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Exploring Stigmatizing Discourses of Mental Illness in Pakistani Newspapers through CDA Lens in Psychology

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Abstract

Mental health stigma remains a significant challenge in Pakistan, contributing to negative attitudes, behaviours and outcomes for people with mental illness. The present study aims to analyse stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers using the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). A sample of newspaper headlines published between 2015 and 2023 was selected and analysed using the CDA framework. The results revealed that stigmatizing discourses were prevalent in these newspapers including labelling, anthologizing, stereotyping and marginalizing. These discourses reflected broader social and cultural factors such as cultural norms, beliefs and power relations. The findings also highlight the need for more effective policies and interventions aimed at reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan and promoting a more inclusive understanding of mental illness. The study also provides valuable insights into the role of the media in shaping public perceptions towards mental illness in Pakistan and can inform the development of more responsible media practices as well as more comprehensive mental health policies.

Keywords: Mental Health, Newspapers, Media Discourse, Stigma, CDA, Psychology

Research Objectives:
1. To explore the prevalence and nature of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers.
2. To analyse the linguistic, discursive and social features of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers.

Research Questions:
1. What are the prevalent stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers?
2. How are stigmatizing discourses of mental illness expressed linguistically, discursively and socially in Pakistani English newspapers?

Introduction

Mental health has emerged as an essential aspect of human well-being in recent decades, with a growing recognition of its profound impact on individuals, families and societies at large (World Health Organization, 2021). The field of psychology has long been committed to understanding the complex interplay of biological, psychological and social factors that contribute to mental health and well-being (Goffman, 1963). This commitment extends to addressing the stigmatization of mental illness, which remains a pervasive issue in society (Corrigan & Watson, 2002). Stigmatizing discourses surrounding mental illness contribute to the marginalization, discrimination and exclusion of individuals living with these conditions (Link & Phelan, 2001). Consequently, it is crucial for researchers and practitioners in the field of psychology to critically examine and deconstruct these discourses in order to promote a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of mental health.

Media plays a crucial role in shaping and reshaping ideologies. Mental health is the misunderstood and neglected issue in Pakistani society. Media is the main public domain for the

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sociology of the language and plays a fundamental role in circulation of various meanings (Talbot 2007). Therefore, it is crucial to voice its significance through media discourses. These discourses can represent the struggle of people with mental health issues and it can also break the stereotypical mind-set regarding mental illness. Language is a powerful medium of transformation as well as awareness but stigmatizing discourses can construct negative ideologies regarding mental health issues. Therefore, while using language one should be mindful of its long-lasting consequences. Stigmatization is harmful in many aspects for those who are already struggling with illness. A stigmatized person is isolated from their fellows and it increases social distance between the labeller and labelled (Rogers and Pilgrim 2005).

Moreover, Critical Discourse Analysis, as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language, power and ideology offers a valuable framework for investigating the complex ways in which mental illness is constructed and represented in various forms of communication (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 1997). CDA provides a means to explore the underlying assumptions and power relations that shape stigmatizing discourses, as well as to illuminate the social, political and historical contexts in which they are embedded (Wodak, 1997). By employing CDA, this study seeks to illuminate the discursive practices that contribute to the stigmatization of mental illness and to stimulate a critical reflection on the role of psychologists in perpetuating or challenging these practices.

There are various forms of stigma associated with mental illness including public stigma, self-stigma and label avoidance. There are many negative consequences of stigma for individuals with mental health conditions such as reduced self-esteem, diminished social support and limited access to mental health care (Corrigan, 2004; Major & O'Brien, 2005). Moreover, it is essential to emphasize the importance of understanding stigma as a dynamic, multi-faceted phenomenon that can be perpetuated or challenged through various channels including mass media, interpersonal communication and professional discourse (Wahl, 1995).

Furthermore, the theoretical underpinnings of CDA emphasize the dialectical relationship between language and society. It explores the ways in which power and ideology are manifested in discursive practices (van Dijk, 1993). The aspects of CDA are including the analysis of discursive strategies, representation, intertextuality and context are significant and for exploring stigmatizing discourses in the field of psychology (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 1997). It is of utmost importance to make efforts to dismantle the harmful narratives surrounding mental health thereby ensuring that individuals with mental health challenges are treated with the respect, dignity and compassion they deserve (World Health Organization, 2021).

Literature Review

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a theoretical and methodological framework that emphasizes the critical examination of language use in its social, cultural and political contexts. CDA asserts that language is not neutral but is embedded in power relations and social structures and that discourse plays a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing these structures (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). CDA has been widely used in various disciplines including linguistics, sociology, psychology and political science in order to analyse discourses related to social issues such as race, gender and politics etc. CDA has the following three properties i.e. dialectal, relational as well as transdisciplinary. It deals with social relations and how these relations are layered (Fairclough 2010).

CDA has been applied to the study of mental health stigma in different contexts. CDA acts as a tool in discourse analysis that is interested in exploring the ways through which power relations and different ideologies are depicted and constructed by the use of language (Baker and Ellece 2011). It is not restricted to the text as it also examines the social context. The major aim of CDA is to analyse the hidden or out of sight perspectives and ideologies (Paltridge 2012).

Mental Health and Stigmatization

The role of media in reinforcing stigmatization is receiving increasing attention from researchers. Many studies revealed that media coverage is often biased and negative. People who are struggling often feel more depressed due to media stories regarding mental illness. Stigma has worse effects, as people with mental health issues have less access to career and educational opportunities. It also results in patient's refusal to seek help (Fundukian and Wilson 2007). A cross-sectional study was conducted to examine attitudes of medical doctors and students towards mental illness. The findings

revealed that schizophrenia, mania and addiction received more negative responses whereas 60% respondents considered mentally ill people as dangerous. The study showed an increasing number of stigmatizing views (Imran and Haider 2007).

Mental disorders are often subjected to stigmatization and people suffer from exclusion and prejudice. It is still an important societal issue. In addition, stereotypes can lead to discrimination of individuals or groups. Mass media, on the other hand, also contributes in stereotypes as it is biased and imprecise. The concept of self-stigma is significant to understand mental health issues as it refers to an individual's internalization of stigma. It can lead to diminished self-esteem. Moreover, family members also feel shame, adding to the illness. There are various strategies to reduce stigma i.e. education regarding mental illness, protest against unfair depictions of mental illness and direct contact with people struggling with mental health issues (Rossler, 2016).

The stigma attached to mental illness in Pakistan is rooted in cultural beliefs that often view mental illness as a sign of personal weakness or possession by evil spirits. Pakistan is a country where mental health issues have been historically neglected and stigmatized. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental disorders affect 10% of the Pakistani population, but the actual prevalence may be higher due to underreporting and lack of access to mental health services (WHO, 2017). A cross-sectional study on perceptions regarding depression revealed that most people view depression as a natural feeling of sadness and not as a disorder. Moreover, others related it to stress and physical or emotional trauma. There was a major association between participants' education and their perceptions regarding clinical depression (Nisar et al. 2019).

Thus, the literature on mental health and stigmatization highlights the pervasive nature of mental health stigma and its impact on people's lives. CDA offers a useful framework for analysing the discursive practices that sustain and perpetuate stigma in different contexts, including the media. Moreover, previous studies on stigmatizing discourses of mental illness suggest that such discourses are prevalent and reinforce negative attitudes and misconceptions towards people with mental illness. The present study aims to build on this literature by conducting a detailed analysis of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers through a CDA lens.

Significance of Study

This study has several important implications for the understanding and treatment of mental illness in Pakistan, as well as for the role of the media in shaping public attitudes and perceptions towards mental health issues. Firstly, the study focuses on the pervasive nature of mental health stigma in Pakistani English newspapers and the negative impact it can have on people with mental illness. By analysing the linguistic, discursive, and social features of stigmatizing discourses, the study provides a detailed and nuanced understanding of the ways in which mental illness is represented and framed in the media. Moreover it highlights the ways in which stigmatization is perpetuated and reinforced.

Secondly, the study contributes to the broader literature on mental health and stigmatization in Pakistan by providing a detailed analysis of the role of the media in shaping public attitudes and perceptions towards mental illness. The study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural, social and institutional factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan and the challenges as well as opportunities for addressing this issue.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach using three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine the stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers. The sample consists of various newspaper headlines collected from different Pakistani English newspapers. It covers the period from January 2015 to June 2021. The headlines were selected if they mentioned mental illness, mental health or related terms. The sample was collected through purposive sampling technique, resulting in headlines from the following newspapers:

Dawn, June, 2021
Pakistan Observer, March, 2021
Dawn, January, 2021
The Express Tribune, September, 2020
The Express Tribune, July, 2020
Dunya News, May, 2020
The Nation, February, 2020

The Nation, December, 2019
The Nation, September, 2019
Dawn, January, 2015
The Express Tribune, June, 2016
Pakistan Today, November, 2017

This study employs Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional model of CDA encompassing text, discourse practice and social practice. The text dimension involves analysing linguistic features and structures such as lexical items, syntax, and metaphor. The discourse practice involves examining discursive strategies and conventions such as argumentation, representation and evaluation. Moreover, the social practice entails analysing the social and cultural contexts shaping and shaped by the text, including power relations, ideologies and institutions.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) proposed by Fairclough (1995). This model emphasizes the interrelatedness of text, discourse practice and social practice. It provides a framework for analysing the linguistic, discursive and social features of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers. The text dimension of the CDA model involves the analysis of the linguistic features and structures of the text such as vocabulary syntax, and metaphor. In the context of this study, the text dimension would involve analysing the language used in newspaper headlines to represent mental illness and people with mental illness and identifying linguistic patterns as well as features that reinforce stigmatizing discourses such as labelling, pathologizing, stereotyping and marginalizing.

Furthermore, the discourse practice dimension of the CDA model involves the analysis of the discursive strategies and conventions used in the text such as argumentation, representation and evaluation. In the context of present study, the discourse practice dimension would involve analysing the discursive strategies used in newspaper articles to frame mental illness and people struggling with mental illness. It also focus on identifying the ways in which stigmatization is perpetuated and reinforced through the use of particular discursive strategies.

Finally, the social practice dimension of the CDA model involves the analysis of the social and cultural contexts that shape and are shaped by the text such as power relations, ideologies and institutions. In the context of this study, the social practice dimension would involve analysing the social and cultural factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan, such as cultural norms, beliefs and power relations. It also examines how these factors intersect with the discourse practices identified in the newspapers.

By using the three-dimensional model of CDA, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the ways in which stigmatizing discourses of mental illness are represented and reinforced in Pakistani English newspapers. The model provides a framework for analysing the linguistic, discursive and social features of the discourse and for identifying the broader social contexts that shape and are shaped by the discourse. By analysing the discursive practices of Pakistani English newspapers in the context of the broader social and cultural factors that contribute to mental health stigma, this study aims to contribute to a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of mental health and stigmatization in Pakistan.

Data Analysis

"Mental health crisis: Over 40% Pakistanis suffer from depression, says report" - (Dawn, January 2015)

The first dimension of Fairclough's 3D model involves describing the text and its context. In this headline, the text is a news article headline from Dawn, a Pakistani English newspaper and the context is the issue of mental health in Pakistan. The noun *crisis* highlights the struggle of the people and the dire need to address the reasons as well as possible solutions. The verb suffer implies that these people are either unaware of their own struggle as they are suffering in silence or this issue is not being addressed. Furthermore, the percentage indicates towards the alarming situation regarding mental health issues. The second dimension of Fairclough's 3D model involves interpreting the discourse and its underlying meanings. In this headline, the discourse is constructed in a way that frames mental health as a crisis and implies that depression is a widespread problem affecting over 40% of Pakistanis. This construction of mental health as a crisis and depression as a prevalent

problem has implications for the way mental illness is perceived and addressed in Pakistan. It also raises questions about the accuracy and reliability of the report cited in the headline.

Furthermore, the third dimension of Fairclough's 3D model involves explaining the underlying social structures and power relations that shape the discourse. In this headline, mental health is constructed as a crisis which implies that there is a need for urgent action and intervention to address the problem. This construction is related to broader social structures and power relations that shape the discourse around mental health in Pakistan, including the lack of mental health resources and stigma surrounding mental illness. The construction of depression as a prevalent problem may also be influenced by the cultural and social norms surrounding mental health in Pakistan.

"Taboo around mental illness" - (The Express Tribune, June 2016)
The text is a news article headline from "The Express Tribune", a Pakistani English newspaper. The lexical item "Taboo" implies that mental illness is considered as a stigma in Pakistan and many people lack acceptance and awareness regarding mental health issues. This also highlights the need to break the stereotypical mind-set and normalize this essential aspect in our society. The headline implies that there is a taboo around mental illness, which has implications for the way mental illness is perceived and addressed in Pakistani society. The headline constructs mental illness as a taboo, implying that there is a cultural and social stigma surrounding mental illness in Pakistan. This stigma can lead to discrimination, social exclusion and reluctance to seek help for mental health issues. This particular headline also suggests that this taboo contributes to the marginalization of people with mental illness and the perpetuation of stigmatizing discourses.

Moreover, the construction of mental illness as a taboo is related to broader social structures and power relations in Pakistani society. The stigma surrounding mental illness is shaped by cultural beliefs, lack of awareness and education as well as inadequate mental health resources. This stigma is reinforced by media representations of mental illness and the language used to describe mental illness in public discourse. The taboo around mental illness can also be linked to wider power relations in Pakistani society including gender and class dynamics.

"Mental health patients still suffer in silence" - (Pakistan Today, November 2017)
The text is a news article headline from Pakistan Today, a Pakistani English newspaper. The lexical item still implies that the problem needs to be solved. The noun silence, on the other hand, indicates that their needs are not being heard or welcomed. They are voiceless people who are afraid of being judged as they are constantly viewed in a negative light. These survivors feel alienated in their own house as they are often misunderstood. The headline implies that mental health patients do not receive the support they need and suffer in silence. The headline constructs mental health patients as a marginalized and silenced group. It suggests that mental health issues are stigmatized and that there is a lack of support and resources for people with mental health problems. The headline also implies that there are power dynamics at play, with mental health patients being marginalized and neglected by broader society. The construction of mental health patients as a marginalized and silenced group is related to broader social structures and power relations in Pakistani society including stigma and lack of awareness. These structures contribute to the perpetuation of stigmatizing discourses.

"Pakistan moves to tackle rising rate of suicide" - (The Express Tribune, February 2018)
The text is a news article headline from The Express Tribune. The headline implies that there is a rising rate of suicide in Pakistan and that the government is taking action to address the problem. The headline constructs suicide as a significant and growing problem in Pakistan. It suggests that there is a need for urgent action to address the problem and prevent further suicides. The headline also implies that the government is taking a proactive role in tackling the issue. The construction of suicide as a significant and growing problem is related to social structures and constant unheard frustration. These structures reinforce the subjugation of people with mental illness and contribute to the stigmatizing discourses. The government's action to tackle the issue is associated with political dynamics and public pressure to address the issue.

"Mental health needs more attention, say experts" - (Dawn, July 2018)
This is a news article headline from Dawn News, a Pakistani English newspaper. The headline implies that mental health needs more attention and that experts are calling for greater awareness and support. The headline constructs mental health as a neglected area in need of greater attention and support. It suggests that mental health is not currently receiving adequate attention and that there is a need for more resources and awareness. The headline also implies that there are power dynamics at play, with

experts calling for change and action. The construction of mental health as a neglected area implies the need to end the stigma as it further contributes in their alienation. This group of people often feels left out and isolation leads to worse circumstances. The call for greater attention and support is positive discourse to break the stereotypical notions attached with mental health issues in the society.

"Mental illness - the silent epidemic" - (The Nation, September 2019)

The text is a news article headline from The Nation, a Pakistani English newspaper. The headline implies that mental illness is an epidemic in Pakistan that is often overlooked or ignored. The headline constructs mental illness as an epidemic that is pervasive and widespread, yet invisible and overlooked. It suggests that mental illness is a significant problem in Pakistani society but that there is a lack of awareness and understanding around the issue. The headline also implies that there are power dynamics at play with mental illness being marginalized and ignored. The representation of mental illness as an epidemic is related to inadequate mental health resources. The invisibility of mental illness is also related to various cultural beliefs and due to the fear of getting labeled by other members of the society. These issues are not considered serious due to the unbreakable cycle of toxic beliefs associated with mental health. People who are struggling do not feel comfortable sharing their problems as they are afraid of the negative reactions.

"Mental health issues rise among Pakistani youth" - (The Nation, December 2019)

The text is a news article headline from The Nation newspaper. The noun youth implies the rising rate of anxiety among young generation as they are the ones who suffer the most with mental health issues. The headline implies that mental health issues are on the rise among young people in Pakistan. The headline describes mental health issues as a significant problem among young people in Pakistan. It suggests that there is a need for action to address the problem and prevent further harm to young people. In this modern competitive era, young people are engaged in a constant struggle to build their unique identity and try to adopt the toxic standards that are represented through social media platforms. They lack proper guidance that causes them to fall into the dark pit of depression. Most people feel misunderstood, isolated and hopeless. There might be other factors as well such as academic pressure, childhood trauma, lack of parental support or broken families but social media is playing a dominant role in their lives. They are confused and not able to express themselves. The emphasis on this specific social group indicates that we need to dig deeper into the root cause of the problem and facilitate youth in the best possible ways by spreading awareness regarding their issues.

"Pakistani students demand mental health services" - (The Nation, February 2020)

The text is a news article headline from The Nation news. The noun student indicates towards a specific group of society who needs help. The rate of mental health issues in students is much more higher than any other social group due to constant academic pressure and high expectations of their care takers. The headline implies that Pakistani students are demanding greater access to mental health services. The headline further suggests mental health services are essential to cope with these issues and authority should develop a well-established channel to facilitate students at every level. It suggests that Pakistani students are experiencing mental health issues and that there is a lack of resources and support to address their needs. The headline also implies that the students advocating for change and action. The call for greater access to mental health services may be linked to advocacy and activism. Moreover, it highlights that Pakistani students are well aware of mental health issues and their rights. This is a positive sign as students play a vital role in transformation of any society. It also suggests that students are devoid of mental health facilities.

"Experts urge Government to focus on mental health amid Covid-19 pandemic" - (Dunya News, May 2020)

This is a headline from Dunya News, a Pakistani news channel. It indicates towards the social and political context of mental health in Pakistan during the Covid-19 pandemic. The lexical item urge emphasizes towards the negligence of government regarding mental health issues. The headline implies that mental health needs to be a priority for the government during the pandemic as people are isolated. The headline depicts mental health as an area of concern during the Covid-19 pandemic in Pakistan. It suggests that the pandemic has had a negative impact on mental health and that there is a need for greater attention and resources to address the issue. Mental health as an area of concern during the pandemic is related to broader social structures in Pakistani society that includes the impact of the pandemic on mental health, stigma and mental health resources.

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"Mental health problems spike in Pakistan amid Covid-19 pandemic" - (The Express Tribune, July 2020)
The text is a news article headline from The Express Tribune, a Pakistani English newspaper. The lexical item spike implies that mental health problems have increased during the pandemic in Pakistan. The headline depicts mental health problems as a key issue during the Covid-19 pandemic in Pakistan. It suggests that the pandemic has had a negative impact on mental health and that there is a need for greater attention to shed light on this issue The spike in mental health problems is due the the impact of the pandemic on lives of people and the lack of support.

"Mental health awareness campaign launched in Pakistan" - (Pakistan Observer, March 2021)
The text is a news headline from Pakistan Observer, a Pakistani English daily newspaper. The headline implies that a mental health awareness campaign has been launched in Pakistan. The headline represents that mental health awareness as a priority in Pakistan. The headline also depicts efforts being made to promote change and action. The mental health awareness campaign may be linked to wider power relations such as advocacy and activism and public pressure to address the issue. Moreover, it is a positive sign to end the stigma related to mental illness. This headline can be viewed as an initiative to facilitate the people who are struggling in silence.

"Mental health challenges for women in Pakistan" - (Dawn, June 2021)
This is a news article headline from Dawn, a Pakistani English daily newspaper. The headline implies that women in Pakistan face specific challenges when it comes to mental health. The emphasis on women suggests that women have to face more challenges as they are subjugated by patriarchal norms. They often face domestic violence and as the notions of shame and reputation are attached with them, they remain voiceless to maintain familial unity. The continuous pressure and pain results in various mental health issues such as anxiety, postpartum depression, stress etc. This headline constructs mental health challenges as a gendered issue in Pakistani society. It suggests that women face specific challenges when it comes to mental health and that there is a need for greater attention and resources to address these challenges. The headline also implies that there are power dynamics at play, with women being affected by broader gender dynamics in society. The construction of mental health challenges as a gendered issue is related to broader social structures and power relations in Pakistani society, including social and cultural norms, lack of awareness and education and inadequate mental health resources provided to women. These structures reinforce the marginalization of women with mental illness and contribute to the perpetuation of stigmatizing discourses. The gendered aspect of mental health challenges may also be linked to wider power relations such as patriarchal structures and gender inequality in society.

Discussion
The analysis of the Pakistani English newspaper article headlines on mental health revealed several prevalent stigmatizing discourses of mental illness. These discourses were identified through the coding of the text using the CDA framework and were further analysed using the three-dimensional model of CDA. The prevalent stigmatizing discourses of mental illness identified in the newspapers included labelling, pathologizing, stereotyping and marginalizing. This form of labelling reinforces negative attitudes towards people with mental illness and perpetuates stigmatizing beliefs and stereotypes. Pathologizing was another prevalent discursive practice in the newspapers, with mental illness often being portrayed as a medical problem that requires medical treatment. This form of pathologizing reinforces the idea that mental illness is an abnormal and undesirable condition and that people with mental illness are somehow different from "normal" people. Stereotyping was also found to be prevalent in the newspapers, with people with mental illness often being portrayed as dangerous, unpredictable and violent. This form of stereotyping reinforces negative attitudes towards people with mental illness and perpetuates the idea that they are a threat to society.

Furthermore, marginalizing was another prevalent discursive practice, with people with mental illness often being portrayed as socially and economically disadvantaged. This form of marginalizing reinforces the idea that people with mental illness are somehow inferior or disadvantaged and perpetuates the social exclusion and discrimination they face. Overall, the analysis of the newspapers revealed that stigmatizing discourses of mental illness are pervasive in Pakistani English newspapers and are reinforced through various linguistic, discursive and social practices. The prevalence of stigmatizing discourses highlights the need for more effective policies, practices and interventions aimed at reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan and promoting a more inclusive and

empathetic understanding of mental illness and people with mental illness. The analysis also unfolded several cultural and social factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan, such as cultural norms, beliefs and power relations. These factors intersect with the discursive practices identified and contribute to the perpetuation of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness. The results also revealed some positive initiatives regarding mental health issues.

Results

This study of the Pakistani English newspaper article headlines unfolded several prominent stigmatizing discourses of mental illness. These discourses were analysed through the coding of the text using the CDA framework. The prominent stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in the newspapers included labelling, pathologizing, stereotyping and marginalizing. This form of labelling paves the way for negative attitudes towards people with mental illness and perpetuates stigmatizing beliefs as well as norms. Pathologizing was another prevalent discursive practice in the newspapers, with mental illness often being depicted as a medical problem that requires medical treatment. This form of pathologizing reinforces the notion that mental illness is an abnormal and undesirable condition and that people with mental illness are somehow different from "normal" people. In addition, stereotyping was also found to be dominant in the newspapers, with people with mental illness often being portrayed as unpredictable and violent. This type of stereotyping perpetuates negative attitudes towards people with mental illness and promotes the toxic idea that they are a threat to society.

Similarly, marginalizing was another frequent discursive practice with people with mental illness often being depicted as socially and economically disadvantaged. This form of marginalizing promotes the notion that people with mental illness are somehow inferior or disadvantaged and perpetuates the social exclusion and discrimination they face. Overall, the analysis of the newspapers unfolded that stigmatizing discourses of mental illness are pervasive in Pakistani English newspapers and are perpetuated through various linguistic, discursive and social practices. The prevalence of these discourses sheds light on the need for more effective policies and interventions aimed at reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan and promoting a more empathetic understanding of mental illness and people with mental illness. The analysis also revealed several cultural and social factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan such as cultural norms, beliefs and power relations. These factors intersect with the discursive practices identified and contribute to the perpetuation of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness. The findings also revealed some positive initiatives regarding mental health issues.

In addition, addressing these broader social and cultural factors is significant in reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan and promoting more inclusive and empathetic attitudes towards mental illness and people with mental illness. The results of this study have important implications for the media in Pakistan as well as for mental health policies and practices. The media can play a more positive as well as vital role in promoting, understanding and reducing stigma towards mental illness by adopting more responsible and inclusive practices that prioritize accuracy, empathy and inclusion. Moreover, mental health practices can be constructed to address the broader social and cultural factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan and to promote a more comprehensive as well as inclusive understanding of mental illness.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study aimed to explore the prevalence and nature of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in Pakistani English newspapers using the three-dimensional model of CDA. The analysis of newspaper article headlines revealed several prevalent stigmatizing discourses related to mental illness. The prevalence of stigmatizing discourses highlights the need for more effective policies and practices aimed at reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan. The analysis also revealed several cultural and social factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan. The findings of the study have important implications for the media in Pakistan as well as for mental health policies and practices. The findings also revealed some positive initiatives regarding mental health. The media can play a more positive role in promoting understanding and reducing stigma towards mental illness by adopting more responsible and inclusive practices that prioritize accuracy, empathy, and inclusion. Mental health policies and practices can be designed to address the broader social and cultural factors that contribute to mental health stigma in Pakistan and to promote a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of mental illness and people with mental illness. The study contributes to the

broader literature on mental health and stigmatization in Pakistan by providing a detailed analysis of the role of the media in shaping public attitudes and perceptions towards mental illness.

By using the three-dimensional model of CDA, the study provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the ways in which stigmatizing discourses of mental illness are represented and reinforced in Pakistani English newspapers. The study has several limitations including the sample size and the focus on English-language newspapers only. Further research is needed to explore the prevalence and nature of stigmatizing discourses of mental illness in other forms of media and in different languages in Pakistan. In conclusion, the study highlights the need for more effective policies, practices and interventions aimed at reducing mental health stigma in Pakistan and promoting a more inclusive and empathetic understanding of mental illness and people with mental illness. The study provides valuable insights into the role of the media in shaping public attitudes and perceptions towards mental illness in Pakistan. It can inform the development of more effective and responsible media practices as well as more comprehensive and inclusive mental health policies and practices.

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