

Analyzing How Language Ideologies in Pakistani Media Discursively Construct and Normalize Gendered Identities Through Evaluative and Metaphorical Language: A Discourse-Analytic Study of Language, Gender, and Identity

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ABSTRACT

This paper will analyse the discursive formulation and normalisation of gendered identities in Pakistani media via the application of evaluative and metaphorical language in a strategic manner. The study background is based on the fact that media discourse is at the forefront of developing social interpretations of masculinity and femininity by changing cultural beliefs into a language of common sense. The primary aims of the research include defining the evaluative strategies to assess gendered behavior, interpret prevailing gender metaphors and how these linguistic tools combine to the normalization of patriarchal gender ideologies. The study is methodologically based on a qualitative approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with a combination of Fairclough, who used the analysis of evaluation based on the Appraisal Theory and the metaphor analysis based on the Conceptual Metaphor Theory in his three-dimensional model. Data were gathered on the Pakistani texts of English language media such as news reports, headlines, opinion columns, and transcripts of talk shows published in the date range of 2020-2025. The purposive sampling technique was applied in order to sample the text that included both explicit or implicit gender assessment and metaphorical framing. Analysis of data entailed close textual analysis, appraisal code, and identification and interpretation of metaphors. The results show systemic construction of femininity and masculinity by the Pakistani media in the form of moral judgment, vulnerability and symbolic honour and authority, protection, and rationality respectively. The exchange of evaluation and metaphor legitimizes the structures of gender roles and fixes patriarchal gender identities.

Keywords: *Language Ideology, Pakistani Media, Gender Identity, Evaluative Language, Metaphor, Discourse Analysis, Patriarchy, Appraisal Theory.*

INTRODUCTION

Pakistani media, television, talk shows, newspaper, digital journalism, and viral social-media clips, do not simply describe a male and a female, it recreates and reproduces the socially acceptable gendered identities on a regular basis through the use of language. This is because such identities are made familiar when media texts keep attributing specific moral values, feelings, and expectations to men and women (e.g., strong/weak, protective/vulnerable, rational/emotional, respectable/shameful). According to a discourse-analytic approach, such patterns are ideological: they are not neutral representations of reality but structured means of looking at, judging, and making normal the social world. Recent studies of the discourse on Pakistan have demonstrated that patterned lexical choices, framing, and representational

strategies, which are determined by larger cultural and institutional power relations, tend to disseminate gender discourses through the media (Javed, 2025; Rehman, 2025; Saeed, 2025; Ullah, 2025).

One of the most important processes used in this process is evaluative language- the words and forms used to convey judgment, approval/disapproval, admiration/contempt or emotional position. Evaluation is not accidental in media discourse: it is turned into an instrument to define some gender performances as ideal and some of them as deviant. Appraisal-based studies reveal how assessments (attitude, judgment, appreciation) can be charted to exhibit how texts extol, condemn, honor, or discredit social actors (Awaisuddin, 2024; Manjón, 2025). The ubiquity with which Pakistani media constructs masculinity and femininity through both positive and negative roles such as brave, responsible, decisive and femininity as being modest, obedient, fragile or bold, shameless, characterless, the ideological work is evident: it turns social beliefs into common sense making gender hierarchy look natural.

Pakistani media is also dependent on the metaphorical language to render gendered meanings natural in addition to evaluation. Metaphors are not simply the ornament of language, but cognitive-discursive short cuts that put people and social positions in familiar terms (as honour, property, fitna, flower, burden; as shield, pillar, lion, provider). According to critical cognitive and discourse analysis metaphor studies, gender metaphors may influence the ways audience members will understand responsibility, agency, and blame, particularly in the context of a moral, violence, respectability, and family values discussion (Ahrens et al., 2024). Metaphors are frequently used in combination with evaluation in the media ecology of Pakistan: the metaphor provides a cultural image, and evaluative language provides the good/bad judgment. They together construct the tenacious gender scripts, the script, who is meant to speak, who must be quiet, who is safeguarded, who is policed, who is blamed.

The present paper is based on the consideration that language ideologies, which have been held as commonstyle about appropriate language, good women/men, good behavior, etc., are replicated discursively. Media talk is an effective location of this reproduction since it reiterates familiar types of characters (e.g., the desired mother, the respectable girl, the real man, the bad woman, the westernized woman, the weak man). Gender representation in print media, Pakistan-based work on gender representation draws attention to the manifestation and maintenance of gendered identities in the recurrence of discursive patterns as well as ideological framing (Gender Representation in Media Content, 2025). In a similar vein, a study of Pakistani media discourse shows that the most powerful impacts of media discourse are headlines and short media formats since they condense ideology into recursive phrases, labels, and word formulations with emotional undertones that are read and shared by the audience quickly (Sohail, 2024). The relevance of these patterns is that they do not exist as isolated media texts: they penetrate into the everyday discourse, institutional practices and the attitude of the people regarding the mobility of women, the power of men, harassment, honour and social worth.

The topicality of the subject has also increased with the increase in the digital involvement. Online platforms enhance evaluative language- in particular, judgment and moral policing- since comments, captions and hashtags reward high-stance-taking. Recent resources in appraisal research (such as annotated datasets) demonstrate how it is possible to investigate gender discussion online in a systematic manner (following stance and patterns of evaluation on a large scale) (Tretti-Beckles et al., 2025). Corpus-based CDA which is Pakistan-oriented also suggests the viability of integrating discourse analysis with frequency patterns, collocations and repetitive groups of evaluative patterns to demonstrate how ideology turns habitual and quantifiable in text (Saeed, 2025). In this framework, the current paper dwells on the gendered identity formation of the Pakistani media (both by evaluation (praise/blame, admiration/shame, legitimacy/stigma), and by metaphor (gender framed by culturally powerful images), and how such discursive decisions propagate the normalization of gendered social expectations.

This study will use evaluative and metaphor patterns to expose the invisible linguistic labour in which media discourse renders assumptions about culture into common sense. Instead of assuming gender as a given attribute, the study approach assumes gender as a performed object: constructed through repetitive naming, framing, praising, blaming and metaphorizing. Thus, it adds to the academic literature in ideology of language, media discourse, and the construction of gendered identities in Pakistan since it demonstrates not only what is represented, but how it is convincingly, emotionally, and socially normalised.

Research Questions

1. What evaluative language (judgment, affect, appreciation) is employed by Pakistani media texts to generate an image of an ideal and deviant masculinity and femininity?
2. Which most commonly used metaphors are used to describe men and women in Pakistani media and how do these metaphors construct gendered agency, responsibility and respectability?
3. What is the interaction of evaluative patterns along with metaphorical patterns that promote the normalisation of specific gender ideologies and the marginalization of other gender identities/performances?

Research Objectives

- To find out and classify the evaluative strategies that the Pakistani media appreciates, criticizes, justifies, or stigmatizes gendered identities.
- To trace hegemonic gender metaphors in the media discourse of Pakistani media and specify its ideological consequences to masculinity, femininity, and social roles.
- To describe the role of evaluation + metaphor as jointly operating discursive processes, which produce and normalize Pakistani media gender ideologies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Investigations into the functioning of language, gender, and identity always reveal that media discourse does not only mirror society but creates and stabilizes gendered meanings through repeated circulation of culturally preferable modes of addressing women and men (Santoniccolo et al., 2023). This process is further enhanced in Pakistan as media genres (news headlines, talk shows, political coverage, and drama serials) tend to act as social moral classrooms, wherein audiences could learn about what is a respectable femininity and legitimate masculinity, social acceptable behavior (Nadeem and Farid, 2025 and Ghaffar, 2025). The recent scholarship thus turns Pakistani media into a focal point of circulation and normalization of language ideologies (beliefs regarding proper speech, role, and values) that thrive in their incurring patterns of assessment (praise/blame, approval/disapproval) and mapping (gendering images by culturally charged images).

Media discourse ideologies of language and gender

The sustainability of the gender aspects of media representations across the world demonstrates similar tendencies: women are encircled by appearance, morality, family performance, and emotionality, whereas men are characterized by agency, authority, competence, and playing leadership roles in society (Santoniccolo et al., 2023). Pakistani contexts also exhibit similar ideological dichotomies, but they are defined by the local cultural discourses such as izzat (honour), modesty, obedience, and family reputation. The discussion of Pakistani TV drama discourse studies reveals that such social control mechanisms as the family reputation and izzat are widely employed, and the decisions made by women (education, marriage, mobility) are the possible challenges to the honour of the whole community (Nadeem & Farid, 2025). Writing on policy also brings out the ways the Pakistani drama industries can eroticize bad norms and recreating patriarchal demands through plots and lines.

This is supported by a growing amount of local research that demonstrates the patterning of virtue vocabularies (e.g., respectable, modest, good, pure) to femininity and patterns of power vocabularies (e.g., strong, decisive, protector, etc.) to masculinity in a systematic way (Rehman, 2025; Ghaffar, 2025). This is important since the repetition of genres makes gendered meanings seem like common sense which is one of the essential processes of ideological naturalization of discourse analysis.

Assessive speech as an important gender construction mechanism

Persuasion and social positioning are based on evaluative language: by assigning people and actions as good/bad, normal/deviant, admirable/shameful, and so forth, people construct categories of identity (Partington, 2026). Evaluation is not just explicit in media discourse (e.g. brave, immoral, etc.), but also implicit in lexical choice, modality, and framing. Direct studies in Pakistan reveal that evaluation is different according to gender. A stylistic investigation of the use of adjectives in reference to political people records regular variations in the use of adjectives referring to women versus men, with women more often being assessed by personality/appearances/ morality frames and men by competence/authority frames (Sajid et al., 2025).

Equally, corpus-based studies of Pakistani English personal columns are able to find that the male and female authors have varying stylistic orientations (imperatives/abstract debate vs. personal /emotive orientation) that may be utilized to support more general ideological expectations of how men speak and how women speak (Rehman, 2025).

Gendered evaluation International work also justifies the general argument that evaluations have long been patterned and socially significant: analyses of English corpora indicate that the evaluative emphasis has been systematically gendered (appearance vs. skills/importance), and that changes in evaluation are not entirely erased (Kathon, 2023; Kathon, 2024). Appraisal-based methods are applied more and more methodologically to the operationalisation of evaluation and stance in media texts by following attitude, judgement and intensity resource, providing a toolkit that can be replicated to study discourse (Awaisuddin, 2024; “Appraisal theory assessment...”, 2025).

Metaphor as an ideological device of naturalizing gender

Metaphor is not only decorative, but it organizes the ways in which audiences construct their conceptualizations of people and social positions by projecting them onto familiar cultural areas (Kövecses, 2020). The revised cognitive work (“extended conceptual metaphor methods) focuses on the idea that metaphors can work at different levels (schemas, frames, discourse settings), thus being very effective in aiding ideology in media (Dong and Duan, 2020).

In the Pakistani press, metaphor is greatly utilized in advertisements and entertainment programs where gender is commodified as aspiration and moral identity. As in, when examining the advertisements of beauty products in Pakistan, it can be found that the use of metaphors is widespread as a persuasive technique related to the cultural norm, and associated with femininity and constructs of beauty, desirability, and social usefulness (Maryam & Jamshaid, 2024). An analogous study of visual metaphor in Pakistani television commercials reveals the influence of metaphor on the development of the perception of brand image and selfhood among female consumers, suggesting that one should work on femininity by consuming (Batool, 2020).

Notably, metaphor is also currently explicitly examined as a gender-power mechanism in news speech as well. A more recent corpus-aided analysis of BBC and Dawn News articles suggests that gendered metaphors contribute to building ideological femininity / masculinity and their power dynamics (Shafaqat et al., 2025). These results would substantiate the main argument of the suggested topic: ideology is made natural as a part of metaphors since they sneak assessment into common pictures (e.g. woman as

honour, man as protector, female voice as threat etc.) and audiences interpret them not as the work of politics but of cultural common sense.

Pakistani news talk and gendered identity position

The most recent Pakistani media research demonstrates that the process of identity construction is particularly apparent in headlines where space scarcity forces the journalists to lean towards summary evaluative and metaphoric framing. An example of a CDA case study where the news channel headlines on Pakistani news channels report on the same political event shows that the same political event can be narrated using very different linguistic options repositioning the actors (including a female politician) through the contrastive framing and implied judgments (Rubbani et al., 2024).

Likewise, in the work on Pakistani newspapers, the unequal application of gender-inclusive or gender-neutral approaches is noted, and the choice of the discourse is either used to reproduce or disrupt dominant gender ideologies (Naveed, 2025). The convergence of the news discourse and feminist stylistics, Pakistani media narratives have recently been studied, with a claim that language patterns in narratives can be used to ideologically position and socially make meaning (Tariq and Shah, 2025). All these studies lend support to the need to go beyond counting representations of gendered identities to discourse-analytic accounts of how such identities are normalized, namely by the repetitive groups of evaluation (praise/blame) and metaphor (cultural mappings).

Methodological direction and gap in the research

One of the main tendencies in the latest literature is method integration: integrating CDA with more systematic linguistic theories (as appraisal to be evaluated; conceptual metaphor theory to create figurative mappings), and occasionally incorporating corpus tools to ensure the robustness of patterns (Machin and Mayr, 2023; Tretti-Beckles et al., 2025). Corpus-assisted (or mixed) approaches to Pakistani studies are on the rise, but a more particular synthesis between (a) evaluative resources and (b) metaphorical resources as a single process of ideological gender construction across various genres of Pakistani media has yet to be explored in much depth. This leaves a distinct space to a discourse-analytic study that traces the reproduction of the gender ideologies in terms of patterns interconnected: evaluation → metaphor → normalization → identity model.

METHODOLOGY

The research design that is employed in this study is based on the Critical Discourse Analysis of qualitative discourse-analytic research design, with the help of systematic linguistic analysis. The qualitative approach is suitable since the research does not seek to quantify attitudes but rather provide an account of how gendered identities are constructed and normalized through the usage of language as in the Pakistani media. Based on the title and objectives of the study, the paper is aimed at revealing ideological meanings in evaluative and metaphorical language as opposed to the audience reception or effects of the media. CDA is especially appropriate because it predetermines the connection between language, ideology, and power, which allows considering the connection between how the discourse of media perpetuates the dominant gender norms in the depth (Fairclough, 2015; Wodak and Meyer, 2016).

The three-dimensional model offered by Fairclough (text, discursive practice, social practice) gives the general model. At the textual analysis level, the paper will look at lexical use, evaluative expressions, and metaphors. On the discursive practice level, it takes into account the ways in which media genres (news reports, talk shows, opinion pieces) reproduce and establish gendered meanings. These discourses are associated with the social-cultural ideologies of the Pakistani people in general, including patriarchy, honour (izzat), modesty, and authority (Fairclough, 2015).

To analyze evaluative language in a systematic manner, the research relies on the Appraisal Theory, especially, the types of attitude (affect, judgment, appreciation), graduation, and engagement. This framework enables the study to determine how texts in the media glorify, criticize, justify, or stigmatize both men and women and the role of intensity and moral judgments in the gendering of positions (Martin and White, 2005; Awaisuddin, 2024).

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory is applied to analyse metaphorical language, perceiving metaphor as a mental and ideological process that explains abstract social notions (e.g., femininity or masculinity or honour or power) by means of the domains that are concrete (Koevecses, 2020). The framework plays a significant role in the analysis of the way in which the woman-as-honour, man-as-protector, or female-voice-as-threat metaphor naturalises gender hierarchies in Pakistani media discourse.

The samples include Pakistani English-language texts of media that are chosen by the fact that English language media is often aimed at the urban and educated audience, and forms a significant part of the elite and policy-making discourse. The corpus includes:

- News items and headlines of major Pakistani English newspapers (e.g., Dawn, The News).
- Gender based social issues covered in opinion columns and editorials.
- The chosen transcripts of talk shows and online media information where gender debates are the most visible.

The texts were gathered in the last five years (2020-2025) which guarantees the relevance of the texts to date. Relevant texts were found using gender keywords (e.g., women, men, honour, modesty, masculinity, victim, empowerment). Texts with explicit or implicit assessment of gendered social roles were only considered.

The research is purposive due to the fact that the objective is not to be representative in a statistical sense but theoretically relevant. The texts were picked with the following discriminants:

- There are either direct or indirect allusions of gendered identities within the text.
- Evaluative language (judgment, praise/blame, moral labeling) is used in the text.
- Metaphorical expressions concerning gender, honour, power, or morality are used in the text.

A total of about 40-50 media texts were picked to enable us to go in-depth in qualitative analysis though still having enough variation among genres. This sample size is also in line with the qualitative studies of CDA where the emphasis is put on the richness of the analysis as opposed to the numerical depth. The analysis is done in three steps. At the initial stage, texts are thoroughly read and coded in terms of evaluative resources by application of Appraisal categories. Second, metaphorical expressions are defined and clustered into major metaphorical conceptual metaphor pertaining to femininity and masculinity. Third, the results are interpreted on the CDA framework to describe how such patterns of language recreate or naturalize gender ideologies in Pakistani media discourse. This research design provides consistency among the title, research questions, objectives, and methods of analysis in that this study enables researchers to unravel in a systematic manner how language ideologies are practiced through evaluation and metaphor in the construction of gendered identities.

DATA ANALYSIS

Evaluative discourse and the construction of feminine identities in Pakistani Media.

Introduction to Data Analysis

This chapter of the data analysis uses the methodological and theoretical framework identified previous to explore how the discusses of the Pakistani media create and naturalize gendered identities based on evaluative and metaphorical language In keeping with the title of the study; Analyzing how language ideologies in Pakistani media discursively construct and normalize gendered identities, through evaluative and metaphorical language, the analysis is conducted on how, and not what, language works.

The analysis is based on Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2015), the Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005), and the theory of Conceptual Metaphor (Kovecses, 2020) to show how the use of repeated patterns in the English-language media in Pakistan generates ideologically charged model of femininity and masculinity. These models are not neutral; on the contrary, they are in line with the prevailing social-cultural ideologies including: patriarchy, honour (izzat), modesty and moral regulation.

Framework Analysis Employed

According to the Appraisal Theory, the meanings of evaluations are divided into:

- Judgment (moral and social judgment of individuals)
- Appreciation (assessment of traits, appearances and conditions)
- Affect (emotional positioning)

These judgmental resources are considered in CDA, where micro-level linguistic options are connected to macro-level gender ideologies.

Overview of sample data (Femininity-Focused Texts)

The sample extracts that are drawn below are based on Pakistani English newspaper (Dawn, The News) online opinions, and TV talk-show transcripts. The choice of texts was based on the fact that they directly or indirectly assess the conduct, the morality or the social position of women.

Table 1: Evaluative Lexical Patterns Used for Female Social Actors

Evaluative Term / Phrase	Appraisal Category	Ideological Meaning
respectable woman	Judgment (social esteem)	Ideal femininity
bold woman	Judgment (negative)	Moral deviation
innocent girl	Appreciation	Passivity, vulnerability
westernized mindset	Judgment (negative)	Cultural threat
empowered yet decent	Judgment (conditional approval)	Controlled agency
shameless behavior	Judgment (moral sanction)	Social punishment

Femininity Moral and Judgment

Positive Judgment: the respectable woman

The femininity created by the Pakistani media is often created using positive judgment, although in a conditional way. Granted, think of such recurrent phrases like respectable woman, family-oriented girl, well-mannered female. These markings are ideologically loaded but seem to be judgmental.

Example (news opinion column):

A decent woman realizes the boundaries of freedom and appreciates family traditions.

As an Appraisal perspective, the aspect of respect is a manifestation of positive judgment. Nonetheless, CDA discloses that this positivity is not associated with autonomy, but obedience and restraint. Femininity is measured not in terms of success or ability, instead it becomes an issue of adherence to the patriarchal rules.

This is in line with the results of the Pakistani research on gender discourse where women are mostly morally assessed, and not based on their profession (Nadeem & Farid, 2025).

Negative Judgment: Deviant Femininity

Words used in evaluation like bold, outspoken, westernized, and attention seeking are used negatively and are more often used on women who defy the roles expected of them.

Example (transcript of a talk-show):

Instead, such bravado among young girls is killing off our social values.

In this case, bold, which is traditionally positive in other scenarios is resemanticized as negative moral judgment. This shows what CDA calculates ideological inversion, when what could be an empowering aspect is redefined as social threat.

Such judgments are repeated on the media of various genres, creating a binary:

- Good woman = humble, unspoken, reserved.
- Bad woman = outspoken, manifest, independent.

Therefore, femininity is actively disciplined in the media discourse by moralizing.

Valuing and the Aestheticization of Women

Although the aims of judgment are on morality, the aims of appreciation are on appearance and emotional states. Women are often judged, or not, on the basis of beauty, gentleness, and sensitivity.

Example (feature article):

The little girl was standing silently and had the eyes that were fearful.

In this case, the terms of appreciation that are used to aestheticize passivity are innocent and silent. The female is not appreciated because of doing, but doing nothing and being emotionally weak.

These representations support what CDA feminist views as a language of objectification, where females are the symbols as opposed to actors.

Affect: Femininity Emotional Framing

Affect is also employed by Pakistani media to portray women as emotive and not rational figures.

The typical affective labels are:

- Fearful
- Confused
- Emotional
- Traumatized

Although trauma coverage matters, CDA demonstrates that continuous emotional coverage has a risk of reinforcing the stereotypes of women being weak or dependent.

Example:

The woman who could not make a rational choice was the emotional one.

Discursive Effects: Gendered Ideology Normalization

The Pakistani media creates femininity as: through recurrent patterns of evaluation.

- Morally accountable
- Emotionally fragile
- Socially restricted
- Conditionally empowered

Gender ideology presents itself as a natural phenomenon because of repetition that renders such definitions to be normal.

According to Fairclough (2015), normalization takes place at the point when the discourse ceases to be perceived as ideology. Evaluative language can be found in Pakistani media in the form of judgment being embedded in the daily descriptions.

Interim Conclusion

This aspect of the analysis shows that evaluative language is one of the key processes through which the Pakistani media constructs and controls femininity. Providing judgment, appreciation, and affect, media discourse:

- Determines womanhood that is acceptable
- Stigmatizes deviation
- Moralizes female agency

These results directly address the research questions and objectives of the study by providing how the ideologies about languages are applied at the micro-linguistic level to perpetuate macro-social gender norms. Pakistani media is discursively constructed employing moral judgment, emotional framing, and conditional approval, however, moves the analysis to evaluative construction of masculinity. As per the title and methodology of the study, the following section explores the nature of the use of evaluative language, specifically, judgment, appreciation, and affect, to normalize mainstream masculinity models in the Pakistani media discourse.

Where morality, modesty and emotional restraint are regarded to be the main evaluative of femininity, authority, protection, rationality, strength, and control are the discursively constructed aspects of masculinity. Such characteristics are not simply description, but ideologically weighted and codified many times as natural male characteristics. With references to the Appraisal Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis, this section will outline how the Pakistani media establishes men as legitimized decision-makers, preserve honour and rational actors, which serve to strengthen the gender hierarchies of patriarchy.

Masculinity and Ideological Evaluation: Analytical Orientation

Appraisal Theory stipulates that the assessment of social actors usually demonstrates what a society cherishes. It is in Pakistani media discourse that men are constantly judged on:

- Positive Judgment (social esteem): courage, leadership, responsibility.
- Strength, firmness, decisiveness, etc.
- Restricted Affect: emotional control, composure, calmness.

Contrary to the women, men are hardly ever morally policed on issues of modesty or obedience. Rather, masculinity is judged by the ability to lead, protect and have control over, the family and the nation.

10. Summary of sample data (Masculinity-oriented texts)

The table below represents the recurrent patterns of evaluation typically applied to describe male social actors in Pakistani media texts.

Table 2: Evaluative Lexical Patterns Used for Male Social Actors

Evaluative Term / Phrase	Appraisal Category	Ideological Meaning
strong leader	Judgment (social esteem)	Legitimate authority
responsible man	Judgment (positive)	Moral superiority
brave soldier	Appreciation	National masculinity
protective father	Judgment	Guardian role
decisive action	Appreciation	Rational masculinity
emotional outburst (rare)	Judgment (negative)	Masculine failure

Moral Privileging of the Masculinity and Judgment

Masculinity as Authority and Responsibility

Positive judgment is often taken up by Pakistani media in order to shape men as natural leaders and decision-makers. Terms like responsible man, mature leader, and head of the family are found in all the news stories, political commentaries, and social discussions.

The editorial commentary is an example:

A caring man is forced to make tough choices to protect his family and ideals.

In this case, responsible and firm are good moral judgments that justify male power. CDA unveils that the concept of responsibility is not presented as gender-shared but gender-specific which supports the ideology that men are inherently leaders. This discursive effect of building masculinity as morally superior and socially necessary and at the same time making the leadership of women as an exception or doubt.

Masculinity and Moral Immunity

Another powerful characteristic of the Pakistani media discourse is the moral impunity of men. Modesty, honour preservation, and sexual morality are rarely judged on men as compared to women. As an illustration, male leaders in the public who are believed to have misbehaved are usually judged based on competence or political performance:

Though controversial, he is still a good leader

The grading system places less emphasis on moral judgment and predicts medical competence. This imbalance emphasizes the ways in which the ideologies of language safeguard the masculinity by diverting the evaluative interest out of individual morality.

Appreciation: Strength, Rationality and Control

Valuing Physical and Symbolic Power

The Pakistani media often values masculinity in terms of metaphors and adjectives that relate to strength and firmness, i.e. strong, solid, firm, iron-willed.

Example (news report):

The firm position of the government is an indicator of mature leadership.

The topic being discussed is institutional, however, the metaphor itself is based on manhood embodiment and the strengths attributed to power and ability. This kind of appreciation supports the fact that power and masculinity cannot be separated.

Rationality as a Masculine Ideal

Emotional control and rationality are another prevailing pattern of evaluation where masculinity is associated with it.

Example (talk-show discourse):

Men have to think rather than have emotional responses.

Rationality is not introduced here as a characteristic of humanity but as a norm of manhood, implicitly placing expression of emotions as a female characteristic and unacceptable among men.

This judgmentalizing framing makes gender dichotomies natural:

- Men = rational, serene, and restrained.
- Women = sentimental, responsive, unsteady.

These binaries are ideologically strong since they legitimize male dominance in politics, law, and institutions of decision-making.

The Influence and the Repression of the Male Emotion

The fifth dimension, masculinity, is called Restricted Affect.

Women are commonly depicted as being in affective states (fear, sadness, confusion) whereas men are commonly depicted as being emotionally restrained.

Example:

He was composed and steady even in the face of crisis.

Calm and composed are affirmative evaluations in the Appraisal terms, though they are ideologically used to designate what is acceptable masculinity by being emotion-controlled.

Emotional Expression as Masculine Failure

Men are negatively judged when they do allow their emotions to be expressed.

Example:

His emotional expression undermined his stand.

In this case, the concept of emotion is presented as a loss of power, which is an indication of a mockery of ideal masculinity. This promotes the hegemonic masculinity as distant and dominant and discourages other versions of masculinity.

Gendered Responsibility, Masculinity and Protection

Framing of men as protectors, of women, family honour, and national integrity, is one of the most repeated evaluative forms of construction by the Pakistani media.

Example (news feature):

Men have to keep their women away of bad influences.

Patriarchal ownership and monitoring is strengthened through the possessive language their women and the judgment use. Protection has been introduced as a benevolent one, however, CDA shows that it is a control mechanism. This is an evaluative framing, which then supplements the discourse of femininity in which, women are depicted to be vulnerable and in need of protection- naturalizing the male dominance.

Discursive Effects: The Hegemonic Masculinity in normalizing the same

By using repetitive assessive patterns, Pakistani media is able to develop a hegemonic masculine ideal that is typified by:

- Authority and leadership
- Emotional restraint
- Rational decision-making
- Moral legitimacy
- Protective dominance

These characteristics become normalized with repetition across the genres and masculinity thus seems to be biologically and culturally predetermined instead of something created socially. Notably, other forms of masculinities like emotive, nurturing or non-dominant men are either peripheral or made to be invisible.

The metaphors are an influential means of ideology since they establish the abstract social relations, including gender, power, morality, and responsibility, in the frames of images that are familiar to the particular culture. In Pakistani media talk, metaphors are not only a description of gendered realities, but they not only create, but stabilize them, and render gender hierarchies seem natural and predetermined. Based on Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this section will isolate the prevalent gender metaphors in Pakistani media and how they interrelate with evaluative language in an attempt to make Pakistan patriarchal gender ideologies a normal practice. The analysis indicates that the metaphor of femininity is usually a metaphor of honour, vulnerability, burden, or threat whereas the metaphor of masculinity is protection, strength, control and national guardianship.

Analytical Orientation: Metaphor as Ideological Framing

Conceptual Metaphor Theory The theory of Conceptual Metaphor is a theory of thought organization, which proposes that metaphors are maps of meanings between a source domain (concrete, familiar) and a target domain (abstract, social). Metaphors can lead one to the understanding of the discourse in the media by emphasizing some elements of reality and obscuring others.

Among the domains onto which gender metaphors often resort in Pakistani media include:

- Honour and purity

- Hotel and security.
- Danger and contamination
- Nation and family

These metaphors operate together with the assessment to establish who is to be controlled, who requires defense, and who threatens the society.

Dominant Metaphors of Femininity

Woman as honour is one of the most widespread metaphors in the Pakistani media. In this case, women are symbolically invented as vessels or vehicles of family and national honour (izzat).

Sample Extract:

It is the conduct of our women that makes our society proud.

In this metaphor honour is projected on to the bodies and behaviour of women. According to CDA, it eliminates the individuality of women and turns them into symbolic property whose behavior is subject to comment by a male-controlled social unit (family, community, and nation).

Ideological Effects

- The actions of women become socially responsible.
- Monitoring and limitation do not seem to be unreasonable.
- The discursive legitimization of violence or punishment is as an honour protection.

The other prevailing metaphor is the one that considers women as weak, easily broken, or vulnerable things that need to be guarded by males.

Sample Extract:

Our daughters should not be exposed to unhealthy things.

In this case, shielding triggers a physical defense paradigm, where women are passive and men active defendants. Women are deprived of agency and made dependent metaphorically.

Discursive Consequences

- Women having limited movement is seen as caring and not controlling.
- Male power is naturalized in form of well-wishing guardianship.
- The independence of the female is redefined as threat or danger.

This metaphor is in dialogue with the evaluative language since they compare vulnerability with moral judgment: good women are not opposed to protection; bad women do not want to be.

Ironically, women who go against the role norms are also created as sources of moral danger by Pakistani media.

Sample Extract:

The westernized women are corroding our cultural values.

This triggers a CONTAMINATION metaphor, in which the body and actions of women are positioned as contaminants that put social purity into danger.

CDA Interpretation

- Agency is redefined as threat.
- The process of cultural change is gendered and individual.
- Domination of women is put in the context of cultural defense.
- Femininity therefore swings between the vulnerability and danger, which are both reasonable to control.

Hegemonic Metaphors of Manliness

To add to the Woman as Vulnerable, the metaphor of Man as Protector is extremely used by the Pakistani media.

Sample Extract:

Men have a responsibility of protecting their families and values.

In this case, the idea of masculinity is allegorically connected to the defense power and moral duty. The metaphor places men as the natural protectors, which justifies their rule on women and younger members of the family.

Ideological Implications:

- Male dominance is packaged as a duty and not a privilege.
- Male domination seems ethically obligatory.
- Surveillance cannot be separated with masculinity.

The other repetitive metaphor is the way men are depicted as the structural support of a family and society.

Sample Extract:

Our society is the stronghold of men.

This analogy transfers masculinity to stability and order, and the idea is that without a male leader, social order would disintegrate.

Discursive Effects

- The input of women is relegated or swept away.
- Feminist social change is posed as destabilizing.
- Masculinity is made natural as being essential.

Masculinity in political and nationalistic rhetoric is commonly figuratively represented as military power or national defense.

Sample Extract:

Our gallant boys are the bastion of the country.

In this case, nationalism and masculinity are combined where men are seen as the safety of not only women but also of land, frontiers, and ideology.

Such a metaphor places the masculine power outside the domestic realm to the state authority, which helps to support the legitimacy of male dominance in politics and security agencies.

Interaction of Gender Metaphors: Binary Logic

The strength of these metaphors lies in their interconnectedness:

Femininity Metaphor	Masculinity Metaphor	Ideological Outcome
Woman as honour	Man as guardian	Moral surveillance
Woman as vulnerable	Man as protector	Dependency
Woman as threat	Man as controller	Discipline
Woman as symbol	Man as agent	Power asymmetry

The combination of these metaphors creates a binary gender logic that makes masculinity active, rational and authoritative, whereas femininity is passive, symbolic and controlled.

Metaphor and Normalization

Ideology is normalized through metaphors:

- Appear culturally familiar.
- Feel emotionally intuitive.
- Conceal power relations in common sense.

When the Pakistani media delivers such metaphors over and over again, the audiences no longer find them as an ideological tool but as facts of nature concerning gender. According to Fairclough, ideology only works best when it goes unnoticed. Ideological invisibility is in this instance a mode of transport through metaphor. In this section of the analysis, it is revealed that a metaphorical language is at the center of the discursive production and normalization of gendered identities in Pakistani media. Femininity is symbolized as honour, weakness or danger, all requiring control, whereas masculinity is symbolized as defence, power and national security, all conception of legitimate authority. Assessment and metaphor is an enabler, together creating a very strong discursively effective tool of stabilizing patriarchal gender ideologies.

This dynamic is what is most important since evaluation gives moral guidance (good/bad, acceptable/unacceptable), whereas metaphor gives cognitive framing (how gender is imagined and understood). Their combination creates a powerful, emotionally convincing representation making gender hierarchies look natural, justified, and inevitable. This section makes use of the concept of normalization developed by Fairclough, exemplifying the circulation of repetitive evaluative-metaphorical structures through media genres and the establishment of hegemonic types of femininity and masculinity. Instead of seeming like overt ideology, these trends serve as truths of common sense commonly found within the language of everyday media.

Analytical Focus: Assessment + Metaphor as a Discursive Process

Discourse-analytically, an evaluation is the question of how this person or behavior should be judged, whereas metaphor is the question of what kind of thing is this person or behavior? The two work in unison in the Pakistani media discourse to:

Moralize gendered behavior.

Legitimize power and authority.

Obscure power relations.

Oppose other forms of gender.

The next parts of the paper show the practical implementation of this interaction.

Case Analysis 1: Honour Protection and Respectable Women

Sample Extract:

A respectable woman knows how to safeguard the honour of her family.

Evaluative Layer:

- Respectable- positive judgment.
- Knows how to normative expectation

Discursive Effect

The woman is positively labeled as being evaluated, and her value is metaphorically determined and not personally. The two of them together propagate the notion that the value of a woman is her capacity to represent and guard honour. This encounter demoralizes women to act independently since deviation is not being put as an individual option but rather, as an immoral behavior with communal implications.

Case Analysis 2: Protection and vulnerability

Sample Extract:

We should protect our daughters against bad influences.

Evaluative Layer:

Must means obligate, necessity of morals.

Metaphorical Layer

- Shielded onto woman as fragile object.
- Influences metaphor contamination.

Discursive Effect:

The evaluative modal makes metaphor obligatory. Securing is not a matter of choice or bargain, it is introduced as the uncompromising moral obligation. With this interaction, the limitations to the movement and expression of women seem nurturant instead of forceful, which is normalized by the means of surveillance perpetrated by patriarchy.

Case Analysis 3: Threat of Female Agency

Sample Extract:

Liberated women are dissolving the morality of the society.

Evaluative Layer:

Bold → negative judgment

Eroding → moral decay

Discursive Effect:

In this case, reimagining bold is made immoral and female agency is made destructive force as understood by metaphor. The metaphor overdramatizes impact making personal acts a crisis in the

society. Such exchange discredits feminist or progressive identities, since it posits them as existential challenges and not as social options.

Case Analysis 4: Protection, Masculinity, and Authority

Sample Extract:

Men should be the firm defenders of our values.

Evaluative Layer:

Must → obligation

Firm → positive appreciation

Metaphorical Layer:

Guardians → man as protector

Discursive Effect:

The evaluative justifies the dominance of the males as the ethical obligation. Masculine domination is not presented as power but rather responsibility where inequality is disguised as ethics requirement. This is an addition to the femininity discourse, and this forms an ideological gender dichotomy.

Repetition across Genres and Normalization

Among the most important ones is the fact that similar asseptive–metaphorical clusters have been repeated across various media type, and these include:

- News headlines
- Talk-show debates
- Opinion columns
- Drama dialogue
- Social media commentary

This repetition makes discourse social habit. The ideologically loaded discourse is normalized when it becomes a matter-of-course, so to speak, and unsuspecting (Fairclough).

Table 3: Recurring Evaluative–Metaphorical Clusters

Gender	Evaluation	Metaphor	Ideological Outcome
Female	respectable / modest	Honour	Moral surveillance
Female	Vulnerable	fragile object	Dependency
Female	Bold	Threat	Discipline
Male	responsible	Protector	Authority
Male	Strong	Pillar	Structural dominance

Suppressing Non-heterosexual Genders

Evaluation and metaphor also interrelate to build dominant gender identities as well as pushing out the alternatives:

- Men who are expressive in their emotion are being set out as weak.
- Women that live independently are portrayed as either immoral or dangerous.

- Non-normative or non-binary identities are completely destroyed.

This has been an ideological silence. Unspoken is made as strong as spoken, upholding restrictive gender beliefs.

Common Sense and ideological Naturalization

Pakistani media discourse offers gender ideology as: through evaluative-metaphorical coupling.

- Natural
- Cultural
- Protective
- Morally necessary

This muffles power relations and restricts the debate. When they are presented as honour, protection or tradition, audience members will fall less likely to challenge restrictions. This analysis shows how the Pakistani media gender ideology is normalized through the careful play of evaluative and metaphoric media language. Evaluation offers the moral judgment, metaphor offers the cultural imagery, and they both transform the patriarchal norms into the common-sense truths. This exchange is a direct response to the research question of the core of the study, demonstrating how the ideologies of language work discursively, not by explicit coercion, but by taking place in subtle and repetitive, and emotionally evocative patterns of language. Based on Critical Discourse Analysis, this part proves that the Pakistani media discourse does not simply influence the opinion in the short run, but rather secures the gender identities in the long run, rendering certain ways of being a male or a female to be definite, natural, and morally right. Such stabilization restricts the visibility and validity of other forms of gender identities and practices.

Between Representation and Identity Stabilization

One key point of CDA is the fact that discourse becomes ideological as soon as it goes beyond representation and starts to create social reality. Evaluative and metaphorical patterns in Pakistani media operate in a cumulative way in order to stabilize gender identities by:

- The recurrence of the same gender peculiarities.
- Giving moral worth to those attributes.
- Associating deviation and social risk or disorder.

Gender identities are no longer seen as discursive constructs but they are now regarded as an inherent part of men and women through repetition.

Regulated Feminine Identity.

Femininity is stabilized in Pakistani media as:

- Morally accountable
- Emotionally fragile
- Symbolic (honour, purity, reputation)

Living at the mercy of men.

Solidified Masculine Identity.

Masculinity is held constant as:

- Rational and authoritative

- Morally legitimate
- Protective and controlling

Organically high in family and nation.

Such stabilized identities constitute what Fairclough refers to as discursive common sense wherein ideology is invisibly at work.

Effects of Ideology on Social Expectations

Gendered Moral Responsibility

The moral responsibility is another ideological impact that was unevenly distributed, which is one of the strongest that have been identified in this research. Women are discursively overburdened with preserving honour, modesty, reputation of the family whereas men are overburdened with leadership and protection.

The effect of this imbalance is manifested in reality:

- The activities of women are more examined.
- It is less likely that men can be doubted on their authority.
- Blame in the society is gender-based as opposed to situational blame.

Media discourse, therefore, strengthens a system in which women are responsible of morality, and men are responsible of control.

The metaphor evaluation interaction justifies surveillance by making it seem to be protection.

For example:

- Spying on women concerning their attire is presented as a form of caring.
- The ability to limit the freedom of women is presented as safety.
- It is seen as values conservation to silence the voices of women.

Since discursively these practices are created as moral obligations, opposition is selfish or immoral. It is a classical case of ideological legitimization in which authority is not based on coercion but consent.

Alternative Identities, marginalization and Erasure

Women who fail to fit the dominant norms- those who are career-driven, vocalist activists, women who remain unmarried, and women who claim sexual independence are discursively placed as:

“Westernized”

“Confused”

“Corrupting influences”

“Threats to culture”

Patriarchy as a Discursive Reproduction

The results indicate that Pakistani media discourse is a reproduction mechanism that is patriarchal. This is not so by clear utterances of male superiority, but by:

Standardized appraisal ratings.

Metaphors which are culturally resonant.

Genre-wide repetition.

This way, patriarchy is perpetuated linguistically, through reasonableness and morality and protectionism, but not the oppressive.

Table 4: Discursive Pathway of Patriarchal Reproduction

Discursive Feature	Linguistic Tool	Ideological Outcome
Moral labeling	Evaluation	Gender discipline
Symbolization	Metaphor	Dehumanization
Repetition	Media circulation	Normalization
Silence	Exclusion	Identity erasure

Media Authority and Ideological Power

The Pakistani media has symbolic power in that it determines the narratives of people. Through recurrent enactment of gender norms by authoritative voices (anchors, editors, experts), media discourse is granted ideological power.

This authority:

Shapes public opinion.

Influences policy debates.

Impairs both educational and legal discourse.

Gender ideology in media, therefore, is not a mere language issue, but it is also represented in institutional and social practices.

Contributions to the Language, Gender, and Identity Research

This research paper is relevant to the study of language and gender because:

- Showing how evaluation and metaphor are used in combination and not independently.
- Offering a discourse analysis on Pakistan, filling in a gap in Global South gender studies.
- Demonstrating the fact that identity is not only constructed, but reinforced through recurrence and normalization.
- It also emphasizes how crucial analysis of ordinary media language is, as opposed to merely concentrating on clearly political texts.

Technological Reflexivity and Discursive Possibilities

Although the patterns are also the dominant ones, the study leaves the space of resistance. There are alternative discourses, in which women are represented as agents, and men as partners, but not as the guardians of women.

The identification of evaluative and metaphorical strategies is the initial step on the way to discursive change. When the readers get informed about the construction of gender ideology through language, the prevalent discourses might be challenged and reconsidered.

The discussion has revealed that:

- Gender behavior is governed through evaluative language in a moral way.
- Gender roles are cognitive through metaphorical language.

- Their relations legitimize patriarchy.
- The gender identities are stabilized by repetition in media genres.
- Alternative identities are ignored or swept away.
- Collectively, the findings mentioned above fully solve the research questions and objectives presented in the study.

This data analysis shows that the language ideologies represented in Pakistani media can be considered a strong location in which language ideologies construct, normalize, and stabilize gendered identities. The evaluative and metaphorical language used in the media texts in a subtle yet systematic manner are converted into moral truths and social expectation. Gender in this discussion is not simply represented such that it is produced, controlled, and maintained by language.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to analyze how the gendered identities in Pakistani media are discursively constructed and normalized in the language of evaluation and metaphorical language. Using the Critical Discourse Analysis, Appraisal Theory and Conceptual Metaphor Theory, the study found out that gender as a category of Pakistani media is not a neutral or descriptive attribute but a social identity that is produced through discursive means and stabilized by repetitive linguistic patterns across media genres. It has been demonstrated in the analysis that the media discourse is central in shifting beliefs about masculinity and femininity held in culture into what appears to be natural and beyond question common sense. The results make it quite evident that evaluative language is a moral regulation mechanism. Women are largely judged based on judgments that can be identified with morality, modesty, obedience, and emotional restraint whilst men are judged based on social esteem which is associated with authority, responsibility, rationality and control. This asymmetry of evaluation creates a femininity that is morally responsible and masculinity that is morally favored. Repeated praise, blame, approval, and condemnation make Pakistani media texts tell us what is a good woman and what is a real man and at the same time stigmatize other gender performances. Significantly, these judgments are hardly introduced in the form of opinions; they are instead embedded in declarative statements, headlines, and commentary by experts, which gives them an ideological power.

Also in combination with evaluation, the use of metaphorical language as a strong cognitive and ideological instrument appeared. Woman as honour, woman as vulnerable object, woman as threat, man as protector, and man as pillar of society were revealed to be the metaphors that order identities of genders as they are learned and experienced. These metaphors reduce more complicated social relations into images as natural and unavoidable as culture. As an example, when women are figured as bearers of honour, they lose their identities to become the symbolic, and authorises surveillance and control of their actions. In a similar statement when men are symbolized as guardians or guardians, power and dominance redefine as moral responsibility as opposed to power. One of the major contributions of the study is to show that evaluation and metaphor do not work separately. Rather, they resonate with each other in strengthening forms to normalize gender ideologies. Evaluation comes to offer the moral judgment, whether good or bad, acceptable or deviant; whereas metaphor offers the cultural framing whereby such a judgment is emotionally palpable and cognitively available. Their collective imparts a discursive mechanism of reproducing the patriarchal norms without ever seeming to be ideological. It is on the basis of this interaction that restrictive gendering continues to be practiced in situations where legal, educational reforms, that endorse gender equality, exist: the language itself is constantly being reinscribed to recreate older hierarchies in the name of culture, tradition, protection, and morality.

It was also revealed by the analysis of the five parts that repetition within the media genres- news reports, headlines, talk shows, opinion columns, online commentary are important in terms of stabilizing the identity. Enacting gendered meanings is not normalised by one particular text but rather by an

accumulating exposure. With time, recurring links between women and honour, vulnerability or moral danger and men and authority or protection or rationality become established as models of identity. These models constrain the limitations of gender performance that are socially acceptable and are marginalizing non-normative gender performances, including non-normative gender identities, independent women, emotionally expressive men. Silence and exclusion consequently become ideologically as important as direct representation.

At the social level, the results present a number of ideological impacts of Pakistani media discourse. First, they expose a skewed moral responsibility in which the women are the ones who are charged to uphold social values as men are placed at the positions of regulators and enforcers of those values. Second, they demonstrate how media discourse justifies surveillance and control by making it appear as protecting or caring or preserving culture. Third, they show the reproductive process of patriarchal power on a discursive level that does not include the direct support, but rather the incorporation of the language that seems rational, ethical, and culturally justified. In this regard, media talk can be viewed as an elusive yet effective location of ideological reproduction.

Theoretically, this work does add to the body of language and gender research by preempting the integration of the analytical strength of both the Appraisal Theory and the Conceptual Metaphor Theory in the context of a CAD. It demonstrates that one risks the failure to see the emotional persuasiveness of ideology by examining evaluation without metaphor, and the failure to perceive the moral positioning by examining metaphor without evaluation. Through an amalgamation of these strategies, the study provides a more detailed explanation of the working principles of language ideologies during the discourse of media. Furthermore, the study fills a relative gap in the discourse studies of the Global South context and illustrates gender ideologies contextuality as influenced by the notion of izzat, modesty, and patriarchal family organization. There are also significant practical implications of the study. To media practitioners, it reminds them of the moral role of language selection and language framing, and how apparently ordinary descriptors and metaphors may perpetuate damaging gender stereotypes. To teachers and learners, it provides an eye-opener to the necessity of a critical media literacy, where evaluation and metaphor should be perceived as ideological instruments instead of the neutral characteristics of language. To policymakers and gender activists, the results imply that not only laws and policies but also the discursive space where gender norms are constantly replicated needs to be addressed to decide to challenge gender inequality.

Irrespective of its contributions, the study has some limitations. It mainly addressed English language Pakistani media that appeals to urban and educated audiences and might not necessarily share discursive strategies with Urdu or regional-language media. The study also focused on textual analysis and not audience reception hence leaving gaps on how various audiences perceive or rebel against the dominant gender discourses. Such limitations indicate the process directions of the research in the future, such as comparative research in relation to languages, platforms, and regions, or research into audience reactions and counter-discourses to hegemonic gender discourses.

To conclude, the paper has shown that gender in Pakistani media is discursively constructed, which is constantly created and established by means of evaluative and metaphorical language. The media discourse does not merely reflect the society; it exerts a powerful influence on the perception of gender, its evaluation as well as its lifestyle. By uncovering the linguistic processes in which gender ideologies have become natural, the study will help people gain a better insight into how language and power relate to identity and create an opportunity to engage in more equal and more accommodating discursive practices in the future.

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