

Revisiting 'Good' and 'Bad' Feminism: Portrayal of Women Rights in Pakistani Television Entertainment

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Abstract

Women rights are the most debatable rights in Pakistan. From traditional media to social media, every platform is filled with debates regarding women rights. Media especially entertainment industry of Pakistan is highlighting women issues through their content but the depiction of women rights are surpassed by attaching negative stereotypes about feminism in dramas and web series. Although Pakistani dramas are concentrating on real issues of women like right to education, property, health etc. but through their dialogues and actions they are actually enforcing the existing patriarchal system. On the other hand web series are depicting women as liberal and promoting bad feminism. Therefore, this research analyzes the content of three dramas and three web series in terms of good versus bad feminism and also compares them to the prime time dramas broadcast on Pakistan's three most popular mainstream entertainment channels (*Geo TV*, *ARY Digital*, and *Hum TV*) via thematic analysis. The primary objective of this study is to ascertain how Pakistani dramas and web series define the shifting and conflicting images and meanings of feminism from a political, social, cultural, and religious standpoint.

Keywords: *Feminism, Good vs. Bad, Women Rights, Drama, Web Series, Entertainment.*

Introduction

Women rights are just basic human rights but in Pakistan, people have their own perceptions, which make women rights, a debatable phenomenon. Even in 21st century, Pakistani women are still struggling for their basic rights as in remote areas women are not allowed to cast vote and most of them still do not have their own national identity cards (Su, 2019). A large number of Pakistani women are still deprived from their basic rights of getting education, marriage, property, security, respect and privacy etc. not only in the rural areas but also in the urban areas of Pakistan (Roth, 2019). Pakistan ranks the third worst country in World Economic Forum for gender discrimination in work place. The UNICEF also reported that 21% of girls in Pakistan are forced to get married before 18 years of their age (Chaudhry, 2020). On the other hand, in large urban cities, the situation seems different where elite women are enjoying not only their basic rights but also have privilege to empower other women of the country.

Feminism is not a new concept in Pakistan. Since the creation of Pakistan, the privileged women help deprived women to build a strong society. Fatima Jinnah was the first woman in Pakistan who established Women's Relief Committee for the women who were migrating from India. Another notable woman of that time Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali created the All-Pakistan Women's

Association in the year of 1949. The basic aim of the organization was to create a moral, social and economic support system of the Pakistani women (Shah, 2014). After that till 1980's, feminism in Pakistan is focused on welfare and growth of women. That was to promote educational and professional opportunities for the female sector of Pakistan but after Zia ul Haq imposition of Hudood ordinance specifically the Zina law in which it was stated that a woman who was raped should provide adult witnesses to prove her innocence was the turning point of feminism movement in Pakistan (Maqsood, 2020). From then till now feminism has become the hot topic in Pakistan. Specifically in 2018, a platform named Aurat March emerged where women from upper class and privileged background come together and demand equal rights for women of Pakistan. Through this platform few slogans got popular that demeaned the purpose of this march. By calling all man are trash and demanding right to smoke and many more such slogans make this march a biggest threat to real meaning of feminism. Due to this, feminism is termed as an anti-Islamic and highly criticized by common people of Pakistan (Manj, 2020).

Here an enduring debate has been raised since many years in Pakistan among Liberals and Conservatives. Liberals want to raise voice of suppressed women but conservatives do highlight the empowered women with multiple negative stereotypes and identities of promoting vulgarity and unnecessary issues. Questions about the usefulness and validity of the women rights, challenges and problems in Pakistan have become a reason to make this debate controversial (Manj, 2020). Instead of discussing real women rights, Pakistani society is stuck in concepts related to good, bad, hyper and religious feminism (Chaudhry, 2018).

Popular discourses assume that television entertainment industry also plays an important role in shaping and cultivating the realities of public (Happer & Philo, 2013). It has been observed that specifically Pakistan entertainment industry produce content, which promotes misogyny and sexism. The Pakistan entertainment industry is normalizing domestic violence and raising issues like men are garbage, women are enemies of one another, second marriage, extra martial affair, forced marriages and many such topics (Hunaid, 2018). Pakistani dramas are women centric. The whole story of the drama revolves around a woman who is fighting against another woman (mother in law, sister in law, sister or husband, lover) for her husband. Many stereotypes related to women are depicted in Pakistani dramas like working women are selfish, you should sacrifice yourself for others, females who represents as modern are villains while simple girls are perfect women (Ishfaq, 2018; Dutoya, 2018). Due to victimized women centric approach of dramas in Pakistan, it is significant to study its role depicting feminism. On the other hand, web series also follow the same path but their portrayal of feminism is different as compared to dramas for mainstream audience. Web series are becoming popular due to its capability to represent such issues that cannot be discussed on mainstream media (Chagani, 2019). Both web series and dramas of Pakistan entertainment industry are examples of depiction of

women in Pakistan that have been remained under question for many reasons. Therefore this research analyzes the content of dramas as well as web series under the umbrella of good versus bad feminism and also compares with the prime time dramas broadcasted on the three top rated mainstream entertainment channels of Pakistan (*Geo TV*, *ARY*, *Hum TV*) through thematic content analysis. The basic aim of this research is to understand that how Pakistani dramas and web series define the changing and competing images and meanings of feminism in the political, social, cultural and religious perspective.

Research Questions

The research questions of this study are:

1. How do web series and dramas in Pakistan portray women rights in Pakistan?
2. To what extent do web series promote a more negative portrayal of feminism as compared to Pakistani dramas?

Literature Review

This research aims to redefine good and bad feminism in Pakistani dramas. There are number of studies that are available in academia related to portrayal of women in Pakistani dramas. Few scholars highlighted that Pakistani dramas portray women as strong, empowered and role model for other women of the society (Iqbal, & Pasha-Zaidi, 2021; Qamar, et.al,2021). On the other hand some of the studies also pointed out that the content of Pakistani dramas were designed by keeping in view the social, economic and especially political structure of the country (Abbas, 2018; Ahmed &Wahab, 2019).

Most of scholars added that Pakistani dramas mostly depict submissive women. In most of Pakistani dramas women are represented as empowered but the story line promotes certain patriarchal connotations that show these women as submissive and dependable (Babul & Niaz, 2019; Dutoya, 2018; Iqbal & Abdar, 2016; Mehra, 2019). Khan (2021) observed that Pakistani dramas promote hetro-normative visual culture, which encourages the gender gap and patriarchal norms. This was observed that even the OSTs of dramas indicate the importance of males in women life. Dramas reinforce the concepts that women are responsible for family honor; daughter is real sufferer in case of divorce; only woman can do household work and workingwomen are independent (Khan, 2021). Another finding of the study suggested that in the drama it is portrayed that women from lower class are vocal about domestic violence while middle and elite class women try to hide domestic violence in the name of family honor (Khan, 2021).

Similarly, Zaheer (2020) also added that Pakistani dramas portray typical societal structure where even empowered woman needs man to become emotionally and financially strong. It was added that showing women

empowerment in the climax could not change chauvinistic connotations that are presented throughout the dramas.

Contrary to this, there are only few studies that are conducted on web series. As Minhas (2020) along with his fellows conducted a study on effects of web series on Pakistani youth and concluded that web series promote western feminism, which is disturbing the real essence of feminism.

The studies related to web series are mostly about its effects but this study analyzes the content of web series and portrayal of feminism in their content. This research is different from above all studies because it is not only designed to examine the portrayal of feminism in Pakistani dramas and web series but also aims to compare the content of these two genres by redefining the debate of good and bad feminism. Since this research focuses on women rights and their depiction on Pakistan entertainment industry. Therefore, it falls under the umbrella of feminist theory. Feminist philosophy is the product of a movement aimed at empowering and authorizing women internationally by elevating their positions. It may be characterized as a political, economic, and cultural movement aimed at granting women equal rights and legal protection. Feminists categorize the feminist movement as having three waves. The term "first wave" refers to the women's suffrage movement that began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (concerned with the right to vote). The term "second wave" which is also known as radical feminism, refers to the ideas and acts associated with the 1960s women's liberation movement (campaigns for officially authorized political, economic, social and reproductive rights for women). The third wave of feminism is concerned with the continuation of and response to the second wave's alleged failings in the 1990s. The third wave of feminism is considered as modest feminists movement (Delao, 2021). From 2010, the fourth wave of feminism emerges which promotes sex positivity and body positivity. By virtue of social media women are being portrayed as empowered and these platforms are used to promote feminist messages. Apart from social media, entertainment industry is also used to show various issues of women where they are depicted as dominant and strong (Feminist/ gender theories, 2020). The fourth wave of feminism is defined by action-oriented viral campaigns, rallies, and movements such as #MeToo that have advanced from the margins of society to the national and international platforms (Delao, 2021). Keeping in view the fourth wave of feminism, this study understands that how women depict in web series and dramas of Pakistan.

Methodology

In this study, thematic content analysis method is used to understand the portrayal of women rights and feminism in Pakistan entertainment industry. The sample comprises of 3 web series based on female issues are selected through purposive sampling. The title of the selected web series is given bellow:

1. *Ayesha* (a woman who is full of life) (GlaxoSmithKline Pakistan)

2. *Lifafa Dayaan* (Envelop Witch) (Urduflix)
3. *Churails* (Banshees) (ZEE5)

Similarly, 3 popular dramas of top 3 channels (*Geo*, *Hum* and *ARY*) of Pakistan are selected on the basis of purposive sampling. The titles of selected Dramas are mentioned below:

1. *Meray Paas Tum hu* (I have you) (ARY Digital)
2. *Sabaat* (Stability) (Hum TV)
3. *Deewangi* (Madness) (Geo TV)

Findings and Discussion

The content analysis method is used to analyze the content of Web series and Dramas of Pakistan entertainment industry. Three web series and 3 famous Dramas are selected through purposive sampling as per the requirements of the research goals. Before analyzing the content of dramas and web series, a brief story plot of all selected dramas and web series are discussed below.

Table.1: *Meray Paas Tum Ho* (Drama)

Drama Title	Television	Writer	Director	Production	Leading & Side Female Characters
<i>Meray Paas Tum Ho</i> (I have you)	ARY Digital	Khalil-ur-Rehman Qamar	Nadeem Baig	Six Sigma Plus	1. Mehwish (Ayeza Khan) 2. Hania (Hira Mani) 3. Anushey (Mehar Bano) 4. Wateera (Hina Javed) 5. Aisha (Rehmat Ajmal) 6. Maham Syed (Savera Nadeem) 7. Roomi's school principal (Shamim Hilaly) 8. Ifra; Monty's wife (Anoushay Abbasi)

Table 1 Meray Paas tum hu Drama details

The story of *Meray Paas Tum Ho* revolves around the lives of Danish, Mehwish and their son. Danish is depicted as an honest simple man who belongs to a middle-class family and works in a government office. On the other hand, Mehwish is shown as beautiful housewife from a middle class family. Danish is madly in love with his wife Mehwish. Mehwish and Danish have a son named

Roomi. Both Danish and Mehwish are enjoying happily married life but Mehwish wants to become rich. She even urges Danish to take bribe to fulfill her desires. She is impressed by her rich friend (Anushey). Anushey invites Danish and Mehwish on wedding ceremony of her brother where they meet the boss of Anushey's brother, Shehwar Ahmed. He is a very rich and cunning man. He gets attracted towards Mehwish due to her beauty and starts flirting with her. Under the impact of his flattery and charm of his wealth, Mehwish gets into extra-marital affair with Shehwaar. Shehwaar offers Mehwish a high position in his office with a good salary and adds additional perks. Initially Danish asks his wife to refuse the job but Mehwish convinces him to let her accept the offer. By giving the excuse of Job, Mehwish starts ignoring Danish and spending more time with Shehwaar. Danish comes to know that Mehwish is not loyal with him and wants to get divorce from him so that she would live with Shehwaar. After learning all the truth Danish finally leaves his wife on her continuous demand of separation.

After living six to seven months with Shehwaar, she finally succeeds in convincing him to get married, but on the day of wedding Sehwaar's first wife Maham comes back. She slaps Mehwish and asks her to leave her house, as she is the sole owner of the property and business, while Shehwar is only managing her business. As a result of Maham's confinement, Shehwar Ahmad losses both his fortune and respect, and he abandons Mehwish also. On the other hand, after the divorce Danish sells his old flat. He sends his son Roomi to a boarding school and invests all his money in stock market. He becomes rich in the span of three months.

Another woman, a very simple and beautiful Hania is a teacher of Roomi in the boarding school. She starts taking care of Roomi because he is used to remain very quiet and is not focusing on his studies. Due to this reason Hania contacts Danish and they both develop a friendly bond but with the passage of time Hania falls in love with Danish but he refuses to reciprocate the feelings. Mehwish, on the other hand after realization of her mistakes, she wants to patch up with his son and Danish. She keeps asking Danish for forgiveness and requesting him to meet. Finally Danish meets Mehwish being pressured by his son Roomi but gets a heart attack as a result of having to face her and all the agony of her betrayal. After his death, eventually, Mehwish is left all alone mourning with regrets.

Table 2: *Sabaat* (Drama)

Drama Title	Television	Writer	Director	Production	Leading & Side Female Characters
<i>Sabaat</i> (Stability)	Hum TV	Kashif Anwar	Shahzad Kashmiri	Momina Duraid Production	1. Miraal Fareed (Sarah Khan) 2. Anaya Aziz (Mawra Hocane) 3. Nirmal (Javeria Kamran) 4. Miraal's Mother (Laila Zuberi) 5. Anaya's Mother (Seemi Raheel) 6. Miraal's grandmother (Azra Mansoor)

Table 2 *Sabaat* Drama details

Sabaat is the story of two strong-headed women who belong to different social classes. Miraal is depicted as an arrogant rude girl belonging to a rich family. Seth Fareed (Miraal's father) is a successful businessman; he fulfills all the wishes of Miraal and even supports her negative thinking. On the other hand, Miraal's grandmother and mother try to teach her moral values and reality of life but Miraal is rude to them; she makes her own decisions and also influences decisions of others. Miraal, also influences Miraal's brother Hassan, an engineering student. Contrary to this Anaya is a very humble girl who belongs to a middle class family. She respects her parents and happily living with them. Anaya is shown as an intelligent, ambitious, passionate and women rights activist and an engineering student in the same university as of Hassan. Anaya wins Model competition against Hassan. This does not go well with Hassan and he destroys Anaya's model. Anaya takes stand for herself and asks Hassan to earn his own money instead of depending on father's money. Hassan takes Anaya's word seriously and starts to earn by himself and even he starts going to University on public transport. Hassan falls in love with Anaya and even confesses it in front of Atif (Hassan's friend). Atif calls Miraal and tells her about Hassan's activities. After the completion of their degrees, Hassan purposes Anaya and also 'tells Miraal and his parents that he wants to marry Anaya. Miraal disapproves this proposal but Hassan is determined to marry Anaya. Hassan's parents agree to go to Anaya's house for proposal. At Anaya's place, Seth Fareed humiliates Anaya's parents as they belong to a middle class family. Anaya's father rejects this proposal but due to Hassan and his mother's efforts, Seth Fareed gets convince to let Hassan marry Anaya. Miraal in revenge asks Ali (Miraal's fiancé)

to marry her on the same day but he runs away. Miraal does not attend Hassan's wedding and also sets his room on fire on wedding night. Due to threats of Miraal and Fareed, Hassan has to cancel his walima ceremony. After marriage, Hassan and Anaya join Fareed's office. Fareed and Miraal degrade Hassan and Anaya as Fareed gives 51 % share to Miraal and also makes her CEO of his company. Although Anaya handles this situation calmly but Miraal keeps degrading Anaya in front of her colleagues. For this, they leave their house and office and start working independently to get settled. Miraal's destiny makes her learned the lesson by being deceived in her marital life and also meets an accident which makes her disabled. After that she realizes her mistake and brings back her brother and Anaya home.

Table 3: *Deewangi* (Drama)

Drama Title	Television	Writer	Director	Production	Leading & Side Characters
<i>Deewangi</i> (Madness)	Geo TV	Sadia Akhter	Zeeshan Ahmed	7 th sky entertainment	1. Nageen Faiyyaz (Hiba Bukhari) 2. Narmeen (Zoya Nasir) 3. Bi Jaan (Ismat Zaidi) 4. Nuzhat (Faiza Gillani) 5. Nuzhat's mother-in-law (Parveen Akbar) 6. Sharmin (Nida Mumtaz) 7. Haroon's mother (Humaira Bano) 8. Ridha (Aiza Awan) 9. Faryal (Fahima Awan) 10. Ramsha (Zohreh Ali)

Table 3 *Deewangi* Drama details

The story of *Deewangi* revolves around the love and hate relationship of Nageen and Sultan Durrani. Nageen belongs to a lower middle class family. Nageen lives with her sister Nuzhat and her family as Nageen's father abandoned them after their mother's death. Nuzhat's husband Rashid is a greedy man. He wants Nageen to get married to his friend Anwar, so he can get money in return. Instead of marrying with Anwar, Nageen decides to do job but she does not have higher degree. She gets job as a bus hostess in a bus company. On the other hand, Sultan is a rich guy with strong political background. Sultan's parents died and he lives with his grandmother, uncle and his family. He is a very successful businessman. When Sultan's automobile breaks down on the highway and he has no other option than to take the bus where he falls in love with Nageen. Sultan is intrigued to Nageen during that brief voyage when he observes her battling a harasser. Following that, he starts traveling on the same bus on different occasions only to see Nageen, but she ignores him and merely treats him as a passenger.

Sultan buys all the bus tickets one day to ride alone with Nageen in order to get her attention. He expresses his emotions for her, but she rejects him due to the disparity in their social classes. After a man throws acid on Faryal (Nageen's friend) for denying his proposal, she becomes even more terrified. Apart from that Sultan's cousin Narmeen is in love with Sultan and wants to marry him by hook and crook. When Narmeen gets to know about Sultan's love affair, she decides to trap Sultan. She hires secret agent to record sultan's meeting with Nageen. Sultan tries to force a ring on Nageen's fingers after a few days, but she refuses and slaps him. The footage of Narmeen's secret agent gets viral on social media. Sultan's uncle loses general public elections as a result of the video portraying him as a harasser. Sultan accepts Nageen's apology as she reaches out to him for forgiveness. Sultan proposes Nageen once more, and she agrees this time. The marriage is highly pleasant for Nageen's family, but most of the members of Sultan's family are against it since they want him to marry Narmeen. Despite the opposition, Sultan decides to marry Nageen in a simple ceremony. On her wedding day, Nageen gets kidnapped, but everyone except Nuzhat believes that she runs away with someone else. Sultan cancels his marriage.

After two days Nageen comes back to home in a terrible state. Everyone thinks that someone has raped her. Nageen tries to convince everyone that she is not touched by anyone but nobody including Sultan believes her. Sultan, on the other hand, reveals that he kidnapped her and that the marriage was also a drama to take revenge for the slap and public humiliation. Nageen is devastated. She threatens to expose Sultan in front of the media, but Sultan uses edited intimate pictures to blackmail Nageen. He also pays Rashid 50 lakh rupees to remain quiet. Rashid takes his family and Nageen to another house and starts living there. Sultan gets married to Narmeen. Nageen gets married to another guy Haroon who accidentally meets Sultan. When Sultan comes to know that he is the husband of Nageen, he hires him in his office and offers a very handsome package. When Nageen comes to know, she tries her best to convince her husband to leave the job but Sultan tries to get Nageen back to her life.

Sultan decides to trap Haroon. He hires Haroon's ex-girlfriend in the company Ramsha, she gets close to Haroon and manipulates him against Nageen. Through Ramsha, Haroon knows about Nageen's past job, love affair and kidnapping. This makes their relationship weak. After that Nageen tells the truth about Sultan to Haroon. After knowing her past, Haroon rushes to Sultan's house for confrontation. Sultan hits Haroon with the help of his guards and makes this as an accident in front of media and public with the help of police. Haroon is in a very critical condition, gets admitted to hospital. Ramsha on realizing her mistake decides to help Nageen to expose Sultan. But Sultan kills Ramsha through his guards and portrays this as a suicide. Nageen, in order to expose Sultan decides to marry him. Sultan takes her to his house and promises Nageen that he will give money to Haroon's mother for his treatment. After winning elections Sultan decides to get married with Nageen. On their wedding day, Nageen denies to get married and exposes Sultan in front of media.

Table 4: *Ayesha* (Web Series)

Drama Title	Web series	Writer	Director	Production	No of Episodes	Leading & Side Female Characters
<i>Ayesha</i> (woman who is full of life)	GlaxoSmithKline Pakistan	Mehwish Hassan	Najaf Bilgrami	Seeme Productions	6	1. Ayesha Ahmed (Yasra Rizvi) 2. Sasha (Maham Amir) 3. Beautician (Sana Gilani)

Table 4 Ayesha Web series details

The story of web series *Ayesha* is based on the lives of Ayesha, her husband Fahad and their kid named as Ali. Ayesha is shown as a housewife living in an urban setup and manages all the household work by herself. On the other hand Fahad is working in a company and depicted as a loving father. Ayesha's life is revolving around her son and husband who is very practical, egoistic and critic of Ayesha's work. Fahad considers Ayesha as a boring and old woman as she is always busy in household chores. Fahad does not consider household chores as work and keeps taunting Ayesha for being free all the time. This makes Ayesha upset. She goes to her friend Sasha's salon where she advises Ayesha to live for herself. After that Ayesha decides to make a fitness training video and upload it on Facebook. When Fahad comes back home from office Ali shows Ayesha's video to him. Fahad makes fun of Ayesha's video which makes her more depressed. Sasha encourages her to make videos on regular basis and create a YouTube channel named as "Ghar wali Trainer" and starts uploading training videos with the help of Sasha and Ali. Her YouTube channel gets famous day by day. One day in Fahad's office his colleagues make fun of Ayesha's first video. On returning home he asks Ayesha to remove her videos from YouTube. Although on the very next day, Fahad's boss appreciates Ayesha for her videos but still Ayesha decides to close her YouTube channel. When Fahad watches her last video message in the office and overhears his colleague's discussion who wants to sign an agreement with Ayesha as his brand ambassador of their product. He realizes his mistake and goes back to home, asks for forgiveness from Ayesha and motivates her to upload training videos again. At the end Ayesha and Fahad start making training video together while Ali records the video.

Table 5: *Lifafa Dayaan* (Web Series)

Drama Title	Web series	Writer	Director	Production	No of Episodes	Leading & Side Female Characters
<i>Lifafa Dayaan</i> (Envelop Witch)	Urfuflux	Adil	Rao Ayaz Shahzad	Farhan Gauhar	7	1. Alina Ali (Mashal Khan) 2. Soniya Khan (Hina Choudary) 3. Sumaiya (Rahat Ghani) 4. Amna Bibi (Tasneem Ansari)

Table 5 *Lifafa Dayaan Web series details*

This web series is based on yellow journalism, bribe and revenge. The story revolves around two women who work in news media industry. In the beginning, Alina is shown as the best news anchor of Pakistan. Alina is depicted as a successful news anchor doing program titled “Sach Kya ha?” which brings highest TRP’s for her channel named RAS News. Alina smokes and drinks a lot and also gains favors from the guests who comes in her news program On the other hand, Sonyia works as a teacher in a school. Sonyia invites Alina as a guest on annual day function in her school and during discussion Sonyia asks Alina about the term “Lifafa” (bribe). It offends Alina and she answers it in a very derogatory way and leaves the stage. After that Sonyia goes to principal office where he asks her to make him happy otherwise she has to leave the job. Sonyia leaves the job and starts finding another job in the media industry to take revenge from Alina. She goes to a news channel for news anchoring but she comes to know through his friend that in media industry she can only get job through contacts. He recommends her to RAS News as a news reporter. On the first day of her job she becomes famous as she reports a rape victim mother who was about to commit suicide. While on the other hand, Alina due to her tantrums becomes a problem for Ishtiaq Siddiqui (news media owner) and start losing her charm day by day. She starts getting jealous from another news media anchor Saeed Najmi. One day, a politician named Shujaat Iqbal who is also a minister invited all the media anchors and owners to his daughter’s birthday party. He calls Ishtiaq and asks him to bring Alina in the party as his daughter is biggest fan of her. In the party, Alina gets into heated argument with Saeed Najmi and Shujaat. This does not go well for Alina, as the channel owner introduces Sonyia to Shaujaat and ensures him that he will replace Alina with Sonyia. He gives Alina’s news program to Sonyia. Sonyia clears the image of Shujaat in the show and becomes favorite of news channel’s owner. Alina goes to Shaujaat’s house to ask for

forgiveness but she comes to know that Soniya is there as well and she is taking revenge from her. Soniya gives physical favors to Shujaat and Ishtiaq and in return she gets news program, house and car. Alina goes to different news channels for job but everyone refuses to take her due to pressure of Shujaat. Finally she goes to Saeed Najmi for job where he asks physical favor from her. He makes video of him and Alina and sends the video to Shujaat who makes this video viral. It tarnishes the image of Alina and she commits suicide. In the last scene, Soniya goes to makeup room for her news program where she asks makeup artist to hide scars from her neck and there she listens the news of Alina's suicide.

Table 6: *Churails* (Web Series)

Drama Title	Web Series	Writer	Director	Production	No of Episodes	Leading Side & Female Characters
<i>Churails</i> (Banshees)	ZEE5	Asim Abbasi	Asim Abbasi	A Glasshouse productions	10	1. Sara Khan (Sarwat Gilani) 2. Zubaida (Meher Bano) 3. Batool Jan (Nimra Bucha) 4. Jugnu Chaudhry (Yasra Rizvi) 5. Laila (Meher Jaffri) 6. Mehak Hussain (Eman Suleman) 7. Shehnaz Khalid (Sania Saeed) 8. Resham (Shabana Hassan) 9. Sheila (Mareeha Safdar) 10. Munni (Amtul Baweja) 11. Baby Doll (Zara Khan)

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- 12. Pinky
(Bakhtawar Mazhar)
 - 13. Babli
(Sameena Nazir)
 - 14. Sherry
(Hina Khawaja Bayat)
-

Table 6 Churails Webseries details

This web series is focused on the lives of four women from different walks of life. Sara is shown as a loving and perfect elite class housewife, who is lawyer by profession but left her job for the family. Jugnu is depicted as an event planner, back in the time she was very famous but after failed marriage and abortion, her career got affected and she is struggling in her career. Sara and Jugnu are best friends. Zubaida is represented as a teenage girl who loves to do boxing, but she belongs to a very conservative family where she cannot even leave the house without her brother. She gives bribe to her brother everyday so that he does not tell father about Zubaida's activities. She also has a boyfriend. Lastly Batool is shown as a murderer who kills her husband for harassing Batool and her daughter. She was prisoned for 20 years in the jail. After returning from the jail Batool lives in the neighborhood of Zubaida, where women backbites about Batool, so she decides to end her life but she gets the job as a household help in Jugnu's house. Zubaida's parents get to know about her activities through her brother, they beat Zubaida and lock her in the room. Batool helps Zubaida to run away from the house. She brings her to Jugnu's house. On the other hand, Sara also gets to know about cheating of her husband so she also leaves her home and starts living in jugnu's house. These four women meet there and decide to open a detective agency to catch cheating husbands and earn profit from it. Sara blackmails his husband and asks him to invest in her business, as she wants to open a boutique named Halal designs. Basically they want to run their detective agency covertly titled "Churails" under the cover of halal designs. Sara, Batool, Zubaida and Jugnu with the help of Shams (Zubaida's lover) and Dilbar (Jugnu's employee) hire a team of 7 women including a transgender who are experts in honey trapping, cat fishing, hacking, carjacking and jack of all trades. They set specific conditions before starting their firm, such as doing everything within the law and charging large fees that will be used to help other women who cannot afford to pay.

After that they open their boutique and agency. In the beginning they earn a lot of money and are very happy with their work. They all are working as sisters. They all even save Zubaida from forced marriage. One of their teammates named as Sheela was fired by Sara as she lied to her about her mother's suicide. Everything is going good for them but the things get out of control when they

take the case of Shehnaaz Khalid. Her husband is involved with a transgender, the team Churails decides to hide this from Shehnaaz. But Batool makes an emotional decision and tells Shehnaz about the location of her husband. Shehnaz finds him there with transgender, this makes her very angry and she brutally killed her husband. In front of police, Shehnaaz's lawyer put blame on Churails that they exploit mental health of Shehnaaz and they are responsible for this murder. After this incident, the Churails come into the radar of police and media. They face backlash from people. Their halal design store is also attacked by the mob. Finally after series of events they close their agency. But the police inspector makes them free from the case as he starts liking Batool. Soon after they know about kidnaping of Sheela they decide to start their work again. Sheela is working with a talent agency titled as Juice talent agency where she gets contract of Jalwa cream. Jalwa is a whitening cream, which is harmful for skin, but this business is running by powerful people who are behind the kidnaping of Sheela. After investigation, Churails come to know about a suspicious party where Sheela used to go regularly. Zubiada decides to go to that party so that she can trace Sheela. In the party, males wear animal mask, judging women body and also bidding for them. In the party Zubaida gets kidnapped and Churails are left with no clue. Sara's husband and Jugnu's uncle shifted all the churails team in a safe house for security purposes.

On the other hand Batool is also searching her daughter Mehak. She goes to an orphanage where she comes to know that a family adopted her daughter. She goes there to meet Mehak but her adopted mother tells that they abandoned her since 8 years ago. Shams and Jugnu help Batool to find Mehak but they come to know that Mehak was pregnant and visiting a hidden clinic. They raid that clinic and it gets revealed that Jugnu's uncle is behind the disappearance of Mehak and Zubaida. After knowing the truth, Churails team makes a plan to get out of the safe house to save Zubaida with the help of police inspector. Police arrests Juice talent agency owner KK and they also discover Sheela's body from his house. In police custody KK does not mention his partner's name and commits suicide. His driver also murders Jugnu's uncle. On his funeral, Jugnu gets to know about all men club which is headed by his uncle in boy's boarding school in United Kingdom. She and Sara also comes to know about Sara's husband Jameel's involvement in Jalwa beauty cream, murder of Mehak and many other women. They discover body of Mehak in Sara's garden. On confrontation, Jameel accepts his sin. Sara shoots Jameel on his leg and hands him over to Batool for punishment. In the end it is shown that all are happy in their lives and reopen their detective agency for the betterment of women.

Thematic Analysis of Dramas and Web Series

It has been observed that women are represented in a complex and strange combination of progress and regress. Though liberal, progressive and gender

sensitive roles have been given to leading characters in dramas and web series but most of the progressive and liberal roles and characters become controversial at the climax. These debatable characters reinforce and promote patriarchal norms and values again because of the negative depiction of feminism. Social issues once considered too subtle, complex and sensitive to portray are currently getting the clear spotlight in the web series and private drama productions. Contemporary entertainment productions have offered more socially relevant subjects that may have made the Pakistani public quite uncomfortable in the past. Therefore, as per the aim of this study, there are few comparative themes that have been observed from the selected dramas and web series discussed in detail to describe the new trends of depicting 'good' and 'bad' feminism and women rights.

Unapologetic Women: Is it a moral threat?

It was observed that in web series, feminism was depicted as 'unapologetic women' whose goals in life are not only to get married and become 'happy wives' and 'daughters in law' as it is in-built culture of sub-continent since ages. Though the reasons behind the different trends of depiction in web-series and dramas is not the scope of the research but the private televisions channels are bound to follow laws and PEMRA regulations of the ethical and moral limitations but in web series, there is a margin to go a little beyond the stereotypical depiction of feminism. Therefore, it has been observed that women in web series are represented as 'flawed humans' more conveniently with controversial roles, abusive language and absurd dressings unlike the stereotypical drama portrayal. The concept of empowerment and equal rights of women were portrayed as someone raising 'offensive' questions against the cultural discrimination, suppression and manipulative dominance of sexual orientations, normalizing domestic violence, child and women sexual abuse, sex slavery, prostitution, illegal abortions and women rights to give birth, strict maintenance of family values and honor, objectification of women and beauty, and evils of the entertainment industry. It is pertinent to say that in web series, empowered, and feminists' women are depicted as 'troublemakers'. The cause to bring the 'evil' in to light was right but the themes and ways to depict the real cause has made the concept of feminism contestable.

On the other side, in patriarchal system of Pakistan, where violence against women is one of major social problems, a woman is supposed to be represented as a soft spoken, compromising and apologizing who can adjust her desires and goals as per the requirements of the society, family and men in her life (Ashfaq & Jatoi, 2016). Surprisingly, Pakistani dramas have also started to break the stereotypes of submissive and apologetic women. It has been found that Pakistani dramas depicted unapologetic woman as a leading character who fights for her rights to get education, job independently, support her family, have capacity to take stand all alone for her legitimate rights of being treated well and respected. Depicting a feminist woman following cultural norms of being soft spoken, well dressed as per Pakistani norms, well behaved with decent language who does not compromise on her equal right with dignity and respect built the image of 'good

feminism' in Pakistani dramas. All the dramas also had one female character who follows the same stereotypical traits of being loud, ill mannered, independent, high elite class and always at losing end at the climax. Such kinds of leading or supporting roles depicted women who are 'decisive and independent' to 'cheat on husband', 'having extra marital affairs', 'leaving child for money' but at the end forced to regret and stay alone.

Moreover, in dramas as well as web series, there are many scenes in which female characters were depicted as very comfortable with having illegal relationships with men. For example, Mehwish (*Meray paas tum hu*) and Miraal (*Sabaat*) had extra martial affair in dramas. While Narmeen, Nageen, Ramsha from *Deewangi*, Anaya from *Sabaat* and Hania from *Meray paas tum hu* spent time with the male leading characters without any relationship but all these scenes were portrayed by keeping in view the moral ethics of Pakistani society but in web series illegal relationship was shown without any limitations. Like Sonyia and Alina from *Lifafa Dayaan* gave physical favors to a politician and even in *Churails* women seduced men for their interests.

Women as 'Alcoholic and Smoker': Religiously Prohibited

Another controversial picture of feminism in web series was reflected by 'women drinking alcohol and smoking'. In a society like Pakistan where it is prohibited religiously and totally unacceptable culturally, this builds notion of 'bad feminism'. On the other hand, in drama series, this culture was only portrayed in elite class to show as a symbol of financially high status and liberal and modern culture.

Foul Language: Culturally Unacceptable

One of the contentious issues was the use of foul, unethical and abusive language in web series. Women's dialogues were based on local and unethical slangs and abusive words for ridiculing or criticizing each other or men. Surprisingly, it has been observed that not only negative characters but also positive characters in *Churails* and *Lifafa Dayan* are depicted as disrespectful towards their parents, men and colleagues by using very unethical and abusive language. The women characters from dramas are also portrayed as disrespectful, rude and insulting. Mostly females playing negative characters are shown as rude like Mehwish from *Meray Paas tum hu*, Miraal, Sana from *Sabaat* and Narmeen, Rashid's mother from *Deewangi*, etc. These women were depicted as insulting and hurting everyone's sentiment throughout the drama. Though again the intensity of rudeness and severity in words selection among dramas and web series are visibly different. Only Anaya from *Sabaat* and Nageen from *Deewangi* used abusive language in one scene of their respective dramas otherwise in all the three dramas female characters did not use abusive or vulgar language. Contrary to this, Web series especially *Lifafa Dayaan* and *Churails*, female characters used abusive and vulgar language in almost all the episodes which suppress the impact of women issues that are highlighted by these web series.

Western Dressing: Is it a symbol of feminism?

Western dress is shown as the symbol of women empowerment in web series for instance when Ayesha (*Ayesha*) was a housewife in beginning she was wearing eastern dresses and when she decides to open her own You Tube Channel, she shifted herself to western style. The character of Sonyia from *Lifafa Dayaan* and Zubaida from *Churails* was also depicted in the same way. In *Churails*, Sara and Jugnu were also shown as empowered women and they were wearing western dresses throughout the series. Contrary to this, in dramas criticism is associated with western dressing as only the negative characters were wearing western dresses in all the three dramas. Only the side characters in *Meray Paas tum hu* were wearing pant shirts while in remaining dramas this type of dressing was only depicted by the villains of the dramas.

Controlling Men or Controlling Women?

All selected dramas and web series used negative connotations to depict men very controlling and dominant. The storylines of all the web series and dramas highlighted the emotional and economic dependence of women on men. As indicated by Zaheer (2020), this study also highlights that the plots of dramas and web series were based on the notion that even empowered women need men for their survival in Pakistan. It was further observed that their dominance and exploiting attitude forced women to be rebellious. For instance, right to make own decisions was snatched by the men in almost all selected dramas while women in *Lifafa Dayaan* was depicted as puppets of men who could not make their own decisions. The selected dramas and web series reflected that only men could decide whom to marry and divorce. For example, Rashid from *Deewangi* (Drama) and Zubaida's father from *Churails* (web series) were depicted as characters who forced females for marriage.

Right to reproduction was also violated in *Deewangi* as in the drama Haroon and Sultan decided the fate of Nageen's baby instead of Nageen herself. In web series it is represented that women are unable to do job, as their husbands do not allow them. Both dramas and web series have publicized through the content that the women right to security is also violated by men. There are scenes in dramas in which women were harassed, slapped, kidnaped and blackmailed by men while in web series women were raped, harassed, blackmailed and beaten by men around them. In *Churails* it is depicted that women are not safe to go outside alone in Pakistan.

As a result, the depiction of women related to dominating and controlling men in web series is a little different from dramas. Women were depicted as aggressive and rebellious to snatch their rights but in dramas, they were depicted as the victims and karma helped them to get their self-esteem back. In web series, the dominance of women over men was depicted as negative. All the leading and supporting ladies were depicted as controlling who were fighting, blackmailing, spying and ordering men.

Women versus Women: Who is feminist?

There is another theme of women depiction regarding women versus women. It has been observed that woman in dramas were fighting with other woman for a man. Like Hania and Mehwish for Danish (*Meray Paas tum hu*), Miraal and Anaya for Hassan (*Sabaat*), Narmeen, and Nageen for Sultan (*Deewangi*). On the other hand, in web series there were a very few scenes in which same gender rivalry was represented. Women gain favors to backbite or ditch other women like in *Lifafa Dayyan*. It has been found that women were depicted as enemy of other women. Women backbite and accused each other for wrongdoings. They were jealous and fought with each other for men. Women assassinated characters of other women and supported men over women. This is not common in web series, for instance, in *Churails* and *Ayesha*, women characters supported one another to uplift them regardless the negative roles and characters.

Moreover, in dramas besides the women rivalry with women, there are many women who took stand for themselves as well as for others. They were portrayed as perfect women like Hania from *Meray Paas tum hu*, Anaya from *Sabaat* and Nageen and Nuzhat from *Deewangi*. The depiction of perfect and empowered women can be observed in many scenes throughout all the three dramas. Especially the character of Anaya was depicted as perfect and empowered woman who was working woman and also managed household work efficiently. She was representing as a perfect daughter, wife and daughter in law. Contrary to this, in web series there are only few scenes in which women were shown who were taking stand for others. Ayesha from *Ayesha* and Sara from *Churails* were depicted as perfect housewives but they changed themselves as the story developed.

Conclusion

Feminism is a well-known global phenomenon to raise voice of women against domination and suppression. It is a long struggle for equality in terms of education, health opportunities, and political social and financial independence. Feminism addresses all the women issues about "gender equality" as per constitution, law, state and the society.

Since the Aurat March Movement in 2018 in Pakistan, new types of feminism have been introduced i.e. 'good feminism' and 'bad feminism'. Good feminism addresses all the women issues and rights but 'bad feminism' is labeled as a liberal ideology and propaganda of western society to weaken the Islamic and cultural values of women in Pakistan (Abuzar, 2019). When it comes to the depiction of good or bad feminism in Pakistan entertainment industry i.e. dramas and web series, there is a visible difference reflected in the representation of women rights. The themes like unapologetic women with controversial roles, characters, western dressings, alcoholic and smoker using unethical and foul language, morally characterless with high self-esteem and

self-love have been used to depict a empowered woman especially in web series but in dramas, themes are similar but the intensity is different. Men in terms of providing rights to women were represented as controlling and domination in both genres. This is labeled as bad feminism. In dramas, only women who fulfill all the stereotypical qualities of being women is considered as good feminism.

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