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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Portrayal of Pakistani Women in Newspaper Advertisements**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study explores that how women are represented in Pakistani print media and investigates the images reported in Pakistani renowned newspapers to explore the portrayal of women. The study is conducted to explore the portrayal of Pakistani women in the newspapers. The study aims to explore the portrayal of Pakistani women in the newspaper through images in relation to biasness, discrimination, representation and associated role in society. Women have had to face stress, tension and problems from domestic to social life. Despite the fact that women are taking part and playing a vital role in every field of life but their representation in media is still objectified.. The images are selected from Pakistani well read English newspaper named DAWN through random selecting technique. The images of women are selected randomly to analyze the depiction of women in the newspapers. The selected images are analyzed in relation to biased, discriminatory and inferior role of Pakistani women in the study. The study is delimited to the analysis of the one of the renowned Pakistani English newspapers DAWN. The results of study depict that there is biasness and stereotypes association in the portrayal of women which highlight the place and position of women in the Pakistani society.

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**KEYWORDS** Discrimination, Images, Pakistani Newspaper, Portrayal of Women, Representation, Stereotype

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**Introduction**

In this globalized world of today media is considered as a major source of knowledge and entertainment. Media is playing a vital role of supplier of knowledge and constructor of social realities (Hardit, 2004). The ideas, assumptions, attitudes, behaviors and thoughts in regard to society are shaped by media. The discourses produced by media plays a vital role in constructing, organizing and shaping the social realities. The representation of specific gender in society is also portrayed through the discourse analysis of media. The semiotic and linguistic messages about gender in newspapers not only convey information about gender but also portray the gender identity and represent specific associated roles of gender in society.

Print media is considered as an important figure in the portrayal of stereotype representation of gender because print media is easily accessible to all members of society as compare to electronic or social media. Pakistani print. This stereotype representation of women in newspapers portrays Pakistan as traditional patriarchal society with gender ideologies in favor of men and against women. The stereotypical images of women represented in newspapers show the binary created in the society in which the role of women is submissive, subordinate, dependent, obedient and inferior. The representation of women in the newspapers is in a way that they are expected to behave, act and perform in the same way in the society. The portrayal of women in the newspapers is marginalized

in a way that there is depiction of associated roles of women which are limited to traditional domestic life and the portrayal of men's roles is in a way that that are represented as important responsible citizen.

The stereotyped typical representation of media is in fact the representation and depiction of the realities of Pakistani society. The studies show that Pakistani newspapers give biased, discriminatory and prejudiced coverage to women. The study aims to investigate the biased and discriminatory representation of women in Pakistani English newspapers.

### **Literature Review**

Isanovic (2006) stated that the portrayal of women has been arrogated in society throughout the history of media. Tuchman (1979) was of the view that women are always portrayed in media in relation to men and representation of women in media are portrayal of realities that are operating in the society. Studies have analyzed that there is presentation of women in media as objects of beauty and as unrealistic presentation (Ullah & Khan, 2014; Rouner et al., 2003).

Dickey (2006) asserted that the portrayal of women beauty in media is to get the attention of men as the presentation of beautiful women is to sell the items but the reality is deformed. The presentation of women is as victims that need to be saved, objects of beauty, submissive and subordinated (Collins, 2011; England et al, 2011; Lazen & Dozier, 2005). The study of Lang (1977) has revealed that the portrayal of men in media is with higher status and the portrayal of women in media is associated with lower status roles. This portrayal of associated roles of men and women in media reflects the representation of men and women in reality that women have to perform the duties of children rearing, housekeeping and of responsible house wives while the men have to perform the duties of responsibility and management.

Mc Quail (2001) expressed his views that the representation of women in media focuses on domestic sphere of life and women are represented in domestic roles as cooking, sewing, washing and etc. This representation of women in media represents that women are considered more worthy in their roles as subordinate and submissive rather than independent and confident. The representation of women in commercials are associated with household products that involve children and beauty. The settings of commercials of women are mostly homes with associated roles of mothers, wives and housekeepers (Wykes & Gunter, 2003). Morris (2003), said that the patriarchal and stereotypical roles of gender is portrayed through the associated roles of women in newspapers. The representation of women in media is popularizes and publicized and advertised to grab the attention of people and to get profit at the expense of unrealistic descriptions. He states that this representation of women in media is regarded as worth representation.

Javee (2005) said the representation of women in media in Pakistani context is portrayed as being dominated, submissive and dependent, their portrayal in media represent them as suppressed, dependent and inferior. Dhar and Pattnaik (1996) stated that the discourses are conveyed in media not only through language but also through images. They further state that women are very rarely represented as confident and successful rather they are preference is to report crimes, rape, abuses and harassment about women, Das (2001) asserted that the representation of women in media is as subordinated, submissive and dependent on men while men are represented as responsible, independent and dominant.

Turner (1998) is of the view that the main news reported in newspaper are about success and achievements of men and focus is emphasized on the independent activities of men. Collins (1991) argued that the representation of women in media through media is to reinforcement sexism and to portray the traditional gender roles associated women as natural and real. Analyzing the print media, Gee (1979) stated that print media represent the traditional gender roles of men as breadwinner and responsible while women are represented as house makers and subordinates. He further argues that the preference of print media is to report marriage and family life of women rather than their career and success.

Kuczynsk (2001) stated that the role of print media towards women is to evoke them to adopt the traditional associated roles as how to keep family happy, how to keep home well, how to look beautiful, how to lose weight to get the attention of people and how to maintain relationships. Khan (2010) was of the view that the portrayal of women in media is as objects of victims, abuse and sex. Print media and especially the pages about women represent women as subordinates, passive and dependent (McRobbie, 1996). Kellner (2008) stated that media helps to shape the views of world about gender by portraying what is good or, superior or inferior, independent and independent. Javeed (2005) stated that there is element of patriarchy in every printed feature, regarding the feelings of inferiority to women in the way the represented images of women in media portray them as inferior, weak, dependent, subordinate and suppressed. In spite of having good degrees and jobs their role in media is preferred as of housewives who lack intellectuality Ahmar (2005) said that globally the media has been man dominated. It is in the hands of men that what the ideologies behind the apparently reported discourses are.

Ahmar (2004) further reported that in Pakistani media and especially in Urdu and regional newspapers there is representation of gender insensitivity and the language used by them is not only abusive but also extremely judgmental. Bem (1993) was of the view that the gender stereotyped are portrayed in media through the medium of images and language are reflection of the thought, cultures and norms of society. Faina (2005) argued that the discourses of media not only constructs but also reflects patriarchal society. The stereotyped use of language and images in media represent the place and position of women in society. He further argues that women are represented as being objects of beauty, attraction and dependent on the mercy of men. This representation of women in media is the reflection of the ongoing situation of society.

## **Material and Methods**

The study is qualitative in nature as it explores the portrayal of stereotype gender through images portrayed in the print media. Qualitative approach is used to explore that how stereotypical representation of women is presented through images in the newspaper. The study is qualitative because the data is analyzed in terms of words not in numbers.

## **Sample**

The researcher collected 10 images from a renowned Pakistani English newspaper DAWN. The researcher applied purposive sampling technique to gather the image randomly. The newspaper DAWN was selected as a source of data collection because of its reputation of well-read nationwide newspaper.

## Research Design

The researcher used analytical research design to analyze the collected data. Qualitative method was used to collect the data by applying purposive sampling technique from DAWN newspaper. The study aims to analyze the stereotypical representation of women in Pakistani English newspaper.

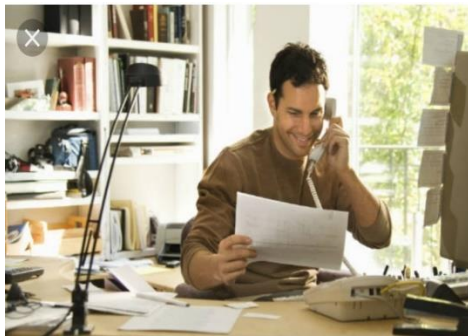
## Data Analysis

The analysis of the images of newspaper is divided into four main categories. The division is Public and private difference, Stereotypical representation, Sports and political reporting and lastly the representation of women in advertisements

## Representation of Public and Private Differences

Media has become a powerful tool in determining people's perception towards a wide range of domains. The representation of women in media can be perceived positively or negatively. It has been analyzed in many studies that representation of women in media is in gender stereotype roles. The representation of women in media is in private life in the roles of mother, wife, subordinate and dependent.

The newspaper selected for this study represent the dominant roles of men and subordinate roles of women. Men were represented while performing important duties while women were represented while performing traditional duties of private life. The representation of women were inside the page with associated traditional roles while the images of men were represented on the front page. This can be analyzed in the following discourses.



**Discourse 1**



**Discourse 2**

The above presented images of both genders show that how media represents the public and private differences of society. The woman was presented in her private life in the advertisement of washing powder while the man was presented in the public life as a breadwinner while working in an office.

The man in the image in discourse 1 has phone in his hand, computer on the desk, smile on his face and books on the back while representing man as a professional figure. Discourse 2 clearly shows the role of woman limited to home. A woman is selected in the advertisement of washing powder while showing that women are more associated with household affairs. The images of man and woman in the newspaper show that Pakistan is a patriarchal society where the associated roles of men are responsibility and breadwinning while the associated roles of women are housekeeping and children bearing.

The gender biasness and marginalization is also presented in the newspaper through images. The following images show discrimination, biasness and inequality in society.



**Discourse 3**



**Discourse 4**

The above presented discourses depict the gender biased representation of women existing in the society. Discourse 3 shows the protest of men for their rights in aggressive and arrogant way while discourse 4 shows the protest of women but the use of language on the banners show the submissive and dependent status of women.

The analysis of these images shows that the role of women in Pakistan is limited to house life and they are subordinate and dependent while the role of men is superior of being independent and dominant.

### **Stereotypical Representation**

The images presented in newspaper also represent the women in their stereotypical roles and violence bearers. The roles associated with women represent them as submissive and dependent while the images of violence and crime of women show them as powerless and inferior.



**Discourse 5**



**Discourse 6**





### Discourse 7

Discourse 5, 6 and 7 clearly show the roles of women limited to traditional stereotypical life while doing low paid jobs. They are involved in activities which are considered inferior and of no worth. Gantlet (2000) stated in his study that the typical woman in our media is submissive, housekeeper, involve in doing jobs as cooking, sewing, washing and dependent. The above presented images represent the specified roles of women to domestic sphere of life while doing traditional duties of women.

The representation of women in these images can easily be identified as 'dependent', 'submissive', 'inferior' and 'helpless

### **Husband and employees allegedly strip woman naked, beat her over refusal to dance for them**

WASIM RIAZ



### Discourse 8

*"Men and employs allegedly strip woman naked, beat her over refusal to dance for them"*

The image in discourse 8 shows the bearish view of our culture and society. This reflects the patriarchal system of society where women are believed to obey the men without even thinking. This shows that in Pakistani society women are expected to follow the instruction of men without asking question, they have to behave as instructed by men.

The news about the violence of women is reported by using unprofessional language without thinking about the effect of this usage on the victim in society. The portrayal of these images show that women continually face biased and discriminatory attitude in Pakistani society.

### **Sports and Political Reporting**

The sports and political reporting of newspaper are also men centered. The researcher analyzed that in political coverage more focus is given to male politicians, their roles and activities were more focused as compare to female politicians. The images of female politicians are more character focused as compare to role.



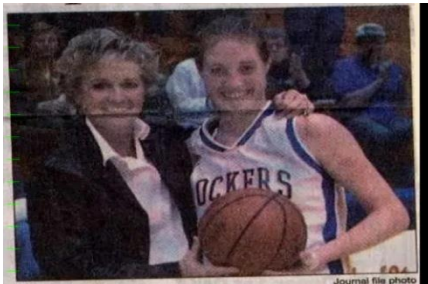
**Discourse 9**



**Discourse 10**

As shown in discourse 9 and 10 the focuses of female image is on makeup, style and physical features while the focus of male’s image is on the setting and his style of behaving beading a politician. This type of representation created hurdles in their private lives. The focus of media while reporting female politicians is on their appearances while there there is no focus on the image of male politicians rather the focus is on their activity and setting. This representation of media discourages the women to take part in politics. Pantti (2006) stated that the stereotypical representation of women on media is creating hurdles for women to be a part of this field.

The pages of sports are also man cantered while there are only a little news reported for women and a little images of women are represented.



**Discourse 11**



**Discourse 12**



**Discourse 13**



**Discourse 14**

The images are of male celebrities of sports while playing games in discourse 12 and 13 while the images of women are appearance centered as shown in discourse 11 and 14. The portrayal of men is in hockey, cricket, and football while women are excluded from media while playing the games. This representation shows that these activities are men centered while women not considered more worthy of these activities and their identity is not reflected in connection of these activities.

### Representation of Women in Advertisements

The representation of women in the advertisements are portrayed as by showing their body, beautiful skin, housekeeper and responsible housewives. They are being represented in the advertisements as objects of beauty to get the attention of people to buy the product. Their role in the advertisements is also associated with housekeeping and as an object of attraction as shown in discourses 15 and 16.



Discourse 15



Discourse 16

The images of beautiful women in the advertisements are to attract the people towards the objects in order to sell them well. According to Mastro (2008) the relationship between women and media is the standard of beauty. This statement can be analysed in a way that there is not a single woman in all the advertisements who has black complexion or who is not looking beautiful if there is then she is portrayed negatively. The beautiful images of women are depicted with objects to get the attention of people to buy the item being presented.

The portrayal of women in this way in newspapers reflects the representation of women in the society. By representing women in this way it is being represented the stereotypical place and position of women in the society.

### Conclusion

The study aimed to investigate the stereotypical representation of women in Pakistani newspapers. The researcher selected one of the renowned Pakistani English newspaper DAWN to analyse the portrayal of women in their marginalised and traditional roles. The study analysed that the images presented in the newspapers are discriminatory representation of women in Pakistani society. The discourses reported in the media contain certain meanings of the notion of stereotypical representation of women in Pakistani society. The study explored that how the traditional roles of marginalization are associated with women and how the roles of men are presented as being superior and dominant. The



representation of women in the analysed newspaper is limited to private domestic life while the representation of men is associated with public life as being responsible citizens.

The representation of women in media has great impact on the real representation of women in society. In this way media reflects that who women are in Pakistani society and who they could be. These discourses in media reflects the patriarchal system the place and position of women in the society. This is the reflection of actual happenings of society where the women is considered as weak, inferior, helpless, dependent, victims are objects of victims.

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