Usage of Slang in Bangladeshi Dramas: An Overview of Viewers' Perspectives

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the influence of slang on audience behavior and its persuasive effects on individuals. A quantitative method, especially a survey was employed to investigate the impact of slang on viewer behavior, with 103 participants. This study focuses on examining the impact of slang within the context of Bangladeshi dramas. The concerning aspects of slang used in dramas, whereas, among all respondents, 59.2% agreed that contents on YouTube incorporate slang, with comedy dramas accounting for 68.9% of this usage. Furthermore, 49.5% of the dramas analysed use slang during the scenes of controversy. Some 46.6% of the viewers surveyed in this study expressed their belief that the younger generation adopts and imitates slang. The study also highlights the negative consequences associated with slang usage in dramas. The respondents said that 47.6% of the slang portrayed in dramas exhibits a malicious attitude towards women. Moreover, 93.2% of the participants claimed that slang contribute to the destruction of standard Bangla language. Additionally, 45.6% of the respondents opined that uses of slang in dramas encourage cyberbullying in society.

Keywords: audience behavior, Slang, Drama, Behavior, Viewers, Bangladesh.

Introduction

Drama serves as a distinct tool for delving into and portraying human behavior, emotions, and sentiments. It illuminates societal dynamics through a theatrical approach that allows spectators to perceive themselves within the performances (Helal, 2014). Following the 1990s, Bangladesh underwent a significant media expansion, coinciding with the initiation of media privatization. This period witnessed the emergence of numerous private television channels, marking the inception of their operations. The era also saw a surge in the popularity of television dramas (Haider & Samin, 2017). The excessive usage of informal expressions of language, or substandard language, is a noticeable trend in several television content.

There are three political standards for language: official standard, non-standard, and substandard. Slang is another term for poor language (John, 2022). Slang comprises a set of words or phrases carrying distinctive, uncommon, or sometimes even counterintuitive meanings, as employed by individuals within a specific subculture (Kuraedah & Azaliah, 2016). Slang language is first used in 1980 as a group language as their group secret code or cipher (Maulidiya et al., 2021). In 2013, Bangladesh launched a third-generation internet service (3G), and new media such as Facebook, YouTube, and OTT platforms became popular. Slang began to be used on social media, initially, but continued to grow until now it has been used in everyday life (Maulidiya et al., 2021). Over the last few years, Over- the-top (OTT) has become more popular due to the extent of the internet. OTT platforms produce and release web series, dramas, movies, reality shows, etc. It is becoming apparent that the attraction to traditional television viewing is declining amongst Bangladeshi youths (Rashid, 2022). In 2017, the Bangladeshi drama titled *Abashik Hotel* pioneered the introduction of slang through its release on YouTube (Bulbul, 2021). Media has the power to influence the viewers and the opinion of the viewers. It can bring significant change to the society that can develop and demolish society (Lippmann, 1946). For filmmakers, the utilization of slang has gained heightened popularity, with some resorting to portraying violence and profanities as convenient paths to success. Employing unfiltered Bangla slang purely for attention-grabbing purposes is a stance that should find little favor, particularly in situations where its necessity is questionable. It is worth acknowledging that due to the relatability of online web shows and video content, the younger generation is prone to imitating and internalizing such language (Raza et al., 2018).

Television exposure has more effect on people`s judgment, attitudes, thoughts, and perception of the world than on their behavior in society (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Interesting to note that television contents have an impact on the viewers. The message is received by the audiences and it influences their daily decisions (Raza et al., 2018). As a result, it has a significant impact on behavioral changes in today's youths. It not only makes them aggressive in their behaviors and thoughts, but it is also likely to draw them to the visual elements that frequently accompany such languages, such as smoking, drinking, drugs, nudity, and vulgarity, which are also frequently shown in these online web shows. This exposes children to a wide range of unhealthy habits at a young age. As a result, the popularity of Bangla dramas grew. While popularizing dramas, various types of slang and suggestive language are used. The majority of them are misogynistic and extremely offensive to women. The purpose of uncontrolled entertainment

provided by television programs is to increase their viewership to earn more and more money and fame. Programs in which women are portrayed as a showpiece to attract viewers are the result of this desire for fame (Perry et al., 1997).The study will investigate how the slang used in Bangladeshi dramas affect the audience behavior.

Significance of the Study

Drama is not only a source of entertainment, but it also has the potential to effect social change. Various problems and solutions to the ups and downs of society emerge through the dramas. Its primary goal is to provide educational and pure content via entertainment. This type of riveting drama is unusual in modern dramas. Most dramas feature light-hearted stories with hints of romance. Beside entertainment, thoughts to ponder were provided. Our dramas have gained popularity not only within the country but also beyond its borders in neighbouring countries. To watch our dramas clearly, people in India's border areas used to connect bells and bowls to the antenna in the 1990s. Family members used to enjoy playing together at home then (Bulbul, 2021). The audience used to keep records of the television drama's broadcast schedule. The storytelling style of dramas has changed over time as television media has expanded. The majority of modern dramas contain vulgarity, improper pronunciation, language perversion, and slang language, which is ironic if you watch them with your family (Rahman, 2022). However, the dress and language of today's television media are straying from the norm. This impure and indecent practice is also beginning to hurt our society. It has had such a negative impact that young people continue to engage in it (Bulbul, 2021). The key objectives of this study are the followings:

- To explore the influence of slang in Bangladeshi dramas on audience behavior.
- To analyze the characteristics of slang as used in dramas.
- To investigate how the audience interprets the slang terms within the narratives

Literature Review

A study was conducted titled *Check this One Out Analysing Slang Usage* among *Iranian Male and Female Teenagers* that focused on the effect of age and sex on the variability of slang usage method used in this paper is a qualitative approach with a sample size of 60. According to the researcher, high school students use slang more frequently than other age groups. He also found that young Iranians, both male and female, use slang as a badge

of identity, despite the popular belief that slang are only used by boys (Shahraki & Rasekh, 2011). The study's findings clearly show that over the last 8 to 10 years, there has been a noticeable shift in our traditional culture and that this move is likely to continue. Though all of this change is not merely due to the effects of satellite TV, it is playing a significant role because this medium provides the most exposure to foreign culture. This cultural shift has significant marketing implications. Marketing efforts today, such as product/service design, appropriate placement, pricing, and promotion strategy, must be focused on the context of recent cultural changes (Shamsher & Abdullah, 2012).

Another study was conducted on the use of slang words in everyday conversation among junior high school students. The researcher applied theories proposed by Yule (1985), Potter (1997), O'Grady and Guzman, and, Gerber (1968). The researcher explored eleven groups of morphological processes in this study where coinage was used 30.36% of the time, blending was used 20.14% of the time, and borrowing was used 13.19% of the time. He also showed how students used slang to say something firstly, express anger, confuse others, and laugh or have fun (Pradianti, 2013). This study was based on a case study. It can be elevated to multiple datasets for various reasons or locations. Another study titled *use of English slang words in informal communication among 8th semester English Department students at Binus University*, focused on the use of English slang in communication. This study used a qualitative method with a sample size of 30. The research found that more than half of the respondents use slang to save time when talking, texting, or tweeting. The most common source of obtaining English slang words is television and film (Muhartoyo & Wijaya, 2014). The study's limitations include a small data set and a small area. It can be expanded to include multiple data sets for different locations or areas.

This paper's work focuses on the impact of television dramas from the perspective of the audience. The goal of this paper is to understand how the rapid process of cultural globalization culturally influences Malaysia's television industry and Malays. In this study, data is collected through content analysis. The study's findings revealed that, as cultural globalization progressed, Malaysian prime-time television dramas portrayed values that are more Western and lifestyles. According to the content analysis study, most of these dramas portray the younger generation as predominantly promoting a culture of consumerism, which is very materialistic, individualistic, and aggressive (Mustaffa & Salleh, 2014). A study that focuses on the impact of slang on the young generation's use of the Indonesian language. This paper's method includes a qualitative research approach. The researchers show in this study that slang has both positive

and negative effects on users. The research showed that as teenagers get older, their use of slang becomes more creative. However, the negative effects of slang can make it challenging for users to properly use slang Indonesian standards (Kuraedah & Azaliah, 2016). This manuscript's limitation or research gap is that it does not investigate the impact of slang on the behavior of the younger generation.

Trimastuti (2017) conducted a study on the use of slang in social media communication. The method used in this paper includes a descriptive qualitative approach and data collection through observation. The research found that teenagers used a type of slang language called 'Alay' in conversation. The Alay language has caused significant errors in Basha Indonesia. This research manuscript's limitation or research gap is limited to abbreviation, alphabet changing, and irregular capitalization. This paper's data set is small, but it can be expanded. Pakistani private television dramas promote anti-social, anti-cultural behavior, and offensive language. This study demonstrates that violent behavior is prominent in dramas. They also noticed a lot of offensive language or verbal violence in the drama. It was based on a 13-week content analysis of two drama serials (Faiz et al., 2020). This study concentrated on four dramas from two channels. It was not nearly enough. *Impact of Re-Enactment-Based Crime Shows on Pakistani Private Channels on Youth* is an area of another investigation. Through the distribution of the questionnaire and their responses, a sample of 100 respondents was obtained for this study utilizing a survey approach. It was surprising to discover from the narrative that many young people thought that violence and offensive language were appropriate given the setting of the re-enactment show. A sizable proportion of young survey respondents considered the display of love, passion, flirting, prostitution, sexual activity, and rape to be both seductive and uninteresting (Bhatti et al., 2020). The work in this paper is focused on the impact of Bangla political cinema on the young generation in Bangladesh. They discuss films that reflect social, political, and social developments and contribute to the shaping of reality. It was conducted with a small group of people chosen by the authors, who were interviewed and then completed a closed-ended questionnaire. This research paper entirely devotes itself to a disciplined line of systematic activities to exhibit the essence of political films in Bangladesh and how they manifest the emotions of the people of Bangladesh. The politics of Bangladesh are deeply influenced by the caliber of the media. Political films play an essential part in constructing a chain of impressions among the people of this country (Islam et al., 2021).

This study focuses solely on how viewers' behavior and understanding are affected by the use of slang in Bangladeshi dramas. The previous

researches have examined the usages of slang across a variety of demographics and contexts, including everyday conversation, social media interactions, and international television content. None of the studies have particularly looked into how dramas' slang affect audience behavior and interpretation.

Methods

This research employs two methodologies—qualitative and quantitative. A concise overview of both approaches is described in the following lines. The quantitative research approach is usually interested in determining how people interpret their experiences. Theoretical hypotheses are tested in quantitative research by determining the relationship between various variables. The phenomenon is generalized to use variables in this method. The data is analysed while maintaining objectivity. Data collection and statistical analysis are carried out using numerical methods. (Flick, 2022).

In this study, a quantitative research approach was employed. The selection of this method was influenced by factors including the research topic, its attributes, data availability, the researcher's proficiency, time constraints, and other relevant considerations.

Population

The study targets individuals within the study population who are consistent viewers of Bangla dramas and are enrolled as students in public universities in Bangladesh. The age range of this group spans from 18 to 30 years.

Sources of Data

The study encompasses an exploration of both data types. While the primary data are drawn from Bangladeshi drama viewers, the secondary data are derived from existing literature that include articles, books, periodicals, online resources, and annual reports.

Sampling Technique

The research employed a probability sampling technique, specifically simple random sampling, for the investigation.

Sample Size and Area

The research encompasses approximately 103 participants, all of whom are public university students in Bangladesh. Inclusion criteria comprise individuals who are 18 years of age or older, and university students in Bangladesh and regular viewers of Bangla dramas. The exclusion criteria pertain to individuals are aged below 18 years, and above 30 years.

Questionnaire Types and Design

The questionnaire exclusively comprises closed-ended questions. The initial segment serves as an introduction, outlining the research survey's objectives and subject. The subsequent portion entails 20 structured inquiries designed for data collection.

Data Collection Methods

Data is gathered through an online Google Forms survey, employing a survey questionnaire to obtain quantitative data.

Theoretical Framework

The idea behind social learning theory is that people can acquire knowledge from each other by watching, imitating, and modelling. Social learning theory is a way of thinking that is based on imitating or copying what other people do. Albert Bandura, a psychologist, came up with the idea, which combines ideas from the behaviorist and cognitive learning approaches. Bandura said that people can learn from what they see without having to copy what they see (Bandura, 1959). He looked into self-directed behavior more. Social learning theories add context and the learner's interaction with the environment to explain adult behavior. Bandura proposed that people learn through observation, imitation, and modelling and that attention, motivation, attitudes, and emotions affect how people learn. The theory explains how the environment and the way people think affect how people learn (Hammer & Lee, 2011). The core of social learning theory is made up of three main ideas. The first is that people can learn from what they see. The next idea is that the way people feel inside is an important part of this process. As per social learning theory, individuals learn by observing the behaviors of others (models). They then evaluate the effect of those behaviors by observing the positive and negative sequences that follow (Fakhruddin et al., 2022). As per social learning theory, individuals learn by observing the behaviors of others (models). They then evaluate the effect of those behaviors by observing the positive and negative consequences that follow (Griffin, 1997). Learning a language needs observation, a model or native speaker to follow, by following technique people learn slang language. In order to learn a language, it is important to consider some things such as listening, and speaking. It is necessary for us to follow methods when mimic a slang language. Thus, this study can be viewed as an application of social learning theory.
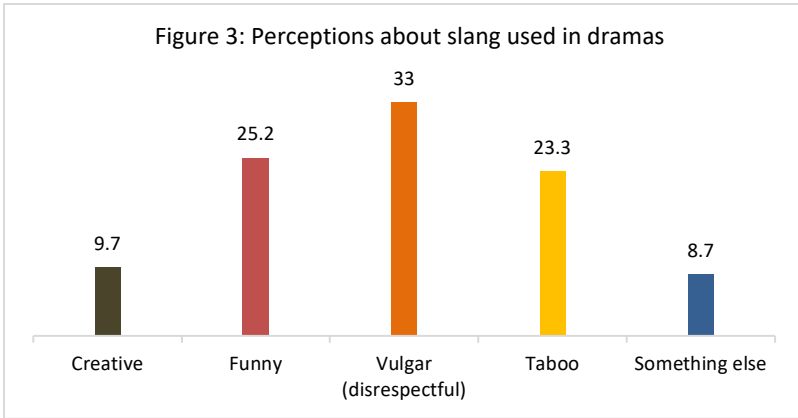
Data Analysis & Interpretation

The study comprised 103 participants, consisting of 76.7% males and 23.3% females, all of whom were university students in Bangladesh. Among the respondents, the majority (93.1%, n = 96) fell within the age range of 18-25 years, while a smaller proportion (6.9%, n = 7) was aged between 25-30 years. In terms of educational attainment, 76.6% individuals held graduate degrees, 17.5% possessed post-graduate qualifications, and 5.8% was undergraduate students. Thus, the study primarily included participants with graduate-level education. Of the respondents, 98.1 percent watch Bangla Dramas, and only 1.9 percent do not watch Bangla Dramas.

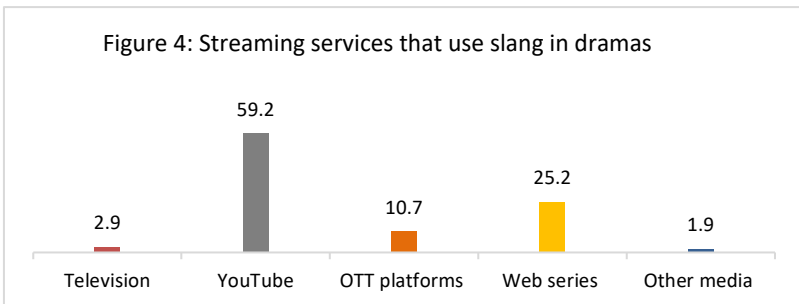Figure 1: Time spent in a week to watch Bangla dramas
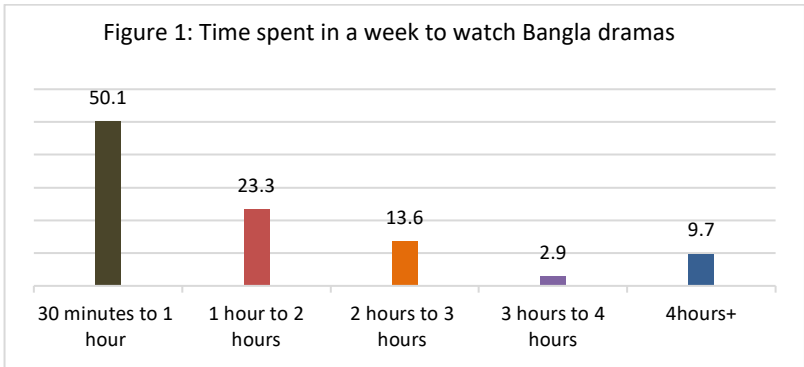
The bar chart above demonstrates that most of the viewers, nearly 50.1 percent, spend 30 minutes to one hour watching Bangla Dramas in a week while 23.3 percent of the respondents spend one hour to two hours watching dramas. On the other hand, 13.6 percent of the viewers spend two hours to three hours watching dramas while 2.9 percent spend three hours to four hours on this purpose. Some 9.7 percent of the viewers spend more than four hours in a week watching Bangla dramas.

Figure 2: Devices Used to Watching Dramas
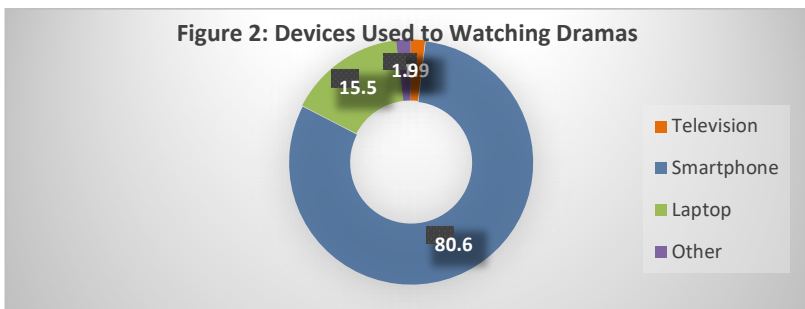
The pie chart above indicates that 80.6 percent viewers use smartphones to watch Bangla dramas while 15.5 percent of the viewers use laptops for watching dramas. Some 1.9 percent respondents use television sets to watch drama and 1.9 percent use others devices to watch drama. The survey results find that 89.3 percent of the viewers identify the usages of slang in Bangla dramas. However, 10.7 percent of the viewers do not identify the usages of slang in Bangla dramas.

Figure 3: Perceptions about slang used in dramas

| Creative	Funny	Vulgar (disrespectful)	Taboo	Something else
9.7	25.2	33	23.3	8.7

The chart above shows that most of the viewers, which is 33 percent of the respondents, mark the slang used in Bangla dramas as vulgar (disrespectful). On the other hand, 25.2 percent of the respondents identify the slang used in dramas as funny and 23.3 percent of the viewers see it as taboo. Only 9.7 percent of the respondents find slang as creative and 8.7 percent of the viewers consider the slang used in dramas as something else.

Figure 4: Streaming services that use slang in dramas

| Television	YouTube	OTT platforms	Web series	Other media
2.9	59.2	10.7	25.2	1.9

According to the above chart, 59.2 percent of the survey participants agree that slang are the commonly streamed contents on YouTube dramas. While
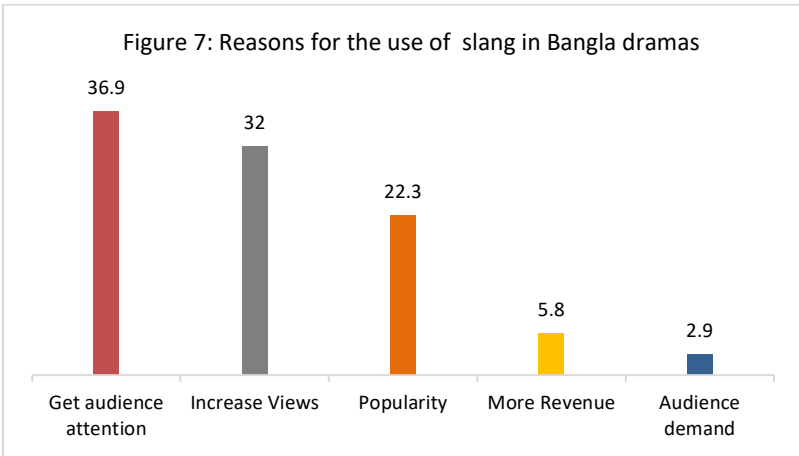
the web series dramas, according to 25.2 percent respondents, secured the second position in terms of using slang, 10.7 percent of the survey participants find that OTT platforms comes third in case of using slang.
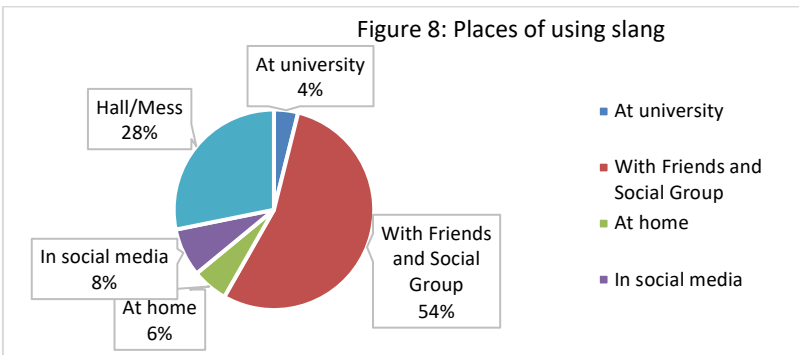
Figure 5: Genres that use slang the most
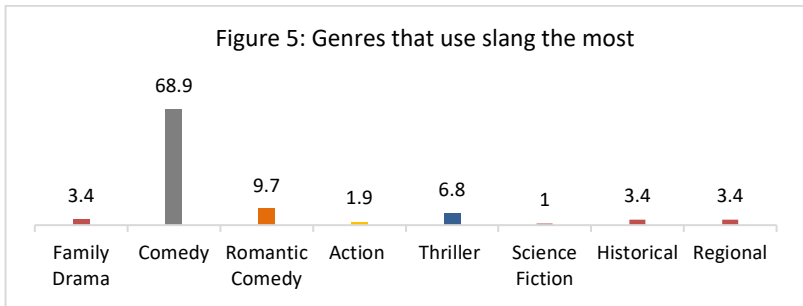
The majority of the respondents, approximately 68.9 percent, consider that slang are used in comedy dramas the most. However, the second-highest percent of respondents, 9.7percent, think that slang are the most likely utilized in romantic comedies. According to 6.8 percent of respondents, slang are used the most in thriller dramas. Some 3.4 percent of respondents said that family, historical, and local dramas use slang the most. Some 1.9 percent of respondents believe that action dramas use slang the most.

Figure 6: Time to use slang in Drama
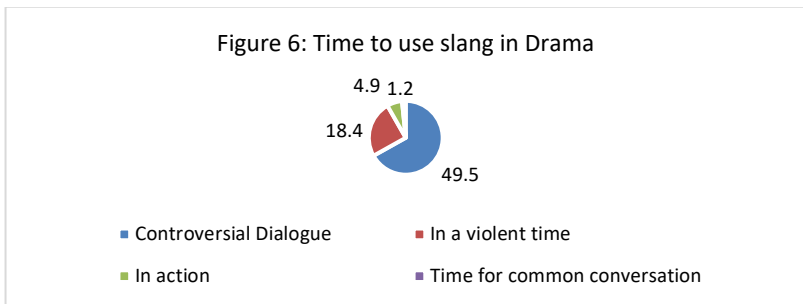
The chart above indicates that most of the respondents, which is 49.5 percent, think that slang are used during controversial dialogues in the dramas, while the second highest 27.2 percent of the total respondents think that slang are used during the time of general conversations. Some 18.4 percent of the participants think that slang are used during violence in the dramas. On the other hand, only 4.9 percent of the participants think that slang are used during the actions in dramas.

Figure 7: Reasons for the use of slang in Bangla dramas

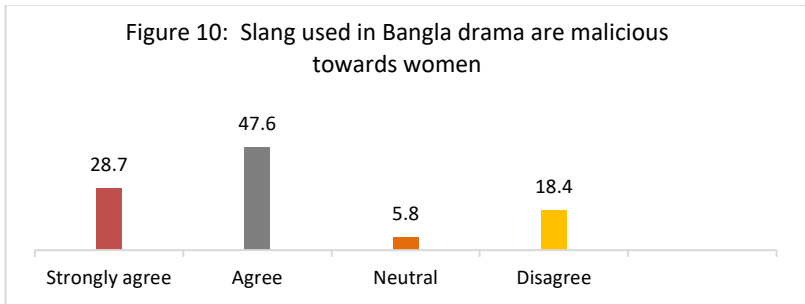|	
Get audience attention	36.9
Increase Views	32
Popularity	22.3
More Revenue	5.8
Audience demand	2.9

The bar chart shows that 36.9 percent of the respondents think that slang are used in dramas to attract the attention of the audiences. On the other hand, 32 percent of the participants think that slang are used to increase the view of the contents. According to the 22.3 percent of the respondents, slang are used in dramas to increase popularity of the dramas. While 5.8 percent of the respondents think that slang are used to audience demand, 2.9 percent of the participants think that slang are used in dramas for profit. Of the total survey respondents, 41.7 percent think that Bangla dramas are still enjoyed with family members, and in peer groups. On the other hand, 58.3 percent participants think that Bangla dramas are no longer watched with family members and peers. Of the total survey respondents, 35 percent say that they use slang in their communications while 65 percent of the total respondents say that they do not use slang in their communications.

Figure 8: Places of using slang

At university 4%
Hall/Mess 28%
In social media 8%
At home 6%
With Friends and Social Group 54%

Legend:
- At university
- With Friends and Social Group
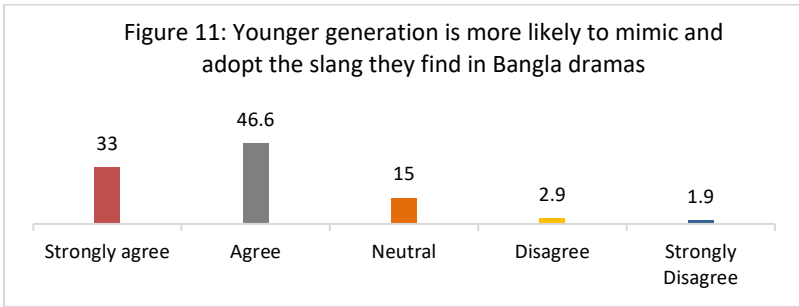- At home
- In social media

The bar chart above shows that 54.4 percent of the total respondents use slang with their friends and social groups, whereas 28.2 percent of the participants use slang in their dormitories or mess areas. Some 7.4 percent of the respondents use slang on social media platforms whereas 5.8 percent participants use slang at their homes.

Figure 9: Negetive effects of slang on viewers' behavior

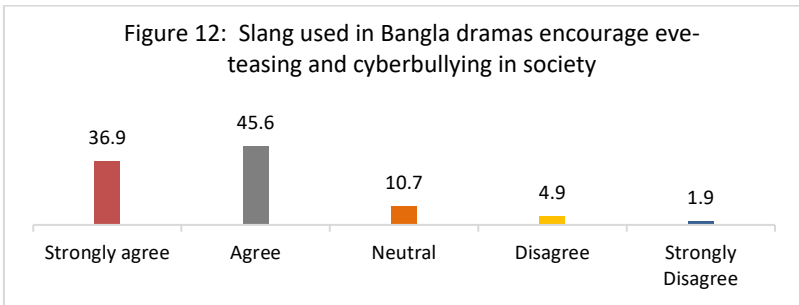|	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	46.6	36.9	7.8	7.8	1
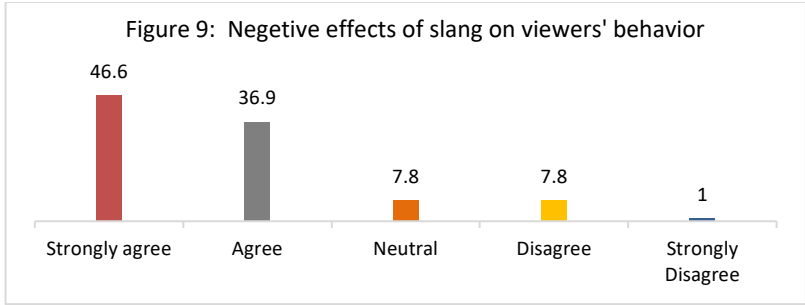
The examination of the bar graph above reveals that 46.6 percent of the total respondents strongly agree and 36.9 percent of the respondents agree that slang used in dramas leave negative influence over audiences' behaviors. On the other hand, 7.8 percent of the respondents disagree that slang leave a negative effect on viewers' behaviors.

Figure 10: Slang used in Bangla drama are malicious towards women

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
	28.7	47.6	5.8	18.4

The bar chart above demonstrates that 47.6 percent of the respondents agree and 28.7 percent of the respondents strongly agree with the notion that slang used in Bangla dramas are malicious towards women. In contrast, 5.8 percent of the respondents disagree with it while 18.4 percent of the respondents are neutral about it.

Figure 11: Younger generation is more likely to mimic and adopt the slang they find in Bangla dramas

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
33	46.6	15	2.9	1.9

The bar graph above shows that 46.6 percent of the survey respondents agree and 33 percent strongly agree with the proposition that youths mimic and follow the slang that they watch in Bangla dramas in their real lives. In contrast, 2.9 percent of the survey respondents disagree with the proposition that youths follow and mimic the slang that they see in dramas in their real lives. Of the total respondents, 93.2 percent think that the slang used in Bangla dramas damage the dignity and purity of the Bangla language.

Figure 12: Slang used in Bangla dramas encourage eve-teasing and cyberbullying in society

Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36.9	45.6	10.7	4.9	1.9

The bar chart above shows that 45.6 percent of the respondents agree and 36.9 percent of the respondents stronglyagreed with the proposition that slang used in Bangla dramas encourage eve-teasing, cyberbullying, and vulgar gestures in the societies. While 10.7 percent of the respondents are neutral to this proposition, 4.9 percent of the respondents disagree with it.

Findings and Discussion

The research findings present a picture of the uses of slang in Bangla dramas and its impact in the society. The study attempted to examine the prevalence of slang in Bangla dramas, perceptions of viewers about slang, and the potential consequences of the usages of slang used in dramas in terms of maintaining social norms and cultural values. The research

underscores the widespread incorporation of slang in Bangla dramas, with a staggering 83.3% of dramas featuring such language. This prevalence extends to online platforms, particularly YouTube dramas, where 59.2% of productions incorporate slang. This ubiquity suggests a normalization of slang within the entertainment industry, possibly reflecting its usage trends in broader society.

Besides, almost all respondents (98.1%) could identify slang; a notable portion finds it vulgar (33%) or taboo (23.3%). These findings reveal a complex interplay between entertainment preferences and moral sensibilities, indicating that while slang may attract viewership, it can also alienate segments of the audiences. The study also sheds light on the broader societal implications of slang usage. It indicates that a significant proportion of the audience (35%) incorporates slang into everyday communications, with peer groups (54.4%) being the primary context for its use. Moreover, a considerable portion of respondents (46.6%) believe that slang influences audience behavior, suggesting a potential reinforcement of certain attitudes or behaviors through media representation.

The concerning aspect of the usage of slang regards the portrayal of women in Bangla dramas. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents associate slang with a malicious attitude towards women, expressing apprehensions about its role in perpetuating eve-teasing, cyberbullying, or other forms of harassment. This underscores the need for a nuanced examination of how language shapes gender dynamics and contributes to broader societal norms. A significant majority of the respondents (93.2%) express concerns about the erosion of Bangla language purity and dignity due to slang usage in dramas. This raises important questions about the preservation of linguistic heritage and cultural identity in the face of evolving media trends. Moreover, over half of the participants (56.8%) believe that the negative impact of slang has led to a decline in family or group viewership of Bangla dramas, pointing to potential repercussions for cultural cohesion and collective experiences.

Conclusion
This research has been carried out with a substantial number of participants who are viewers of Bangla dramas, rendering the results derived from the analysis highly significant within this domain. Upon concluding the data examination, it becomes evident that the utilization of slang language in Bangla dramas exerts an adverse influence on audience behaviors. The repercussions extend not only to audience conduct but also to the integrity and sanctity of Bangla language. This study sheds light on the rationales, characteristics, and cultural implications of slang embedded in Bangla

dramas. Consequently, this research holds enhanced pertinence and suitability. Furthermore, it underscores the necessity for further exploration in this particular area.

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