand, the man's slightly slouched position and sideways glance can suggest reluctance or thought. The characters' well-groomed yet casual attire suggests an informal setting that is important to the story. The woman's appearance has a dynamic element due to her sequined outfit, which could suggest an energetic personality or the joyful atmosphere of the scenario.



Figure 31 Kelsa on the journey to explore her true self

The fact that the young lady is in the forefront and clearly in focus designates her as the important subject. Her prominent position alludes to a significant or pivotal role in the story or action. The students in the background and the school bus play a supporting or contextual role because they are out of focus. The woman is staring off-camera, suggesting that she is reflecting or focusing on something that is out of the viewer's line of sight, rather than speaking to them directly. This builds suspense and a feeling of story since viewers may be curious about what or who has captured her interest.

The woman's pastel and light-colored clothing could be seen as a sign of freshness, youth, or a kind nature. The school bus's bright yellow color is connected to both youth and education. The bright color scheme as a whole adds to the upbeat and enthusiastic atmosphere. The young woman is positioned in the center of the open frame image, but the action is visibly stretching beyond it, implying that the tale or setting is bigger than what is initially apparent. The woman stands out because of her sharp focus against the hazy background. Moreover, the lighting appears natural, lending the image a commonplace, authentic feel.

The image has a feeling of reality and vitality because of the great level of detail in the woman's features and attire, which conveys a high degree of modality. The ground line creates a horizontal split, and the subjects—the students and the young woman—are positioned above it, suggesting solidity and grounded-ness. The young

woman becomes the center of attention in the bustling surroundings due to the vertical separation created by her placement, potentially creating a dynamic scene.

CHAPTER 5

FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

This chapter aims to validate and verify the findings of the linguistic and semiotic analysis by analyzing the focus discussions about Transgender in Popular Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Trans Representation in Pakistani and American Movies. Two one-hour focus groups that included different participants, comprising linguists and non-linguists, were held in this regard. Each group consisted of five to six participants. The linguists in one group were randomly selected from the MPhil Linguistics students and the Linguistics teachers at the Department of English at NUML Multan Campus. The other group was made up of educated non-linguists from various departments of NUML Multan Campus such as Education, Mathematics, Management Sciences, Philosophy, Islamiyat, etc.

The dialogues and semiotics from the aforementioned movies, *Joyland* and *Anything's Possible*, were chosen with purpose and have already been examined, as was indicated in chapter three (Research Methodology), while the rest of the participant comments are included in Appendix 3. The researcher has identified the major themes that emerged from the focus group discussions of the dialogues and semiotics of both movies in this chapter. In order to identify the common themes, the focus group responses on particular discourses and semiotics from both movies were collected one by one. Afterwards, the complete discussion was examined using Kruger's 2000 model.

This chapter presents the focus group participants' opinions in order to draw attention to the recurring themes that arose during the discussions. The following elements of the aforementioned model are applied to assess all those that are relevant to the portrayal of transgender characters in the two films: words, context, internal consistency, frequency, intensity, specificity of responses, extensiveness, and finding the big idea. In Chapter 3, all of these terms' meanings and operational definitions have already been discussed.

5.1 Movie One

5.1.1 Joyland

5.1.1.1 Use of Words

The following section provides the list of most frequently used lexical items by the participants of linguistic and non-linguistic groups. Keeping in view the context in which the participants spoke these statements, the researcher has attempted to identify the implicit and explicit ideologies embedded in these words.

List of Words	
Linguists	Non-linguists
Representation, presented, perceived, society, ironic, joy, transgender, social class, connections, maltreated, taboos, protagonist, social space	Appropriate, bold, manly, marginalized, accepted, mindset, vulgarity, vulgar, representation, stereotypes, transgender
Identity, males, females, survival, social reality, oscillating, gender, culture, popular culture, language	Gender, social unacceptance, society, males, masculine, females, hanging, language, sexual object, inequality,
Media, movies, language, physical appearance, construction, honor, dilemma, sexual object	Movie, physical appearance, man, patriarchal, strongness, ridicule
Ideology, social economy, change, biological disorder, women, now	Economic issues, inequality, space
Movie, titles, issues, interpretation	Color, sparkling, green
Acceptance, very, really, gentle,	Very, much,
Think, here, central character, contrast, perception,	Pronouns, we, us, she, he, they, I, her, his, him
Pronouns, you, I, we, his, her, he, she, they, their	

According to Rehman (2003), language is a tool that is utilized to propagate both explicit and implicit ideologies. In this way, using strong language has the potential to validate and normalize particular behaviors by influencing people's thoughts and actions.

Keeping this in view, the lexical items used by the participants linguist and non-linguist groups on movie 'Joyland' depict the stereotypical representation of transgender character Biba. Many ideologies are propagated through the visual and verbal representation of the trans character some of the most common are socio-economic condition, social class different, social space and gender inequality. The use of words shows that media discourses play a huge role in shaping the minds of viewers. The words used show how the transgender character is negatively portrayed in the popular culture. They are portrayed as the people working in dance theatres who are either sexual objects or the subject of ridicule for the people. The loaded lexical items indicate that these trans characters work so hard to become socially accepted by the society, but society doesn't accept them as they do to the other gender so, this gender just keep oscillating between these two genders. The use of pronouns 'he', 'she', 'her', 'his' for the trans character Biba depict that even the educated people like the participants of focus group discussion are unable to categorize them in either of the genders category.

Through the analysis of the words used, we can see the ironic representation of the movie title 'Joyland' which depicts that the life of a transgender can be a source of joy for others whereas their own life is like a hell where they struggle to be socially accepted and earn some living for themselves. The example of the ironic expression of the movie title through the participants' dialogues is as follows:

What I perceive is how much contrast there is. The movie's name is Joyland but what about Haider and that Biba that his or her life is completely a hell what we have seen in the movie that how she has been treated by you know by her colleagues, if he is in public, at house. So, how she is being treated, I think there is more joy for him, but she has become a joy for others and her life in itself is like hell.

The title itself could be related to some sort of taboos because I think the title is actually representing the social scenario, it is the 'joyland' for others not particularly for the transgenders.

The use of word ‘movie’ and ‘change’ show that through the cinematic representation of transgender in popular culture, some change has gradually started coming in the social perception of this character, however still, there is long way to go for this gender to be socially accepted.

5.1.1.2 Context

Responses from participants that are prompted by a stimulus or the researcher's question are referred to as context. Twice during the discussion, when participants disagreed with one another's points of view in answer to the moderator's questions, the context was impacted—once in the group of linguists and once in the group of non-linguists. When answering the question, one of them stated that changes are on the way in terms of representation and attitudes toward the transgender community, while the other stated that there is still more work to be done before any real change is brought about. The following are the participants' opinions:

What I personally observe is that now, there is a little bit of acceptance for them. you know the people who belong to academia, they are somewhat accepting it because there are many famous transgender in Pakistan, they are working on social media, they are doing some sort of educational works, and even they people are now in medical field, specifically, if you talk about Multan, I think Multan is the only city that is providing a specific institute built for the education of transgender, so I think, these steps are actually somehow, giving us this clue that now the society has got somehow the acceptance for these transgender.

Yes, there is a little bit of acceptance for them, still this phenomenon is very slow, and people are still very much reluctant to accept them the way they should be accepted.

At the professional domains, even women are marginalized in this part of the world and for the transgender, life is, in the plight of their life is worse, even that they are not accepted in the role which men desire to see.

She tries to manipulate that person through her physical appearance by touching Mr. Ishfaq and talking to her in privacy.

Yes, because she knows this is supposed to be done to attract a man in this patriarchal society and gain attention. This is the expectation of society, that is why she tries to attract that person or the audience through physical touch, but she still doesn't win that attention and faces inequality here and at the stage as well.

Additionally, some of the participants clarified that economy is the primary cause of the mistreatment and marginalization of the trans community, forcing transgender people to work in places like dance theaters to survive.

5.1.1.3 Internal Consistency

It indicates whether or not a participant changed their opinions following conversation with other participants. Regarding the implications of the verbal and visual practices used in the movie, none of the participants changed in their opinions. They were all of the view that the main causes of this community's misconduct and negative portrayal are social and economic challenges.

5.1.1.4 Frequency

Frequency, according to Kruger (2000), indicates the number of times a statement is made in relation to the topic being discussed. The "socio-economic" condition is the most frequent theme used in focus group discussions between linguists and linguists. Words like 'society, social class, social space, social reality, representation, etc.' were used often throughout the conversation to emphasize the theme. Words like ideology, identity, marginalization, new, identity, etc. were also frequently used, emphasizing the social stereotypes connected to the transgender community. Despite using different words to express their opinions about how transgender people are portrayed in the chosen movies, all of the participants in both groups implied the same things in their remarks and comments.

5.1.1.5 Intensity

The focus group discussion participants' opinions, both linguists and non-linguists, revealed the intensity of the discussion as well. The participants' intensity level is demonstrated by their usage of lexical items and expressions such as ironic, maltreated, marginalized, vulgar, vulgarity, physical appearance, sexual objects, inequality, etc. It also shows how interested they are in the focus group discussion. Furthermore, the words "very," "really," and "much" suggest that the participants were rather certain about how transgender character was portrayed in the movie. Given how important pronoun usage is the pronouns he and she are used to symbolize the fluctuating status of transgender people during the discussion.

5.1.1.6 Specificity of responses

All of the participants in the focus groups—linguists and non-linguists—stayed focused on the subject or problem under discussion. One non-linguist group member briefly became confused before realizing the pointlessness of his perspective and quickly rejoined the discussion by making relevant remarks while keeping the topic of discussion in mind.

5.1.1.7 Extensiveness

According to Kruger (2000), the term extensiveness indicates the degree to which participants in a focus group discussion agree on a specific theme on the topic under discussion. Regarding the notion of extensiveness, during the discussion between linguists and non-linguists, one participant from each group showed disagreement with the other participants through opposing discourses. Nonetheless, after two focus group discussions on the emerging themes, a degree of agreement was observed among the participants.

5.1.1.8 Finding the big idea

Concerning the term "finding big idea," the main theme that emerged from the analysis of the remarks made by the participants in the focus group discussion, both linguist and non-linguist, was breaking the stereotypical cinematic representation of transgender people in movies while taking into account the changing socioeconomic conditions of the contemporary world. It was discovered after an extensive analysis at the word level utilized by the participants in both focus group discussions.

5.2 Movie Two

5.2.1 Anything's Possible

5.2.1.1 Use of Words

The most common lexicon used by participants in both linguistic and non-linguistic groups is listed in the following section. The researcher has made an effort to identify the implicit and explicit ideologies rooted in these words, taking into consideration the context of the participants' statements.

List of Words	
Linguists	Non-linguists
Prevailing, ideology, acceptance, accepted, society, orthodox, harassment, prestigious, livelihood, dating, normal, abnormal, display, historical background, affection, Culture, movie, media, publicly, socioeconomic, victims, racism, space, western, cinema, respect, Broken, agony, pain, love, curiosity, father, mother Identity, gender, trans, transgender, male, men, ostracized, biologically, sexuality, straight, hide, male energy, women, protect, relationship, Very, much, kind, if, now, Colors, blingy, dingily, Pronouns, her, he, they, themselves, our, we,	Confident, portray, empathetic, acceptance, liberties, marginalized, vocal, hiding, space, educated, bold, Cultural differences, ideologies, identities, social pressure, laughing, mocking, challenges, social unacceptance, male, economic Transgender, relationship, personality, mother, daughter, father, humanity, universal, attitudes, Love, equal, publicly, similar, exceptional, depiction, successful, Now, very, basic, needs Pronouns, her, she, him, they, his, I, we, you,

Blommaert (2005) asserts that social interactions and conversation are never devoid of ideology. According to Verschuren (1999), discourse is also seen as an ideological investment and site of struggle. In accordance with this, lexical items used in the focus group discussion on the movie "Anything's Possible" have brought attention to recurrent themes. The participants' (linguists and non-linguists) frequent use of certain important words draws attention to the issue of shifting transgender representation in movies based on socioeconomic circumstances and public opinion. It was like a verbal war between the participants (linguists and non-linguists) due to their usage of loaded linguistic devices to defend their points of view.

The small shift in transgender depiction in Western media is illustrated through the use of vocabulary terms such as "bold, confident, equal, vocal, prestigious, normal, acceptance," among others. Given the numerous socioeconomic crises of the modern day, this is what is demanded by everyone. In this sense, transgender-themed western movies like "Anything's Possible" have a crucial role in disseminating a new vision of what it's like to be transgender in the postmodern world and how they should be represented. The transgender character Kelsa has brought attention to the idea of being strong, independent, and fearless. This has overshadowed previous stereotypes of transgender people being used only for sex, for begging or dancing only. The examples from participants' dialogues are as follows:

She is more confident, brave and strong as compared to the Pakistani trans. She is more confident in what she wants and how she has to portray herself to the society and what are her demands, her desires, she is more confident about herself as compared to Pakistani trans.

That is where the writer or the director of the movie came up with this title, 'Anything's Possible.' A trans individual, not feeling worried about harassment is possible in our society like America.

This is the same thing I find that there are cultural differences and different brought up and I see she is much more confident as compared to Pakistani transgender. So, I think that as these are the cultural differences in understanding of the things and understanding of the ideologies, personalities, identities, the transgender community is more confident there in America.

Additionally, during the focus group discussion, some lexical elements are employed by the participants, which symbolizes an irony on the part of previously formed gender norms by objectifying transgender people and making them a source of pleasure for men. Words like "racism, victim, harassment, broken," etc. are used to describe the trans community negatively and to show how society views transgender people.

5.2.1.2 Context

According to Kruger (2000), context refers to participant's response brought on by a stimulus, such as a researcher-posed question or a remark about the opinions of another participant. A member of the group of linguists once changed the context during the discussion. A participant who was a linguist attempted to steer the conversation in a different direction by responding to the moderator's question irrationally by taking the discussion towards religious and racist side. The remarks are as follows:

But the acceptance is very much not acceptance because Khalid is also not fully American. He is half Muslim, either Pakistani or some Arab roots.

If you could look at the American Literature or the history of American Literature as a whole, you will get to know that the most demeaning and the most ostracized kind of people, they were Blacks. So much so, they were not allowed to have white ice cream except on July 4th and if this kind of harassment or this kind of mental torture was going on with them, there is nothing to worry about or there is nothing surprising that Kelsa was a character that was taken from that stratum of society.

The remaining participants, however, stayed stuck to their statements.

5.2.1.3 Internal Consistency

Internal consistency refers to whether a participant has changed his or her opinion during the discussion with other participants. Within the focus group discussion, only one member of the linguists' group was unable to maintain internal consistency and quickly changed her opinion after hearing other participants' comments. Rest all participants remained consistent in their point of views.

Here I would like to differ. She is not confused that she needs to disclose that she is trans or not, she is just that when at the stage of dating I need to disclose that. Should I disclose things right in the beginning of the dating stage and if this happens then of

course everybody would run away because probably people will not be very okay with that and if they are not, so at what stage, maybe after some time after being friends or so.

5.2.1.4 Frequency

The terms acceptance, harassment, culture, identity, economy, confidence, ideology, and stereotypes were used most frequently during the discussions. On the other hand, the most prevalent themes were the idea of socioeconomic problems, cultural differences, historical contexts, and social space. As a result, it can be concluded that the main themes that emerged from discussions between linguists and non-linguists are basically the same, except for lexical items, suggesting that participants' perceptions of the themes are consistent overall.

5.2.1.5 Intensity

The viewpoints of linguists and non-linguists in the focus group discussion also demonstrated the degree of intensity. The vocabulary and expressions that the participants used such as, marginalized, challenging, mocking, etc.—indicate the intensity level of the participants. It demonstrates their level of interest in the topic of the focus group as well. Additionally, it appears from the use of the terms "very," "really," and "much" that the participants had strong opinions on how transgender characters were portrayed in the movie.

5.2.1.6 Specificity of responses

All of the participants in the focus groups—linguists and non-linguists—stayed focused on the topic of how transgender people are portrayed in popular culture.

5.2.1.7 Extensiveness

The extent of agreement and disagreement among participants regarding the specific topic under discussion is indicated by the degree of extensiveness. It was noted that throughout the discussion, everyone's opinions regarding transgender representation in popular culture were quite similar.

5.2.1.8 Finding the big idea

The emerging idea from the discussion between both groups linguist and non-linguists is the change in representation of transgender in western media depending upon the socio-economic situations and acceptance by family and society. According

to both groups, the trans character Kelsa in ‘Anything’s possible’ has been depicted as a confident and vocal character who speaks for her rights and is ready to do anything to get her accepted.

5.3 Summary

The key findings of this study are all of the aforementioned dominant emerging themes that emerged during focus group discussions on the chosen movies. What sets the two movies apart from each other was how the linguists used and applied linguistic and stylistic devices to express their opinions on the chunks of each movie that were chosen, with the only distinction being that the linguists focused on the linguistic and stylistic devices before applying them to the semiotic text, while the non-linguists used their background and prior knowledge of the context to decode and interpret the linguistic and semiotic chunks from the two movies that were chosen for analysis.

Participants in focus groups, both linguists and non-linguists, generally experienced and understood that the representation of transgender characters in the two movies was done with regard to the socio-economic demands of the post-modern world. Semiotic practices and language can interact to influence how people see and respond to the world around them. Thus, the main objective of the focus group discussion was to confirm and validate the results of the linguistic and semiotic analysis in order to determine whether or not transgender representation in both movies was done to the same standard.

It was found that media discourses significantly contribute to the spread of the prevailing ideologies, keeping in mind the previously described examination of emerging themes, lexical items, and other devices during focus group discussions. In conclusion, the researcher found that focus group discussions, as a research tool, were very helpful in validating the results of her linguistic and semiotic analyses, particularly with regard to the portrayal of transgender people in American and Pakistani movies.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The present research aimed at finding out the visual and verbal practices employed by transgender characters, ideologies propagated through the portrayal of transgender characters in the selected movies ‘Joyland’ and ‘Anything’s Possible’ and how those ideologies shape the mindset of the viewers. After analyzing the linguistic and semiotic texts from both movies, it appeared that the majority of transgender portrayal has been largely negative as the transgender characters are facing a lot of challenges for their survival in the society, be it western or eastern culture, their depiction is more in a negative manner. However, the research has demonstrated that representation is progressing positively using a mixed method approach that combines content analysis and discourse analysis at linguistic and semiotic level. Despite their shortcomings, the transgender depictions in the two examined movies are making progress toward improving transgender representation.

To analyze the visual and verbal practices employed by the transgender characters in the selected movies and their frequency of occurrence, the researcher has employed a mixed method approach using Quantitative Content Analysis based on Content Analysis (CA) method adapted from Capuzza and Spencer (2017), Linguistic Analysis using A Feminist Model of Text by Mills (1995) and Semiotic Analysis by employing Kress & Van Leeuwen’s (1996) Social Semiotic approach. Furthermore, to validate the findings of linguistic and semiotic analysis, the researcher has conducted two Focus Group Discussions by employing Krueger (2000) model to understand the viewpoints of the general public about the representation of transgender in popular culture.

Through the analysis of both movies, it has been observed that transgender community all over the world faces challenges to survive in society, whether its Pakistan or America, they struggle to get accepted in the society. However, the acceptance ratio is increasing in western society, and it might be because of the difference in the socio-economic conditions in the west. As through the analysis, it can be seen that the transgender character Biba from Joyland has very limited options of working and earning livelihood for herself like she is supposed to work in dance theatres, dance at the weddings or do any work that has a negative portrayal in the

society. Being trans is a taboo in the society. On the other hand, through the representation of trans character Kelsa from the movie *Anything's Possible*, we can see that she has been given proper education as she is studying in a high school, she is accepted by her mother and has been given full confidence to pursue her dreams. She is not bound to work at any such place, which is majorly due to the better socio-economic status of Kelsa.

Biba, the transgender character in *Joyland*, is frequently seen wearing colorful and vibrant attire. These clothes violate traditional gender conventions in Pakistan and have cultural significance. Her clothing choices draw attention to the difference between her gender identity in public and private settings and stress her status as a performer. The transgender character wears unusual clothes in about 65% of the situations, especially while they are performing. Biba has expressive body language, particularly when she's acting or making an effort to be heard in a conversation. She makes confident motions, yet in private moments, her body language shows vulnerability, implying the character's emotional complexity. In public, body language tends to be aggressive, whereas in private or intimate situations, it becomes vulnerable.

On the other hand, Kelsa, the transgender character in *Anything's Possible*, is seen wearing stylish, informal, and trendy clothing that symbolizes the freedom of expression usually connected to gender identity representations in the West. Her outfit complements the school setting, demonstrating her desire to be accepted while also showing her individuality. Kelsa wears outfits highlighting her unique personality in about half of her scenes, especially when interacting with other students.

Biba communicates her gender identification using language that is direct and assertive. Her conversations frequently highlight the struggles that transgender persons in Pakistan experience since she speaks openly about social stigma and individual struggles. It may be estimated that Biba discusses or alludes to the difficulties of being transgender in a conservative society for almost half of her dialogue. Biba's voice can be forceful or vulnerable, depending on the circumstance. In public or professional contexts, she is assertive; nevertheless, on more intimate or personal occasions, her tone softens, showing the emotional toll of her experiences.

More discreetly, Kelsa expresses her gender identity in conversation with friends and potential love interests. The way she navigates her gender identification in

the movie reflects a more accepted view of transgender identity as it doesn't dominate every conversation. Though the movie shows Kelsa as a complex person with different interests and worries, most of her speech deals either directly or indirectly with gender identity. When she meets transphobic conduct or experiences moments of self-doubt, Kelsa's tone becomes more reserved and calmer, indicating her comfort in her identity. Like Biba, Kelsa handles awkward conversations with humor and lighthearted banter. *But Anything's Possible* has a more upbeat tone, which is appropriate given the diverse cultural settings.

While talking about the acceptance and challenges faced by the transgender, it has been observed that there are a few common challenges that are faced by trans characters all over the world such as the social space issue; this issue is faced by both the character while Biba travelling on Orange Train and Kelsa using the girls' bathroom. Biba was asked by the female character to go to the males' section despite her trying to fit in the society as a female, wearing female attire and behaving like a female, she is forced to join the males' section whereas for males, she would be an object of pleasure. Same goes for Kelsa, she is forced to use the gender-neutral bathroom and gets banned from using girls' locker room and bathroom despite wearing girl's attire and having been friends with girls in her high school.

Another important theme that emerged through the analysis is the struggle for gender and identity. The trans characters are continuously struggling for their identity. Identity is actually the social construction of a male and a female that is associated with certain gender, and these people keep struggling to fit into any of them. Even though they have been given official identities and national identity cards by Pakistan government, still the society is not ready to accept them.

The transgender character Biba in *Joyland* stands in opposition to the strict gender norms prevalent in Pakistani culture. Her persona examines the difficulties faced by gender nonconformity in a nation with deeply rooted conventional beliefs. The movie depicts the need for acceptance and acknowledgment while also exposing the social exclusion and discrimination that transgender people experience. The patriarchal structure of the family, in which male authority limits the displays of male gender fluidity as well as women's duties, is a major theme in *Joyland*. The viewer and the characters are forced to face deeply established gender stereotypes as the younger male

character develops feelings for Biba, upending the conventional masculine-feminine binary.

As she is from a lower socioeconomic background, Biba also emphasizes the relationship between gender and class. She is doubly ostracized by her class standing and her status. The challenges of people who live at the crossroads of marginalized identities are revealed by this twofold discrimination, which further exposes society institutions. Joyland addresses taboo topics in Pakistani culture, including those pertaining to the presence of transgender individuals and the larger LGBTQ+ community. The film promotes an ideology that opposes strict heteronormativity and cultural transphobia by giving a story that humanizes Biba and highlights the emotional and psychological complexity of her existence.

In contrast to Joyland, the main focus of *Anything's Possible* is Kelsa's self-expression and personal empowerment. The movie promotes a unique ideology, wherein Kelsa embraces her true self and defies conventional notions of femininity. This signifies a change in the direction of more inclusive gender representations in American media, where transgender characters are praised for their bravery and resilience rather than being reduced to tragic figures. Kelsa's identification is complex because she is a Black girl who identifies as transgender. The movie highlights the particular difficulties that Black trans people in the United States confront by acknowledging the interconnectedness of race and gender. This intersectional representation challenges oversimplified or homogenous representations of transgender lives and advances a more complex understanding of identity. In contrast to Joyland, *Anything's Possible* has a more upbeat and uplifting stance. The story's main themes include self-discovery, acceptance, and love. The ideology at play here is unmistakable: transgender people's journey to self-acceptance should be welcomed and honored, upholding progressive values of tolerance and respect for variety.

The ideologies that Joyland and *Anything's Possible* promote are greatly influenced by their respective cultural settings. Joyland, which has its roots in Pakistani society, emphasizes the struggle that exists between transgender identity and conventional beliefs, portraying the transgender character as someone who upends social order. Whereas intersectionality and other issues are still present, trans identity is portrayed in *Anything's Possible* as an acceptable part of diversity, reflecting a more progressive American setting. Though in very different ways, both movies challenge

and dismantle conventional gender stereotypes. While Joyland approaches this from the perspective of breaking the law and fighting against social conventions, *Anything's Possible* tells a more upbeat story of liberation and empowerment.

The intersectionality of marginalized identities is a theme in both movies, whether it is race and gender in *Anything's Possible* or class and gender in Joyland. Because of this intersectionality, trans individuals are shown with more complexity, highlighting the multiple difficulties they encounter as well as the larger ideological criticism of social systems. The ideals that the trans characters in *Anything's Possible* and Joyland espouse are a reflection of broader cultural attitudes around inclusivity, societal standards, and gender identity. Joyland criticizes Pakistani society's inflexible patriarchal and cultural norms, whereas *Anything's Possible* embraces transgender identity and advances acceptance and empowering aspirations. When seen as a whole, these movies add to the growing global conversation about transgender visibility, acceptance, and the continuous fight for equality.

The ideologies that are propagated by the portrayals of transgender individuals in *Anything's Possible* and Joyland profoundly influence viewers' perspectives in many ways. Joyland aims to foster empathy and a deeper understanding of the difficulties faced by transgender people by presenting their problems in a conservative society. It draws attention to the damaging effects of strict gender norms on individuals as well as the harsh reality of social rejection. Viewers are prompted by the movie to critically examine their own views regarding gender and social norms. It may cause conventional ideas about gender roles to be questioned and reevaluated, as well as the marginalization of transgender people. Joyland's portrayal of the intersectionality of gender and class draws attention to the many forms of discrimination that marginalized people must endure. Viewers might gain a greater understanding of the ways in which gender identity and socioeconomic position can interact to generate distinct obstacles.

Anything's Possible helps normalize trans identities in popular culture by portraying a trans girl as an ordinary high school student. By making transgender experiences seem more relatable and acceptable to viewers, this representation can lessen stigma and encourage an inclusive perspective. The film's emphasis on personal development and self-empowerment may encourage viewers to accept who they are and help others on their path to self-acceptance. The way Kelsa's experiences are portrayed positively serves to support the notion that authenticity and self-expression

are admirable qualities that ought to be honored. Transgender identity is portrayed in *Anything's Possible* as a part of a vibrant, diverse, and inclusive universe. This can aid viewers in realizing and appreciating the benefits of diversity and inclusivity in enhancing society.

While *Anything's Possible* sheds light on the changing viewpoints in more progressive civilizations, *Joyland* can increase viewers' understanding of the unique difficulties experienced by transgender people in conservative settings. When combined, they provide a comparative perspective that can improve knowledge of gender identity-related worldwide concerns. *Anything's Possible* has the potential to strengthen favorable views toward gender diversity and inclusion, whereas *Joyland* may compel viewers to critically analyze deeply ingrained social conventions and the necessity for societal reform. The combination of these movies can advance action for greater equality and acceptance as well as a more thorough understanding of transgender issues.

These findings suggest that a change is coming in the representation and acceptance of the transgender characters as many transgender people are getting education and are becoming independent and strong specially in west. As the popular media plays a crucial role to shape the general perception of the public and propagate ideologies, through the better and positive media representation of this gender, the acceptance ratio can be increased, and it would be easier to break down the stereotypes towards their existence.

Moreover, the analysis of the viewpoints of focus group participants who were from different fields of life suggest that the movies depicting transgender characters positively play a crucial role to some extent shape the mindsets of the target audience and can break the ice towards empowering this community.

Furthermore, the researcher's and possibly the film's producers' one of the main objectives is to spread the idea that gender stereotypes should be questioned because they are meant to be challenged. One of the research's key findings is that these two movies, when linguistically and semiotically analyzed, may help adults and children become more gender sensitive. Additionally, because it's widely believed that ideologies propagate from top to bottom, transgender representation in movies may

gain influence with the general public. People start to behave or believe consciously or unconsciously in accordance with what they are exposed to in the movie.

6.2 Suggestions for Future Research

As the topic of transgender is quite vast and there is much more to explore regarding the particular language style of transgender or deconstruction of gender stereotypes. Keeping in view the vastness of the subject matter, there are some of the suggestions for future researchers which are as follows:

- The comparative analysis of trans representation can be done between more than just two cultures with more than two movies.
- The research can be carried out in some other dimension like the particular language style of transgenders.
- More focus group discussions can be conducted with the participants of the particular cultures i.e. participants from Pakistan for Pakistani movie's validation, participants from America for American movie's validation or any other culture chosen by the researcher.
- Corpus can be designed to analyze the key words and lexical items used by transgender characters and other characters from the movie as well as the words used by the participants of focus group.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Scripts of Movies Joyland and Anything's Possible

Joyland (2022) Movie Script

https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=joyland

..ten

..nine

...eight

..Seven

...six

...five

...four

...three

...two

One

I caught you!

Momina, do something!

You can't escape!

It's tickle attack time.

Uncle, stop!

Let's play something else!

Our brother will beat you!

We will have a boy brother!

She thought I wouldn't catch her

.I don't want to play this game

!"Haydar"

What happened?

A water pipe broke

.But do not worry

I'll clean up the place.

.No -

.Get the bike out of here

..."Faithful"

If you need something, ask your sisters for it

Don't bother your grandpa, okay?

.I will return soon

Aunt Fayaz is coming to lunch.

Will our brother be born? -

Haider, the bike!

.bicycle

.you can do this

.Just press a little more now

Rashida! Bring the bucket!

The contractions are irregular

We may need surgery. The doctor will decide

Buy these drugs, please

.Accurate -

.Hi bro -

What are the medications?

who are you?

.I am the father

So who is this? -

I'm his younger brother.

Why didn't you call me earlier?

I told my dad that-

Oh really? -

You should have sent me a text

..I was just -

.Be calm -

Rashida -

Where is Doctor Alia? -

.she is not on duty today

Doctor "Fatima" will deliver the baby

Rashida, hurry up!

Where is Doctor "Fatima"? -

Sir, this is the fourth birth of your wife

She can deliver this baby even without a female doctor

Rashida, are you dead or what?

I'm not sure if

This was available at the pharmacy

Can you check again please?

.."Haydar"

what is wrong with you?

What the hell took you so long?

Come on, uncle!

Grab it now!

Haider, just document it now.

.come. come

.Hello -

.And may peace be upon you -

.you are about to catch her

where have you been?

I was in the salon

How's Nogi?

I'll fetch some water

Stay here!

You go get him water

The butcher still hasn't come to pick her up by car

what is wrong with you?

.I don't know

I got really hot all of a sudden, didn't I?

.I don't think this butcher has any plans to come

Will Uncle Haider slaughter her now?

.I'm sure there are other butchers

Why don't we try calling another one?

What is the point of having a young son at home?

Haider, you will do it.

.Let's go

!My Father

!Go

Help him catch her

.don't make her suffer

Go inside, Momo.

.I want to watch -

.do it, son

!"Haydar"

.Keep your hand steady. Hold the legs firmly

!Let's go

Say in the name of God, and do so

!"Haydar"

May Allah accept from us and forgive us

Ultrasound report said

.sonic it would be a boy

Oh really?

.sometimes they make mistakes

There is no doubt that the examiner was a beginner

If you check at an early stage

The result could be wrong

.I'll just go and call home

Shall I bring you juice too?

So what?

Have you and Mumtaz thought about it?

In what, dad?

.in having a child

Actually, Mumtaz does not want a child now

Excellent "don't want to, or don't you"

you can do that?

...I was thinking maybe

...that with my next paycheck

I have to buy an air conditioner

If we buy an air conditioner, we will have to put it in my dad's room

Shall we bring two then? What do you think?

Did you get a raise or something?

Did you win the lottery?

Tell me -

No. I didn't get a raise.

who knows. let's see

Keep bringing me this lentil, okay?

All the girls in the salon loved it

What if I get a job?

Who will prepare the lentils then?

where?

I do not know yet

"Qaisar" said he might find me

something next week

That's cool, isn't it? -

That's what I'm saying -

Did you tell your father?

...My uncle

Momo is hungry. Can you come feed her?

My grandfather says go get the butcher

Well, I'll go in a little while. shut the door

Will Nogi try to conceive again now?

just say it

Hello -

And may peace be upon you -

Mubarak! You are uncle again!

Dad sent two bags for you

Are they taking your wife out tomorrow?

I'll put on my shirt. Iron it

Come on, my love

Why haven't you slept yet?

Uncle, she is mean to me

She said the baby was really ugly

Now close your eyes

how's it going? -

Everything is good -

Come on, let's go

where are we going? -

Come now -

Will he move or not?

will do, sir

Come on, Haider!

Try it!

Hear. "Haydar"?

Sorry sir, just give me a second

Haider, stop, just listen to me.

Come back and laugh, you faggot

what is your problem? -

Was this the job? -

so what? -

You looked stupid.

We are all stupid here

When did you start working here? -

two years ago -

What?

Do you know your family?

At first, they didn't know

You don't have to tell your family either

Why did you even think of me?

Oh man, I thought-

you know my father -

I thought you would like this

You know my father is not as nice as yours

You keep repeating, "Daddy... Daddy."

Why do you have to tell him? -

Of course, I should, loser!

Tell him the salary is twenty thousand rupees each

an offer. And that there are two shows a month

When you bring money to home, no one would care where it came from

Any work is better than living behind your wife

Where's the tea boy? -

...here comes the witch -

Auditions for her boys are in the back row

Why is everyone hiding from me?

Where are you going?

Bebba, give us some privacy!

Won't you take your noise elsewhere, please?

Why should I?

I'll stand here.

Well, sure.

No, tell me, do you own this place?

.I'm sorry. Please stay

Who is this handsome?

.My friend

He is auditioning for a group

Your back row dancers

I have? -

.yes -

...I've seen you before

..in the hospital

.that wasn't me

..it was you

.few weeks ago

what were you doing there?

My brother's wife was giving birth to a baby

boy or girl? -

.girl -

And yet? -

And yet? -

nothing

.nice shoes

You'd be better off dancing without it

.Madam, your tea

Try. But just let me know

...if you don't even want to try

No, I'll try.

Oh really? -

Did you put sugar or poison?

.yeah, you're right

.of course, I'm right

It's time to shine

.pause the music

Sir, at least watch it well

I've seen enough

Masha Allah, you are really terrible

!shut up

If we keep him, will we have six children?

.Yes sir

So I'm done

.I will work hard sir

.It's not rocket science

The exercises will start tomorrow

You will all join from the next show

May God have mercy on us

"close your mouth"

The whole city shakes when I roar

Yeah, when I roar

The whole city shakes when I roar

My enemies are burning with envy

The whole city is dancing to my song

on my song

...yeah, they dance to my song

what happens? -

.relaxation -

...no.. no.. no

...no.. no.. no

You hugged me so hard you crushed me

You hugged me so hard you crushed me

Every part of me hurts, bring me some pain balm

I can't even walk straight

Can I take a weekend break?

...oh my god, you're a monster

...my God, you're a monster

Bebba, there's a problem with the sound.

Just go back

What is the problem with the sound? -

You were so good!

What the hell is wrong with the sound?

When you entered, didn't you hear the applause?

You were amazing!

Tell that to the dogs outside.

.Listen to me -

.or to this bitch in there -

what did she say? -

It's not all your business, Shabu.

Can you both keep calm?

There is an audience outside

...look at me

I picked six dancers for your back row

Should I call them?

.No. Just call them tomorrow

..But -

Enough, Mr. Ashfaq!

Who wants to watch a transgender?

.open your mouth

Is she ready? -

Just a few minutes, madam.

Excellent. I told you to put the other shade on first.

This shade you're wearing looks weird

.move aside

You can teach them the skill

But you can't teach them taste

I had to really hurry up, I should have

.I'm in my photoshoot right now

Just two minutes

what the hell?

what happens?

The government started rationing power loads

What about the generator?

We sent the alternator in for repair today

Have you all lost your mind?

How are we going to end this in the dark?

I really don't have time for this

...Give me a second

Ma'am, can I try something?

Safina, Alena and Sarah, bring

your phones and turn on the camera light

!Quickly! Quickly

Don't worry, okay? I'll get you ready

.You are ready

!Excellent

.just let me know

paternal uncle?

It's okay if you don't get the job

You didn't get it, right? -

Tell Mumtaz to come.

Why don't you tell me? -

.Hello -

!And may peace be upon you

!dinner is ready

.Girls, it's time to sleep

Haider, bring the cooler tomorrow.

.."Excellent"

.listen -

yes? -

.I got it

the work? -

.yes -

!I swear to God

...wait..wait..but

but what? -

.I will tell you -

.."Caesar"

Caesar? -

Caesar works in a seduction dance theatre.

so what?

Isn't it as if you were dancing?

.. "Excellent" -

Haider got a job in a theater!

This is good news!

Why didn't you tell me that?

Did Caesar help you?

How lucky my new baby girl is!

in the theater?

Are you well?

Seduction dance theatre?

It's not like it is

.He will do the seduction dance

I said the same thing.

!Be quiet -

after years of unemployment

...now I will go to work in

dance theatre?

what is the job?

...a stage manager

.stage manager for their shows

They pay twenty thousand per show

There are two shows every month

ie forty thousand rupees

.There is nothing wrong

..just don't go around telling everyone in the neighborhood

About the stage -

.Well -

Nogi, this curry is a little raw.

It's okay, that's it, okay?

And now that Haider is absent from work

Who will help me with the housework?

We'll find a solution for this.

She's right, Dad.

We have to get a girl over

.home with Nogi full time

There is so much to do

.someone has to stay with her

is not it?

You must be happy

.You don't need to work anymore

.It is not about need

.I work because I love to work

Excellent. She loves to work.

...and I like to do a lot of things but -

How am I going to do that? -

To cook for nine and take care of four kids?

.but they are not my children

But she is my wife!

Are you immune to what is yours and what is mine? -

I didn't mean it that way.

Mumtaz should stay at home now

No, Dad!

Have we ever banned you from working before?

.There should be balance in life

Tell her, Haider

."Haydar"

.."Excellent"

Couldn't a break be good for you?

I will take care of things now

Finally, after all these years, my son will be making money

It's time to bring Haider babies into the world

I was thinking of buying us two air conditioners

...I've saved up some money

Haider can buy them

But Haider will spend on the house, won't he? -

No need for conditioner. The fan is enough for me.

You can now buy electronics in installments

How much is the premium?

Four to five thousand per month

.This depends on the brand

Imported or local

Don't stress about fitting that brand

...there's this new kind

.Xiang..."Something, it's good."

Is it imported?

.No, it's Chinese, but it's cheap

.then it will work badly and won't last long

You relax. I will do that

.I will do that

Sorry?

There was a power outage at work today

My boss has gone mad at work

.as well as the bride's paradise

Then I had all the girls turn on their phones

And I finished decorating the bride

Everyone started clapping

!"Haydar"

.. "Haydar"

Can she sleep with you guys?

She keeps kicking the baby and waking her up

. Thanks

...if any of you want to laugh at me

So do it on your damned rest!

. I do not care

...but if I see you laughing in front of me

I assure you, you will regret it

. I will teach you the steps

There are only two weeks left until the next show

We must make sure not

. go anyone during the break

...but, Bebb-

"Call me, 'ma'am."

Well, ma'am, what if

They have to go and pee?

You should take care of your own urine

You make sure your bladder is empty

What is happening here?

You cannot practice here

We are putting on a new decoration

Why is there a new decor?

If you want to know, you will know

Where will we train?

This is what kept me awake the whole time

Night: "Where will the kid train?"

You're next, shorty

. Yes you. Come

Have you danced in a theater before? -

.No -

So? what were you doing

I was in the school theatre

."Romeo and Juliet"

What was your role?

"Juliet" -

What? -

"Juliet" -

Juliet? -

Well, Juliet, let's see what you've got

I see a lot of teeth

Ninson Mandela.

You mean "nelson"? -

No. Ninson.

Are you deaf or what?

"India"

."Haydar"

"Tibo"

Why bring lentils without

What does your face taste like?

..Hey you

Damn, I forgot to calculate the timing

What do you want, Juliet?

The other boys have just left

I wanted to ask you if I could leave

Or if you want me to practice more?

Just come with me.

.Well -

Can you act a little bit? -

.No -

I guess you acted in a play at school, right? -

.yes -

Anyway, I'm going inside

Wait for me outside a minute

..then go in and tell "shabu" that

Hafez is at the gate, and he's fighting the guard.

Who is Hafez?

Her rich lover

I apologize for arriving late.

.."Peppa" -

What is going on here?

If your poster includes a girl

.really beautiful, it will not fall off

Mr. Ashfaq?

I must say that your project

.Charity is getting out of hand

Will her picture be on the poster now?

Only if they find space for it

.near your chubby face

Do you hear this bitch?

Hafez "fighting with the guard".

My fat face is selling tickets here

Then you don't need the sticker

You can leave

Honey, it's not me. You are the one who will leave

.no milk in your breasts, only waffle

Shabnam, that's enough.

I will deal with her! Go inside
Why should I go? She must go
A young man, Hafez, is fighting
.with the guard outside
what the hell are you doing?
Where did Hafez come from?
Stop taking pictures and come on!
Oh little piece of shit!
Peppa, was this all some stupid drama?
Obviously I'm not coming
To the stage to recite the Quran
.I told you I couldn't afford a model
You know, Mr. Ashfaq...
Will we do that again? -
Can we talk inside?
Why don't we talk here?
.I want to talk inside
What's the problem sir?
.I see you started ignoring me a while ago
Peppa, no.
That's okay, really
"Peppa"
Hi, Gita?
where are you?
Are you going to any dancing event tonight?
Can you ask them to do that for me too?
.I need some money
I know I said I can no longer
No, I will

.okay. Well

Would you send me the details on WhatsApp?

.Well. Bye

Listen, problem solved

.Go get my photos from the photographer

!Go now

I'll send the rest of the money tomorrow.

.Well -

The figure will be ready at night

.Get it before 10pm

I'm busy tonight. Can I take it tomorrow?

I will place the order tomorrow then. You won't

Its size is proportional to this small shop

I can pick it up at 10 pm

.Excellent

I'll tell the stage keeper

!lightly

Are you well?

!vegetables

Potatoes.. onions.. tomatoes.. okra

!...cucumber.. eggplant

Cauliflower.. carrots

"Nogi"

Why don't you return my previous dishes?

Peace be upon you, aunt

..And may peace be upon you

I see a stranger here today

If I return your dishes, how?

Then you will come up with new dishes?

What did you prepare today?

You wait and you will see

How are you, Mumtaz?

.fine and how are you? I haven't seen you for a while

How will you see me? You are always out of the house

Where is my brother Aman? -

.Inside -

I already told you that she didn't call me

Can I keep it inside the theatre?

.It will only take 2 minutes

I already told you they don't

They give me the keys to the gate

.bring me a drink

Hug him! He's rich, come on

Hug him.. hug him

Yes, here is my man!

!Hug! Hug

who is she?

..Ms

"Peppa"

She is the one who hired me

.she is a very beautiful lady

But..?

.okay

.that's it

..And

..my job

..actually me

Back row dancer

Sorry, I don't know why you didn't

.I could tell you before

.I don't know why I lied

are you mad at me?

So what do you do all day?

...good

We train and practice

Did you like that?

.okay

.I don't know. I mean, it's early days

I'm still learning some "steps".

steps "?"

.yeah, dance moves

She calls them "steps."

Some of them are very difficult

...and it takes practice

don't you show me

right Now? -

.yes -

show me what are you doing?

.Well

.well, it is done to the music

...so one of the steps is like

.you do like this

And you come back like this

.This step is very difficult

.thats good

...No

No, it's good.

.Is enough -
.I've never seen you move this much before
Things will get better when you practice
Aren't you angry with me?
.No
.a little jealous
Our family has lived here since before Partition
We never had money
.but we had respect
And with that damned bitch he dragged
Excuse me for my words
.I bet the whole neighborhood will be talking now
Don't worry, brother Aman. Your honor is our honor
Thank God, it was me
I discovered it, not a stranger
Thank you, Mrs. Fayaz.
No thanks.
May God forgive us
.this is embarrassing. shameful
Excellent, I don't know why you're wearing it.
.such loose clothes
.because it's convenient
.It shouldn't be that wide
You'll look like... you know?
Bring me your shirt
.I'm going to narrow it down
It will only take ten minutes
I've done that four times before
.If you don't like it, I will unscrew it again

.I think I'm fine

No. Why?

Does Haider object?

No, Haider does not object

You obviously give him no reason to object

...look at her

What's her name?

from?

That lady I brought this morning

Peppa? -

Yes, Peppa.

what happened to her?

.Look at her picture

If he was "Selim" he would spend his days with

A girl wearing such tight clothes

I will walk around without wearing anything

.look -

For God's sake, Nogi!

.she's not really a girl

not a girl

..not a girl

.she is not a girl

Oh, is it fleeting?

.No way. It's fleeting

I'll give it a like.

No, I wouldn't!

You'll know we've been tracking her

Open it

How much do you want? -

.two -

No, Nogi, what?

.what? She'll think I'm her fan

Anyway, the important point is that you should

.Stop dressing like a chicken

.just a little tighter here

.Raise your arm

.I'm fine, please

.but you will look very beautiful

.look. You can look very sexy

.I don't want to look sexy

Five, six, seven, eight

,one two three four five

Six, seven, eight

.once again

...Quickly

...five, six, seven, eight

,one two three four five

Six, seven, eight

Haider, what are you doing?

I want everyone to sync

Only a few days separate us from our premiere!

...five, six, seven, eight

..one two three four five

...six, seven, eight

.once again

what the hell?

Why do you repeat that again?

Do you have a long tongue, short one?

!Yes I have! We master this nonsense

Teach this son of a bitch!

We're out of here!

Calm down, man.

Damn that! let's go -

Well, you guys can take your lunch break

Haider, you stay.

.to stop

.Try again

.Yes that's good

You are about to learn that

..Brown

You can't sit here

This is the women's section

Go to the men's section

.Sit There

Welcome?

.I'm talking to you

You can sit down, but not here

Go sit in the men's section, that's it

Are you deaf?

Or do you speak a foreign language?

.what a weirdo

Look how this boy sat

.beside her, they rub their knees together

.yeah, everyone is now openly rude

Do whatever you want in your bedroom

At least not in front of our children

.Look, she's laughing. She laughs

Of course, all of these are new fads

They want to generate interest

.that's why they do it

This generation has no patience at all

But even if you have patience

Will he make a weed link or a missile?

!And may peace be upon you

Hello, Guru! This is Haider

He is my dancer

Is he here to finish our vodka? -

No, he doesn't drink.

How did it go?

I'm still in the break

So the stage was half empty

.half full

.Sure, that can be said

We've been at protests all day

.All goes well

You should have come, Peppa

.You know I won't

Filmmakers contacted

.Germans documentaries again

They still want to interview you

At least talk to them once? -

Will they pay? -

No, Peppa. But they make

Documentary for Tina

Tina is dead, Guru.

So they make it for themselves

Tina. Just an excuse. Come on.

Have you seen how her tongue looks like scissors

And what am I going to do?

This generation of disciples is disrespectful

Goro, you spoiled her.

The students will not be disrespectful

Never if you keep the reins tight

I spoiled her till she was spoiled

.Yes, I was with her

I was in the car with her

And at dinner too

No, she wasn't really friendly

I went to dance with her in the show

.there was a man

He was carrying a gun

.came to it

.then touch it

.so we paid him

.Shot

..all night long

..Police men

..and doctors

...and passing girls

..they kept asking me the same questions

"What happened?"

"What happened?"

...and I kept saying

"Yes, I was with her."

I was in the car with her.

"Yes, I was with her at dinner."

...you are so naughty

Tell me. what are you wearing now?

My favorite part of your body?

.Your hair

You are not ashamed, are you?

not in front of me? Not even in front of your family?

what is this?

.coincidence

I got this from French Beach

from France"?

...no, you silly one

French Beach in Karachi

Did you ever go to him?

I have never been outside of Lahore before

You must go someday

Earn some money

And buy a ticket and go

You'll see how big the ocean is

And that man is very small

.Tell me a joke

A mosquito fell in love with a chicken

The mosquito and the hen kissed

Mosquitoes died from bird flu

The chicken died of malaria

guess why

Why?

Because the fate of love is death

Didn't you like it?

No, not at all

.There is nothing wrong

.do not worry

.try it

.will not kill you

I haven't caught him yet

I will clean this up.

Watch out!

.be cerfull -

.Well -

Watch your feet

Does your wife know you're here?

.show me her picture

.she is beautiful

.I also have a mole

.but not on my face

.in another place

..Do you know? Last night a Chinese guy

He returned after making a trip to Mars

And you can't even hold a pretty girl's hand?

are you scared?

.My leg hurts

.sorry

.everyone is on top of each other in this neighborhood

Wait, the neighbor's son is walking around

God knows where it came from

are you tired?

Have you ever been to the beach?

Yes, whenever we go to visit

Our aunt is in Karachi

.she was taking us

Did you dive?

No, I could barely put my feet in the water

Why?

My aunt did not allow girls

.to enter because our clothes would get wet

Is it really big?

.it's the ocean

.Of course, it's big

Maybe we can go someday?

."Haydar"

.you will wake up

.I can not sleep

Can I go out on tour?

...you know my cousin

.It bothered me a lot that day

"Brush your hair. Brush your hair."

.it really bothered me

Aunty Excellent, hurry up!

!One second

Hurry up!

!we are waiting -

I said one second!

what is wrong with you?

We found a dragonfly this morning

.but we lost it later

We are just looking for it

We live in a city!

There are no dragonflies here!

.You need to change, to look like a dancer

.he won't

Why? -

I bet he wouldn't.

Why?

He doesn't even urinate without his father's permission

.I'll do it

.this is good. do it

.I'll put this here

Put it in storage for later

What are you going to do with that now?

.I will think of something

Haider. Can I talk to you quickly?

.Yes Madam

Why are you calling to talk outside?

If Caesar finds out, he will tell my father

...and my dad

My father will plan my funeral

Do you really think that if you did something

You want it, it will lead you to your funeral?

.Certainly

will you come?

to my funeral?

I will have to check my schedule

I was watching this video

.I have an idea for a show next weekend

.It is a western style dance

Strange movements

.One second

.Look over

is he coming

He said he would

Let me know if you need

.to get another dress

I'm not a stupid bitch like you until I get married

Tell me some secrets. Is he good at "it"?

Well, he's learning

learn? Is he not married?

We know that this does not teach anyone anything

And "Ahmed"? -

What's wrong with Ahmed?"

You and Ahmed

What do you do together in bed?

.all he wants

And what does he want?

...what men have always wanted

.nothing special

Why? Why do you ask?

.No. No actual reason

You look beautiful for the first time in your life

Did I ever tell you that I got

Have a diploma in interior design?

...but when we got married he said "selim" like

Why do you decorate other people's homes?

If you could decorate your house

That makes sense, I think

What's wrong with you, "excellent"?

.I think you need to change the atmosphere
We're going to the Land of Joy
Tonight, you will come with us
No, I don't feel like it
Someone has to stay with my father
We will ask Auntie Fayaz
.she will take care of him
Why is she?
..Why do you think she brings food
To our house every day since 2012?
What happened in 2012?
.Tell me
Her husband died
.Come now
.go first
It will take a long time to convince your father
.I will not go back
.Go, I'm coming
...even dinner is ready, and
I thought I'd ask
.a neighbor to come and sit you
No. I can stay with my brother Aman
.This is not a problem
Oh really? -
.okay -
This makes me feel good
So can we all go then?
Take the little ones with you. Isn't it, my little girl?
What is your opinion?

Well, Dad. do you agree? It's okay

Thank you, Aunt Fayaz

..."Where was I? Yes, Parveen's tooth came out

.give me one ticket

Shabu is going to dance, right?

.yes

.My dear -

yes? -

Can you give me a love bite? -

No biting allowed.

Didn't you see your face?

.even a mad bitch wouldn't bite you

What the hell is this! Oh Sohail!

Come on, stop the song!

Sir, one of the generators has broken down

!what the hell?

That was so embarrassing!

.Wait. Wait -

My fans are very upset!

They come to see me, not this lizard

My friends, there is a technical glitch

But we will fix it as soon as possible

!Go to the hell -

We didn't come here to listen to you!

.just bear with us

.You know how sensitive I am

Well, Peppa

I will cancel the break

Your boys can go home

Why are you canceling my paragraph? I am canceling the shabu

.she is not ready to dance yet

!the curse! I will cancel you all -

I'm not talking to you, sister!

No paragraph on today's break!

!Hear -

If you miss a night on Nilo

...or Shabnam, they don't care

But it concerns me and my boys!

The stage is dark!

Go! I can play music

.only on backup generator

Go bang your heads in the dark!

They're cursing me outside

And you're worried about yourself, as usual

.There is nothing wrong

.let's do it

How do?

You must share your heart's secrets with me

You must share your heart's secrets with me

..you want to break up with me

..you want to break up with me

And I wish I could destroy myself for you

..you want to break up with me

And I wish I could join you

Many sorrows and many joys

..I put all my faith in your love, my love

..I put all my faith in your love, my love

Do you remember the last time we came? -

.yes -

on your birthday?

Watch yourself where you are going!

Why don't you watch yourself, madam

It won't go up any more, I swear

.just look straight ahead

.I can't look. I can only look at you

Lord forgive me my sins

Oh Lord, have mercy on us

Oh God, forgive me my sins. God have mercy on me

..I put all my faith in your love, my love

..I put all my faith in your love, my love

..so if you can't be with me

..so if you can't be with me

..so if you can't be with me

So Peppa, give me back my heart

Fayaz!

Yes, brother Aman?

What do you do?

.I will come right away

Would you bring me my phone, please?

The children should have come back by now

What do you do?

If you could help me a little bit

.I have to go to the toilet

.Of course, I'm coming

.please enter

Aunt Fayaz's pudding

...it's just that

.There is nothing wrong

...just hang the chair

...I'll clean this up

Where's the mop? -

..wait-

.just sit down

Shall I bring you new clothes?

No, I can manage

..it just got stuck and then

.and no longer works

.There is nothing wrong

.Nothing happened

.Nothing happened

Radwan is not answering his phone.

What about your son's wife?

She never answers, even when I'm at home

.It is late

.then stay here

...I mean

Wait for Selim or Haider to return

They will accompany you home

Five thousand views now!

!Look

where are you?

.I am here

So?

..Sometimes

.I feel like I don't have anything of my own

...everything looks borrowed, or...

.stolen from another person

What happened?

Did your father lock the door?

.I will check inside

No doubt he had already fallen asleep

.It's okay, girls can sleep with us

.This is also closed

What happened?

.It's closed

Where is Haider?

.look at the time

...that's the job he's at

!what a hell

Nogi?

Come on, let's go to bed

.okay

.I'm coming

.You go

What the hell is this? Momo!

Wake up!

Momo!

.wake up! You wet the bed

You all just talk

Should I offer you tea? -

.No -

..it kind of is

.embarrassed

can i say something -

...Mom, please be silent -

.we are talking

..nothing out of the ordinary

It happened, I assure you

It's okay, I'm sure on your part

What about others?

Will you knock on every door?

And you explain why my mother spent the night here?

what's wrong man?

They must have been tired, so they fell asleep

what's the problem? -

God -

It's easy to say when you're not your mother

What if it was a woman from your family?

So what do you want to do?

what shall we do?

..she won't visit you anymore, with her snacks

.and sweets. enough

So what should I do?

.stay home, mom

Is this a very difficult problem?

I bought her a Netflix account

.to make her stay at home

.However, it did not stop

Why didn't you come last night?

What?

to take me?

Why didn't you come last night?

Your mother stayed out all night

Why didn't you come to look for her?

Because you didn't even realize I wasn't home

.I am not a smart woman. I know that

.I am old

I look like a ghost now. I know that

.I am of no use now at all

.I know that too

..but if I can be useful to him

...if I can take care of him

And to offer to help, why wouldn't I? -

did you lose your mind? -

Well, stay here then. Enjoy

.don't ever come back

Uncle, I respect you, so I came to talk

.But everyone seems to have lost their mind here

.I actually don't care what anyone says

.I can stay here

..listen

Haider will drive you home

Please, bring my dishes

Why do you stay out all night?

You have to stay more at home

Why? What happened?

Did dad say something?

...no just

Keep an eye on your wife

What?

What about what?

I do not understand. What you mean?

.just take care of it

.she is your wife. It is not difficult to understand

.but I take care of her

..so do it

.Well

Mr. Ashfaq will raise my salary, so that I can

.Finally get enough savings

What are you saving up for?

I save up for all my surgeries

Being a girl is hard work, baby

What?

.no thing

Gita was also waiting for me

We've always wanted to do this together

Why don't you say anything?

Why do you have to do all this?

what do you mean by that?

.no thing

.no, tell me

.Finish what you were saying

...just nothing

.Tell me

What is there?

.speak

...just listen

...I love you as you are

And you won't love me like that?

No, that's not what I said

Did I ask you for your opinion?

...I was just

just what? you talk nonsense

.I just talk

.Sorry. I'm sorry

.leave me alone

Peppa, I'm sorry.

.do not touch me

Everything I do, I do for myself

.Well

.Well

You are in the seventeenth or eighteenth week

Masha Allah, the fetus looks beautiful

Excellent! Congratulations!

and blood? What's wrong with the blood?

It appears in some pregnant women

.this is normal

..and God willing, Mubarak

.it's a boy

!Boy

.yes -

Oh really? -

Son? -

.yes -

Excellent!

.on God`s will -

.Mashallah -

Are we sure it's a boy?

...in my case, they are

Well, isn't that great news

It's great news

Slim, calling.

He will be very happy!

No, let me tell Haider first, please

.naturally. You should tell Haider first

.and then we'll see

I'll just go take his call

No, please wait with me

.she is still cleaning

.I will come with you. Just wait a bit

.Well. Definitely

Just wait with me a bit.

.yes. yes -

There is nothing to worry about, right? -

.No -

Well, I'll just respond to this

.he is worried

The doctor is here

I think Haider should

.Looking for a regular job now

It should not be late again

.In any case

...when wives get pregnant

I don't know what happens to the couples

They get very excited

When I was pregnant with Momo

.Slim has become like a hungry leopard

.I couldn't take his hands off me

...In addition to -

I feel like running away.

.What is with you? I'm kidding
You should see your face
Hey man, we have some questions
The boys ask if she is
Its merchandise is real or fake?
Is it real or not?
How do I know? -
How do you not know? -
Tell us, man, we really are friends here
.I don't know, guys
Forget it, relax first. take
Come on.. Come on.. Come on!
Now, the real question. The most important question, okay?
What is the?
What is between her legs?
.do not worry. We won't tell anyone
Oh man, I don't know
To be honest, I always knew somehow
what do you know?
Our friend Haider is going to have someone special
Then he must be distinguished as well
Is he thinking of becoming her disciple?
Just tell us, Haider
Does she have a penis or not?
Wait, leave it on top of your head!
.Let me take a picture
It would be kind of scary then
She still had a penis, right?
.be respectful man, come on

Maybe she has both, a penis and a vulva?
Come on, go ahead! Don't let the wig fall off
.I think that's enough
.just another picture
.you took one before, guys
Don't be so pushy
I told you, don't take off the wig!
Better not fall now!
Just one picture, man!
I said leave it on your head!
!It is enough -
!Son of a whore
Caesar, take it easy!
what are you doing -
What happened? Whose mother died?
Hell, we were just telling jokes
And what is the joke?
blink, what is it?
What's in my pants and under my shirt?
Was this a joke?
And you, have you lost your tongue?
!tell them
Why are you acting like a corpse?
.I never wondered what was in your pants
.or how small your penis is
Watch your mouth, or I'll break it
!Come! And try that with me
And then watch me smash your fucking face!
..I suggest we both take off his pants

..so everyone can see

How big are you and how big are I?

!Go to Hell

.stay here

.tell me blink

You like jokes, right?

.tell me a joke

.and I'll tell you some good jokes too

"Leaving"

are you crazy?

Why the hell do you keep trying that?

Have you lost your mind or what?

You really don't know how to do it

a damn thing, right?

.sorry, I made a mistake

Go to hell, you gay!

!Left -

.I'm sorry. I made a mistake -

.we can talk about this

!Left

!I do not wanna talk! Go to the hell

Don't you dare touch me!

I said stay away!

!Retreat

.OK I will. Let's talk

.let's talk. Just talk to me

.just for a minute

Damn that!

I admit that I made a mistake

Leave now! Go to the hell

.I do not want to talk -

Just for two minutes.

!I do not want to talk

!Get out -

.Please. Please -

Please. Im sorry! Peppa

!We are done

Don't show me your face again!

Not here, not in the theatre

Go away, you gay!

You didn't bring me an air conditioner

.Sorry

I will bring him tomorrow

.It is useless now

Why?

Why is it useless?

Where are your shoes?

.I don't know

Maybe you left it at Peppa's

There is one more thing I want to tell you

What?

.I don't know

.I don't know

.I don't know

We will have a baby

.Boy

Can we take a picture?

"The princess is back"

Stay at your expense, guys

It better be a nice hotel

.I don't live in a dirty guesthouse

.Of course, madam

.do not worry

We have a budget for that, and it is sufficient

.and book for two people on everything

.I will be with her throughout the shoot

.he is my business manager

.congrats. I haven't seen you for many days

!Hello -

.And may peace be upon you -

How are you, new dad?

I'm good. Where is "excellent"?

.she's there

Are you still invisible?

What's on your face?

..."Haydar"

We've never had a cake this big!

This is because you are not yet 70 years old

When you're 70, you'll be this big

Faithful, no, don't touch her.

Excellent!

What are you boys doing?

...you want, but I suggest

To give birth to the second as soon as possible

Yes, raising two children for the price of one

.and you will finish it in one go

Imagine that God has given you

.baby right after this
.I hope not
Oh really? Why do you say that?
.I mean we got lucky the first time
And he was a boy
Why do we need to try again?
At least make tea for your guests.
I will do that.
.Look at the cake. she is very beautiful
You really have good taste
...Happy birthday
...happy birthday, Dad
...Happy birthday
.Thank you very much
.I am too old to celebrate my birthday
But my two sons insisted, so I agreed
I just thank God so much for that
"Who blessed me with these two..." Salim" and" Haider
My dear son Haider
...a palm reader told me a long time ago
Haider will be the last man in the Rana family
.and I believed him
Hi, come on. Do you want to play?
But "Haider" will prove soon
.that these myths are wrong
What about the "touch" game? ready?
Let's see who plays first
.I'll start
where are you going?

where are you going?

what if?

You haven't touched me yet! No

I caught her! It's her turn now

Let's go! Can't you run?

Excellent. Be careful.

!I got you

Excellent, would you give me the scissors?

.Excellent. Enough.

Excellent. Can I come in, um?

That you will need some more time?

No, I will open

Are you well?

.okay

do you enjoyed it?

.okay

The cake was good

What?

.the cake...was good

Oh really?

Seventy years

..imagine that

What will we look like when?

Are we seventy years old?

.I don't know

You must be tired, right?

.Me too

I'll go to bed. will you come?

.yes. Go, and I will catch up with you

.Hello

.And may peace be upon you

...and your friend from Sargodha has called

Sir, the bill

.put it in the kitchen. I'll bring the money

.Well

Slim says it's time.

.thank you sir. And sorry

They testified

.don't throw flowers here. Put it in the cemetery

They testified

They testified

Come on Haider, let's go

Come on, Haider

Does she have a record...?

..I mean

Do you have any mental illness?

What?

.no thing

My grandson was called to

.the sky before we can see it

.she was crazy

Salim, please remain silent.

Why?

I have been silent all day

We pretend she didn't do anything

Definitely! As if it was easy for her

So, she shouldn't have done that!

which was very annoying here

That she had to kill my nephew?
I was aware of her methods.
Slim! That's enough!
I'm just telling the truth
I can't even say what I've seen her do
we all knew deep down
What mother can do this?
She could have waited another month
.and then do whatever you want
I told him to watch her
What a day to finally show your manhood
I care about you, that's why I'm talking to you
Did I ask you to speak for me?
If only you were a man in it
Enough, why did this happen?
Stop talking about it!
I haven't said anything yet! everyone says -
Nobody says anything
close your mouth
How many mouths will you shut? how much?
close your mouth! close it
Are you still standing in line?
Are you still defending her?
Can't you see what I did? -
and what did you do? -
And we, didn't we do something?
Didn't he do anything? Didn't you do anything?
We killed it all together!
We didn't! did you lose your mind -

Yes, I lost it!

she wanted to run away

And I didn't help her

So, I said it too!

Look at him standing here, his face like that of a sad puppy

He killed her too!

We killed them all!

Nogi, let's calm down.

I don't want to calm down!

do not touch me

Well -

She's dead, Slim! she died -

Take, I beg you!

Please forgive her! And shut up

Well, I'll keep silent.

calm down -

do not touch me

Look at all of yourselves, you are crying now

We've just been to a funeral, so let's be civil.

Don't tell me that, say it to yourself!

We all killed her!

Just shut up and sit down then!

...Well -

Stop fooling each other!

As if you don't know why that happened

"Leaving"

what are you doing here?

Do you know who I am?

yes

Your father brought you a picture

yes

dad wants me to say yes

But I wanted to ask you first

you ask me? -

okay -

...it's just, you know

I will not pressure you

Can I work after marriage?

if you want to

But if you're going to work after marriage

So, what am I going to do?

Will I be a housewife?

if you want that

...naturally

...but anyway, if you want to say no

You can tell me, and I'll say no

It is easier for a boy to say no

Do you want to say no?

And you? -

No -

Why?

because you are handsome

And you, too

handsome?

...no, I meant

I have to go now

see you later then

when?

in the wedding?

.in the wedding

Do you know what I said to my cousins?

I said I will not go to a salon

I will be the first bride to do her own makeup

You should have seen the look on their faces!

Go now

The land of joy

Anything's Possible (2022) Movie Script

https://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/movie_script.php?movie=anythings-possible

MELLOW MUSIC PLAYING)

KELSA: One of the reasons

I like animals so much

is that they're all named

after what makes them unique.

Here are some

of my favorites.

And they should pop up

somewhere around here,

I believe.

The pink fairy armadillo,

the blue-footed booby,

scaptia beyonceae

or the Beyonc fly,

and the blobfish.

What makes them unique

is also

what helps them survive.

(PHONE CHIMES)

(MESSAGE NOTIFICATIONS POP)

(ELECTROPOP SONG PLAYING)

(PHONE KEYPAD CLACKING)

WOMAN: Kelsa!

The mornin's

not gettin' any younger.

KELSA: And this is true

for humans.

We're a part

of the animal kingdom, too,

aren't we?

Take my mom.

She's got this whole mother

elephant thing going on.

Mess with her baby and

she'll trample all over you.

I think it's a little extra.

-Hey, love. Good morning.

-Hey, good mornin'.

Last first day of school ever.

Are you nervous?

-No.

-It's okay to be.

I'm not.

Oh, we wearing' boas now?

Can I get me one?

Are you wearing a bra?

What? Mom, law of averages.

Oh, it passes the law.

The average mom

would be concerned

that her average daughter was

properly covering the girls.

Ugh.

Please don't call them that.

-That's what they are.

-KELSA: A lot extra.

Where you goin'? Oh, I see.

EM: Look at this color!

You can see me from...

(EM AND CHRIS GASP)

(ALL SQUEAL)

Look at you!

KELSA: My best friends

make survival look good.

Okay, you're giving.

-Look at you!

-I know! Yeah. And

-what are you giving? NASA?

-Don't come for me.

Please tell me

you went shopping this summer?

Of course I did.

Who do you think I am?

-Yeah, come on.

-Wow.

First day of school, bitches.

Here we go.

KELSA: Some animals

use aposematic signals

which basically means

you survive by serving looks.

Em's the best at this.

I bought this online

and the model looked so cute.

But then it arrived, and look,

you can see my ass from space.

KELSA: Uh... Usually.

She's like

the panther chameleon.

Emphasis on "panther."

If she likes something

from your closet,

you gotta let her have it.

All I had to eat last night

was a box of mac and cheese.

KELSA: Chris is

a howler monkey,

honey badger.

She's like, "I am here

and I am chaos, honey."

Girl, you do know

that's a meal for kids, right?

CHRIS: Yeah. It's all

Mike knows how to cook.

But it's like,

"I don't cook. I grill."

It's like, "Shut up.

"Experiment

with gay porn already."

EM: Oh, my God.

KELSA: Oh!

CHRIS: You know what I mean?

KELSA: Whatever it is,

I'm here for it.

What's cool

is survival is creative.

WOMAN: Khalid!

-Arwin!

-(EXHALES HEAVILY)

KELSA: Meerkats survive

by keeping their family close.

-Ooh, good morning.

-KHAL: Good morning.

ARWIN: Good morning.

Uh, Arwin,

what's up with your hair?

Uh, it's my pompadour.

KELSA: Basically,

every animal and every person

has her own

survival mechanism.

And no matter

how amazing or rare,

they're all a part of nature.

Uh, let's just try for normal,

okay?

-All right.

-(SELDA CHUCKLES)

But listen,

if you don't like this,

can I get a skullet?

What's that?

It's... It's like a mullet,

but, like, shaved up front,

and then,

really long in the back.

-Sure.

-No.

(BOTH LAUGH)

But, you know,

speaking of, uh, boyfriends,

we're kinda seeing you

with a boyfriend this year.

-Uh, nah. Full stop. Cut it.

-(EM CHUCKLES)

(ELECTROPOP SONG CONTINUES)

SELDA: Eat your food. Come on.

Was Grease auditions

today at school?

-Sasan!

-Sorry.

KELSA: Thing is, I'm gonna

be out in the real world

after senior year.

-New ecosystem, new threats.

-(STUDENTS CHEER)

Sometimes, I catch myself

worrying a little

about how I'm gonna get by.

(STUDENTS WHOOPING

AND LAUGHING)

-(SCHOOL BELL RINGING)

-(PANTS)

So glad you could join us,

Ms. Kelsa.

Good morning, everybody.

(LAUGHS)

STUDENTS: Good morning.

My name is Ms. Kidd.

And today, we are going

to paint portraits.

Now, I want you

to pick a partner

and paint each other

in the style of your choice.

Okay, now go.

Pick a partner. (LAUGHS)

Don't be shy.

Hi, you wanna...?

-Didn't I have you last year?

-BOY: Yeah, did you miss me?

(CHUCKLES)

Hey.

Um, yeah?

Yes, yes.

Can I borrow

some of that millennial pink?

Yeah, but that is

not millennial pink.

That is flamingo pink.

Okay.

Uh, that one?

KHAL:

That's ballet slipper pink.

That one?

That's just pink pink.

(SMACKS LIPS) All right,

we got a color purist

up in here.

Yeah, well, I don't like

to oversimplify things.

It makes everything

kind of boring.

Oh! What style is this?

Um, it's kinda

like street art, I guess.

Is that okay?

Oh, yes, yes.

Put a little more cleft

in that chin.

Oh! Think pink. (CHUCKLES)

(CHUCKLES)

Uh, what's going on

with my chin?

Nothing. Nothing.

-Nothing at all.

-(CHUCKLES)

Let me see.

(SCOFFS) No way.

That's so good.

Yeah.

You... You can have it.

Really?

Yeah.

You're so nice.

-No, I'm not.

-(BOTH CHUCKLE)

Yes, you are.

I remember, last year

Joey Zhang made

a ceramic soccer ball

and put it in the kiln.

After he left, you grabbed it,

punched a hole in it

so it wouldn't explode

with the heat.

Yeah, well, maybe I was

trying to protect

my Egyptian faience pot

from the detritus.

You were already glazing

your Egyptian faience pot.

Joey was the only one

still sculpting.

-Well, Joey's my friend.

-Nah.

You're perpetually nice.

There's nothing wrong

with that.

-Okay.

-(LAUGHS)

Can I see yours?

Oh, wow.

That... That is...

That is great.

Where did my ear go?

Ears are hard.

Yeah, that's valid.

Yeah.

(SCHOOL BELL RINGS)

MS. KIDD: Excellent work,

everyone.

Excellent.

KHAL: And here you go.

MS. KIDD: Don't forget

your assignment for next week.

All right, who's gonna

help me clean up?

Anybody?

Anybody wanna stay and help?

I don't even have blue eyes.

Dude, I'm not

gonna lie to you.

You're blind

and you're colorblind.

MIKE:

That looks nothing like me.

I don't know

what you're talking about.

MS. KIDD: Thank you.

KELSA: I think

this year's goal

is to actually find out more

than just what I need

to survive in this world.

I wanna find out

how to thrive.

I wanna be like my girl,

the pharaoh cuttlefish.

She knows when to blend in.

She keeps a sharp tongue.

And she never forgets

she is sick AF.

-Hey, love.

-Hey. (LAUGHS)

How was it?

-Oh, it... It was good, yeah.

-Wonderful.

What? Dag, Mom.

On the first day?

You wanted to go to school

out of state

and leave me here

to fend for myself.

-Oh, girl, okay.

-You could always go

to the community college

up the hill.

Love you, Mom, but it's
either New York or LA.

What do they have
that Pittsburgh doesn't?

-It's what they don't have.

-What?

-People that know me.

-(CHUCKLES)

Well, you gonna need
a scholarship
-and a damn good application.

-Oh, my God.

Come on. Sit right up in here.

-The throne awaits you.

-(LAUGHS)

Take the faux fur off.

Oh, okay.

-Get your brain on.

-(LAUGHS)

"Recount a time
when you faced a challenge,
"setback or failure
"and responded with bravery.

"How did it affect you
"and what did you learn
from the experience?"

Bravery.

I don't wanna get in

just because I'm trans.

You'll get in

because you're you.

You can write about

what happened with your dad.

-Uh, I don't wanna exploit...

-No.

You're not

exploiting anything.

It's your story to tell.

But it doesn't

say anything about me.

Of course it does.

You went through all that

and you came out stronger.

You know what that shows?

-Bravery.

-(LAUGHS)

SELENE: Mmm-hmm.

-Oh, my God. Okay.

-Mmm-hmm.

Call on him.

-(LAUGHS)

-Yes.

It's real funny.

Especially when

you start writin' it down.

B...

-Mmm, no, no.

-R...

(BOTH LAUGH)

KELSA: So, what do you want me
to talk about next?

Nature?

Trans stuff?

Put it in the comments.

-(COMPUTER CHIMES)

-I'm down for whatever.

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC PLAYING)

So, I, 25, female,

met what seemed to be

the perfect guy, 26, male.

But afterwards I tried texting

and he totally ghosted.

So,

how do you get over

someone you never even dated?

KHAL: I don't think there's

any tried and true cure

for heartbreak.

Listen to

your favorite sad songs,

cry as much as you need.

It might take awhile,

but one day,

before you realize it,

the pain will be gone.

BOY: I, 16M, have

this amazing girlfriend, 16F.

She's everything

that I ever dreamed of.

(SIGHS) The thing is...

I like to LARP as a High Elf.

I really want

to do it around her,

but I'm kind of embarrassed.

-Yo, Otis.

-OTIS: Mmm.

Do you know what LARPing is?

Um...

I don't know.

Sounds like some loser shit.

LARPing.

Okay...

I think the whole point

of having a partner

is to be able

to be completely yourself

around another person.

Show her what

you're passionate about, dude.

-(KEYBOARD CLACKING)

-Who knows,

she might even be into it.

My boyfriend keeps telling me

I need to lose weight.

KHAL: Stop. I don't

even have to read any further.

This guy sounds
really manipulative.

-(KEYBOARD CLACKING)

-Dump him.

Yo, what are you doing?

N... Nothing.

You done with my notes yet?

No, I...

Oh. Chance and Kevin are going
to the Pirates game tonight.

-You wanna go?

-I'm not that close with them.

All good.

You're rollin' with me.

Like that gives me
any credibility.

-Hey, I got you. (SCOFFS)

-Okay.

I mean, what are you gonna do
besides simpin'
on Reddit all day?

Well...

Yo, does the SAstill have an essay section?

Eh, I don't think
it does anymore.

SELDA: Khalid! Otis!

Dinner!

OTIS: Delicious as always,

Mrs. Z.

You're always

welcome here, Otis.

And tell your mother

these flowers are beautiful.

And it would be

Khalid's pleasure

to help you apply

for community college.

Are you kidding?

I mean, without Khal

I wouldn't have

passed kindergarten.

(CHUCKLES)

And how about you, pesaram?

Your college essay?

Uh, it's not due for,

like, five months.

Put it off and you'll end up

like your cousin Nahid,

studying poetry.

Wait, you can study poetry?

I grab a bite to eat.

My shoes are on my feet.

-(LAUGHTER)

-Hey, Mr. Z! That was good.

-Z snaps. Z snaps.

-(OTHERS EXCLAIM)

Sasan, please,

don't embarrass yourself.

Really? Oh, my God, Dad.

Oh, my God.

Yeah, well, you do know

that the first love poems

were written by Muslims.

(CHUCKLES) Viable career

option in the 13th century.

(ALL CHUCKLE)

You wanna study poetry?

No, no...

You know,

something creative or...

I don't know, something

where I can use my hands.

SELDA: Hands?

I thought you decided

on Economics.

-No. You did.

-Wait a second.

You don't wanna go to college?

No. I don't know.

I'm just saying

that there are other options

than the whole

four-year academic thing.

-Who says I have to do that?

-I do.

Uh, why don't you

just start your essay today?

I don't have anything

to write about.

Well, write about

when we went to Tehran.

What about that woman

you saved from drowning?

-No, that was Arwin.

-That was Arwin?

-That was me.

-Arwin.

Yeah, we don't

all look the same.

(ALL LAUGHING)

SELDA: Work on your essay.

KHAL: No!

(DOOR CLOSES)

God.

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC PLAYING)

(SIGHS)

College...

essay...

Kelsa.

(CHUCKLE SOFTLY)

Kelsa, teen...

Pittsburgh,

River Point High School.

I see you, Renard.

So, here's the deal.

I've been on hormone blockers
for two months
and I haven't felt any changes
in my mood or personality.

I'm not more emotional
or calmer.

I think more of that will come
once I'm on estrogen.

I have to decide whether
to take pills or shots.

They say shots
are more smooth sailing,
but needles... Ugh.

I've been thinking a lot
about dating, like,
whether or not I want to,
because, like, when exactly
am I supposed to disclose
that I'm trans?

(DISTORTED) Trans.

Trans.

Trans.

(SCREAMS)

(LAUGHS)

(CHUCKLES) Like, it's not
really a personal thing,
but it's also something
that just wouldn't
naturally come up.

And I'm not even worried

about harassment

or anything like that.

I'm worried about people

only pretending to like me

because they wanna be woke

or something.

Like, once I'm off at college,

far away,

and no one knows my tea,

I could go stealth.

But that would mean

nobody would know me.

No one would see me

for all that I am.

So, what would you rather,

the existential despair

of not being known

or the existential despair

of being known

and being rejected?

If I talked like that

in the real world,

-they'd put me away.

-(CHUCKLES)

And I'm not dying

to date anybody either.

Like, my friend Chris

is in a relationship,

and to be honest...

MIKE: Mmm!

CHRIS: Mmm!

(IN HIGH-PITCHED VOICE)

Thank you.

I'm your baby bird.

And I'm your daddy bird.

It doesn't seem too appealing.

I mean, why have a boyfriend

when I have two best friends?

Honey, get those Skittles.

CHRIS: So...

Sleepover at Kelsa's

this weekend. We on?

Um, my mom booked

a spa day for us,

and she can't change it.

I feel like you're having

a lot of spa days

with Miss Miranda.

CHRIS: Yeah, when we're

supposed to hang out.

EM: You know Miranda.

I'm trying.

CHRIS AND KELSA:

Try harder, bitch.

(CHRIS AND KELSA LAUGH)

I have a theory.

CHRIS: Yeah? What's that?

First Insta story is the
person you're thirstiest for.

CHRIS: Okay.

Let's try it out.

Um, okay.

CHRIS: Danny Trejo.

(ALL CHUCKLE)

-That tracks.

-What about Mike?

-What about him?

-Oh?

(EM AND KELSA LAUGH)

What about you?

Khal.

Khal Zuabi.

-Since when?

-For, like, a few months now.

I don't know. I was
kind of embarrassed about it,
but he's so sweet.

CHRIS: You should ask him out.

Are you serious?

Yeah. Why not?

KELSA: Uh... (CHUCKLES)

I don't know. I mean, I feel
like you could do better.

I don't want to.

-CHRIS: Who do you have?

-Uh...

No one. Just a meme account.

Okay.

So, how you gonna do it?

KELSA: Just DM him.

No, that's so obvious.

CHRIS: Yeah.

I think you should write

a love note.

EM: That's a good idea.

CHRIS: Yeah.

EM: Mmm.

CHRIS: Oh, yeah.

EM: Cute.

(TEARS OFF PAGE)

-Give it to him.

-Why me?

-I'm shy.

-So am I.

I never ask you

to do anything.

-I'll do it.

-Stop.

You want me to do it,

I'll do it.

Yo, bro.

Last night I joined Parler.

Why would you do that?

Because there's

some gnarly shit on there.

-No, it's... it's...

-Have you ever been on there?

No, I'm not a sociopath.

Hi, Khal.

What's it say?

Nothing.

This from Kelsa?

-Hi, Khal.

-Oh, Chris.

(IN FLIRTY TONE) Hi, Khal.

Wait. Wait,

are you hitting that? (SCOFFS)

-No.

-Nice, dude!

Give me that.

(SIGHS)

(CHUCKLES SOFTLY)

(MUSIC PLAYING FAINTLY)

KELSA: (SIGHS) Okay...

(PHONE KEYPAD CLACKING)

Mmm.

Oh.

Mmm. Mmm-mmm.

Mmm...

(POP SONG PLAYING)

Oh!

(POP SONG CONTINUES)

So, uh, are you gonna go

to art school?

What?

You're, like, really good.

Oh. Um...

I don't know. I feel like

I'm not interesting enough

to be an artist.

Yeah.

(SMACKS LIPS) You're right.

-Wow. Ouch.

-(CHUCKLES)

No, I just meant, like,

artists are douchebags.

But you're nice.

(GAGS) I hate

when people call me nice.

(CHUCKLES) I know.

You know what I hate?

What?

When people say I'm brave.

Really?

"You're transitioning

so young.

"Oh, my God, like,

do you get bullied?

"I just wanna tell you

how brave you are."

Yeah, I mean, it's not

technically that brave

if you're just,

you know, being who you are.

Exactly. And it's

so self-congratulatory.

Yeah.

(SIGHS)

So, what do you wanna study?

Zoology.

Dope. Then what?

I wanna be

a nature cinematographer.

Wow! Dope.

Like Planet Earth kinda thing?

-Yeah.

-(BOTH LAUGH)

(IN BRITISH ACCENT)

Antarctica.

BOY: We can make it.

Come here, baby, come here.

-Yo.

-The high school.

The human male

woos the female.

(KELSA LAUGHING)

But with a ruthlessness

only found in nature,

the female...

BOY: Check this out!

KHAL: ...pretends to text.

Ignoring his sexual advances.

(KELSA AND KHAL LAUGH)

(GIRL GIGGLES)

So what? You're gonna, like,

travel to desert islands,

tread your gear

through mud and stuff?

Stay in a tree for days,

waiting for the perfect shot.

Yeah. I wanna see everything.

Every place.

Every animal.

Why do you like animals

so much?

Because they're all unique,

and named after

what makes them unique.

KHAL: Ladies and gentlemen

of Reddit,

I find myself

in a little bit of a bind.

MS. KIDD: Beep, beep.

I'm coming through.

I'm coming through.

Ooh. Oh. I'm sorry.

KHAL: I, 17, male,

am developing a huge crush

on this girl, 17, female.

It's like

a pull-your-hair-out,

scream-it-out-the-window-
for-the-whole-world-to-hear
kinda deal.

(UPBEAT POP SONG PLAYING)

Oh, no. I'm stupid. I'm stu...

I'm stupid.

How do you know when
you officially have a crush?

Is it when
you start looking for them
in every group of people?

Or is it when you're looking
at a astrology meme
and you check
for their sign too?

MS. KIDD: The Thundershower
by H. Lyman Sayen.

This is the perfect example
of European modernism with...

Yo, how is that
a thundershower?

Wait.

Aren't they...?

BOTH: They're in the shower.

-Yes.

-BOYS: Yo! (CHEERING)

Okay. I have one.

-Shoot.

-Okay.

Sandwich. One bite.

I dare you.

(SOFTLY) Go, go, go.

Go, go, go.

Go, go, go.

No, she didn't!

Okay, quiet!

KELSA: When exactly

does it happen?

(SCOFFS) Whatever. I shouldn't

even be entertaining this.

I know Em likes him.

All I know is, it feels like

there's a freshwater eel

lodged in my esophagus.

(SIGHS)

KHAL: Problem is, she's trans.

And not that

that's a problem for me.

I'm just afraid

of the drama I could cause

if I ask her out.

I'll probably lose a friend,

and I doubt my parents

would understand.

So, what do I do?

(COMPUTER CHIMES)

Just explain your feelings

to your friend,

maybe they'll understand.

-(EXPLOSION IN GAME)

-No! That is so gay!

That is so gay.

KHAL: Mmm... Not an option.

MAN: Go for it.

Hey, love is weird.

Just make sure you like her

for who she really is.

That you don't see her

as an adventure

or a challenge for you.

KHAL: She would be

an adventure,

but not because she's trans.

Because her brain just works

in weird and beautiful ways.

She'd be a challenge

because...

Well, because she's just a lot

smarter than I'll ever be.

Anyway, babes, right.

No friendship lasts forever.

Your parents are gonna

have to be all right

with who you're with,

though, innit?

Ask her out. Do it.

Don't think about it. Do it.

WOMAN: This is how I see it.

Are you gonna live

your own life right now?

Or are you gonna do

what people expect of you,

and spend the rest

of your life wondering,

- "What if?"

- "What if?"

I think you should

give her flowers.

- What?

- The girl

- from your Reddit posts.

- I'm sorry.

- How did you know it was me?

- I use your tablet sometimes.

Look, you should really clear

your browser history.

- You little creep.

-(CHUCKLES)

Calm down. I'm just tryin'

to help you out, all right?

Look, I know it's kinda

cheesy, but hear me out.

Girls like flowers, right?

Yeah. I mean,

it's not a bad idea.

Okay!

Will you stop looking

at my browser history?

-Okay.

-Okay.

Oh. Uh, are you still worried

you'll get

erectile dysfunction

from watching too much porn?

Get out of my room!

SELDA: Hey!

ARWIN: Mom!

Khal hit me!

CHRIS: (MISPRONOUNCES)

"Mayor Caligiuri..."

Caligiuri.

"Mayor Caligiuri's

administration

"is now synonymous

with the first Renaissance.

"Cultural and

neighborhood development

"expanded Pittsburgh's

skyline, and..."

That's a tardy, Mr. Zuabi.

KHAL: Sorry, Mr. Alderdice.

CHRIS: "And it was declared

America's most livable city."

Yo, who the flowers for?

-Nobody.

-Dude, just tell me.

Hey, hey, hey.

-Chance? Masloff.

-Mmm?

-Oh...

-Now!

Uh, "Sophie Masloff

was the first woman to hold"

-"the post of Mayor..."

-(KHAL SIGHS)

Yo, who are the flowers for?

If I hear another word out

of turn, it will be your last.

-Continue.

-"...of Pittsburgh.

"Her administration

also was the first

"to suggest stadiums be built

for the city's sports teams,

"although her vision

would not be implemented

"until years later."

-Dude.

-Who are they for?

-Em! They're for Em.

-(CHUCKLES)

TEACHER: Kelsa. Murphy.

KELSA: "Mayor Tom Murphy's

leadership led

"to a building boom dubbed

as Renaissance 3,

"which reappropriated

industrial land,

"transforming the eco...

the economic base...

"from steel to medicine,

finance, and technology."

(CHRIS CLEARING THROAT)

-(PHONE VIBRATING)

-(CHRIS CLEARING THROAT)

-(TEACHER CLEARS THROAT)

-Uh... (CHUCKLES)

Um...

"This shift

would be the catalyst

"for the city's resilience

"during the 2008 recession,

and its..."

Uh...

(STUTTERS)

"...selection for, um...

"for, uh, O... for...

"for O... Obama's G20 summit,

which posed the question..."

Everybody.

STUDENTS:

"How did Pittsburgh do it?"

Great.

Hi.

Hi, Em. H... How's it going?

Actually, I've been feeling
kind of sad, you know.

Seasonal affective disorder.

It... It's October,
and it's warm outside.

I don't know, I could use
a little whiff of spring.

See ya.

See... See ya.

EM: Hey, Otis.

OTIS: Hey, Em.

Yes, sir! That's my boy!

(TYPING)

(ON PHONE) Go for Arwin.

Okay, so I may have messed
things up big time.

-She didn't like the flowers?

-I don't know, man.

Word got around
that they're for Em Vaughn.

So?

So, both of them
probably know by now,
and if I give Kelsa
the flowers,
all girly hell's
gonna break loose.

(SIGHS)

I'm just gonna

give them to Em.

Jeez.

Can you believe this guy?

-I know.

-Yeah, what a loser.

This is classic Khalid.

You're so concerned

about pleasing everyone

that you forget to look out

for numero uno.

I don't wanna hurt anyone.

Uh, news flash, bro.

In this life,

you're gonna hurt people.

And if you try

to please everyone,

you're just gonna end up

hurting the ones

that matter most.

-Do you like Em?

-No.

-Do you like Kelsa?

-Yeah.

Then don't be

a perpetually passive pussy,

and give her the flowers!

Yeah, don't be a pussy,

Khalid.

Don't be a pussy.

Hey. Arwin,

give me your phone.

I'm using my calculator.

This is Language Arts.

(SCOFFS)

Why is your generation
so resistant to technology?

I'm 25, Arwin.

EM: Oh, my gosh.

Did you see him?

He's so nervous.

It's adorable.

There's this cute little spot.

So romantic.

I think dinner and a movie...

Oh, that's

kind of expensive...

(KHAL SIGHS)

Uh, these are for... for you.

(SCOFFS)

-Oh, shit.

-(SIGHS)

(SOMBER MUSIC PLAYING)

(GIRL MURMURS)

(SCOFFS)

(SIGHS)

(PHONE VIBRATES)

GIRL: Someone's crying

in the bathroom.

-Oh, my God. Who?

-Em Vaughn.

(SIGHS)

Oh, my God.

Bro, you gave

the flowers to Kelsa?

-She's a dude, you know.

-I have to go, dude.

(SCOFFS)

(AVANT-POP SONG PLAYING)

(STUDENTS CHATTERING)

(AVANT-POP SONG CONTINUES)

Hi.

Hi.

So, uh, did you like

the flowers?

Ow. Ow!

What the hell, Khal?

-What?

-(SIGHS)

You really did that

in front of Em?

If you're trying to prove

you're not nice,

congratulations.

I'm not trying

to prove anything.

Khal, Em likes you.

Yeah, well,

I like... like you.

She was right there!

Well, then, all right,

if you don't like me,

just tell me.

I still wanna be your friend.

If you don't wanna be friends,

we can, you know...

I didn't say that.

So, you just wanna be friends?

I didn't say that either.

(SIGHS)

They're wildflowers,

by the way.

Yeah, I noticed.

Yeah, 'cause, you know,

didn't wanna get you

something typical, you know?

(CHUCKLES) I like you.

You do?

But you've really made a mess.

Okay, yeah. I'm sorry.

You know what?

What?

Let's just go in there.

Together.

I mean, come on,

you're gonna lose your friend.

I'm for sure

gonna lose my friends.

So, what do you wanna remember

from high school?

We could live our own life,

right now,

or do what people expect of us

and (SIGHS) spend the rest

of our life wondering,

"What if?"

(KELSA CHUCKLES)

Yes!

(CHUCKLES)

(UPLIFTING MUSIC PLAYING)

(STUDENTS CHATTERING)

-BOY: Come on. Come on!

-(GIRL GIGGLING)

(IN BRITISH ACCENT)

In a daring move,

the human mates publicly

display their affection.

Will their colony accept them?

(DRAMATICALLY)

Or will there be carnage?

-(YELLS)

-Doing the most.

Uh, this is me.

Okay. Um...

I will, uh... (CHUCKLES)

-Bye.

-Bye.

Yo, dude, what's happening?

(CHUCKLES)

-(SIGHS)

-Are you gay?

-No.

-Because you can tell me

-if you're gay.

-I would.

-I'd accept you.

-Really?

But I can't

if you're in denial...

Okay. Whatever, Otis.

(SCOFFS)

(PHONE KEYS CLACKING)

(SCHOOL BELL RINGS)

(BALLAD PLAYS ON PHONE)

-30 seconds.

-30 seconds?

GIRL: For real,

it was 30 seconds.

(EM SIGHS LOUDLY)

(SCOFFS) Mmm, all right.

So, I feel like it's normal

to be, like, upset.

But I can't believe

that she would actually

-be like flip-flop.

-I know.

I mean that's just...

Are you kidding me?

KELSA: I mean,

can you blame her?

-CHRIS: Yes. I can.

-(CLEARS THROAT) Hey.

-(CHUCKLES)

-Hello.

So, you've officially set

the school on fire.

(CHUCKLES DRYLY)

(SUCKS TEETH) Great.

Bye, lovebirds.

(LAUGHS)

So, how's it going?

Um...

It's going.

Yeah? Uh...

-So, I was thinking maybe...

-Maybe we should...

Sorry. You go.

(CHUCKLES)

No, it's okay.

No, really.

I want you to go first.

KELSA: Maybe we should

go on a date.

KHAL: I was thinking

we should go on a date.

(BOTH LAUGH)

So... yeah.

So...

-yeah.

-(KELSA LAUGHS)

(ELECTROPOP SONG PLAYING)

(PHONE KEYPAD CLACKING)

(INHALES DEEPLY)

(HOLDS BREATH)

(STIFLES LAUGH)

(BOTH EXHALE HEAVILY)

(ELECTROPOP SONG CONTINUES)

KHAL: So, this is the Phipps.

KELSA:

Well, evolution's crazy.

I mean, we think we're

genetically superior to, like,

sea cucumbers but we're not.

We just evolved

to successfully procreate

in different environments.

Um, no. Humans are superior

because we're, you know,

genetically modified

by reptilian aliens.

Uh... Oh!

Okay, so you got
some conspiracy theories.

-Mmm-hmm.

-Uh-huh.

Well, did you know
that the government
made selfies popular
to build
a facial recognition software?

KHAL: Oh, yes.

I was convinced my parents
were New World Order spies.

So, naturally, I just
put glass in their soup.

-You did not.

-I did. If they were lizards,
they would have eaten it.

No problem.

(KELSA LAUGHS)

I didn't know
you were so weird.

It's so nice in here. Wow.

KHAL: Very flowery.

So, how are things with Em?

(LAUGHS) Not good.

Uh, I actually
broke out in hives
just from feeling so guilty.

Well, at least

Chris took your side.

Yeah. Yeah. Um...

You know, Em told her
to never talk to me again
and Chris was like,
"That's stupid."

Wow. Yeah, totally.

Yeah, yeah.

Uh, what about you and Otis?

Uh... Things are weird.

KELSA: Mmm.

KHAL: And I've been
realizing, like,
he would always say these,
just, like, messed up things
and I just,

I wouldn't say anything.

Like, why?

Why didn't I say anything?

'Cause we were

"Khal and Oates."

That's not even my name,
you know?

(CHUCKLES) Wait.

It's not?

What's your full name?

Khalid.

(KELSA CHUCKLES)

Uh...

Why did you shorten it?

Because people can't pronounce
the "Kh" sound.

They say it like "Khal-eed."

(CHUCKLES)

Khalid? Like, you're

-young, dumb and broke?

-Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Okay, okay. I get that a lot.

And no disrespect to Khalid,

but it is a completely

different name.

(BOTH CHUCKLE)

Sounds like a hard life.

It is!

And then meanwhile, my brother

gets the freaking Anglo name.

What's his name?

Arwin.

-Arwin?

-Mmm-hmm.

Sounds like

a serial killer name.

It does. Honestly, yes,

I would not be surprised.

Oh, well... (CHUCKLES)

Okay, well,

I'm gonna call you Khalid.

Did I say that right?

Eh...

-No?

-No.

Khalid?

Close enough.

Say it with me. Khalid?

Khalid.

Okay, I'll get it right later.

Yeah, hopefully.

Point is,

I'm gonna get it right,

because names

are what makes us unique,

right?

I thought it was only animals.

No.

To people too.

Wow.

By the way,

I like what your name means.

(CHUCKLES)

How'd you know that?

There's this

very cool new website.

It's called, um, Goggle?

KELSA: Oh, okay.

KHAL: Yeah.

KELSA: Gotta check that out.

KHAL: Yeah.

(KELSA CHUCKLES)

KELSA: So,

did you find anything else?

Yeah. Um...

Your videos.

Were they supposed

to be secret or something?

No, no. Um...

Well, from my mom.

But if one person

finds my videos

and comes to

understand themselves better,

that's awesome.

But no one at school

has seen them.

No, 'cause that's,

like, my trans stuff.

It's different in real life.

So, like, um,

you don't want people

in real life to talk about you

and say,

"Oh, my trans friend this,

"my trans friend that."

Or is that not it at all?

No, that's...

that's exactly it.

And in my videos, I can

just say what I'm thinking
without people trying
to protect me or something.

In real life,

I just wanna be Kelsa.

Well, you're Kelsa to me.

(CHUCKLES)

MAN: So, I've been thinking,

I wanna get away.

I wanna go on a trip...

Wow. Hi. How are you, people?

Come on.

(SIGHS) Okay...

(R&B SONG PLAYING)

KELSA: Come on. (CHUCKLES)

Oh, my gosh.

(BIRD CHIRRING)

(KELSA LAUGHS)

(PARROTS SQUEAKING)

KHAL: Oh, God!

I'm literally doing this

for you. That's it.

KELSA: This was your idea,

first of all.

-KHAL: Oh, my gosh.

-(LAUGHS)

You have three birds.

(KELSA CHUCKLES)

(BIRD CHATTERS)

Thank you for taking me.

Of course. (CHUCKLES)

KELSA: (SIGHS)

I don't wanna go home.

I have to go work
on my college essay.

KHAL: Same. I have no idea
what I'm gonna write it on.

I'm sure that's not true.

Okay, well, then,
maybe I don't want to.

Like, go to college
or take the whole
classic route anyway.

Then don't.

What do you wanna do?

Art school?

No, not necessarily
art school.

Okay, then tell me.

-Okay!

-(LAUGHS)

Maybe, like, study a trade.

Okay.

So, there's this thing...

Um, it's called
Computer-Aided Drafting.

-Mmm-hmm.

-Where you, like,

design things for real life.

Okay?

So, like, look around.

Every nut and bolt and bench

and I don't know, handrail,

like, someone thought about it

-and created it.

-Yeah.

So it's like,

why create paintings

and sculptures

when you can just create life?

Is that super random?

I don't think so.

I mean, your life doesn't have

to look like anybody else's.

It's your you.

-It's my me?

-(LAUGHS)

Yeah, it's your you.

(CHUCKLES) Okay.

I mean, take it from me.

Oh, wow.

Holding hands, round two.

I mean, since you won't

start it, I'mma do it.

-I'm a dignified coward.

-Okay? (LAUGHS)

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC PLAYING)

Okay.

Okay.

Um, this is my house.

Yeah. Um...

Bye.

-Bye.

-(BOTH CHUCKLE)

(CHUCKLES AWKWARDLY)

(LAUGHS)

Why are we so awkward?

Uh, I don't know.

Okay.

All right. Well, see ya.

(BOTH CHUCKLE)

Um, wait.

You wanna make out?

Um...

-Yes, yes, I do.

-(LAUGHING)

(LIGHT MUSIC PLAYING)

(KELSA LAUGHS)

-(KELSA LAUGHS)

-(KHAL GRUNTING)

-Okay.

-Oh, shit.

-You okay?

-(LAUGHING) Yeah, I'm fine.

Oh, my God. Um...

Okay. So embarrassing.

KHAL: (SOFTLY) Wow.

Okay.

Um, I should probably
actually go this time.

Yeah, you probably...
probably should.

-All right. Bye.

-(BOTH CHUCKLE)

Bye.

(SIGHS DEEPLY)

SELENE: (MOUTH-FULL) Mmm. Yum.

-I outdid myself.

-(KELSA CHUCKLES)

I didn't hear

from you all day.

What's going on with you?

Sorry, sorry. I, um...

I went on a date.

-With a boy.

-What?

So, um...

I think I have...

a girlfriend.

Pesaram , that's very nice.

You went on a date?

Why didn't you tell me?

Because you were

gonna make it weird

like you are now.

Well... (YELPS)

What's her name?

Kelsa.

Good.

SELDA: You know her, Arwin?

Uh, yeah.

She's a...

a pretty cool girl.

(OTHERS CHUCKLE)

-SELDA: That's nice, maman.

-Yeah.

What's his name?

Did you talk about...

-Oh. Law of averages, okay?

-Okay.

-Okay.

-(LAUGHS)

Can you tell me anything?

Anything.

(BOTH LAUGH)

Oh, my God.

Lord, help me.

-That tells me everything.

-(LAUGHING)

In other news, I'm thinking
about staying in Pittsburgh

-for college.

-Okay. Carnegie Mellon?

Uh, yeah, no. More like

Pittsburgh Technical College.

-(CUTLERY CLINKS)

-(SELDA CLEARS THROAT)

Look, y'all,

it's a 2-year program.

I... I can stay home.

I can forego student loans...

That's your dream?

Come on.

SELDA: Khalid, I know

you think you're being smart,

but you really need to go

to a 4-year college.

You need that degree, baby.

I don't need to go

to a 4-year university.

And look, if I need to,

I will transfer.

-(SASAN CLEARS THROAT)

-You know, go when I'm 35.

-Oh.

-(SASAN CLEARS THROAT)

It's my me.

It's your what?

(UPBEAT POP SONG PLAYING)

(YELPS)

Okay. Oh, God.

-How was the date? Huh?

-Okay.

Chris, this is the girls'...

-Did you try anything funny?

-Yes.

I made her laugh.

Oh! You got jokes, huh?

Oh, my God.

Listen here...

guy.

You might think

you're a very special boy,

but you're not.

There are a lot of men who are

attracted to trans women,

but when it gets down to it,

they're not down to get to it.

Yeah, well,

it's not like that, okay?

Your friend is dope,

and that is all

there is to it.

Okay.

Okay.

I didn't peg you for the type.

Yeah, 'cause I'm not.

But prove me wrong

and I'll skin your face

and wear it like a mask.

Do you think I'm scary?

Yeah, yeah. Yes, I do. Yeah.

So, I know I said I didn't

want a boyfriend, but...

Okay, wait. I said

I don't need a boyfriend,

and I don't.

But there's something

I realized recently

that's literally so obvious.

Not everything

is about gender.

Cis people don't talk

about gender all the time.

They literally

just take for granted

that they are who they are.

So why should I?

Why do I have to talk

about gender all the time?

Like, literally,

let's talk about dating.

Sure, there's

some gender involved,

but it's really

just two people.

Like, I was so worried

about someone not wanting to

be with me because I'm trans

or only wanting to be with me

because I'm trans.

And you know, I started
dating someone recently,
and it's not
even about all that.

This guy's fire.

He just gets me.

I don't have to be strong
around him.

I don't have to be brave.

I can just... be.

It feels good
to get this off my chest.

I can't really talk about this
with my best friend.

Between you and me,
she's going through
some major boy issues.

-No!

-CHRIS: This heart! This heart

-breaks back, bitch!

-(GUN CLICKING)

KELSA: Mike dumped Chris
out of nowhere.

It was brutal.

But, you know, she's coping.

Trans, cis or whatever.

None of us are safe from love.

Is that hideously cheesy?

I don't care.

KHAL: Hey, Reddit.

I noticed you've been asking
for an update, so here it is.

As predicted, there was,
you know,
a little bit of drama.

(KHAL SIGHS)

(KHAL CLEARS THROAT)

My best friend,
let's call him "Oates,"
is giving me
the cold shoulder.

I guess he's still mad
that I don't buy
into his messed-up way
of seeing the world.

(PHONE CHIMES)

(PHONE KEYPAD CLACKING)

I guess part of growing up
is having to leave
some friends behind.

Despite all that, I am proudly
dating a trans girl.

I stand by my decision,
and I've kinda
never been happier.

(CHUCKLES SOFTLY)

(KEYBOARD CLACKS)

(MELLOW MUSIC PLAYING)

(BIRDS CHIRPING)

Honestly, Mike can do
so much better.

GIRL: I heard they were
getting back together.

You know why
they broke up, right?

No, why?

She was poking holes
in their condoms.

GIRL: Shut up!

EM: Uh-huh. (LAUGHING)

GIRL: Oh, girl. No.

Okay, you know
that's not true.

Can you stop stalking us?

Can you stop
with the rumors about Chris?

Is it really a rumor
if it's true?

KELSA: It's not true.

Oh, well, you should know.

You're her friend.

Oh, I forgot. You don't give
a shit about your friends.

-Apparently, you don't either.

-Oh, okay.

-Get off me.

-EM: Ow! (YELPS)

-KELSA: Oh, my God, Em!

-What's your problem?

-I'm sorry! I'm sorry, Em!

-EM: Get away from me!

KELSA: What...

I'm sorry!

Em, I'm sorry.

What? Em.

-Em!

-Okay...

Em, I'm sorry!

Em!

-Em!

-Shut up!

You broke my finger!

(SIGHS)

(SIGHS)

Ow.

Do you have any painkillers?

They gotta be strong.

Something that'll

really zonk me out.

This is a high school.

We have chamomile tea.

Ugh, fine.

(DOORBELL DINGS)

SELENE: Kelsa!

Company's here.

Hi.

-Um, I'm Khalid.

-SELENE: I know.

Khal or Khal.

Come on in.

KHAL: Hi.

SELENE: Hi.

Take your coat off.

Stay a while.

Kelsa will be down shortly,

and I'm just

getting through this

so I can get to the hospital.

Uh, is everything okay?

Oh, everything's fine. I just

have to go check on a patient.

-I'm on call.

-Ah.

You could just put your coat

down on a chair or something.

-Cool.

-Don't worry about that.

(CHUCKLES)

Can I help you with this?

Well, sure.

Thank you.

Yeah.

I'm really

just hanging out here

'cause I was trying

to give you the whole

"Don't hurt my daughter"

speech,

but you seem so nice.

Thank you.

That is very kind of you.

You know where

you're going to college?

No. I'm just kinda, you know,

blindly throwing darts

everywhere.

Hmm. Well, Kelsa is going to

-a more heterogeneous city...

-Someone say my name?

(LAUGHS) Guess I did.

-(KELSA LAUGHS)

-Look at those jeans.

But I keep telling her

there's no place safer

than right here

at home with me.

KELSA: Mom, law of averages.

SELENE: Fine, fair enough.

Wait, what is that?

It's just this rule we have

where I'm not allowed

to ask her anything

that the average mom

won't ask the average girl.

-KELSA: Mmm-hmm.

-(PHONE CHIMES)

SELENE: I really gotta go.

It's so nice to meet you,

Khal-eed.

-Yeah.

-It's Khalid.

-What is it?

-KELSA: Khalid.

-Khalid?

-Mmm-hmm.

You're both failing,

but that's okay.

-(SELENE LAUGHS)

-KELSA: You know what? Okay.

Okay, I'm out.

Which might make you feel

like you're home alone,

unsupervised.

But you're not.

Because I have cameras.

Everywhere.

Strategically placed.

Behind you.

In front of you.

Always

watching you.

So you're never

really unsupervised.

Bye.

Bye. (LAUGHS)

(DOOR CLOSSES)

(SIGHS) Anyway.

Okay. Does... Does she
actually have cameras?

No!

(SENTIMENTAL MUSIC PLAYING)

-CHRIS: Yo, bitch.

-(KNOCKING)

Why aren't you
answering my texts?

-Hello!

-Oh, my God.

-Okay!

-Go away!

I'm sorry!

Did I interrupt something?

Go!

I just saw your mom
on the street,
so you're getting nasty
already?

Get out!

-I see you.

-KELSA: Go to the car!

-CHRIS: Okay, okay, okay.

-Oh, my God.

(SIGHS)

(KHAL SNICKERING)

That is so awkward.

(SNICKERS)

(BOTH SIGH)

Sorry, she's...

she's a lot. Um...

(NERVOUSLY) Did you like that?

What?

Um...

Was everything okay?

Oh... Yeah. (CHUCKLES) Yeah.

Yeah, that wasn't anything

that I didn't like.

Well, then...

what do you like?

Um...

I don't know yet.

Is that okay?

Look, I'm attracted

to all of you.

You're beautiful.

(SOFT MUSIC PLAYING)

(CHUCKLES LIGHTLY)

Okay, so, question.

In 100 years,

when our granddaughters are

getting engaged to hot robots,

will you be

pro-robot-human marriage

or will you be against this

beautiful, beautiful union?

I'll be pro-robot marriage

because they don't smell

like boys do.

Wow, ouch,

that's a hurtful thing to say.

-What about you, Chris?

-I mean, okay. Um...

You know...

Against robot marriage.

Against human marriage.

I'd outlaw love in general.

-Just don't do it. Just don't.

-KHAL: Oh.

KELSA: Um... Chris, uh...

CHRIS: Hmm?

You good?

Tsk.

Yeah.

-Yeah.

-Yeah?

It's my Mike Chaplesky

exposure therapy.

It's all part of the process

to get over him.

Why did you guys break up?

'Cause I'm

an untouchable goddess

and he's a little shit dick.

Let's go!

(DANCE-POP SONG PLAYING
ON SPEAKERS)

(CHEERING AND LAUGHTER)

(LAUGHING) Ah...

Okay.

(KHAL LAUGHS)

Come on. (LAUGHS)

-(CROWD CHEERS)

-EM: Whoa!

Fingers!

-(LAUGHS)

-KELSA: You know what?

We're doing this right now.

-What?

-KELSA: Come here.

Okay.

What else do you want from me?

I've been trying to apologize,

but I get it.

I was never

supposed to like anybody.

You were allowed

to like whoever you wanted.

You chose to like

the guy I told you I liked.

You don't get to choose

who you like.

I definitely don't get
to choose who likes me back.
You should have chosen me.
Well, I didn't.
One time I put myself first.
And what? I gotta pay for that
for the rest of my life?
One time?
I've always had your back.
You don't even know what
I've had to give up for you.
But I never asked you
to give up anything.
We're supposed to be friends.
Yeah. You think...
What?
You think it's easy
being your friend?
Or boyfriend, for that matter?
Knowing Khal, he's only dating
you for the woke points.
KHAL: Kelsa!
(DANCE-POP SONG CONTINUES)
(BREATHES HEAVILY)
(KNOCK ON DOOR)
-KHAL: You okay?
-(SIGHS)
I'm fine.
(KHAL SIGHS)

(KHAL SIGHS)

Hello?

-Anything I can do?

-(SIGHS)

Forget it. It's...

It's trans stuff.

Yeah, well,

I can handle the trans stuff.

(CROWD CHATTERING)

Hey, quit flipping me off.

(CHUCKLES)

Why do you care?

I... Because, um,

I'm your boyfriend,

and you're trans.

What does me being trans

have to do with you

being my boyfriend?

Uh...

I don't need you

to save me, okay?

-Um, are you okay?

-I'm fine.

It's Kelsa Renard

who's got mental problems.

Oh, yeah,

I heard she stole your man.

She didn't steal my anything.

She's just a conniving bitch.

Oh, no, no. I get it.

I mean, she stole

my best friend. (SCOFFS)

(SIGHS)

You wanna get back at her?

I mean, listen, I'm pretty

liberal and everything,

but it sounds to me

like you were assaulted

in a space

meant for women only.

(DANCE-POP SONG CONTINUES)

It's our space.

A women's space.

And she brought her socialized

male energy into it.

And I'm okay with

her lifestyle, I really am,

but it stops being okay

when she enters our space

to assault us.

Remember when I said

not everything

is about gender?

Apparently, it is for me.

I got banned

from the women's locker room

and bathroom.

They're making me go to this

dingy, gender-neutral bathroom

that no one's cleaned

since the '90s.

Because when people

look at me,

all they see is gender.

It makes me never wanna

step out of this room again.

At least soon,

I'll be moving far, far away

where no one knows anything

about me, or who I am.

If you wanna help, here's how.

Don't.

Anyway, surviving high school.

Here's a tip.

Don't be trans.

(PHONE CHIMING)

ARWIN: Hey, Khal.

-Fratello!

-What are you doing? What?

I just wanted

to congratulate you, man.

Your girl went viral, dude.

What?

KELSA: (ON VIDEO) Remember

when I said not everything

-is about gender?

-Holy crap!

SELENE: Kelsa, get up!

-Get up.

-What?

What is this?

(ON VIDEO) When people look
at me, all they see is gender.

It makes me never wanna
step out of this room again.

SELENE: I'm waiting.

But, Mom, I didn't do this.

-You didn't film this video?

-I did.

But this was meant
to be personal.

Take it down, now.

I can't. Even if I do,

Get This

has posted it already.

It went viral.

It has 50,000 views.

How long have you been making
these videos, Kelsa?

-But Mom, law of averages.

-Answer the question!

How long have you been
making these videos?

Since I started

hormone blockers.

How many followers

do you have?

You mean how many subscribers

do I have?

How many people

have been tuning in

to watch your personal life?

Like, uh,

200?

Take the channel down now.

And you're not making

any more videos.

What? But yes, I am.

You can't do that.

Oh, yes, I can.

What you do with your body

is your business.

Yeah, it's my business,

and were you not trying

to get me to do

the same thing

for the college application?

What are you talking about?

That's different.

That's totally different.

Why? Because it's

on my terms and not yours?

Oh, the World Wide Web

-is on your terms now, Kelsa?

-Yeah.

-Delete the video.

-No!

SELENE: I will not have it.

KELSA: Oh, my God!

It makes me feel good.

Why can't you understand that?

How does it possibly

make you feel good?

Because I get to connect

with people like me.

And whatever psycho

wants to look at you.

-They're not psychos!

-I am not gonna have that!

They're not psychos!

SELENE: I'm not having

a conversation with you.

What are you doing?

Do you know

what a psycho looks like?

-KELSA: Do you? Do you know?

-What do you know?

When you figure it out,

you can have a computer back.

-This is not a question.

-Wait. Wait.

SELENE: All it takes is one,

Kelsa.

KELSA: Where are you going

with my computer?

SELENE: One psycho

to have access to you.

What? What are you doing?

You think this world is safe

because I've created a safe

and accepting

environment here.

KELSA: Safe? What's so safe?

This is not safe!

You keep me in a cage.

I'm just trying

to protect you!

Protect me? I don't need you

to protect me.

Not you. Not Khal.

You know what?

That's you. That's your shit.

Say "shit" to me one more time

in this house.

Say "shit" to me one more time

in my house.

The only reason why

you're trying to control me

is because Dad left

and now you wanna

overcompensate

because there's no

father figure in the house.

I don't need him. I got this!

I need you.

I need you

to help me protect you.

Or I can't do it.

So take it down! Or you ain't

going to nobody's college.

-What?

-Did you hear what I said?

(SCREAMS)

(SIGHS)

(SAD POP SONG PLAYING)

Walking outside

with no shoes on.

That's what you got me doing!

(SNIFFLES)

(PHONE CHIMING)

(IN UNISON) Hey, Khal!

Should we try it?

Yeah.

GIRL: Okay...

I don't know how to aim.

Bro, all I'm trying to say is,

there's really no reason

to separate sports

into guys and girls.

Why don't they do it according

to weight, or simply skill?

It's pure misogyny, bro.

Guys don't even want to have
the option of losing to women.

Hey, that's facts, my guy.

CHRIS: (ON MEGAPHONE)

We stand with Kelsa!

STUDENTS: We stand with Kelsa!

CHRIS: With Kelsa, we stand!

STUDENTS:

With Kelsa, we stand!

CHRIS: We stand with Kelsa!

STUDENTS: We stand with Kelsa!

CHRIS: With Kelsa, we stand!

STUDENTS:

With Kelsa, we stand!

We stand with Kelsa!

Do not use the bathroom

that aligns

with your gender identity!

(STUDENTS CONTINUE CHANTING)

CHRIS: Yo! Hey. Wait up.

What the actual hell?

What? You think

I'm gonna sit around

in the face of injustice

against my best friend?

Don't act like

you're not doing this

just to be the center of

attention, like you always do.

Wow. You're really coming

for me right now?

I'm doing this for you.

-I didn't ask you to.

-You didn't have to!

I'm your best friend.

You should have known better.

KHAL: Kelsa!

(STUDENTS CONTINUE CHANTING)

Kelsa!

KELSA: Move, please!

KHAL: Excuse me.

Would you slow down?

Look, would you

just talk to me?

What do you want from me?

Everyone is helping you!

I literally

just wanna live my life.

-LIBRARIAN: Shh!

-You said you wanted

to make a difference

with those videos.

KELSA: So you did post it.

That's not your call.

-You said only one person...

-Silence in the lab, please.

-Khal, stop.

-Look. Okay, please, tell me.

I don't need you
to save me, okay?
Have you not been
paying attention?
Well, you don't talk to me!
Look, I just
wanted to help you.
Excuse me!
That's all I wanted.
I lost my friends for you.
Whoa, whoa, whoa.
I never asked for that.
I never asked for the flowers.
Do you want a "Thank you"?
What do you want?
Just back up.
Kelsa!
That's the thing
about being nice.
You think you're so special
going around
helping everybody,
but really
you just wanna show off
how morally superior
you think you are.
Go back to Otis.
You two deserve each other.

(STUDENTS EXCLAIMING)

KHAL: Kelsa!

STUDENTS: We stand with Kelsa!

With Kelsa, we stand!

Okay, okay. Okay.

Protest over!

Traditional gender rules

reinstated.

KHAL: Kelsa!

Kelsa, what is happening?

Jesus!

OTIS: What's wrong, Khal?

You don't want

to suck him off?

What did you just say?

-What did you call her?

-Him.

-Remember? It's a "him."

-She's "her."

-And he has a mental disorder.

-No, she does not.

And you know what?

I think you do too.

Yeah, yeah. I think

you have a mental disorder.

No!

You do, you illiterate...

STUDENTS: Ooh!

(SCOFFS)

KHAL: Okay.

OTIS: (GRUNTING) Ow! Ow!

-Hair! Let go!

-Hair! Hair!

My hair.

That hurts! That hurts!

OTIS: Yeah, what...

-This sucks!

-KHAL: You've got my hair!

-STUDENTS: Oh!

-Enough!

That's enough!

Stop! Break it up!

(PANTING)

What is going on?

Otis?

Khal?

(STUDENTS MURMURING)

KHAL: Move!

(DOOR CLOSES)

(SASAN CLEARS THROAT)

What? What's going on?

Otis's mother called

saying you two fought.

He came home with a black eye.

I knew there was

something off about you,

so we searched

your Internet history.

-Why would you do that?

-SELDA: Hormones,

laser hair removal...

-Oh, my God!

-...sex change surgeries?

You are gonna live

such an unhappy life.

I'm not gonna live

an unhappy life.

I will live a fruitful life.

-Are you transgendered?

-No!

My girlfriend is.

SASAN: Huh.

I told you. He's just gay.

Oh, my God.

(SASAN SIGHS)

(KNOCK ON DOOR)

Khalid?

(SELDA SIGHS)

Khalid.

What?

Talk to me.

I'm just...

I'm sick of it.

I'm sick of people

calling me gay or crazy...

when they're the ones

who are just wrong about her.

Stop.

You don't have to explain

anything to me.

I understand.

(SIGHS)

You've always been so kind.

I know you don't like to

hear that, but you are kind.

That's always been

who you are.

And that's why...

you see this girl

for who she really is.

Welp, it is too late anyway.

She broke up with me.

Then she has bigger problems.

'Cause she's an idiot.

(KHAL CHUCKLES)

(SELDA LAUGHS)

Oh.

(SELMA SNIFFLES)

(SOMBER POP SONG PLAYING)

-(SCHOOL BELL RINGING)

-(STUDENTS SAYING GOODBYES)

Look, I support you.

I accept everybody's

self-expression.

But what I cannot tolerate

is a bully.

Now, I don't understand why

we're rallying for the bully.

Why are we protecting

the bully,

and not the bullied?

I don't think that'

what's happening here...

Please, let her finish.

Frankly, I'm just a little

bit concerned as a feminist.

I don't understand

how my daughter

is gonna feel safe

in single-sex spaces

if you just open the door

to anyone who wants

to come inside?

Oh, my God.

You are not a feminist.

Unless you are advocating

for a safe space

for everyone's daughter,

you are not a feminist,

you are full of shit.

EM'S MOM:

Well, you are rude and loud.

And you know what?

I'm not gonna

let you make me out to be

some narrow-minded woman

right now.

To be clear,

my concern is my daughter.

I'm here to protect

my daughter.

SELENE: You are a danger

to your daughter

with that attitude.

She is not free until all of

our daughters are free.

-Free?

-I don't know how

-you don't understand that.

-Oh, my gosh.

-This is not some sort of...

-I don't know what is wrong...

Martin Luther King

moment here.

...with my own people...

My child has a broken finger!

...and the inability

to understand...

-Your child is a bully.

-...that you are not safe

and you are not free

until my child is.

EM'S MOM: My child is the one

that wasn't safe!

You know what, you're excused.

She's excused.

And you will not ban
my daughter
from that locker room.

It is illegal.

It's not illegal when,
unfortunately,
there was actually an assault.

I know optically
it's not ideal,
but I can't have them together
in an unsupervised space.

-Are you kidding me?

-So are we done here?

No, we're not.

EM'S MOM: Yes, we are.

Come on. Let's go.

She didn't assault me, okay?

-That's stupid.

-EM'S MOM: What? Honey...

(SIGHS) I broke my finger
on accident.

I made this up
because we were fighting.

-Is this true?

-EM'S MOM: Emberlee. Please.

EM: No, please.

Can you just stop

-telling me what to think!

-You do not have to
defend her. I don't want
you to say something

-you're gonna regret.

-Mom!

Why don't we call
the student mediation team?

Why would we call
the student mediation team?

She just admitted
that this has been a lie.

-Okay.

-Listen, my daughter...

We're sitting here
for no reason.

-Like we have nothing...

-Shut up! Can I talk?

I... (SIGHS)

I don't think like that.

I don't.

I don't think like you.

(SIGHS) Whoever jumped out
of me that day...

That's not me. Or at least

I don't want it to be.

I'm sorry.

-Goodbye.

-EM'S MOM: Bye.

Always good to see you.

All right.

Thanks.

Thanks for everything today,
but you didn't have to.

All I wanna do
is be here for you.

I get that,
but I don't want you to feel
like you have to protect me
just because Dad refused to.

Kelsa.

The mess between me
and your dad,
you can't think that's because
of you and being trans.

I mean, yeah, of course it is.

I was such a burden
on you both
that your marriage
just couldn't take it.

You know our relationship
was cracking
long before any of that.

And I was
what finally broke it.

Mom, it's fine.

This is just what happens
when you're trans.

My relationship

couldn't take it either.

Like, it just is what it is.

Kelsa, no. Look at me.

Look at me.

Our relationship fell apart

for a million reasons

that had everything to do

with me and him

and nothing to do with you.

Nothing.

You are the one thing

we got right!

And what's happening now,

with him not choosing

to be in your life,

that is his mistake.

That is his choice, his loss.

But I choose you.

I choose you.

Who you were then.

Who you are now.

Law of averages!

Law of averages is a fallacy.

It's not real.

You can say it

as many times as you want to,

but you are not average.

You are exceptional.

You are my incredibly

exceptional,

beautiful daughter!

And what is unique about you

does not make you

hard to love.

For anyone

that is worthy of you,

you are the easiest thing

to love in the world.

Do you hear me?

Come here.

Oh, girl.

I'm so sorry.

But I'm not sorry

about that video, girl.

You can't put that back up.

I...

I took down my channel,

so yeah. (CHUCKLES)

(SNIFFLES)

Keep it down.

You have a few months

before you leave for college.

Make the most of it.

(SIGHS)

(R&B SONG PLAYING)

(EXHALES HEAVILY)

(PHONE CHIMES)

(R&B SONG CONTINUES)

Hey.

Wow. Are those for me?

Yeah. Yeah.

-Okay.

-(BOTH CHUCKLE)

No one's ever

got me flowers before.

Yeah, um, someone did it

for me once.

It was a lot,

and also it was,

like, the best thing ever.

-Listen, I'm sorry about...

-KELSA: So, like, I...

-(CHUCKLES)

-KHAL: I had this,

-like, big old speech...

-You know, we don't have to...

Oh, okay. Um...

(CHUCKLES)

Why are we so awkward?

(LAUGHS)

Uh...

-(SIGHS)

-(KELSA CHUCKLES)

(LAUGHS)

(R&B SONG CONTINUES)

(IN BRITISH ACCENT) The human

male courts the female

through the green abyss
in a courting ritual,
hoping to get back
together as mates,
and now thanks to this new
Planet Earth technology,
we can finally witness
this rare phenomenon!

(R&B SONG CONTINUES)

(SIGHS)

KHAL: Hey, Reddit.

I know it's been a few months
since you've heard from me
and because
you clearly can't seem
to get enough
of my personal life,
here is one last update
for you all.

KELSA: I can't look.

I can't look.

KHAL: You nervous?

KELSA: Yes, I'm nervous!

-KHAL: You should be.

-Why wouldn't I be nervous?

Hit it. Hit it.

All right.

I just did, but okay.

Here it is.

I think this is the one.

You said that

about the last seven times.

Yeah, well, Jesus. Just trying

to spread good energy.

Okay, okay.

I can't look. I can't look.

-Okay.

-(GROANS)

Oh, man. Um...

What?

(SIGHS) Your mom's

gonna be really bummed.

What?

You know,

that you got into UCLA.

Oh, my God!

On a partial scholarship!

Oh, my God!

-Yes!

-What?

KHAL: My girlfriend got into

the college that she wanted

because she's the greatest

mind of our generation.

And the future's looking

pretty good for me too

because my parents

finally came around.

-(SASAN CLEARS THROAT)

-Who knew?

What? What's happening?

You're staying home.

(ALL CHEERING)

SASAN: Congrats!

-Oh, my baby!

-KHAL: Thank you.

(LAUGHING)

-Congratulations.

-KHAL: No, no, no!

-Do not touch me.

-Get him, get him, get him!

ALL: River Point High!

(CHEERING)

KHAL: Graduation's

a strange concept.

You look around seeing faces

you'll probably

never see again.

And ones

you really hope you will.

Um, what else?

We spent pretty much every day

of the summer together.

Well, maybe not.

Yeah, no, every day.

-MS. KIDD: Welcome.

-Hey.

MS. KIDD: Entrez vous.

Hurry up. Come on.

KHAL: Thank you.

The place is all ours.

Welcome to the Warhol.

This is The Big C.

You know, my grandmother

and Andy's mother

went to the same church.

Grace Jones.

All of this.

This is Marsha P. Johnson,

Candy Darling...

Now, I met Candy Darling

at the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

Gently, darlings.

(KHAL YELLING)

-Go, go, go.

-(KHAL GRUNTING PLAYFULLY)

Easy, easy, easy.

Read the sign on the wall.

(UPBEAT POP SONG PLAYING)

KELSA: Well, my mom

finally decided

to give me back my computer.

So, I'm here to update you

on the latest.

I've always been so focused

on how to just survive,

but now I'm actually
thinking beyond that.
I can be soft and flawed.
I can make mistakes.
I can let myself go and trust
that people
will love me for me.
I'm actually excited
about what's to come.
For the first time in my life,
I truly feel
anything's possible for me.
KHAL: Our summer together...
was magical.
But we both knew
what came next.
Okay, so they're closing
in five minutes.
We supposedly
came here to talk,
so should we just do it?
Yeah.
Okay.
(BOTH CHUCKLE)
Talk mode.
-Talk mode.
-Um...
So, summer is ending soon.
I am aware of that, yeah.

Yeah. Uh...

So, what's gonna
happen with us?

Well, you wanna do
long distance?

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC PLAYING)

No.

KHAL: Yeah.

KELSA: Right?

Like, it would only be
about us meeting up
for Thanksgiving,
New Year's,
summer,
until one of us
meets someone else
and breaks
the other one's heart.

KHAL: Yeah, that sounds
very, very complicated.

KELSA: Yeah.

I feel like for the first time
in my life,
I can just exist
in this world.

And...

I know it's gonna be hard,
but I don't want
to just exist.

I need to find out
what else I'm capable of.

KHAL: I agree, yeah.

So, um...

Are we broken up then,

I guess?

KELSA: I'm gonna miss you

so much.

KHAL: Me too.

I'm gonna walk home alone

if that's okay?

Yeah, yeah.

I'm just gonna, you know,

stick around here.

Okay. Okay.

Kelsa, wait.

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC CONTINUES)

I love you.

I love you.

(BOTH CHUCKLE)

(BOTH LAUGH)

Okay.

Well, you know

since we're breaking up,

I don't wanna feel

like I missed anything.

Okay... (CHUCKLES)

I'm trying to think if,

you know, there's something

about you that I don't know.

Okay. I know what that is.

Okay?

What's your favorite animal?

Huh.

Believe it or not,

I don't know.

(CHUCKLES)

-I'd have to think about it.

-(BOTH LAUGH)

Um...

Okay.

(CHUCKLES SOFTLY)

(DOWNTEMPO MUSIC CONTINUES)

KHAL: Kelsa taught me

a lot of things.

And while

nothing is permanent,

I will always be grateful

for what we had.

And with that,

I am signing off.

GIRL: Come on,

let the master work.

Stop! I'll catch up in a bit.

BOY: See you over there.

(LAPTOP CHIMES)

(COMPUTER CHIMES)

Hello.

Um, don't mind
the new background.

I did move
into a college dorm,
and a little incident
last year
slightly upped
my subscriber count,
but don't worry.

I'm still me,
giving you the best
in slightly-above-par
trans YouTube content.

I was asked this question
a while ago
by someone I love.

And I think I finally
have the answer.

So, here we go.

(BIRD CALLING)

The marsh harrier
is a bird of prey
that makes its home
over fields and reed beds.

And it's known for its sharp
and precise hunting,
as well as its daring
courtship displays.

About two years

into their lifespan,
some males will undergo
a metamorphosis
which changes the color
of some of their feathers
from a foggy gray
to the creamy brown likeness
of the female.

So, I like to say
my favorite animal
is the marsh harrier
because of its magnificent
and unique sky-dancing antics.

But to myself, I can say,
"Look at that beautiful,
talented trans girl,
"and look how high she soars."

(UPBEAT SOUL SONG PLAYING)

(UPBEAT SOUL SONG CONTINUES)

Appendix 2

Dialogues and Semiotics from both Movies for FGD

1: Joyland

Scene 1

Qaisar: *Here comes the witch*

(Ay aa gai hay churail)

Auditions for her boys are in the back row

(Aidy background wasty audition hory nay)

Biba: *Why is everyone hiding from me?*

(Kyun meri wari sary mar Jandy nay)

Qaisar: *Where are you going?*

(Tu kithy challa ain)

Biba, *give us some privacy!*

(Biba sanu gal karan dy)

Won't you take your noise elsewhere, please?

(Kidry hor ja k rola paa ly)

Biba: *Why should I?*

(Kyun main kyun jawan)

I'll stand here.

(Main tay ithy hi khalowan gi)

Qaisar: *Well, sure.*

(Khaloti reh fir)

Biba: *No, tell me, do you own this place?*

(Nai das, main kyun jawan?)

Qaisar: *I'm sorry. Please stay.*

(Khaloti reh)

Biba: *Who is this handsome?*

(Ay kon ay cheesa?)

Qaisar: *My friend*

(Yar ay mera)

He is auditioning for a group, your back row dancers

(Tuady background dy audition wasti ly k ayan wan)

Biba: *For me?*

(Mery Laye?)

Qaisar: *yes – (Haan)*



Scene 2

Mr. Ishfaq: Beba, there's a problem with the sound.

Just go back

Beba: What is the problem with the sound? -

Mr. Ishfaq: You were so good!

Beba: What the hell is wrong with the sound?

Mr. Ishfaq: When you entered, didn't you hear the applause?

You were amazing!

Beba: Tell that to the dogs outside.

Mr. Ishfaq: Listen to me -

Beba: or to this bitch in there -

Shaboo: what did she say? -

Beba: It's not all your business, Shabu.

Mr. Ishfaq: Can you both keep calm?

There is an audience outside

...look at me

I picked six dancers for your back row

Should I call them?

Beba: No. Just call them tomorrow

Mr. Ishfaq: But -

Beba: Enough, Mr. Ashfaq!

Shaboo: Who wants to watch a transgender?



Scene 3

Mr. Ishfaq: *Peppa, was this all some stupid drama?*

Peppa, ay drama karan di ki lor si?

Biba: *Obviously I'm not coming to the stage to recite the Quran*

Zahir ay main kera ithy koi sipary parhan ayi aan.

Mr. Ishfaq: *I told you I couldn't afford your cut out*

Main tenu pehly hi kaya ayy main tera cutout afford nai kar sgda

Biba: *You know, Mr. Ashfaq...*

Tanu pata ay Ashfaq sb

Mr. Ishfaq: *Again, the same thing? –*

Tu fir ohi gal kry ja ri ayn?

Biba: *Can we talk inside?*

Assi andar ja k gal krye?

Mr. Ishfaq: *Why don't we talk here?*

Ithy ki ayy?

Biba: *I want to talk inside*

Main andar gal krni ay

What's the problem sir? I see you started ignoring me a while ago

Ki gal ayy Isfaq sb? tussi bilkul liftan nai krandy, tusi menu ignore kr ry ho

Mr. Ishfaq: *Biba, no.*

Biba nahi

Biba: *That's okay, really*

Koi gal nai sach

Mr. Ishfaq: *"Biba"*



Scene 4

Lady: You can't sit here

Tum yahan nahi beth sakti

This is the women's section

Ye aurton ka section hai

Go to the men's section

Mardon k section main chali jao

Sit There

Wahan ja k betho

Hello?

I'm talking to you

Tumhary sy kuch keh ri hon

You can sit down, but not here

Tum yahan nahi beth sakti

Go sit in the men's section, that's it

Mardon k section main chali jao

Are you deaf?

Tumhay samajh nai aa rhi meri baat ki?

Or do you speak a foreign language?

Ya meri zaban smjh nai aa rhi kiya?

what a weirdo

Ajeeb bat hai

Look how this boy sat

Daikho kesy ye larka beth gaya

beside her, they rub their knees together

Usky sath jur ky apas main guthny mila ry hain

yeah, everyone is now publicly vulgar

Han, hr koi ab publically behaya ho gya hai

Do whatever you want in your bedroom

Jo krna hai apny bedroom main ja k kro

At least not in front of our children

Kam az kam bachon k samny tou na krain

Look, she's laughing. She laughs

Daikho, wo hans rhi hai, hans rhi hai wo

Of course, all of these are new fashion

Zahir hai, ye sb ab naya fashion hai

They want the attention

Inko tawaja chahyes bs

that's why they do it.

Tabhi aisa krty hain



Scene 5

Qaisar: *What happened? Whose mother died?*

Tanu sariyan nu ki hogya ay, tuadi kerī koi maa mar gai ayy?

Hell, we were just telling jokes

Mazak kr ry aan ty asi ki koi ki kr ry aan

Biba: *And what was the joke?*

Ki Mazak si?

what was the joke?

Mazak ki si?

What's in my pants and under my shirt?

Meri shalwar chy ki ayy ty meri qameez chy ki ayy?

Was that your joke?

Ay tuady logan da Mazak si?

And you, have you lost your tongue?

Tu, teru mun chy zaban nai?

tell them

Bold nai

Why are you acting like a corpse?

Laash banya hoyā ain, das na inan nu

I never wondered what was in your pants

Main tay kadi nai socha tuadi shalwaran chy ki ay

or how small your penis is

ya teri kinni choti lulli ayy

Qaisar: *Watch your mouth, or I'll break your teeth*

Bothi bakwas nak r main tery dand bhan dainy ny

Biba: *Come! And try that with me*

Tu bhan mery dand, tu hath ty laa

And then watch me smash your fucking face!

Main tera mun tor dewan gi

I suggest we both take off his pants

Main ty kendi dono shalwaran landhy aan

So, everyone can see

Taky sary vikhan na

What you have got and what I have got!

Ky tery chy ki ay tey mery chy ki ayy

Qaisar: *Fuck off!*

Kam kr!

Biba: *Stay right here!*

Ithy reh!

Joke with me

Kar na mazak

You love joking right!

Bara tenu shoq ayy mazak karan da

Tell me a joke,

Mery naal kr

I'll tell you some good ones too!

Main tery naal mazak karan gi pora!





Anything's Possible

Scene 1

Kelsa: I've been thinking a lot

about dating, like,

whether or not I want to,

because, like, when exactly

am I supposed to disclose

that I'm trans?

(DISTORTED) Trans.

Trans.

Trans.

(SCREAMS)

(LAUGHS)

(CHUCKLES) Like, it's not

really a personal thing,

but it's also something

that just wouldn't

naturally come up.

And I'm not even worried

about harassment

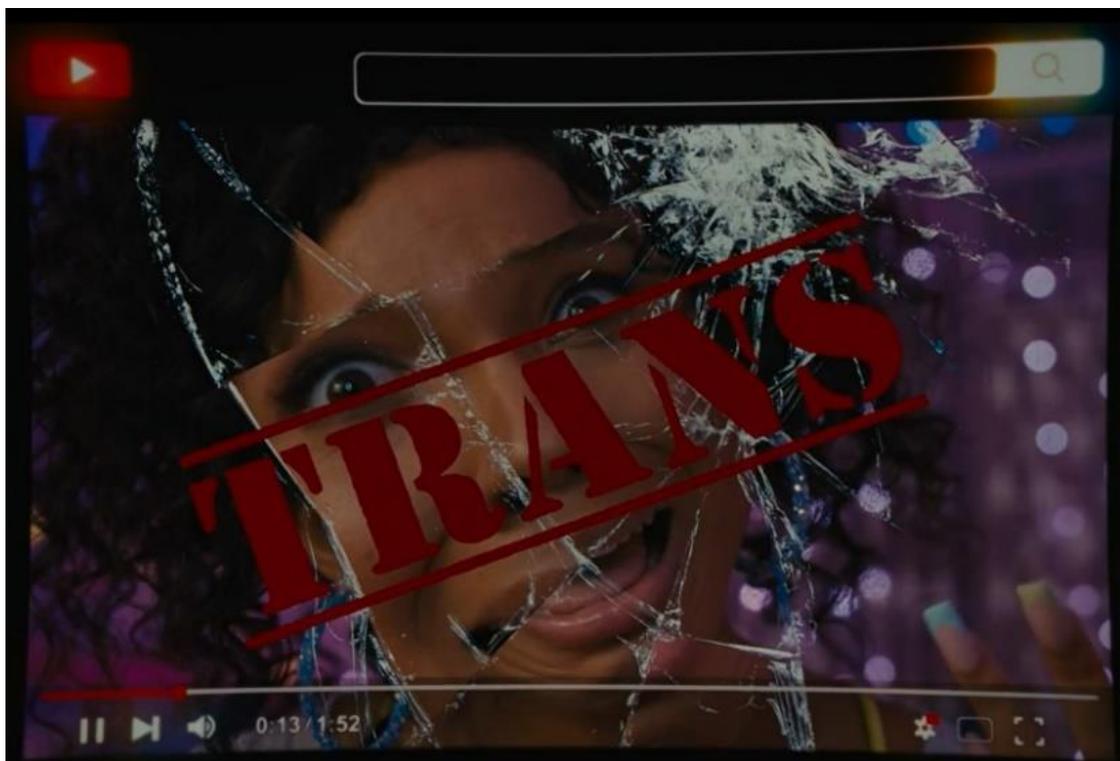
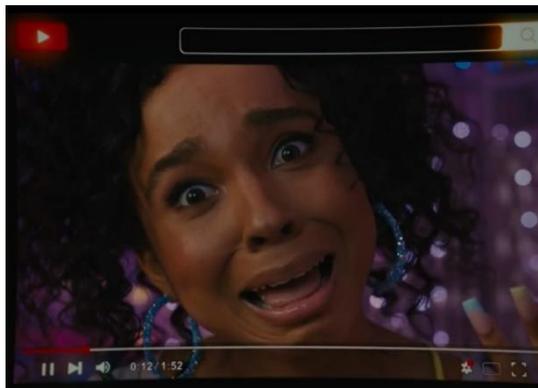
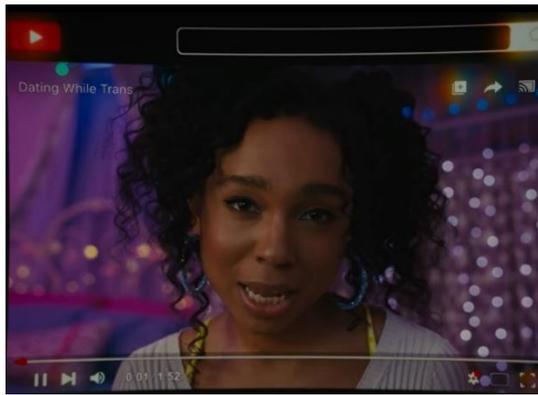
or anything like that.

I'm worried about people

only pretending to like me

because they wanna be woke

or something.



Scene 2

Khalid: *So, what do you wanna remember from high school?*

We could live our own life, right now,

or do what people expect of us and (SIGHS) spend the rest

"What if?" (KELSA CHUCKLES)

Yes! (CHUCKLES)

(UPLIFTING MUSIC PLAYING)

(STUDENTS CHATTERING)

-BOY: Come on. Come on!

(GIRL GIGGLING) (IN BRITISH ACCENT)

In a daring move, the human mates publicly display their affection.





Scene 3

Em: *It's our space.*

A women's space. And she brought her socialized male energy into it.

And I'm okay with her life style, I really am, but it stops being okay when she enters our space to assault us.

Kelsa: *Remember when I said not everything is about gender?*

Apparently, it is for me.

I got banned from the women's locker room and bathroom.

They're making me go to this dingy, gender-neutral bathroom that no one's cleaned since the '90s.

Because when people look at me, all they see is gender.

It makes me never wanna step out of this room again.



Scene 4

Kelsa: Thanks for everything today,

but you didn't have to.

Mother: All I wanna do

is be here for you.

Kelsa: I get that,

but I don't want you to feel like you have to protect me just because Dad refused to.

Mother: Kelsa, the mess between me and your dad, you can't think that's because of you and being trans.

Kelsa: I mean, yeah, of course it is.

I was such a burden on you both that your marriage just couldn't take it.

Mother: You know our relationship was cracking long before any of that.

Kelsa: And I was

what finally broke it.

Mom, it's fine. This is just what happens when you're trans.

Mother: Our relationship fell apart

for a million reasons that had everything to do with me and him and nothing to do with you.

Nothing!

You are the one thing we got right!



Scene 5

Kelsa: I feel like for the first time

in my life,

I can just exist

in this world.

And...

I know it's gonna be hard,

but I don't want

to just exist.

I need to find out

what else I'm capable of.



Appendix 3

Transcription of FGD

Particulars of Participants for focus group (Non-Linguists)

No	Name	Gender (m/f)	Age	Education
1	Mr. Glasses	M	24	MA Economics
2	Ms. Hijab	F	26	MA Islamiat
3	Mr. Coat	M	25	MBA
4	Mr. Cap	M	27	MS Physics
5	Mr. Beard	M	26	MSc E-Commerce
6	Ms. Orange	F	25	MA Education

Particulars of Participants for focus group (Linguists)

No	Name	Gender (m/f)	Age	Education
1	Ms. Faiza	F	28	MPhil Student
2	Mr. Tayyab	M	25	MPhil Student
3	Ms. Sumera	F	27	MPhil Student
4	Ms. Mamoona	F	26	MPhil Student
5	Ms. Rubab	F	30	MPhil Student
6	Mr. Hammad	M	29	MPhil Student

Comments of Focus Group Participants

Non-Linguists Views on 'Joyland'

Moderator: The title of the research is “Transgender in Popular Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Trans Representation in Pakistani and American movies”. The researcher has picked one Pakistani Movie ‘Joyland’ and the other movie is “Anything’s Possible”. Both movies are released in 2022, and both depict the female transgender. So, it is going to be a comparative analysis. s

From **scene one**, which gives the first appearance of transgender, what do you think, how is the transgender presented here? How is the character portrayed?

Miss. Hijab: The attire that she is wearing, is quite vulgar and may be the language she is using, is also very vulgar and very dominant.

Mr. Glasses: If this setting is in Lahore, so wearing such kind of dress is not I think appropriate in Pakistani context but she appears in so bold and so manly way, so there is an element of that gender mix up, which appears from the picture.

Miss. Hijab: And the element of smoking in this scene, it also shows that it is not common in Pakistan for women but she is smoking, which also shows the male prospect in her character.

Mr. Coat: Yes, from this scene, as per my understanding, I see this character wearing the dress just like a male person and the smoking style is just like a male person and the behavior is just like a male person. So, she is looking like a female but behaving like a male person. This is what I see.

Moderator: Alright, and as we see in scene two, the trans character is dancing but the sound is distorting, what do you interpret through that? How is the trans character being treated at the workplace?

Mr. Coat: No one is appreciating her, no one is clapping for her performance that’s why she was worried a lot and she moved away from the stage. And she is also given the chance in the interval not for the main performance.

Moderator: And you see the sound was distorted back stage. Don’t you think it was done on purpose?

Mr. Glasses: At the professional domains, even women are marginalized in this part of the world and for the transgender, life is, in the plight of their life is worse, even that they are not accepted in the role which men desire to see. They know that she is a transgender, so she doesn't win that much applause of the audience. And the lyrics chosen for her dance are once again reflecting the mindset that is prevailing in this part of the world that they are not at all worthy of being watched with family but in theatres such things, such vulgarity is going on and they have to sacrifice their self-honor in order to please a few. And even if you see her dress, she is wearing such sparkling lehnga of green color and half blouse, means she needs to show of some part of her body to attract the audience, still as the audience knows she is a transgender, they are not ready to accept her that way.

Moderator: So, the element of vulgarity is there which depicts that transgender are the symbol, they are the subject of vulgarity in Pakistan.

Miss. Hijab: Why transgender is always supposed to be dancing and is presented as a sexual object? Why are transgender characters supposed to be like this?

Moderator: If you just look back at the scene where 'Shabo' (the other lady) and the makeup artist are making fun of her saying 'Who would want o watch a tranny?' Do you think there is the element of social segregation here?

Mr. Coat: It shows that people see transgender characters as a subject of ridicule and are not ready to accept them the way the accept other genders. She is trying to please the audience by doing vulgar moves and making such body postures to attract the audience and gain some applause but at the back stage they just make the sound distorted that forces her to get off the stage.

Moderator: If you look at scene three, she is not getting the chance for her cut out. And the way she gets it forcefully, what kind of social treatment is done with 'Beba' (the trans character) at that very place?

Miss. Hijab: Inequality! She faced inequality and due to which she is quite depressed here. But she tries to manipulate that person through her physical appearance by touching Mr. Ishfaq and talking to her in privacy because she knows this is supposed to be done to attract a man in this patriarchal society and gain attention. This is the expectation from the society that is why she tries to attract that person or the audience

through physical touch but she still doesn't win that attention and faces inequality here and at the stage as well.

Mr. Glasses: This is once again the typical representation of the stereotypes attached with transgender. They don't have a life of their own and they are the incomplete human beings, specially in this part as far as I know. So, here every moment is kind of self-negation and living for others and the others never get to her expectations. So, this is a really sorry state of affairs in respect of gender treatment and gender division not only that but also women are used as play thing in such cases.

Moderator: And here we can see that earlier she refused to dance at the public events but after this whole scenario, she has no other choice but to call her other transgender friend and ask her for an event booking so that she can get some money. Do you think the element of social economy lies here?

Mr. Cap: Yes, we can say the major cause of discrimination is economic issues. She is struggling for money and even after refusing to dance at the public events, after being refused by Mr. Ishfaq, she is will to dance just to get some living for her.

Moderator: And why do you think about cigarette? What does it symbolize in this scene and in general when we see her smoking at many places in the movie?

Mr. Cap: Well, there are many connotations attached with smoking. If we talk about Beba here, as she is facing discrimination and cruel behavior from the society, she tries to calm herself by smoking cigarette. Cigarette symbolizes the source of stress relieving may be.

Moderator: If we talk about scene four, she is travelling in the orange train and is asked by the lady to move in the other section, what ideology or social treatment is represented here?

Miss. Orange: In this scene, the woman was not ready to sit with that transgender but when the man comes and sits with the lady, she is all comfortable and doesn't refuse or ask that man not to sit there and go to the men's section, which shows the clear inequality.

Mr. Glasses: Social unacceptance is very explicit, even their own parents don't own them and they have to come out and join different circles and actually the economic independence can help them. If there is surety and fixation of some jobs for them, I

think such problems can be mitigated. The overall mindset is being reflected here that the society, the woman, the aged woman, even she doesn't accept her and on the other side, the males are always ready to pounce and to advance towards them, so, this is again a very sorry state of affairs indeed.

Moderator: So, this shows the clear social unacceptance even at the public places, public space, they are not accepted as the lady was all comfortable sitting with the male but wasn't okay sitting with the trans character. This is an ironical situation.

Mr. Glasses: Another point to note is that Nadra has lately allowed them CNICs, otherwise they were always in search of their identities. But our society is still not ready to accept them and they are hanging in between the two genders that is not even their fault.

Moderator: Yes, and they are being the object of ridicule or sex as we can see in scene five, the boys are asking Hider about her biological orientation and making fun. What ideology or mindset is being depicted here?

Miss. Hijab: This clearly depicts that the transgender characters are taken as the subject of sexuality. They are treated as a sex object and for the pleasure for the males. They don't have a complete identity and have always been mocked at.

Moderator: So, you think the concept of commodity and sex object is there?

Miss. Hijab: Yes, that's so obvious. The males consider the transgender as the sex object only and as we see they start mocking Haider for his gender too. And in this scene the language, the tone that Beba has used symbolizes the masculine traits in her and it depicts the strongness in her that she is not ready to be mocked by such people and is ready to fight with anyone for gaining space for herself.

Non-Linguists Views on 'Anything's Possible'

Moderator: From scene one, we can say there is the concept of dating. What do you think, what hinders her doing so? And how is this character represented?

Miss. Hijab: She is more confident, brave and strong as compared to the Pakistani trans. She is more confident in what she wants and how she has to portray herself to the society and what are her demands, her desires, she is more confident about herself as compared to Pakistani trans.

Mr. Coat: This is the same thing I find that there are cultural differences and different brought up and I see she is much more confident as compared to Pakistani transgender. So, I think that as these are the cultural differences in understanding of the things and understanding of the ideologies, personalities, identities, the transgender community is more confident there in America. There can be much more training for transgender in Pakistan. That's what I think.

Miss. Hijab: I think Americans are more empathetic as compared to Pakistanis, means they have more acceptance towards transgender people as compared to Pakistanis.

Mr. Glasses: As compared to Pakistan, the situation is different in West, particularly in America. They have personal liberties as the top most element in their upbringing, that's why everyone, they don't have any kind of shyness and any kind of being marginalized. They can say things and that is why she is being vocal and confident about it.

Moderator: If we see in scene two, the way Khalid is holding Kelsa's hand, and the way Haider was hiding his relationship with Biba in Joyland, how do you interpret the social pressure handled by both male characters in these two movies?

Mr. Glasses: This is quite strange that people started noticing when they appeared in college holding hands and they started mocking and laughing, which shows that in America, there also transgender characters are facing some discrimination. In case of both males handling the pressure, I would say Khalid, the male character in American movie is more confident and is ready to take the ownership while Haider was not strong enough to handle that openly and there can be many elements involved in the two males handling it differently.

Moderator: Yes, there in America, transgender people are also facing challenges, even though many parents have got more acceptance towards their trans children, still not all the parents and if you see the background of this trans character, the father didn't accept the child but the mother did. And even if she is going to the high school, everyone knows she is transgender and faces some kind of discrimination too. As we can see when Khalid approaches her and falls in love with her, everyone starts behaving the way that why he is even liking her. So, the concept of social unacceptance is in that culture too.

And one more thing to notice here, the male character 'Khalid' is a Muslim here.

Miss. Orange: So, here is another culture involved, I think. And when we look at both movies' trans characters and the male characters involved, we see that the boy who fell in love with transgender in Pakistani movie, was not confident enough to hold her publicly but in American context, the boy is ready to hold her and stand by her side. As at first, the door is closed. And before the door opens, he holds her hand, then the door opens. It means that he was ready to make her and himself ready to face all the challenges that the society will put forward in their way.

Moderator: Alright, now how would you compare this space scene with the social space issue in the movie 'Joyland'?

Mr. Glasses: The case is similar to some extent. Societies don't have space for transgender whether it is West or East. We can see in Joyland the lady was not okay sitting with trans and here Kelsa's own friend was not ready to have her in female's space. So, the situation is pretty much similar in both the cases.

Mr. Coat: Same thing, we find transgender discrimination in there.

Moderator: Yes, we can see the same scene of publicly and socially unacceptance as in Pakistani movie, she was asked to go to the males' section and in here, she is banned from female bathroom and locker room and is forced to use gender neutral washroom.

Mr. Glasses: But one difference, that she is very vocal. The trans character in American movie is quite vocal about her rights and all as compared to the trans in Pakistan.

Moderator: Let's talk about scene four which is a conversation between the mother and the trans daughter. What message is being conveyed through the conversation?

Miss. Hijab: I like the strong personality of her mother. It shows that the trans character, she got that confidence and the ability to speak for herself, she got that from her mother. Yeah!

Mr. Coat: In this scene, I see the strong relationship between the mother and daughter that even after being transgender, mother is not ignoring her and she is saying that you are exceptional, you are not average. She is, even being transgender, she is praising her. So, this is depicting the ideology that even if you have a transgender child, you can give them love, you can give them everything that you give to the other children because they are the equal creatures. They are also human beings. So, why do we differentiate? Why don't we send them to schools, this can be done even in Pakistan too. And I feel that it should be done all over the world. If you have got a trans child, just accept it and send the child to school, give proper education.

Moderator: Yes, as we can see the trans character in Joyland, is an award-winning trans actor in real. So, we can say, now they have started gaining acceptance, still a lot of things are there, they are being degraded, social unacceptance and marginalization is there but at least they have started occupying certain space in societies.

Mr. Beard: Obviously, the characters are the mouthpiece of the writers, so in the same context, whatever the mother is saying over here, is the concept of humanity rather I should say that everyone ought to be regarded, either they are from whatever category they belong to. Apart from that mother and daughter relationship, I felt that we are being educated or told that such is the parameter to judge someone not by being categorized as transgender or any other gender.

Moderator: Now, talking about this last shortest but the strongest scene of the movie, I feel like trans people should be given confidence and liberty since their childhood, they deserve the equal rights too. What would you like to say?

Mr. Glasses: This shows that even the trans character in America is facing a lot of challenges and could not live the way a normal human being lives and now she finally got what she wanted and felt happier and acceptable. Both movies are actually in response to the social situations with reference to transgender. The situation is not that much encouraging in America or in West, so this is a universal problem. I think people should pay attention to them and should devise some better attitudes towards them and accept them as human beings. And they should not be judged on the basis of their

gender. Gender is a biological process and all of us are born in the same way. So, it is the social attitude that has been the cause of this problem. Acceptance and space! Every living being is for the earth and the earth is to accommodate everyone. So, there should not be any discrimination on the basis of gender and biological factors.

Moderator: And how both male characters handled the societal pressure? Any last comments on it?

Mr. Coat: Yes, in American movie, the male character is bold enough to accept the transgender, while in Pakistani movie, the male character is not that much bold.

Miss. Hijab: Despite the cultural differences as well as the religious differences between Pakistan and America, I think in America, the level of marginalization is less as compared to Pakistan. The social expectation of transgender in Pakistan are to be dancing and all this sexual objectification but in America, these things are not shown through this character. She is more educated, more confident, and more vocal as compared to Pakistani transgender. Even the attire is totally different. So, I think in America, there is more acceptance as compared to Pakistan.

Mr. Coat: I would like to add up here. In both movies we can see that in Pakistani movie, the transgender is dancing, and is being used only for physical pleasure. But in American movie, we see that the transgender is studying at some place and getting school education, then going to college. So, there is a way of other things being successful in life.

Mr. Glasses: Once again, we have to notice the economic side of both characters. Here is the financial element and societal protection and the economic protection that the society provides in America, that's why she is so confident and she is not dependent in any way.

Miss. Hijab: And I think the confidence comes from your own family. If your family accepts you, then the society will also accept you to some extent. If your mother is degrading you, if your father is dehumanizing you, if they are not accepting you the way you are, then how will you get the confidence and how will you prove yourself to the society. So, in the American movie, she got that confidence from her mother then she is trying to prove herself to the society. I don't think in Pakistan, the parents accept their child as they are, so think this is how it is happening here.

Mr. Glasses: Even the daughters are not accepted here, how would transgender be accepted in such societies.

Mr. Cap: I would like to say in the end as I have seen in Pakistani culture, the parents do not accept trans children and just kick them out of their houses, they are not accepted socially, they are not given any education or good jobs, so they are forced to join theatre and dance just to meet their expenses.

Moderator: And they are forced to join the transgender community.

Mr. Cap: Yes, they are forced to join transgender community as they are not accepted by their family. But in the American movie, we have seen that transgender are being educated, they are being given acceptance, and still a part of that was not accepting, at some parts, people were not accepting the transgender character but they had the right to speak up and play their role as a citizen. They were given the right to study, though with some complications but they were accepted. But in Pakistan, they are portrayed to be existing just for the physical desires of the male community. They have to dance and they have to work to earn and meet their basic needs and do such things.

Moderator: Thank you so much everyone for participating and giving your precious time to us.

Linguists Views on 'Joyland'

Moderator: Welcome to the Focus Group Discussion. It is the part of MPhil research and the title is "Transgender in Popular Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Trans Representation in Pakistani and American Movies". It deals with trans representation, the way transgender people or characters are presented and perceived and accepted in both ways. The very titles of the movies selected for the analysis are 'Joyland' and 'Anything's Possible'.

So, first of all, I would like to ask Mr. Tayyab that what are your comments about the very title of the movie which deals with Pakistani scenario, the way transgenders are accepted and what type of issues they face in Pakistan, is 'Joyland'. So, what is your interpretation of the title Joyland?

Sir Tayyab: It seems quite ironic because somehow, they are actually treated very badly in society. There is no acceptance for people belonging to transgender in our society. What I personally observe is that now, there is a little bit acceptance for them still this phenomena is very slow and people are still very much reluctant but somehow, you know the people who belong to academia, they are somewhat accepting it because there are many famous transgender in Pakistan, they are working on social media, they are doing some sort of educational works, and even they people are now in medical field, specifically, if you talk about Multan, I think Multan is the only city that is providing a specific institute built for the education of transgender, so I think, these steps are actually somehow, giving us this clue that now the society has got somehow the acceptance for these transgender but it is again if I go somehow in detail, there is still the difference of class that if go and I observe that there is a class in transgenders too. The people who belong to elite class and they have connections with elite class, they are very much social, they are having gatherings with the general people but the people, the transgender that belong to lower strata or the middle strata they are very much reluctant and they are maltreated by general population.

Moderator: What do you think about the movie title Ms. Sumera?

Madam Sumera: The title itself could be related to some sort of taboos because I think the title is actually representing the social scenario, it is the 'joyland' for others not particularly for the transgenders. Here in this movie, transgender has been represented

as the subject or the central character or we can call it a protagonist who is actually fighting for her own identity. But on the other hand, the title doesn't signify that she is taking, I mean I want to give my perspective regarding it that the Joyland itself is the entire society in which transgenders are living and for the society itself is taking it as a joy in my opinion.

Sir Tayyab: What I perceive is that how much contrast is there. The movie's name is Joyland but what about Haider and that Biba that his or her life is completely a hell what we have seen in the movie that how she has been treated by you know by her colleagues, if he is in public, at house. So, how she is being treated, I think there is more joy for him but she has become a joy for others and her life in itself is like hell.

Madam Sumera: Even the way we are debating about this very character, we are again socially so much in this very trauma that we are unable to identify the very character as his or her.

Moderator: In our context, such characters are still fighting for survival. At certain places, they are taken as 'he' or at certain places they are taken as 'she'. There are some examples in the script of the movie as well 'Ky lo wo aa gai hai', the use of slang is there, 'Gashti di zaban wekho', 'ye khusra hai'. So, she is oscillating. Such types of characters are oscillating either as a male or female. So, they are occupying a dislodged type of identity.

Sir Tayyab: A very interesting thing that I just got from the movie that in Language, we are treating him as a female but when she goes as a female, no female is going to accept her as a female and they are actually discarding in that just get out from the place.

Moderator: Ma'am Fayeza, it is said that popular culture reflects social reality, media mirrors social reality. So, after having been through the movies, what type of social reality is being mirrored or reflected through these two movies in Pakistan and there in America?

Madam Faiza: Thank you very much. If we just look into the scenario of Joyland that is very much South Asian. I am not confining it just to Pakistan or anything but it is very South Asian mentality that what kind of work that we have or you know the work boundaries particularly. It's a gender disorder, sorry it's a biological disorder. It's not that somebody is doing it at their own or it they are doing at their own, that is a different

story. But when one is born with different biological difference, I don't call it disorder but I said biological difference. So, in that way particularly, we are confining their work opportunities in our society and then there are dissociation from culture, our culture, from gender boundaries, particularly, we have seen that there is a scene where they were going in that Orange Train, the women are not letting him or her sit down in that women compartment and asking, forcing her rather to go to the other one and then, if the man is sitting right next to her, to get the support, in that way there is another thing that even you are in the middle of the identity. At the same time, you still have to get that shelter of a man, that is one very important thing in this case.

As far as the title is concerned, like when we talk about 'Joyland', let's endorse that point here strongly that there is no joy for such kind of people because we have actually made them the source of pleasure for many, they are the sex workers, they are you know we call them with whatever the names we want.

Moderator: They could be joy for others.

Madam Faiza: Yeah, everything that they are doing, they are doing it for their living.

Moderator: Yes, they are struggling for their survival.

Madam Faiza: Survival! Of course, they are struggling for survival.

Moderator: Their basic need is money. And this is what we see throughout the movie that Beba is doing his/ her best to earn more and more money to get more acceptability.

Madam Faiza: And we have left only this work opportunity for them that in the evening they have to just make up and they have to just dress up and walk on the roads like 'Chamak Challo' and you know touching this and that person and if they are dancing on shadis (weddings), so, we are expecting that kind of particular gestures from them you know, the veil (giving money on events) system is going on and if someone is putting money on their heads, it means they have to do what they want. With that, its not worth it for the women but it is for men and men feel pleasure probably and then you know there is a Tatha (Making fun) of that dance and that certain moves during the dance.

Moderator: So, this is how you mean to say that the very title of the Pakistani movie 'Joyland', correlates with South Asian or Pakistani mindset?

Madam Fayeza: No, it's South Asian because same thing is there in India. If we just look into the history, a Khwaja Sara has very distinct kind of job. Even in the Mughal Era, they were the messengers and then they were those who were like, again this might be demeaning, that they were those who used to give massage to the kings or queens or to all. And if we look into that, there is no khwaja sara those who are allowed to clean the Holy premises of Khana Kaba. No man or woman is allowed to go inside and clean, this is the duty of a Khawaja Sara.

Sir Tayyab: Number one, the name Biba, in Punjabi, Biba means someone who is very gentle. So, here the name is giving the sarcastic meaning.

Madam Sumera: And in the very first scene I have noticed that very negative connotations have been associated with this transgender character who we entitle. And when abusively represented that transgender is represented as female and the very word 'Witch' has been used for her. Many abuses and negative connotations are associated here with the character and they are relating I to the female identity. And in the movie, the scene in which she is sitting in the bus, she wasn't allowed to sit there and was asked to move to the males' cabin. So, when there is positive connotation, we are associating with males and when there is abusive terminology, they are being associated with female identity. So, gender biasness is there.

Sir Tayyab: If we see, male is not there to protect him or her.

Moderator: So, you see such type of characters are still hanging in between. Even you, the educated people are unable to assign them a solid identity whether they should be placed in male category or female category. So, this is how what has been happening with them since ages. They have been like hanging identities.

Madam Mamoon, if you just look at the very title of the movie and the picture shown in the movie title, that a woman is driving a kind of a scooter or a scotty and the male is sitting behind. Do you think that any kind of change is going to initiate keeping in view the very movie?

Madam Mamoon: I think one of the messages the movie has tried to give is that the spaces are not given to the individuals that are ostracized in our society, they somehow, have to take power back from the society. If you look towards Biba, Biba appears to be a very aggressive woman, she is not kind, she is not polite.

Moderator: And there is irony at the level of naming. There is irony as the very name Biba means very gentle and kind but she is not.

Madam Mamoonah: Yes, because she knows if she would be gentle, no space would be given to her. The only space she can occupy by doing this.

Moderator: You mean to say being Bebe, she has internalized that being Biba, she cannot exist and she has to be otherwise to the Biba.

Madam Faiza: It's the survival to the fittest basically. And in that way, if she becomes Biba, there will be no survival for her. She will be maltreated and she will die like probably an insect someday. But from heart, she is very Biba as we can see that she has those feelings for Haider and when Haider was protecting her while in the Metro train, she was feeling that you know tenderness.

Madam Mamoonah: And at the same time, she could not smile openly because she knew if she represents that emotion, again that would be taken as weakness at her part.

Moderator: But the way she has been represented in the movie, she is using cigarette and slang language as well and she has been represented as a sex object. So, what type of message is being propagated through her use of language and the very get up she is wearing throughout the movie?

Sir Tayyab: It is again you see is a survival for the fittest. If she remains Biba by adopting all the feminine traits, she may be a good dancer but not a strong one. So, wearing this attitude, is a gesture to the society that I am not only Biba, I can do anything I want.

Moderator: I can be 'Goli', as the opposite of Biba is 'gola'.

Madam Mamoonah: Sir as you said, she has to stand in the middle. She has to be somewhat feminine and then again, she has to occupy masculine spaces.

Moderator: So, here is the idea of many facets of survival in postmodern era that you cannot survive as being a Biba and perhaps you cannot be accepted everywhere as being the opposite of Biba.

Madam Faiza: And that is not only with the character, that is very human. All of us do that. All of us become fire some day and the other day, we are just like dew drops. But the thing is that her language, the usage of language, as she belongs to the certain

community and people are telling her those things. People are making fun of her physical appearance.

Moderator: Yes, biological differences, the concept of biological differences is here.

Madam Sumera: There is another point, I want to add, she has been ostracizing the speech herself. On one hand, she is not allowed but on the other hand she is. Whenever we talk about a female, we usually associate certain titles, owner, shame etc. with females and those who are breaking these barriers, we consider it as taboo in the entire subcontinent. If she is the one who is projecting herself or representing herself as being a female and she wants that sort of space replacing those ladies, who have been working as actual females, then definitely, when she is in that sort of scenario, she is ostracizing the space herself. There are many other we can say ways, as the law is giving to them. There is space but actually, on the other part, they themselves don't want to take the initiative because it will take too long for them to adjust in that particular scenario. That is why I think that on her part, 70 percent is her own fault.

Moderator: Well, the way, she or many character like her or him are accepted in society indicates the very construction of the society. In the movie, when the boy working with him or her brings his/her portrait in his house and when it is looked at by his father and he uses the slang and says that "Shuru sy lay ky abhi tak, hamary pas paisy nai thy magar izzat thi, aaj tum ny wo bhi gawa di'. So, what is the possible connotation associated with this very statement?

Madam Sumera: So, it means honor has been attached to taboo. It is not only related to transgender identity, Izzat (honor) is something that cannot be compromised in subcontinent. If you talk about West, they have changed their ways, they have changed their ways of acceptability but we are stuck on this very domain that honor, shame and modesty are the titles that you have to survive. Even, you cannot live without these titles.

Madam Mamoona: I think, everywhere, honor is attached to the female body and be it anywhere, any society rather in subcontinent, it is attached to female body everywhere and that is exactly the father has said in the movie.

Madam Sumera: But it is different. The honor that West is depicting, that is something different in comparison to the subcontinent.

Madam Faiza: Because West has an entirely different concept.

Madam Mamoonah: But at the same time, you see working women are shamed everywhere.

Madam Faiza: But particularly, as we are talking about Haider's father and this dialogue, this thing was that it is exactly kind of a slap on the face of Haider also that how dare he is to like 'Sari dunia main tumhy aik yhi mili thi ya tha, jis ki apni identity ka kuch nahi pata k wo bnda hai ya bandi hai' (she or he was the only one he could find in the whole world, whose identity is not even clear whether he is a male or female). This is also same kind of dilemma for Haider that how he developed that liking for her.

Madam Mamoonah: Here is a big question for his identity whether he is hiding his inner self from others. Haider himself is hiding his inner dilemma. He himself is in question that who should he like.

Sir Tayyab: The government has given some respect to transgender in the form of identity cards but still the use of language by the society is not appropriate as we can see the way Mr. Ishfaq calls her 'Pepa' instead of 'Biba', it's the disgusting way. Here we see who is giving them identity, the society.

Madam Mamoonah: We don't let them attain that identity. We just keep them in limbo, hanging in between the genders.

Madam Sumera: Semon quoted this very thing that one is not born a woman, similarly, the transgender himself/herself isn't born, it is actually the society that decides their gender and here lies the difference between gender and sex.

Sir Tayyab: I think we should work on the basic grounds where they can stand somewhere in society.

Madam Mamoonah: I think as we have separate spaces for men and women, for example let's talk about public washrooms, we have separate ones for men, women and even for the disabled persons then why don't we have for them because we don't even consider them as humans.

Moderator: Don't you think it can be an attempt on the part of some ideologists that he/she has attempted to propagate this type of ideology that this very section of the society should be recognized, accepted and should be given a proper space?

Madam Faiza: They are recognized now as they are getting separate identity cards but the mindset of the layman, the society, that needs to be changed.

Moderator: The very center of the research is representational modes about transgender. And one of the root causes of representation either positively or negatively keeping in view the Marxist ideology that Haider has been shown belonging to a middle-class family and Biba is struggling to earn more and more. So, don't you think that social economy or social inequality are the only cause behind such types of representational modes?

Sir Tayyab: Yes, of course, it is as we see when Mr. Ishfaq refuses Biba for the work, she makes a call to her friend, Gita and ask for the work that earlier she had refused to do. But now she was ready to do it just for the sake of money.

Moderator (Sir Akbar): And money was the sole cause of opting that job of a dancer for Haider. We can see the producer has attempted to raise an awareness about transgender acceptance. And I think, people have started accepting. Though the element of change is there still there is long way to go. Thank you so much!

Linguists Views on ‘Anything’s Possible’

Moderator: As the very title of the research done is Transgender in Popular Culture: A Comparative Analysis of Trans Representation in Pakistani and American Movies. The movie scenes that we are going to talk about has been taken from an American movie – Anything’s Possible and the character’s name is Kelsa. Here are some of the linguistic dialogues:

“I have been thinking a lot about dating like whether or not I want to have it.”

As the very title implies that it’s a comparative movie. Actually, what the researcher wants to gain is the way transgender either male or female, are perceived, accepted or presented in Pakistani popular media. It’s not talking about the media; it is about the social acceptance of trans characters in Pakistani and American cultures. Therefore, the linguistics highlights that the concept of dating. Dating is very much Americanized. When we are comparing the representation of trans, perhaps, we cannot talk about it so openly - about the concept of dating. No doubt trans characters are taken as a sex object in our culture too but the terms used for them are different. How would you interpret this very concept being given in American but can’t we say that such type of concept about dating related to trans can be openly discussed in Pakistani culture – through Pakistani movies?

Ms. Faiza: If we talk about Anything’s Possible, it is taken from the Pop culture – Pop we call as anything that is popular and the concept of being trans and this disguised identity has become the talk of the town these days, whether it is about literature or about movie, media, or anything. We have seen that this kind of attitude is very much prevailing into the western society now because of may be that the social media pressure and everything. My point of interest here is that as soon as the movie opens, we can see a lot of pop images in that whether they are wearing fur, that is of very blingy colors and then we could see that the mother who is kind of an orthodox and the male character that we have seen, so in that scenario particularly, she is asking about the hair style of her son and he was telling that the whole head would be shaved off from behind and this will be really long. Simultaneously, the response of the man and the woman, the father and the mother, that was entirely different. So, same is the case

that is interconnected with the ideology that our Pakistani society and American society both.

Moderator: In Pakistani movie – Joyland too, we see that when the character, Haider, reveals his relationship with a trans character and his father buss out into galian (abuses) and he says the things like this is the day we have doing like this or that and the very lines are:

“Is ghar vich shuru ton hi jera na paisa nai aya laikin izzat ayi ay”

Don't you think it is taken as a type of taboo having some sort of relationship with trans character and same is the case with the parents of Khalid when he reveals that he is going to have a sort of relation or kind of love or is going to marry a trans character, Kelsa and they all are taken aback. So, don't you think Ms. Mamoona though America is an advance country, advance society, but the perception and acceptance of transgender up to some extent is similar?

Ms. Memona: I would like to talk about the first seen and then talk about your question. My point of concern lies here in the dialogue,

“I'm not worried about harassment or anything like that”

Moderator: But here trans characters are ever worried about harassment.

Ms. Memona: Yes, that is the point. In our society, no trans identity can be separated from harassment. It is impossible. Neither can a woman, biologically women or even men sometimes are not free from harassment, and talking about a transgender not being worried about harassment is something that interests me here. That is where the writer or the director of the movie came up with this title, ‘Anything's Possible.’ A trans individual, not feeling worried about harassment is possible in our society like America.

Moderator: It's a metro perception and acceptance.

Ms. Memona: That is where I will come to your point that may be acceptance in western societies is not the same as in Pakistani society. We are now learning.

Ms. Faiza: But the acceptance is very much not acceptance because Khalid is also not fully American. He is half Muslim, either Pakistani or some Arab roots.

Ms. Memona: He does not have conventionally European roots and that is why, its targeted as well.

Moderator: There could have been a White trans character. But what underlying ideology could be representing the Black as a transgender and then making his/ her attempts to have him/ herself accepted as an important member of the society?

Ms. Faiza: Because that is very much there if you could look at the American Literature or the history of American Literature as a whole, you will get to know that the most demeaning and the most ostracized kind of people, they were Blacks. So much so, they were not allowed to have white ice cream except on July 4th and if this kind of harassment or this kind of mental torture was going on with them, there is nothing to worry about or there is nothing surprising that Kelsa was a character that was taken from that stratum of the society. She could be Black but White in that term will be the character that was prestigious. Having a Black President in White House, was also a big question mark on the democratic history of United States for a longer period of time. And then having the second tenure also. Same is the case with that.

Moderator: You mean to say that kind of gendered or racist ideology is here at power?

Ms. Faiza: Yeah, it is exactly like that. Like whenever we have to make any joke about somebody's foolishness, we always call it 'Sardar Ji' and in Pakistan, we call them "Pathan". Or if we want to mock somebody about being miser, we call them "Sheikh". So, these things are there. Ideologies are prevailing. So, with that, the character is not accepted wholeheartedly by the society because on the other front, where she very clearly mentions that

"I am worried about people only pretending to like me because they wanna be woke or something"

So, 'pretending to like me', that was her concern. She was not concerned about harassment because harassment is there in any case. She is already Black; she was facing the harassment. Then she is trans; second harassment, so probably, she is very much immune of harassment. Her only problem was people who were pretending to like her.

Ms. Memona:

And the other thing is she can't think about dating and relationships and love because she doesn't have the other aspects of the problems like Joyland.

Moderator:

This could be one of the ways of having herself accepted in a society because perhaps, being trans, you cannot isolate, in fact you are already isolated section of society and you cannot further isolate yourself. So, she is going to take some sort of extra liberty to have herself accepted. And one thing more when we try to compare it with trans character in Pakistan, she is shown as a dancing girl, while on the other hand Kelsa has been shown as a girl brought up by very good parents and she is seeking education in High School, so her problems are different as compared to trans character in Pakistan. In Pakistan, trans characters on one hand have to keep themselves alive or survive by earning money and having them accepted as a human being.

Ms. Faiza:

Their livelihood problems are far different from the people living in Western society because in western society, there is more of legalized, they have their own rights and we are still quite far.

Moderator:

Again, there is the expression

“I am supposed to disclose, I am trans” and there is a question mark means she is still very much doubtful about her identity whether being trans, she is going to be accepted by the society or not because only the person “Khalid” has shown somewhat inclined towards her but rest of the society and her colleagues even either male or female, they are not taking her as a normal human being.

Ms. Faiza:

Here I would like to differ. She is not confused that she needs to disclose that she is trans or not, she is just that when at the stage of dating I need to disclose that. Should I disclose thing right in the beginning of the dating stage and if this would happen then of course everybody would run away because probably people will not be very okay with that and if they are not, so at what stage, may be after sometime after being friends or so.

Ms. Mamona:

And if the person doesn't, the opposite person of interest doesn't run away, she has the doubts whether or not they are going to stay with me only for the curiosity of what they have.

Moderator:

When you are talking about curiosity, the concept is there in Joyland also and the friends of Haider were much curious about knowing of what type of personality she has as they ask very open questions from him that what is she hiding behind.

Ms. Faiza:

Yes, biologically which part is depicting what.

Ms. Memona:

And what was her name? Biba.

Even Biba has doubts whether Haider is interested in her in actual or he is also curious.

Moderator:

On the other hand, when Kelsa was getting ready to go to school, her mother asked the question whether she is wearing bra or not, it means her mother wishes that she should look like a girl. So, perhaps mother has realized that being a girl, she may be accepted by the society.

There is no proper space/ place or acceptance for the trans character as being mentioned by Kelsa's fellow colleagues that you cannot use this washroom, that washroom, you can use yours and ironically that was not well kept because in the past, they might have not felt this need but now people despite being advanced, they are ignoring this harsh reality of life. So, perhaps they have realized if society rejects us, we should make efforts on our own to have ourselves accepted at any cost and perhaps engaging the male partners towards physical affairs is one of them. And you see Haider's parents criticize him for having an affair with trans character while Kelsa's mother encourages her.

Ms. Rubab:

And even in case like in the beginning, Khalid's parents, they start thinking that Khalid himself is some other gender, trans or something like that. They started worrying about that. But once he reveals that no, he is in love with a transgender, then they were okay with that. They didn't have any issue; they were even happy that finally our son is not into that thing.

Moderator:

And even when mother is leaving for office and finds that Khalid is at their home, she openly informs that they were free to do anything.

Ms. Faiza:

And besides that, there is I think one of the major discrepancies in their own child because Kelsa's mother is very much aware of her trans kind of sexuality and Khalid's parents are thinking that he is very much straight and coming from those Muslim roots also, his mother is orthodox, in that case it's difficult for Khalid.

Ms. Rubab:

Even Khalid's friend, his best friend, he starts thinking that he is a gay. He asks him are you a gay and he informs Khalid's parents and then the parents start doubting.

Moderator:

Here lies the similarity in representing and accepting trans characters through the movies of Pakistani and Western culture though t the surface level we can say one is advanced and the other is less advanced or backward country but as far as the concept of trans acceptance is there, there is very much similarities. They are taken as something odd; they haven't been accepted as very important part of the society. Everywhere, they are taken as something odd, the abnormal side of society.

Ms. Faiza:

Anything that's not normal is of course taken as abnormal.

Moderator:

In particular, in case of teen characters, if you ae going to accept a teen as your life partner, this is taken as very much abnormal.

Ms. Memon:

I think, this thing only happens in the west, teens have such capability of deciding their future selves or emotionally understanding what their needs are, I think, that's something that hasn't been shown yet in the Pakistani Cinema.

Ms. Faiza:

It does, it does but it's a very kind of deal I think in this scene because we could see that "in a daring move, human mates publicly display their affection and what if?" What if you know is followed by a question mark that is basically a kind of a deal that let it go with the flow and all that kind of a thing and also, this scene is self-explanatory in this case that as soon as he door opens, and we could see two hands you know holding each other's, that scene is very much that they wanted to get themselves acknowledged and accepted like a couple now on and since many people probably are now clear about Kelsa being a trans, this is one strange kind of you know, they were taken aback that idea that how Kelsa can be with Khalid because she herself is a trans character already. And there is one also major question that why have they not taken somebody else but a Muslim character? Not an orthodox, Christian or something like that.

Moderator:

Actually, in Western movies, the Arab people are shown to be very much inclined towards sex.

Ms. Faiza:

Yeah, and men specially. We generally make fun of our friends those who are very attractive men and when they are going to GCC countries, we say them, "hmain tou khawateen ka koi dar nai hai, tum apny apko bacha k rakh lo".

Men in that way, because of the historical perception of having the harams and then in Turkey also, that Sultan Ahmad and all these Ottoman Empires, and in Arab harams also, there were harams of women and then there were harams of men also. There, men are captives. So, in that case, may psychological or historical background be very much attached to Khalid and then this was kind of a deal breaker for that 'what if? 'And then the chuckles and this thing was going on. Then there is of course display of affection but one thing that is very sweet is that he kissed her forehead, SO this shows a very friendly kind of PDA, which was respectable and showed that there isn't only lust involved, its more of care oriented.

Moderator:

In one of the scenes, Khalid starts kissing Kelsa from the forehead but she attracted him for lip kissing.

Ms. Mamoona, 'will their colony accepts that' the same problem of identity acceptance is there though they are going to take a bold step but they are not sure will their colony, will their colony mean the general people, the school, the stereotypes, the societal norms.

Ms. Faiza:

The school and school of thought they belong to.

Moderator:

Yes, very good, the school and school of thought, will they be accepted first by their school mates and then the school of thoughts surrounding them. So, we can say that at comparative level, both in Pakistan and here, the people, trans characters and the people who are involved with such characters are leading their lives in uncertainty, they are not certain whether this act of theirs would be accepted by the society or not. So, one common element that is common in both movies as far as the representation of trans is concerned, nowhere we find the element of certainty regarding accepting trans character as a part of mainstream society.

Ms. Memona:

Agreed but at the same time, there is a difference here as well if I remember correctly. In 'Joyland', there is no such thought that comes in the mind of Haider that will it be accepted or not and then he does the act like takes hold of her hand or takes her somewhere. 'Ye aisa kabhi bhi nahi hota Joyland main, usko pta hota hai k ye acceptability tou sochni hi nai hai kyun k ye tou hona hi nahi hai Pakistan main' as compared to this movie.

Ms. Faiza:

In the head of Haider, he was not thinking that long term.

Ms. Memona:

Han, wo itna long term nahi kyun k usko pta hai k sochna hi kyun hai. Over here, there questioning k 'acha ye carnage tou nahi ho jayga agar hum niklaingy abhi hath pakar k aik dosry ka, kuch hoga tou nahi laikin wo nikal bhi jaty hain pakar k.

Moderator:

Haider was forced to have his relation with Biba on economic ground because socioeconomic conditions of Pakistan forced Haider to do the things which are normally taken as odd or unacceptable by the society.

Ms. Faiza:

But Sir, you are saying that they were they were thinking about that, in Haider's character, he was not thinking about that but in their character they were may be thinking or pointing that out So, one of the very major thing I think is that this is one of the biggest discrepancies on both of the societies because if Haider is taking the charge of all the act and everything, sorry Biba was taking that because in that way she has nothing to lose, Biba has nothing to lose because she is already not given that privilege, that respect, that name, fame, good one, that is not given to her anywhere in her life but for Haider, it was a big time question mark. That is the reason they were hiding in this case. Here, Kelsa is not hiding at all but may be Khalid is intriguing her to make it public because here, there is no kind of socioeconomic, first of all socioeconomic pressure and then the societies comparatively have that liquidity because there are other people also, they are not the only ones but for Haider's father, as he said 'Tenu sari dunia chy ayho labhi si?' So, this was one thing.

Moderator:

There is a concept of homosexual marriages as well there to some extent.

Ms. Faiza:

No, no, not to some extent, they are legalized there.

Mr. Hammad:

The most important thing which I see in that is when they come out of the room, and the girls were laughing, basically the racist people, which were the black people in white society, they were laughing at them. They were coming upfront and saying what they were doing. So, this is an important aspect that I have found that how the racist which are discriminated by the White people, even they are laughing at them, so this highlights the unique and new dimension.

Ms. Faiza:

Yeah, see they themselves are the victims of racism and then they are laughing at the one who is being victimized also.

Mr. Hammad:

Means they are understanding that this is much unique and out of conscious of the people.

Ms. Faiza:

And another interesting thing, his best friend is Black.

Ms. Mamoona:

Yes, so many Blacks.

Ms. Faiza:

Yeah, his best friend is black and objecting White Khalid not to fall in love with Black Kelsa.

My only thing that they are born with that biological orientation, it's not their hand.

Ms. Mamoona:

Yes, and they should be given respect and security and all.

Ms. Faiza:

Yes, if somebody is acquiring a different identity, that is an acquired identity. They people have tendency towards that thing and then some people are courageous that they take that step that they get that life done and then they go there but there are a lot of such people like what do generally people do? People generally do that if they are born with a child with is disorder, such children are born in their houses, what they do. Even if they don't do anything, the transgender people do come to their houses by themselves saying that we got to know that there is a transgender child born in your house. So, just to protect that child from killing, from being murdered, so, they just take that child. And parents also seem to feel that this is the easiest way to get rid of the child because this is the clear human idea we see here and everywhere. Nature itself brings the loved ones to this critical situation. May ALLAH eases their difficulty.

Ms. Faiza:

I want to talk about the appearance of Em, who is like the real Pop character, with that dingily earrings and with extended nails and all that. Fine, its perfectly alright but then there is another point which Hammad has already mentioned that a Black is insulting another Black.

And as she said that 'It is our space, a woman's space' so in that case, they were considering Kelsa among them but as soon as she brought Khalid into it, Khalid is an added advantage, he is like a package deal, if Kelsa was there, Khalid also came. So, 'she brought that male energy' and with that again, it is raising one kind of a question on Em's sexuality also. What kind of women space you know you want and at one point of your life, you wanted to have Khalid's attention and once Khalid did not look back at you, you find him attacking or threatening for your sexuality or for protection of your women space and male energy which can be you know contagious, contagious is even a better word, it's a dangerous male energy I would say rather. And very apt and very clear answer which Kelsa has given that not everything is about gender though everything is about gender. But in Kelsa's life, in Kelsa's head, in her school of thought, not everything is about gender.

Ms. Memona:

But in Em's brain, when she says it's our space, a woman's space, clearly, she is separating Kelsa from the women's space. How I have analyzed and understood this male energy is that Kelsa is not a biological woman, that's why she says that her male energy is entering a female's space and that is why Kelsa is not allowed to be in their space. And then she is giving the authority that because I am a complete woman, I have the authority to give you the 'ok' that you live your lifestyle, you are ok with that lifestyle and I am the ne who is giving you this ok.

Ms. Faiza:

And Kelsa herself is being the victim of that thing that not everything is about gender but for me, it is because I got banned, it was me who got banned from that women bathroom. I had to go to gender neutral bathroom, they were dingy and she was also banned from the women locker room and the bathroom and she has to go to gender neutral bathroom which was not cleaned, they were left at their fate just like trans were left at their fate.

Moderator:

It describes, since the nineties, it describes the long history of America about trans character acceptance and all these things, classroom, bathroom, locker room, all these things can be taken as metaphors. They are talking about public spaces and places at different domains of life. So, what she is talking about is that she is solely and deliberately targeting it and excluded from the domains of humanity and there could be underlying ideology behind this very film that such kind of neglected and marginalized characters should be brought to attention and the society should be made realized that now the right time has come and these people are increasing in number and they must be given proper space and the identity they deserve.

Ms. Memona:

Another point that I want to highlight is that when we watch the movie, we see Khalid is a very reasonable looking guy and Em is also pissed off at the fact that she as a woman could not attract him and Kelsa being somebody who is not even a whole woman has been able to attract him rather trap him and that is also something that is problematic.

Moderator:

Both Em and Kelsa, we can say are male trappers.

Ms. Memona:

Yes, and Kelsa, a transgender has somehow become a threat for the other women.

Moderator:

And this is insulting.

Ms. Rubab:

This happened in Joyland too.

Hammad

Because when people look at me, all they see is gender. It means gender is being dominated over humanity. This aspect is very important. Means they prefer gender in the society as compared to humanity.

Moderator:

Gender, they mean either male or female. People are not going to accept anything other than this.

Ms. Faiza:

I wanna add one thing here is that generally the nurturing time in our Montessori or something like that, we always have this question that who we are and then we give the answer to that we all are Muslims. This is another one strange kind of question because not everyone in Pakistan is a Muslim and even in a class, we have students, those who are not Muslims, they are from different religion so, you have one quarter of the flag that is white, same is the case with that when people are looking at somebody, they say words like ‘larkion jesa larka’, ‘mard maar aurat’ and these kinds of things. So, we define society into ‘aurtain idhr ho jaen, mard udhar ho jaen’, ‘ye mardana hai, ye zanana hai’, same is the case with women locker or something just like the women faculty, female faculty room and male faculty room. It is like your cozy space, it’s your relaxing space, where people have to sit down at a work place where both the genders have to sit down, they observe certain norms and, in their language, and demeanor, in their dressing, manners and everything. But when it’s all a women kind of discussion or if its all-men kind of a discussion, or it’s that kind of space, the whole vibe of room changes altogether because in the mind of a man, when there are women, there is always gossips going on, no woman can talk sensible or elevating kind of a thing. But if it is men’s conversation going on, in women’s head, they think that they are making fun of some other woman or their houses or may be the politics going on as we see on media to the women saying now stop talking about politics and eat sweet.

And we don’t expect this from a woman that they can have logical discussion, some decision-making discussion or such discussion where there is a policy you can devise. And previously in history, we can see that there were thousands of women who were policy makers but then they have to take that demeanor off the ‘mard maar aurat’.

Moderator:

Mother’s role here is like a moderator or facilitator here, as she says that the bad things in her father and mother’s relation has nothing to do with her.

Ms. Faiza:

One very interesting thing that was added into that is that Kelsa told her mother you don't have to protect me because dad has refused to. So, this problem, you know the mental agony. I feel, I really feel for Kelsa here because when her mother said that our relationship was cracking and Kelsa in response says that in that I was the only one who was broken. So, coming from a broken family, is another thing that probably has shook the trust of Kelsa in this institution of marriage and normal lifestyle also. And another very interesting thing in this case is that the mother is continuously assuring Kelsa that the mess between her and her husband was not because of Kelsa but it was Kelsa who was taking things very realistically, to some extent very bitterly also. And in the end, all she could close the conversation was by saying you are the one thing we got right because in Kelsa's life, she is not looking for this thing. Probably, she herself is very much aware about this thing, about the agony and the pain a child has to go through when a family is breaking up and when a home is broken. So, in that case, she may have acquired a different kind of identity in this case.

Moderator

Kelsa has been shown as a realist. Though this is not the end of the movie, but it can be taken as the end of a span of life she has been spending with different people. And finally, she has realized and her realization as a real indicates the existing reality related to transgender. It invites talks and discussions and attention of the policy makers or high ups of the society that like past, they cannot steal their eyes from the existing reality that these transgenders are there, they are increasing in number and their issues are the genuine one. They need different things to survive and one of them is, first and foremost of them is to take them as a human being and then the society should make arrangements accordingly. And I was finally broken mom but its fine, it happens when you are a trans. And its also a reality that when you have a child like this, it is a kind of anomaly and it is not acceptable by the society. The parents can suffer a lot and perhaps the decision taken by Kelsa's father can be justified on social grounds.

Mr. Hammad:

The most important point is that 'I get that and you don't have to protect me all the time' it highlights the severity of the situation like she is saying to her mother that you

don't have to bother the father. This is my right and I will fight for that. She is ready and determined to fight for her rights.

Ms. Memona:

And I think this is the point as she says 'this is what happens when you are a trans' or anything which is not gender specific.

Ms. Faiza:

Because she is saying it very clearly that she is not bothering about the harassment or anything because that is always there in the package deal.

Ms. Memona:

Yes, harassment is always there in the package when you are a trans, families do break up, relationships do break up, people are with you just for the fun. I think that is one tragedy that is very common in *Joyland* and *Anything's Possible*.

Moderator:

A comparative perspective of both the movies in terms of transgender representation, we can say that the concept of economy is the dominant one in both. In Pakistani society, economically unprovided trans character Biba has to struggle a lot to have herself accepted as a human being and let's suppose if Biba has been provided with all the resources, good type of education that Kelsa has been enjoying then there has been better situation. One thing more is that the Muslim characters in American movies, have been shown as more inclined towards sex and in Pakistani movie, trans character has been represented as a sex object and Biba is bound to learn the art of how to attract people to have herself accepted and at the end, we see that Biba is happy being a renowned dancer and having so many offers in the form of lucrative money packages. So, economy is the leading factor in the representation of transgender character in Pakistani and American movie.