

Received : 15 March 2024, Accepted: 09 June 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33282/rr.vx9i2.210>

## **Woman becoming victim of society's taunts via her dress in Patriarchal Society in Qaisra Shahraz's A Pair of Jeans**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In order to better understand the complex and dynamic nature of victimization through clothing in the context of Pakistani patriarchal society, this study aims to critically analyze the theoretical concept of gender resistance in Qaisra Shahraz's "A Pair of Jeans & Other Stories" (2013). The primary objective of the research is to ascertain whether specific short stories written by Qaisra Shahraz support or challenge traditional, stereotyped notions about womanhood. In the framework of Pakistani patriarchal society, and culture Qaisra Shahraz (2013) uses her story "A Pair of Jeans" to examine the intricate and dynamic nature of victimization through clothing and culture role. As a result, the main goal of the study is to determine whether certain short stories by Qaisra Shahraz replicate or pose new questions.

In order to explore the ways in which women challenge the patriarchal presumptions ingrained in hegemonic gender ideology and reinterpret their roles or gain personal empowerment, this research study solely concentrates on the female characters as they are portrayed in the short stories. The primary epistemological location of short fiction, which is crucial for examining issues with social and cultural significance and for reflecting actual life in particular—of which gender is the most significant—is where the data for this study was carefully chosen. Since feminism and women victimization are two important fields in the study of gender, the theoretical and methodological insights from these two fields are

combined to analyze the data for their potential strength in decoding and understanding gendered inequality and culture role. This process is known as feminist analysis. The research indicates that Qaisra Shahraz's short stories do not replicate traditional and stereotypical notions of femininity, and her female characters frequently question and challenge the patriarchal presumptions ingrained in gender equality in order to forge new identities for themselves. This conclusion is based on the data analysis. Drawing conclusions, it is reasonable to say that the chosen short fiction by Qaisra Shahraz is primarily feminist.

**Keywords:**

Femininity, victimization, Resistance, Hegemony, Patriarchy, Short Fiction, Feminism.

**Introduction**

The narrative centers on a girl named Mariam who has been traveling with her friends. However, the day her in-laws are scheduled to visit, she needs to get home early to avoid them seeing her in the clothes that she believes may raise suspicions. Upon returning home, she saw her in-laws wearing the identical tight pants and tank top that she had intended to replace. Her in-laws decided to call off their son's engagement after realizing this. The narrative depicts a persistent partnership between the oscillation of ideas and cultural norms ingrained in the minds of traditionalists, who view everything as negative and objectionable.

The protagonist Mariam's thoughts oscillate from the opening of the story, when she is returning from a trip and is self-conscious about her legs covered in pants and the shorts she is wearing below. She wants to go home as quickly as possible before her in-laws arrive because she knows they will be stopping by their house today. The author, Qaisara Shahraz, skillfully combines two cultural values in this passage. While Mariam views the same piece of cloth as appropriate for hill walking, it also serves as a source of embarrassment for her when she appears in front of her future mother-in-law and father-in-law.

While thinking these things through, she turned back to her excursion and said, "It had been a wonderful day." She then returned to the present and moved more quickly to go home. At the outset of the short narrative, there is a character behavior metamorphosis that occurred when Mariam's in-laws saw her wearing a dress they had never thought to see. In literary works, the term "metamorphosis" is frequently employed to denote a drastic transformation in either form or character. Transformation, another name for metamorphosis, is the process of growth—both mental and physical. Now, how is this mental development demonstrated by the language and actions of the characters when Mariam came.

I am still the same young woman they visited regularly—the person that they have happily chosen as a bride for their son in their household". When researcher focuses on the first basic element culture and suppression, although a culture can also suppress a gender. These are interconnected forces. She is a girl from the other world of another identity. There are other elements named Structure and Superstructure that hold the social organic and ideology and symbolism of the society, the very first word from the father-in-law of Mariam is "Sharif" which symbolizes the person who wears shalwar kameez, not the Jeans when he argues with her wife about Mariam and said: "I thought you told me that she was a very "Sharif", a very modest girl. Was that naked waist what you call modest"? The Appropriation of English words with Urdu shows that the writer herself wants to emphasize that society has the title of Sharif for the person to seem modest. Now this word elaborated further qualities of a girl who is not Sharif means she wants a lot of freedom and wants you lead her life with her English college friends and amazingly with the magical quality of twined their husband around their little finger. But for Mariam these things have a different view, she considers them to a cloth that has nothing to do with freedom religion, and modesty. These are the clothes she needs to wear for hiking that's it. But the society to which her in-laws belong has the equation of Jeans=Identity=problem.

The writer's attempt to highlight that society has given them the title of Sharif in order to make them appear humble is evident by the appropriation of English phrases into Urdu. The fact that this word

describes additional attributes of a girl who is not Sharif indicates that she desires a great deal of independence, to live her existence with her English college pals, and, most astonishingly, to have the ability to enchant their husband. Mariam, however, sees things differently; she views them as a piece of clothing that has nothing to do with modesty, freedom of religion, or either. That's all the clothing she needs to wear trekking. However, her in-laws' culture operates under the formula Jeans=Identity=Problem.

The Mariam in-laws are now having issues because of the protagonists. The phrase "Sharif turns into Izzat" now appears at the conclusion of the short story. when the Begum calls to tell Fatima that her daughter Mariam has been rejected. In society, they are respected, even though it is currently unjustified. She believes that there is an ocean-sized cultural and generational divide between them and Mariam. They were raised in and lived in many worlds, customs, and cultures. Above importantly, their surroundings were rapidly altering. Pakistan was another place, but it was so far away from Britain.

The paper also examines how gender resistance is demonstrated in the chosen short stories, concentrating on how woman challenge the presumptions of gender inequality to reframe their roles and/or gain personal agency.

These themes that is explored in this context. Because of the extraordinary level of creativity in her works, this prolific writer's fiction has garnered positive reviews from critics. To illustrate both cultures and the "confrontation between old and new, male and female, east and the west," Shahraz draws on aspects of her diasporic identity as well as longing for her own country (Shaw, 2005: 3). Some western institutions have put the title tale from her first book of stories, "A Pair of Jeans & Other Stories (2013)," on their syllabus. The collection includes numerous prize-winning works. The book has stories that mostly focus on feminist concerns and are situated within the sociocultural framework of Pakistan.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. How the protagonist is suppressed by culture oscillation?
2. Why a female dress will always be a victim of her dress?

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To explore generation gap and culture gap from Qaisra shahraz perspective.
2. To explore women victimization by dressing .

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Female suppression in Patriarchy culture**

In patriarchal cultures, female opposition frequently entails questioning and opposing a man's natural right to become the head of the household. One such conflict is depicted in Shahraz's (2013) film "Zemindar's Wife," which centers on the Zemindar, the landlord, and his wife Noor. The two are constantly at odds with one another over who controls the household. Noor expresses her opinions on all significant home matters, emboldened by her solid socioeconomic status. She is committed to stopping her husband from destroying the villagers' land in his heinous quest to amass as much wealth as possible. It is implied that she is a strong, morally-aware woman who would not submit to her husband's absolute power in the home. Patriarchy has a tremendous hold over women's life, both in Pakistan's sociocultural environment and in the lives of immigrant women living in the west. One such example is Miriam from Shahraz (2013)'s "A Pair of Jeans," who comes from a Pakistani immigrant family living in the UK. She falls prey to the "rule of the father" because of her clothing code. As the head of the family, her father-in-law has complete authority over his son's life issues, and as Miriam will one day become his daughter-in-law, he also has full power over her life as well. Just before her wedding, Miriam is ultimately turned down by her father-in-law.

But instead of accepting his choice and submitting to the shame and humiliation of rejection, Miriam subverts her father-in-law's authority and control by coming up with a counter-plan. "They can't do this to me!" her thoughts exclaimed. Although she wasn't sure if Farook was aware of this, she was going to make sure he was (p. 49).

By making her choice, she tends to undermine the pull of patriarchy and asserts agency and control over significant aspects of her life. Even if the stories in the short stories show a great deal of variation in how women are portrayed because of the many sociocultural settings in which they are set, they are always subject to the same patriarchal norms.

For example, even if Aziza in Shahraz's (2013) film "Malay House" is not originally from Pakistan, her destiny is decided by the same genetics as a Pakistani lady. Despite the fact that her brother brought their parents' deaths to an unhappy end, she is shown as a spirit of rebellion who defies his control and expresses her outrage and unhappiness at her brother's choice to let visitors stay in their family home in order to make money. To heck with them, she says when she confronts him. How would it change today if I don't say goodbye to the thousands of people I have already said goodbye to? I will, however, do it elegantly and later! Provide the key to me, and She makes it clear in her response that she is not a voiceless subordinate who cannot advocate for herself. In the end, she manages to free herself and her mentally retarded spouse from her brother's terrible grip. In the language of short stories, women are not only portrayed as patriarchy's victims but also as the usual decoy for a patriarchy in full bloom. They prepare their daughters, whether consciously or unconsciously, to comply to the rules of the patriarchy as well as embrace it as an unalterable reality and driving force in their lives (Rashida Imran & Samina Amin Qadir 165). In parallel, they raise their sons to view patriarchy as a positive force and to avoid any opportunity that would weaken or undermine its hold.

Thus, women are portrayed in Shahraz (2013)'s collection of short stories as both victims and tools of the patriarchal social order, serving to further solidify and deepen its hold. Nevertheless, the women frequently question patriarchal presumptions in order to reframe their roles in the gendered power system. Having an Awakening of the Mind Three key characteristics of Pakistani society's gender socialization process are that it is strong, convincing, and forceful, making gender seem both "common sensical" and "natural." In this context, the concept of naturalized speech proposed by Cameron (2001) is extremely significant, as it serves to both legitimize female subjugation and their incapacity to escape the restrictive environment.

This type of female intellectual colonization is reminiscent of the widely recognized concept of "manufacture of consent" proposed by Gramsci (1971), which has practical applications in securing and validating women's assent and establishing hegemonic gender ideology. Notwithstanding these restrictive factors, female figures frequently undergo intellectual awakenings that heighten their awareness of their submissive roles and unfair treatment.

### **Victimization through Dress**

A pair of jeans is used as a metaphor for awakening the intellect. She took off a blue crepe shalwar kameez suit from a hangar from her closet. Her rebellious nature came out once more as she put it on. "They're just clothes," her thoughts angrily snarled. (pages 39–40). She gets victimized because of her clothing code, and she cannot stand it. As a result, women are able to reframe their gender identities and change the direction of their lives thanks to gender resistance and intellectual awakening.

In an argument with her wife about Mariam, the father-in-law uses the word "Sharif" to refer to someone who wears a shalwar kameez rather than jeans. He says, "I thought you told me that she was a very "Sharif", a very modest girl." These two elements together hold the social organic, ideology, and symbolism of the society. Was that bare waist considered modest by you? The writer's attempt to highlight that society has given them the title of Sharif in order to make them appear humble is evident by the

appropriation of English phrases into Urdu. Now that this concept has been expanded, additional characteristics of a female who is not Sharif include her desire for great freedom .

They lived and were brought up in different worlds, traditions, and cult. Mariam, however, sees things differently; she views them as a piece of clothing that has nothing to do with modesty, freedom of religion, or either. That's all the clothing she needs to wear trekking. However, her in-laws' culture operates under the formula Jeans=Identity=Problem. The Mariam in-laws are now having issues because of the protagonists. The phrase "Sharif turns into Izzat" now appears at the conclusion of the short story. when the Begum calls to tell Fatima that her daughter Mariam has been rejected. In society, they are respected, even though it is currently unjustified. She believes that there is a significant cultural and generational divide between Mariam and their generation. Pakistan was another country and a very long way from Britain. The piece of cloth is what transforms Mariam into a stranger, a westernized version of the same girl who once impressed them. However, the subject of whether these garments alter the girl's morals, ethics, and values arose, and Mariam commented on this in a very hopeful manner as she went into her room to change the clothes: With disgust, she cast a low glance at them. A sardonic line twisted her mouth. Ick! Her mind was screaming, defying her. "They're just clothes. I remain the same youthful lady they frequently saw, the one they gladly selected to be their wife.

When an investigator concentrates on the initial fundamental component of Marvin Harris' Culture Materialism, Infrastructure, they find that Culture and Environment possess a mutually reinforcing power. The use of this concept is made clear by the fact that, although a pair of jeans is all that Mariam has on, to her in-laws, it transforms her identity completely.

Silently and emotionally withdrawing In the specific socioeconomic framework of Pakistani culture, as is shown in the discourse of the short tales, feminist struggle to overthrow hegemonic gender ideology frequently takes the shape of "silence," which can be interpreted as a sign of empowerment as well as weakness. Silence is the only tactic available to the victim when she is completely helpless and unable to defend herself due to her extremely precarious situation. It frequently denotes a rejection of emotional intimacy. According to Chaudary (2013), the most typical form of resistance supplied by women in Pakistan's patriarchal society is emotional withdrawal from one's husband by wives who are stuck in restrictive marriages.

. In Shahraz's "Malay Host" (2013), Aziza is shown as a fearless and courageous woman who defies social norms on proper feminine conduct in her role as a wife. She is a liberator because she frees her mentally retarded spouse who has spent the previous thirty years imprisoned in a tiny room by her brother. The stereotypes associated with men in the socially constructed gender schemata are those of liberators and saviors, but Aziz blurs these lines and turns the tables on her. She thus transforms her gender image from that of a helpless creature to that of a person who defends and saves her husband by shattering this stereotype. "Ibrahim, my darling, we are free," she says to her husband.

"In Shahraz (2013)'s "A Pair of Jeans," Miriam doesn't hesitate to defy conventionally prescribed rules by allowing her parents to talk to her in-laws about the divorce: "I'm sorry, Miriam; that wasn't my intention. It's simply that I felt it would be more reasonable for us, your parents, to get in touch with Farook first rather than you doing so. "Oh, Mom! You resume your tirade about "seemly" items there. I'm not being "unseemly" by getting in touch with my own fiance.

Women so tend to rebel against the established rules of appropriate gender behavior by shattering assumptions typically linked with femininity. Generally speaking, this type of resistance is fundamentally empowering. Taking a violent stance Dworkin (1976), who sees violence as inherently "male derived," emphasizes the need for nonviolent resistance to aggression. Depending on the type of oppression they face, women's revolutionary refusal to accept victimhood is not necessarily consistent with Dworkin's ideas. In order to reject their "programmed" and "conditioned" submissive behaviors, women use force and

violence in a few short stories, and Rashida Imran & Samina Amin Qadir 169 seek to break hegemonic repressive gender relationships. As an illustration, Rubiya in Shahraz (2013)'s "

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Pakistan is a traditional patriarchal society where complex and dynamic process of gender socialisation is achieved through the transmission of social and cultural values in both overt and covert ways through different cultural products and institutions of socialisation. Men and women are not born either masculine or feminine in nature but the society and its dominant discourses, in all of their abstract and material manifestations, shape and influence their perceptions, enabling them to exhibit standardized gender behaviour. Bem (1993) elaborates this point further by arguing that 'hidden assumptions about sex and gender remain embedded in cultural discourses, social institutions, and individual psyches' (p.2). Feminist scholars, however, strongly condemn this kind of resistance because it seems to be a mere continuation of surrender. The following is how Jia (2003) best explains this situation: Even when it goes against their better judgment, South Asian women appear to be content to remain subservient and to follow rather than rebel. Aziza in Shahraz (2013)'s 'Malay Host' is a victim of no different fate than that of Rubiya. Her brother inflicts worst kind of emotional and psychological violence on her. He deprives her not only of her due share in her father's inheritance but also denies her identity. He gets her married to an intellectually challenged man just to save his property. She is often seen wiping her wet cheeks with the end of her shawl. In a fit of anger and grief, she sets the house on fire: "Come and take a last look at your precious show house, Abdul Hamat!" she jeered in return. "What are you saying, you mad woman?" Body shaking with hysteria, Aziza pointed to the house. Abdul Hamat scrambled down, two steps at a time. "You mad woman!" He cried peering at the flames at the sides of the house. His worst fear realized. She had once threatened. Today she had done it! (p.37-38) In a fit of desperation, Aziza burns Abdul Hamat's empire into ashes and is labelled as a mad woman by her brother but he himself is responsible for her madness. Cooper (1978) asserts, 'one does not go mad but is driven mad by others' (p. 51). Since her brother is the one who drove Aziza into insanity, he ought to bear the price for her derangement: Furious Aziza sprang up and hurried over to give Abdul Hamat a sharp poke in the chest. "You have made us slaves to your tyranny and greed, robbing me of my home, my youth, my independence, and really, my life. Look!" She displayed a raw blister on the palm of her right hand. "I burned it using this." Shahraz (2013), page 38 *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities: Spring 2019 170; Volume 27, Number 1*. She becomes a relatively strong lady as a result of her aggressive opposition. She thus succeeds in redefining herself as a brave and courageous spirit who transforms from a subservient creature

Another way to be silent is to suppress yourself out of concern that you will be made fun of, attacked, or disregarded. (Page 4 of Cameron, 1990) Thus, depending on the particular survival circumstances of the woman, emotional distance and quiet can be both a liberating and a limiting factor. Dispelling Imaginations As a result, gender stereotypes function at the larger macro level of society, defining normal gender roles and behavior. They represent the collective expectations of society regarding what constitutes suitable behavior for men and women in a given society (Eagly, 1987). According to Eagly and Karau (2002), gender role stereotypes are normative in nature, meaning they typically convey behavioral, emotional, and attitude norms that align with people's perceptions of what it means to be a man or a woman. Men and women are subject to subtle social and cultural restraints as a result of these prejudices; yet, women actively work to challenge these notions in order to reshape their roles within the patriarchal social structure. There is plenty of evidence of this form of resistance in the discourse of short stories, as women defy preconceptions in order to either end oppressive situations or gain personal empowerment. In Shahraz's (2013) "Perchanvah," Zeinab bibi defies the conventional wisdom about proper feminine behavior, which dictates that women shouldn't broach delicate subjects with men. Particularly in a rural town, yet "she felt no shame in talking about miscarriages, a taboo subject like sex and pregnancy, while in the presence of men," according to *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities: Volume 27, Number 1, Spring 2019 168*. Shahraz, page 63.

Gramsci's (1971) widely praised concept of the "manufacture of consent," which has a practical significance in obtaining and validating women's assent and establishing hegemonic gender ideology, is reflected in this type of intellectual colonization of women. But even with all of these restrictions, female figures frequently go through intellectual awakenings that help them see how unfairly they have been treated and how submissive they have been. For example, in Shahraz's (2013) film "The Elopement," Rubiya finds herself stuck in a romantic heterosexual relationship and decides to elope with the man. However, she soon discovers that the relationship is fundamentally discriminatory:

1) . Fortunately, she left. She raised her head. Page 86: Since she is a woman, Rubiya understands that society will never forgive her violation; on the other hand, the guy can easily get away with his wicked deed. Using "The Discovery" in general and Rubiya's husband's response the revelation of her evil past deed in particular, Shahraz (2013) very skillfully captures the truth of the societal attitude toward such an issue. The Elopement by Shahraz (2013) is the sequel to this tale, in which Rubiya now has to deal with the fallout from her previous sin. Despite her best efforts, she is unable to convince her spouse of her views. He gives her a "yell" and a "bark" before leaving.

The fiction created by this prolific writer has received much critical reception for an unparalleled quality of her creative ability. Shahraz uses the elements of nostalgia of the homeland and her diasporic identity to depict both cultures and 'confrontation between old and new, male and female, east and the west' (Shaw, 2005: 3). Her first collection of stories 'A Pair of Jeans & Other Stories (2013)' contains many prize winning stories and the title story has been included in the syllabus of some western universities. Most of the stories of this collection are set within the socio cultural context of Pakistan and highlight issues of feminist concern. Therefore, her work is marked by a strong sense of feminist consciousness, she usually presents the theme of feminism within 'the experience of migration, settlement, racism and ethnic identity in a hostile society' (Hussain, 2005: 132). A Pair of Jeans and other Stories (2013) Qaisra Shahraz S. Socio Cultural Context of the Study Pakistan is a traditional patriarchal society which exhibits a marked preference for norms and values associated with supremacist androcentric ideologies. The social structure is not only stratified by socioeconomic class, caste and ethnicity but by gender as well. The gender ideology is used not only to justify unequal treatment of men and women but also to determine roles and privileges of both the sexes (Ullah, 2013). Men and women are socially expected to perform their roles and responsibilities in accordance with societal schemata of ideal masculine and feminine behaviour. Women are required to perform household chores while men are mostly the bread winners and work in public sphere. However, slowly and gradually these boundaries are being blurred as a significant number of women are shouldering responsibilities in different walks of life. Thus, women perform diverse roles ranging from performing household chores to managing affairs as ministers in the federal cabinet of Pakistan. Despite of the diversity of roles performed by women, property and other material resources are mostly allocated in the favour of men. The education of girls is not given as much importance as that of boys especially in rural areas (Raza, 2015). The birth of a female child is not celebrated as much as that of a male child. A male child is considered to be a 'social capital' whereas a female child is perceived to be a 'burden'. Thus, these are not only cultural practices but also 'internalization of patriarchy by women themselves' which prescribe and legitimize different positions for men and women in the society (Ullah, 2013:277). No other cultural product depicts socio cultural aspects of our society in its miniature as does the short fiction for being the reflection of real life. The contemporary female writers like Qaisra Shahraz critique and challenge institutionalized discourses which result in gender discriminatory Rashida Imran & Samina Amin Qadir 159 practices. Therefore, a feminist critique of her short stories enables the researcher to explore the representation of female figure in relation to the society in which she is projected. The primary concern of female fiction writers, as Pandey (2003) asserts, is the critical scrutiny of cultural prescriptions which disempower women: The fictional experience of characters, the rational, intuitional or imaginative capacity of an author, the experience implicit in language of structure that interrogates the cultural prescriptions, that subordinate and trivialize women and treat them as inferiors are the primary concerns of female fiction writers from feminist perspective. (p. 1) Though, Pakistani short story in

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English is still an emerging field, it carries much significance since it opens literary space for a wider English speaking world for its consumption and critique. Therefore, it is significant to scrutinize its discourse to unmask gendered social practices pertaining to hegemonic gender ideology. . . He argues, 'The discourse of a narrative fiction yields up both a story and significance. Ideology maybe inscribed within both. On the one hand, the significance deduced from a text---- its theme, moral, insight into behaviour, and so on---- is never without an ideological dimension or connotation. On the other hand, and less overtly, ideology is implicit in the way the story an audience derives from a text exists as an isomorph of the events in the actual world (p. 2)'. Thus, the discourse of a narrative not only constructs but also reflects social reality. The constitutive property of discourse impacts readers' perception of 'self' and 'other'. Thus, the use of story as an agent of socialisation is a conscious and deliberate process, therefore, 'fiction must be regarded as a special site for ideological effect, with a potentially powerful capacity for shaping audience attitudes' (Stephens, 1992:3). However, such texts are no less important for critical scrutiny (Toolan, 1997), 'precisely because they do not invite serious attention, are fleeting, and yet are everywhere in modern, urban societies. From a critical perspective, fiction offers a productive site for the study of cultural politics and relations of power and ideology as they reflect the cultural processes and practices of the society' (Sunderland, 2004:143). The rationale involved selection of mainstream female author, particularly diasporic, who at least published a single collection of short stories and the relative literary merit of her stories which was determined through the critical reflections of Shamsie (2017) who is a pioneering and leading authority on Pakistani literature in English. On the basis of the methodological and analytical insights derived from (Creswell 2003, 2009; Sunderland, 2004), the following procedural steps were rigorously followed in the process of data collection and analysis. i. The data was organized and prepared for analysis and interpretation, this involved converting the text of stories into Word file and storing electronic copy for quick reference. The text of the electronic copy was thrice compared to the original text in paperback form in order to ensure that there was no discrepancy between the typed and original text. After a through proof reading, a final E copy of the data was saved. ii. The data was carefully and thoroughly read to gain a general sense and impression of the text of the stories and to reflect on its overall meaning. iii. A detailed data analysis was carried out with a coding process. Coding is the process of organizing the material into 'chunks' before bringing meaning to those 'chunks' (Rossman & Rallis, 2003:171). It involved identifying and marking related utterances or sentences into categories and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based on the theme reflected by that particular chunk. iv. The coding process involved systematic addition, deletion, and modification of overlapping categories rigorously to obtain a fully saturated list to a point when no further categories emerged naturally. The process was repeated to attain an exhaustive and mutually exclusive list of sub categories too. v. After coding, data was analyzed on the basis of theoretical assumptions of Feminist study concerning the issues of gender resistance and its evidence in the discourse of the short stories. vi. Every story was analyzed at least thrice very carefully by focusing on the voices of narrator/narrators as well as characters either their thought or voice represented in the text with a special attention paid to every stretch of talk based on a single utterance or complete sentences in the light of insights drawn from Sunderland (2004)'s The researcher also focused on Bakhtin (1981)'s idea of polyphony which stands for multiplicity of voices and perspective which can be instrumental in identifying and exposing complex patterns of gender representation. Thus, patterns of gender resistance were closely coded and decoded to develop an in depth understanding. vii. The study involved both denotative and connotative analysis in line with Baxter (2002:11)'s view, she argues that discourse analysis is conducted on two levels, namely that of denotative analysis, which makes close and detailed reference to the evidence, but which is a form of interpretation involving a selection of foci in which certain aspects are highlighted; and connotative analysis, which attempts to weave possible perspectives relating to the material together in relation to gender representation. In some instances the two levels are linked in the analysis process. viii. As a final step, data was interpreted to gain meanings in larger socio cultural context of Pakistani society to draw inferences and conclusions related to the patterns of gender resistance. The analytical framework developed to



examine and investigate the critical notion of gender resistance was conceptually informed and theoretical grounded in Sunderland (2004)'s empirical work on gender related to a number of fruitful epistemological sites of vital importance. Besides Sunderland (2004)'s theorization of 'ongoing' and 'fluid' nature of gender, the critical insights drawn from Baxter (2003)'s work based on the notion of simultaneous discourses of competing and oppositional nature, enabling the females to adopt multiple positions in gender based power hierarchy were primarily instrumental in identifying and investigating the multiple ways through which women contest and challenge the hegemonic assumptions embedded in patriarchal gender ideology to redefine their positions and / or empower themselves.

### **Findings and Discussion**

They hardly follow prescriptive norms of ideal feminine behaviour and adopt multiple strategies to redefine their positions. The following section provides empirical evidence of gender resistance in the stories. Shaking Patriarchal Social Order Patriarchy, by definition, exhibits androcentrism. Lindsey (2011) believes that patriarchy seems to be an irrevocable and inescapable fact of our existence. The discursive construction and reconstruction of patriarchal philosophy grips the collective psyche of the women in 'conditioning' them to adhere to its norms. Deconstructing this grand narrative requires not only the critique of discourses which establish it as an inevitable, inescapable and indispensable facet of the social life, but also challenging and contesting its fundamental assumptions leading to female empowerment. The discourse of short stories reveals that patriarchy bestows on men the fundamental right of household control. This may involve taking charge of household not only as a functional and structural unit but also the power and authority to take important decisions. The female resistance of a patriarchal culture often involves challenging and contesting a man's inherent claim to gain household control. For instance, . Through her decision, she asserts agency and control on important matters of her life and tends to weaken patriarchal hold. Though narratives presented in the short stories reflect marked diversity in the depiction of females, owing to different socio cultural contexts but they are all subjected to the same rules of patriarchy. For instance, Aziza in Shahraz (2013)'s 'Malay House' though is not of Pakistani origin, yet her fate is no different than that of a Pakistani woman which is determined by their identical biology. Her life is made miserable by her brother after the death of their parents but she is presented as a rebellious spirit who does not yield to his authority and openly shows her displeasure and anger at her brother's decision of opening their family house for the tourists to generate money. She often confronts him and asserts her voice: To hell with them! I have said goodbyes to thousands already - what difference will it make today if I don't. Anyway, I'll do it later and in style! Give me the key, and get them out of here! Or you will regret it!" the voice chilling. (Shahraz, 2013, p.36) The ultimatum in her reply explicitly conveys the idea that she is not a subaltern who cannot speak for herself. She finally rescues herself and her mentally retard husband from the evil hold of her brother. The discourse of short stories not only presents women as victims of patriarchy but also depicts them as the common ploy for a thriving patriarchy. Qaisra not only presents women as victims of patriarchal social order, but also as a ploy to reinforce and strengthen its grip. Nevertheless, the women very often challenge patriarchal assumptions to redefine their positions on gender based power hierarchy. Experiencing Intellectual Awakening The process of gender socialisation in Pakistani society is characterized by three essential features; it is potent, persuasive and powerful in such a way that gender appears to be both 'common sensical' and 'natural'. Cameron (2001)'s idea of naturalized discourse is crucially important in this regard; it is used not only to justify female subordination, but their inability to break free from the oppressive confines as well. This kind of female intellectual colonization is reflective of Gramsci (1971)'s critically acclaimed notion of 'manufacture of consent' which has a functional relevance in winning and legitimizing women's consent leading to hegemonic gender ideology. However, despite of all these constraining elements, female figures often experience intellectual awakening which makes them conscious of their subservient positions and unjustifiable treatment. For instance, Shahraz (2013)'s 'A Pair of Jeans' becomes a metaphor for intellectual awakening, 'From her wardrobe, she pulled off a blue crepe shalwar kameez suit from a hangar. As she put it on, her rebellious spirit reared its head again. "They are only clothes!" her mind

hissed in anger' (p.39-40). She cannot tolerate the fact that she is victimized on the basis of her dress code. Thus, gender resistance through intellectual awakening is an enabling force for the women not only to redefine their gender identity but also to redirect the course of life for them. Thus, intellectual awakening often enables the women not only to realize their victimhood status in the gender based power hierarchy but also influences them to question and challenge androcentric assumptions embedded in patriarchal ideology to redefine their gender identities. Distancing Emotionally & Silently Feminist resistance to dismantle hegemonic gender ideology often takes the form of 'silence', both as a sign of weakness as well as of empowerment within the particular socio economic context of Pakistani society as is depicted in the discourse of the short stories. When the victim is utterly powerless and cannot retaliate because of her extreme vulnerable position, silence serves to be the only resisting strategy. It, very often, represents a denial of emotional intimacy. Thus, the wives who are trapped in an oppressive matrimonial relationship often emotionally withdraw themselves from their husbands; which is the most common form of resistance offered by women in Pakistani patriarchal society (Chaudary, 2013). However, this form of resistance is highly critiqued by feminist scholars as it appears to be a mere continuation in submission. This situation is best explained by Jia (2003) thus: South Asian women seem to continue being submissive, even against their interests, continuing to obey rather than defy...Their submission becomes a habit for many, a way of life, the line of least resistance, requiring little thought and little mental struggle. It is promoted as a virtue, a state of being aspired to, the mark or badge of a dutiful and desirable daughter/wife/daughter-in-law. (p.376)

### **Significance of Research**

Since this work is the most recent and there hasn't been any thorough research done on the chosen issue, it adds to the body of knowledge. It would expand the subject's understanding for aspiring academics and provide fresh avenues for research. For the current study topic, the researcher intends to look into how women's victimization is portrayed in Qaisra Shahraz's A Pair of Jeans. It also acts as a means of disseminating information about the study's topic to the general audience.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The current study's goal is to investigate a pair of jeans from a feminist perspective. The study was divided into two main portions. The maltreatment of women in Pakistan is covered in one part. Kate Millett's workman's assessment of Sexual Politics through radical feminism perspective is a crucial text for understanding both the theory and the book.

Since her "analysis of how men's power over women can be seen in all areas of women's lives" would later form the basis of radical feminist theory, Millett was the first feminist to receive global praise. Similar to race and class, sex is a status aspect that affects one's ability to wield power and whether one is weaker than others in "A pair of Jeans"

### **Conclusion**

Thus, the study came to the conclusion that Qaisara Shahraz's 2013 short story, "A Pair of Jeans," contained all the components and was fundamental to a cultural analysis, whether seen literally or from an anthropological angle. It outlines the in-depth research on the generational and cultural divide.

Despite being exposed to western culture, the two families' lack of acceptance of each other is seen in their act of rejecting a girl who would be perfect for them but is now a girl from another planet just because she wears jeans. At the conclusion of the story, the reader is left wondering if her fiancé will accept or reject her.

Although she portrays her female characters as being bound by the customs and laws of a traditional society structure based on hegemonic gender ideology, her female characters make a concerted effort to

break free from these restrictions in order to reclaim their silenced voices and redefine their positions. Their physical, psychological, and emotional suffering frequently results in the emergence of a feminist consciousness that helps them to resist the sociocultural presumptions ingrained in hegemonic gender ideology and "unlearn" the social schemata of ideal feminine behavior.

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