

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN PAKISTANI CULTURE: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF THE MINI SERIES 'RAZIA'

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to investigate the stereotype and difference in gender in Pakistani culture by taking a sample of Pakistani miniseries "Razia" that is based of 6 Episodes. The study highlights the problems faced to the Pakistani girls because of the difference in behavior of parents and society towards them. The researcher has used the difference approach introduced by Tannen and Maltz to identify this stereotype concepts of daughter and son in Pakistani culture. The multimodal data analysis is used to explore the stereotype behavior of parents towards their children. In some of Pakistan's rural areas the difference of being male and female are still can be seen, the people of these areas consider women only for the household works, and male as the dominant personality in the society. The researcher takes the web series "Razia" this masterpiece was concluded with captivating animation and cutting-edge graphics, offering a narrative that goes beyond being just "another story" but rather, the story that could potentially redefine not only the script but also the art of storytelling itself. The result of the study shows that through verbal and non-verbal elements actors and other team tactfully tells us about the stereotype behavior of parents and society towards the daughters, as some of the families desired for a boy.

Keywords: *Stereotype, captivating animation, cutting-edge graphics.*

INTRODUCTION

Since the Vedic era, women have faced several injustices, including discrimination based on gender and limited freedom. Women were portrayed by society as being weaker and less capable than males, which was highly undesirable and inappropriate. However, as society, the law, and the economy change, women are protected by the right to an education, the freedom to migrate, and other rights that grant them equality with men. All over the world the entertainment industries are trying to breaking stereotypes and showing the real faces of the society and that factors or persons causing the problems but in Pakistani industries the characters and the ploy is so glamourized specially the negative characters, they work quite the opposite and instead of demolishing they are promoting the gender stereotypes. According to the 2001 Media Report to Women, it is linked to more conventional sexual practices, harmful relationship standards, and a higher propensity to accept sexual approaches, especially from women and adolescent girls.

In Pakistani entertainment television, gender issues are conveyed via the portrayal of men and women. By analyzing a variety of Pakistani dramas, it is seen that the dramas are imposing certain traits and gender roles in the society. Women's roles are presented mostly as an ideal housewife Mothers, wives, and daughters are the stereotypical roles that have been offered for women, according to a quick examination of the empirical findings. They are reduced to the object of desire and sex object status in sexual love. Most empirical research on the representation of women in advertising and television commercials concludes that "women are portrayed in television advertisements as sex objects".

The act of assigning to a particular woman or man certain traits, qualities, or roles solely because of their affiliation with the social group of women or men is known as gender stereotyping. Human rights and basic freedoms are violated when gender stereotyping leads to one or more of these breaches. Gender discrimination often happens when an employer gives one employee a different treatment because of their sex. Most of the time, the employer will base this unfair behavior on a stereotype. When decision-makers have an unfavorable opinion of women based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, these stereotypes can be very harmful. For instance, the employer can assert that a woman's emotionality or lack of strength prevents her from doing a certain task. The results show that females use language differently than males because language is influenced by culture, the media, the social group and thoughts patterns.

Razia's journey concluded on an optimistic and motivating note. Razia possessed abundant potential from the start, yet its culmination transformed it into a masterpiece that will endure in memory. The character of Razia left a profound impact throughout, showcasing resilience and unwavering determination that delivered a powerful message to all the Razias who may feel trapped in despair.

Razia expertly conveyed a series of blunt and uncompromising truths in a way that consistently captivated the audience's attention. One of the key reasons why Razia's narrative remained engaging to viewers was the adept storytelling that enabled deep empathy with the protagonist as she navigated her challenging path. Throughout the tale, there was an undeniable allure that left you eagerly anticipating each new turn and development.

In the setting reminiscent of bygone eras when the village raconteur gathered the local folks to recount tales of power, bravery, courage, avarice, family, and more, the narrative of Razia transports us back to those delightfully nostalgic times - akin to the vividly colorful stories of yesteryears, much akin to the reminiscence of Dilip Kumar's legends - do you recall Qissa Khwani Bazaar in Peshawar? Within the bustling square of the market, villagers would congregate and eagerly listen as the storyteller disclosed his qissas, anecdotes, and riveting sagas while savoring cups of fragrant kahwa, spiced tea, infusing the night with enchantment, folly, and enigma.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the gender stereotypical values imposed by Pakistani dramas.
- To analyse the women status in rural areas of Pakistan.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

RQ1. How media is playing a vital in portraying the status of women in society?

RQ2. How Razia drama story unfolds a powerful depiction of a young woman?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender Stereotypes in Media

Studies have shown that such portrayals reinforce societal norms and expectations, limiting the perceived potential and roles of women in society. Historically, media across cultures has frequently perpetuated traditional gender roles, depicting women primarily in domestic roles or as objects of beauty and desire (García, 2020). This trend is prevalent in Pakistani media, where women are frequently shown as subservient to men or confined to household responsibilities (Ahmad, 2018). The way men are depicted in the media usually involves their being strong, powerful, and in charge.

Tannen's Differential Approach:

Male characters frequently occupy positions of authority and control in Pakistani plays, which reinforces the notion of male domination in society (Rashid, 2019).

Deborah Tannen's difference approach highlights the ways in which cultural norms and societal expectations impact the communication styles of men and women (Tannen, 1990).

According to Ali and Batool (2018), this portrayal is consistent with traditional patriarchal attitudes that prioritize males as the main decision makers and providers of income.

This method helps us examine how stereotypes are maintained by gendered communication.

Tannen contends that whereas males use language to establish authority and attain status, women generally utilize it to form connections and communicate their feelings (Tannen, 1990). 2021).

Maltz and Borker's Work:

Daniel Maltz and Ruth Borker further indicate that these distinctions in communication styles are learnt behaviors, reinforced through socialization processes (Maltz & Borker, 1982). In the context of Pakistani society, these habits are typically strongly established and represented in media depictions. A framework for examining the gendered relationships and communication patterns portrayed in "Razia" is offered by the difference method.

Verbal Communication:

The treating of sons and daughters differently is highlighted in "Razia" through verbal communication. Conversations frequently make clear the preference for male offspring and the expectations that are put on them as potential family heads. Daughters, on the other hand, are constantly reminded of their responsibilities within the family. Research has demonstrated that word choice, tone, and conversation structure in media may all subtly promote gender prejudices (Hall, 2014).

Non-Verbal Communication:

Gender norms are also strongly communicated through non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and visual symbols. In "Razia," visual signals and settings are frequently used to highlight how women's roles are constrained in comparison to men's more unconstrained and powerful ones. Nonverbal cues have the ability to strongly reinforce or challenge society norms, according to research on multimodal communication (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

The Roles of Women in Pakistani Society Urban versus Rural Viewpoints:

The way gender roles are portrayed in "Razia" speaks to the problems that persist in Pakistan's cities, where traditional beliefs persist in spite of growing knowledge and efforts to promote gender equality. Progressive and conservative views on gender roles are frequently seen in urban environments (Zafar, 2017). Research indicates that although education and urbanization are increasingly changing people's viewpoints, ingrained cultural norms still have an impact on expectations and behavior (Siddiqui, 2019).

Parental Expectations and Gender Prejudice:

With a blatant preference for sons over females, the television series "Razia" skillfully demonstrates the gender prejudice in parental expectations. This prejudice stems from the traditional belief that men will provide for and defend the family in the future, whereas daughters are viewed as transient family members who will ultimately marry and move out (Jafri, 2018). According to sociological study, these prejudices are passed down through the generations and have an impact on both boys' and girls' goals and self-esteem (Nawaz & Gilani, 2017).

The mini-series "Razia" highlights the pervasive gender stereotypes and prejudices that affect the lives of men and women, acting as a microcosm of Pakistani society. Using the difference method and a multimodal analysis framework, this study emphasizes how media plays a dual function in reflecting and enforcing cultural norms. Comprehending these factors is crucial in advocating for gender parity and confronting deeply ingrained misconceptions within Pakistani society.

METHODOLOGY

Multimodal discourse analysis has been employed to study the play. The discipline of discourse analysis is witnessing a swift rise in multimodal analysis. This approach essentially involves constructing meaning by combining text with various other forms of media such as images, sounds, gestures, and videos. The researcher uses the multimodal to show the gender stereotype in the selected sample a Mini Pakistani series Razia in which the discrimination in gender, the domestic violence and the appalling condition of girls is highlighted. The research is investigating the public's perception of Pakistanis and analyses the reasons behind the decline of the Pakistani entertainment industry, particularly among the younger generation, who are the least consumers of Pakistani dramas. Machin (2012) asserts that every visual concurrently conveys two different meanings: denotation and connotation. Connotation refers to meaning based on social, historical, and cultural context, whereas denotation refers to surface meaning. The analysis of the image is done with the assistance of certain elements, such as participation, size, gaze, setting objects, and pose. Connotative meanings are mostly assigned to objects, which represent the image's deeper or more obscure meaning. Location is very important in illustrations because illustrators can promote particular beliefs with the aid of a particular location. The researcher watched all the episodes to determine the difference of gender and also the male dominance in the drama. The drama is the true picture of some of Pakistani rural areas, where still the concept of boy and girl discrimination exist and people do not accept the girls as they do the boys. There are many sampling procedures to select sample from population and selection of sampling depend on the study and objective of the study. This study has used purposive or judgmental sampling for the selection of sample. The sample of this study is taken from Pakistani miniseries "Razia" of about six episodes.

DISCUSSION AND DATA ANALYSIS

In the setting reminiscent of bygone eras when the village raconteur gathered the local folks to recount tales of power, bravery, courage, avarice, family, and more, the narrative of Razia transports us back to those delightfully nostalgic times - akin to the vividly colorful stories of yesteryears, much akin to the reminiscence of Dilip Kumar's legends - do you recall Qissa Khwani Bazaar in Peshawar? Within the bustling square of the market, villagers would congregate and eagerly listen as the storyteller disclosed his qissas, anecdotes, and riveting sagas while savoring cups of fragrant kahwa, spiced tea, infusing the night with enchantment, folly, and enigma.

Razia's story unfolds as a powerful depiction of a young woman challenging the oppressive gender norms in a patriarchal and misogynistic society. In a world where daughters are often devalued in comparison to sons, where masculinity is glorified as a symbol of power while femininity is seen as weak and insignificant, fathers and brothers perpetuate injustice and violence, and husbands exert various forms of abuse. Despite these challenges, Razia's strong and eloquent words stand as a testament to her resilience and that of every woman.

Gender Discrimination:

In the drama mentioned above starts with the moment everyone is waiting for the birth of boy in the house but girl born in the house of such people who desired to have a boy and they heard that it is not a boy. Instead of happiness, whole environment turns into sadness. This drama highlights the most unfair moment when a woman cursed for not to give birth to boy. One of the most prominent and obvious themes that the series prominently highlighted was the pervasive practice of dreading the birth of daughters, treating them as if they were worthless, and systematically denying them their fundamental rights solely on the basis of their gender. Regrettably, this is a

deeply entrenched and persistent practice that continues to be prevalent in our society. Razia put this message forward with utmost clarity and unflinching resolve.

On the birth of baby girl in the house the first typical dialogues between her father and her grandmother;

Grandmother: *A son becomes his father's support and a daughter is like a burden on him. You have to bear her expenses for 20-22 years and then any stranger would come and ask for a huge dowry and will take her away.*

The old lady cursing and blaming her daughter in law as she denied to go with her to cleric for the blessings so you definitely get a son.

Daughters are the blessings by God, but for these types of people it is a burden for the father and a threat of divorce for the mother for giving birth to daughter not a son. After few years, on the birth of a son the whole environment shows a different scenario, the celebration of father and the grandmother is distributing the gifts and sweets in front of little girl to tell her that she is worthless for them. It is such a heart wrenching moment for her, at that moment the old lady died but no one calls that boy like unlucky, wretched and ill-omened. All these titles are specified for the girls for the whole life.

Criticizing the attitudes of such parents who reject their female children, the Qur'an states:

When news is brought to one of them, of (the Birth of) a female (child), his face darkens and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain her on (sufferance) and contempt, or bury her in the dust? Ah! What an evil (choice) they decide on? (Qur'an 16: 58-59).

In the serial there are some heart wrenching moments in which the father considers the girl as she does not exist and brings toys for his son, celebrates his birthday just ignoring that it is his mother's funeral day. The little girl just watches that her father loving her younger brother.

Daughter: Mom, when was I born? Which date?

Mother: On 29th October.

Daughter: Why don't you celebrate my birthday then?

When she first asks for herself;

Mother: Dear, you are not supposed to compare yourself with your younger brother.

Restrictions on women:

The serial tells us about the parents' restrictions for girls of doing anything like boys as in this serial the mother even asks Razia to stop going outside the house, girls are not supposed to be friends with boys in childhood, even can't ride the cycle and nor ask the questions.

Difference in Gender:

When she tends to eat the dinner and select a leg piece for her to eat and the mother stops her;

Mother: Razia, give this piece to your brother, you can take any other one.

Razia: Why? I like it.

Mother: Dear, you are the elder sister and elder sisters are supposed to take care of their younger brothers.

Razia: Mom, a hen has two legs, give the other one to him.

Mother: that I kept for your father.

In the above-mentioned lines, it is cleared that she has to compromise on her every favorite thing because she is girl and girls are meant for comprising everything in life. The mother is being stereotype person by asking and stopping her from eating her favorite piece and save that for

husband and son. All these restrictions make her to think that growing up is such big problem and she started hating her gender, because the society has made her realize that being a girl is a fault. Razia also provided a poignant reminder of how crucial it is to instill the proper values and beliefs in boys. It refuted the widely accepted notion that spoiling and elevating boys to a higher social standing will always mold them into admirable people.

Dominance in Gender:

When the little asked about herself and her father slapped her, at that moment she actually realized that she has grown up and she convinced herself that she is a fragile. She is not allowed to ask for her rights and live her life on her own terms. The drama more over shows that when a son gets the passing marks, he is appreciated and given some money as a gesture of appreciation but on the other hand, the daughter gets first position and asks to stay at home and help her mother because she has to be married and not wrathful to educate her. The girls in the society are so deprived that they cannot say anything to her parents even something wrong is happened with her because she is scared of one thing that her parents will not believe on her, and thinks that it might be her fault. The story is based on a girl growing up in a patriarchal society. It highlights the struggles a girl has to face when she dreams big while living in a society that considers women to be only capable of running households.

In our society, there are some persons who consider a girl as a show piece in a shop when they go for marriage proposal for their son or brother, like they need good looking smart, beautiful and even good in-home chores. And if the boy or man does not like her, he can deny from the proposal but unfortunately this option is not valid for the girls. The girls are not allowed to pursue their studies in some urban areas but they have to give the hard exams that are taken by the life and society. People do not even think the girl also has self-respect and we have to respect that.

Another sacrifice from Razia, when her brother has done adultery with the girl and now it is the time to pay off. The girl is used for the compensation and Razia is compromising her life and a life full of thrones is ahead.

Domestic violence:

Domestic violence causes worsened psychological and physical health, decreased quality of life, decreased productivity, and in some cases, mortality. Intimate partner violence includes stalking, sexual and physical violence, and psychological aggression by a current or former partner.

Now Razia is also the victim of domestic violence because of her brother's bad deed, she has to survive all this. On the night of her wedding, she is beaten by her husband as she is just a payoff. The father has happily sacrificed her daughter to save her son, she is burden for him, the innocent is sent to the prison in the shape of home in law and the real culprit is still enjoying his life in the open air. This all is just happening because of her mother who never take stand for her.

Dialogues:

Husband (Saleem): Aren't you going to have breakfast? I will feel bad if you won't have breakfast with us. Sit down. Down on the floor.

This is the moment in which the left-over self-respect and wellness of living a life is finished. Razia is spending the life and she has killed her-self from inside and also accepted her fate, this all is happening with her due to her brother's fault. Neither she felt any humiliation nor has she stopped hiding her bruises.

Among the most impressive verses in the Qur'an about marriage is the following.

"And among His signs is this: That He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest, peace of mind in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo, herein indeed are signs for people who reflect." (Qur'an 30:21).

The author skillfully highlighted the idea that raising kids with an entitlement complex—where they are insulated from responsibility or supposed to be superior—can actually have detrimental effects by using the characters of Razia's brother, father, husband, and father-in-law.

CONCLUSION

The study has concluded how the stereotype thought of gender can destroy the life of an innocent girl or woman. The researcher has highlighted the different aspects of the society with the sample of a drama "Razia". Gender stereotypes are dangerous because they can cause us to might be disoriented in our perceptions. When individuals don't conform to our gender stereotypes the result can lead to discrimination and unequal or create unequal or unfair treatment. s to a certain person who chooses to defy people's assumptions about her gender. The main goal of the study is to identify the ways in which Pakistani plays frequently use stereotypes to represent gender and how various characters are frequently portrayed in these ways. Additionally, as several theories of behavioral development have demonstrated, the presentation of a gender or the various roles connected with it in the media has an impact on the audience's thoughts and reinforces their opinions.

A gender stereotype refers to an oversimplified perspective or assumption on the traits or qualities, or the roles that women and men should or should not play. When a gender stereotype prevents men and women from pursuing their professional goals, growing as individuals, or making life decisions, it is damaging.

The Qur'an thus states:

"And they (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them, and men are a degree above them." (Qur'an 2:228).

Islam does not consider woman "an instrument of the Devil", but rather the Qur'an calls her muhsana - a fortress against Satan because a good woman, by marrying a man, helps him keep to the path of rectitude in his life. It is for this reason that marriage was considered by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a most virtuous act. He said: "When a man marries, he has completed one half of his religion." He enjoined matrimony on Muslims by saying: "Marriage is part of my way and whoever keeps away from my way is not from me (i.e. is not my follower)."

The Qur'an has given the raison of marriage in the following words:

And among His signs is this, which He has created for you mates from among yourselves, which you may dwell in tranquillity with them; and He has put love and mercy between you. Verily in that are signs for those who reflect. (30:21).

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