



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Legislative Measures on Violence Against Women: A Critical Study  
of The Editorial Caricatures of Mainstream Pakistani English  
Dailies**

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PAPER INFO	ABSTRACT
<b>Received:</b> September 09, 2019	The study intends to examine, how opinion page illustrations of main stream English dailies depict females' issues as well as women and men, who characterize in the cartoons are incarnated both individualistically and in association to each other as well as how present the "Women Protection Bill". Legislative measures on violence against women are directly related to sustainable harmony and peace in society. The study is based on framing theory and researchers' employed content analysis and semiotic analysis; research methods. The findings show that only 13% editorial caricatures of <i>Dawn</i> and <i>The Nation</i> sketched the women as victim, because of dominating patriarchal society structure. Whereas, the illustrations in <i>The Nation</i> , are being frequently framed gender stereotype roles of women. Though, women protection bill supported by print media but interestingly, editorial illustrations showed "zero tolerance" at religious parties' suggestions to dilute/revise some of the clauses of legislation for women, as these are, according to Council of Islamic Ideology, contrary to Quran and <i>Sunnah</i> . This paper proposals an imperative insight into how legislation on violence against women delicately portrayed in leading media caricatures. It's evocative to study the Editorial cartoons; reflect the policy of any news organization and also delicately twist public opinion
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**Introduction**

The media works like cultural industry. It is manufacturing the products like newspapers, radio, advertisement, film, television, which play a core role in mending descriptions and discourses, through which people give meaning and

understand the world. It is frequently changing the spheres of both civilization and technology (Lacey, 1996). Women portrayal in media remained controversial issue and critical school of thought; feminist's scholars highlighted the predisposed media treatment towards women. Studies frequently found that media contents; print and electronic commercials, music videos and images are stereotype by gender roles like females repeatedly play romantic, tragic and family-oriented roles (Brown 2011; Gentry and Sjoberg 2015; Gonsalves 2005; Laster and Erez 2015; Signoriella, 1985a., Brown & Campbell, 1986). It's significant to examine gender stereotyping, as previous researches have not yet examined the depiction of women in editorial cartoons in Pakistani leading English dailies. The potentiality of the editorial Cartoon genre surges the latitude of inquiry in this field as it expresses views that thousand arguments cannot elucidate.

Every day in Punjab, approximately six females are killed or bear homicide attempt; at least eight females are raped, another 11 beaten, and 32 kidnapped for several motives, according to a description printed by the Law and order section of the Special Monitoring Unit (SMU). The Punjab Assembly on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 approved the long-awaited "Protection of Women against violence Bill 2015", which covers remedies for sufferers of violence, criminalize all forms of ferocity against women, including abetment of a crime, domestic violence, sexual violence, physical and emotional exploitation, financial abuse, aggravation and cyber-crime.

### **Literature Review**

Understanding cartoon is a multipart process that needs people to have a broader knowledge of previous and existing proceedings, tact of analytically thinking and have a thorough grasp at cultural signs and symbols. (Refaie, 2009). The editorial cartoons have now become very significant, because people enjoy imaging the entire story by just seeing a minor depiction (Shaikh et.al, 2016). Editorial cartoons, historically and presently, play a substantial role in public discourse about grave and significant issues. It is observed that over years, editorial cartoons positively or negatively formed masses opinion on political as well as the human interest-oriented issues internationally (Streicher, 1967; Medhurst and DeSousa 1981; Seymour-Ure, 2001; & Baldry and Thibault, 2006). The core themes of previous studies have been mentioned; while it's also significant to explore some other form of portrayal through stereotypes. Conventional roles of female are that of spouse and mother. Extra role of women was a sex object because of objectification of women as well as females, who didn't like conventional roles as mother and wife. These three roles are frequent in

scholarly discourse and popular debates (Courtney & Lockeretz, 1971; Dominick & Rauch, 1972).

Cartoonists sketched the events in a style relevant to readers' societal observations and understandings. Gender ideals are incessantly created, cherished, and negotiated in American society at wide level as (Gamble et al, 2003) studied.

Mavin, Bryans and Cunningham (2010) studied the depiction of female politicians in U.K. newspapers and government websites, regarding UK 2010 government election campaign. The researchers focused at female MPs and specially representation of Harriet and Theresa May. The results of the research asserted that overall UK media marginalized female politicians' contributions, thus detracting their integrity as leaders. Chang (2008), through semiotic analysis of images of Newsweek, explored that first lady "Hilary Clinton" was presented as a wife and mother; while presidential candidate, Hilary was portrayed with the lens of female politician. In cartoons consequently, females are depicted as submissive, waiting for men's consideration, whereas, males are shown overlooking, manipulating or leading women in all situations according to (Brown & Campel, 1986).

Edwards (2003) research also affirmed the role of editorial cartoons in image building. He studied sign and symbols cartoonists applied while discussing the contributions of Bush and Al-Gore during US presidential elections. In a nutshell, the review of literature narrates that there is limited study on the role of editorial cartoons regarding the framing of women issues; issues of those who do not traditionally sit at home but add their voice for their basic rights, political activities of Pakistani female politicians and their stance at approved women protection bill.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research is grounded on the concept that editorial cartoons published in leading Pakistan English dailies from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 are indicating certain messages. The current research is based on *framing theory*; it's a technique, by which any issue is highlighted or marginalized in different media genres. As Entman (2007) mentioned in his study, media is partial and frame the events according to their policies and preferences. The media through editorial cartoons is framing women issues, government policies and religious parties stance about women protection bill as well as gender stereotype portrayal in a particular way so, this research comes under the umbrella of framing theory.

<b>Research objectives</b>	<b>Research questions</b>	<b>Methodologies /data collection device</b>	<b>Data analysis</b>
1.To examine the portrayal of women in editorial cartoons of Dawn and The Nation from 1 <sup>st</sup> Feb 2016-Dec 2017	1.How are selected leading English dailies depicting the women in their editorial cartoons from Feb 2016-Dec 2017.	Content analysis	Percentage analysis
2. to identify the themes/metaphors/signs and symbols used by leading Pakistani English dailies in their editorial cartoons.	2. How selected leading dailies used different themes/metaphors/signs and symbols about women to make their stance impactful.	Semiotic analysis	Thematic analysis

### **Material and Methods**

The current study is based on Descriptive and analytical research methods. In this research quantitative content analysis is used to state the present situation of media treatment regarding portrayal of women issues. While in an analytical section, the researcher answers the questions of why and how. In this study, quantitative content analysis and semiotics analysis are used to answer the question of how the editorial cartoons have highlighted the women issues by using different signs and symbols.

Semiotics is generally defined as the “science of signs”. Semiotic analysis includes a search for the meaning deliberately or accidentally attached to sign.

<b>Universe</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Unit of analysis</b>
The universe of the study is editorial cartoons, which are the part of leading newspapers.	The sample of this study is editorial cartoons of Dawn and The Nation.	Editorial cartoons on Dawn from 1st February 2016 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2017 about women issues; honor killing, physical, emotional Women protection bill.	An editorial cartoon.

### Categorization and Operationalization

A number of main and subcategories are formulated for qualitative and quantitative content analyses which are given below:

1. Women issues; honor killing, gender discrimination at home and work place, harassment and abuse.
2. Punjab Women Protection Bill.
3. Women in politics.
4. Gendered stereotype role of Women in society
5. Government policies regarding women rights.

### Results and Discussion

Themes	Frequency in Dawn	Percentage in Dawn	Frequency in The Nation	Percentage in The Nation
Women issues: honor killing, acid throwing, harassment and abuse.	03	13.04%	03	14%
Punjab Women Protection Bill	07	30.45%	02	9.5%
Women in politics.	06	26.08%	03	14%
Gendered-stereotypes role of Women	06	26.08%	12	57%
Government policies regarding women rights.	01	4.34%	0	0
Women contribution in welfare of society.	0	0	1	4.76%
Total	23	100%	21	100%

### Findings of Data

*Dawn* sketched 23 editorial cartoons at women related issues. Out of 23, only 03 (13.04%) discussed the women issues, 07(30.45%) are ironically projected the reservations of leading religious parties at women protection bill. 06(34.08%) editorial cartoons are about the women participation in politics as well as 06(34.08%) reinforce gender stereotype role. Only 01(4.34%) cartoon throws light at Government policies about women issues.

*The Nation* published 24 editorial cartoons at the said issue, out of 24, 12(50%) depict the women in their gender stereotype roles. 03(12.05%) editorial cartoons are about women role in political activities, as well as about women issues. Only 01(4.2%) caricature is about women achievements.

### Finding of semiotic Analysis

The second and most important methodology of this study is semiotic analysis--- editorial cartoons which involve in the framing of women issues are analyzed through Barthes model of connotation and denotation. The captions, codes, and signs that applied in editorial cartoons of *Dawn* and *The Nation* are studied to understand the connotative meanings of the cartoons. Seven main themes appear from the semiotic analysis. The discussion is given below:

#### Violence against women:



Figure-1.1, (11<sup>th</sup> June 2016-Dawn)



Figure-1.2, (27<sup>th</sup> November 16 -  
The Nation)

Figure -1.1 is signifying the miserable condition of Pakistani women. The arms and legs of the teenage girl in *shalwar kameez* (Pakistani national dress) are tied (which signifies that she is a victim) with iron rod (social fabrication about inhuman attitude for females) that is placed on iron stand. She is *grilled* (facing physical, emotional and financial abuses, discriminations), with *fire* (social pressures). Two men in Stone Age *dresses* signify (backwardness of males regarding gender stereotype) are trying to grill the girl. The man and woman in modern civil society (educated people) are observing the whole situation in a detached manner, because the civil society pays lip service on such issues, rather than taking any pragmatic steps on social ills faced by women. This editorial cartoon depicts the critical condition and the gravity of the situation faced by Pakistani women because of tyrannical and narrow approach of the male community.

In Figure-1.2, the girl in *uniform*(student) is holding book and pen. The pack of dogs (depicts the amplifying challenges faced by female student) is attacking at the girl and trying to snatch her books and pen. In the latent meaning, these dogs are signifying the forces of resistance that harass and abuse woman while she is trying to get education.

### Women protection Bill

Newspapers specially *Dawn* highly projected the extreme reaction of religious parties at women protection bill.



Figure. 2.1 (3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016)



Figure.2.2 (4<sup>th</sup> March 2016)

Figure.2.1, shows that the JUI chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman in *shalwar kameez* wearing *turban*, *having beard* (signifying religious person/Islamisation frame) is keeping a *hammer* (is signifying a tool to break female rights) in his hand. with Furious expression staring at the broken female symbol. The reason of such portrayal is the severe criticism of Fazlur Rahman at Women protection bill. In figure 2.2, Maulana Fazlur Rahman (signifying religious person) istaking a knife (a tool) in his handand seems to be attacking at the women protection bill, with furious expression staring at legislation for women. It indicates the severe reaction of religious parties that they did not accept the women protection bill.



Figure. 2.3- (19<sup>th</sup> March 2016- Dawn)

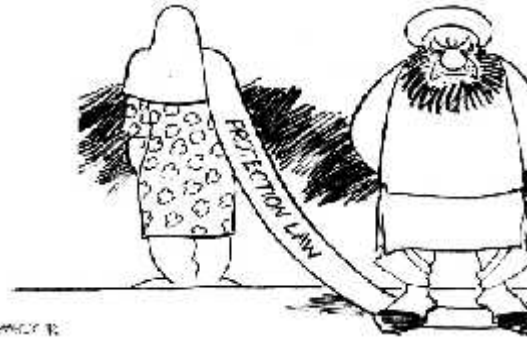


Figure. 2.4-(17<sup>th</sup> March 2016- Dawn)

In figure 2.3, the president of Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam(F) Maulana Fazlur Rahman is holding a crossed female slogan followed by mainstream religious parties belonging to all schools of thought. It indicates that religious parties cumulatively rejected the women protection bill passed by the Punjab assembly. In figure 2. 4, the person in religious appearance is standing at the “dupatta” of female labeled as “protection bill”. The latent connotation conveyed through this illustration is that religious parties show their adverse reaction against women protection bill.



Figure 2.5. (Dawn 11 March 16)

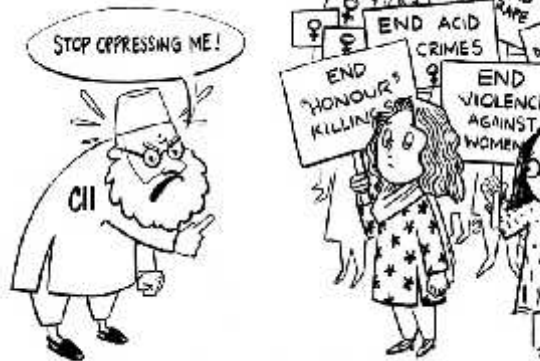


Figure 2.6. (20<sup>th</sup> November 2016-The Nation)



In figure 2.5, two images of Maulana Tahir Ashrafi are shown. In one image, chairman of Ullman Board Pakistan, Maulana Tahir Ashrafi (signifying as representative of religious-political parties) is holding a female symbol placard as he is a supporter of women rights, besides this, he puts his feet at the placard. In the latent meaning, this editorial cartoon depicts his contradictory and hypocritical attitude.

In figure 2.6, council of Islamic ideology chairman, Maulana Sherani is shown as annoying and putting the finger towards women protesters that are holding placards labelled "end violence against women, end acid throwing crimes, end honor killing etc.!". It presents that religious parties under the umbrella of Council of Islamic Ideology has rejected the women protection bill, by saying "The clauses in this bill will eventually lead to the break-up of society".

### Women in Political Activities



Figure.3.1-(Dawn-10<sup>th</sup> August 2016)

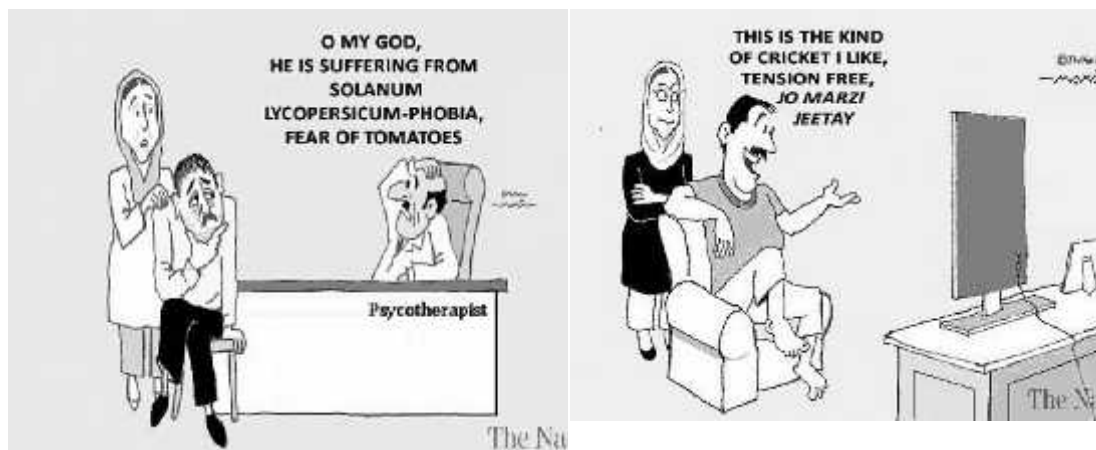


Figure.3.2-(Dawn-15<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016 )

In figure 3.1, four characters are shown engaging with each other. As Ayesha Gualali (representing Imran's scandal) is flinging ball (depicting her allegations) towards Imran Khan and Ayesha Ahad (imaging Hamza Shahbaz's scandal) is throwing ball (character assassination) towards Main Nawaz Sharif. Both Imran Khan and Nawaz Sharif are holding the bats (giving response) to kick the balls. Negative role of Ayesha Gulalai and Ayesha Ahad depicted as character assassins. Ayesha Gulalai's allegations of sexual harassment against Pakistan Tahreek-i-Insaf chief, Imran Khan; Prime Minister said, there should be a committee to investigate allegations. On the other hand, Ayesha Ahad asked "when will Main Nawaz Sharif make a committee for his daughter-in-law?". In the latent meaning, both women are engaged in dirty politics.

In figure 3.2, Kulsoom Nawaz, the wife of ex- prime minister, who is fighting with cancer, is standing on the wheel chair (signifying to catch sympathies) with a placard labelled “vote for me” at NA 120. It presented very negative image that she is asking for vote only because of her poor health conditions. Even women in politics also seem to be having no “voice” of their own, but they are blinding following their males’ counterparts, which again reinforce gender discriminations.

### Gender Stereotyped Role of Women



4.1-13<sup>th</sup>September 2017*TheNation*

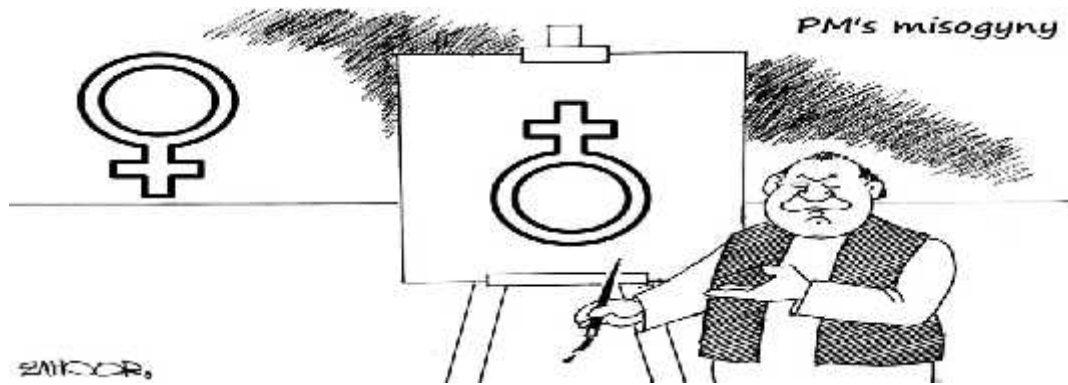
4.2-17<sup>th</sup>June 2017*TheNation*

In figure 4.1, the psychotherapist (male) and the patient (male) are in active role, communicating with each other while the patient’s wife is in passive role. The latent message conveyed by editorial cartoon, the active participants (the males) are important in society and mute female (wife) just showing the feeling of depression because of her husband’s sickness.

In figure 4.2, the viewer (male) in a leisure mood sitting on a sofa, watching a match (signifying has a control at entertainment tool) and giving comments that appeared above his head while a mute passive woman (his wife), wrapped her arms (signifying obedience) standing behind him just looking at tv admiringly. These symbolic themes in editorial cartoons implicitly reinforce the gendered stereotypes already prevalent in society. These editorial cartoons seem to have internalized these stereotypes.

### Government policies about women

Newspapers especially *Dawn* use the theme that depicted that Pakistani government is not serious about women issues.



5.1-2<sup>nd</sup> May 2016

On 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2016 a cartoon of *Dawn* reflects the anti-feministic role of Government. The cartoon of Prime Minister Main Nawaz Sharif, in *shalwar kameez* and *waistcoat*, (Pakistani national dress) holding a paint brush draw a reverse feminist symbol. In latent message, the government policies are not in the favour of feminist.

### Women Empowerment



6.1-9<sup>th</sup> March 2017 *The Nation*

A girl in *uniform* (signifies student) with book in one hand and sign of victory from other hand, standing at the stage happily; whereas the religious person (the male), feudal lord (the male) as well as street boy (the male) looked at her annoyingly. In the latent message, the dominate group of society (males) do not support, cherish and appreciate the women's prosperity.

## **Discussion**

This paper attempted to reconnoiter a previously under explored topic of editorial cartoons in leading Pakistani English dailies and declared that the editorial illustrations in Pakistani dailies marginalized or trivialized the women critical issues; acid throwing, physical as well as psychological abuses against women. It also proved that through this comic portrayal a media group's gender stereotype affiliations are revealed. The analysis of the two leading English dailies highlighted those women issues are least represented in *The Nation*, as compare to *Dawn*.

The study examined numerous differences in the portrayal of men and women in editorial cartoons. Men were typically depicted in active roles, women in submissive ones. A man comfortably seated on sofa and watched a television, while a wife served her or just listened his remarks about any T.V program. A woman cooked food and rest of family waited her. Such representation frequently observed in *The Nation* delicately prolonged a continuity of gender discrimination.

The contributions of Pakistani women that make us feel proud totally ignored or marginalized in editorial cartoons. Print and electronic media really need to have their own policies and agenda instead of just imitating others. As Zheng (2011) observed that the Chinese media gradually rectify the objectification and labeling roles of female with independent and powerful individuals. Cumulatively, both newspaper's editorial cartoons supported the legislation for women. Ironically, depicted the religious elements who so ever, criticized women protection bill. But, gendered stereotype roles of women in political activities and rest of areas show the status quo. The findings of the research revealed that women depiction in cartoons also reinforce gendered stereotypes and marginalized their unrelenting Struggle for fair treatment and freedom of expression. The study endorses to the broad indulgent of editorial cartoons and how they amplify the strength of legislative measures on violence against women in Punjab. The current analysis also attempt to specify the numerous social themes developed after the time frame of women protection bill and its description by the caricaturists. However, these are not the final words on editorial cartoons in the Pakistani English dailies. There is a need of further exploring other features of the editorial cartoons, chiefly in the Pakistani context. This research may assist as a guideline for future researches in this area.

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