

Construction Of Subversive Gender Identities: A Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis Of A Television Play, *Chal Jhooti*

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Abstract

This article examines the women's construction of gender identities as a form of resistance in the presence of dominant discourses. Firstly, it aims to analyze the construction of gender identities which are not approved by the societal norms and yet helps women gain a position of power needed to survive in a male dominated society. Secondly, it seeks to describe and interpret the socio-cultural discursive practices responsible for inequities and the strategies adopted by the women for resistance and change. The data for the present study consists of a single episode television play "Chal Jhooti". Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) and theory of performativity are employed to deconstruct the cross identities and to reveal the discourses underlying the mechanism of power in sustaining repressive social structures and hegemonic social relations. The findings reveal that women are multiply located in discourse as they adopt particular ways to resist certain dominant social practices. It also reveals that women's construction and performance of masculine gender identity is not merely construed as their power but at the same time it is a reinforcement of men's power as generally these gender crossings aggravate the essential dualism of the gender structure. The current study suggests that the presence of existing discourse of gender differentiation results in deviations from gender appropriate norms which are policed and intended as a mean to defy it.

Keywords: Subversive Gender Identities, Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis.

تلخیص

یہ مطالعہ غالب تذکروں کی موجودگی میں خواتین کی مزاحمتی صنفی شناخت کا معائنہ کرتا ہے۔ اس کا پہلا مقصد سماجی اصولوں کی نامنظور کردہ صنفی شخصیات کی تعمیر کا معائنہ کرنا ہے جو خواتین کو مضبوط سماجی حیثیت حاصل کرنے میں مدد کرتی ہیں تاکہ وہ

مردوں کے غالب معاشرے میں زندگی گزار سکیں۔ اس کا دوسرا مقصد موجودہ سماجی و ثقافتی طریقوں کو بیان کرنا اور ان کا معائنہ کرنا ہے جو عدم مساوات کا سبب بنتے ہیں اور خواتین انہیں تبدیل کرنے اور ان کے خلاف مزاحمت کے لیے کیا حکمت عملی اختیار کرتی ہیں۔ موجودہ مطالعے کے لیے معطیات ہم ٹی وی چینل پر نشر ہونے والے ایک قسط پر مشتمل کھیل 'چل جھوٹی' سے لیا گیا ہے۔ ایف پی ڈی اے اور تھیوری آف پرفارمنس کی مدد سے متضاد شناخت کا تنقیدی تجزیہ کرتا ہے تاکہ جابرانہ سماجی ڈھانچے اور سامراجی سماجی تعلقات کو برقرار رکھنے والے نظام کو ظاہر کر سکیں جو اس سامراجی نظام کا مقابلہ کرنے کے لیے مزاحمتی جدوجہد کا سبب بنتے ہیں۔ مطالعے کے نتائج یہ ظاہر کرتے ہیں کہ تذکروں میں خواتین کے ایک سے زیادہ کردار ہوتے ہیں اور وہ بعض غالب سماجی طرز عمل کے خلاف مزاحمت کے طریقے بھی اختیار کر لیتی ہیں۔ نتائج یہ بھی ظاہر کرتے ہیں کہ خواتین کی مذکر صنفی شناخت کی تعمیر اور اس پر عمل صرف ان کو مضبوط حیثیت نہیں دیتا بلکہ اس کے ساتھ ساتھ یہ مردوں کی پہلے سے مضبوط حیثیت میں اضافے کا بھی باعث بنتا ہے۔ عمومی طور پر یہ متضاد صنفی شخصیات معاشرے میں پائے جانے والے صنفی ڈھانچے کی دوئی میں اضافہ کر کے اسے مضبوط بناتا ہے۔ موجودہ مطالعہ یہ تجویز کرتا ہے کہ صنفی تفریق کے تذکرے (بیانات) قائم کردہ صنفی معیار سے انحراف کا سبب بنتے ہیں جن کا مقصد صنفی تفریق کا مقابلہ (سامنا) کرنا ہوتا ہے۔

کلیدی الفاظ: متضاد صنفی شناخت کی تعمیر، بیانات کا فیمنسٹ پوسٹ اسٹرکچرلسٹ تجزیہ

Introduction

Television plays are significant for studying discourse because media plays an influential role in shaping ideologies and reflecting the constituted identities. There are diverse ideological repertoires incorporated in individuals' subject positions and identities, represented through the discourses which they come to draw upon in the course of their social lives. FPDA helps in exploring ways in which individuals successively negotiate their positions within competing discourses. It also enables the researchers to study individual moments of resistance and empowerment in the verbal and nonverbal interactions of people who might otherwise be seen and represented as victims (Baxter, 2006). It thus provides a possibility to study those instances and moments where there is a change in the form of defiance, contestations, and power reversals, possibly subtle or a direct shift in the status quo.

Gender depiction on media influences individuals' views of gender in their own lives and among other media forms television plays are much influential in presenting the notions with the potential to make them sustained and standardized (Soza, 2014:20). Television plays are significant for studying construction and representation of identities through its

discourse because media plays a leading role in shaping ideologies and reflecting the constituted identities. Carter & Steiner (2003) explored gender construction in varied media forms and argued that in media discourse the discursive approaches to entertainment tell about the intricate ways media contributes to gendered subjectivities. Matheson (2005) in *Media Discourses* addressed the need to challenge and deconstruct the discursive representation of the social world in media, as discourses represent, interpret and construct reality which “structure both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity” (Mills 1997:15). Soza (2014) pointed out the significance of studying media discourse for poststructuralist feminist scholars as it opens up a room for studying the influence of media in enabling and constraining the identities of women. Keeping the importance of media in present times and its role in depicting gender identities, the present study is an attempt to explore the intricacies of discourse, gender, and media to reveal the constitution of gendered subjectivities in Pakistani society and the resistance against the constituted discursive practices.

There are notable researches conducted in Pakistan on the subject of gender and feminism, a good number has targeted electronic advertisements and print media too. But there are only a few which have used the Feminist Post-Structurlist theory for their investigation. Juma (2017) conducted an action research in Karachi to engage teachers with Feminist Poststructuralist theory to open up the possibility of gender equity practice in Pakistani classrooms. Walters (2016) investigated the newspaper articles by using discourse analysis, a feminist poststructuralist, and postcolonial approach to identify the leading discourses about Yousfzai in the context of the United Kingdom. In the context of Pakistan gender is also investigated by using the theory of performativity, Rehman & Karim (2016) explored the gender binaries in Bapsi Sidhwa's novels by adopting the perspective of Butler's performativity theory. Khurshid (2012) studied Pakistani Muslim Women teachers through Butler's Performativity framework in order to analyze the construction and performance of their educated subjectivities in a transnational women's education project.

Hence no significant research on television plays was found which might have explored the resistant gender identities by using FPDA or theory of performativity. The present paper is an attempt to fill this gap and investigate the construction and performance of gender identities in a television play by employing Performativity and FPDA together.

The present study is conducted in Pakistani socio-cultural context where the discursive social practices define women's position as the subordinate gender, since women are the gender allocated to physically weaker traits that depict them and classify their status. In this study Feminist Poststructuralist perspective is adopted to critically examine the

repressed meanings of gender within the text of a television play *Chal Jhooti* and the discourse of cross gender exhibition to dig for manifold meanings of femininity in the discourses of gender and media.

The study has twofold purposes, firstly, to examine the construction of gender identities which are not approved by the societal norms and yet helps women gain a position of power needed to survive in a male dominated society. Secondly, it seeks to describe and interpret the socio-cultural discursive practices responsible for inequities and the strategies adopted by the women for resistance and change.

The focus is on how language and discourses used in media co-construct the implications of gender and subjectivities and produce resistant discourses countering the dominant ones. Specifically, this study views discourses as mutually constitutive, herein the performative perspective helps to recognize how gender is enacted strategically to resist the normative constructions of gender by getting aligned with them and finally a poststructuralist view aim for the deconstruction of gendered subjectivities. Thus, the combination of a number of theoretical bases makes a significant contribution to the study of gender and discourse within the field of discourse analysis.

Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) and Theory of Performativity

There are diverse ideological repertoires incorporated in individuals' subject positions and identities, represented through the discourses which they come to draw upon in the course of their social lives. Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis helps in exploring ways in which individuals successively negotiate their positions within competing discourses. It also enables the researchers to study individual moments of resistance and empowerment in the verbal and nonverbal interactions of people who might otherwise be seen and represented as victims (Baxter, 2006). It thus provides a possibility to study those instances and moments where there is a change in the form of defiance, contestations, and power reversals, possibly subtle or a direct shift in the status quo.

FPDA is influenced by the ideas of the poststructuralists, Derrida (1987) and Foucault (1980), in relation to power, knowledge and discourses, the formalist, Bakhtin (1981), and the feminist work of Walkerdine (1998), and Weedon (1997). It shares similarities with CDA despite having quite different theoretical and epistemological orientations. After the publication of Baxter's "Positioning Gender" in 2003, scholars have modified and extended FPDA methodology in different ways according to their own objectives. Kaur (2005) combined Performativity theory with FPDA while studying the

performances of gendered identities in online discussion boards as FPDA helps making a thorough textual investigation of the discourses competing with each other in the enactment of gender. Castaneda Pena (2008) adopted FPDA as a fundamental approach for analyzing the speech of pre-school children in Colombia, for micro analysis he drew upon CA while also applying a CDA critique. He found that FPDA offers micro-analytical tool to find ways in which a range of gendered discourses function intertextually and how the pre-school children, both male and female continually fluctuate their different subject positions in line with the different discourses. FPDA challenges the dominant approaches which “ground truth and meaning in the presumption of a universal subject and a predetermined goal of emancipation” (Elliott, 1996 cited in Baxter, 2003). In Davies (1993, 1994, 1995, 1997b) we find the application of Feminist poststructuralist theory as applied to educational domain those of teachers and students, Davies (2006) more recent application of this theory is on fiction. His concern is to liberate students from the constraints of prevalent discourses on gender (Davies, 1992). In Barrett, M. J. (2005) the major concern of Poststructuralist theorizing is that how discourse produce subjects. Fardon and Schoeman (2010) examined gender bias in history text books through feminist poststructuralist lens.

Our perception of biological sex is discursively produced but to a poststructuralist like Butler, there exists no pre-discursive identity. Such an outlook emphasizes on speech event itself which requires us to analyze the way ideologies of feminine and masculine speech are manipulated by the people in the constant production of gendered selves (Hall, 2000). Gender differences are established by and in discourse. Butler asserts that by uttering “I pronounce you, etc.” by the one not certified to do so is a subversive political strategy, as it is the performance of an unstable heterosexual norm which is all the times susceptible to appropriation (Salih, 2006:65).

Gender is an “act,” an outcome of a subtle and politically enforced performativity that is open to self-parody, and the exaggerated displays of “the natural” that, in their very amplification, expose their essentially phantasmatic status (Butler, 1999:187). Butler argues that construction is not opposite to agency; agency gets articulated through construction and becomes culturally intelligible. Tonissen (2014) in his work *Challenging Gender Identities* applied Butler’s notion of performativity and Gramsci’s theory about cultural hegemony in order to explore the portrayal of certain characters in the selected films that deviate from the appropriate gender norms. Kale (2011) examined feminist identity politics while taking Judith Butler’s perspective in questioning identity and its relation to gender politics. To achieve this purpose he

used qualitative research method and conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews for data collection.

Television plays are much influential in presenting the notions with the potential to make them sustained and standardized (Soza, 2014:20). Gender depiction on entertainment media influences individuals' views of gender in their own lives. Carter & Steiner (2003) explored gender construction in varied media forms and argued that in media discourse the discursive approaches to entertainment tell about the intricate ways media contributes to gendered subjectivities. Matheson (2005) in *Media Discourses* addresses the need to challenge and deconstruct the discursive representation of the social world in media. As discourses represent, interpret and construct reality which "structure both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity" (Mills 1997:15).

Soza (2014) points out the significance of studying media discourse for poststructuralist feminist scholars as it opens up a room for studying the influence of media in enabling and constraining the identities of women. Specifically, the study of an entertaining television play *Chal Jhooti*, explores the intricacies of discourse, gender, and media to reveal the constitution of gendered subjectivities in society and the resistance against the constituted discursive practices. In Denby (2011) the general purpose of his thesis is an investigation of feminist postmodernism, the Combination of feminism with postmodern concepts as a means of challenging gender oppression.

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Methodology

Research Design

The study combines Performativity Theory and Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis in order to analyze how gender is constructed and performed in the play and what are the different ways in which the characters actively construct, co-construct and de-construct gender identities.

Butler's theory of Performativity (1990) provides the theoretical stance in framing this study. FPDA is used as an interpretative framework drawing upon Performativity theory which helps investigate the contestation of the discourses in the enactment of gender, while CA is used as a method of data analysis tool to investigate and interpret how gender identity is enacted and demonstrated, linguistically and para-linguistically as a form of resistance. The notion of contradiction between micro and macro analysis is denied by FPDA, as is demonstrated through the application of FPDA with CA the transcripts are analyzed micro analytically within the given context in which they occur and then using these as a reference point.

Due to the scope of the study and time constraints only one television play is taken through purposive sampling. The single episode play *Chal Jhooti* was aired on Hum TV in 2014; it has the duration of one hour and is downloaded from www.ytpak.com. The complete episode is transcribed and analyzed; the transcriptions of the scenes are given in appendices. The verbal and nonverbal aspects i.e. dressing, artefacts, posture, gesture and facial expressions are analyzed sequentially using CA, and the principles provided by FPDA which are denotative, connotative analysis and deconstruction.

Categories of Analysis

The categories of analysis are chosen keeping in view the theme of the play which focuses on the socio-cultural practices of society and the female contestation through deviant subject positions. After watching/examining the play, the discourse of gender differentiation, discourse of social class, cross gender discourse and discourse of resistance as the competing discourses to counter in the play were identified. The data is categorised under the following headings:

- Resistance to Stereotypical Subject Positions
- Male dominant Socio-Cultural Practices
- Deconstructing deviant identities

The data is presented keeping in the order of scenes by categorizing them in the diachronic way so the story would make sense even if one has not seen the play.

Data Analysis and Findings

The data for this study is taken from a play *Chal Jhooti* which is the story of a lower/middle class family consisting of three sisters i.e., Kuku, Jagu, Kashu (Kokab Ghazal, Zakiya Ghazal and Kishwar Ghazal respectively) their niece (Bushra); and of two men i.e., middle aged man (unnamed) and his teenage son (Tanveer) who live in the rented house of the three sisters. The sisters live on their own without having any male family member in the house. The father and his son Tanveer are of flirtatious nature and both are interested in Bushra. She also flirts with both of them but elopes with the father at the end. In the play, the three sisters have adopted cross identities (practices associated with men), which is reflected in their dressing and behaviour. It is only after analyzing the play that the actual motive behind their cross gender behaviour becomes obvious which is to protect themselves and survive with dignity in the world of men.

Gender differentiation happens to be a powerful discourse which construct characters' talk in the play and the cross gender discourse as a way to counter it and cause power reversal. It reveals the constant process of negotiation for positions of power among characters or else resisting positions of powerlessness in accordance with the multiplicity of subject positions available to them.

Resistance to Stereotypical Subject Position

Scene 1

The denotative level of analysis of *Chal Jhooti* provides a concrete account of the happenings in the text, such as in the conversations among characters, while revealing different aspects with reference to the verbal and non-verbal interactions of the participants. The connotative level of analysis gives more penetrating, interpretative explanation of spoken discourse.

The utterance made by the man ¹ shows hesitation on his part in an absolute contrast to the response coming from the girl (Bushra). Nonverbally too the artefacts (spectacles), facial expression of both establish a disparity between them making the girl look more confident and bold whereas the man as a timid and nervous fellow.

The scene presents a common observable phenomenon in Pakistani society where men usually flirt with girls by making such offers. The girl is not shown in a stereotypical timid role of the one who would either feel shy or harassed rather the one who counters the man in a bold way. The response of the girl refutes the culturally-biased notions concerning women's submissiveness and lack of agency in their encounter with opposite sex. This is interesting to note how the non-conformist gendered discourse come into play

and remain impassive by the physical intimidation and indifference to the pressure and authority associated with male status within the society.

Scene 2 in a Park

The second scene of the play again establishes a discourse of gender deviation where the girl (Bushra) instead of employing 'feminine' speech styles, opts for more authoritative speech styles related to men; whereas, Tanveer is shown getting confused in the presence of a girl. The length of talk and particularly Bushra's response in line 4 is noteworthy when she says:

Thore motey ho lekin ho cute (Tanveer gets shy and starts biting nails), *ye sharmany waley larkon mein na muje chakkon wala touch lagta hai, paseena tau saaf ker lo....* The para linguistic elements are also significant here including the pink shirt worn by Tanveer, his gestures of wiping sweat from his face and biting nails. All this establishes his timidity which is obvious through his body language. Whereas, Bushra's body language, that is, her acts of chewing gum, looking directly in his eyes demonstrates her carelessness towards the meeting as well as her level of confidence which is again a deviation in a society where dating is considered morally wrong and still those girls who do it are typically conscious and careful of their act.

Discourse of class also places Tanveer in a powerless position here, when Bushra talks about her dress "*mein nahi silwati Ghareeb abad jaisay ilaqa sy mera tailor na Tariq Road per betha hai, hai bohat mehnga...*" and when Tanveer talks about his inability to get the right (black) shirt due to load shedding which refers to his poor economic condition and thereby lower subject position due to his failure at maintaining masculinity and the attributes associated with it. Thus both the linguistic and para-linguistics establish contrasting subject positions in the discourse where the boy is in a powerless and the girl in a powerful position.

The commanding manner in which she seeks his response and the way she gives response to his query is interesting in terms of the established gender order in society where women hold subordinate position. In line 9 the characteristic discourse associated with such girls (who do dating) becomes obvious but she handles it successfully by answering him using the same discourse type and proving herself knowledgeable towards the kind they are, and then dealing with him accordingly by threatening him. Interestingly when she seems losing her position in front of Tanveer's use of moral order discourse of society, she challenges him by showing him another side of moral order discourse where she could make him learn the lesson by calling people around to help her. This makes evident how strategically she maintains her position of power in the present discourse.

Scene 7

The scene where the man is shifting to the rented house is interesting in the sense that the cross gender discourse reverses the discursive practice of society as both the elder and 2nd sister are standing in their way and passing comments on the man and his son like the men in Pakistani society do on women. The performance of cross identities contributes to discourse of power reversal. Women being the owners as well as their enactment of male gender make their subject positions strong here. The traditional practice of covering head comes in and their power as a male counters it through an assertion in line 11 in response to 10 when the elder sister utters *tau hum bhi tau baithay hain baabay is ki hifaazat ke lye*. Bushra's taunt is also an expression of power where she in an authoritative position passes a remark on Nabeel as a reminder of his act on the road. Power reversal is very much evident here where deviation from stereotypical norms gives female a privilege over male.

Scene 8

This scene again establishes a contrast of the discursive practices where it is usually seen men threatening women in Pakistani society. But here we could see quite the opposite where Bushra is in position of power through her bold and courageous manner and importantly this boldness is a result of her being the niece of three aunts performing successfully their cross gendered roles and establishing power through it.

Micro level analysis in FPDA brings out plurality of meanings and makes silenced minorities heard (Baxter, 2003). The character of Tanveer is an example of a silenced minority in society from various perspectives. First one is very obvious that he is dependent on his father both financially and psychologically. He has not gained maturity due to his father's constant check and lack of liberty that the boys of his age usually demand. The end of the play makes his powerless position even more obvious where he was left with nothing but to perform cross gender (like women) which ironically matches with his existing helpless situation. The last scene also brings to mind the address term his father uses for him "putri" (daughter) which the women at home made fun of. The FPDA theoretician and practitioners i.e., Chris Weedon and Judith Baxter consider the possibility that male as well as female speakers both are marginalized and victimized in such cultural contexts where the traditional upbringing of children with lack of exposure and poverty results in social oppression, as in the case of Tanveer who is both emotionally and financially dependent. Both the genders are subjugated due to the relative powerfulness of competing institutional discourses save for gender differentiation working in those contexts.

Male Dominant Socio-Cultural Practices

Scene 3

This scene introduces two men, Sattar, who is a property dealer, and the middle aged man belongs to lower middle class who cannot afford high rent and demands the property dealer to arrange for such a house where apart from low rent presence of women is desirable. Here the discourse draws upon the society where though women occupy a subordinate position yet their company is sought after by men either rightfully or vice versa just for their pleasure. This exposes the objectification of women who should be around men in order to please them. The word ‘aurat’ seems to have sexual overtone here.

Scene 6

The discourse of resistance which in this case is cross-gender discourse when counters the societal hegemonic discourse, then it becomes difficult for society to accept it as it is considered against norms. As is evident through the man’s puzzled expressions after his encounter with the women and their boldness. Here the man is the representative of society and the three women represent those who while accepting that hegemony exists are successful in finding ways to counter it. They are successful in achieving empowerment by performing like the superior group (men) who has power.

A contrast is built through Sattar’s conversation where the actual role of a woman is brought into play and the power she has in the role of a wife, but this power is again refuted by the man (society) who sees it against a man’s ego to behave submissively towards his wife. The discursive practices in dominant discourses do not let/allow women to have agency. Despite recognizing the need for women they want to place them in an inferior position as it is against men’s status to acknowledge it as is made obvious in this discourse.

The scene continues when Sattar comes back and asks the man about his decision. The conversation brings to surface the hegemony found in society where the powerful can have their way. The women’s cross gender performance give them a little edge at certain times but their unacceptability on societal level is also a reality which makes them vulnerable. Their house is good but has a comparatively low rent as mentioned by Sattar in line 3. This makes obvious that women’s efforts could help them survive but could not get them an equal status in society as the man utters “*yehan per rehne waley bilkul ghair*

munasib hain". Here the women are victims of multiple discourses i.e. social class, gender differentiation and social structure which render them compromise even on less money necessary for their subsistence.

Deconstructing Deviant Identities

Scene 4

A woman doing male genders both linguistically and paralinguistically is introduced in this scene is referred humiliatingly by the man when he utters, "*ye kaya cheez hai?*" (the man is there to see that woman's house for rent). The woman's (Kuku's) choice of words "*Bandriya*" for his wife is rude to which the man seems surprised. Yet Kuku's response point to an important fact that despite wives being considered in a powerless position in society, they have certain powerful positions as well depending upon the situation like final decision for the rental house in this case.

The performance of cross gender contributes to the double-voicedness and reformulation of hybrid gender identity in discourse. The woman has agency here, her subject position as the owner of the house and the authority that comes with it and most importantly her unexpected gender deviant character intimidates the men and strengthen her powerful position. Her verbal and nonverbal behavior clearly establishes her dominant position in this discourse.

As the scene continues, the man tells the age of his son and also gives Kuku the assurance about his strong character that she will never get any complains about his son. Kuku's response to his assurance was as violent to tell him that he (the woman) does not tolerate such things and will not care for his young son or he being a man. In response to her further query of reeking socks, the man tells that Sattar's wife has a quarrel and is not at home, that's why he is wearing socks for the last 20 days.

Gendered discourse of society is obvious where teenage is considered crucial for boys usually as they tend to get indulged in immoral activities at this age. Significant is woman's cross gender discourse and her threatening language where she reverses the position of a man into a helpless being like woman, that if she gets any complain she won't care for his being a man (conventionally it is said for women that one will not care (tolerate) for her being a woman). Then the discourse of hegemony is evident where firstly the wives are stereotypically seen as some quarrelsome entities who leave their home and husband as a result and secondly their duties as a house wife are naturalized where a man couldn't even wash his socks if wife is not at home. Such a discourse establishes the role of a wife as a necessity of life whose presence is useful for successful running of affairs of home which simultaneously keeps her at both powerless and powerful position.

Scene 5

The scene starts with the man appreciating the home he has recently rented comparing it with the circumstances where it is getting hard to meet both ends. He in an attempt to be at good terms with the landlady tells her a story of his childhood where he mentions his pink frock and his beauty to which the landlady makes a satirical remark.

In this scene cross gendered discourse is at work as the audience' (the landlady's) interest is involved so the use of this discourse strategically helps her gain the position of power. As for the man he attempts to identify with them in order to gain their trust and good will by making use of this discourse "*farak pehnati theen gulabi rang ka*". Multiple voices can be heard i.e. beauty associated with white complexion, the influence of west and then the critique of moral order is done implicitly which closes the topic.

The intervention of two other sisters (Juggu and Kashu) in the scene is significant as it further throws light on the discursive practices found in Pakistani society. Their nonverbals clearly establish a difference in norms associated with both genders where men move openly and women coyly while doing "pardah". The groundings of discourse of resistance are in the hegemonic societal discourse where freedom to move and live in society is relative to gender. There the women intelligently make use of the cross gender discourse as their strategy is to resist and challenge the societal norms by turning tables on them. Agency is a key concept for Butler, as it implies the likeliness for challenging the law against itself to fundamental, political ends (Salih, 2006).

The cross gender discourse gave these women an agency to live fearlessly and boldly in male dominated society; the response of elder sister (Kuku) is significant in this respect when she responds to the utterance *itna jawan jahan* by saying *o hamain kis baat ka khatra hai* as there is no need to fear since they have adopted to perform like men so they are out of them. As Nietzsche made the claim, that "there is no 'being' behind doing, acting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction imposed on the doing—the doing itself is everything" (cited in Salih, 2006). Gender is a performance that brings into being a "masculine" man or a "feminine" woman. In line 9 the authority of the woman is a result of the power that comes with her being a landlady and he being the tenant and more importantly she being a male through her performance and cross gender discourse.

Scene 9

This scene reveals the sisters' private life and their personal views towards their cross gender portrayal; it also illustrates the difference in power positions between subjects of equal rank. The youngest sister Kashu seems to be in a position of power in this discourse

as she is the one who is an earning source in contrast to the 2nd sister Jugu who because of getting over age could not earn through taking part in cricket team. This also exposes the bitter circumstances where the opportunities of employment are less accessible particularly to those who do not conform to societal norms and digress which bring its own consequences. Lines 5 and 8 point to the harsh reality of these women's existence, as they are forced to make a choice of shifting their gender identity in an attempt to gain power and strive for an independent life. Yet despite being successful in their resistance, they often ponder about their confused identity. This also shows that their choice of cross gender performance was not by choice rather they were bound to do it as a challenge to male norms which proved a success as pointed in line 6 and 9. This scene very explicitly tells the reality behind the subversive construction of their gender identities which are adopted as a shield to guard them from society and the dominant social structure which consequentially place them in a relatively powerful and powerless position simultaneously at the same moment in time.

Hence, the analysis reveals the process of the shift of power across the range of speech events or even within a single speech event making the characters experience the moments of relative powerfulness or powerlessness. The deconstruction of discourses in the play reveals both the positioning of the women as relatively powerless individuals surrounded by a variety of prevailing societal discourses, but also comparatively powerful within alternative and competing social discourses. These women discursively work to contest being victimized by gender differentiation discourse, while creating for them a cross gender identity in a form of resistance. In their struggle to survive and be independent they resort to a wider range of existing economic and gendered discourses.

Discussion

Discourse and Presentation of Cross Gender Performance

When discourses produce subjectivities, their center of power mostly remains invisible and unchallenged; using FPDA and the principle of deconstruction help bring the imperceptibility of the constituted and constitutive on the surface. Deconstruction exposes not only the subjectivities produced by discourse but also the center of power that sustains them and remains invisible itself. It sets up procedures that help in demystifying the realities we create. As in the play there is constant interplay of power among the characters at a synchronic level which is deconstructed to see the processes of those dominating and being dominated or in this case to see how the women in the play resist and challenge the discursive construction of gendered subject positions.

A perverse sense of equality appears to be at work, where discursive practices place women in a subordinated position, and present them in media as sexually objectified group. The women by performing cross gender turn the tables on men, in this discourse of reversal, noticeable is the reverse use of idioms and phrases otherwise associated with women like in scene 4 the elder sister (Kuku) interestingly says *mein phir parwa nahi karun ga tumhare jawan betay ki ya tumhary mard honey ki*, and then in scene 5 *kahin aur muhn kala karo*. In similar lines Bushra threatens Tanveer in scene 7 *teray gol gol muhn pe tezaab phaink dun gi*.

To uphold a dominant discourse, other meaningful discourses which provide understanding are marginalized and treated as unnatural or trivial as in the case of this play. The title *Chal Jhooti* itself is significant which at the outset point to the worthlessness of the being which is not considered serious rather taken as a trifle. This small phrase *Chal Jhooti* marks the bigger dilemma of constituting practices causing representations worthless or worthwhile. For that matter, one of the gripping elements of the play is its apparent humor through which is presented a grave reality of the society where the existence of women without male counterpart is not acceptable and so not compromised. In such circumstances women are left with no choice but to resist or surrender to those in power vis a vis male hegemonic social structure. The light hearted manner of presenting an issue of a serious concern itself establishes irony which is at work throughout the play at both linguistic and non-linguistic levels. The funny manner of depiction brings triviality to women's power and a mocking sense could be sensed lurking beneath it. The reality shown at a synchronic level in the play is an outcome of the societal norms establishing themselves throughout the history at a diachronic level.

The analysis of cross gender performance in the play brings understanding of the intricate and distinctive ways in which our society designates gender norms. The gendered discourses in the play make a point that gender is shaped by and negotiated in discourse and does not exist pre-discursively, but individuals potentially have the agency to change their discursive positions along with circumstances and requirements.

Feminist post-structuralism agrees with the social constructionist view that identities are enacted repeatedly. Thus gender has continually to be reaffirmed and openly displayed by constantly performing particular acts conforming to the cultural norms which define masculinity and femininity. In this regard those deviating from such norms must be understood and investigated to explore the intricacies of their discourses and performances. Deconstruction draws multiple interpretations from a text which is in line with poststructuralist's view on disjointed identities and multiple meanings of texts. This is interesting to note the subtle manner in which media reveals the discursive constructions of gendered identities and the co-construction of those gendered subjectivities as a mean to counter them and retaliate. Along with other motives, the

study makes out the discursive practices in the society as barriers and these are the discriminatory practices that women with no male counterpart have to cope with and handle in their effort to survive in the society which has been a male dominated domain.

Implications and Conclusions

The discourse of gender differentiation is manifested acutely through the cross gender performance of women in the play. Women are presented as empowered in contrast to the men who are disempowered here and structurally, the players have been switched but the gender order is still hierarchical. The discourse of resistance competing with the dominant discourses asserts its power in specific circumstances for that time period but the general pattern remains the same. The societal order of discourse remains hegemonic by keeping the women in subordinate position as the symbolic depiction of Tanveer performing cross gender at the end of the play. He in performing the role of a girl is also performing the timidity and submissiveness associated with women.

The study of transgression and creativity is needed to be held precisely while keeping in the restraints and possibilities given by particular social constructions and practices. Or else, a celebration of agency loses its effectiveness, this must be considered that in some situations challenging the gendered expectations and going against them could end in reinforcement, rather than the abolition of the dominant gender order. Such as, women 'doing' power in any setting or men being timid can strengthen the dualism between genders. The masculinization of talk by women and the feminization of forms of masculinity may be perceived as redefining conventional standard fixed for women and men in some societies. However, generally these gender crossings not only facilitate but aggravate the essential dualism of the gender structure, as they are seen against the societal assumptions and behavioral norm of the 'other'.

End Notes

- 1 The man is a reference to the central character of the story who remains unnamed throughout the play as representing "everyman" of the society.

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Appendices

The main character of the play is unnamed and I referred to him as “the man” throughout the transcribed dialogues and in the analysis.

Resistance to Stereotypical Subject Positions

Scene 1 on the Road

(There are two characters i.e., a middle aged man and a young woman (Bushra) standing on a road)

The Man (wearing spectacles): ager bura na manyen tau juice chal ker peetay hain.

Bushra: (while chewing gum, a frowning gaze): sharam ker ly uncle.

Nabeel: naiki ka tau zamana hi nahi hai.

Scene 2 in a Park

(A boy (Tanveer) wearing a pink shirt is shown waiting and then getting enthusiastic while looking at the girl (Bushra), she looks composed while chewing gum)

1. Tanveer: Bushra?... mein Tanveer (she makes a sign of disapproval while looking at him),... tum itna nervous kyun ho rahi ho?
2. Bushra: wo pehli date hai na isi liye,... mein tumhein kaisi lagi?
3. Tanveer: Payari ho aur mein?
4. Bushra: Thore motay ho lekin ho cute (tanveer getting shy and starts biting nails), ye sharmany waley larkon mein na muje chakkon wala touch lagta hai,... paseena tau saaf ker lo,(Tanveer wiping his face) ... pata hai meray saath yehi hota hai shuru shuru mein mein khud nervous hoti hun phir doosron ko nervous kerna shur ker deti hun,... (Bushra looking careless and happy) meray kapray kaisay hain, fitting achi hai na, mein nahi silwati Ghareeb abad, Ghareeb abad jaisay ilaqaon sym era tailor na Tariq Road per bethta hai, hai bohat mehnga lekin lush designs doondh ker lata hai my God, ... waisay bura na manina lekin muje pink type ky colour pehnany waley larkey badhey ghigay lagtey hain.
5. Tanveer (getting confused) : yeh tau bas mein ne wo jaldbazi mein hi pehan lye thy, mein ne tau black shirt nikali thi, lekin wo light chali gayi tau bas yehi... (Bushra making a bad face at it, Tanveer wiping sweat from his forehead)

Scene 2 Continued

6. Bushra (in an authoritative tone): ghar mein kaun kaun hai?
7. Tanveer: Bas mein aur abu hain, ammi ka tau intaqal ho gaya hai, dada dadi Gujranwala hotay hain aur tumhare ghar mein kaun kaun hai?

8. Bushra: Sorry gi! mein kisi ko na pehli mulaqat mein apna kacha chatha nahi khol ke suna deti aur wo bhi aisay larkay ko jis say meri wrong number pe bat hui ho, chall, waisay bhi tum larkon ka kya bharosa, pehlay sab kuradtay ho, us ke baad hum larkiyan ko blackmail kertay ho.
9. Tanveer: hay ziada satti savatri mat bano meray samney, jis larkay nay tumhara number diya tha na us ne kaha tha badhi tight bachi hai.
10. Bushra: Acha bachu tera kazim wala group hai, wo tau hain hi sarey ek number ke kameenay aur kangley, ullu ke pathay aaj ke baad muje phone kya na tau bas dekh lena (while taking his shirt into grip)
11. Tanveer: karun ga kisi ke baap ka der hai
12. Bushra: (taking off her shoes) maar maar ke na ganja ker dun gi, abhi chillaun gin aur bheer(crowd) ikathi ho jaye gi, chal ja... (he went off while screaming)

Scene 7

(The middle aged man and his son (Tanveer) shifting in, holding chairs in their hands)

1. 2nd sister: ohoo tum logo ne tau nakhreeli begmat ko bhi maat ker diya hai
2. Man: oho putri dekh ke mera bacha chal chal
3. 2nd: tu ne tau motey lagta hai kha kha ke sirf pait ke muscle bnaye hain
4. Man: (trying to ignore them) jaldi ker
5. 2nd: bahi hmara qasoor nahi hai, tumhari apni grip dheeli hai

(meanwhile they both encounter Bushra (their niece) on stairs)

6. Bushra: yeh dono kaun hain badhi phupho
7. Elder: in ko ooper ka ghar karaye per diya hai
8. 2nd: oye sar pe dupatta rakh
9. Elder: oye tu kab se maulvi faqeer hussain ho gaya
10. 2nd: abay larka jawan hai
11. Elder: tau hum bhi tau baithay hain baabay is ki hifaazat ke lye

(Bushra teases the man on their way to upstairs by referring to their previous encounter “juice piyye ga mangwa dun”)

Scene 8

(Bushra standing in the way, the man remembers her words “sharam ker ly uncle” while passing by, so avoiding any talk)

Bushra: (Threatning Tanveer) sun agar tu ne kisi kau bachu meray aur apni date ke baaray mein btaya teray gol gol muhn pe tezaab phaink dun gi, janta nahi kis ki`sm ki larki hun main.

Male Dominant Socio-Cultural Practices**Scene 3**

1. Sattar: chalo kartey hain kuch, lekin aap bhi tau karaya kam dena chahtey ho, advance bhi kam ho, ye ghar acha hai agar kaho tau baat chaluun.
2. The man: mitti aur kahta theek ahi, saary hi mard hain koī aurat hi nahi.
3. Sattar: tau aap ne malik makan ki aurton ka kya kerna hai?

Scene 6

(The man looks so harassed and distressed while coming out of the building)

(Sattar is shown talking on phone with his wife)

1. Sattar: dekho Robina Allah pak ki qasam iman se bta raha hun jot um kaho gi wohi ho ga iman se bta raha hun
2. The man: oye sharam ker muaaf ker de, tu ne tau mardon ka naam dabo diya hai, oye aurtaen bhi minnatein nahi kerti is terah, teray ander na purani Nayyara Sultana ki rooh ghussi hui hai.

Scene 6 Continued

1. Sattar(to Nabeel): haan bahi kesa hai (ghar)?
2. The man: ye kesy Bengalion ki terah puch reha hai kesa hai, ye pooch keh teen ghabru mard jo andar mulakhra ludh rahe thy wo kesay hain, Allah Paak ki qasam un mein se dau key muhn itney (too much) badhay thy.
3. Sattar: Boss itny paision mein is elaqay mein is se ziada munasib ghar nahi mil sakta.
4. The man: magar yehan per rehne waley bilkul ghair munasib hain, agar ye teenon aurtein hain tau mein inhain aurtein manane se inkar kerta hun, mera inkar hai.

Deconstructing Deviant Identities**Scene 4**

Giving bell at the door

A woman dressed like a man is coming and saying aa raha hun, aa raha hun

1. The man: ye kaya cheez hai?
2. Sattar: ooper waley portion ke lye karaye dar laya tha.
3. Woman (owner): o yar ye tum roz roz itny sab logon ko kyun le ker aa jaaty ho, (then asking from nabeel) oh tmhari bandrya kidhar hai.
4. The man: konsi baandri ji?

5. Woman (owner): o tumhari bivi, bahi fasiala tau usi ne kerna hai na, sab kuch dekhna hai saath dekho ye roz roz ka chakar nahi paalty hum.

Scene 4 Continued

9. Woman (owner): hmmm betay ki umar kya hai?
10. The man: beta hai ji koi 18, 19 saal ka, mashaAllah badha hi shareef hai ji, ajkal waley larkon ki koi baat nahi hai us mein, kisi kism ki koi shakayat nahi ho gi.
11. Woman (owner): oye shakayt hui na tau taang pe taang rakh ke na cheer deyn gay, samagh gye hum koi aasra kernay waly log nahi hain bta dayn, dekho zyada guaranteean na do mein tafteesh karnay pea a gaya na tau tiya paancha ker ke rakh dun ga, mein phir parwa nahi karun ga tumhare jawan betay ki ya tumhary mard honey ki, samajh gaye..... ye kis key mozon mein se boo aa rahi hai
12. The man: ji is ki biwi lar ke maikay gayi hui hai, is ne 20 din se juraabain pehni hui hain.

Scene 5

1. The man: ghar tau badha aala hai ji hawadar bhi hai, karaya bhi munasib hai, aajkal karaye badhay ho gaye hain, banda daal roti karay ya karaye de, waisay kurta badha aala pehna hua hai aap ne, pichli Eid pe mein ne bilkul aisa kurta pehna tha..... bachpan mein meri maan jab bhi muje farak pehnati theen gulabi rang ka foran nazar lag jati thi muje, badha kamal rang tha bachpan mein mera, gaun mein sary kehtay thy Ashfaq Angrez lagta hai Angrez.
2. Woman(owner): o angrez aaty jaaty hon gay gaaun main.
(There enters two women dressed like men)
3. 3rd sister: abay o sun agar yahan shift hona hai na biwi ke sath usay bolna hum se parda karey yahan teen mard rehtay hain, us ke bachgana sawalon se bhi duur rahen gay hum log
4. Woman owner: iski biwi mar gayi hai, ek beta hai.
5. The man: 18 ,19 saal ka
6. 3rd sister: itna jawan jahan
7. Woman owner (taking her face into grip): o hamain kis baat ka khatra hai, hayn
8. 3rd sister: ye tau hai
9. Woman owner: sari sharayat bta di hain qabool ho tau aa jana nahin tau kahin aur muhn kala karo. (making gestures for him to leave the room, enacting and behaving like street boys)
10. The man: khuda hafiz gi
11. Woman owner: Allah hi hafiz (making a rude gesture to him to leave at once, then the 1st and 2nd started fighting with each other)

Scene 9

(2nd sister preparing tea in the kitchen, then shares it with the 3rd sister)

1. 3rd: kasam se jugoo ab ki baar mein gya na Lahore cricket match khelne ke lye teray liye bohat sari cheezain le ker aaun ga, teri pasandeeda naan khatayaan, aur lakshami chowk se masoor ki daal ka halwa, sardiyon mein kya maza deta hai.
2. 2nd: wo apni auraton wali cricket team mein muje bhi shamil ker le na, kasam se muj se bhi moti moti aur umer raseeda aurtein hoti hain cricket team mein
3. 3rd: teri umer nikal gayi hai
4. 2nd: pohka
5. 3rd: acha ghussa na ker, chor na ghussa, yar aik baat btaun badha hi ajeeb sa laga muje aaj, certificate nikal ke dekh raha tha, pta hai us pe kya likha tha, Kishwar Ghazal, aisa laga jaisay koi mein khusra hun, ek lamhey ke lye bhi mehsoos nahi hua mein eik aurat hun
6. 2nd: abbay jo auratein aurat pan bhool jati hain na un se badha draikola koi nahi hota mardon ko drane ke lye
7. 3rd: aur tu kaun hai Zakiya Ghazal, aur wo kuku Kokab Ghazal
8. 2nd: ye tarkeeb tau kuku ki thi logon ko drane ke lye mardon ko dhamkane ke lye us ne apna ye swang derha aur phir jis jis ko bhi zarurat padhti gayi us us ne ye swang derha. Abay hum jaisi maamooli aurton se na mard shadi wadi nahi kertay. Haan akeli aurton ko drane mein mardon ko chatpata sa swad aata hai, phir aqal shakal nahi dekhi jati
9. 3rd: abbay hum se kaanptey hain mard, hum log mardon se zyada haseen hain aur un se zyada taqatwar
10. 2nd: kameena hai (laughing)

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