International Journal of Social Science Research (IJSSR)
Volume- 3, Issue- 5 | September - October 2026 ISSN: 3048-9490

Application of Bandura's Social Learning Theory in Understanding Trauma and Resilience: A Study of Vicarious Learning through the Character Kamlesh in *Chiraiya* Drama Series (2026)

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Abstract

The relationship between social learning, trauma, resilience, and behavioural transformation has considerable significance within contemporary educational psychology. Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides a useful theoretical framework for understanding how individuals acquire, modify, and regulate behaviour through observation, modelling, vicarious experience, and cognitive processes. The present study applies Bandura's theoretical perspective to the 2026 Hindi drama series *Chiraiya*, with particular attention to the character Kamlesh, portrayed by Divya Dutta. The six-episode series centres on Kamlesh, a traditional daughter-in-law, and Pooja, her newly married sister-in-law, whose experience of sexual violence within marriage challenges the family's assumptions concerning consent, gender roles, marriage, and family honour. The series was released on 20 March 2026 and comprises six episodes: *Griha Pravesh, Pag Phera, Honeymoon, Muh Dikhai, Vidaai,* and *Kathaa*. Adopting a qualitative interpretive research design, the study uses thematic textual analysis to examine Kamlesh's behavioural and cognitive transformation across all six episodes. The analysis is organised around Bandura's concepts of observational learning, attention, retention, behavioural reproduction, motivation, vicarious reinforcement, self-reflection, self-efficacy, and reciprocal determinism. The study argues that Kamlesh's transformation can be interpreted as a movement from socially acquired conformity towards reflective learning and agency. Initially, her beliefs are shaped by a patriarchal family environment and by her emotional investment in the family. As the narrative progresses, her observation of Pooja's experience, exposure to new information about consent, confrontation with contradictory evidence, and recognition of her own contribution to the social environment gradually alter her understanding. Her later actions demonstrate how observed experience can become a basis for self-reflection and behavioural change. The study further interprets trauma in *Chiraiya* as socially embedded rather than exclusively individual, because the narrative connects Pooja's experience with family expectations, gender socialisation, silence, and institutional limitations. Resilience is likewise represented as a dynamic process involving knowledge, interpersonal support, reflection, agency, and collective action. The study

Published: 31 October 2026
DOI: https://doi.org/10.70558/IJSSR.2026.v3.i5.301403
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concludes that *Chiraiya* offers a valuable cultural text for examining Bandura's theory in relation to trauma awareness, empathy, gender socialisation, and resilience. However, because the present study analyses a fictional narrative rather than actual audience responses, it does not claim that viewers necessarily acquire the same learning represented by Kamlesh.

Keywords: Bandura, Social Learning Theory, observational learning, vicarious learning, trauma, resilience, Kamlesh, *Chiraiya*, consent, gender socialisation, educational psychology.

Introduction

Human behaviour is influenced by a complex interaction of personal experiences, social relationships, environmental conditions, and cognitive processes. Within educational psychology, understanding how individuals acquire attitudes and behavioural patterns is particularly important because learning extends beyond formal classroom instruction. Individuals learn from parents, teachers, peers, institutions, communities, media representations, and everyday social interactions. Among the major psychological perspectives that explain this process, Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory occupies an important position because it moves beyond the assumption that learning occurs only through direct experience and reinforcement.

Bandura's *Social Learning Theory* (1977) emphasised that people can acquire behavioural patterns through observing others and the consequences of their behaviour. Observational learning involves attention to a model, retention of observed information, the capacity to reproduce behaviour, and motivation to perform it. Thus, an individual does not have to experience every consequence directly in order to learn from it. Observing another person's actions and their consequences can provide information that subsequently influences the observer's beliefs, expectations, and behaviour.

Bandura subsequently expanded this perspective into Social Cognitive Theory in *Social Foundations of Thought and Action* (1986). This formulation placed greater emphasis on cognitive, vicarious, self-regulatory, and self-reflective processes and proposed reciprocal interaction among personal factors, behaviour, and the environment. This theoretical development is particularly relevant to the study of characters in dramatic narratives because fictional characters may function as symbolic models. Audiences observe characters confronting social situations, making decisions, experiencing consequences, and changing their behaviour. Consequently, drama can be examined as a cultural representation of social learning even though such representation should not automatically be equated with measurable learning among real viewers.

The 2026 Hindi drama series *Chiraiya*, directed by Shashant Shah and written by Divy Nidhi Sharma, provides an appropriate narrative for such an analysis. The series focuses on Kamlesh, a traditional homemaker and elder daughter-in-law, and Pooja, her newly married sister-in-law. Its central narrative concerns marital consent and sexual violence within marriage, while also exploring patriarchy, family expectations, gender socialisation, and the difficulty of recognising violence within apparently respectable family structures. Contemporary reviews identify Kamlesh as the principal narrative perspective through which the consequences of Pooja's experience and the family's response are explored.

The character of Kamlesh is particularly significant for a study of social learning because she is not introduced as an already transformed or emancipated character. Instead, her beliefs and practices are initially closely connected to the norms of her family and social environment. In an interview concerning the series, writer Divy Nidhi Sharma explained that Kamlesh was deliberately conceived as a character whose patriarchal conditioning would be visible and recognisable, while Pooja remains the victim of the central violence. Sharma also described Kamlesh as someone whose own questions and limitations were intended to make the narrative accessible to audiences who may not initially recognise the problem of marital sexual violence.

This distinction is theoretically important. Kamlesh's development is not simply a story of an individual acquiring information. It can be interpreted as a process in which an already learned system of beliefs is confronted by new social information and contradictory experience. The resulting tension creates opportunities for observation, reflection, re-evaluation, and behavioural change. In this sense, Kamlesh becomes an especially useful fictional case for examining the relationship between social learning and resilience.

The study also considers the representation of trauma. The narrative places Pooja's experience within a wider social environment in which family honour, marriage, gender expectations, and silence influence how her experience is interpreted. Contemporary commentary on *Chiraiya* similarly identifies consent, patriarchy, social conditioning, and the family's refusal initially to acknowledge the seriousness of Pooja's experience as central concerns of the series.

Resilience is considered here not as a fixed personal quality but as a dynamic process through which individuals and social systems respond to adversity. The present analysis therefore investigates not only Pooja's experience but also Kamlesh's changing response to it. The central argument is that Kamlesh's transformation illustrates how observation of another person's experience can generate cognitive conflict, self-reflection, empathy, and eventually behavioural change.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's Social Learning Theory developed partly in response to approaches that explained learning primarily through direct reinforcement. Bandura acknowledged the importance of environmental consequences but argued that human beings can acquire knowledge and behavioural patterns through observation. Observational learning enables individuals to learn without personally performing every behaviour or experiencing every consequence associated with that behaviour.

The process of observational learning involves four major subprocesses: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. Attention determines whether the individual notices the relevant aspects of the model's behaviour. Retention concerns the cognitive representation and later recall of what has been observed. Reproduction involves the individual's capacity to enact the observed response, while motivation determines whether the person actually chooses to perform it.

These processes are useful for interpreting Kamlesh's development. Initially, she does not adequately attend to the meaning of Pooja's experience because her existing beliefs provide a different interpretation of marital relationships. As the narrative develops, Pooja's distress becomes increasingly salient. Kamlesh subsequently retains new information concerning consent, reflects upon it, and eventually translates her changed understanding into action.

Vicarious Learning

A central element of Bandura's framework is vicarious learning. An individual can learn by observing the behaviour of another person and the consequences associated with that behaviour. Consequently, learning does not require direct personal experience of every event. Observing another person's experience can alter expectations concerning what behaviour is acceptable, effective, harmful, or socially supported.

In *Chiraiya*, Kamlesh can be interpreted as a vicarious learner because her understanding of consent and trauma develops partly through observing Pooja's experiences and the responses of other family members. Her learning is therefore relational. Pooja's experience becomes a source of information through which Kamlesh gradually re-evaluates her own beliefs.

Social Cognitive Theory and Reciprocal Determinism

Bandura's later Social Cognitive Theory expanded the original social learning framework by emphasising reciprocal interactions among personal factors, behaviour, and environment.

This concept is particularly useful in analysing Kamlesh because she is simultaneously influenced by her family environment and capable of influencing that environment. Her beliefs are shaped by the family, but her subsequent actions begin to challenge the same family system. The relationship can therefore be represented as:

Personal beliefs ↔ Behaviour ↔ Social environment

Kamlesh's transformation is consequently not merely an internal psychological event; it becomes part of a changing social relationship.

Trauma, Social Learning and Resilience

Trauma is not solely an event but may involve psychological, emotional, social, and behavioural consequences. In the context of *Chiraiya*, the narrative presents Pooja's experience within an environment in which her account is initially challenged or denied. The social response becomes part of the representation of trauma because the meaning assigned to an experience can influence whether it is recognised, supported, or silenced.

The series therefore allows trauma to be examined through a social-learning perspective. Pooja's experience becomes something that other characters observe, interpret, and respond to. Kamlesh's changing response is significant because it demonstrates that witnessing another person's suffering can challenge existing social beliefs.

Resilience is similarly represented as a process rather than a simple personal characteristic. Contemporary psychological literature generally treats resilience as involving adaptation to adversity and interaction among personal and social resources. The American Psychological

Association describes resilience as a process of adapting to significant adversity, while interdisciplinary research has emphasised the importance of understanding resilience dynamically and contextually.

Within the narrative, Kamlesh's developing resilience involves changing knowledge, emotional engagement, self-questioning, social support, and action. Pooja's own agency is also central, meaning that Kamlesh should not be interpreted as the sole source of change. Indeed, the series' writer explicitly distinguished Pooja as the victim of the central violence and Kamlesh as a woman whose own thinking has been shaped by patriarchy.

Objectives of the Study

The study has the following objectives:

1. To examine the application of Bandura's Social Learning Theory in understanding Kamlesh's behavioural transformation in *Chiraiya*.
2. To analyse the role of observational and vicarious learning in Kamlesh's changing understanding of trauma and consent.
3. To examine the representation of trauma and its social consequences through the relationship between Kamlesh and Pooja.
4. To analyse the development of resilience through Kamlesh's changing attitudes, decisions and actions.
5. To examine how family, social norms and interpersonal relationships function as environmental factors in Kamlesh's learning process.
6. To explore the educational and psychological significance of *Chiraiya* as a cultural representation of social learning, empathy and resilience.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative interpretive approach because its primary purpose is to understand meanings, representations, interactions, and behavioural transformations within a fictional narrative. A qualitative approach is appropriate when the researcher seeks to examine how psychological and social concepts are constructed through dialogue, characterisation, narrative structure, and interaction rather than measuring variables statistically.

A descriptive-interpretive case-study design was employed, with Kamlesh treated as the central narrative case. The primary source of data is the six-episode 2026 Hindi drama series *Chiraiya*. Published episode information confirms that the series contains six episodes released on 20 March 2026: *Griha Pravesh, Pag Phera, Honeymoon, Muh Dikhai, Vidaai,* and *Kathaa*.

The analysis was conducted through thematic textual analysis. Particular attention was given to scenes in which Kamlesh observes another character, receives new information, responds emotionally or cognitively to an event, revises an existing belief, or undertakes a new action. These narrative units were interpreted in relation to Bandura's concepts of observational

learning, attention, retention, reproduction, motivation, vicarious reinforcement, self-reflection, self-efficacy, and reciprocal determinism.

Secondary sources consisted of Bandura's theoretical works and contemporary psychological literature on trauma and resilience, together with published episode descriptions, interviews, and critical commentary concerning *Chiraiya*. The use of reviews and interviews is intended to contextualise the narrative and production perspective; they are not treated as substitutes for the researcher's textual interpretation.

The study does not involve human participants and therefore does not make claims about actual viewer responses. Its conclusions are restricted to the representation of social learning, trauma, and resilience within the selected narrative.

Analysis and Discussion

Kamlesh before the Crisis: Socially Acquired Beliefs in *Griha Pravesh*

The first episode, *Griha Pravesh*, establishes Kamlesh as an emotionally invested member of the family. Episode information describes her as deeply attached to Arun and initially reluctant to accept his marriage to Pooja. On the wedding night, Arun's behaviour towards Pooja occurs while Kamlesh remains unaware of what has happened.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, the importance of the episode lies in the establishment of Kamlesh's pre-existing behavioural framework. Her understanding of family, marriage, and her responsibilities as a daughter-in-law has been socially acquired. She therefore interprets new situations through previously established cognitive structures.

This is important because Bandura's theory does not imply that every observed behaviour is immediately imitated. What an individual observes is filtered through attention, interpretation, memory, expectations, and motivation. Kamlesh's initial response to Pooja is consequently influenced by what she has previously learned to regard as appropriate behaviour for a daughter-in-law.

The episode also establishes a contrast between Kamlesh's perception of family life and Pooja's emerging experience of it. This contrast becomes the foundation for later cognitive change.

Encountering Contradictory Experience in *Pag Phera*

The second episode, *Pag Phera*, shifts attention towards Pooja's attempt to communicate her experience. According to the published episode description, Pooja confides in her mother, but her concerns are dismissed and she is encouraged to return to her marital home. During her journey, she decides to escape instead.

The significance of this episode for social learning lies in the representation of consequences. Pooja's attempt to seek recognition does not receive the expected support. The family environment therefore becomes a site of conflicting models. Some responses reinforce silence and conformity, while Pooja's behaviour demonstrates an alternative response based on self-protection and agency.

For Kamlesh, the significance of these events lies in their capacity to challenge the assumptions through which she understands family relationships. Vicarious learning can occur when an observer notices the consequences associated with another person's behaviour.

The episode consequently marks a transitional point. Kamlesh's earlier worldview has not yet completely changed, but the narrative has begun to provide experiences that cannot easily be accommodated within her previous understanding.

Cognitive Reorganisation in *Honeymoon*

The third episode, *Honeymoon*, is particularly important for the study because its published description explicitly states that Kamlesh initially dismisses the concept of marital rape and Pooja's concerns but begins changing her perspective after educating herself about the issue.

This episode illustrates the cognitive dimension of Bandura's theory particularly clearly. Observation alone does not produce transformation. Kamlesh encounters information that challenges her existing beliefs and then engages in a process of cognitive processing.

Her movement can be interpreted as a progression from ignorance or denial towards awareness. This process corresponds with the idea that social learning involves active cognitive mediation rather than mechanical imitation. The observer interprets what is seen, evaluates consequences, develops expectations, and determines whether a behavioural response should be reproduced.

Kamlesh's acquisition of new information is particularly significant because it demonstrates the role of symbolic and verbal learning. She is not simply learning by copying another person's behaviour; she is learning through information, conversation, reflection, and observation.

The episode therefore represents an important shift from socially inherited belief to reflective knowledge.

Self-Reflection and Responsibility in *Muh Dikhai*

The fourth episode, *Muh Dikhai*, develops Kamlesh's transformation further. The published episode description states that Pooja and Kamlesh develop a strategy to gain Bhramar's support and that Kamlesh acknowledges partial responsibility for Arun's actions.

This development is significant because Kamlesh begins to reconsider not only the behaviour of others but also her own role in the environment in which Arun developed.

Bandura's later Social Cognitive Theory places considerable importance on self-reflection and reciprocal interaction between individuals and their environments. Kamlesh's acknowledgement of responsibility can therefore be interpreted as an instance of self-reflective learning.

The narrative suggests that parenting and socialisation do not operate only through explicit teaching. Everyday statements, expectations, privileges, emotional relationships, and gendered practices can become models from which children learn. A contemporary discussion of *Chiraiya* similarly draws attention to the way apparently small household practices and gendered assumptions contribute to the socialisation of boys.

Kamlesh's transformation therefore involves an important realisation: she is not merely an observer of the social environment but also a participant in it. This recognition increases the complexity of her character and strengthens the relevance of reciprocal determinism.

Social Support, Institutional Barriers and Resilience in *Vidaai*

The fifth episode, *Vidaai*, shifts the emphasis from cognitive transformation to action. The episode description states that Kamlesh seeks justice after Bhramar refuses to assist against Arun. With Vinay's support, she takes Pooja to her grandfather, but they discover that the legal situation does not provide the remedy they expected for marital rape.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, this episode demonstrates that learning does not guarantee immediate success. Behaviour is performed within an environment containing opportunities and constraints. Kamlesh's new understanding motivates action, but the social environment limits the outcomes available to her.

Vinay's support functions as an alternative social model. His behaviour demonstrates that interpersonal support is possible even when institutional support is inadequate. Kamlesh consequently receives reinforcement for continuing to act rather than returning completely to her earlier position.

The episode is also significant for understanding resilience. Resilience is not represented as an absence of difficulty; rather, the narrative places Kamlesh in a situation where her newly developed beliefs encounter resistance. Her continued engagement despite that resistance can be interpreted as a movement towards greater behavioural agency.

Behavioural Action and Collective Challenge in *Kathaa*

The final episode, *Kathaa*, brings the narrative's psychological and social transformation towards collective action. Published episode information describes a situation in which manipulation threatens the resolve of the characters before an unexpected source of inspiration contributes to a public challenge to the existing system.

In Bandura's framework, this stage can be interpreted through behavioural reproduction and motivation. Kamlesh's learning has moved beyond cognitive recognition. She now acts on what she has learned.

The transformation can therefore be conceptualised as:

Social environment → Observation → Attention → Retention → Cognitive reflection → Motivation → Behavioural action

The process is not linear in an absolute sense. Earlier beliefs continue to influence Kamlesh, and environmental resistance continues to affect her decisions. Nevertheless, the final episode demonstrates that new learning can become incorporated into behaviour.

The ending also makes visible the social dimension of resilience. Kamlesh's response does not occur independently of Pooja, Vinay, Bhramar, family structures, and the broader social environment. Resilience is consequently represented as relational and contextual.

Cross-Episode Interpretation of Kamlesh's Transformation

Taken together, the six episodes represent a gradual process of psychological and behavioural transformation. Kamlesh begins the series within a relatively stable belief system that is supported by her family environment. Her emotional attachment to Arun reinforces that worldview. Pooja's experience introduces contradictory information, but Kamlesh initially interprets that information through her existing beliefs.

The transformation becomes more pronounced when Kamlesh receives information that cannot be reconciled easily with her previous understanding. Her effort to educate herself represents a transition from passive observation to active cognitive engagement. The subsequent recognition of her own role in Arun's socialisation marks a movement towards self-reflection.

Her later actions demonstrate that learning has acquired behavioural consequences. She attempts to obtain support, seeks alternatives when support fails, and participates in a public challenge to the existing social arrangement.

The writer's own explanation of Kamlesh is relevant here. Divy Nidhi Sharma has stated that the character was intentionally written with patriarchal conditioning and that the series sought to avoid making Kamlesh a conventional saviour figure. This production context strengthens the interpretation of Kamlesh as a character whose transformation is constructed through learning rather than presented as an innate moral quality.

Trauma and Vicarious Learning

A central contribution of the narrative is its representation of how trauma can affect not only the person directly experiencing violence but also the social relationships surrounding that person. Pooja experiences the direct harm, whereas Kamlesh encounters the consequences as an observer and participant in the family environment.

This distinction is important. It would be theoretically inaccurate to describe Kamlesh as experiencing the same trauma as Pooja. Instead, the study uses the concept of vicarious learning to explain how Kamlesh learns from observing Pooja's experience.

The narrative thus establishes two interconnected psychological processes. Pooja's experience involves coping with direct adversity, while Kamlesh's process involves recognising, interpreting, and responding to another person's adversity.

This distinction allows the study to avoid equating witnessing with experiencing. It also demonstrates why Bandura's framework is useful: observational learning provides a mechanism through which the experiences of others can become psychologically informative without becoming identical to one's own experiences.

Resilience and the Development of Agency

Kamlesh's later behaviour can be interpreted through the concept of agency. At the beginning of the narrative, she largely operates within established family expectations. By the end, she participates in challenging those expectations.

The development of agency is gradual. It involves knowledge acquisition, recognition of contradiction, emotional engagement, self-questioning, support from others, and behavioural experimentation. These processes correspond to the broader social-cognitive view in which individuals are neither completely controlled by their environments nor entirely independent of them.

The narrative therefore represents resilience as a process of transformation. Kamlesh does not become resilient simply because she encounters adversity. Rather, her responses change as she acquires new knowledge and develops new interpretations of her social environment.

Pooja's resilience is equally important, and the analysis should not allow Kamlesh's transformation to overshadow Pooja's agency. The series itself is structured around Pooja's experience, while Kamlesh's transformation provides the principal secondary learning trajectory. Contemporary commentary similarly notes that the narrative focuses on the interaction between Pooja's experience and Kamlesh's internalised patriarchal assumptions.

Discussion

The findings indicate that Bandura's Social Learning Theory provides a productive interpretive framework for understanding Kamlesh's character arc. The most significant feature of the narrative is that transformation occurs through a combination of observation and cognition rather than through direct instruction alone.

The first stage involves socialisation. Kamlesh has already learned behavioural norms concerning gender, marriage, family hierarchy, and the responsibilities of a daughter-in-law. These norms influence how she initially interprets Pooja's behaviour.

The second stage involves contradiction. Pooja's experience challenges Kamlesh's existing expectations. This creates cognitive tension and gradually attracts greater attention to the problem.

The third stage involves information acquisition. Kamlesh actively learns about consent and begins reconsidering her assumptions. This demonstrates that observational learning can interact with explicit education.

The fourth stage involves self-reflection. Kamlesh begins to consider how her own behaviour and parenting may have contributed to the environment in which Arun developed. This corresponds with Bandura's emphasis on self-reflective processes.

The fifth stage involves action. Kamlesh's new understanding begins to influence her behaviour, producing attempts to support Pooja and challenge established responses.

The sixth stage involves social action. Individual cognitive change becomes connected with broader collective resistance.

The narrative therefore demonstrates the movement from learning within a social environment to acting upon that environment.

Educational and Psychological Implications

The analysis has relevance beyond the study of television drama. From an educational psychology perspective, *Chiraiya* illustrates how learning occurs within social and cultural environments. Students do not acquire values only through textbooks or classroom instruction; they also learn through observation of family behaviour, peer relationships, media representations, and social institutions.

The series may therefore be used as a case study in courses dealing with educational psychology, social psychology, gender studies, counselling, human development, and teacher education. Rather than presenting the drama as evidence that media automatically changes attitudes, educators could use it as a stimulus for critical discussion. Students could examine how beliefs are learned, how stereotypes become normalised, how observation influences behaviour, and how new information can challenge previously learned assumptions.

The narrative also illustrates the importance of reflective learning. Kamlesh's development suggests that awareness alone may not be sufficient for behavioural change. Individuals may need opportunities to question previously accepted beliefs, obtain reliable information, discuss alternative perspectives, and develop confidence to act upon new understanding.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future researchers could extend this study by examining audience reception rather than limiting the analysis to the narrative text. Interviews and focus-group discussions could investigate whether viewers interpret Kamlesh's transformation as observational learning, moral awakening, empathy, or social conditioning.

Comparative studies could also examine *Chiraiya* alongside its Bengali source series *Sampurna* or other Indian dramas dealing with gender, family, consent, trauma, and resilience. Such comparative research could identify similarities and differences in the representation of social learning across linguistic and cultural contexts.

Further research could employ a mixed-method design in which qualitative analysis of the series is combined with quantitative measurement of viewers' attitudes. Such a design would make it possible to distinguish between what the narrative represents and what viewers actually learn from it.

Research involving students or young adults should use appropriate ethical safeguards, particularly because the narrative concerns sexual violence and potentially distressing experiences. Researchers should avoid requiring participants to disclose personal experiences and should provide appropriate support procedures where sensitive topics are discussed.

Limitations of the Study

The present study is interpretive and therefore does not claim statistical generalisability. Its conclusions are based on the textual representation of Kamlesh in one six-episode drama series. The study does not measure actual audience learning, behavioural change, trauma symptoms, or resilience.

A further limitation is that fictional narratives use dramatic techniques that may simplify, compress, or symbolically represent psychological processes. Consequently, Kamlesh's transformation should not be treated as a clinical model of trauma recovery or as direct evidence concerning how real individuals respond to similar experiences.

The analysis is also necessarily selective because the series contains several characters and social relationships. The present paper focuses specifically on Kamlesh in order to examine the applicability of Bandura's framework to one character's learning trajectory.

Conclusion

The present study has examined the application of Bandura's Social Learning Theory to the character Kamlesh in the 2026 Hindi drama series *Chiraiya*. Through qualitative textual analysis of all six episodes, the study has interpreted Kamlesh's transformation as a process involving observation, cognitive processing, vicarious learning, self-reflection, motivation, and behavioural change.

At the beginning of the series, Kamlesh's understanding of family and marriage is strongly influenced by socially acquired beliefs. Her relationship with Arun and her commitment to the family make it difficult for her initially to recognise Pooja's experience in terms of consent and violence. As the narrative progresses, however, Pooja's experience creates a contradiction within Kamlesh's established belief system. This contradiction encourages attention, information seeking, reflection, and eventual behavioural change.

The significance of *Chiraiya* from a Social Learning Theory perspective lies particularly in the distinction between direct and vicarious experience. Kamlesh does not directly experience the central violence represented in the narrative, but she observes its effects, encounters the responses of others, acquires new knowledge, and gradually changes her own behaviour. Her learning therefore illustrates how an individual's social environment can become a source of both conformity and transformation.

The analysis further suggests that the series presents trauma as socially embedded. Pooja's experience is connected with family expectations, gender norms, silence, and institutional limitations. Kamlesh's transformation demonstrates the potential for social learning to operate in the opposite direction: previously learned beliefs can be questioned and revised when individuals encounter new information and alternative models of behaviour.

The representation of resilience is similarly dynamic. Kamlesh's movement towards agency develops through knowledge, empathy, self-reflection, interpersonal support, and action. Pooja's own agency remains central to the narrative, and Kamlesh's development should therefore be understood as a secondary learning trajectory rather than as a replacement for Pooja's experience.

Bandura's theory consequently offers a valuable conceptual lens for understanding how the drama constructs behavioural and cognitive transformation. At the same time, the study recognises the distinction between representation and empirical effect. The fact that Kamlesh learns within the fictional narrative does not establish that viewers will learn in the same

manner. Future audience-based research is therefore necessary to examine whether and how such narratives influence viewers' knowledge, attitudes, empathy, or behavioural intentions.

Within these limitations, *Chiraiya* can be regarded as a significant contemporary cultural text for educational psychology because it brings together questions of social learning, gender socialisation, trauma, empathy, resilience, and agency. Its representation of Kamlesh demonstrates how deeply established social beliefs can be challenged when observation is accompanied by information, reflection, interpersonal relationships, and opportunities for action.

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