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The Contrast Portrayals of American and Pakistani Culture in *The Big Sick* Movie

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the cultural stereotypes between American and Pakistani that are portrayed in The Big Sick (2017) movie. This study uses a qualitative method with a Cultural Studies approach. The analysis is done by looking at the characteristics of American and Pakistani characters by using the theory of characterization from Boggs and the theory of representation by Stuart Hall to present the cultural stereotype issues that appear in the movie (Hall, 1997). The cultural stereotype of the American and Pakistani culture is presented by some American characters (Emily and her family) and some Pakistani characters (Kumail and his family) of The Big Sick movie.

The result of the study shows that the characteristics of Pakistani characters are religious and deceitful, while the characteristics of American characters are smart and straightforward. Furthermore, through the analysis of the characters' characteristics, the writers found the cultural stereotype in the movie. Pakistani characters are associated with conservatism and close-mindedness. On the contrary, American characters are associated with modernism and open-mindedness. It can be concluded that in this movie, American culture is depicted as more positive than Pakistani.

Keywords: Cultural Stereotypes, Representation, Characterization, Multicultural Society.

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Introduction

The cultural stereotype is still very interesting to discuss because it remains to exist in a multicultural society. According to Josefová, multicultural society is made up of people from different nations, cultures, origins, religions, ethnics, races and languages (Josefová, 2014). All ethnic groups, as (Thompson, Taylor L, 2016) argues, are associated with various set of traits or characteristics; thus, each ethnic group holds its traits of stereotype. For example, based on the result of Katz and Braly's research in 1933 that explores the traits of stereotypes which attributed to various ethnics and nationalities, Americans are associated



with intelligence, ambition, and straightforwardness; while Chinese are associated with conservatism, deceit, and loyalty to family ties (Blankestijn, 2015).

Commonly, the cultural stereotype can be found in a Western nation, such as America, in which the indigenous people consciously or unconsciously will give negative stigma to the immigrants, especially to the Easterners, because of the cultural differences that they have. Appel, Weber, and Kronberger argued that many immigrant groups are faced with negative achievement stereotypes in the countries they live in." (Appel, 2015) In line with this, according to Schweinitz, "Standardized conceptions of people, primarily based on an individual's belonging to a category (usually race, nation, professional role, social class, or gender) or the possession of characteristic traits symbolizing one of these categories." (Schweinitz, n.d.) Stereotypes are also defined as, "The result of an individual's direct interaction with members of the same or different social group and a form of indirect learning – information gained from parents, peers, teachers, political and religious leaders, and the mass media." (Korez-Vide, 2016)

In this globalization era, mass media plays an important role in forming an individual or group's prejudice toward the target cultures by representing different portrayals of each culture. Related to this, there are many Hollywood movies that portray the issue of a cultural stereotype in which the Easterners are associated with negative traits, while the Westerners are associated with positive traits. For instance, Arabs are often portrayed as uncultured and barbaric, especially after the 9/11 attack (Alalawi, n.d.). The negative stereotypes of the Easterners in the Hollywood media might shape inaccurate perception on the Easterners, as Liu states, "The racial images portrayed and perpetuated through Hollywood films greatly affect American audiences; accuracy and objectivity of understanding minority cultures (Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Native American) are different from the 'White' culture." (Liu, 2008) Media thus greatly influences the attitudes and values of society. One of the Hollywood movies which portrayed the cultural stereotypes is *The Big Sick* (2017) movie. The movie which was directed by Michael Showalter is a romantic comedy movie that was first released on January 20, 2017, at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. Its story is written based on the actual relationship of the writers of the script: Kumail Nanjiani, a Pakistan-born stand-up comedian, and his American wife, Emily V. Gordon. The story then revolves around the cross-cultural couple who has to struggle with their cultural differences, culture clashes, and family expectations.

This movie is about Kumail, the main male character who is a stand-up comedian and also an Uber driver. He comes from a fairly traditional Pakistani family who migrated to America when he was fourteen. Although his family has lived for several years in the Western nation, they remain conservative and hold to their traditional customs, attitudes, and values. For example, his mother still always wears traditional Pakistani clothes and serves Eastern food for her family; his brother grows a thick beard because it is a common thing for Pakistani men, and his parents arrange his marriage to a young Pakistani Muslim woman who is also a common practice in Pakistan. On the contrary, Kumail was influenced by the American cultures, which was reflected through his appearance and lifestyle. He experiences significant pressures from his conservative parents that force him to become a lawyer, to be a good Pakistani Muslim, and to accept the arranged marriage. He even does not introduce his American girlfriend named Emily Gardner to his family because he is afraid that they would disown him, just like they disowned his cousin who has a relationship with a Westerner. He realizes that whatever the reason, his family would not bless his relationship with any Western woman; thus, he is forced to keep Emily a secret. On the opposite, Emily tells her

family openly to her family that she dates a Pakistani Muslim man, and her family does not take it as a big problem. When Emily finds out that he has been keeping a secret from his family, she calls off their relationship. It becomes more complicated when Emily enters a medical-induced coma after they break up. However, seeing the health of the woman he loves deteriorated, it makes him realize that he needs to take control of his own life: in his career, religion, and love life. He, therefore, decides to tell his family that he wants to pursue his career as a stand-up comedian, he is an agnostic, and he cannot marry the Pakistani Muslim woman that his parents find for him because he has dated an American woman he loves.

Here, *The Big Sick* movie portrayed the cultural stereotypes between Pakistani culture (analyzed through the portrayal of Kumail and his family) and American culture (analyzed through the portrayal of Emily and her family). It is interesting to examine the issue of cultural stereotypes in *The Big Sick* movie because the movie portrayed the Pakistani and American in really different ways: The Pakistani was portrayed in a negative way, while the American was portrayed in the positive ways. This study, therefore, aims to describe the cultural stereotypes that are portrayed in the movie.

This study is important as the movie is one of the cultural elements which does not only function as a complement of its story but also as a tool to show the creator's perspective towards the culture that is portrayed in the movie. Furthermore, despite the cultural stereotypes, the writers choose *The Big Sick* movie to be analyzed because this movie managed to get a nomination for Best Original Screenplay at the Academy Award. It also became one of the highest-grossing independent movies of 2017.

In analyzing the cultural stereotypes, the theory of representation by Stuart Hall and the theory of characterization from Boggs are used in this study. In general, representation is the production of meaning of the concepts through language (Hall, 1997). As Hall argues, there are two systems of representation. The first system is known as a conceptual map, which is "The 'system' by which all sorts of objects, people, and events are correlated with a set of concepts or *mental representation* which we carry around in our heads." (Hall, 1997) Without carrying concepts of things in our head, we could not interpret things meaningfully. Although each of us probably interprets things in an individual way, those interpretations are roughly in similar ways; thus, the conceptual maps which each of us carry around in our head are roughly the same (Hall, 1997).

To be able to communicate our conceptual maps to other people, we should translate it into a shared language; hence, language is the second system of representation (Hall, 1997). The term 'language' in this context is very broad because language which is used to represent the concepts of things is not only in the form of written words, but also in the form of spoken sounds and visual images, whether they are produced by hand, mechanical, electronic, or digital (Hall, 1997). As long as it represents meanings, everything can be considered as a language, even if it is not related to the linguistic sign. For example, we use tear to represent our sadness or happiness; traffic light uses colors to represent the traffic rules, and the musician uses music to represent their feelings. All forms of language are also called a *sign* (Hall, 1997)

Moreover, as Hall argues (1997), there are three different approaches to explain how the representation of things works through language. First, the reflective approach claims that language functions like a mirror which simply reflects the true meaning which already exists in the world of objects, people and events (Hall, 1997). Second, the intentional approach

argues that language only expresses the speaker, the author, or the painter's personal intended meaning (Hall, 1997). Third, the constructionist or constructivist approach claims that we construct meaning as social actors who use the conceptual system of our culture and the representational system in order "To make the world meaningful and to communicate about that world meaningfully to others." (Hall, 1997)

In this study, the theory of representation with the constructivist approach is used to show how *The Big Sick* movie represents the different portrayals of the two cultures (Pakistan and American) that exemplifies common cultural stereotypes of the Easterner and Westerner. The writers use this approach because the portrayals of each culture are constructed and designed through the screenplay by the creators of the movie as the social actors. Furthermore, since this study will also use the theory of characterization to reveals the cultural stereotypes in the movie, the following paragraph will explain the characterization theory.

According to Boggs, there are seven types of characterization (2008). First, characterization can be seen from appearance. Through the characters' facial features, dress, physical build, mannerism, and the way they move, the audience can make a certain assumption about the character. Second, characterization can be seen in the dialogue. As Boggs states, "Their true thoughts, attitudes, and emotions can be revealed in subtle ways through word choice and through the stress, pitch, and pause patterns of their speech." The use of grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and particular dialects, therefore, can express their characters' social and economic level, educational background, and mental processes. Third, characterization can be seen from the character's external actions; for instance, every action that the characters do reflects their real personality. The fourth is characterization through internal action. Internal action can be in the forms of character's minds and emotions which consist of secret, unspoken thoughts, daydreams, aspirations, memories, fears, and fantasies. The inner action reveals what the character imagines, remembers, or thinks about. The fifth is the characterization from leitmotif. Through the repetition of a single action, phrase, or idea by a character that becomes almost a trademark or theme song for that character, the audience can form their thought about the personality of each character. The sixth is the characterization through the reaction of other characters. As Boggs argues, "The way other characters view a person often serves as an excellent means of characterization" (2008). Last, the characterization through dramatic foils. It can deliver each character's personality by comparing two opposite characters in the same frame. From this technique, each character's attitudes, opinions, lifestyle, and physical appearance can be seen clearly.

From the background mentioned above, two research questions arise. The first is how the American and Pakistani's character are described in the movie, and the second is how the cultural stereotype between American as the West and Pakistani as the East is depicted through *The Big Sick* movie.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative method with a Cultural Studies approach. This approach looks at how cultural stereotypes in Western and Eastern cultures. The writers focused on watching the movie and collecting the data related to the issue. The analysis is conducted by looking at the characteristic of American and Pakistani characters by using the theory of characterization from Boggs. It is also done by seeing the cultural differences of each character by using the theory of representation from Stuart Hall. The characterization and representation theory is used so that the writers will be able to see the characteristics and

depictions of American and Pakistani characters; therefore, the cultural stereotypes of each culture can be seen.

Results and Discussions

Based on the aims of the study, the writers will reveal the Pakistani and American stereotypes in *The Big Sick* movie through the theory of representation and characterization. The Western is portrayed by Americans, and the Eastern is portrayed by Pakistanis. The writers first analyze Americans portrayal through the characterization of the American characters and then analyze Pakistanis portrayal through the characterization of the Pakistani characters to understand about the stereotypes of each culture. The portrayals of the Americas and Pakistani in this movie are not only depicted by their characters, but also by other aspects which are the image of each place.

A. The Characteristics of Pakistanis

Kumail as the main character of the movie is a Pakistan immigrant who moved to America with his family when he was fourteen. He is a stand-up comedian and also an Uber driver whose appearance and lifestyle contrast with his conservative family that still hold to their traditional customs, attitudes, and values even although they have lived for several years in the Western nation. The following paragraphs will explain the characteristics of Pakistani characters (Kumail and his family). The characteristics of Pakistani characters described in this study are religious and deceitful.

I. Religious

“Religious” comes from the word “Religion” which means belief in God or the power above (Jalaluddin, 2008). The religious characteristic could be seen in the form of worship and a state of soul or way of life that reflects the love or trust to God. As a Muslim family, Kumail’s Pakistani family is very religious. This characteristic is shown through the dialogues of the movie. First, at the beginning of the movie, when Kumail was performing his stand-up comedy, he sneeringly said, “We prayed a lot. Well, not a lot. Just five times a day.” By those words, he specifically addressed that his family is religious because they prayed a lot. Second, when he was having lunch with his family, his mother asked him to pray before he eats his ice cream because she did not want him to miss his obligation as a Muslim to pray five times a day. She always wanted him to be a good Muslim and to marry a Muslim woman by directly said, “There is only one thing that we have ever asked from you: that you be a good Muslim and that you marry a Pakistani girl.”

On the contrary with the religiousness of his family, Kumail has become an agnostic and has not prayed in years. He kept that as a secret from his family. When his mother asked him to pray, he just pretended and only played video games for five minutes in a room until he thought that his family would believe that he has prayed. When Kumail eventually told his family that he has just pretended to believe in Allah in front of them and has actually become an agnostic for years, his family, especially his mother was really disappointed with him. They immediately kicked him out of the family. His mother even said that he is not her son anymore because of her big disenchantment with him. Those reactions show that his family is really religious.

II. Deceitful

The second characteristic that is associated with the Pakistanis is deceitful or a liar. Angelo and John Turri stated that “A lie is a dishonest assertion. You lie if you say something

which you think is false to deceive your audience into believing it.” (Turri, Angelo, 2015) In the movie, Kumail and his family are portrayed as people who often say the opposite of the fact a dishonest assertion to make other people believe them. There are several lies that told by Kumail and his family.

First, it is shown when Kumail lied to his family that he wanted to become a lawyer just to please his parents and meet his parents’ expectations. In fact, he does not want to become a lawyer since his only dream is to become a successful stand-up comedian in America. The dialogue below showed that Kumail himself has admitted that he has lied to his family through the material for stand-up comedy that he delivered in New York.

Kumail : I was, uh, *lying to my parents*, I was telling them
I Was gonna be a lawyer. And they’re very disappointed
‘cause they wanted me to be a doctor. You guys are like, why
didn’t you just tell them that you wanted to be a doctor? It’s
a lie anyway, and I’m like, well, it has to be believable. If I
told them “I want to be a doctor,” they’d be like, “Bullshit.”
If I said “lawyer,” they’re like, “Oh, okay.” “That’s
something.”

(01:56:28 - 01:56:50)

From the dialogue above, Kumail told the audience that he was lying to his parents who wanted him to become a doctor or at least become a lawyer. This is showed by the words “*I was, uh, lying to my parents.*” Another dialogue that strengthens that he lied to his parents can be seen through the dialogue below:

Kumail’s father : So where were you last night? What were you doing?
Kumail : Nothing. I wasn’t doing anything.
Kumail’s mother : Kumail?
Kumail : All right, I’ll tell you.
Kumail’s mother : Tell.
Kumail : I was... *I was studying for the LSAT.*
Kumail’s mother : Really?
Kumail : Yup. I signed up, and if I pass, I’m going to go to law
school and become a lawyer and do law.
Kumail’s mother : Hmm.

(01:10:31 - 01:10:57)

From the dialogue above, Kumail lied to his parents again. As an excuse for his absence from the family dinner at his parents’ house, Kumail said that he should study for The Law School Admission School (LSAT) which makes him unable to go. The truth behind that lie is he visited Emily at the hospital.

Second, Kumail lied to his parents that he is still as religious as his family. In front of his family, Kumail pretended to still believe in Allah and to pray five times a day. It happened when his mother told him to pray in the middle of their lunch, he just rolled out the *sajdah*

(prayer mat) in a room where he pretended to pray, and played games on his phone for the full five minutes before he goes back to the dining room in order to make his family believe that he had prayed. In fact, he no longer believed in Allah and had become an agnostic.

Third, from the beginning of his relationship with Emily, Kumail has never told her that his parents had arranged his marriage with a Pakistan Muslim woman that his parents chose for him. He even lied about how badly his parents want to meet Emily where he keeps her a secret from his parents since he is never allowed to date a Western woman. He kept telling all the lies because he tried to keep his relationship with her. Emily's dialogue below shows Emily's disappointment over Kumail's lie.

- Emily : So, what does your mom think about you and me Then? She doesn't know about me, does she?
- Kumail : No. Emily, just...
- Emily : Fuck! Five fucking months of red flags. Oh, my God, I'm so stupid. You ducking my parents. Oh, my God, the two-day rule. That had nothing to do with it. Seriously. Red flag after red flag.
- Emily : You're such a liar. You lied to me. You lied to you parents. And those are just the people you like. Is there someone that you're not lying to? I'd love to meet them because then I could tell them what a fucking liar you are!

(00: 33:05 – 00:34:18)

Through the dialogue above, it shows that Emily believed that Kumail already told his parents about her while in fact, he was not. Kumail did that thing because he is afraid loosing his family that is still loyal to the Pakistani culture: arranged married. He realized that if he confesses to them that he is dating an American girl or even wants to marry her, his family would kick him out of the family.

Fourth, the depiction of Kumail as a liar is also seen through Kumail's parents. Kumail's mother who always set him up with a single young Pakistani Muslim woman every time he came home for the family dinner, often lied to his son to avoid a rejection from Kumail. She always said that the woman who came to their house when he was coming home just happens to drop by. The truth behind that lie is she already arranged the meeting in order to introduce the potential Pakistani bride to Kumail. The dialogues below are the evidence of it.

Kumail's mother : Everyone, this is Zubaida. *She just dropped in.*

Zubaida : Salaam.

(00:16:25 - 00:16:30)

Kumail's mother : Everybody, you remember Khadija? *She just dropped in.*

(01:11:12 - 01:11:15)

Both dialogues above show that Kumail's mother mentioned "She just dropped in" more than once. She always said it every time the Pakistani potential bride comes to their house. It clearly shows that Kumail's mother is not an honest person because she has already

set the meeting. From all the dialogues that mentioned above, it can be seen that it is not only the main Pakistani character who often lie but also his other family members.

B. The Characteristics of Americans

The portrayals of Emily and her family that will be examined in the following paragraphs will reveal the Western stereotypes portrayed in *The Big Sick* movie. Furthermore, the positive cultural stereotypes of American are shown through the dialogues and their behaviors. The characteristics of the American characters described in this study are intelligent and straightforward.

I. Intelligent

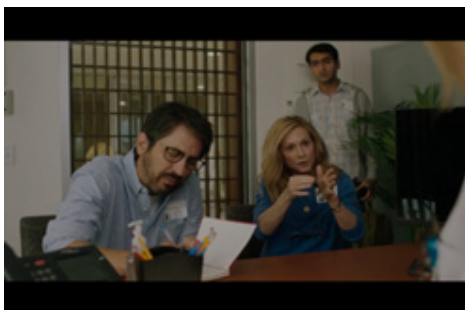
The first portrayal of this characteristic in the movie is depicted by the external action of Emily's parents. When Kumail informed Emily's parents that Emily had entered a medical-induced coma, Emily's parents immediately came from North Carolina to Chicago where she was hospitalized to accompany their daughter. At that time, she was handled by many doctors. Every time the doctors explain about her illness to her parents, they always listened to the doctor's explanation carefully, noted every detail about the illness, and also did research on the internet. They did not want their children to be handled carelessly by the doctors and nurses. They even wanted to know all the actions that the doctor will take to their daughter, from handling the disease to the medicines that will be given to Emily. Based on that action, Westerners are described as intelligent because they did not only stay and do nothing, but tried to find out, and did research. This characteristic also can be seen in the scenes below:



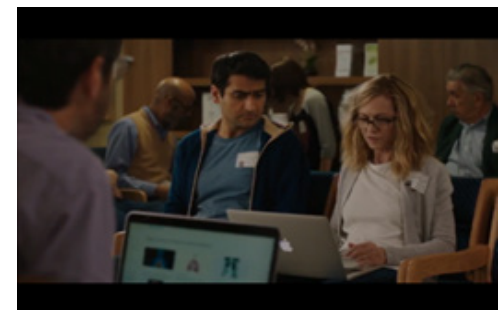
Picture 1
Emily's mother was trying to find any information about Emily's illness on the internet



Picture 2
Emily's father was taking a note



Picture 3
Emily's father was taking a note



Picture 4
Emily's mother and father were trying to find any information about Emily's illness

From the external action shown in the scenes above, the writers found that Emily's parents are intelligent people. Emily's father always notes the doctors' explanation as in the

pictures above, and Emily's mother always brings her laptop to find any information related to their daughter's illness.

II. Straightforward

By the characterization through dialogue, the straightforward characteristic can be considered as one of Westerners characteristics. According to De Rue et al., straightforward individuals are frank, honest, and sincere in their dealings with others (DeRue, D Scott, 2009). In this movie, the American characters were likely to talk straight to the point. Without sugar coating their words, they spoke what was on their hearts or minds straightforwardly to keep it simple and honest. This is in line with Park's analysis which proves that "Central and South American countries had the strongest preference for direct communication style." (Park, Hee Sun, 2012)

This characteristic can be found through Emily and her family's dialogue from several scenes. The first scene which is used as the evidence is when Emily confessed to Kumail that she has married before. In the first evidence, Emily is the one who opens the topic about marriage especially his own experience. See the dialogue below:

- Emily : I was pretty unhappy in my first marriage, and I drank a lot, and, uh, one way to cover drinking a lot is to just, like, know a lot about wine.
- Kumail : Wait. I'm sorry. What did you just say?
- Emily : That knowing a lot about wine covers for drinking a lot.
- Kumail : Uh, no, I mean the huge piece of information that you're trying just to blow right past.
- Emily : Yeah. Yeah, I was married.
- Kumail : You were married?
- Emily : Um... I was.
- (00:29:27 - 00:29:47)

The dialogue above happens when Kumail was asking Emily about how she could know a lot about wine and she honestly answered that question by saying that it happens because she was unhappy in her first marriage. She did not try to cover up her marital status to her boyfriend although she knew that it surely would make him a bit shocked since he had never known it before. Although she showed a slight doubt at first, she still answered his question honestly.

Second, the depiction of the honest characteristic can be seen through the dialogue of Emily's mother. The following dialogues occur when Emily's parents went to the bar to watch the stand-up comedy performance.

- Chris : Terry, Beth, where you guys from?
- Emily's mother : We're from North Carolina.
- Chris : Ooh. North Carolina. Tar Heel state.
- Kumail : Stop. Stop it. Oh.

- Chris : Home of Krispy Kreme donuts. What brings you to Chicago?
Emily's mother : Our daughter's in a coma.
Chris : Yeah, uh, how... What, uh...
(00:59:20 - 00:59:42)

The dialogue above took place in the public space, specifically in the bar. Chris who was opening his stand up performance in front of the audiences in the bar asked the audiences where they were come from. Chris picked Emily's parents to ask. He also asked why they come to Chicago from North Carolina; however, that was a wrong question because Emily's mother directly answered that they come because their daughter is in a coma without a slight of doubt even. She was not trying to hide that kind of sensitive matter even though she was in the public space. That answer suddenly made Chris in an awkward situation.

Third, the dialogues below take place in Kumail's apartment. The characteristic of Westerners as honest can be seen through the Emily father's dialogue. Take a look at the following dialogue:

- Emily's father : I told Beth right away. I had to. She was devastated. And now she hates me.
(01:21:11 - 01:21:19)

At that time, Emily's father was having a night-conversation with Kumail. Emily's father confessed to Kumail that he had an affair with his colleague. Through the dialogue, it can be seen clearly that after he slept with the other woman, he right away confessed what he already did to his wife. Even though he realized that her wife would hate him for that, he wanted to be completely honest and real to the person he loves by confessing the truth. All those actions and confessions of Emily and her parents make them classified as honest and straightforward.

C. Cultural Stereotype Between Pakistani and American

Based on the analysis above about the characteristics of Pakistanis and Americans in *The Big Sick* movie, the writers found that the movie depicted cultural stereotype of each culture. In the movie, the West is described as more positive than the East in many aspects. The West is depicted as the superior and East as the inferior. The following paragraphs are the explanation of the cultural stereotype that showed in the movie.

I. The Stereotypes of Pakistanis

1) Conservative

This stereotype is mostly shown through the portrayals of Kumail's parents that remained conservative and held to their traditional customs, attitudes, and values although they have been lived in America and been part of its society for several years. The act of conservativeness could be seen when they do not follow the Western's fashion style. Kumail's mother always wears traditional Pakistani clothes, whether at home or not. His brother also grew a thick beard since it is a really common thing for Pakistani Muslim men, and his family also asked him to grow his beard. This characteristic is seen through the dialogue. This dialogue below shows how his family wanted him to stick to their culture.

Kumail's mother : Kumi, why don't you grow a beard? Not like Naveed's, just a small one.

Kumail's father : Maybe like mine, small and stylish.

(00:13:59 - 00:14:05)

In the dialogue above, Kumail's mother and father told him to grow a beard. Just like his parents, Kumail's brother also told him the same thing. Kumail still denied and said that it was not an important thing and would only make himself feel uncomfortable. Kumail wondered why Muslim men are associated with the beard.

Kumail's brother : Well thank you for that information that no one gives a shit about and you should listen to mom and grow a beard.

Kumail : It gets itchy, I've tried. It's all patchy.

Kumail's brother : Try being a man and conditioning like I do.

Kumail : What's the whole thing with Muslims growing beards Anyway? It's such an arbitrary thing. Like who decided that? Oh, we have to have beards.

Kumail's brother : Yeah. There are a billion of us, and you are the only One with the truth. Is that right? The sun is just shining down on you right now. It's just parting like "ahh."

(00:27:22 - 00:27:41)

Second, his parents still arranged his marriage to a young Pakistani Muslim woman who is also a common practice that has become a culture in Pakistan. According to (Akhtar, 2017), in arranged marriages, the process of searching for a bride or groom is not conducted by the individuals who wish to get married, but conducted by the parents or other family members. This characteristic is directly shown when Kumail said the following words to his American audiences when he was performing stand-up comedy.

Kumail : And we marry someone our parents find for us. Arranged marriage, you know.

(00:01:36 - 00:01:41)

The word 'we' above refers to the Pakistanis, and by using that word, he addressed that all Pakistanis got arranged marriages to find their marital partners.

Third, they tended to be family oriented. Even though Kumail did not live with his parents anymore, he always takes his time to visit them for eating together. For further evidence of their conservativeness, his mother always serves Eastern food for her family during that family gathering. Moreover, Kumail thought that his family is really important more than anything. That made him to forcefully keep his American girlfriend a secret to his family because he did not want they will disown him for dating a Western woman. If he did not want to obey the arranged marriage, he would be kicked out of the family.

Kumail : You know what we call "arranged marriage" in my Culture, Emily? Marriage! Okay? We just call it marriage. There's another type of marriage that's called "love marriage," and

that's bad. My cousin Rehan married an Irish woman, and he was kicked out of the family! And nobody is allowed to talk to him.

Emily : Why didn't you tell me any of this?

Kumail : Because I didn't think you'd fucking understand and I was fucking right!

(00:34:50 - 00:35:05)

Last, when Kumail was describing Pakistan, the movie portrayed Pakistan by using a yellow screen color which creates an old and unattractive impression of the country. The portrayal of the vehicles, such as the buses and old motorbikes are also not modern. It also can be seen from the shape of the building that looks traditional and the road that is really crowded since there are too many vehicles and people selling fruits and clothes.

2) Close-minded

Kumail experienced significant pressures from his conservative parents. One of the pressures he experienced was the force to become a doctor or at least a lawyer. That force was not in line with his dream of becoming a successful stand-up comedian. His parents, however, thought that if his son becomes a comedian, the family would be embarrassed. They had a strict hierarchy in which comedian is at the lowest position after doctor, engineer, lawyer, and other hundreds of jobs. It can be seen through the following dialogs:

Kumail : No day has lived up to that day. So I was lying to me parents, I was telling them I was gonna be a lawye And they're very disappointed cause they wanted me to be a doctor. And you guys are like, why didn't you just tell them that you wanted to be a doctor? It's a lie anyway. And I'm like, well it has to be believable. If I told them I want to be a doctor, they'd be like, bullshit." If I say, lawyer, they're like, "oh, ok, that's something." Cause there's a strict hierarchy: doctor, engineer, lawyer, hundreds of jobs, ISIS, then a comedian.

(01:56:19 - 01:56:56)

His parents' action in categorizing which jobs are in the low position and which jobs are in the high position shows their close-mindedness. Regarding this matter, based on Hare's description of an open-minded person, the close-minded person is regarded as one who rejects other opinions that against their belief. (Siegel, 2009)According to Kruglansi, Webster, and Klem (1993), compared to those open-minded people, close-minded people are "Less likely to be persuaded under conditions where they have a prior opinion base." (Nisbet, Erik C, 2013) tend to discount new information that may be inconsistent with their prior opinions (Nisbet, Erik C, 2013)

Furthermore, he also experienced the pressure to marry a Pakistani Muslim woman girl which is shown through the way his parents arranged his marriage. Whatever the reason, he was not allowed to have a relationship with any Western woman. If he breaks that force, his parents will kick him out of the family, just like they kicked his cousin who married an Irish woman. Their discrimination toward the Westerner also shows their close-mindedness.

II. The Stereotypes of Americans

1) Modern

Compared to Pakistanis that is still conservative, Americans in *The Big Sick* movie is depicted with modern portrayals. It can be shown through Emily's parent's fashion styles that looked modern with their t-shirts and jeans. Emily's mother even wore ripped jeans when she was visiting her daughter in the hospital. This look is different compared to Kumail's mother that always wears Pakistan traditional clothes.



Picture 5

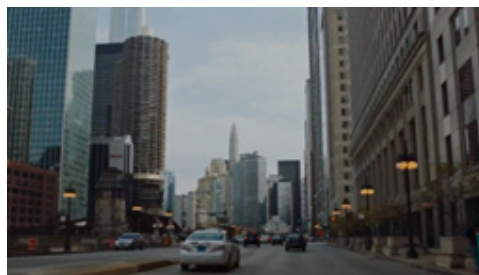
Emily's mother was wearing ripped jeans, casual shirt, and blouse



Picture 6

Kumail's mother was wearing Pakistani traditional clothes

Furthermore, the modern portrayal is not only shown through the fashion of Americans but also the image of the city (Chicago). The movie used clear colors to create a modern look when presenting the city. The luxurious buildings are also portrayed to create a modern look. That image also really contrasts with the image of a city in Pakistan where Kumail and his family live before they move to America.



Picture 6

The portrayal of America



Picture 7

The portrayal of Pakistan

2) Open Minded

Open minded can be considered as the action from someone who is willing to consider new ideas or unprejudiced (Oxford Dictionary). As Hare stated, "To be open-minded is...to be critically receptive to alternative possibilities, to be willing to think again despite having formulated a view, and to be concerned to defuse any factors that constrain one's thinking in predetermined ways." (Spiegel, 2012) Open minded people, therefore, may be able to recognize that their belief could be wrong.

Emily's parents were portrayed as the people who can accept new ideas. They also did not give any prejudice towards people from a different culture. Unlike Kumail's parents that arrange their sons' marriage to make them marry the Pakistani Muslim women, Emily's parents tended to give their daughter full rights to choose her partner that she thought is the best for her. Moreover, it contrasts with Kumail's parents that would kick their sons out of the family if they marry the Westerners. Emily's parents did not mind if their daughter has a relationship with someone who is not American. As long as he is good to Emily, no

matter what race he is, they would accept him. Those characteristics are not directly stated through the dialogue but appear from Emily's parent's external action. The external action can be seen from the respond of Emily's parents to Kumail. Even though at the beginning of the movie Emily's parent tended to stay away from Kumail but as the story goes on, they accepted Kumail and allowed him to visit Emily when she was still in the medical-induced coma. Moreover, when Emily woke up from the coma, Emily's mother still allowed Kumail to see her daughter; she even smiled at Kumail. Although they knew that Kumail is "different" from them, they still allowed him to date their daughter.

In conclusion, *The Big Sick* is one of the Hollywood movies that portray the issue of cultural stereotype between Eastern and Western in which the Easterners are associated with negative traits, while the Westerners are associated with positive traits. This movie tells about the male main character, Kumail who is a stand-up comedian. He is also a Pakistani immigrant who migrated to America when he was fourteen. Kumail has been influenced by the American cultures even though his family is still stick to the Pakistani culture. Because of his family's conservativeness, he has to pretend to be someone that his parents expected, being a good Muslim and a husband of a Pakistani woman. Meanwhile, he has become an agnostic and does not want to marry a Pakistani woman since he has fallen in love with an American woman and wanted to marry her. If he does not follow what his parents wanted him to be, he would be kicked out of the family.

Through the analysis of the characters in *The Big Sick* movie, the writers found some of Pakistani's and American's characteristic. The characteristics of Pakistani characters are religious and deceitful, while the characteristics of American characters are intelligent and straightforward. Furthermore, through the analysis of the characters' characteristics, the writers found the cultural stereotype in the movie. Pakistani characters are associated with conservative and close-minded. On the contrary, American characters are associated with modern and open-minded.

Conclusion

Based on the discussions above, it can be concluded that cultural stereotype does not only exist in real life, but also the movie. Many Hollywood movies portray cultural stereotypes in which the Westerner is associated with positive traits, and the Easterner is associated with negative traits. One of those movies that portray that kind of cultural stereotype is *The Big Sick* (2017). In that movie, the Westerner is depicted by American characters and Easterner is depicted by Pakistani characters, and the stereotype of each culture, therefore, is seen through the characterization of the characters. The big factor that influenced the depiction of each culture in contrast portrayals is the Western's purpose for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Eastern, and also for showing Western's identity and strength.

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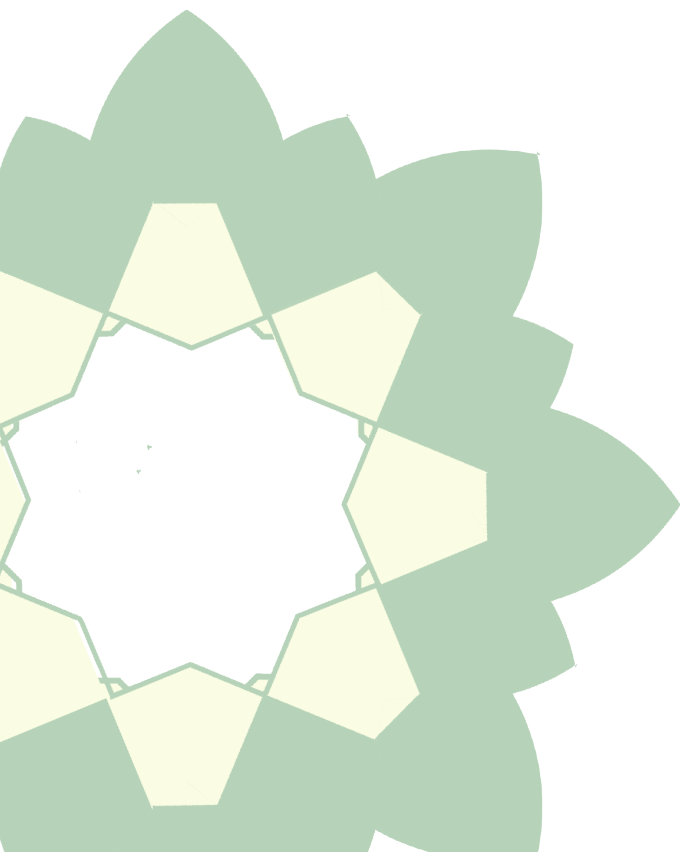
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1. It has not been published elsewhere.
2. The paper is research findings, conceptual idea, science development on a certain field, and theory application study.
3. The Manuscript typed with Microsoft Word, Font Times New Roman size 12, spacing 1 on A4 size paper with a margin of 3.5 cm from the left edge, 3 cm from the right edge, 3 cm from the top and bottom edges. The length of 15-20 manuscript pages including a list of references. Writer (s) must follow the journal template that can be downloaded at Insaniyat Open Journal System <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/insaniyat>
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5. Article contains title; writer's name, author affiliation (department, faculty, university / or institution), complete address of the affiliation and Author's corresponding email.
6. Abstract is written for about 250 words. It pervaded research objectives, methodology, discussion and result, and conclusion with maximum 5 keywords that represent the research core.
7. The article consists of **Introduction** (background of study, research problem, research purposes, significance of the research and theoretical basis). **Method** (explaining the chronological research). **Discussion and Result** (containing analysis and result of the research), and **Conclusion**.
8. Citation and reference must follow APA style (American Psychological Association) sixth edition.
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For detail information on Arabic Romanization, please refer the transliteration system of the Library of Congress (LC) Guidelines



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