

## PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

### WOMEN PROJECTION AND GENDER INEQUALITY: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF LEADING CHARACTERS IN PAKISTANI DRAMAS

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**Muhammad Matloob Ur Rasool, Zulfiqar Ali, Tariq Khan. Women Projection and Gender Inequality: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Leading Characters in Pakistani Dramas-- Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology 19(1), 1141-1159. ISSN 1567-214x**

**Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Pakistani Dramas, Women Projection, Gender Inequality.**

#### **ABSTRACT**

The present study examines the language of leading characters from selected Pakistani dramas to investigate the projection of women and the linguistic features employed that lead to gender inequality. Fairclough's three-dimensional model of "Critical Discourse Analysis" (1989) provides the theoretical underpinning to the present study. The study uses a qualitative research design, where the researchers have collected a sample of 15 episodes from 3 selected Pakistani dramas by systematic sampling design proposed by Sekaran & Bougie (2016). The sample chosen is "relevance sampling" based on the recognised contribution to the central research questions (Krippendorff, 2018). The selected dialogues of main female and male characters and the employed linguistic features are classified into eight categories after consultation with previous literature and based on the themes in these episodes. Selected data is analysed by applying a three-dimensional CDA model. Results based on analysis are congruent with previous findings and conclude that Pakistani dramas project women's pejorative image and represent features that lead to gender inequality.

#### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Suppression of certain groups by rhetorical manoeuvring, including and excluding certain news and portrayal of women on media, has always been an active vigour in Pakistani society. Isanovi (2006) indicates that with the advancement of mass media and modern information technology, women's projection and representation are confiscated. Women are represented often by

male drama directors, and their positive or negative role is not close to reality but is constantly relative to men, and often, "the content of the media distorts women's status in the social world." (Tuchman, 1979, p. 531).

To Bilal (2012), language used in newspapers aids to the opinion-shaping of its reader by presenting the ideological stance on some issues existent in the society. Media play an essential role in shaping public opinion and constructing social reality through news and entertainment channels. Carvalho (2008) remarks that Journalism is typically a discursive re-construction of reality; therefore, it can be argued that media can re-construct the social realities through discourse. Discourse is any utterance or piece of writing which conveys meanings. Everything on media, either print or electronic, falls under media discourse. Media discourse is also used for building and shaping social realities and ideologies. Ideology is "the mental framework, [i.e.] the languages, the concepts, categories, imagery systems of representation" (Hall, 1986, p. 29).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) emphasise that critical discourse analysis begins from perceiving a problem in society. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) aims to unmask social injustice caused by the manipulation of language by different social actors. Thus, the present study tries to unmask some social problems caused by the manipulation of language, and when it comes to the power of language, discourse governs the ideology of supremacy and authority, and most of the time, it goes against it. Discourse analysis is specifically beneficial when there is a need for reformation, reshaping, and re-construction by introducing society to an ideology.

The present study probes Pakistani dramas from the viewpoint of women's projection and gender inequality through the language used by leading characters and linguistic features employed by the main characters. Specifically, the study focuses on how Pakistani dramas project women through the language of leading characters and what type of linguistic features lead to gender inequality.

### ***Problem Statement***

The critical approach of Hall (1997) describes that the women projection and representation in the mass media is not the mirror reality, but it is only construction and re-construction of images and recreation of ideology by loaded language. This construction is necessary for media control to favour and serve the elite class interests. This unfair treatment of women feeds patriarchy, leads to the dehumanization of women, and consequently foments the rape culture.

Fowler (1979) suggested the aim of CDA to make a profound connection among discourse, social practices and larger social structure. This connection is not visible for numerous individuals. This study is needed to identify the linguistic features employed in Pakistani television dramas that lead to gender inequality and the role of language that endorses gender inequality in a patriarchal society. The researchers' highlight the media treatment of women that caused hurdles for women trying to secure a better position and equality in Pakistani society.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a) To analyse the language of main characters in Pakistani dramas for women's projection.
- b) To identify through CDA the linguistic features leading to gender inequality employed in the Pakistani dramas.

### *Rationale and Significance*

"Media is biased against women in many areas which affect their images and hamper women's development in society" (Zia, 2007). It can be argued that the majority of the Pakistani people only rely on mainstream media for news and entertainment in which women are projected through the discourse wrapped in the language of patriarchy and loaded with subjective ideologies. Fairclough described the objective of the CDA approach as "a contribution to the general rising of consciousness of exploitative social relations, through focusing upon language" (1989, p. 4).

The rationale of this study is to unmask the exploitative social relations and gender issues for general awareness.

This study evaluates the linguistic choices that objectify women and etherise them as lesser or subservient beings. It helps raise women's consciousness to react to the animated display of their physical beauty as the defining feature of their identity. The study attempts to highlight the misrepresentation of women in Pakistani dramas and helps in evoking change in men's attitudes towards women. The study also sheds light on the role of media endorsing gender inequality and discrimination in a patriarchal society.

### *Delimitation*

There are plenty of drama serials being aired on television channels, but the researchers delimit this study by collecting and analysing data about only three Pakistani dramas: "Mere Pass Tum Ho", "Dil Ruba" and "Mohabbat Tujhe Alvida". Dialogues of central male and female characters are chosen for analysis. These three dramas have 78 episodes, but the study examined only 15 episodes.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Discourse as a Form of Power Struggle*

Eriyanto (2001) argues that the textual, conversational and whatever form of discourse is not seen as natural and neutral, but a form of power struggle. Power is always exercised through language, for example, male dominance over women, king's control over his public, the power of legislative towards the executive, etc.

Carter and Steiner (2004) point out that mass media firms have power over the public news and messages through electronic media transmission and print media publications. Thus, they control all types of media messages by deciding

important information, setting agendas, different broadcasting ways and whom to exclude from mainstream channels or include to what extent. Therefore, it can be stated that inclusion and exclusion of certain news in Pakistani media are deliberate, for example, censorship of the press conferences of elected members of national assembly, allowing people to speak to the media and what to censor in live programmers.

### ***Women Projection and Men's Perspective in Dramas***

It is argued that women are often projected through the male gaze in dramas and objectified; their apparent look and body is given more importance than intelligence. Their performance in academic and professional life is neglected, and fashion, style and bodies are highlighted (Lin, 1998). Women's presence in society is determined by their looks and beauty rather than abilities and proficiencies. This objectification of women in media can lead to gender inequality (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). This argument is plausible in terms of our society.

The portrayal and appearance of women are controlled, and they are often seen as products, physical beauty objects, and sources of masculine charm and joy. In media history, the expression of women in the media has been confiscated (Isanovi, 2006).

Ahmed and Wahab (2019) conducted a study using content analysis of two Pakistani T.V dramas containing 54 episodes. That study aimed to observe the representation of leading characters, social roles and women's rights violations. In the selected dramas, they have been particular to the exploitation and discrimination of women's rights badly affected by patriarchy. However, this subject is confined to the deprivation of women's rights and explores the significance of women defiled by patriarchal ideology. The content analysis seems to be a helpful approach for digging deep into the data to find the research objectives, but our study employs CDA because content analysis has some limitations in the critical analysis of the data.

### ***Gender Inequality in Pakistani Dramas***

Ali and Khan (2012) outline that the TV fiction dramas and other content project and construct the women's image as degraded, devalued, mediocre, reliant, financially and emotionally frail, and occasionally portrayed as creatures with no fundamental human values. Gallagher (1979) argues that women are seldom represented as dynamic, vital and decisive members of society and the home. Ashfaq and Shafiq (2018) conducted a study named "Contested Images of 'Perfect Women' in Pakistani Television Dramas". This study analyses the television dramas to determine the representation of socially accepted good, perfect, flawed and imperfect women and further explores specific stereotypes about good and bad women in the Pakistani television series. This study assumed that these popular dramas play an essential role in shaping social attitudes and beliefs.

This article contributed to gender inequality and media research by emphasising women's representations and comparing their characteristics. However, the study probes the same by analysing the language of main characters and linguistics features responsible for gender discrimination or gender inequality in dramas.

A similar study about the portrayal of women in Pakistani drama is conducted by Niaz (2019) is a qualitative-cum-quantitative study of selected Pakistani dramas to analyse how women are portrayed in the Pakistani context. The researchers have stated that recent drama does not represent the actual image of Pakistani society, language, makeup and other cultural costumes but emphasises the character of women. In some TV series, the woman looks depressed, but in others, she seems negative, and a woman's role on the screen is absurd (Huda, 2015).

Gallagher (1981) argues that the media interpretation of women can be considered narrow, as interests and activities of women are generally limited and fixed to the family life only; moreover, the character of a woman is calculated as fictional, active and romantic in mass media.

Signorielli (1989) rightly argues about gender stereotypes projected by media and often influence people to create biased attitudes towards women's treatment in all the spheres of life. Ali and Batool (2015) explain that discursive approaches to media discourses can disclose the multifaceted and delicate ways media contributions create, support, and sustain gender identities. They added that the women's representation conveys conventional, mainly patriarchal and traditional attitudes and beliefs.

Bhargava (2009) illustrates that "gender stereotypes are a psychological process which illustrates structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes of men and women". Thus, it can be argued that there is a link between the stereotypical projection of women in dramas and patriarchal beliefs in a society. This relationship can be unmasked through the critical analysis of the language used in Pakistani dramas.

Earlier studies mainly focused on portraying women as submissive wives, obedient daughters, and caring mothers in dramas. Those who considered women's representation and objectification through embedded patriarchal language are few and far between. Therefore, to fill the gap in this line of research, this study undertakes the analysis of Pakistani dramas. This study builds on and strengthens existing knowledge with new data and takes a theoretical approach to the topic not focused on in earlier studies.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

The present research is qualitative as it uses Critical Discourse Analysis as a research technique and the primary tool for qualitative research is textual interpretation and argumentation. The study deals with secondary data analysis

by applying CDA and employing the deductive method. The researchers' main aim is to interpret and critically analyse the discourse taken from media to find the answers to research questions. Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) suggest that discourse analysis can be employed as a theory and method for analysing data.

### *Data Collection*

The researchers used a non-probability sampling type to choose the sample of Pakistani dramas. All the elements in the selected population do not have any possibility of being selected as a sample in non-probability sampling type. Purposive sampling design is further selected from non-probability sampling type.

Sekaran and Bougie (2016, p. 277) outline that "it might sometimes become necessary to obtain information from specific target groups. The sampling here is confined to specific types of people who can provide the desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it, or conform to some criteria set by the researcher". The main criteria set by the researchers for selecting these particular dramas is their Television Rating Point (TRP), popularity on renowned channels and considering its vast viewership across the country. That is the main reason behind selecting these three Pakistani dramas, "Mere Pass Tum Ho", "Dil Ruba", and "Mohabbat Tujhe Alvida" by purposive sampling method for the present study.

Data collection sources are official websites of ARY digital and HUM TV. Total episodes of drama "Mere Pass Tum Ho" are 23, "Dil Ruba" 24 and "Mohabbat Tujhe Alvida" 31. It is hard to analyse a total of 78 episodes; therefore, probability sampling type is used to choose the sample of episodes. All the elements in the selected population have an almost known possibility of being selected as a sample in probability sampling type. Systematic sampling design is selected from probability sampling type. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) developed the systematic sampling design; in this design, sample members from a bigger population are chosen, giving an arbitrary starting point. This starting point is an episodic interval ( $k$ ) and fixed. This design comprises every  $n^{\text{th}}$  element in the  $N$  population size, starting with a randomly chosen element between 1 and  $n$ . The formula for the systematic sampling method is  $K=N/n$ .

$K$ = Systematic sampling interval

$N$  = Population size

$n$ = Sample size

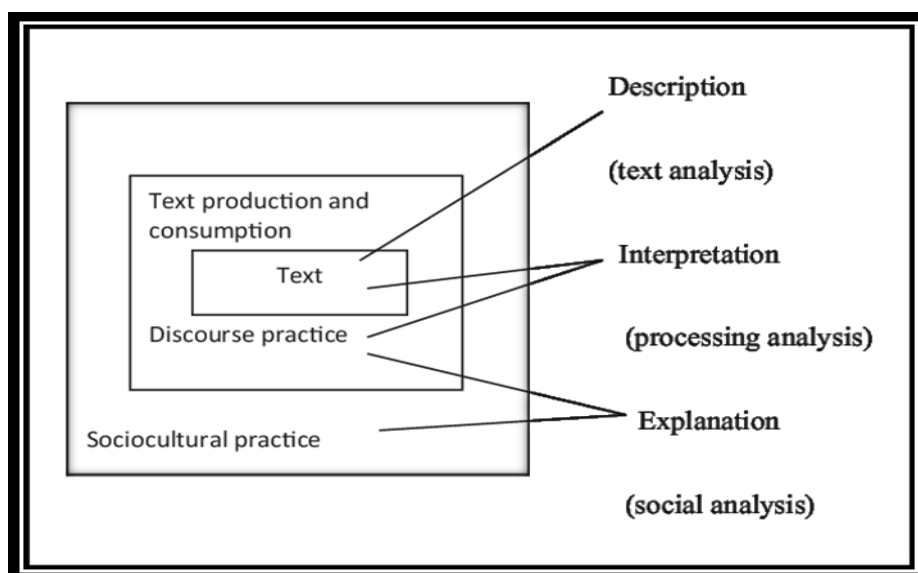
According to systematic sampling total of 05 episodes of drama "Mere Pass Tum Ho" starting from 2<sup>nd</sup> episode with the interval of 04, 05 episodes of drama "Mohabbat Tujhe Alvida" starting from 5<sup>th</sup> episode with the interval of 05 and 05 episodes of drama "Dil Ruba" starting from 4<sup>th</sup> episode with the interval of 04 are chosen. After the first sampling of episodes from the selected dramas, the dialogues are selected through "relevance sampling" based on the recognised contribution to the central research questions (Krippendorff, 2018). Dialogues of main female and male characters are extracted to probe the projection of

Pakistani women and how linguistic features employed in these dramas that lead to gender inequality.

**Theoretical Framework**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an experimental research paradigm that examines "ideological manipulations, power relations, and hegemony." (Rahimi & Sahragard, 2007, p.1). Fairclough three-dimensional model is applied to collected data to get the answers to the research questions of the present study. N. Fairclough in Language and Power (1989) "Examine how the signs of progress in which we deliver are obliged by the arrangements and strengths of those social organisations inside which we live." (Fairclough 1989: vi). The three phases of the model of critical discourse analysis are:

1. Description; the first stage in which formal aspects of the text is analysed. The researchers study the chunks of utterances, linguistic choices of social actors, and words frequency along with keywords
2. Interpretation; the second stage deals with the link between the text and the interaction—seeing the text as a product of production development and as a resource in interpretation. This stage also deals with discursive practice, which is the production of text by the speaker, the medium for delivering the message and its interpretation.
3. Explanation; "the third stage is concerned with the connection between social context and interaction – social determination of the procedures of construction and interpretation, and their social effects" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26). This analysis stage deals with the social analysis of the text in which a larger social structure is considered essential to unmask the meaning.



**Figure 1:** 3-Dimensional Model of Discourse and Its Shaping Fundamentals and the Connection between these Elements (Fairclough, 1992).

### *Linguistics Features*

Linguistic features are detailed pairs of structures or meanings formed in language. Various linguistic features refer to vocabulary, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, etc. Sa'idah (2018, p. 12) defines that "Features of language that support meanings (for example sentence structure, noun group/phrase, vocabulary, punctuation, figurative language, choices in language features, and text structure together define a type of text and shape its meanings". Extracting semantic features is a notational method used to describe the existence and nonexistence of pre-established semantic properties by using plus + and minus – signs (Lipka, 2002). This study unmasks the semantic features employed in Pakistani dramas that lead to gender asymmetry.

### *Data Analysis Technique*

The qualitative data analysis deals with the categorisation, textual interpretations and non-numerical analysis. It differs from quantitative data analysis as the collected data is in text and systematically examined to reach knowledgeable findings. Data categorisation also requires some initial understanding of the themes and earlier studies in the concerned area (Mason, 2002).

The sample for the present study was purposively selected and categorised in five different categories. The selected sample is subjected to 'relevance sampling' based on the perceived contribution to answers the research questions (Krippendorff, 2018).

## **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

A sample of 07 dialogues from 07 episodes out of 15 has been analysed, and to facilitate the analysis of the data following categories were developed:

- Women as ungrateful, ostentatious and talkative
- Women as a rehabilitation centre for badly raised, ill-mannered men
- Projecting the 'ideal' wife material

### *Linguistic Features and Gender Inequality in Pakistani Dramas*

- Women as frail and gold-diggers.
- Infidel man is worthy of redemption, but women damned to eternal damnation.

#### *Category 1: Women as Ungrateful, Ostentatious and Verbose*

The data from the leading female and male characters of Pakistani dramas are shown, respectively. For the women's projection as ungrateful and talkative, these examples depict pejorative projection.

1. Aur tum bhi yad karo jaan ko aa gaye thy, meri kesy kesy khawb dikhaya karty thy aur shadi ho gai to la k bitha dia is choty se flat main. (Mehwish from drama "Mere Pass Tum Ho" episode 2)



***English Translation:***

You also try to remember! You were chasing me badly, talking about big dreams and after getting married, you've put me in this tiny flat.

***Analysis:***

There are 31 words uttered by Mehwish, of which 16 are related to complaining and ungratefulness. The first sentence comprises multiple linguistic items, which attempt to remind the addressee how he created virtual reality through his fake promises. Mehwish's direct address using the second-person pronoun "You" focuses on Danish and illustrates that she is complaining to him. She emphasised by saying 'kesy kesy' about the dreams Danish used to show her before marriage. She chooses the degree of adverb 'choty se' while talking about the flat the people are living in. she could only decide flat or 'Chota' flat but her deliberate choice of 'choty se' flat depicts her intention to belittle her husband for not providing the luxuries of life as he promised before marrying her. The sentence is a declarative statement, and the speaker is lamenting. Both the sentences are interconnected in their context.

Moreover, the whole utterance is interconnected with the mindset of all the women in the society around the speaker. Mehwish is focusing on 'Kesy Kesy Khawb dikhaya Karty thy' her language projected the image of women who are easily prone to the temptation of men by showing them dreams of a better future and luxurious life. Women image is projected as ungrateful by uttering these dialogues that "you have put me in this small flat 'la k bitha dia is choty se flat main'. Text is serving an emotive function as Mehwish seems emotional while complaining. Salient lexemes allow the viewers to notice the most significant aspects of the message at first glance. Salient lexemes 'la k bitha dia' and 'is choty se flat main' are used to foreground the message and depict women as ungrateful.

2. Allah kaa insaaf dekh kia ho jata jo hamy bhi 1 aisi gari dilla deta

***English Translation:***

Look at the justice of God, what happened if we were given such a car.

***Analysis:***

Excerpt 3 comprises 15 words uttered by Ulfat, illustrates that religious discourse strictly prohibited anybody from being ungrateful of Allah almighty, but by these dialogues of Ulfat 'Allah ka insaaf dekh', she is projected as ungrateful for not given a luxurious car. On the other hand, she has also projected the woman destined to compare everything with another woman. Drama projects this scene so that women are ungrateful for what they have and always crave for more and worldlier things. Psychoanalytically, the speaker is in a state of inferiority complex and ungrateful towards her creator. Semantically, she is complaining and vanning against the distribution of God.

Ulfat uttered these words in front of her husband, ignoring her. The male character is depicted as kind-hearted and mature compared to the female in a situational context, and the female character is projected as ungrateful. “Just as even a single sentence has traditionally been seen to imply a whole language, so a single discourse implies a whole society.” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 152). This excerpt is loaded with two layers meaning firstly, women are ungrateful to God for not having the luxuries of life, and secondly, they are ungrateful to their husbands despite the provision of basic needs and comfort. It shows that women are ungrateful to their creator and so-called guardian.

3. Aakhir kar di na shoharo wali baat, de dia naa taana, dar asal baat yeh hai ke woh jalta hai; mujh se, meri dolat se, meri khushio se, sari zindagi khud jo kuch nahi de paya.  
Episode 23(15:16-15:35)

***English Translation:***

At last, he acted as a typical husband taunted me. The thing is that he is jealous of me, jealous of my wealth, my happiness. He couldn't give me all of this in his life, which is why he is taunting me.

***Analysis:***

A total of 36 words are uttered by Ulfat, and all are related to complaining, arguing and quarrelling. The first phrase of excerpt 4 tells us that the speaker used independent clauses, which semantically reflect the male domination. Ulfat's utterance 'shoharo wali baat' depicts two ways of speaking, one associated with husband and the other with wife. She illustrates the different bar set by society that men are supposed to talk in this way and women in that way. 'Aakhir' word shows that her husband is now talking to her in this tone; he used to talk in a different way earlier. Her phrase 'woh jalta hai' tells the audience about female nature that if women have more money and earnings than her husband, then he seems to be jealous of her. Money brings prosperity, and one could be happy with it. So, this phrase shows that if women are happy with her money, her husband would be jealous of her because she is no more dependent on him for her financial needs. 'Sari Zindagi khud Jo Kuch nahi de paya' shows complaints and lament of Ulfat for her husband that he could not have been able to give her financial freedom.

CDA uncovers opaqueness and asymmetrical power relationships, and this excerpt shows the gendered power structure prevailing in society. Women's earnings are often not accepted and unwelcomed in our society because it hurts the male ego to see the wealth controlled by women. Ulfat's complaint to her husband for not providing luxurious life is depicted negative quality of women, and if she managed all that lavish lifestyle on her own, she is also not very welcomed by her husband and society.

Mera beta to itny bary school main jaye ga ke meri sari dosty dekhti reh jayegi (Mehwish from drama “Mere Pass Tum Ho” episode 2)

***English Translation:***

My son will go to a big school so my friends will get jealous.

***Analysis:***

There are 16 words uttered by Mehwish, of which 06 words are related to show off. The first part of dialogue No five projects the image of Mehwish as an ambitious mother who is worried about the better education of her son. Semantically, the possessive determiner 'my' Mera shows affection and possession of a mother towards her son. Pragmatically, the word bary shows the inferiority complex of the speaker and the desire to change the social status through entering some credible schools. Moreover, the term barra depicts a generic social barrier associated with the elite class. The phrase dekhti reh jayengi describes a social contest among the families, which are not just endeavouring for success but letting others feel timid. The second phrase depicts the image of Mehwish as ostentatious who wants to show off by sending her son to English medium school so that her friends may get jealous. Using these words, meri sari dosty dekhti reh jayegi negative image of women is projected that they are not worried about the standard of education for their sons, but they are more concerned about their reputation in their friends and happy to show off.

According to the Human rights commission, approximately 22.5 million Pakistani children are out of school, and in this situation, a woman's worry about her son's education seems fair, but she is depicted as showing off in her friends. This contextual analysis shows the ostentatious nature of the leading female character.

4. Kal hi Danish bata rahy thy aap ke bary main. (Mehwish)  
 Kia bata rahy thy. (Monti)  
 Wo gari hai na aap ke pas, usky bary me bata rahy thy ke shaid hum usy khareed le (Mehwish)  
 (Mehwish from drama "Mere Pass Tum Ho" episode 2)

***English Translation:***

Yesterday, Danish was telling about you.  
 What he was saying?

He was telling about your car; he was saying that maybe we will buy that.

***Analysis:***

There are 29 words uttered by Mehwish and 04 by Monti. Dialogue No 5 shows the formal utterance, but Mehwish's second utterance is a solid message about her ambition to have a car and ostentatious nature to show off. They do not have any final plan to purchase the car of Monti as Mehwish says 'shaid', which shows the uncertainty about the decision, but Mehwish is talking to him merely for the sake of show-off.

The lunacy of society about materialistic objects is on the rise; television dramas are endorsing it instead of defying it. Rich women having luxurious lifestyles are projected on television as standard, and that impact on others is profound. Mehwish's friend is projected as a wealthy lady roaming in her car and busy in branded shopping, ultimately impacting Mehwish to have the same lifestyle. Danish cannot afford a car with his current job, but Mehwish talks to Monty as they are just about to buy his car. This utterance of Mehwish depicts her as an ostentatious woman who only shows off by her utterance.

### ***Category 2: Women as Rehabilitation Centres for Ill-bred Men***

1. Aap ka matlab hai ke maim khuram ki harkaty khamoshi se brdasht karo, apni zindagi, apna skoon, sab kuch dao per laga doo, sirf ic ghar ke liye. (Sanam from the drama "Dill ruba" episode 13)

#### ***English Translation:***

You mean to say I should bear Khurram's habits quietly? I should risk my life, peace of mind, and everything just for this family?

#### ***Analysis:***

There are 28 words uttered by Sanam, of which 06 words are related to her life. Sanam by saying 'Aap ka matlab hai' seems to argue with her father-in-law and 'khuram ki harkaty' tells the audience that her husband Khuram is not a gentleman and involved in such type of activities which her wife does not accept. 'khamoshi se brdasht' shows that Sanam is expected to bear all the activities of her husband by not complaining and saying anything just because he is her husband. Hence, she seems bound to do so. 'Sab kuch dao per laga doo' depicts that her father-in-law further expects her to sacrifice her life, peace and everything to please and change her husband. 'sirf ic ghar ke liye' seems the reward of her efforts which she is supposed to put up to work her marriage. The relational value of the sentences emphasises what modes are used to transport the message. This dialogue No one apprises and explains to viewers that tolerance is the finest quality of women whatever the situation is in marital life, women must have patience and bear with the wrongdoing of her husband to get the approval of her good wife by family society.

This scene depicts the current situation of our society; ill-mannered and badly raised men are married by their parents by saying that they will be okay after marriage. Their wives will be the life-changer and turn them into good men. As Nakhavaly and Sharifi (2013) outline that woman are directed to do anything and everything to please their men. This notion and implicit objective of marriage are wrong and destroy many girls' lives in our society because females also consider them life saviours and game-changers for these men and ultimately end up with domestic violence and many other marital issues.

Furthermore, if, for some reason, women are unable to bring the children up, then they have other options to shift this very fundamental responsibility from their mothers to their wives. This is the male privileged but women do not have

such luxury of choice, and they are constantly instructed to live with their men irrespective of the subjugation and domestic violence by their men. These patriarchal beliefs in society caused social insecurity for women because they feared being replaced by other women or thrown out of the home if they failed to fulfil the desires of men. Tair and Edwards (2006) argue that women are ought to obey, respect and conform to the wishes of men mainly in terms of their matrimonial relationship.

### ***Category 3: Projecting the 'ideal' Wife Material***

Kisi chez ka shauq hi nahi hai tumhe, na orhny ka, na pehinny ka, na kahi bahir jany ka, yaha tak ke tumhe to baat karny ka shauq nahi, bechary hamad bhai, pta nahi kia ho ga un ky sath.  
(Sanam from dil-ruba-episode-4)

#### ***English Translation:***

You don't have an interest in anything. Not in dressing up, not in going out. You don't even have an interest in talking. Poor Hammad, God knows what will happen with him.

#### ***Analysis:***

There is a total of 40 words uttered by Sanam in which 30 words are related to the qualities and interests of a good wife, and ten words are related to the men who got a wife without these qualities. Sanam talking to her sister Iram, she uses the phrase kisi chez ka shauq hi nahi mean that her sister is not interested in any activity which seems attractive to men. According to Sanam, those men are poor who have wives like Iram; not interested in anything, not to cover, not to wear and even do not like to talk. The sentence's relational value outlines the modes used to convey the message: declarative, imperative and interrogative or question. In this sentence, the declarative mod conveys the direct transmission and command to the audience, which serves the patriarchal ideologies that the duty of maintaining a marital relationship is lye on the shoulders of women only. Men are free from all these terms and conditions of having good dressing sense, being outspoken to their wives and taking them on outings often.

CDA also seeks to identify the assumptions and silences in the texts, and one of the critical silences presented in this text made in this excerpt is regarding the other roles of women in society after her marriage. Text is silent about the education, career and any other personality trait of women, which should be given due consideration contrary to projecting her image as a stereotypical wife. Women are rarely portrayed as efficacious, skilful, industrialists, and ambitious entities. The educational qualification and rational abilities of women are minima considered. Their capabilities, different skills, talents and competencies as equivalent allies in the course of progress remain unappreciated (Shaheen & Parveen, 2003). Lin (1998) claims that media projection of women is more focused on their physiques and appearances than their productivities and competencies.

### *Linguistic Features and Gender Inequality*

The two linguistics features are divided into two categories according to their themes represented in selected dramas that lead to gender inequality.

#### **Category 4 : Women are Frail and Gold-diggers**

1. Dekhny sunny main bary intelligent lagty hain aap lekin yaha bhao karty hoye aap ne mujhe heran kar dia is **2 takky ki larki** ke liye aap mujhe 50 million de rahy thy (Mere Paas Tum Ho 12)

#### *English Translation:*

You seem to be a brilliant businessman, but you have surprised me while dealing here. You were offering me 50 million for that low-class woman.

#### *Analysis:*

The phrase 'dekhny sunny' advocates the intelligence of the addressee in one way and provides a strong negative impact by using the word 'bhao', which means dealing; dealing in terms of a woman. Addressor and addressee are talking about the woman in terms of money which projects women as a commodity. The declarative statement shows that the speaker is too judgmental. From Marx's perspective, the approach of interlocutors is highly economical. Both the interlocutors judge the worth of human beings in terms of money. The addresser is objectifying a living human being worth '2 takky ki larki' because she wants to leave him for whatsoever reason. The notational method is used to describe the existence and nonexistence of pre-established semantic properties by using plus + and minus - sign. 'larki' girl is [+ Human] and [+Adult] but not [-2 takky] and [-commodity]. The speaker is comparing his companion's appearance with his mentality. The situation is so ironic because the speaker criticises the addressee on his making the deal through money without realising that he is judging a woman's value in terms of money.

#### *Category 5: Infidel Men Redeemed and Women Retributed*

This category shows the dual standard of society, which deals with women and men differently. Forgiveness is only for men, and women are not supposed to be forgiven, especially in cases of infidelity.

1. Jao ge us ke paas, toi sirf yeh na kehna k aa kar mil jao, us se pochhna mafi kyun nahi mill sakti isy? galti ho gayi, gunah ho gaya, maan lia, us ne bhi maan lia. Ab wo toba ki sharat se bhi aagy nikal ayi hai to pochhna us se Khuda maan jata hai tum kyun nahi manty. kitni misalein hain monty, jis ko talaq di us sey dobara shadi kar li, woh bhi kar le naa. shaadi mein hoti hai talaq mohabat mein nahi hoti, is mein mard badalney ke liye sirf bewafai hoti hain. aur bewafai mein maafi ho jaye Toh Mard Khuda Na Ho jaye (Mere pass tum ho, episode 22, 25:25- 26:20)

***English Translation:***

Will you go to him? Then just do not say this, to see her once, ask him why she cannot be forgiven?

A mistake is done...A sin has been done. He has accepted this; she has also accepted this. Now she has gone beyond the condition of repentance, then ask him God forgives...why don't you forgive? There are so many examples; Monty, who has been divorced once remarried the person again, should also do this.

Divorce happens in marriage but not in love. To change the man, she did disloyalty. If there is forgiveness in cheating, then would not a man become God?

***Analysis:***

this utterance of Monty '**Toh Mard Khuda Na Ho Jaye**' unnecessarily exaggerates the men's role and depicts the power of men over women. Hyperbole is the figure of speech used for exaggeration purposes. This speech and linguistic feature symbolise men with God, which goes towards an unbelievable altar of male supremacy. The notational method describes the existence and nonexistence of pre-established semantic properties by using the plus + and minus - signs. 'Mard' is [+ Human] and [+Adult] but not [-Khuda]. This utterance gives a loud and clear message to the infidel women that they are not worthy of redemption by men of anycast. This text makes silent about the punishment of the same sin committed by men. This silence and foregrounding of only women's sins depict the power of males over females in this discourse.

***Findings Of the Study***

Pakistani dramas portrayed women as ungrateful and talkative. According to the male perspective, women should be grateful to them for their efforts because public sphere work is paid higher than private sphere unpaid labour of women. So, if the women are not grateful toward their husbands, they are considered harmful and unaccepted in society.

Similarly, women are projected as ostentatious who love to show off their clothing, items of beautification and money. Their lunacy for getting new clothes, shoes, jewellery, and other ornaments is exaggerated in these dramas. They are further shown as talkative, always involved in unnecessary and excessive talk with their husbands and other family members. Their tongue is projected a razor-sharped which can speak continuously for hours on trivial subjects. Coates (2004: 10) remarks about "the androcentric rule" whereby the linguistic behaviour of men is seen as expected and the linguistic behaviour of women is seen as deviating from that norm.

Furthermore, society gives men a monopoly over the house's income and assets, ignoring women's unpaid labour. Men believe that women should bear the

wrongdoings to keep the family together. This led to domestic violence and legitimatised it according to societal norms.

The study further finds women's projection as a rehabilitation centre for badly raised, ill-mannered men. When society finds any male not responsible for his family, they go for his marriage, which is one of the main reasons for marriages in Pakistani society. This type of marriage considers women as rehabilitation centres that women will ultimately change the behaviour of men through her love and attention, and he will become responsible towards his family. This type of women projection treats women as inferior, having no right to marriage as their choice.

The study further finds that the ultimate women's role as projected in selected dramas is to look beautiful, have a sense of talking, dressing, and beautification to attract their husbands and live a happy life. These characteristics are shown as the ultimate requirement of happy marital life.

Finally, the study finds some positive aspects of women's projection as agents of change and challenging patriarchal societal structure. Female leading characters show courage to go outside the home chores by not bothering the sayings and criticism of society; some dialogues seem to break the stereotypical notion of a daughter as they are not much welcomed in our society and considered a burden on their parents.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study concluded that these dramas show women's negative image and project them as greedy and materialistic. This representation distorts facts because materialism and gold-digger are personality traits that are not associated with any gender, but these dramas emphasise that women are always seen as gold-diggers. Greed is part of human nature, and it can vary from person to person, not gender to gender, but these dramas show women only greed is an alarming situation because this projection can enhance the problems of women which they are already facing in a patriarchal society. These female characters are stigmatised for being gold-diggers and frail, which can be very harmful to the general thinking of the masses.

The second research question states the linguistics features that lead to gender inequality in Pakistani dramas. Accordingly, the study results find the men's role is altered and glorified to an unbelievable extent; these selected Pakistani dramas portrayed the best version of men and the worst of women by manipulating language. These linguistic features employed by characters are the main reason for gender inequality because both genders are not treated equally. Male characters' linguistic choices lead to gender inequality; they manipulate language to gain dominance and exercise power through their language. Devereaux (2003) and Giltlin (1980) argue that the media 'pictures' often do not reflect the real world as this study concludes that women are projected as frail and gold diggers through the linguistic features employed in these selected dramas.



This study fetches awareness about the importance of the optimistic projection of women in Pakistani dramas. Dramas can better address the socially sanctioned norms and raise the consciousness of the common masses to determine and unveil the social practices that generate the gender disparity and lead to nasty effects for women in our society. Domestic violence, honour killing, acid throwing, forced marriages are some of the most contested topics for our drama writers in Pakistan. However, comparatively, very little work has been carried out to discern women's stereotypical projection and objectification in Pakistani society. This study attempts to contribute to the communal efforts to highlight the plight of women from a stereotypical projection point of view.

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