Global Social Sciences Review (GSSR)
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-II).04

DOI: 10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-II).04

Socio-Cultural Trauma and Gender Objectification in Haider's How It Happened: A Cultural Feminist Study

Nida Tabassum* Muhammad Owais Ifzal † Ghulam Murtaza ‡

Abstract *The research aims to pinpoint the socio-cultural suppressive crisis faced by the Pakistani women and tends to evaluate the standards through which Pakistani women are (mis)recognized through Shazaf Fatima Haider's How It Happened (2012). It focuses upon the internalized social norms regarding women's conduct to achieve perfection and a state of acceptability which have terrifyingly placed a question mark upon women's existence. Zeba, being the protagonist of How It Happened, undergoes anunnerving situation, being continuously displayed as an object for her marriage. Simone de Beauvoir's cultural feminist ideologies in her work, The Second Sex(1997), tend to deconstruct falsely existing cultural archetypes. She illustrates in her work the transformative stages of women's life beginning from the oppressive state towards the protesting state. Consequently, celebrating women's strength by acknowledging biological differences. Through the methodological application of a Textual analytical apparatus, this research tends to reverse the suppressive patriarchal patterns, bringing women from the periphery to the center, also providing a voice to silenced women entangled in the fabricated culture.*

- Vol. VI, No. II (Spring 2021)
- Pages: 30 – 37
- p- ISSN: 2520-0348
- e-ISSN: 2616-793X
- ISSN-L: 2520-0348

Key Words: Gender, Feminism, Pakistani Literature in English, Fiction

Introduction

I am the one you hid
In your walls of stone
While you roamed free as a breeze
Not knowing that my voice cannot
Be smothered by the stones.
(Naheed, 2009, p. 34)

The research focuses upon the critiques of misusing the cultural obligations and constraints to subjugate and interiorize inferiority in women, also replacing the pertinent essence of culture with the constructed set of norms along with the hidden manipulative agenda of suppressing the other gender. This cultivation of falsely generated cultural conventions and restraints degrade women thrusting them not only towards the peripheral phase of the societal status but also establishing an arbitrary state of disintegration of honor upon any transgression of societal restraints for women. The research aimed to encapsulate the life stories of all such traumatized women, who reside within the troubling and fearsome state of severe inferiority complex as they are made to internalize the socio-cultural stereotypes since childhood. Hence, the young female minds are moulded, and their spiritual and liberal essence of womanhood is slaughtered in order to justify the insignificant and fabricated societal parameters of modesty.

The current research intends to reconnoitre the culturally built up stereotypes regarding the role of women through Shazaf Fatima Haider's *How It Happened* (2012). Haider adds grave humor to verify her social issues in an affirmative manner, avoiding a controversial dispute as cultural blasphemy. With a tinge of sarcasm and comedy, Haider illustrates the innumerous issues undergone by Pakistani women under the cultural oasis. Haider remains remarkably successful in giving a voice to all the Pakistani

*Visiting Lecturer, Department of English, National University of Modern Languages, Faisalabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: nidatabassumnuml@gmail.com
†Lecturer, Department of English, Government College University Faisalabad, Hafizabad Campus, Punjab, Pakistan.
‡Associate Professor, Department of English, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Citation: Tabassum, N., Ifzal, M. O., & Murtaza, G. (2021). Socio-Cultural Trauma and Gender Objectification in Haider's How It Happened: A Cultural Feminist Study. *Global Social Sciences Review, VI*(II), 30-37. https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-II).04

women victimized under socio-stereotypical pressures in the form of her protagonist Zeba. Throughout the plot, Haider demonstrates how women in Pakistan are objectified and sold off in the name of marriages. The misuse of cultural conventions enables her to dwell in fear and inferiority, not only to deny freedom as her right but also to strive hard for getting an education as compared to men in the society. Haider brings into light the obstacles and hardships faced by Pakistani women from birth till death via Zeba's sufferings. They are thrust upon the baggage of not only societal responsibilities and cultural expectations but also the parameters of perfection in order to survive in society. She exemplifies that failure to fulfil such grounds of acceptability consequently puts up a question mark upon her identity, along with tags or immorality.

Kishwar Naheed in *A Bad Woman's Story: A Translation of Buri Aurat Ki Katha* (2016) illustrates the societal contributions of tagging women as immoral without any authentic grounds. She depicts through her work, the suppression faced by the women under the name of culture, religion and customs of the society as well as the complex relationship between parents and daughter of a Pakistani society, where each fails to embrace any action which is unacceptable by the constructed culture of the society: "My father said to me, Don't come to my house, you've married a boy from a different caste, you've thrown off the burqa, you work, you've done your MA" (Naheed, 2016, p. 173).

Literature Review

As this research is penetrated ina the theoretical paradigm of cultural construction, therefore it is pertinent to highlight the related literature dealing with all the key terms and jargons associated with the critical issues regarding culture and its manipulatively imprinted outcomes upon society and female identity, eventually leading to the drastic consequences of female's subordination. This chapter tends to demarcate the cultural outcomes with regard to feminism in order to pinpoint the significant issues by focusing only upon the related literature review. As the research mainly deals with the socio-cultural victimization of women as an inscribed cultural trait, this chapter begins its avenue to elaborate the concept of assumed cultural traits which are not only manipulative in nature but also act as a catalyst to degrade women's status in all societies, especially in Pakistan. In 1983, Raymond Williams expressed that the term culture 'was linked to the tending of crops and animals – as in agriculture' (Kendall, 2001, p. 6). Whereas during the enlightenment periods, this term was replaced by a synonym known as 'civilization'.

While bringing under discussion some characteristics of culture as shared knowledge, it is notable to mention that the 'shared knowledge is not static but is constantly emerging and evolving as a result of socio-political and other types of changes in the society' (Wyer, 2009, p. 5) depicting how the variation in cultural traits are sensitive to social, political, economic changes occurring in society. The relation between culture and feminism can be understood as Julia Kristeva, while arguing about the constructed femininity, symbolizes culture as a constraint when she associates 'psychic repression with the actual structures of language, which she takes as the basis for culture' (Brooks, 1997, p. 123). According to Kristeva, a "woman" is someone who can never be represented, spoken of through words because she remains outside this process of naming, analogies and ideologies. Mary Wollstonecraft, in her work *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), portrays the 'naturalness' of unjust behavior and inequality towards women. Such an inequality 'is socially constructed to shore up the position of the privileged liberal-individualist male' (Robbins, 2000, p. 26). There are various factors like the inappropriate emotional and behavioral training to construct strong women, a wrecked educational system providing ingredients to formulate mentally and emotionally weak females suffering from an inferiority complex, the eradication of basic women rights to demolish their financial stability and most importantly, the socio-cultural hegemony (practices, beliefs, and customs) to incorporate gender dichotomy. All of these play a vital role in the portrayal of women as weak entities of the society. Moon Charania, in her book *Will the Real Pakistani Woman Please Stand Up? Empire, Visual Culture and the Brown Female Body* (2015) begins her crucial argument about cultural monopoly justifying women's bodies as an embodiment of men's captivity by unveiling the 'deconstruction of the relationship between human rights and visual culture' (Charania, 2015, p. 41). The book *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into*

© 2021 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

Opportunity for Women Worldwide (2009) highlights the inhumane treatment of women as the most crucial issue of the present time, pinpointing the oppressive factors in prostitution, education, slavery, sexual harassment, maternal mortality, domestic abuse, and so on. Moreover, the book reflects the exploitation of women's powerlessness on the basis of economy, education and culture, 'There are good practical as well as cultural reasons for women to accept abuse rather than fight back and risk being killed'(Kristof and WuDunn, 2009, p. 48).

Sara Suleri, an eminent name in Pakistani feminist writers, defines women as a deprived community. Being treated unequally as the minority, Pakistani women oscillate in an unjust suspension of rights and freedom. Ali Usman Saleem elaborates the crucial issues, including gender dichotomy faced by Pakistani women in his research work *Personal and Political Parallels in Suleri's Meatless Days* (2011) as he states, 'Sara in her postmodernist prose style blends the history of Pakistan with the issue of gender.' (Saleem, 2011, p. 48). An article published in PAPERCUTS Magazine by Afia Aslam as *What just happened? An interview with Shazaf Fatima Haider* revealed an interesting conversation where the writer mentioned the purpose of writing this novel evidently by saying, "The whole point of my novel was to show society a mirror of itself but in such a way that the world is able to digest it" (2013, p. 89). While discussing the crux of the story, Haider commented, "This book is not just about the girl getting married, although a lot of people will read it like that. It's about men and women and what they go through. What goes on, how people react, how relationships come into that combination" (p. 92). The writer has beautifully thrown light upon some major grave issues of Pakistani society that has been passed down from generation to generation, which remain untouched under the name of cultural treasures, whereas things exist differently in reality. In order to discuss such sensitive issues in a comfort zone, Haider decided to choose the element of humor at various stages in her novel to deal with such issues of male/female binary, love marriages, out of cast marriages, traditionalist versus modernist.

Theoretical Framework

This research tends to examine the cultural elements towards female's subjugation in Haider's *How It Happened*. The novel is a remarkable portrayal of Pakistani culture and its strong influence on the lives of females. The sketch of the characters and their lives directs us towards a complex yet the thought-provoking relationship between feminism and culture, hence leading us to operate the text under the lens of cultural feminism. This chapter focuses upon the theoretical paradigm, which leads us towards critical textual analysis. Simone De Beauvoir's prodigious work *The Second Sex* (1997), enrooted in the paradigms of cultural feminism, reveals her utmost notions about culture's impact upon the lives of females of every society. All the experiences and sufferings of women, from childhood to adulthood, gender dichotomy to sexual objectification, marriage to child-bearing, are encapsulated under the term The Second Sex.

Simon de Beauvoir unfolds one of the cultural misinterpretations regarding the existing repressive identity of women: "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. No biological, psychological, economic fate determines the figures that human females present in society" (Beauvoir, 1997, p. 295). She further explains the cultural and societal trauma which imposes the tag of inferiority upon woman: "it is the civilization as a whole that produces this creature" (Beauvoir, 1997, p. 295). whereas the usage of the word creature further leads to the identity analysis of female in society, which oscillates between a male and eunuch, a nondescript kind of feminine entity. Beauvoir explains the act of a girl's acknowledgement regarding her passive life, with a pre-planned destiny as she "agrees to submit unresistingly to a destiny that is going to be imposed upon her" (p. 325). Contrary to the doomed fate of a woman lies a man who is unscathed by cultural constraining knots, for he "looks towards an open future, he will see the world, he feels free, confronting a future in which the unexpected awaits him" (p. 325).

Being born in a patriarchal society, men are privileged to dictate women in all walks of life, whereas the women's fortune strolls within particular structured traits, for "she will be wife, mother, grandmother- she is twelve years old, and already her story is written in the heavens" (p. 325). Hence Beauvoir unmasks cultural manipulation where the girl's fate is obtruded upon her, "for the girl marriage and motherhood involve her entire destiny" (p. 326). Beauvoir,

while discussing the apparent problems appearing as a backdrop of women's biology, comments that when puberty embraces the young girl's body, it becomes difficult for her to isolate her body from the society because "this flesh becomes an object that others see and pay attention to" (p. 333). Beauvoir pinpoints the social pressure laid upon a woman due to her body because she becomes a dreadful victim of the male gaze. The shackles of insecurity and unreliability strangle her survival in such a dominating male society as "on the street men follow her with their eyes and comment on her anatomy" (p. 333).

Beauvoir further attacks the inscribed cultural stereotypes about women's fragile identity by highlighting her menstruation issues. The purpose of revealing such profound issues regarding her personal pains and private parts is to promote women's capability and power to undergo pain: "menstruation is painful: headaches, over fatigue, abdominal pains, make normal activities distressing or impossible" (p. 353). She describes the minute details not only to reveal the crucial problems faced by women due to their biological structure but also to justify the inability of these biological concerns to serve as a hindrance in her progress. Despite going through the process of such antagonizing metamorphosis, she is able to conquer all the complicated challenges through self-empowerment.

Analytical Discussion

This research tends to evaluate the manipulative cultural ideology to destabilize Pakistani women's identity and freedom under feminist lenses. Simon De Beauvoir elaborated stereotypical ideologies as fruits of cultural construction regarding women's lives in every society, which become the cause of severe atrocities. *The Second Sex* (1997) puts forward Beauvoir's theoretical tenet that women are not born rather forced to become women through societal pressures and constraints driving them to stiffen their streams of liberty and individuality, for they are to follow those patriarchal patterns for the rest of their life. The text reflects the gradual cultural modifications and manipulations imprinted through our ancestors in order to germinate seeds of patriarchy, strengthening the binary of male and female as superior and inferior. The text encompasses the tormenting yet countless forms of physical as well as psychological violence which Pakistani women have to undergo being the constituent of the male-dominated setup. Haider's *How It happened* (2012) demonstrates certain critical issues which are faced by Pakistani women from the cradle to the grave. The novel depicts transitional trajectories through their protagonists.

The major challenges to the lives of Pakistani women are portrayed in the novel *How It Happened*. One of the crucial issues of Pakistani society is signified as child marriage. Apart from this, marriage without a girl's consent must be taken under consideration and abolished on an individual as well as societal level. It is the sole responsibility of society not to inculcate such improper customs to complicate the issues of marriage. The narrator of the text, Saleha, a teenage girl and the youngest of all the family members, elaborates her Dadi's life history when Dadi's marriage was arranged and rearranged three times, leaving her as a "veritable spinster" (Haider, 2012, p. 1) because usually, all the girls at the age of sixteen blessed their husbands with beautiful children, Dadi "remained disgracefully single" (p. 1). The women's state of indecisiveness is quite alarming as they have to rely wholly upon the men of the society to make the decisions, therefore, eliminating the chords of women's self-esteem and individuality to survive as a free member of the society, "the dominant groups of the society assign positive meanings to what they do and negative meanings to what others do" (Siddiqui, 2014, p. 116). The set of ideas regarding the appropriateness of arranged marriages and the inappropriateness of love marriages is quite common in Pakistani culture. Saleha exquisitely elaborated that women are bound to "remain in the state of feminine helplessness" (Haider, 2012, p. 7). Haider pinpoints love marriages as another big issue faced by Pakistani women, for the perception of Love is considered highly immoral, and such marriages are firstly considered as the most disgraceful act and secondly condemned by Pakistani society. The text highlights the character of Zeba, from a Shia Family, as the representer of all Pakistani women who claim to have the right to choose their life partners. The moment she puts forth her desire to marry an intra-caste man she loves, she's rebuked by her family. Saleha elaborates, "Through the use of guile, blackmail and several subtle and not-so-

subtle pressure tactics, our great-grandmothers, grandmothers, and mothers had managed to avoid the stigma of love marriage" (p. 9). Saleha talks to herself, "Good, sensible girls didn't fall in love, I told myself. I repeated: respectable girls only fell in love with fiancés picked by their parents" (p. 166). If she marries, builds a relationship or anyhow transgresses the societal boundaries, she is victimized of unjust brutality as Nafisa Shah in *Honour Unmasked* (2017) remarks, "the woman alone was expelled or killed and not the co-accused …" (2017, p. 1).

A woman is always considered responsible for preserving the family's name and dignity by not leaping through the constraints fixed for her, whereas in the case of man, no particular boundaries are set forth, and there exists no act, which if done, may have the responsibility to associate the term of shame and disgrace with men. In the text, Dadi emphasizes remaining within the cultural boundaries to avoid "blackening the name of the prodigiously chaste family tree' (Haider, 2012, p. 9). Haider left no stone unturned to portray the typical patriarchal mindset through her characterization and innumerable incidents in the plot. Through grave humor, she strikingly pinpoints the flaws of society that have been particularly affecting women since time immemorial. Pakistan being a strong patriarchal nation, fails to provide equality to women in all walks of life. One of the major reasons to suppress women is to maintain the patriarchal hegemony, as Mary Wollstonecraft elaborates in her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) about women's inequality which "is socially constructed to shore up the position of the privileged liberal-individualist male" (Robbins, 2000, p. 26). Wollstonecraft unfolds the hidden agenda behind misogynist societal attitude as a way of stabilizing as well as enhancing men's authoritative domains. The law in Pakistan has also been used to subjugate women. In the 1980s, a notorious Hudood Ordinance threatened women's societal existence by interpreting "rape as adultery" (Begum, 2017, p. 167). Because of this law, Pakistan's image was drastically distorted worldwide where the innocents were punished, "not the culprits" (p. 168). Haider, through her satirical style, has emphasized the discriminatory attitude between men and women. She points out in a hilarious manner various factors that have to be analyzed while choosing a Pakistani bride by the groom's family through the character of Dadi in her text. The character of Dadi is an image embedded with cultural traits representing the whole society. Haider demonstrates the ill-minded people of society who set up certain rules and conditions while seeking a bride. Haider adds a tinge of humor by declaring Dadi as racist, for she demanded a white bahu for her grandson, "Dadi was also a racist and had well-developed paranoia of all dark-skinned individuals..." (Haider, 2012, p. 25). One of the most crucial factors leading towards women's suppression is the economic instability which causes men to dominate her physically, psychologically, as well as financially. Education plays quite a major role in strengthening the position of women, but cultural practices fail to coordinate with the progress of women's education, declaring it as a threat to her character, future as well as marriage. In most cases, Pakistani women are deprived of higher education as it becomes a distracting agent between their marriages. Haider expresses the narrow mentality of Pakistani society through Dadi's character when she says, "good girls were hard to come by, and it was very difficult to find full virgins who had graduated from high school" (p. 35).

Women are forced into marriages because the idea of providing education can emerge as a disturbance and delay to their marriage. For ages, the second sex, apart from being clustered into the column of inferiority, is as well considered as an object placed on a display, for women are to please men with their anatomical powers and divine beauty. The socio-cultural misconception of exhibiting girls for their marriage is demonstrated in an amusing manner. This tradition of exposing girls by various families, if reciprocated with boys, can undoubtedly put a huge question mark not only on their self-esteem but also upon their super-egoistic entities, thriving them into inferiority complex. Zeba, after suffering from psychological as well as physical torture of looked-upon-ness, screams at one point, "Do you know how demeaning it is to be put on display in front of insufferable women while you praise their idiot sons?" (p. 211). In Pakistani society, girls ought to be taught about the codes of this patriarchal setup since their youth begins. The reason is that the young minds are more capable of absorbing and implementing the ideologies as compared to the adult minds, who can emerge as a threatening rebel to the inscribed set of traditions and

customs. This is also one of the reasons for choosing young girls as brides. The penetration of obedience into young minds is also portrayed through Dadi's character, "the younger they are, the more malleable! They will be able to learn and adapt to our way of life!" (p. 36). Whereas Zeba, being a constant rebellious character, mocks at this thought of malleability when she inquires, "Are we talking about women or plasticine?" (p. 36). Feminism, for ages, focuses on the acknowledgement of women's identity and position outside their anatomical boundaries. It is not only her body but her individuality, rationality, subjectivity and innovative capability that must be analyzed and adored in a genuine manner to eradicate the modes of archetypal discrimination between *her* body and *his* mind. It is a huge drawback of our society that women are intellectually disclaimed, and their capabilities are highly neglected, whereas men are regarded as the icon of genius sensibility and intellectuality.

The bitter realities faced by Pakistani women have been explained through various stages of Zeba's life as she was compelled to get married by putting aside her personal notions and choices. For instance, when a family was about to arrive for Zeba's hand, Dadi prescribed her some advice to shatter her intellect while using her beauty as a tool of attraction, "after all, one must look pretty while pretending to be demure" (Haider, 2012, p. 145). In order to fix her in the perfect compartment of societal mannerism, Dadi taught her that she would shyly say Salam and sit quietly without initiating any conversation: "[S]he would not discuss politics or literature under any circumstances because this would reveal her in all her opinionated glory. Good Eastern Girls should never have strong opinions of their own, only those of their husbands or in-laws" (p. 146). Women are viewed as an object of sexual satiation; their physical attributes serve as their only remarkable quality and a tool of recognition in the society. While considering girls as matches for her perfect grandson, Dadi, as a representative of our society's stereotypical traits, carefully analyzed bodies, while rejecting and selecting upon the basis of such attributes, she added, "too hairy, not good for the genes of grandchildren … no chest and hips like watermelons: a most unattractive combination" (p. 41). It is undoubtedly a disturbing fact that marriage has become more of a business trade instead of a prestigious act of finding an ideal spouse through simplistic rather constructed ritualistic manners. Haider carefully reveals this bitter yet actual mindset through the plot when Dadi declares the ultimate sadistic reality of our society, "who would want to propose a girl without looks, virginity and luck?" (pp. 82-83). At another point, Haider beautifully assimilates the idea of marriage with the sole extraction of sexual spirit, "all these girls are ripe … to be plucked by whatever man should come your way" (p. 263). Haider has sarcastically reflected the societal mindset regarding working women through Dadi's character when she utters, "Girls who work alongside men in these companies are all the same. They have no sense of shame. They don't care about housework or childbearing … Loud and aggressive they are!" (p. 55). As Beauvoir highlights how the working women are degraded for being careless as they fail to fulfil their domestic responsibility, there is a huge need to embrace womanly roles, inside as well as outside their homes, as working consistently with pain and patience. When a family visits Zeba's house for a proposal, they put forward several conditions, including one as, "There would be no need for her to work" (p. 189). Through the character of Zeba, Haider has converged various Zebas of the society, who let go of their dreams to work, due to the conservative patriarchal setup which stands upon the constructed ideologies while destructing the society.

Haider tries to sketch the tragic picture of our society where women have to pay for the men's wrongdoings; she has illustrated this fact when Dadi declares the reason for the unsteady reputation of working women as, "Good Eastern women lived their lives for their children and did not spend all day in an office with strange men staring at their bosoms" (p. 257). It is revealed that the "most vulnerable targets of violence are not just women within homes, but women are working in male-dominated work environments" (Jafree, 2017, p. 5). The character of Zeba defines that women are not to be acknowledged only within the premises of domestic responsibilities; rather, they must be recognized through their powers of intellect and self-esteem so that liberalism may help them acquire their dreams and motives. She demonstrates the societal version of her Dadi's views: "They only need a woman feels is the need to hold her child in her arms and to keep her husband well-fed and

contented" (p. 144). The consistency of Dadi's ideas regarding women's sole duty towards her husband and home is illustrated time and over throughout the text: "We women are built to have children, to create families" (p. 159). Haider's motive, like Beauvoir, is to deconstruct this notion of marriage as the only destiny of women.

Haider's ultimate motive is to create marriage neither a hindrance in acquiring dreams nor an obstacle in freedom. Haider's novel mainly presents a clash of old and new generations as well as the disturbing consequences of falsely constructed socio-cultural norms. Haider has inserted the characters of Dadi and Zeba simultaneously to depict the biased cultural traits leading to the alienation of Pakistani women in all walks of their lives. The difference in thoughts and practicalities between Dadi and Zeba can be observed when Dadi forcefully tries to inculcate her stereotypical ideologies into Zeba's personality, therefore leading Zeba to define herself as, "I'm not like other girls…I don't fit into your notion" (p. 212). The rigorous character of Zeba, formulated by Haider, portrays her state of non-fragility as compared to the majority of suppressive women in Pakistan. Through Zeba's image, Haider aims to target the absurd set of rules that hinder the freedom of women and must be broken down to attain the essence of women's individuality.

Conclusion

The analysis of the text established the reality that the social structure is based upon gender discrimination which leads towards sexual harassment, objectification, male gaze, the disintegration of identity, honor killings, tagging labels, unequal educational and employment rights, indecisive state, forced and early marriages, parameters of morality, inhumane humiliations, displaying women for marriages, modification of young girls, incorporating the inscribed cultural traits of obedience, intellectual murder, unjust stereotypical trends, parental constraints, social pressures, animalistic treatment, horrors of dowry and power play by the male gender. Women are exploited to the extreme under the religio-cultural melodrama. All these issues reside under the canopy of cultural monopoly. Beauvoir elucidated the inculcation of multiple constructed traits of the culture in women since their childhood. The process of inscribing the dominating cultural traits, i.e. the acceptability of male-gaze and gender objectification, is not only to manipulate the women but also to strengthen patriarchal roots while eradicating women's power, rights, dignity and any kind of privilege. The text defines the spiritual and intellectual suffering of women residing in the Pakistani cultural setup. It brings forward the dismantling status of women on the basis of their anatomical features as compared to their intellectual identity. Not only they are forced to nourish the ultimate dreams of marriage as their fate, but they are also deprived of all kinds of societal independence to carry out with their personal dreams and goals, for too much freedom may cause a threatening state of equality with men, therefore there thrust upon the peripheral normative restraints in order to remember the inculcated inferiority campaign. The research highlights the delicacy through which the controversial issues are unveiled and set free to be examined and acknowledged by society. The text binds the pros and cons of Pakistani culture by elaborating the beauty of the true culture as well as the horrifying outcomes of the constructed culture simultaneously. Therefore reflecting the fate of women as marital bliss and her role to first fulfil her familial obligations instead of developing any plans for the achievement of personal goals. The purpose of selecting this text is the comprehensiveness through which the text analyzes and depicts the tormenting scenario of Pakistani women conjugated under suppressive socio-cultural pressures and constraints. The writer tends to demolish the severe exploitation of Pakistani women through the development of audacious characters, acting as symbols of cultural deviation and self-determination. The motive residing in highlighting the cultural misbalance through this research is to promote a sense of awareness and an avenue that can provide justice and rights to Pakistani women in order to eradicate their quest for contented survival in their own country.

Note: This article has been derived from HEC's NRPU Project No. 5709, entitled "The Ideology of Nationalism in Pakistani Literature in English."

References

Beauvoir, S.D. (1997). The second sex. London: *Vintage Books.*

Begum, I. (2017). The impact of Afghan soviet war on Pakistan. Karachi: *OUP*

Brooks, A. (1997). Postfeminisms-Feminism, Cultural theory and cultural forms. London: *Routledge*.

Charania, M. (2015). Will the real Pakistani woman please stand up? Empire, Visual culture and the brown female body. North Carolina: *McFarland & Company.*

Haider, S. F. (2012). How it happened. India: *Penguin Random House*.

Haider, S.F. (2013). What just happened? An interview with Shazaf Fatima Haider in papercuts magazine. (ed. Aslam Afia) Karachi.

Jafree, S.R. (2017). Women, Healthcare and violence in Pakistan. Karachi: *OUP*

Kendall, G. (2001). *Understanding culture cultural studies, Order, Ordering*. London: *SAGE Publications.*

Kristof, N.D. (2009). Half the sky: Turning oppression into opportunity for women worldwide. New *York: Alfred A. Knopf.*

Naheed, K. (2009). The distance of a shout. Karachi: *OUP*

Naheed, K. (2016). A bad woman's story: A translation of buri aurat ki katha. Karachi: *OUP*

Robbins, R. (2000). Literary feminisms. Hong Kong: *Macmillan Press LTD.*

Saleem, A.U. (2011). Personal and political parallels in Suleri's meatless days. (Thesis, Master of Philosophy) *International Islamic University, Islamabad*.

Shah, N. (2017). Honor unmasked: Gender violence, law and power in Pakistan. *Pakistan: OUP*

Siddiqui, S. (2014). Language, gender and power. Pakistan: *OUP.*

Wyer, R.S. (2009). Understanding culture-theory, research, and application. New York: *Psychology Press.*