

Gendered Linguistic Patterns in the Online Harassment of Female Politicians in Pakistan

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Abstract

Although social media is playing its significant role in political discourse but in a patriarchal culture such as Pakistan, it is used to assault and harass the female politicians as well. This study investigates how gendered language is used in online harassment of females and how different abusive words and sentences are spoken in political campaigns to denigrate women. This study also highlights how ethical crimes such as hate speeches, moral attacks and personal insults etc. are committed by the political parties on each other by launching their special social media teams. This research focuses on three famous and renowned female politicians of Pakistan including PMLN's Maryam Nawaz, PTI's Bushra Bibi and PPP's Sherry Rehman. This is to examine how these female politicians face sexual insults, physical mimicry and false allegations on their religious practices through social media. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) and feminist linguistics are applied to reflect how abusive and harassing language is used for these female politicians. The findings analyze how this gendered and harassing language used in social media platforms to hurt and degrade people particularly women and female politicians of Pakistani society.

Key Words: Gender, Linguistic patterns, online harassment

1.Introduction

Politics has been affected by social media to a large extent in Pakistan. Social media has made easy access to political campaigns and discourses. But it has negative impacts as well. A large number of people use it to abuse and harass women politicians. In a patriarchal society where males have dominancy, it is considered that women have no right to be the leaders. It is believed that they are incompetent to manage power dynamics and hold leadership positions.

When these female politicians come in power and serve the public e.g. work strategies and policies for welfare, administration, economic development, etc. these trained backbiters attack these women's personal lives and attitudes, their ethical and moral concerns and their physical appearances. This online harassment of female politicians is worse than simply hating them. It is a struggle to spread negative publicity about female politicians to blemish their political positions. This toxic environment affects directly or indirectly their political career, creating difficulties to manage their duties properly.

Social media wings, operated by the political parties are the major factors causing online harassment and sexual insults of people especially the female politicians of Pakistan. These major political parties have their own wings. They train people that start and organize trends and campaigns on different social media platforms. Their main purpose is to support their leader and to spread negative and false allegations and information of their opponents. They are active all the

time to criticize the politicians in opposition. For spreading their agendas, memes, viral posts and hashtags are used by these social media teams. They do attacks on personal lives and appearances of opponent female politicians. These teams' social media accounts are mostly associated with political parties' accounts.

This study investigates how language in online harassment is used to exclude women politicians from politics. This also reflects how social media abusers try to degrade female politicians by analyzing speech patterns and exploring the language used. This study applies Critical discourse analysis (CDA) and feminist linguistics. This is to examine how gender inequality is greatly portrayed in different social media platforms. This study also demands initiatives of better awareness and internet protection for a developing future for female politicians in Pakistan.

A large number of female politicians around the world are facing greatly the issue of online harassment. This harassment has negative impacts on political engagement and personal dignity of female politicians. There are many studies and research works done which shows that females are larger victims of sexual violence than males. In Canada, Wagner (2020) has studied how abusive language is used in online social media apps to suppress and silence the voices of females who are active in politics. This research reflects that this harassment not only causes negative effects on their personal lives but also try to exclude them out of politics.

The study of online harassment on Swedish Members of Parliament is carried out by Josefsson, Erikson and Håkansson (2021). Women's political representation has increased rapidly in the past few decades, but a lot of barriers are hindering women's political participation in a myriad of ways. This study examines that females are facing more online harassment and threats than male politicians on social media. These attacks focus on their identities rather than their political beliefs. The study also limits the women's agency in politics and lights up gender stereotype. Their findings also suggest that men who endure online abuse are more likely to abandon politics. While on the other hands, women believe their ability to operate as politicians is limited owing to constant harassment.

Trolling and online attacks against politicians especially the female politicians are also popular around the world. Bardall (2013) and Krook (2017) noted that sexist and misogynistic language used at female politicians is designed to weaken their legitimacy. Rheault, Rayment, and Musulan's (2019) study on online harassment in Britain has found that female politicians receive more hate speech than their male colleagues. Their messages frequently include derogatory comments about gender, sexuality, and attractiveness.

It is revealed in a global study by Amnesty International's (2018) that female politicians, especially belonging to minority and working class groups face online abuse and harassment around the world. Sometimes, this harassment crosses the limits of online insults to rape and death of these female politicians. The threats of violence and harassment on females have gotten severity and regularity in the world. Many women have reevaluated their political carriers to highlight the significance of social media and digital spaces in democracy of a country.

"How women are targeted for online harassment" is clearly revealed in a linguistic research. Hardaker and McGlashan (2016) investigate a British journalist who has abused online. Their study analyzes how the abusers use language towards harassing the women. It has been revealed that their language is full of sexual violence and threats. Similarly, Mantilla (2015) invented the A term "gender-trolling" is invented by Mantilla (2015) which reflects how women are silenced and oppressed in public places by using inappropriate and sexual language.

Southern and Harmer (2019) have examined the abusive tweets by the people about female politicians in the United Kingdom (UK). This analysis highlights how these tweets have harassed females, questioned their identity and integrity, and left negative impacts on their physical and psychological tendencies. It also revealed that this social media harassment is a struggle to maintain patriarchy and male-dominancy in political campaigns and affairs. Madden, Janoske, Winkler, and Edgar (2018) have investigated how these online attacks and abusive language for female politicians critique their characters and question about their roles in politics as well as their suitability for leadership positions.

Erikson et al. (2021) have discovered that both males and females have to face political criticism which varies on the basis of language used. Men have to encounter broad criticism but women have to face insults and harassment related to their physical appearances, sexuality, personal and domestic lives. This reflects how language serves as a tool and weapon to downgrade and suppress the legacy of females in political discourse.

Female politicians face psychological and professional consequences after being targeted by online harassment. Citron (2014) has observed that online abuse is one of the biggest causes which weaken proper mental health. It results in depression, anxiety, fear and restlessness. This online harassment also results in forcing female politicians to reduce or eliminate their social media activities. The continuous threats and abuse also lead to resign and withdraw from politics and leadership positions.

Gillard (2016) has found that online abuse is a big fear for women which discourage them from taking part in political discourse. In Canada, Bernard (2016) has shared her experience when she has faced online harassment and sexual threats on different social media platforms.

This highlights how this online harassment affects individuals as well as the democratic process of a country.

Gender-trolling has negative impacts on political discourse and freedom of speech of females in a patriarchal society. Perraudin (2019) has reported that online and social media harassment has caused resignations and withdraws of large number of female politicians in United Kingdom (UK) and Canada. Erikson et al. (2021) have also found that women often change their social strategies and communication methods to avoid from online harassment.

Krook and Restrepo Sanin (2020) have examined that online harassment has created broader threats of sexual violence for women who take part in political discourses (VAWIP). This harassment is not only limited to online and digital means, but it has negative impacts in reality and real word as well. It leads to physical and psychological threats to women's lives and forces them to leave politics.

Dhrodia (2017) and Sawyer, Tremblay, and Trimble (2006) have examined patriarchal ideas and male-dominancy are reflected through social media harassment of women in particular. Social media abusers try to harass female politicians by attacking on their personal lives, physical appearances and political affairs. This is done to silence and exclude them from public and political matters. Gender trolling is more politically motivated in Western contexts than in Pakistan. Here in Pakistan, harassers and abusers use political, cultural as well as religious rhetoric to criticize and undermine female's roles and presence in politics.

The report published by the Digital Rights Foundation (2020) investigates the linguistic patterns of used in online harassment of women in Pakistan. This report reflects how social media harassers mostly take help from religious connotations to criticize and abuse women and try to exclude them

from politics. This report also reveals that how anonymous individuals and social media wings, motivated and launched by political parties, have chosen social media platforms as breeding grounds for harassing and abusing female politicians.

The literature indicates that online harassment of female politicians has become a prevalent problem worldwide. This literature includes specific gendered linguistic patterns that align with societal norms of gender stereotypes. In limiting women's involvement and effectiveness in politics, these sexual insults and online abuse have played their negative roles. Threats of sexual violence and misogynistic language are used on broad level to exclude women out of politics.

Although, the research has broadly focused on gendered linguistics in Western contexts yet it also explores how online harassment is increasing on women politicians in Pakistan. Women politicians in Pakistan experience similar misogynistic and gender-based harassment on social media platforms. Studies have shown that linguistic patterns in online harassment in Pakistan include derogatory downgrade female politicians' characters. It reflects how women have to face threats of violence, allegations and negative comments due to their involvement in political affairs.

Future research should focus and identify solutions to tackle these online abusers and harassers to protect female politicians from online harassment. Internet platforms' managers and policymakers must find and adopt safe measures to control over the online harassment. This will help in reducing gender stereotypes in society. Further, it will also provide rights and freedom of women to join politics according to their will.

1.1 Purpose Statement

The study aims to analyze gendered linguistic patterns used in the online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan. By analyzing social media discourse, the study pinpoints the linguistic patterns and strategies to make female politicians a butt of criticism. The study will highlight social and cultural norms which contribute to formulate these linguistic patterns. The findings of the study will be crucial to understand social media misogyny in political media campaigns. It will help in combating gender based online harassment.

1.2 Limitation of the study

This study has the small data set, however, more insightful results can be found when the data set would be of decent amount.

1.3 Research Questions

What gendered linguistic patterns are used in the online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan?

How do social and cultural norms contribute in online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan?

What are the thematic patterns in the online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan?

2. Methodology

The study employs qualitative approach to analyze gendered linguistic patterns in the online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan. The process involves data collection, preparation and analysis.

2.1 Data Collection

Data is collected manually of the three major lady politicians of three major political parties of Pakistan Maryam Nawaz Shareef of PMLN, Bushra Bibi Wife of PTI chairman Imran Khan and Senator Sherry Rehman from PPP from the social media Platform X.

2.2 Data Preparation

Data is stored in the three separate files and each file contains the tweets and comments on the different pages related to the selected there politicians.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

To investigate and analyze the gendered linguistic patterns in the online harassment of female politicians in Pakistan, two theoretical frameworks will be applied. Critical Discourse analysis focuses on the investigation to uncover the hidden meanings embedded in texts and conversations. Feminist linguistics argues that language shapes attitudes and cultural practices. Feminist linguistic and Critical discourse analysis (CDA) will help in analyzing and interpreting gendered language and its patterns. This research will also assist in answering the questions of how female politicians are degraded and males are dominated in a patriarchal society including Pakistan.

Fairclough (1995) and Van Dijk's (2008) study on Critical discourse analysis (CDA) reflects different ideologies, social norms and their impact and influence on language. The nature and structure of the language is analyzed. The CDA divulges how people manipulate linguistic techniques to undermine and harass women. The Social Media influencers use memes and hashtags to spread hatred against female politicians.

According to Cameron (1998) and Mills (2008), the gendered language influences female politicians a lot. Sexual objectification, virilization and moral imposition are different online linguistic trends to harass female politicians. Sexual objectification refers to judge the women politicians from their physical appearance rather than their political knack. The linguistic trend of virilization presents female politicians as unfeminine to mar their political capabilities.

Moral imposition is another linguistic tool to stop women from taking part in politics. They are blamed to be violent with weak character that make them misfit in politics.

3. Data Analysis

3.1 Analysis of Gendered Linguistic patterns in the Online Harassment of Maryam Nawaz

The most viral trend to undermine Maryam Nawaz's political sagacity is sexual objectification. The words like "رنڈی" (whore), "طوائف" (prostitute), and phrase like "میں حجاب طوائف لپٹی" (veiled prostitute) highlight her moral laxity and bankruptcy instead of political wisdom. It reflects the norms of patriarchal society where chastity is the only passport for women to survive. If chastity is compromised, woman has no regard and respect in any field including politics. Such prejudiced and misogynistic phrases are frequently used to tarnish female politicians so that they may not play constructive role in political spheres.

In order to attack politically, they use the sexualized terms against the Maryam Nawaz. The statement minimizes Maryam Nawaz's identity to her gender and body rather than criticizing her political tactics or policies. Sexualized language is used to degrade her in phrases such as:

"مریم کو ویسے بھی خیبر پختونخوا کے مرد بچپن سے پسند رہے ہیں"

(Maryam has been admiring males of KPK since her childhood).

And "بے آبی پلاتی دودھ کو سب" (she has been breastfeeding everyone). This illustrates how women's agency is undermined by the framing of their political presence through sexual and personal meanings. A larger social unease with strong women is reflected in the focus on her connections with men and the suggestion of improper behavior, which presents them as morally reprehensible rather than capable leaders.

Another trend was to associate the female leadership with immorality. Throughout the text, the attack on Maryam Nawaz is not just personal but extends to a broader rejection of women leadership. The phrase:

جب حالات نے گھیرا تنگ کیا تو چالیس سال سے بند رنڈی ہر شعبے سے اچھل کر نکل آئی۔"

(When circumstances tightened, the prostitute hidden for 40 years emerged in every field) suggests that women who step into politics or public roles are inherently immoral. This narrative reinforces the stereotype that women in power are intruders in a male-dominated domain and must be shamed into retreating. The mentioning of:

"سیاست، صحافت اور ادبی کوٹھے بند ہوتے ہی رنڈیاں سڑک پر مجرے، ناگن ڈانس اور تھرتھرانے لگیں

(As soon as political, journalistic, and literary brothels shut down, prostitutes took to the streets performing snake dances and shivering) metaphorically aligns female politicians, journalists, and writers with sex workers, stripping them of intellectual or professional legitimacy.

The assault on Maryam Nawaz is not only personal; it also represents a larger rejection of women in leadership roles throughout the country. The statement:

"جب حالات نے گھیرا تنگ کیا تو چالیس سال سے بند رنڈی ہر شعبے سے اچھل کر نکل آئی۔"

implies that women who enter the political or public spheres are intrinsically immoral. The idea that powerful women are trespassers in a male-dominated field who need to be shamed into leaving is supported by this story. The reference to

"سیاست، صحافت اور ادبی کوٹھے بند ہوتے ہی رنڈیاں سڑک پر مجرے، ناگن ڈانس اور تھرتھرانے لگیں

(As soon as political, journalistic, and literary brothels were closed, prostitutes took to the streets performing snake dances and shivering) figuratively links them to sex workers, depriving them of intellectual or professional legitimacy.

An organized attempt to harass female politicians online through coordinated social media trends is reflected in the text's tone. The fact that "منڈی -ان-رنڈی" is mentioned as a trending hashtag suggests a methodical attempt to manipulate the political conversation by using derogatory words. By portraying Maryam Nawaz in negative light, the debate creates a toxic online climate that deters women from participating in politics. The acceptance of such rhetoric in political discourse demonstrates how internet platforms serve as instruments of gendered oppression rather than promoting democratic engagement.

The media discourse is firmly steeped in patriarchal notions, in which a powerful woman is viewed as an extension of male figures rather than an independent entity. Mentions of her father and her purported reliance on male authority indicate an attempt to undermine her personal agency. Statements like "بے لاش کی ابا کے اس امید آخری کی سیاست کی مریم" (Maryam's last political hope is her father's corpse) portray her as incapable of political survival without male support.

This narrative lowers her political position as well as it also promotes the concept that women can never achieve power on their own. The power comes to women through their male relatives which also promotes the concept of gender stereotype.

The study analyzes different patterns in which criticism varies in male and female politicians. Male politicians are accused of their political failures, inefficiencies and corruptions etc. But on the other hands, Maryam Nawaz is criticized for her gender roles, physical appearance and personal lives. Males are considered "چور وٹ چور پیسے" (money thief, vote thief), whereas Maryam is stigmatized as "عورت گشتی" (wandering lady, meaning sexual promiscuity). This also shows the duality of portrayal of males and females in politics. Males are judged for their political failures and

leadership activities. While the criteria for woman is reduced to her gender and perceived sexual purity. This duality also reflects the gender bias in politics.

The article also justifies harassment through the use of religious, social and cultural

"آج اسلام کا جتنا نقصان ان بہنچودوں نے کیا ہے اتنا تو کافروں نے بھی نہیں کیا ہوگا" statement The ideologies. (today, these people have injured Islam more than even non-believers) weaponizes religion to cast Maryam as an enemy. The rhetoric aims to target her for harassment and alienate socially by portraying her as a violator of cultural and religious ideals and norms. This shows the broader opposition to female's empowerment and their leadership positions.

The discourse also reflects class stereotypes. Maryam Nawaz's political standing is also criticized due to her rich background. The phrases like "طوائف منڈی گوال نواز مریم" (Maryam Nawaz, the whore of Gawal Mandi) portrays her as a woman belonging to dancing girls bazaar rather than an influential political leader. Such remarks strengthen gendered stereotypes. It is generally believed in Pakistani society that most of the women of upper class who participate in politics are morally corrupt.

The trends of misogynistic and abusive linguistic patterns against Maryam on different social media sites highlight how social media is being used to target and harass female political leadership. The nature of these attacks is moral and personal rather than political capabilities and skills. Abusive language used for her political activities signifies how linguistic tool is used to hinder women from participating in political activities and playing their constructive role. It is need of the hour to formulate strict rules for the misuse of social media so that such social media influencers may be taken to task. In this way women will be able to participate in politics without any gender discrimination.

3.2 Analysis of Gendered Linguistic Patterns in Online Harassment of Bushra Bibi

Bushra Bibi, the wife of PTI's chairman, is the most targeted female politician in PTI. Although she remained behind the scene, yet she actively led the movement launched for the release of Imran Khan. She is the victim of the most misogynistic and abusive language. The opponents call her with different names and use words and phrases like "زانیہ" (fornicatrix), "بدکارہ" (Lascivious woman), "جادوگرہ" (sorceress), and "پنکی پیرنی" (Pinki peerni) which mar her feminine and political identity. This reflects her character as a manipulative rather than an intelligent figure. This use of language reflects that women achieve power through deception and corruption exhibiting patriarchal ideals. Her character as "sexually uncleaned" and "morally flawed" is portrayed to make her unfit and undermine her role in politics and public life.

The strategic use of religious morals portrays Bushra Bibi as a violator of Islamic ideals. The hashtag "عِدَّت کی شدت" (the severity of Iddah) is frequently used. This is used to highlight that she was engaged in an illegal and immoral relationship during her Iddah (in Islam, the waiting period of 90 days following divorce before remarrying). This allegation is an effective instrument because in traditional communities, it is considered shameful and immoral to violate Islamic laws. This provides social criticism to a great extent. This criticism not only harms her honor but also makes her unfit for public and political affairs.

"خاتون ہونے کی صورت میں عدت کی شدت کا شدید مظاہرہ لازم ہے" like expressions Furthermore, (if being a woman, she must carefully observe Iddah) reflects duality of religious and social norms employed by society on women. In a society where men politicians are judged by their political or administrative failures, Bushra Bibi is abused for her perceived violence of religious norms and

societal expectations. This reflects moral and ethical duality and hypocrisy of society towards men and women.

The discourse portrays Bushra Bibi as a "جادوگرنی" (sorceress/witch). She is characterized as a practitioner of black magic. It shows that powerful women use supernatural means to control men. Phrase such as "ہے والی کرنے سجدے قبر اور پرست قبر جادوگرنی" (the sorceress worships graves and bows her head before them) shapes her as a deviant who engages in un-Islamic practices.

This further alienates her from mainstream religious values.

This story reflects a female who has knowledge to control witches and this knowledge has helped her to control men in patriarchal society. Rather than portraying her as an active participant in decision-making, her character is presented like a dirty fish that contaminates the river. Bushra Bibi's use of supernatural knowledge to attain power has made her dirty who is contaminating the system. From the witch hunting of Middle Ages to modern politics, the allegations on women politicians have been the same.

It is criticized that Bushra Maneka's influence over her husband was illicit and manipulative when she claimed that:

”سزا یافتہ عمران خان بشری مانیکہ کی ڈوریوں سے چل رہا تھا“

(Bushra Maneka was pulling the strings of convicted Imran Khan). This relates with larger misogynistic myths that accuse women of exploiting their sexuality to obtain power and deny women agency in particular.

In a clearly gendered manner, the rhetoric also incorporates Bushra Bibi into more general charges of criminal activity and corruption. She is accused of whoring and necromancy for which she uses small kids for her evil designs. She must answer for the murder and burning of orphans in Kashana, according to statements like: ”گا پڑے دینا حساب کا جلانے“ (She must answer for the murder and burning of orphans in Kashana).

bewitched Bibi Bushra بنوائی حکومت پر کالا جادو کر کے حکومت بنوائی (said also is It establishment with black art to form the government). The statement reflects her negative role in politics and tarnishes her political position. The statement also challenges women's political legitimacy as it portrays them as fraudulent and it is what patriarchal ideology propagates.

The linguistic attack on Bushra Bibi also challenges the legitimacy of Imran Khan's government. The media discourse debilitates Khan's integrity as a political leader due to his wife's dictations. It strengthens the traditional notion that a male political leader is controlled and influenced by a woman. From the feminist point of view, it lowers his status as a leader in patriarchal society. Another statement ”رہا لیتا ڈکٹیشن سے جادوگرنی مریض ذہنی“ (a mentally hinged person have been taking dictation from a sorceress) signifies that Bushra Bibi bewitched Imran Khan and dictated him which signified that he was not incapable of ruling over a country.

The rhetoric against Bushra Bibi puts question mark on Imran Khan's Premiership and his regime. As a Prime Minister, he is defamed as Bushra Bibi interfered in his political decisions.

The dominance of Bushra Bibi has not been presented in favourable light being a woman.

On the other hand, male politicians' dominance over their wives portrays women helpful and supportive. It reflects wider patriarchal belief that women should not directly participate in politics.

”اس جادوگر خاتون کے ساتھ ننگے پیر پاک پتن کی گلیوں میں توہم پرستی کا شکار وزیراعظم“ (The superstitious Prime Minister along with this sorceress strolled in the streets of Pakpatan)

portrays Bushra Bibi as a fraudulent and religious exploiter. It testifies the stereotype that women lack rationality and detract men.

It challenges women's authoritative role as they use emotions instead of reason to rule or control others. Bushra Bibi is blamed for using black magic to influence her husband's political decisions which further undermines women's political knack and potential.

3.3 Analysis of Gendered Linguistic Patterns in Online Harassment of Sherry Rehman

The online trolling trends against Sherry Rehman use masculine patterns to mar her gender identity and political capability. The words "بیجڑا" (transgender), "زنخا" (effeminate), and "کھسرا" (eunuch) are used for her which signify that she is not fit in politics. This shows how powerful women in patriarchal society create unease. They are either portrayed as too masculine to or too feminine to be successful politicians. Social media abusers use such words to critique her femininity and devalue her political authority.

Another common subject in the comments is ageism and the policing of women's appearance. Sherry Rehman is criticized for her age, using terms like "بڈھی گھوڑی" (old mare) and "جھاڑو والی" (witch with a broom), meaning that older women lose relevance in public life. Furthermore, her usage of cosmetic surgeries is criticized, as seen in

"سیلیکون کے استعمال سے" (silicone implants have injured her brain). It shows dual standards of society in which society demands fresh and youthful outlook from women and criticizes them if they pursue for it. Female politicians are rejected as unattractive and irrelevant, maintaining patriarchal control over their appearance in public areas. In contrast, men politicians' age is associated with wisdom.

The rhetoric portrays Sherry Rehman as a sexual commodity controlled by men instead of presenting her as a political leader. Words like "گشتی" (prostitute), "زرداری کی زرداری" (Zardari's mistress), and "رنڈی ہی ہے تو یہ" (Indeed she is a prostitute) signifies that she has no political skills rather her political success is because of her links with influential male political leaders. Misogynistic rhetoric uses these linguistic patterns to highlight that women rise in politics because of their sexuality instead of political talent. This narrative is built to tarnish female politicians publically so that their leadership capabilities may be undermined.

The remarks, which hold Sherry Rehman to a higher ethical standard than her male counterparts, also exhibit gendered hypocrisy and moral policing. Responses such as:

"کیا اپوزیشن والے عورت کی عزت کرنے سے بری الزمہ ہیں؟" (Are immune members opposition respecting women?) imply that men are free to use combative language, but women in politics must constantly demonstrate their moral character. The rhetoric of statements undermine her political status as it portrays her sentimentality instead of rationality which is imperative to participate in constructive political activities. The dual standard for women is meant to maintain patriarchal moral order instead of acknowledging their political wisdom and policies.

Another notion of patriarchal discourse is that influential and powerful women manipulate the situation. Sherry Rehman is portrayed as a manipulator and cheater who hatches intrigues for her vested interests. The statement "بے وفائی کرنے والی تنظیم بڑی سے سب خود یہ" reflects her organizational capabilities which are based on manipulation rather than skill.

The remarks for Sherry Rehman, a witch with a broom "جھاڑو والی" a female monkey "باندری", or a cursed witch "چڑیل گماشتی" are attack on her personal and political dignity. These rhetoric remarks also make Sherry Rehman and other female politicians vulnerable to violence. The online caricatures of female politicians are meant to make them laughing stock and misogynistic hatred. It is needed to stop this online trolling. According to Ahmad et al.(2023), there are no strict laws

in Pakistan to deal with digital rights, but the pressure is growing on policymakers to pay attention to protect digital rights of people especially women.

3.4 Discussion

The online abuse addressed to Sherry Rehman, Bushra BB and Maryam Nawaz differs.

But it is driven by the same misogynistic and patriarchal language that seeks to erode their political standing. Every woman is targeted in manners fit with societal expectations of women's behavior that divert the focus from their political stances to their personal matters, moral beliefs and gender. It is an organized attempt to berate and exclude women from political arena. These gendered linguistic patterns of harassment reflect patriarchal ideology and power in political spheres.

The frequent online sexual assaults on Maryam Nawaz defame and denigrate her political image and portray her as an evil incarnate. The words like "رنڈی" (Whore) and "طوائف" (prostitute) cast slur on her character. The question on her moral integrity is meant to devalue her political authority. Such rhetoric is a linguistic weapon in traditional societies where women's reputation depends on her physical chastity. The opponents pay attention to women's private matters, relations and physical features instead of political vision and wisdom. It underscores that a woman's political victory is linked to her sexual purity rather than her abilities.

Bushra BB's unique yet equally misogynistic form of harassment based on accusations. This is accusations of manipulation, violating religious norms and witchcraft. She was characterized as a scheming and dangerous woman. As she uses Dark magic to govern her husband Imran Khan and wield control over political affairs. This text is contrasting the sexual accusations of Maryam Nawaz. The terms that employ in the narrative like "جادوگرنی" (sorceress) and "جادو کالا" (black magic) perpetuate stereotypes of women in power as manipulative and deceitful.

Bushra BB's story reflects a deeply embedded belief that woman cannot hold power on her own. She must rely on deception and manipulation to gain power. Historically, these attacks have been used to vilify powerful women. This depicts them as threat to male authority instead of credible authority figures. Male politicians are barely questioned about their personal lives or religious convictions. In other hands, women are investigated and must prove their moral and religious certificates.

Sherry Rehman's harassment differs from Maryam Nawaz and Bushra BB. She is targeted on masculinity, age and dehumanization. She is mocked for her age and physical appearance, while Bushra BB is accused for witchcraft. And Maryam Nawaz is targeted for her sexuality. In politics, women are often seen as having a limited shelf life. On the other hand, men believe in gaining wisdom with age. Slurs like "گھوڑی بڈھی" (ancient mare) and "چڑیل والی جھاڑو" (witch with a broom), that emphasizes this notion. Additionally, Sherry is frequently subjected by slurs like "زنخا" (effeminate man) and "بیجڑا" (eunuch), aiming to erase gender femininity.

These attacks indicated a deep rooted patriarchal discomfort with women who defy gender norms. In politics, strong, outspoken women are often depicted as too masculine, as though leadership and femininity cannot be combined. The debate about Sherry is an obvious example of how rhetoric is used to discredit women in politics. The language that used in these attacks is intentional. It portrays women in politics as sexual immoral, manipulative witches and masculine figures that have lost their femininity. This is a mindful effort to dishearten women from joining politics. The selection of words, analogies and imagery is intentional. These are carefully chosen to secure traditional patriarchal notions about women's roles. Bushra BB is portrayed as a decisive sorceress who manipulative men. Maryam Nawaz is depicted as a vile woman who has breached ethical

limits. And Sherry Rehman is depicted as an unattractive, unfeminine and elderly character. The clear goal of all these is to discredit these women's political creditability and dishearten future female leaders from coming forward.

Irony and sarcasm play a major role in sanitizing abuse in these attacks. Many misogynist utterances are laced with sarcasm, slurs, humor and exaggeration to present them more acceptable. This is a common method in online harassment. Hashtags and catchphrases, like "sorceress" and "market prostitute", that magnify the harassment and instill a bond of collective efforts.

Repeated uses of such comments solidify their impact on digital culture and normalize gender based inequality. This sort of disastrous language creates toxic atmosphere. And provides atmosphere where females are dishearten to take part in politics. These attacks on prominent women serve as a message that political grounds are risky and combative. Hypocrisy is impressive as male politicians are judged by their policies and leadership. And on the other hands, female politicians are pressurized to defend their reliability, character and femininity. The actuality that these attacks are often gender based and personalized. These attacks highlight the major obstacles that women face in politics. Additionally, tackling with political rivals, they must face ingrained societal norms that erode their authority and integrity.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, Pakistan has male dominating culture and society where people have expectations about women as weak and oppressed characters in politics. For instance, the harassment cases of different women politicians in Pakistan like Sherry Rehman of PPP, Bushra BiBi of PTI and Maryam Nawaz of PMLN expose the men's struggle to dominate over women. Their objective is always to uphold and maintain male and men power in politics. They try to threaten female politicians through different ways such as dehumanizing women rights, blaming them for their sexes, mocking them for their physical appearances and questioning their femininity. The language used by different writers and speakers distinguishes how social media and online harassment has become a broader social problem. These social media wings, through their false allegations and agenda always ready to get a chance to mock these female politicians, silence their voices and exclude them from politics.

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