

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Sexist Language of Men in the Proceedings of the Parliament House of Pakistan

Abstract

The current study focuses on the element of sexism in the discursive practices during formal enactment of statements and discussion in the Parliament House (PH) of Pakistan. The PH is an apex place for the constitutional developments, establishment and implementation. There are many debates on concurrent and instantaneous social, administrative and legal issues in the Parliament House where the members (either from the ruling party or the opposition) are observed to be reacting on each other's discursive practices, which in the long run, results in argumentation and other dissensions that might get inappropriate such as sexist, ethnic or linguistic or parochial remarks. The data is extracted in form of comments or remarks that have been exchanged in the discursive interactions by the male politicians pointing at the female members of the Parliament House. The study is analyzed by means of Critical Discourse Analysis and uses Mills' Model of Sexism (2008) for the analysis of data. The study is qualitative and the design is descriptive where the state of affairs has been simply expressed and stated. The comments have been taken following the principle of non-proportional quota of non-probability sampling. As soon as enough number of comments were collected, the researchers stopped collecting further data. The sources of the data collection were online web sources and the main stream news channels. The analysis of the study confirms that sexist language has been used against female politicians, who are formerly and solemnly selected as MPs. The analysis also reflected that the male politicians try to dominate the female members by making sexist remarks considering them as the *Other* which also reflects the colonial mind set of the male

politicians. The study recommends that awareness policy may be approved in order to sensitize politicians to the mutual respect and cooperation for the betterment of the homeland.

Keywords: Sexism, Gender Discrimination, Discourse, Sexist Language, Pakistan Politics, Critical Discourse, Sara Mills Mode

Introduction

In recent times, there has been widespread discrimination against women on a professional level. This is evident from a study conducted by United Nations, (Facts and Figures: Ending violence, 2020) where it has been observed that 82 percent of women have faced verbal harassment while serving in Parliament and, these included sexist remarks, inappropriate graphic images as well as threats and nearly 44 percent women have received rape and death threats aimed at their families (para. 19). The use of sexist language against women all over the world has been significantly noted in recent years. With specific regard to Pakistan, the research endeavors to analyse the meanings behind the sexist remarks that have been aimed towards female MPs through critical discourse analysis. Sexism is universal. It can be directed towards both males and females. In an article by (Barreto & Ellermers, 2015) sexism is the negative evaluation and representation of individuals on the basis of gender and subsequently, the development of attitudes, beliefs and behaviours for the same. (p. 289). Furthermore, in a speech by Leet in 1965 on 'Women and Undergraduate' at a US university, she defined sexism as

When you argue... that since fewer women write good poetry this justifies their total exclusion, you are taking a position analogous to that of the racist — I might call you seen this case a “sexist” Both the racist and the sexist are

acting as if all that has happened had never happened, and both of them are making decisions and coming to conclusions about someone's value by referring to factors which are in both cases irrelevant. (Lorenzi-Cioddi & Kulich, 2015, p. 2).

Although sexism against both genders has been widely common, however, for specification this article will focus on the identification of those sexist comments that female MPs have been a victim of.

Statement of the Problem

The current research derives to explore the use of sexist language aimed at women who play a pivotal role in the politics that govern the state affairs of Pakistan. Sexism has become a very prominent issue raised by women in not only politics but in other fields where women work with men as their counterparts. However, in recent times, growth in the use of sexist language has been observed. This problem is not being addressed properly. So, the research aims to identify and analyze sexist remarks aimed at females by male politicians. The study is meant to bring awareness in the hope that the use of sexist language may be abolished from the political sphere.

Significance of the Study

The study aims to focus on the sexist language that women working in politics are facing every day. The study aims to create awareness about the sexist language as depicted through the lens of women so that people will learn about sexist language and minimize the use of sexist comments when referring or talking to women.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are

- To analyse the discursive comments of women through the use of sexist (verbal) language.
- To explore the meanings of sexist comments made about females by male politicians in Pakistan.

Research Questions

The research aims to find the questions to

- Which sexist comments have been directed towards female MPs in the Parliament House of Pakistan?
- Are the comments made against female MPs stereotypical in nature?
- In a greater context, what do the meanings behind sexist comments being passed on women signify?

Delimitations

The study only deals with the analysis of sexist comments aimed at women in the sphere of politics. There are other fields where women have been victims of sexist language. For example, in sports; however, the main focus of this study is limited to analyzing the sexist comments made by male politicians towards female MPs.

Literature Review

Across the globe, language has always been one of the most fundamental instruments through which people connect with others. Human beings live in a

diverse world where the use of language has been classified as a utensil that helps regulate the daily activities of people. However, just like everything else, language cannot always present a positive outlook. Recently, language has received the medal of enacting negative effects on the gender of males, females, and Trans people. Here, it is vital to note that language comes from the interaction of people with other people with the inclusion of its binding force being morals, values and, the culture which link people together as a society because according to (Nordquist, 2020). In order to understand the language against gender, (He & Zhang, 2018) argued that language offending women is known to be the sexist language. (p. 424) which justifies the sexist slurs, vulgar language, and disgusting statements made against women. The problem with women being frequently targeted with sexist comments lies in the stereotypes against women that have been part of human culture. This is because of the fixed roles that women and men occupy in society. If a woman is not a housewife and tries to make a name for herself in a field where men are in majority, they are more prone to hearing insults and crude remarks from the opposite gender about how this is something fit for a man to do only. According to (Hentschel et al., 2019) it has been observed that men are considered more agentic whereas the word associated with women is communal, as men are considered to have stronger control over their goals whereas women are considered warm and kind and are only good at maintaining relationships. Furthermore, according to (Ellemers, 2014), if there is a single female among a group of men, her opinions are usually not taken into consideration. This accounts for the sexism and the discrimination against women. Over the years as women have progressed in male-dominated fields certain stereotypical names have been associated with them as well. According to Forbes

(Goudreau, 2011) mentions that males are hailed as leaders but women are labelled with stereotypes that weaken their position. These include being called an Ice Queen, cheerleader, or taken as being fragile and emotional.

In a paper (Dia & Xu, 2014) highlight the sexist comments that women in politics have faced from their male counterparts by comparing speeches between the presidential candidates for the 2008 American election. It was observed that women's speeches in the political sphere are more interfered with and, controlled by media as compared to male political speeches. Through using Speech reporting, it was concluded that the reporter does not present the exact content of Hillary's speeches but rather concludes it in "end silence" (p.714). In another paper by (Ahmed & Khan, 2010) a similar circumstance is highlighted where sexism in the Bangladesh language is analysed by using Sexist Analysis. The analysis is done through occupational lexis, animal imagery with connotations surrounding marriage where women are named as objects for their husbands who are considered as human. Another research by (Darweesh & Abdullah, 2016) analysed Trump's comments based on various features that he subjected women towards. For example, being posed as objects or negatively connoted like "Can you imagine that, the face of our next president? I mean, she is a woman" (p. 91). In another research by (Trimble, 2016) it has been highlighted that the Prime Minister of New Zealand Julia Gillard has publicly addressed this issue by accusing the Leader of the Opposition Tony Abbott of using sexist remarks against women in multiple speeches, saying that "And in so doing I say to the Leader of the Opposition, I will not be lectured about sexism and misogyny by this man. I will not..." (p. 304). Though, women in Australia hailed her speech as a triumph. In an article by (Rourke, 2012) one woman said that it is quite noteworthy for a prime minister to

acknowledge sexism in her own country because this shows that she will turn a blind eye to this matter anymore.

Recently in America, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Congresswomen was accused by Representative Yoho of sexism (para.3) saying that he called her ‘A fucking bitch’ (Broadwater & Edmondson, 2020). In Pakistan, discrimination based on sexism is very common though hardly recognized. According to an article by (Habib, 2019) it has been reported that women face sexism in their working places far too often, retelling that a girl Mehvash Zaidi who is an employee at a private bank addressed this issue by saying that she often hears sexist comments highlighting, “yeh larki hai is say nahi ho paye ga” [she is a girl and she would not be able to do it] and “hum larkiyoun ko itnay he paisay daytay hain” [we offer only this much salary to girls] (para. 9) from her male colleagues. Furthermore, according to another article by (Tirmizi, 2015), it has been observed that working women are usually housewives, females from backward areas and domestic violence victims. So, stereotypical representations pose a barrier women’s accomplishments. In conservative countries like Pakistan and Iran (Hancock, 2017), it is not easy to address sexism because there is a premeditated notion that women belong in the house. Compared to the working women of America or China, women mostly reprise the role of housewives in Pakistan.

There have been studies that highlight discrimination against women in the field of thespians or portrayal in media and dramas and, numerous small newspapers have highlighted sexism to an extent but no analysis has been done to tackle the interpretation behind sexism. The research has aimed to go deeper by analysing the meanings behind the sexist comments that have been directed towards female MPs through discourse analysis.

Theoretical Framework

For this research, two linguistic theories have been used I-e Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Van Dijk Socio-Cognitive Framework (2006). In relation to this, the practical model applied in analysing the sexist comments is Sara Mills Model of Sexism (2008). As explained below, the Socio-Cognitive Framework (2006) by Van Dijk acts as an interface to analyse sexist slurs in a discursive manner. The aim to critically analyse the comments is to identify the subtle sexism that is deeply prevalent in the political sphere. Since the mode of this research is to pinpoint practices through verbal discourse, hence, Critical Discourse Analysis is the primary factor in identifying the use of sexist language as an anomaly. Moreover, according to Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Model is used in proclaiming common sexist slurs as representations of women in the political arena of Pakistan.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

There have been many kinds of researches based on the feminist analysis using discourse as the binding tool yet there has been little progress made on the analysis of gender with the help of Critical Discourse Analysis. The basic notion of CDA is that it studies the type of language that is viewed as a social practice and a norm. Since Sexism is a new term hence, the research has aimed to understand the use of sexist language as a means of how women are discriminated against and exploited in the arena of politics by language.

A part of CDA is to analyse data by using various texts with the inclusion rhetoric, styles as depicted below in Mills Model of Sexism (2008) to hide power relations. Her model is used to not only identify if the comment is a sexist remark

or not. But is also a tool to help understand what works and the linguistic marker is used that categorises the specific remark as sexist.

Van Dijk Socio-Cognitive Framework (2006)

Van Dijk believes that the cognitive linkage between starting a conversation and the social relation that links these two aspects is an important aspect that helps in identifying the meaning of that particular debate. Social cognition is defined as (p. 265) ‘the beliefs or social representations that they [people] share with others of their groups or community’ (Ghachem, 2015). The socio-cognitive approach of Van Dijk analyses the similarities and dissimilarities between the said held ideologies, beliefs, and opinions of people in a society as it is part of CDA. Individual beliefs of people are said to be in parallel contrast to the credence of people as whole. It helps determine how people and how they live and interact among shared values and beliefs with others in the society.

Sara Mills Model of Sexism (2008)

Sara Mills Model of Sexism (2008) enunciates the very basis of the birth of sexism in a society of women and men. She lays down the principles as to what are the instances of sexist use. It is difficult to decipher when a comment has a sexist line because often comments, where women are targeted, render headless to the ears of those who make them. But in her model of sexism, Sara Mills lays down the criteria which can be used to identify if a comment is sexist or not.

The following are the elements of the Mills Model of Sexism:

- ☐ Negative evaluation of women
- ☐ Males as the norm,

- ☐ Comparing women to inanimate objects
- ☐ Semantic derogation/disparagement of women
- ☐ Women are no more than possessions
- ☐ Women are weak, lacking in strength and ability
- ☐ valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality
- ☐ glorifying the maltreatment/mistreatment of women
- ☐ Vulgarity when speaking about women
- ☐ Negative presentation of women

They are analyzed through the following markers:

- ☐ Rhetorical strategies
- ☐ Simile
- ☐ Sexist slurs and disgusting statements
- ☐ Semantic strategies
- ☐ Insult terms (i.e., sexualized terms like: bitch, bimbo, faggot, prostitute, etc. These terms incite violence towards and abuse of women).
- ☐ Proverbs
- ☐ Metaphor

- ☐ Disclaimers
- ☐ Words or statements with negative connotation
- ☐ Presupposition and implication
- ☐ Structural strategies

Research Design

The Research approach for the study is Qualitative. By using Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework (2006) and Sara Mills Model of Sexism (2008), the comments made by males towards females in numerous instances through the course of politics have been analysed.

Procedure and Tools

For this study, the researcher has extracted comments from different Parliament sessions. The data has been extracted through print media and electronic media. The data has been collected through various newspaper articles websites like Geo News, Samaa, The News, The Tribune, India today, Parhlopink, and Independent UK. The comments have been differentiated in various categories to see if they justify the sexist discrimination women have become a victim to in the political sphere of Pakistan.

Sexism is of two basic types i-e Overt Sexism or Direct Sexism, and Covert Sexism. This type of sexism can be easily identified through different linguistics markers that portray the discrimination of women openly. Covert Sexism is indirect sexism. This type of sexism is covered up in sentences through the use of humorous and ironic phrases. (Darweesh & Abdullah, 2016). On account of

various comments, the research has analysed the comments of women based on the negative evaluation of them as weak humans, objectified as possessions, and not as individual human beings. Moreover, the comments have been analysed based on statements, proverbs, metaphors, and similes to identify the kind of sexist remarks that have been directed at women by their fellow males.

Data Analysis/Result

Negative evaluation of women

1- "Do not ask these women to stop talking, speaker; they will fall ill if they don't talk continuously." (Source 1)

In a National Assembly session, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq said to the women lawmakers to ("Asifa Bhutto demands apology", 2017) "keep quiet or go outside the assembly if they wanted to continue talking." (para. 2) In response to this statement Khurshid Shah, lawyer and member of the National Assembly said that according to his evaluation, women will fall ill if they do not talk continuously. By using the word 'ill' he has used negative lexicalization to denote women in general. This comment has no context. It has got nothing to do with the session of the assembly. It is a wrong thing to say and highlights the sexism prevalent in the assembly when not even the Speaker is willing to identify and rectify the problem. Furthermore, it has also been reported that Khurshid Shah hurled another sexist remark in relation to this comment, (Asifa Bhutto demands apology, 2017) saying, "barring women from talking in the House would create trouble for us men in the home." (para. 3) implying that a woman is a 'chatter-box' (a stereotypical notion made against women for centuries) and if they are refrained from being given the opportunity to speak, they would then turn towards their

husbands to chatter. By using a negative connotation in the statement, Khurshid Shah condemns women from speaking as it is a sign of 'trouble' for men. This comment is a clear example of subtle sexism which according to (Swim & Cohen, 1997) is "characterized by openly unequal and harmful treatment of women that goes unnoticed because it is perceived to be customary or normal behaviour." (p. 104) CDA enforces the fact that according to an article by (Sikander & Hussain, 2019), it has been deduced by Fairclough that power is in the control of those who at the top of the hierarchy and they tend to constrain the ones below them. Here, Khurshid Shah and Speaker Sadiq Ayaz both tend to exercise their power of sitting in the Parliament to subdue the voice of a woman who is deserving of the same stature as him.

Males as the (social) norm

1. "Like a spoiled rich girl, she has no control over her tongue" (Source 2- Part a)

Fawad Chaudhry, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting threw this sexist remark towards Maryam Nawaz, a Pakistani politician on live television. In a debate to determine which party is the best, Fawad Chaudhry chose to get personal by using a negative connotation of a 'spoiled rich girl', which is another proverb used to identify women, indirectly stating that she has been dependent on her father's wealth so she knows nothing about politics. This is why she blabbers without knowing the actual depth of the matter hence, using the phrase that she has 'no control over her tongue'. Instead of challenging her with facts and figures based on political numbers, he chose to attack her personally.

Women are weak, lacking in strength and ability

1- “Maryam has never managed a kitchen in her entire life. She lived in her father’s house and he ran the household.” (Source 2- Part b)

Fawad Chaudhry threw a sexist remark towards Maryam Nawaz, this time raising his finger to comment on her capability of handling things as a woman. To target a woman based on her ability to do certain things and not others is no criteria to determine her ability to hold a position. Nobody has the right to blatantly point out if a woman can do certain things or even if she can so why does she do that and not that. Also, making a sexist statement, without knowing if Maryam Nawaz can handle the kitchen of her house or not holds no validation of its truthfulness. In the next statement, Fawad Chaudhry has further said that she is dependent on her father for survival, claiming (without proof) that she used to sit idle while her father ran the business affairs. In a simpler context, according to Fawad Chaudhry, if a woman cannot manage the kitchen of her house, she has no right to aim for a position in the public office which is a misogynist approach.

Semantic derogation/disparagement of women

1- “Mr. Speaker! Tell the tractor trolley to be quiet,” (Source 3)

Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khawaja Asif passed on a sexist remark towards Shireen Mazari, Minister for Human Rights of Pakistan during the National Assembly session. He used semantic derogation of the word ‘tractor trolley’ to tell her to ‘shut-up’, refraining her from giving her opinion in the House to which she has full right to do so. He has vividly supported that women have no right to freedom of speech. Using insulting terms and negative lexicalization of words and calling female politicians by various derogatory names is not novel in

the political arena of Pakistan. For example, previously, Khawaja Asif has also called Begum Mehnaz Rafi (member of PLM-N) “penguin” (para. 7) just because of the limp in her walk. (Zaidi, 2016) In another case, Hassan Nisar (a journalist) said his friend preferred calling Shireen Mazari as “bulbul” meaning “nightingale” (in Persian and Arabic) but he preferred to refer to her as (para. 11) “Bull Bull’ referring to the animal which is disgraceful (Talat, 2016). Not only this, the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif has also referred to Benazir Bhutto as “Yellow taxi” in the National Assembly session regarding her yellow clothes. The use of this word is downright vulgar because it refers to a “prostitute” (para. 3) and to refer a woman by this word, prostitute or not is downright appalling and sexist. (Naveed, 2018).

Women are no more than possessions

1. “There is silver lining for IK, Tractor trolley & newly acquired dumper can be used for hauling political garbage. No additional effort/expense” (Source 4- Part a)

Khawaja Asif made sexist comments by calling Shireen Mazari a “Tractor trolley” and Firdous Ashiq Awan as “dumper” which is downright insulting. Furthermore, if this was not enough, he dared to refer to them as toys of Imran Khan’s government to be used for collecting and dumping political garbage without much difficulty. To call a woman ‘dumper’ and then to refer to her as a collector of political nonsense shows means that women are considered as a sidekick. In the eyes of Khawaja Asif women have no voice, no mind or ability of their own to claim public office and only men are appropriate for the job because they are far more capable.

Valuing women based on their appearance rather than their intelligence or personality

1- “If Firdous baji was to wash her face, the true her would come out from behind the makeup, meaning that instead of Firdous baji, Firdous Khan will emerge.”

(Source 5- Part a)

Talal Chaudhry, a former member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, having served as Secretary for Information Technology directed this comment towards Firdous Ashiq Awan who serves as Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Instead of reprimanding the latter female politician based on work, he chose to insult her by commenting on her appearance, hinting that if she washes her face, after all the make-up, the world will see a ‘man’ instead of a woman.

Here, Talal Chaudhry insults Firdous Ashiq Awan in two ways. Note that the word ‘Baji’ in the Urdu language means ‘Elder sister’. He uses this word against her to aim at her age, referring to the presupposition of indirectly insulting her which he has no right to do so. Secondly, the word ‘Khan’ is a surname used in the Pushto language, spoken in the northwestern region of Pakistan. Though, women hailing from these families have the name ‘Khan’ attached to their first name, yet, the word is always associated with the name of a man. Here, the shift from the word ‘Baji’ to ‘Khan’ is an explicit example of Overt Sexism, which according to an article by (Nayef & El-Nashar, 2015) is defined as “any utterance that contains clear and unambiguous language that refers to women in any negative way” (p. 165). By entirely changing the gender of the female politician from female to male, he has insulted the identity of the woman, making her image

doubtful in the minds of others. This kind of connotation is wrong and strictly condemned because, in a conservative country like Pakistan, allegations of these sorts can become taboo, resulting in disrespect on the part of the woman.

2- “It will be better if you first transform your masculine voice into a more feminine one,” (Source 4- Part b)

Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan hurled this comment towards Shireen Mazari who is the current Minister of Human Rights of Pakistan during a session on water and power. This is another derogatory remark aimed at the female politician that has no relation with her job or profession. Furthermore, by commenting that her voice needs to be tuned to a more feministic type, he has insulted the personality trait of the politician. This shows that no matter how much credited Shireen Mazari is for her work, that is not enough since Khawaja Asif used the phrase “It will be better if you *first...*” highlighting that in his opinion there is a specific criterion to admit females in the Parliament House which is based on the extent of femininity of women registered as kind, loving, soft-spoken.

3- “You look like a veritable parrot” (Source 6- Part a)

Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad, the current Minister for Interior of Pakistan passed this comment towards the late Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto during a National Assembly session. According to journalist Nusrat Javeed, it is reported to have been said that Bhutto had donned on a green shirt and white shalwar, to which he made this crude sexist remark. It is to be noted that for emphasis, he used the word ‘veritable’ metaphorically associating her green colour with that of parrot, alluding to comment on her appearance.

Glorifying the maltreatment/mistreatment of women

1- “Jootiya maar ke nikalein ge Islamabad se is ko.” (Source 7)

Shiekh Rasheed, Minister for Interior of Pakistan hurled another sexist comment towards then Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto by protesting in a public rally to throw her out of the House. During the protest, he said this sentence translated as “We will kick her out of Islamabad.” (Khan, 2018) which received a hail of applaud and cheers from his fellow members, supporting him fully and not caring in whichever way she gets kicked out as long as she is gone. The use of the word “Jootiya” translates to “Shoes” in English. This word is a connotation of vulgar language implying that they will beat her with shoes and kick her out of the capital. This is an insult that glorifies the beating of women to attain public office.

Vulgarity when speaking about women

1- “*I told her there is nothing to touch anyways*” (Source 5- Part b)

Abid Sher Ali, a member of Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz aimed this disgusting statement towards Minister of Human Rights, Shireen Mazari during a protest in his hometown. Accordingly, Shireen Mazari had asked him to keep a distance from her but instead of respecting her and apologising, he chose to reply with this vulgar remark. The disturbing notion in this statement is the fact that he is saying this so proudly in his rally, without realising that what he is saying is wrong or sexist. Firstly, to comment on someone’s appearance based on the fact that they are attractive enough to touch or not is disrespectful. It shows how one aims to degrade a woman by referring towards her body which no one has the right to do so. Secondly, insinuating with the word ‘touch’ is downright insulting in itself

since it clearly shows the insult he aimed towards her and that too in the public workplace.

2- "I will strip off your clothes and will do the same to your mother too" (Source 8)

Hafiz Hamduallah, a member of the religious party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam hurled this threat towards Marvi Sirmed, a human rights activist live on national television. The topic of discussion was honour killings of women in Pakistan and when Marvi Sirmed supported the host in saying that religious scholars have failed to protect the rights of the women, Hafiz Hamdullah insulted her by giving her a rape threat mentioned above and then when she asked if he would give the same threat to the women in his own family he stood up was about to hit her if not stopped by another guest on set. Marvi Sirmed herself tweeted the words (Cockburn, 2016) "tumhaari shalwaar utaar doon ga aur tumhaari maan ki bhi." (para. 8) Threatening a woman on national television and that too with rape not only is an insult but credited abuse and violence towards that woman because this sexist remark is not a joke, and one against which serious action needs to be taken.

3- "...Her own sister Maria Toorpekai, who is a squash player wears shorts in tournaments." (Source 9)

Fawad Ahmed Chaudhry, the current Minister for Information and Broadcasting commented on the sister of Ayesha Gulalai, who is a former member of the National Assembly of Pakistan, during a live political talk show. In response to an argument between her and then prime-minister candidate, Imran Khan, Fawad intervened to give his two cents in the matter by commenting on her. It is

important to know that in a conservative country like Pakistan, the use of the negatively connotated word ‘shorts’ to refer to a woman is considered extremely vulgar and offensive. If translated in Urdu language, shorts mean ‘nikkar’ which is used for ‘boy shorts’, not for women. By using this phrase on live TV he is trying to use a rhetorical strategy to condemn that her character is tainted.

4- “In airports abroad, they also strip-search you. Is that the international standard she wants,” he responded (Source 6- Part b)

Sheikh Aftab, a senior member of the National Assembly of Pakistan said this to Shireen Mazari, Minister of Human Rights of Pakistan during a discussion on the security measures observed at Islamabad Airport. This is a downright vulgar comment to make towards a female political representative of the country. It is important to note that the usage of the word ‘strip-search’ according to Merrium-Webster Dictionary means to search a person for weapons or illegal weapons “by requiring the person to remove some or all clothing.”The irony in the situation supports the fact that Shiekh Aftab has absolutely no shame in putting up these measures for the pleasure of the public, hence if Shireen Mazari had approved since he was so generously asking for her permission. The latter only questioned about the security measures, which is a part of her job but Sheikh Aftab chose to reply with a crude comment instead.

5- “Dafa hojao kaali aurat. Behas na kharab kar jaan boojh kar. Dafa ho!” (Source 10)

Shah Farman, Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa hurled this comment towards an MPA of the Pakistan Peoples’ Party Nighat Orakzai in a live in-house discussion on the distribution of public funds. When Nighat Orakzai hinted that

some development funds were being directed towards Nowshera, Shah Farman got up and started shouting at her saying ‘Dafa hou’ meaning ‘Get lost’ and ‘Don’t ruin the argument on purpose’ furthermore, also commenting on her appearance by saying ‘Lady with Black Face’ (“Condemnation as PTI minister insults”, 2017). The disrespect shown to her is evident from his choice of words since he used the word “kar” which is used informally for friends and family. Instead of using the word “karou” he chose to speak to her in street language which is a sexist slur. The conversation got so bad that a fight erupted in the session and Nighat Orkazai had to leave.

Conclusion

The research acts as an attestation to identify the deeply rooted sexist language in the politics of Pakistan. As presented from the sexist statements above, it is evident that this problem needs to be addressed by the law of Pakistan. Negative discourse in high position offices dismantles the law and order which is necessary to keep justice in its rightful place. In an article by (Shahzad, 2021) anyone found guilty of The Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2010) will be liable to an imprisonment of 10 years and a fine but the act limits the complaints put forth by women to only sexual harassment or favours for inciting sex. The act does not address slurs, vulgar comments, name-calling, or any other non-sexual approach. The article has claimed to address the comments identified as sexist in the hope that the government can introduce a law that will obliterate this kind of practice, with strict implementation that should include a fine and imprisonment or deduction in salary and removal from the office with immediate effect.