

THE IMPACT OF ISLAMIZATION ON PAKISTANI POSTFEMINIST ENGLISH FICTION

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Abstract

This article explores a prominent shift in the feminist discourse in writings of Pakistani contemporary authors in Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The author explain the new domain of feminist in current situation of Pakistani which is somehow personalized and private version of self, who acts as subjects, their main agenda is to empower women within Pakistan under the spectrum of Islam. The writing chosen is a novel by Pakistan writer who inspects the scenario in current situation of Pakistan where everything is so globalized and modernized. The researcher main focus is to study the change in the feminist ideology found in the mindset of women in 21st century to see their struggles as Muslim women. The struggles of the female characters of novel "Beautiful From this Angle" by Maha Khan Philips have been studied under the theory of "Postfeminist Sensibility" proposed by Rosalind Gill. The present research explains the survival of women in modern times without losing their subjectivity under patriarchy. The genre of chick lit has been chosen for this. This article voices the larger concern over the rise of a new generation of Islamic revivalist feminists who seek to rationalize all women's rights within the religious framework and render secular feminism irrelevant while framing the debate on women's rights exclusively around Pakistani culture and tradition. This is only likely to produce a new, radicalized, religious-political feminism dominating Pakistan's political future.

Keywords: Feminism, Postfeminism, Islam, Empowerment, Pakistan, Fiction

1. Introduction

The current research focuses upon the impact of Postfeminist culture on the attitudes of females in Pakistan's social and cultural systems. This study reveals the way in which various entities such as academics and general trends have influenced females' sexual identification in this contemporary world. It investigates how female youth objectively associates with "Beautiful from this Perspective," and investigates mainstream societal values as a domain by contrasting feminism's narratives with the perspectives of the "Postfeminist Sensibility" given by Rosalind Gill. Due to the extensive interconnection of feminist narratives with mainstream culture, the age is defined as post-feminist, while at the same time it is often defined by the convergence of fair feminist ideologies and a progressive focus on individual liberalism. This study highlights the formation of gendered identities in contemporary culture through the perspective of post-feminism. The struggles of women in present Pakistan are different from the previous centuries where they have been fighting for their rights for economic and educational independence. Now they know that for their survival how they have to manipulate their strategies for their survival in the society without being victim of their culture, patriarch and false values. A female narrative has been chosen by Maha Khan Philips who tells the stories of four women. This paper explores women's activism and political engagement in contemporary Pakistan. The experiences of women have been shown how they depoliticize the already set ideals of the society related to gender equality and female identity.

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Qualitative research has been done. In this qualitative research a new form of feminism has been applied called postfeminism where women are exerting their female agency by keeping in accordance with the new standards of an Islamic state. Their personal and public spheres have been highlighted where each character is fighting its own battle of survival. The study also has applied significance for prejudices and stereotypes that make it difficult for women, to break away from fixed categories of gender role expectations. This paper informs academics and practitioners on socially and politically engaged Pakistani women's views regarding these narratives. The following study would be helpful to see women activism of women of 21st century under cultural and religious interpretation.

This article studies feminism as a terminology, a movement that continued raising its strides from the last hundred years, is clearly not really a plain title, rather a complicated philosophical conception; from the last hundred years it maintained its identity as a disputed and questioned ideology. Implicit in feminist philosophy is the argument that females deserve identical rights as well as freedoms as males. According to Janell and Rudman (2014) since human being's emergence on earth, everything has been seen, interpreted, and recognized from the viewpoints of males in diverse positions of males in positions of rulers, researchers and explorers. Hardly any acknowledgement of the female version of the narrative exists, since they were quickly removed from human being's historic accounts. In a representational framework like this, an issue exists since it emphasizes and creates a certain sex in the superior ways whereas erasing and diminishing the presence of another. Without any valid or accurate portrayal of their experiences, females were and still are associated to this inferior form of portrayal. When it took females and their concerns into the spotlight by protesting and resisting the inequality shown to females by community, feminist ideology arose as a protector and source of salvation for females. Feminist movement is not just a single theory of females' dominance, rather it insists on fair treatment and fair liberties for all gender groups.

During earlier days, feminism arose to address the problem of societal disparity amongst the genders. It challenged community's male dominant mentality and increased knowledge of fair treatment for both males as well as females. Since its creation, feminism's philosophy and its supporters have taken it as their mission to talk regarding community's unequal attitude towards females, and to demand same rights and advantages traditionally gained by just males. Females have been enabled by feminist movement to win their part of land, the freedom participate in elections and sexual autonomy. They have acted in opposition of familial household abuse, repression, murders in the name of familial dignity, sexual assault and bullying about the wrongs and cruelties practiced upon females. Feminist movement promotes not just females' freedom from repression, but independence by allowing them to become economically free. Feminism's activists have fought to offer females economic power by demanding same working status, reach to prospects and fair pay. By adequate schooling, feminist movement has worked to strengthen the role of females in community. Until emergence as an intrinsic cultural debate, post-feminism was utilized as a term to reflect a feminism's field of thinking that relied on sexual identity as a societal standard and structure instead of a significant factor of one's existence (Zeisler 2008). During that period, post-feminism seemed to be identified with the problem of gender-based identification's creation that strongly mirrored Judith Butler's idea of gender roles. In reality, it turned into a completely fresh idea when post-feminism turned into a mainstream press conversation and began to reflect modern society. Post-feminism turned into a mainstream topic in the press for Zeisler, not only as a campaign in the continuation of feminist

theory as an essential power to motivate females to get their fundamental freedoms and entitlements, but as a campaign in defiance of feminist theory and an agency to surpass its validity (pg.116).

Chick lit in Pakistan is gaining popularity in younger generation specially females. Even so it wasn't taken as a significant genre in the Pakistani literature's sphere due to small audience. Now it has turned into a focus point of discussion with the emerging Pakistani multicultural chick lit. Pakistan now is a young community with over one third of our population consisting of youth. Most of this audience group is made up of female youth who are schooled and live in Pakistan's urban areas. This female youth is symbolic of the societal and financial transition that Pakistan has undergone during the past years of the twentieth century after the liberalization of the market, and represent the rising middle class in our state. The chosen mode of communicating for this modern youth belonging to urban females is through English. The depth and popularity of chick lit amongst female youth in Pakistan has vastly expanded this. These literary protagonists offer a modern representation of the modern feminism's aspiration: a synthesis of feminine freedom and authoritarianism with a self-assured show of womanhood or attractiveness referred to by mainstream media as post-feminism. Chick lit 's intent is that while stressing womanly pleasure and relations with a promotion of (mainly glittery pinkish) products and the development of a post-feminist "gals" and "babes" enterprise group has turned into liberal market of feminist narratives and an organization to undermine the advances and societal changes that feminism is bringing about. This research attempts to examine the post-feminism resistance hypothesis by concentrating on the book "Beautiful from This Angle"

Result

In the context of modern Pakistani English literature, the current study examines post-feminist aspects in regards of the societal and traditional forces which helps women in their functioning in a particular culture and community. This current study reveals how females' role and status in Pakistani community is shifting. The selected novel is a representation of societal post-progressive commodity that presents females in a setting in which they could be ladylike, sensual, and progressive altogether. Humour, female liberation, commercialism and, to a lesser degree, make over paradigm of female new subjects describe this type of feminist ideology. It is essential to warn that some books offer the feminist narrative a varied representation. The feminine roles of the books appear to stress the autonomy of individual preference. My thesis aims to create an assertion like that. During this attempt , my intention is to construct the groundwork for a somewhat constructive and effective post-feminism understanding and definition, which exposes the complicated respects wherein post-feminist narratives influence the modern female youth and interpret the existing historic event. In addition, formerly Rosalind Gill's principle of "Post-Feminist Sensibility" was applicable just to films and television productions, but this current study would demonstrate its relevance to passages derived from books collected from Pakistani literature. Through this viewpoint, the book chosen for this study has not been discussed before.

This study utilizes "Beautiful From this Perspective" as a scenario study to examine the persistence of post-feminism in the portrayal of three metropolitan females making a short film on a rural female named Nilofer. The theoretical approach I utilize is centered on the theoretical structures of Rosalind Gill for understanding post-feminist perception in mainstream norms. I

followed chick lit category of literature in order to achieve a better understanding of the way post-feminism appears in "Beautiful from this Angle." Gill concluded that post-feminism can be seen as a modern "sensibility," influenced by modern liberals and identity-race and class-related powerful as well as ongoing inequality. This sensibility contains aspects such as:

- Obsessional focus on physical appearance
- Shift from victimized object to sexualized subject
- The rise of concepts regarding choice, freedom and empowerment
- The increased highlight on self-monitoring and remodeling
- Make-over paradigm
- Acceptance of Sexual Differences
- Media message including irony and knowingness

Through more than 1000 scholarly references, this model of post-feminism has been quite significant. In 2017, Gill was requested to concentrate on the article in the 20th anniversary issue of EJCS and established her case in three crucial angles: stressing the importance of interdisciplinary studies of post-feminist society; addressing post-feminism's mental existence; and laying forward criteria for understanding post-feminism's effective aspects, structured about faith, endurance, adaptability and positivity. Elsewhere in a crucial contribution in the paper Feminist Media Studies (2016), in a period marked by both a revival of feminism's advocacy and an intensified mainstream sexism, Gill discussed the role of post-feminism and justified the ongoing importance of the word to indicate a target of criticism..

This larger industry is generally made up of female youth residing in Pakistan's urban areas who are schooled and employed. Chick lit becoming proclaimed as the self-assistance manuscript for female youth in a complicated world gives those females who are still having difficulty finding their position in the transformed twenty-first - century's societal and financial sector, an enticing option for studying. The protagonists of these novels are usually young females who take part in professional fields actively and are economically independently, attempting to complete the greatest struggle for true love in females' lives. Also the search turns into a challenge to find a middle ground among job and familial life if they are in a marital relationship. It's not surprising that the reviewers linked the roots of chick lit with the books of Jane Austen, which are typically constructed around the concept of unmarried females searching love.

It's believed that authors and the entire category developed in the background of the factor that the females it depicts are the ones who earned the advantage of feminist movement but who decline to be labeled as feminists. Post-feminism is commonly viewed as a solution to the stresses and excessive demands that the "undergarments destroying modern feminist movement" put upon females and advocated for a shift towards a more conventional womanhood. Post-feminism is also considered as an anti-foundationalism campaign which liberates females in a better way than feminist movement might. Modern females have apparently earned far more liberties by gaining what feminist movement presumably forced them to leave. Mothering, home, intimacy, styling, attractiveness, luxury, seductiveness, entertainment, sheer joy, and males - those aspects are typically described as womanly. Hence, in their search to pursue a wonderful lifestyle we see the protagonists of such books walking once more in the pinkish hallways of fitness centers, salons and fashion shops.

Discussion

The sample taken for this study is Pakistani book "Beautiful from This Angle," published in 2010 by Maha Khan Phillips. This is imaginative writing centered on (very seldom recognized) realities that switch throughout developed and under-developed cities, joyously making an impact in the former and seeking trash in the latter unabashedly. Utilizing such a diverse spectrum helps her to focus on a broad variety of complicated concepts that are helpful in extending the level, which initially appears like a walkway. Search all the crap from Karachi's famous Page 3 events on the confident, the pretty and the outright disgusting! Aynah Farooqui pens a frequent confidential scandal article for a Karachi-based publication, 'Party Queen on the Scene'. Aynah, who does not feel apologetic about her lifestyle of non-committed sexual interactions and addictive substances, is the absolute antithesis of her closest pals, Mumtaz and Henna, which she would like to be more like her-specifically Mumtaz, that is excessively stubborn being a narcotic dealer's child whereas his friend Monty continues to pull in the Mullahs making a television program named as "Who Wants to Be a Terrorist?" Mumtaz tries to earn profit by following pattern and shooting a short film regarding females' harassment in Pakistan. So in the face of Nilofer, Henna's hometown earl times' acquaintance, the ever-resourcing Aynah discovers the ideal story. It gets apparent as shooting starts that all of them have their own motives, which includes Nilofer, who isn't as weak and naive as she looks. The project's focus, together with the influence from Henna's dad as a political leader, disconnects them. Then disaster hits and completely transforms their worlds. Maha Khan Phillips's Beautiful from This Angle is a spectacular release featuring a mixture of luxury products and narcotics, pleasure and totalitarianism while looking for joy and affection in the ritzy scenery of Pakistan.

According to Suzanne and Young (2016) the chick lit can be composed of these occasions where the heroine's expectations and feelings can look orbiting from a feminist viewpoint. Though such situations stem from the truth that the modern feminist groups have provided a heritage of females who are unmarried to the 21st - century females, though they still haven't determined if they are content to be unmarried. By extending females' options via post-feminism, these attitudes have plummeted females into self-uncertainty today and intensified their discomfort about the decisions they get to make to preserve their autonomy in community and to attain satisfaction in their lives. The irrational fixation with the physique is an interesting feature of post-feminist press trends. Evidently, in shifting from past accurate traditions, womanhood is defined as physical assets contrasted to a simple or psychological human asset. Aynah Farooqui is still remembered for her adventurous way of living. She's got a guy acquaintance called Kamal with whom she discusses her romantic getaway with. Once she'd stayed overnight in a motel with him. After she awakens the next morning, Kamal compliments her for her physical attractiveness. He asserts;

"Miss Farooqui,' he sighs. You are a holy terror." (pg.96)

To the above she sensuously responds that she is doing her utmost. Rather than being branded with outdated labels, postfeminist females enjoy being praised for their physical assets. The philosophy of individual choice, the freedom to select and express as well as the capability to react for herself and her desires is among the good elements of post-feminism rationality. Female has full power of her actions, and with all those things, she is not responsible for others. This was perceived by Lois McNay (1992) to be the systematic restoration into public domain of conditions that were perceived political. Aynah Farooqui appreciates a guy at seaside and chooses to go along with him. Due to consuming alcohol to a great deal, she was knocked out at

the event. A strange man gave her a bottle of water with a mix of ideal masculine allure. She quickly falls in love with him, and intends to pursue him.

When Kamal dropped Aynah to the home of her friend Mumtaz, she offered him to join her and see Mumtaz's mom. Shockingly, he reveals to her that not visiting relatives is the first principle in their partnership, until they are confident of their romantic affiliation's success. She then leaves of the vehicle and promises herself that she will not comply with the principles laid down by Kamal in her interaction. She'll do whatever she wants. She does acknowledge that:

“If anyone’s going to make any rules, it should be her. She doesn’t do dependency, after all.”(pg.101)

Another main aim of this study is to construct a system that helps one to properly perceive the dynamic, multi-dimensional forms through which post-feminist narratives and mainstream trends are interconnected. In the absence of acknowledgment of cynicism and consciousness, hardly any review of the post-feminist rationality in the press could be completed. There are several purposes that Irony can play. In ads, it is utilized to tackle what Goldman (1992) termed 'sign fatigue,' by crowning listeners as intelligent and mature users, exploiting them through their understanding of implicit meanings and the suggestion that efforts to exploit them will be identified by them. Irony is often utilized like a means of maintaining a healthy space amongst yourself and real emotions or convictions, at a period when it appears to be 'boring' to be emotional about something or pretend to worry excessively. Like in specified book "Beautiful from This Angle" the lead character is an easy going female working for a publication as a columnist and reports regarding it in non-regretful manner. A consumer of the Akbar Mehmood article argues at the beginning of the book about the article wherein columnist Aynah Farooqi offers a rather brazen picture of Pakistan. He said:

“Is this how we thank those people who gave up their lives for Islam? By portraying our country to be nothing but a den of sex and drugs? At a time when Islam is under threat around the world, and our own country is close to breaking out in civil war, is this our only answer?”(pg. 3)

He claims that by giving all those lives, predecessors had gained this country and the structures of this country were established upon the grounds of morals, values and liberty of religion, and now just to get amusement the younger people use it.

The revival of concepts of inherent gender distinction in all platforms, from magazines, to advertisements, to interview programs as well as mainstream literature, has become a central aspect of post-feminist rationality. The mass-media discussions over manhood wherein the concept of a modern male was targeted as being gay-ish and insufficiently masculine by both males and females also is a forum this was practiced within . The modern male was denounced as pretentious and deceptive, and was interpreted by most as another expression or perhaps a role which has been brought into existence by what was perceived as feminist ideology's dominating supremacy, yet had no concern with the way males were really like.

Females don't really hold back from acknowledging the male species in post-feminist rationality and don't feel threatened by their sexual identity rather than accepting this sexism. Females aren't accusing masculine supremacy for anything anymore, because if any unpleasant incident exists in community, they consider all of genders accountable.

Such an instance where Henna wants to illustrate the instances of murders of women in the name of familial dignity, her mate Aynah claims that males have become targets of such murders quite often too. She acknowledges the assumption that often males become targets also, not only females. She points out;

“Mumtaz

Let’s not forget that men too are sometimes victims of honour killing.” (pg.71)

We commonly assume that just females get sexually assaulted, exploited and sexually harassed but several instances have arisen recently in which males were the targets. When murdered in the name of familial dignity are carried out, they are often murdered together with females.

The model of redesign defines a postfeminist mainstream community. This needs individuals (mainly female) to assume initially that in some manner they or their lifestyles are incomplete or defective, and secondly that by acting upon the guidance from partners, fashion or behavior specialists, and implementing properly adjusted eating patterns, it is conducive to reimagining or improving. This is not just the implied meaning of most publications, gossip programmes and similar entertainment material, but the 'redesign revolution' (Hollows) that occupies modern broadcasting is the clear emphasis. It began with health, houses, and plantations, but now it has spread to clothes, hygiene, jobs, marriage, sexuality, beautification procedures, and rearing kids. Aynah tells her followers of her latest passion that she just began. As the city is overflowing with protests against the blasphemous material of Denmark, there were no gatherings and she felt she'd concentrate her energy elsewhere. She scoffs at NGOs and their bad way of life. She says if anyone wishes to change community and support the poor as it's published, they have to follow a simplistic routine and carry sick-fashioned clothing. She says,

“Hideous! Just because you’re saving the planet doesn’t mean you shouldn’t wear- up! I, on the other hand, am going to save the world with my YSL Touche Éclat Radiant Touch concealer and my Gucci bag intact.” (pg.79)

She considers the reason why the NGO staff aren't supposed to carry on any cosmetics very unacceptable. They are also seen in very plain dresses such as kurta and shalwar anytime our television reveals any social workers.

The latest focus on self-surveillance and self-correction in the post-feminist cultural community is closely linked to the insistence on individual preference. Perhaps self-monitoring and self-correction have long become standards of good womanhood performance—with training in appearance, dress, elocution and 'ways' that are 'presented' to females to enable them to imitate the western elite image in a better way. Womanhood has often been depicted as subjective in females' publications — needing endless focus, effort and care, from checking your looks to preparing the optimal compact outfit, from avoiding 'ghastly' acne, lines, aging marks, or bruises to throwing a good evening gathering. Even so, what distinguishes the current situation as unique are three characteristics: first, the significantly enhanced severity of self-monitoring, reflecting the strength of females' control; furthermore, the broadness of monitoring over completely new realms of living and personal actions; and lastly, the emphasis on the emotional aspects.

She sweeps the space for Aynah, and arranges it all. After that, she wipes her palms with wet wipes and rests on a chair and is very careful not to do something with her palms now so she is very mindful of her cleanliness and hygiene. In reality Aynah deals with OCD and gets very irritated when items are not organized in a certain way.

Amynah meets Henna in her town and while she was there she becomes aware that the rural people come to see Henna regularly to find answers to the questions. At such a meeting, Amynah emphasizes on accompanying Henna. Henna tells her to switch her modern clothing, and to carry kameez shalwar. She informed her that townspeople have strong values, and that they may be scandalized by this outfit. Like she says to her;

“These people get scandalized when they see women our age in jeans and our heads uncovered” (pg.47)

As Amynah encountered females, they all stared at Amynah in order to know the meaning of her appearance there. Since they did not realize she was a classmate of Henna's. All this pressure made her really nervous and now Henna's claiming she knows entire issue regarding shifting clothing. Rural females are so attentive and they remember the other individual's action. Amynah understands;

“Amynah feels uncomfortable under their scrutiny. Is this what Henna means? Do people always watch her every move” (pg.47)

There has been rigid monitoring on all areas on females' lives. Many females deal really well with it, yet few still can't.

Conclusion

The cross - cultured exploitation of females in Islamic state belonging to the social group having lesser means, opportunities and liberties by females belonging to elite, working and metropolitan social group, while having complicated historic record of objectification along with oppression is also confusing as well as complicated system. Quite significantly, social status turns into a representative position within this specific situation, in which females don't just get exposed to abuse, but are capable of performing hostile actions. Thus it is necessary, for the examination of the concept regarding autonomy in perspective and background of females outside the "white" community, to be done above the restrains of the rigid distinctions and simplistic assertions of compliance against opposition. Beautiful from this Angle by Maha Khan Phillips portrays a subordinate young woman through the role of Nilofer, that becomes a target of intentional murder for the sake of familial dignity and is extremely oppressed throughout the novel. Nilofer while attempting to save herself from her oppressive and violent spouse falls into the hands of Mumtaz, an ambitious feminist that develops a non-factual short film based on Nilofer's story to earn recognition as well as wealth. The book portrays various narratives that are imposed and engraved on repressed Muslim females' bodies. Even after the abuse Nilofer faced from her spouse, Mumtaz dramatized the repression of Nilofer rather than expressing sympathy to her. Mumtaz didn't just to employ a makeup expert to create scars on Nilofer's forehead and other facial areas, she also exaggerated her impoverished circumstance by depicting a designed mud hut that was created by using props and the killing of Nilofer by her spouse, Fazal, to allow Nilofer to appear adequately spectacular for a CNN viewing public. This move explicitly illustrates how lower class females' advocacy can actually be deceptive, especially if associated with certain perspectives and institutions having political benefits as backing factors, a scenario that is much deeply complicated than simplistic rigid contradiction of 'contemporary' (females' entitlements) against 'pre-existing' (repression of females' through male domination). This ideology skillfully blends newness of contemporary society with feminist ideology and unifies male hegemony with violent extremism. There is, therefore, a

straightforward direction for females to: be liberal, be political, and flee from the shackles of masculine authoritative extremists (Eisenstein 424). Females like Nilofer turned into useful symbols when examined in the context of these narratives to highlight prevailing popular political and societal ideologies and portray a picture of Islamic societies with downtrodden females, thus reinforcing the orthodox portrayal of purdah adhering females which constructed a strong argument for declaring battle against extremism and Muslim nations. Females like Nilofer are also assumed to possess lesser power as compared to contemporary females.

The modern Pakistani chick lit's modern female is autonomous, trusting love, doesn't have household lifestyle, is attempting to appear beautiful just for her own satisfaction and learning the way of being sinful with no regret. She is always less considerate in the pink hallways just to look more in control and confident about herself. The modern feminist narrative is not a recurrence of feminist fundamentalism nor a surrender to commercial propaganda machine, but a reinterpretation of feminist narrative that does not claim the supremacy of one female's function above another. Furthermore, it stimulates the elements of femininity that the former feminism's advocates eliminated in their attempt to gain equity and economic freedom. The term "post" in post-feminism isn't used to imply a disconnection from the background rather an effort to incorporate modern vitality into the feminist narratives that which were losing their meanings in the midst of radically evolving societal and economical developments around the globe.

I will recommend a restoration to the coalition, namely, a transitory reinstatement of an integral female group. Even so, in the last ages, misogyny as well as inequality have transformed and the aspirations for modern women are not like those of their counterparts in the previous notions of feminism. Both males and females have to consider a feminist ideology that suits the requirements of a post-feminist community. This, I assert, is a feminist narrative which has to reach the universal communal mindset outside one single entity. While feminist ideology previously addressed regulation, now philosophy must be put on board. The coming journey is broad for males and females pursuing gender parity in politics as well as social realms, but before this post-misogyny culture is understood post-feminism doesn't have any position in community.

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