

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PAKISTANI FEATURE FILMS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the violence against women in Pakistani Urdu films (2013). In year 2013, Lollywood released 37 movies in different languages (Urdu, Punjabi, Pashto and English) from which the sample of four Urdu movies is selected through random sampling technique. The theory supporting the research is feminist theory and its extension feminist film theory. The research method of content analysis is used in order to analysis the violence against women through sub categories of physical violence, tone and quality of scenes. The result of content analysis represents the existence of violence and portrayal of the issue in negative way. Furthermore it provides a modest view of Pakistani film's theme and way of treating women in movies. The results indicate the independent and affirmative image of women in movies but the factor of violence is still noticeable in the Pakistani movies.

Keywords: Violence against women, Physical, Pakistani films 2013, content analysis, sexual, battering, murder.

INTRODUCTION

Media is the most expeditious and most effective way of transforming conceptions of audience; it has the influence to bring revolution in society. Elsaesser and Buckland (2002) states cinema is one of the vital components of the media, it is an excellent story telling medium and engenders the mediated authenticity in such a way that people start to affix their emotions with the medium. According to feminist cinema scholars cinema plays noteworthy role in influencing and shaping the concept of gender roles and gender identities.

Cinema in Pakistan

Pakistani cinema commonly called Lollywood commenced on 1929 in Lahore. The first Pakistani film after partition was "Teri Yaad" released on 7 August 1948. Since then Lollywood have visually perceived different genres of movies. In early years of Lollywood movies with the love, tragedy, romance and melodramatic themes were engendered. In 70's the trend transmuted to action and massacre, which was entirely the effect of super hit movie *Maula Jutt* (1979).

The era of 1959 to 1977 is considered to be the golden age of cinema industry. Due to the Indian invasion in September 1965, all Indian movies were banned in all over Pakistan. The decline of the Pakistani film industry started in 1970's, when Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq began to Islamicize the country. The restrictions ruined every kind of performing art and film industry. The new

registration acts enforced all filmmakers to have degrees furthermore the raise in entertainment taxes and demolishing of cinema houses caused collapse of Lollywood.

The revival of Pakistani cinema started with movies like *Khuda key liye* (2007), *Bol* (2011) and *Ramchand Pakistani* (2008), these movies were not only hit on Pakistani cinemas but additionally welcomed across the border. The subjects of these movies tend to be social issues including terrorism. The year 2013 gave Lollywood many movies with plausible quality and plot. *Waar*, *Chambaili*, *Main hoon Shahid Afridi*, *Josh*, *Zinda Bhaag*, *Seedings*, *Anjuman*, *Armaan* and *Siyaah* are successful movies of year 2013.

The last two decades of Pakistani cinema consist of same kind of content; mostly it is about murder, bloodshed, violence. In the context of Pakistani movies, it is to observe that women are made target of the violence frequently. They are just under influence of their male partner, who can rule his wife or girlfriend. Physical violence is portrayed as a normal action.

Crowell and Burgess (1996) stated violence against women exceeds from the limits of geography, race, culture, class and faith. It can be found in almost every community and every corner of the globe. It is frequently protected by custom and strengthened by institutions; it flourishes on extensive freedom for culprits of masculine world that is unwilling to grant women equal rights and protection from gender-based violence.

Objectives

The study has following objectives;

- To examine the violence against women in Pakistani movies.
- To determine the duration of women violence in Pakistani movies.
- To study the forms of violence against women and treatment with the scenes exposing such content Pakistani movies of year 2013.
- To examine the no. of scenes physical violence in filmed on women

Hypothesis

- I. It is more likely that the physical violence against women in Pakistani Urdu movies of 2013.
- II. Pakistani Urdu films of 2013 are free from screening violence against women and address their issues.

Research Questions

1. Does the portrayal of physical violence against women in Pakistani Urdu films illustrate the true image of Pakistani women?
2. Does the social and domestic condition of women in Pakistani movies coincide with their actual status in the society?
3. Does the violence against women in movies raise the voice against this issue?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is analyzing the violence against women in movies, the topic of study is being implemented by other researchers in different dimensions and with various point of views. The violence against women is studied in form of case studies, rate of violence, existence and types of violence, while the movies are individually studied in foreign and countrywide researches. According to the report of Aurat foundation (2012), that purposes find out the truth about the violence against women in the country, it reports that there is no decrease in crime against women in the last four years (2008-2011) unfortunately there was an overall 6.74% increase in the reported cases of violence in the country as compare to year 2010. The increase in violence is alarming yet harming to Pakistani society. The review of literature includes the studies of violence against women shown in Lollywood and foreign films released last few years. These studies interpret the contextual and contemporary trends of the topic under study. Some of the studies covered the violence against women in movies and its effect on the society that relates with the study in various extents. It increases the understanding about the previous researcher's perspectives and present study's conclusions.

Berkowitz (1963) has planned a stimulus-response association model which shows the effect on film viewers on certain stimuli. The model assumes that the movie viewer behave spontaneously to certain stimuli in the surrounding. When an individual in shown any aggressive movie (*i.e.* Violence against women) and that individual is placed in a situation in which surroundings have noticeable signs related to aggressive respondent, for example situation involving female victim or the person is angered, that individual will respond more aggressively due to stimulus response linking built up formerly through exposure of the films.

The Centre for women's development studies (CWDS), conducted a seminar on women and media. The seminar objective was to making an assistant on the image of women in reality and mediated reality by media. The member of seminar addressed on the socio economic development and autonomy of women. A significant clause was made, that is "The commercial cinema today is the prime medium through which negative and derogatory images of women in our society are both created and reinforced". The media played a negative role in displaying the real image of women.

Neil M. Malamuth et al (1986) studied the effect of sexual violence in the media on violence against women in actual situations. They presented a model to prove the indirect effect of media violence increasing violence against women. The thought pattern of people is suggested to be effected by some cultural patterns and other variables that lead to aggression against women. The first model shows the exposure of violent content and the development of thought pattern while the other model represents the link between aggression and the other variables in lab and natural settings. The research shows that the exposure of media sexual aggression harmfully affects the men's thought pattern. It was found that the more frequent exposure of the violent content was associated with greater acceptance of women violence. The experimental research exposed male participants to the rape with positive consequences for the female victim and other with the negative consequences. The perception of the all participants was affected by the exposure of rape violence. The men exposed to positive consequence rape believed that the rape is not such extreme form and consider the pleasure of women in the violence. This research shows the effect

of the portrayal of the violence against women on the perception of the men and increase in aggression.

UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) provided the right to liberty and security to women including right to equal protection under the law. The article 3 of the declaration offered protection to women by stating the right to women that they can't be subjected to torture, insensitive, degrading conduct including penalty or other painful act. The policy for eliminating violence against women state should pursue all appropriate ways. State should be attentive to reduce, investigate and punish acts of violence against women perpetrated by state or any individual.

Jhally (1995) conducted a study on violence and women in the media, the study indicated that the frequency of violence against women appears to be connected to a number of variables. The study suggested that it is an important factor that how a woman portrayed in the media. Violence against women is depicted in various forms of media, including television, films, games and music videos. The excessive show of violence against women results in acceptance of such issue as a normal action.

The violence against women in Pakistani movies is closely related to feminist. Feminist theory emerged from a collection of feminist movements and philosophy that aimed at defining equal rights for women in social institutions. Pence & Paymar (1993) states that feminist research focused on the collective message of the society that permits male's use of violence and aggression throughout life, and the forbidden gender roles that command how men and women should behave in their intimate relationships. Feminist theory sees the core reasons of intimate partner violence as the outcome of living a society that ignores aggressive behavior practiced by men.

METHODOLOGY

The research method used for the present study is content analysis for collecting data and coding as a method of analyzing data. The study is both qualitative and quantitative, as the data is in numerical as well as descriptive form. The method of content analysis changes the qualitative data into quantitative data, like movies or television shows can be changed into text to analyze it. Smith (1975) suggests that content analysis is blend of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. He explains that he has taken this point, because "qualitative analysis deals with the forms and antecedent-consequent pattern of form, while quantitative analysis deals with the duration and frequency of form"

Pakistani movies of year 2013 consist of 16 Urdu and Punjabi movies. Researchers selected the sample is four Pakistani movies of year 2013 for the purpose of analyzing violence against women. The unit of analysis for the present study is the scenes and duration of time in seconds consumed by Pakistani movies for the portrayal of physical violence against women.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION

Violence against Women

Violence against women is hurting the women physically or emotionally. Killing, slapping, throwing acid, pushing, forced marriages, abusing etc are all kinds of violence against women.

Pakistani Cinema

Pakistani cinema is the movies produced and released in Pakistan and mostly by Pakistani productions. Pakistani cinema industry is called Lollywood, which means the hub of Pakistani movies.

Inhumanness

Inhumanness is used in sense of behaving wildly and brutally. The term is used to express the behavior of people against weak and feeble women in the society.

Pelting

The constantly hitting someone is called pelting. This term is used in sense of hitting women and type of violence against women.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is perceived as the injuring or damaging women sentiments in the household. It can be explained as, slapping, hitting, abusing, yelling on your wife or forcing someone or restricting form doing something.

Category Construction

In this study one main category and further its subcategories to analyze the violence against women in Pakistani movies are described as follows;

1. Physical violence

Physical violence is harming or injuring a person intentionally by using physical force. Physical violence includes pushing, quaking, throwing, grabbing face, slapping, hitting or using a weapon against a person.

i. Sexual violence

Any sexual action taken against the will of the other person is sexual violence. Sexual violence involves rape, sexual harassment, forcing, and human trafficking for the purpose of mistreatment.

ii. Battering

Battering is heavily or repeatedly beating a person. It involves hitting a person by using a weapon or by using force. Slapping, pulling hair, pushing, kicking *etc.* are kinds of battering.

iii. Murder

The slaughter and assassination of one person by another without any warrant explanation and excuse in law. Murder can be done by using a weapon, suffocation, poisoning *etc.*

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**Table 1. No. of Scenes and percentage of Physical Violence against Women in movies**

Name	Sexual violence (Scenes)	Sexual violence (%age)	Battering (Scenes)	Battering (%age)	Murder (Scenes)	Murder (%age)
Josh	2	66.67%	2	25%	1	50%
Anjuman	1	33.33%	1	12.5%	0	0%
ZindaBhaag	0	0%	1	12.5%	0	0%
Armaan	0	0%	4	50%	1	50%
Total	3		8		2	

Table no. 1 explains the number of scenes and percentage of showing physical violence against women in Pakistani movies of 2013. Physical violence is categorized in three further categories i.e. sexual violence, battering and murder. There were total 3 scenes of sexual violence in 4 movies. Battering was shown in 8 scenes of the movies while the murder was shown in 2 scenes. Josh contains 66.67% of the sexual violence, Anjuman 33.33%, ZindaBhaag 0% and Armaan 0%. The battering percentage in Josh is 25%, Anjuman 12.5%, Zinda Bhaag 12.5%, Armaan 50%. The murder percentage is calculated to be 50% in Josh and Armaan, and 0% in Anjuman and Zinda Bhaag.

Table 2. Duration and percentage Physical Violence in seconds in movies

Name	Sexual violence (Seconds)	Sexual violence (%age)	Battering (Seconds)	Battering (%age)	Murder (Seconds)	Murder (%age)
Josh	172	64.18%	130	26.80%	126	59.15%
Anjuman	96	35.82%	61	12.58%	0	0%
ZindaBhaag	0	0%	18	3.71%	0	0%
Armaan	0	0%	276	56.91%	87	40.85%
Total	268		485		213	

Table no. 2 shows the duration of scenes and percentage of physical violence against women in movies. The total duration of sexual abuse is 268 seconds, battering is 485 seconds and murder is 213 seconds. The percentage of sexual abuse in Josh is 64.18%, while anjuman has 35.82%, Zinda Bhaag 0% and Armaan 0% of sexual violence against women. Battering is 26.80% in Josh, 12.58% in Anjuman, 3.71% in Zinda Bhaag and 56.91% in Armaan. The murder percentage is 59.15% in Josh, 0% in Anjuman, 0% in ZindaBhaag and 40.85% in Armaan.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The violence against women study is evaluated by the physical violence represented in the movies. The physical violence and verbal violence are assessed by classifying data into three more sub categories; Sexual violence, battering and murder.

The total sexual violence scenes shown in Pakistani Urdu movies have the duration of scenes is 268 seconds in total. Josh movie contains 66.67% of the sexual violence which is 172 seconds and Anjuman contains 33.33% of the total sexual violence against women which is 96 seconds of the movie. The other two movies Zinda Bhaag and Armaan have not covered any amount of sexual violence scenes. The difference between these movies is quiet noticeable. Sexual violence in Josh is harsh and has highly negative tone, showing sexual violence against women through rape and sexual harassment. Anjuman is the story of a *tawaif*, who is forced by her mother to perform dances and at one point she is being prepared to sale herself to costumers. The forced prostitution is a prominent kind violence against women, which can be noticed in Anjuman. The representation of a woman in a movie affects the status and repute of a woman in real society. The above mentioned movies showed visible amount of violence against women, this can cause the change in the views of society about women or spread women's image as a weak personality.

The other category of the physical violence is battering; it is as harmful as sexual abuse or murder. The selected movies showed 8 scenes of battering; the duration of scenes is 485 seconds. Josh showed 25% of the battering in 130 seconds of the movie, Anjuman and Zinda Bhaag displayed 12.5 % of the battering in 61 and 18 seconds respectively. The highest percentage of battering scenes is displayed by Armaan. i.e. 50% and its duration is 276 seconds. The analysis of the four movies battering scenes evaluates the high amount of battering in each movie. However the percentage in Anjuman and Zinda Bhaag is lower than the movies Josh and Armaan. The intensity of violent scenes in Josh was high and their tone was highly negative. Josh portrayed a woman who was kicked and battered by the goons of landlord and the kidnapping of woman by landlord. These scenes are representing high amount of violence happening against woman. Anjuman portrayed the pushing, hurting women in disgraceful way. The representation of battering in Zinda Bhaag was negative but in low intensity, it include hitting, slapping, pushing. The movie Armaan showed 50% of violence in which hitting, pushing and hurting women was projected.

The third category of physical violence is murder; killing women intentionally due to aggression or honor are common in our society and movies. The selected movies portrayed total 2 scenes of murder in Josh (50%) and Armaan (50%) respectively, calculated duration of scenes is 213 seconds. The duration of murder scene in Josh is 126 seconds and Armaan has 87 seconds of murder scenes, the tone and quality of scenes in Josh and Armaan are observed to be brutal and highly negative. The other two movies named Zinda Bhaag and Anjuman didn't comprise any scenes of murder. The physical violence against women in selected four movies is portrayed in total 13 scenes of the movies and the total duration is 966 seconds, in comparison with all four movies, Josh (44.31%) and Armaan (37.58%) are observed to be more physically violent movies than Zinda Bhaag (1.86%) and Anjuman (16.25%). The quality and tone of scenes in Josh and Armaan are high and negative. Although Anjuman and Zinda Bhaag have sexual violence and battering all the same it is in low intensity.

The first hypothesis of the study is “The physical violence is represented more against women in Pakistani Urdu movies of 2013”. The above analysis of the data shows that the no. of physical violence is 13 scenes and duration of scenes is 966 seconds. Which is low in quantity as compared to other types of violence.

The second hypothesis is “Pakistani Urdu films of 2013 are free from screening violence against women and address their issues” It is considered that Pakistani cinema is improving its standard with the arrival of new private productions; these productions are making movies with decent storyline, high quality equipment’s and educated team. The movies are supposed to have good plot and less violence than ever before in cinema. The analysis of the selected movies proved the hypothesis wrong by pointing out high amount of verbal and physical violence in all of the movies. The movies contain 62 scenes of 4,844 seconds of violence against women. The violence could have been decreased in comparison of previous years, but the amount of violence is still not satisfactory. The movies represent women as weak and suffering creatures who does not complain about it and accept it as their fate.

CONCLUSION

The year 2013 is the year of many successful and blockbuster movies that help the cinema to stand again. The cinema development managed to pursue people to watch movies in cinemas again. The major finding of the study of Pakistani movies concluded that the movies consist of the violence against women in large amount. The presence of the physical violence didn’t have much space in the movies in comparison with the other types like verbal and psychological violence. The positive point to conclude is that the scenes and time duration of murder of women are in a smaller amount in the movies.

The violence against women shown in Pakistani movies somewhat relates to the violence practiced in Pakistani society. The movies portrayed the real face of our society where women are being slaughtered and injured physically as well as psychologically to the frightening extent. The HRCP report of 2013 showed the death of 557 women due to acid attacks, injuries, burning and honor killing, until July 2013. The report states 113 cases of rape in Lahore city in just 7 months. The report indicated the violence against women’s increased alarming state in Pakistani society.

The result of the study explains the women in 2013 movies are shown in versatile characters to some extent, the movies have portrayed women as capable of handling important issues, by representing them as journalists, doctors, teachers, business women, nurses and social workers. The previous studies state therapy, murder, sexual assault and suicide are the noticeable violence presented against women in movies of those selected years.

The most important point to notice is the creativity and versatility in the topics selection for movies in the 2013. The producers have improved their script and plot of the movie. The previous study reveals that the cinema industry is going toward downfall and cinemas are becoming malls and markets due to the same trends going on in movies. The current analysis of movies of year 2013 reveals that the themes in recent movies have gradually changed. 1980’s was the era of violence against women at average level but the violence increased during 1990’s.

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