

Cultural Dynamics of Gender-Based Victimhood in Pakistani Paintings on Honour Killing: Constructive Portrayals or Stereotypical Representations?

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Abstract

The study highlights the socio-semiotic representation of gender-based victimhood and autonomy by pinpointing visual signs related to power, oppression, suffering, protection, control, marginalization, and subjugation in relation to gender in Pakistani paintings on honour killing. Four paintings have been purposively selected to highlight how, as compared to highly stereotypical representations, these paintings present diverse cultural themes and realities concerning gender roles, victimhood, and autonomy in honour-based contexts. The social semiotic approach of the grammar of visual design as suggested by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) has been employed. Analysis shows that not only women, but men have also been represented as sufferers. Men are both oppressors and oppressed, while their protective role has also been represented. However, men have not been represented as direct victims of honour killing. Female assertion of individuality and agency has also been represented along with female victimhood.

Keywords: honour killing, gender, autonomy, victimhood, stereotypes, paintings

Introduction

Honour is often deemed as essential to the social standing or status of the families within certain communities (Dyer, 2015, p. 11). Violence can occur if perpetrators in such communities perceive that a relative, especially a close relative, has brought dishonour to the family or entire community by breaching their “honor code” (Yaqoob, 2017, p. 2). The extreme form of such violence is known as honour killing which is a premeditated homicide or customary murder of a man, woman, or social group by family or community members, due to the belief of the perpetrators that the victim, having been or suspected to be involved in an immoral behaviour as per the standards of that community, has brought shame to the family or community.

Traditional patriarchal ideologies and honour norms are followed in various sections of Pakistani culture as well (Yaqoob, 2017). According to Shah (2017), “in Pakistan the two words denoting honour, *ghairat* and *izzat* are interpreted and understood differently, motivating various forms of behavior and action” (p. 17). In Pakistan, *ghairat*, which according to Shah (2017) is explained as an “instinct in men” (p. 57), “a reflex action” among them and “moral justification for violence in honour” (p. 50), is substantially linked to honour violence. Shah (2017) elaborates that following a murder or

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punishment in the honour-based contexts in Sindh, Pakistan, no sense of regret or grieving is required because “*ghairat* needs no explanation” and “*ghairat* also turns the perpetrators of violence as victims and the apparent victims into perpetrators” (p. 58). If a man or a family ignores or doesn’t take revenge from the so-called transgressor, “he is called *begairat* (barefaced) until they prove that they are honorable by avenging the act of dishonour (Shah, 2017, p. 59).

The present study examines how gender is represented in the visual narrative about the display of power and passivity i.e., honour killing and investigates the representation of gender roles based on power and autonomy in the paintings on honor killing in Pakistan. Following is the research question:

How have men and women been represented in terms of gender-based victimhood and autonomy in the Pakistani paintings on honour killing?

Studying representations is important because representations have ideological implications and repercussions. Cultural representations, through art, depict and shape social realities. Representation, as a term, indicates a description of social groups and institutions. According to Sturken and Cartwright (2001) “representation is the use of language and images to create meaning about the world around us. The world only has meaning and can be seen through those systems of representation” (p. 12).

The present study not only pinpoints the patterns of gender-based victimhood but also highlights the invisibility and misrepresentation of male-victimhood. It not only explores the visual grammar of paintings but also localizes it by identifying and interpreting the signified pertinent to Pakistani culture. For instance, black color may connote ambiguity, attraction, gloom, or crime in different contexts, but according to the findings of the present study, in the paintings on honor killing, it connotes defamation and stigma. The analysis has implications for the policymakers, victims, perpetrators, educational institutes, viewers of art, and painters, because what is represented or misrepresented regulates stereotypes and ideologies, as well as unleashes various cultural realities which help people ponder over and take necessary steps to question, modify, resolve, and address the existing structures.

So far as existing studies on honour killing or gender representation are concerned, to investigate the news coverage of honour killing and its major causes in Pakistan, Raza and Liaqat (2016) did a comparative study of two Pakistani newspapers- *Khabrain* and *Jang*- and found that in January, February and March, 2013, “there were total 56 news about honor killing among which 40 news were

about the female and 16 about the male” (p. 4). They confirmed that on making marriage against parents’ will, suffering sexual assault, or breaking the family norms, women suffer from honour killing.

In Indian context, Deol, (2014) explored the causes and socio-legal aspects of honour killing in Haryana, an Indian state. Deol probed 100 cases of honour killing as reported in a daily newspaper, *The Tribune*, published from 2005-2013 and found, “74 per cent of the honour killings transpire only in the *Jat* dominated region” (p. 199) due to the patriarchal tendencies of *Jat* clan.

Regarding the representation of gender and identity, Rehman (2016) carried out a discourse analysis of four Pakistani films and concluded that women in these films have been portrayed as victims, while liberation from male dominance has been shown as an instrument to gain empowerment, seek education, and do jobs. Ullah et al., (2016) studied gender representation in children’s textbooks and noted that men were portrayed as strong, active, successful, and independent, while women were depicted as caring, passive, quiet, nurturing, and coward. Other studies conducted on gender representation of Pakistani men and women include those by Sanauddin (2015) on portrayal of gender in Pashto proverbs, Ali and Batool (2015) on portrayal of Pakistani women through media, Riaz (2021) on representation of gender in the digital illustrations on rape, and Riaz (2019) on the visual representation of gender in the digital illustrations on honor killing.

The present study touches on the discourse of Pakistani paintings on which there already is limited research available from a linguistic or social semiotic perspective. The existing studies, as mentioned above, highlight the stereotypical representations of men and women, while the present study sheds light on the constructive portrayals of men and women. It emphasizes that the painters have also deviated from stereotypical portrayals and painted various constructive aspects of gender roles in the context of honour killing in Pakistan, such as the depiction of men as protectors, and women as courageous fighters for human rights, and not merely typically perceived aggressors or sufferers.

Methods

This article is part of a doctoral research for which 40 paintings were purposively selected based on variables including visual signs related to gender, male and female painters having diverse geographical backgrounds within Pakistan, and paintings displayed in exhibitions organized from 2007-2017. Thirty-six paintings simply represented women as victims and men as perpetrators but for this research paper, four of those forty paintings have been selected through information rich sampling technique to highlight the diverse

discursive representations of Pakistani men and women. The four paintings selected for this article, besides connoting female victimhood and male aggression, had slightly different representations of gender roles and themes concerning victimhood, suffering, and agency, which were important to highlight with reference to honour killing and gender-based victimhood or violence.

To understand the visual signs and symbols of honour killing, identify their cultural connotations, and examine the representation of men and women in the Pakistani paintings, the present study applies the social semiotic approach of the grammar of visual design suggested by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006). Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) elaborate how ideational, interpersonal, and textual meta functions are semiotically realized in images.

The ideational metafunction, in this regard, has been studied to analyze the “locative circumstance” and context, background and foreground, “possessive attributes” of the represented men and women as “interactive participants” in the paintings, symbolic significance of the signs and symbols, “vectors” and their functions, “analytical structures”, “transactional structures”, geometrical shapes, “angularity”, and the “actions” taking place between represented men and women, expressions and their symbolic value (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 46-113). These concepts related to ideational meta function have also been employed in existing studies (Riaz, 2019, pp. 5-20; Ahour & Zaferani, 2016, pp. 82-83; Riaz & Rafi, 2019, p. 129; Riaz, 2020; Riaz, 2021). Moreover, relations between various participants and the resulting meanings with a focus on how men and women have been represented as either perpetrator, victims, or both, and what kind of visual language of honour killing emerges through the choice of various processes, patterns, semiotic signs, and their symbolic value have also been studied through interpretive analysis.

Analysis of the Paintings

Queen Card and Crown of Chastity



Figure 1. Arjumand, S. (2010) Mukhtaran Mai (digital print of work in oil). From 'No Honor in Killing: Making Visible the Buried Truth', VM Art Gallery, Karachi.

The indoor setting in Figure 1 depicts the portrait of a woman who, placed against a plain bottle-green background, is standing at the centre of a window. Her possessive attributes include a white dress, invisible hair, a long, pointed nose, a frail body, and dark skin. One of her eyes is larger than the other. Though the background is painted as a queen card, yet the woman is wearing the crown of a king.

The painting is dynamic and personal because the walls are hindering the woman who too is reacting through her gaze. The painter has painted the portrait of Mukhtaran Mai, a survivor of alleged gang-rape as honour revenge in rural Sindh, Pakistan. Though the culprits were acquitted by the courts due to insufficient evidence, yet Mukhtaran Mai went abroad, wrote a book, and became an advocate of the women rights. The painting depicts her courage which helped her challenge the norms by raising her voice. Large crescent, stars, a crown with stars, and a small crescent on the top, as ideational visual signs, signify the power granted to her through her religion, Islam. With reference to interrelation of honour killing and Islam, Gharaibeh (2016) notes, “although Islam does not condone adultery, there is nothing in the Qur’an or other Islamic religious texts that justifies ‘honour’ killing” (p. 123) (“Islam upholds the sanctity of human life” (Gharaibeh, 2016, p. 123).

The crown as an ideational sign symbolizes her male role and power and strength associated with it. The crown represents the power that Mukhtaran Mai has gained by fighting for her rights and that any oppressed and abused woman can gain by standing up for herself. The painter has also mentioned in the statement of the painting, ‘*Most of the art made in relation to honour killing and the violence against women has a negative feeling to it. As someone who promotes independence and freedom of women, I feel it is important to highlight a figure like Mukhtaran Mai.*’ The placement of the figure right in the middle of a window, thus, is a sign of hope, an opportunity to seek refuge, an ability to breathe fresh air and an opportunity to look at the external world with her unique perspective.

Her high-neck white garb and *dupatta* symbolize not only chastity but also loss and dismay. Besides, Bouvier (2017) notes “Open–closed” dress clearly points to a barrier, to formality (buttoned-up) and order. Buttoned-up can suggest a barrier and privacy” (p. 202). The processes involved are “locative”, due to contrast of foreground and background, “exhaustive analytical” due to her possessive attributes mentioned above, and “narrative” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 40-60) due to vectors. Vectors are forming through her eyes, while her possessive attributes represent power and control of the situation. The symbols of the queen the crown of a king reflect her ability to exert power and assert individuality.

The square blocks and thickness of the wall are signs of protection, while they may also symbolize social control, challenges, and barriers imposed in the name of protection. The angularity, as an ideational component of visual grammar, of the walls shows that these honour norms or limiting beliefs are treated as laws, which, however, are man-made, therefore, can be re-evaluated. Regarding the construction of the female gender as oppressed through social practices, Sato (2011) notes,

“In relation to gender, the law begins with a midwife’s cry, “It is a girl!” The naming of the “girl” is the process that compels a layered series of “girling” to one who was just born. The formation of the subject is preceded and conditioned by the discursive condition of social recognition that entails the foreclosure or cultural and societal exclusion of women” (p. 148).

In this way, repetitive “performativity” (Butler 1999, cited in Sato, 2011, p. 149) of social norms perceived as natural laws reproduces, regulates, and naturalizes gender and gives the illusion of a fixed female identity. However, the painting reinforces that the social norms oppress but whoever can stand up and take responsibility, can invert the persistent power structure.

Pointing Fingers to Cause Harm



Figure 2. Sulehri, M. H. (2011) *Broken Paths*. From 'In the Name of Honor', Jharoka Art Gallery, Islamabad.

The visual grammar employed in the form of signs related to ideational metafunction in Figure 2 suggests that the setting of this “dynamic”, “dramatic”, and “personal” (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 45-46) painting is a garden where two mustard coloured flowers, painted as two human faces have been placed opposite to each other. The faces have been foregrounded against a light grey and white plain background. The stem of the feminine flower has been cut,

disconnected from the masculine flower, and blood in small rectangular shapes is coming out of that point.

The relations between the flowers and the index finger hitting the stem as a bullet are analytical and symbolic attributive because the possessive attributes, such as pale faces, rounded lips, and pale petals of the flowers as carriers, represent sadness and loss. Eight to nine overlapping “circles” (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 46-71), connecting petals of both the flowers and forming a web are symbolic of repeated futile efforts to maintain relationships. Disconnect of the bleeding branch signifies rupture in the relationship of both the represented participants, while loss of blood represents death of the female. The blank and averted gaze of the feminine image, who is “recipient” of violence and passive “reactor” (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 51-59) to it, also connotes loss of trust, life, and happiness.

Exhaustive transactional and reactional processes can be observed because the vector formed is formed by the eye. It is important to understand that killing a loved one is a hard and traumatic experience for the family and the aggressor, but to pacify the intransigent society, which makes one realize of being dishonourable, people commit such a ghastly crime and apparently justify it, but it shatters them forever. It also shows the complexity and “multiplicity of masculinity”, which can not only be considered as hegemonic, which “occupy the leading position” in gender relation but can also be “complicit, marginalized and subordinated” (Connell, 2005, p. 77, cited in Arat & Hasan, 2017, p. 790).

The index finger, which is forming a vector as an actor, is symbolic of the judgmental attitude of the society that plays its obnoxious role in causing honour killing. The goal of the pointed fingers in the context of honour killing is to initially sensitize the family members towards the loss of their honour and trigger the crisis. The pointed finger, in case of this painting, is shaped as a bullet. In honour-based contexts, Dogan (2016) endorses, people are “so willing to spread rumors about the next door’s daughter” but equally “reluctant to intervene in what will eventually happen to the next door’s daughter” as a result of the rumours, judgments, and gossips (p. 66). Despite knowing that those who spread rumours, poke fun, or judge and criticize, and after the commission of offense laud and sympathize with the perpetrator, are not sincere, people kill their loved ones in the name of honour. However, it is important to understand that the remarks and behaviour of the society get so intensely judgmental, if the so-called honour is not reclaimed, that even the thought of it makes people kill the women because otherwise, such men are considered “weak” and “without face” (Norheim & Bjorkoy, 2017, p. 23). In this way, the killer is an instrument and a sufferer, while the actual

perpetrator is the society that neither offers space nor intervenes when necessary.

Set in Stone



Figure 3. Rahi, M. (2011) *Dream of Freedom*. From 'In the Name of Honor, Jharoka Art Gallery, Islamabad.

The processes involved in Figure 3 are “locative” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 72) because in a block on the right side, the large and heavy foot of a man can be observed crushing the small foot of a woman. It symbolizes gender inequality, male dominance, and violence exercised on women. Two of the decapitated dead bodies have been placed horizontally on the lower part of the frame, while in a block on the left side, a woman is sitting down and looking towards the bird placed on top of the block on the right side. Other processes are “narrative” “transactional” and “symbolic attributive” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 50-63) because vectors formed by the woman’s glances have freedom, which is represented by a bird, as their goal. Her posture shows the intensity of pain, as well as the need for support. Half face of a woman, representing constrained self-expression, and loss of identity or respect, is visible almost at the centre of the frame. Taints of red spread here and there signify murder.

Larger blocks of rocks placed on the margins are actors that are immuring the men and women like small animals or worms are encased. The square-shaped blocks connote a man-made patriarchal system causing trials and tribulations. The goal of the vectors formed by the straight lines of the edges of stiff rocks is to impede the individual freedom of people and drain their energy or life-force. As a woman’s foot is being crushed, so the woman is a recipient and “carrier” (Kress & Leeuwen, 2006, p. 90) whose dream of freedom

paradoxically got translated into confinement and death. Though the man is crushing the foot, he too is stuck in a system of oppression. The decapitated bodies of the man and women show an identity crisis and loss of honour.

In this context, it is important to understand the concept of structural violence to determine the impact of social norms on individuals and gender relations. Structural violence “as a system of interlocking oppressions manifested in the form of social and economic deprivation” due to being embedded in social institutions and public policy, is invisible, yet powerfully perpetuates violence and “disempowers individuals and communities, particularly those marginalized at the intersections of gender, race, and class” (Hyman, et al., 2016, p. 2). Victims and perpetrators in Pakistan, thus, are stuck up in a debilitating system which has been structured in a way that it regulates violence, oppression, and exploitation, while the system of accountability is also lethargic (Riaz, 2021; Cheema & Riaz, 2021).

The “modality”, “credibility” or “truth value” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 156) of grey, black, red, brown, turquoise, pink, and white is high from cultural point of view. Basically, the painter has contrasted, femininity, tranquility, peace, patience, loyalty, and serenity represented by pink and turquoise and to an extent white, with chaos, stagnation, tyranny, loss, gloom, tradition, and death or murder, being represented by grey, brown, black, red, and white.

Men’s Council

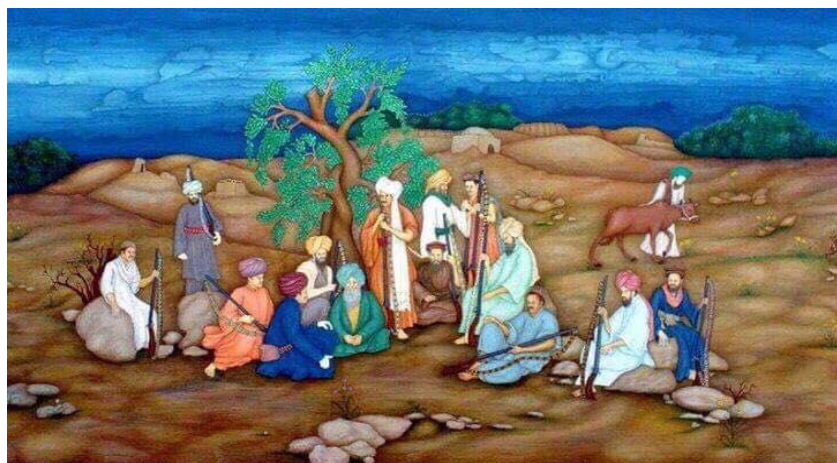


Figure 4. Iqbal, K. (2011) *Jirga*. From *in the Name of Honor*, Jharoka Art Gallery, Islamabad.

Setting in Figure 4 is outdoor and men sitting near a tree in a desert have been foregrounded against tombs, graves, and sky. “Instrumental relations” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 46) are

involved because seven of the 15 men are carrying guns. Other processes are “transactional” due to “vectors”, analytical due to “possessive attributes” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 59) of men, and “symbolic attributive” due to identity being conferred to the “carriers” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 105). *Jirga*, the title of the painting makes it clear that it is a men’s council that decides and resolves all important issues of the community. Their possessive attributes such as beards and turbans connote their religious and cultural affiliation (Riaz, 2019; Riaz, 2021). Beard, here, connotes respect for religion and respect by the society as well. Turbans connote their high social status. *Jirga* consists of men and it is very common in rural areas, especially tribal areas in Pakistan to have such councils for making decisions (Gul & Fakhr-ul-Islam, 2020). It consists of the feudal landlords or other authority figures in the community who decide the lot of common people. In the context of honour killing, it has a special significance because generally a *Jirga* decides penalties in cases of *karo-kari* i.e., honour killing. It decides if a man or woman or both are guilty and how they should be penalized.

Women cannot be members of a *jirga* but *jirga* can always decide for women (Khan, 2017). The stones, guns, and animal, as well as rough, uneven, and desert-like space in Figure 4, depict the phenomenon i.e., *jirga* as a rigid system. These signs also highlight honour killing as a barbaric practice associated with uncivilized people, illiteracy, misuse of power, and violation of human rights. While *jirga* is an established traditional legal system in various areas of Pakistan, forms of punishment, such as enforcing revenge marriages including *vani* and *sawara* (marriage of underage girls against their will to settle murder and tribal disputes) make it questionable.

The tree symbolizes growth, shade, or protection but the presence of men carrying guns all around it shows that men, who as guardians must protect women, can also harm them. Placement of men along with a tree at the centre contains the key information signifying their supportive, protective, strengthening role which is expected of men as guardians and leaders. *Gairatmand* (honourable) man is expected to be *muhafiz* (protector). However, tree also symbolizes growth and transition, which shows that social change is possible, if men let it happen.

Them sitting on the ground or rocks connotes that they are preserving traditions, valuing traditional norms and facing hardships as well. The “vectors” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 51) formed by the guns or rods in their hands show that the rule or right of the law is in their hands. The round structures of rocks, as elements of visual grammar, convey that ruling over society, deciding for women, maintaining their authority, and protecting social norms is considered

as men's birthright. In honour-based contexts or patriarchal societies, it is considered that men are stronger than women and it is their prime responsibility to stay strong, decide, earn, and protect. Their staunch belief in their power and responsibility to protect sometimes makes them forget the difference between masculinity and toxic masculinity. Arat and Hasan (2017) also point out that "aggressive and violent behaviour is typically associated with manhood" ... however... "masculinities are multiple, socially constructed and sustained through a complex system of symbols, identities and forces" (p. 789), instead of being biological.

Findings and Discussion

The visual structure, "background", and "locative circumstance" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 72) of the paintings including signs such as barren land, smudged background, thick walls, withered leaves, bullet, and stones, etc. predominantly depict that generation after generation, women are still under social control and the entire cultural landscape is unfavourable. Society, thus in general, has been portrayed as a dark and exploitative force.

Findings reveal that the women, through their appearance, body language, colour choices, and the action taking place on or around them, have been represented as "passive actors", "carriers", or "reactors" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, pp. 46-113). Overall, "helplessness, passivity, suppression, gloom, insignificance, and isolation are their defining traits" (Riaz & Rafi, 2019, p. 144). Men, on the other hand, have been represented as active actors, oppressors, and aggressors through various visual signs such as guns, turbans, and rods, etc. Visual representation of hope, freedom, courage, and male victimhood represented through an open window, a bird, sky, and a withering flower, is also there. Masculinity has been represented as toxic masculinity, while femininity has both been represented as marginalized, passive, and toxic. Femininity is toxic because women are not asserting themselves or taking control of their lives. Toxic femininity has often semiotically been represented through the red color. Red color also represents killing of women in the paintings.

Representation of men and women in terms of powerful/powerless binary has been confirmed by many researchers such as Ullah et al., (2016), Islam and Asadullah (2018) Raza and Liaqat (2016) Agha et al., (2018), Marefat and Marzban (2014), Riaz (2019), and Sahu (2018), etc. Women as insignificant, busy in ordinary chores, and oppressed, while men as respectable, domineering, and powerful have been represented in these studies on data such as textbooks, science journals, blogs, newspapers, and TV serials, etc. in Pakistani, Turkish, Finnish, or Malaysian contexts. However, Ahour

and Zafrani (2016) noted neutral representation of both men and women. Marefat and Marzban (2014) found that men were “more visible” and “active doers”, while women were “invisible and underrepresented” (p. 1098) in ELT textbooks. However, the semiotic resources employed in the data selected for the present study show that women have been made more visible, but as “tradition-bound, passive” (Sahu, 2018, p. 211) persons (Figure 1, 2, 3), while men are the active doers (Figure 3, 4).

The results are similar to those of other studies (Beenish & Jamil, 2015, p. 67; Islam & Abdullah, 2018, p. 5; Riaz, 2019; Riaz & Rafi, 2019) on gender representation in Pakistani context, in that social oppression against Pakistani women have been highlighted. Analysis of the paintings also shows that courage, freedom and agency too have a price for women (1). A woman is offered limited freedom and conditioned autonomy. Freedom and happiness are conditioned with subjugation.

However, the findings of the present study are different from the existing research in that courage of women (1) or female agency and power, as well as male victimhood (2) and male sense of responsibility and protection (4) have also been highlighted. It is important to understand the cultural dynamics of protection offered by men in such settings because men protect and take responsibility positively as well, which is by no means easy. In honor-based contexts, manhood and gentlemanhood are associated with a man’s ability to protect his women and property and wage a war or take revenge when needed. Manhood, in this context, is about sacrifice, patience and restraint as well, as Shah (2017) pinpoints, “a man who is able to kill and die for honour is publicly acclaimed, but one who is unjust or cruel is shunned” (pp. 59-60). To address female victimhood, it is, therefore, irrevocably crucial to understand the issue of honor killing from the perspectives of men’s sense of responsibility towards women, male oppression, stigmatization of men, cultural dynamics concerning protection, and structural violence.

The painters, through ideational visual signs, also draw attention to the women’s limitations, inability to empower themselves, and assert their individuality, however, a queen card, religious symbols, and a woman wearing a crown in Figure 1 show that female autonomy is possible. The findings of the present study are also different from the existing studies in that in the present study both men and women have been shown as suffering from oppression (2, 3), but within that system, men are further oppressing women (4). The victimhood of men (2) as represented in the paintings, however, is not like that of women. Men have been shown as sufferers as relatives or guardians of women but not as direct victims of honor killing. Men are

also killed in the name of honor in Pakistan, but male victimhood in this sense has not been represented (Riaz, 2021, Riaz 2019; Riaz & Rafi, 2019). Male victims of honor killing can be visually represented in the future.

Conclusion

The semiotic encoding of paintings reveals that women, through their possessive attributes and vectorial relations as well, have been represented as melancholic victims who are facing challenges, oppression, and lack of social freedom in honour-based contexts. Social barriers and their gut-wrenching impact on men and women have also been depicted as a core issue. Visual grammar of the paintings shows that female autonomy or agency is possible, but it is limited, conditioned, and challenging. While existing studies highlight stereotypical representations of women as victims, the present study pinpoints an understudied aspect of honour killing that men bear the burden of protection as well because they bear the responsibility of women in honour-based contexts and in a way, they are more oppressed than women because in protecting women, they experience severe social pressure and judgment, as well as guilt of committing crime, and loss of a female family member in severe cases, solely either because they are judged by the society or they have not learnt constructive ways of handling honour-based judgments. They suffer as guardians and relatives of women because society judges and questions them for their honour. Therefore, they too are stuck in a system of oppression, but they also regulate oppression simultaneously by controlling, dominating, oppressing, and killing women. They are both oppressed and agents of oppression and victimhood. These issues should be explored in relation to structural violence in further research. Women as direct or indirect perpetrators and men as direct victims of honour killing should also be visually represented and addressed. More constructive and dynamic portrayals of women are also needed.

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