



Women and Media; Stereotyping Trends of Women Portrayal during 21st century (An Analysis of Female Roles in Pakistani Dramas during Different Political Eras)

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Abstract- This research article gives an insight scenario of representation of women in Pakistani TV dramas in working and non-working roles during 21st century having three different political eras. The researcher has adopted the content analysis technique in which a code sheet was developed to get the findings. Hypotheses were tested through statistical techniques to get accurate results. Results of the study revealed that representation of women in working and non-working observed no specific change in Pakistani TV dramas during three different political eras of 21st century. Most of the women, both educated as well as non-educated, were shown in non-working roles. The study also suggested that women were shown in stereotypical manner dependent on male and home bound during all three different eras.

Key words: Women Stereotypical Portrayal, Pakistani TV dramas, 21st Century

I. INTRODUCTION

Media programs have powerfully influenced process of socialization. Audience's get information on daily basis through prime time TV dramas because these series are notable source of information. Gerbner with his co researchers in 2002 described that, "Its (television's) drama, commercials, news, and other programs bring a relatively coherent system of images and messages into every home" (p. 44). By the exposure to the content of TV series audience not only experience a change in their way of living, but likewise realize sense of value. (Ma, 2008)

Through media policies, media can change and break the stereotypes exists in the minds of public. But media most often depict women in sexiest and submissive way. That is why women have fewer characters to play in mass media. Media have two categories one is reporting media in which women always lack roles and another is fictional media in which women are presented in domestic roles or associated with sex objects. Heeter and Greenberg (1983) explained that most often stereotypes are negatively generalized and if these perceived generalizations are accepted true, can make a poor self-image and the negative prejudgment of the whole group. (Greenberg & Heeter, p. 46).

Television is a very beneficial instrument to build frames, develop norms, recommend actual behavior and construct stereotypes. Similarly, McCall and Martel (1964) observed that media tries to get the attention of audience by representing the characters in such a manner that they seem different from the daily life of the audiences. Strong stereotypical beliefs develop by watching television more heavily (McGhee & Fruech, 1980). Women's stereotypical portrayals on television give people a thought about women that they are also same in real life as shown on television (Siu, 1981).

In a study signorielli (1989) observed that women in reality may be misjudged due to exposure to television. Other studies have also observed the same phenomenon. Like Siu (1989) observed in his study that television programs make the minds of people about women in a society so they keep biased thoughts about women and they understand the women incorrectly. Zerbions and Thompson in 1995 observed in their research that despite of miscellaneous content of television, women are most often presented with inadequate occupational status, knowledge and ability. The study explains that women are shown as lacking higher level decision authority at workplace and they have to give more attention at workplace to the interpersonal relationships.

Depictions and presentations of females vary from culture to culture, societies and time. Femininity is socially and culturally built by family, people, and education and mostly by the media. So, media can play its role in breaking down the stereotypes about women exist in society. (Anna Davtyan-Gevorgyan 2016) In the 21st century Pakistan has experienced a great deal of development and growth in media sphere (Eijaz, Ahmed 2011). This period can be divided into 3 different political eras.

First 2001-2008 Pervaiz Musharraf

Second 2008-2013 PPPP

Third 2013-2018 PMLN

Pakistani media flourished and become more powerful under the Musharraf era. Since 2002 the number of television channels increased. After being independent and modernized in 2002 the electronic media experienced a great explosion of newness.

PPPP govt. has always championed the cause of free media. It continued with the policy of opening the new private channels.

PMLN govt. continued to facilitate the growth of free and responsible media in the country.

The study focused on the stereotyping trends of women portrayal during 21st century during different political eras.

The present study attempted to analyze the changing trends of feminism in 21st century by exploring her representation in Pakistani electronic media as working and non-working roles assign to her during three different political eras of 21st century. The study explored that whether media is creating awareness about feminism through TV dramas or still women are portrayed in stereotypical manner.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review of this study is based in the previous researches related to women portrayals in TV serials.

The study related to Chinese prime TV series argue that with the passage of time content of TV series changed similarly by changing the content portrayal of women in TV series also varied as compared to past. Television has the ability to keep the image of gender roles which are mostly identified by American society. The people and culture both have influential nature and they affect and influence each other. (Weitz, 1977).

Pakistan TV drama has been a significant topic for researchers. Foreign researchers have also been interested in the researches related to Pakistani dramas. A great work by Jabeen and Qaiser (2008) has been done on Pakistan TV dramas, portrayal of women issues in Pakistan television drama serial, PTV drama serials based on real stories about women issues from 1964 to 2000 Pakistan television dramas portray women in positive way. Pakistan fashion industry is impressed by the foreign localized effects, Pakistani satellite channels and presenting in foreign style and culture as well as foreign dressing. Media imperialism and its effects on culture of Pakistan is studied by Irum and Khan (2009). They studied it through survey and context analysis the findings revealed that drama is losing its credibility as compared to past TV dramas. Nas applied content analysis approach to find out the theme and message of the dramas from 1995 to 1998 PTV's telecasted 18 dramas during this time period 12 dramas were based on social problems. Drama producers try to encourage the writer those who highlight the social issues.

A research conducted by McGhee in 1975 explained about women representation that women are most often given the characters of entertainers, teachers, nurses, journalists and secretaries in prime time television series instead of ministers, doctors and lawyers. Female characters are not shown as decision making authorities at workplace mostly family oriented characters are given to the female characters (McGhee, 1975).

In 1980, various researches proved that women in TV series are mostly preferred to do household tasks and plan about work related to home as compared to plans about workplace (Greenberg, Richards, & Henderson, 1980; Henderson & Greenberg, 1980).

Cheng (1997) stated that gender roles are considered as the most significant measurable variables of categorized behavior in all societies. (P295). Levinson (1975) in his study on sex roles in cartoons explained about the study that Television Portrayals of the sexes in Cartoons reflect real world values regarding gender role assumptions but these portrayals does not reflect real world events (P 569).

In TV series portrayal of 15 women was tested in which typically their dependency on men and families was observed. Females were found mere emotional, submissive, timid, sensitive, passive, affectionate and romantic than males. (Busby P 692). Similarly, female characters were rarely shown as having achievements in domestic field and on their work place. Moreover, young females were more highlighted than other female characters from total characters. So, it can be analyzed that in TV series the female characters have age between 30 to 50 may not be frequently portrayed (Libertoparkin, 1988: craing,

1991 Davusm 1990, signovielli, 1991) durkin (1985) explained sex roles in a society as a set of behaviors and different activities that a given society consider more suitable for one person with one sex than a person having another sex. (P.9). He stated that in some societies explain strictly sex roles as a rule (Durkin, 1985) Defleur (1964) in Women's occupational roles, described the occupational portrayal as the appearance of any person in some valuable occupational status while performing his role on television screen more than three minutes (P.61) He further explained that the television programs which deals with occupational roles can be misleading, unreal, stereotypical, selective. (P.74). It can make the real world stereotypes stronger by watching on screen occupational stereotypes. Television producers most often take advantage of stereotypical traits of an occupation in reality to boost up the untypical and entertaining aspect while depicting on screen to attract audience at larger scale. (Defleur 1964). For example the employment rate of females on screen in lesser than it is in reality, while women share only fewer range of occupations Seggar and wheeler, 1973; Defleur, 1964) Feminist theories wartella and Treichler (1986) stated that communication theories provide support to the feminist the theories by analyzing and classifying various portrayals of gender differences in the media, by finding out that how economics and ideology bisect to produce and maintain occurring practices in the communication industry and providing a collection of processes for analyzing and collecting a large number of data and then checking the validity of insights and certain observations. (P5)

III. METHODOLOGY

Research design

Content analysis is the central approach to conduct this study and the researcher used it as a methodology to collect data. Krippendorff (2004) noted that the content analyst views data as representative not of physical events but of texts, images and expressions that are created to be seen, read, interpreted and acted on for their meanings, and must therefore be analyzed with such uses in mind.

Universe of the study

Universe of the study from selected population was Urdu Dramas for analysis. This study examined the portrayals of women, in term of roles assigned to her, in Pakistani Urdu dramas. As the study included the dramas telecasted during 21 century this period was stretched over the period of eighteen years (2000-2018).

Unit of analysis

Unit of the analysis of the study was Women roles in Pakistani Urdu dramas.

Instrument

For this qualitative and quantitative study, the researcher has used the code sheet as a data collection instrument.

Inter coder reliability

To get the reliable results researcher trained more two coders. The researcher was the first coder (coder 1) and the invited coders (coder 2) and (coder 3) participated in reliability test. The coders were provided with code book and code sheets. The coders started the coding process after understanding the methodology and the definition of measurements.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study includes,

- Women are more presented in working roles during PMLN era as compared to Musharraf and PPP eras of 21st century in Pakistani TV Urdu dramas.
- Women are more presented in non-working roles in TV dramas during PMLN era as compared to Musharraf and PPP eras of 21st century in Pakistani TV Urdu dramas.

Hypotheses of the study are tested through chi square statistical technique.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1 Working role of female characters in three different eras of Pakistani drama Professional

Era	Doctor	Secretary	Teacher	actress	Officer on lower ranks	Any other	Not applicable	Chi. square	Sig. value
2001-2008	0	1	1	0	1	2	18	12.577	.401

2009-2013	0	0	0	3	0	3	14
2014-2018	1	0	1	1	1	0	15

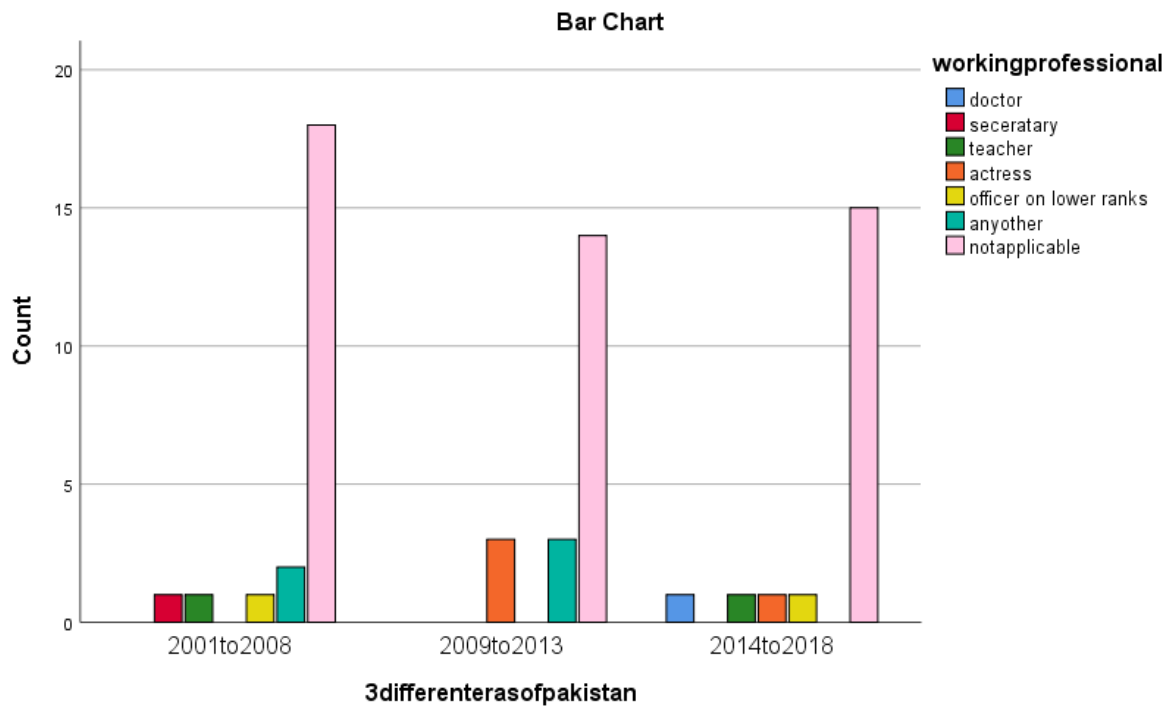


Figure 1

The table and fig 01 indicates that the Chi-Square statistics was performed to find out the professional working role of female characters across three eras. The statistical analysis depicts that the value of $\chi^2 = 12.577$ and $P = .401 > .05$ which shows that Working role of female characters in three different eras of Pakistani drama Professional was not statistically significant. The table depicts that female characters during 2001 to 2008 era did very few professional roles doctor(0), actress(0), teacher(1), secretary(1), officer on lower ranks(1), any other(2) as compared to not applicable (18). In 2009 to 2013, Female characters did very few professional roles doctor(0), actress(3), teacher(0), secretary(3), officer on lower ranks(0), any other(3) as compared to not applicable (14). In 2014 to 2018, Female characters did very few professional roles doctor(1), actress(1), teacher(1), secretary(0), officer on lower ranks(1), any other(0) as compared to not applicable (15).

Table 2 Working role of female characters in three different eras of Pakistani drama Business

Era	Factory owner	Prostitute	Not applicable	Chi. Square	Sig. value
2001-2008	1	1	21	3.504	.477
2009-2013	0	0	20		
2014-2018	0	0	19		

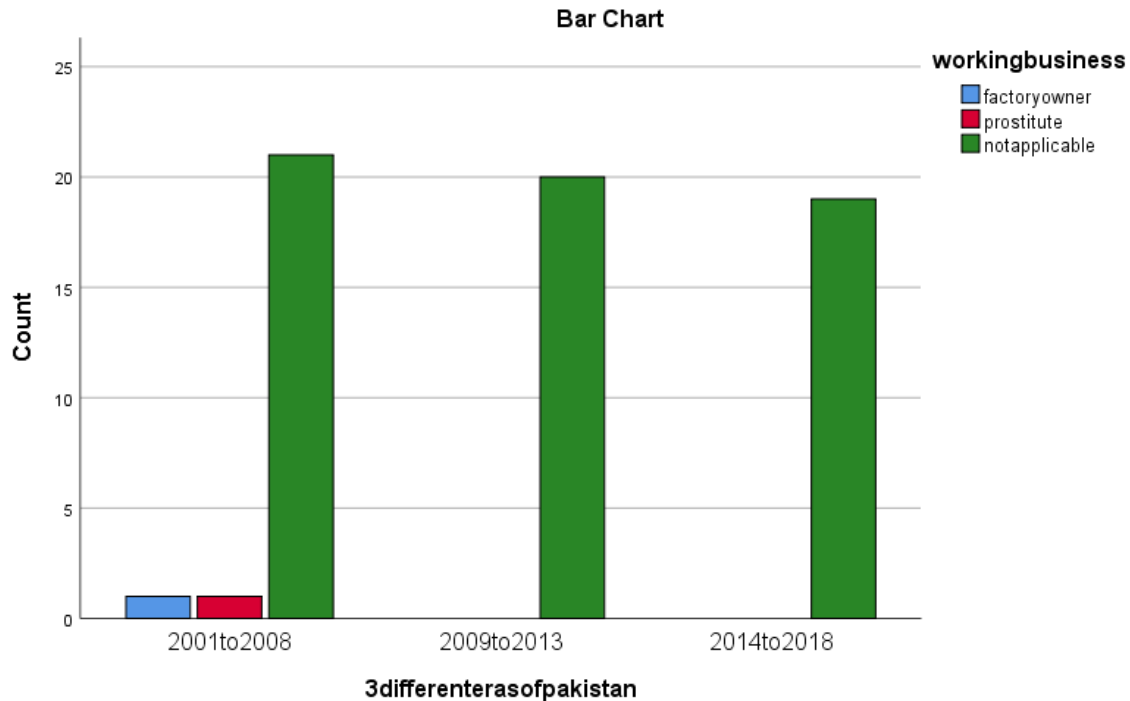


Figure 2

The table and fig 02 indicates that the Chi-Square statistics was performed to find out the working roles (business) of female characters across three eras. The statistical analysis depicts that the value of $\chi^2 = 3.504$ and $P = .477 > .05$ which shows that there is statistically significant different in professional working roles is not statistically significant. The table shows that female characters during 2001-2008 era did very few business roles factory owner (1), prostitute (1) as compared to not applicable (21). In 2009 to 2013, female characters did very less business roles, factory owner (0), and prostitute (0) as compared to not applicable (20). In 2014 to 2018, Female characters did very few business roles factory owner (0), prostitute (0) as compared to not applicable (15).

Table 3 Non-working female characters in three different eras of Pakistani dramas

Era	Student	Care giver	House wife	Any other	Not applicable	Chi square	Sig. value
2001-2008	2	0	11	3	7	7.282	.507
2009-2013	2	1	7	4	6		
2014-2018	5	0	9	1	4		

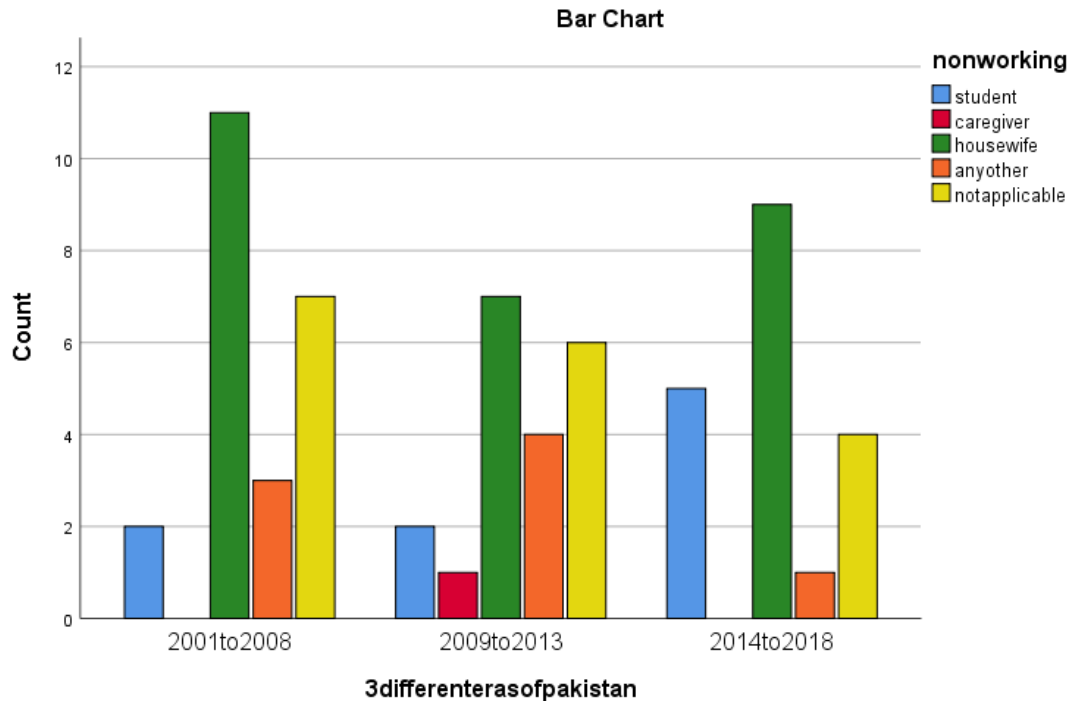


Figure 3

The table and fig 03 indicates that the Chi-Square statistics was performed to find out the non-working role of female characters across three eras. The statistical analysis depicts that the value of $\chi^2 = 7.282$ and $P = .507 < .05$ which indicates that Non-working female characters in three different eras of Pakistani dramas is not statistically significant. The table shows that female characters during 2001-2008 era female characters did more non-working roles house wives(11),any other(3), student(2), care giver(0) as compared to not applicable (7). In 2009 to 2013, Female characters did a more non-working roles, house wives(7),any other(4), student(2), care giver(0) as compared to not applicable (6). In 2014 to 2018, Female characters did more non-working roles house wives (9), any other (1), student (5), care giver (0) as compared to not applicable (4).

V. DISCUSSION

The present study also indicated that women were provided very few professional working roles. Not any strong or powerful profession was assigned to any lead or minor character. Similarly in business category among 18 dramas just few characters were shown as having their own business. As when it is talked about assigned roles, women are portrayed as dumb, dependent and house wives (Jean,2006, Shahwar,2013). In a study McNeil(1975) investigated that presentation of women in television drama as employed women is less.

VI. CONCLUSION

The current study indicated that women were stereotypically presented in non-working roles especially most of the characters were presented as house wives in all three eras i.e. Musharraf era(2001-2008), PPP era(2008-2013), PMLN era(2014-2018). A study conducted by Singrolli (1991) during the decades of 1960s and 1970s on TV were still depicted as stay at home moms.

To find out the professional working roles of female characters across three different eras it was observed that there was no change in assigning the professional working roles during three different eras. Similarly, the working role of female character in business sector was observed and there was no change in three different eras. So, hypothesis of the study rejected.

The non-working roles of female characters also remained same during three different eras; the objective was to analyze the media constructed femininity in terms of portraying woman in working and non-working roles in Pakistani TV Urdu dramas across three eras. The hypothesis of the study partially

accepted because women are presented in non-working roles not only in PMLN era but also in other two eras.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of conclusions some useful recommendations are made for the future researchers:

- Pakistani TV dramas are still portraying women in stereotypical manner there should be Present study was based on female characters only. Future researchers should compare the male and female characters in TV dramas to analyze that whether male or female characters gain more screen dominance.
- Future researchers should combine the survey and content analysis to check the feministic changes in drama and reality.

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