

Silencing the Protagonist: Gender and Rape Depiction in Pakistani Dramas

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Abstract : Silencing of opinions is an important aspect of Spiral of Silence theory however its applicability in rape-themed dramas requires investigation. This study focuses on the portrayal of female rape victim protagonists in Pakistani dramas and the factors influencing their behavior after rape. A quantitative content analysis was conducted on two prime-time dramas which directly dealt with female rape victims. Results indicate that the female protagonists who faced rape are shown as silent and submissive characters who are unable to communicate about their ordeal due to fear of social isolation. These findings lend support to the Spiral of Silence theory and indicate that the theory's basic elements (inability to express opinions and fear of social isolation) exist in these TV dramas.

Keywords : gender stereotyping, rape victims, the spiral of silence, TV dramas

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