

Analyzing the Language Construction of Victim Blaming in Pakistani Public Discourse:

A Corpus-Based Study of Online Reactions and Ideological Patterns

1. **Muhammad Sheraz Anwar** English Lecturer, Department of English Language & Literature, Superior University, Lahore / PhD English Scholar, Department of English Language, Imperial University, Lahore
Email: sherazsadh786@gmail.com
2. **Qudsia Saleem** MS English Scholar, Department of English, Forman Christian College, University, Lahore Email: qudsiasaleem517@gmail.com

Abstract



This study analyzes victim blaming narratives in Pakistan surrounding harassment cases. It identifies underlying ideologies and recurrent linguistic categories that are utilized to justify victim blaming. A mixed research design was adopted for the systematic evaluation of public opinions on social media platforms. The AntConc software is used to carry out a corpus-based study, which facilitated the quantitative analysis by measuring word frequencies and collocations, whereas the underlying ideologies and societal beliefs are examined through Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) Framework. A purposive sampling technique is utilized to examine harassment cases in the current year 2025. The sampling consists of 1000 comments sourced from 4 different cases, out of which three of the cases took place in recent months. Since Urdu and English hold the status of standard languages and are widely practiced in Pakistan, bilingual comments are examined so that the findings closely align with the communal ideologies of the population being studied. The findings reveal how language is used as a discursive tool to justify violence, condemning victims and reinforcing preconceived patriarchal, cultural and religious narratives. This calls for swift measures to dismantle these negative ideologies on digital platforms.

Keywords: Victim Blaming, Corpus Based Analysis, Harassment Cases in Pakistan, Linguistic Analysis

Introduction

The term victim blaming was first coined in the year 1971 by William Ryan, who referred to the transference of blame to the victim by the criminal. Ryan employed the term blaming the victim in order to present the argument that shaping the blame on the Black people in the US was a justifiable form of racism and violence against Black people. The way women are blamed as having provoked sexual violence perpetrated upon them by males, has become a significant element in victim blaming literature, but victim blaming does not only take place in the context of sexual violence or women. Victim blaming in sexual violence against women is the application that makes the women shoulder the burden of the male to rape her instead of the responsibility being with the male rapist (Burt, 1980). The existing studies carried out across different times, locations, and cultures have reported different levels of prevalence of victim blaming among women who experienced sexual violence. Over half of those involved in historical studies found a reason in the promiscuity or bad reputation of the woman when they thought of rape.

Victim Blaming in Pakistan

The variables are diverse, which affect how rape victims are perceived by the population, such as psychopathic tendencies, gender roles and stereotypes, rape myths, societal and cultural norms, individual biases and experiences, and historical experiences with sexual assault (Kim and Santiago, 2020). Pakistani men with more conventional, conservative, and sexist attitudes are more prone to hold the victim in rape cases responsibility, they hold negative views, and are less sympathetic to victims of rape. Masculinity and conservative attitudes are also associated with negative attitudes towards victims of rape, but the victim blame is negatively correlated with the perpetrator blame. In the Pakistan case, 8.4 rapes per 100,000 people were witnessed, and thus a judicial punishment must

be strong against people who commit such acts. There is less favourable attitudes towards the rape victims in the general population and is more likely to hold victims of sexual assault and rape to the blame. It has also been determined in the relevant literature the contribution of the social and cultural variables to acceptability of rape myths and victim blaming.

Victim Blaming in Media

The notion that a woman is lesser to a male and should be treated as one has been a long time social construct in the society. The sexual violence has become normal and this has translated to people being less sensitive to actual assault and they have found it hard to intervene on it through the media. Women are often blamed and held to the point of responsibility of their attacker than the other way around. This lack of success in defending victims of sexual assault and the trick of blaming women on themselves is referred to as rape culture. It happens when the horrific attack on a woman is made to seem insignificant, when men are absolved but women are reproved because of their dressing code during the attack and when a woman is more than willing to keep quiet than prosecute the person who assaulted her. Sexual violence and the consequences of rape culture are against human rights, as it does not consider the equality and dignity of women. The primary factors in the rape culture are the normalization of sexual violence in the media, blame of the victim and the patriarchal society, which is a human rights issue.

Purpose of the study

This paper examines the manner in which perceptions of rape victims are foretold by victim blaming, historical experiences of sexual victimization, adherence to rape myths, and responses to friends who have fallen victim to sex. The paper also tries to assess the importance of the above factors within an indigenous Pakistani setting but considering social realities that influence and shape the way people perceive rape.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of victim-blaming in Pakistan on social media by demographics (gender, age & education)?
2. How do cultural and religious interpretations impact on Promoting attitudes of victim blaming On Pakistani social media platforms?

Research Objectives

1. To evaluate/examine the impact of cultural norms and values on victims blaming attitudes on social media through discourse in Pakistan.
2. To understand the dominant patterns of arguments and justifications utilized in victim blaming narratives on Pakistani social media and if those conforms to cultural or religious values.

Literature Review

The way crime is being covered in the newspapers may also affect the perception of the society on gender-based violence on a day-to-day basis. Abuse of women by men is a common practice in our society and due to the fear, the issue affects all women either directly or indirectly. The newspaper can sometimes be quite direct when it comes to its views such as in the 1982 headline which stated, Victims must take the blame. Nevertheless, sometimes language tells about any underlying attitudes and changes the responsibility indirectly. They can easily show the blame pattern by observing this language (Clark, 1998).

Sexism is prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination according to gender (Oxford Dictionary, 2016). Moreover, gender roles are outlined as a set of socially produced norms that define what characteristics and behaviours should be desirable or acceptable depending on the gender of a person. These norms are generally created out of sexism. These messages and norms contribute to victim blaming and self-blaming by expressing a range of expected or acceptable characteristics, behaviours, and stereotypes of women and victims of rape and sexual assault (Alsop et al., 2002; Levant and Alto, 2017; West and Zimmerman, 2002).

The former legal system was being operated in a different way and the victims played an important role in it. The aim of justice was not to put the criminals behind bars but to punish them according to the suffering they caused to the victims. The victim is simply regarded as a witness and has no control to add anything on what happens. A civil action can also be initiated by the victim against the perpetrator so as to be compensated. This change has ensured that victims still maintain a

role in the criminal justice system but they do not in the civil system since the state is respected more than the victim (Eigenberg & Garland, 2008).

The revelations may be received negatively by the friends even when they are trying to support the survivor, which may harm them emotionally and potentially the survivor too (Bogen et al. 2019). Such reactions may encompass feelings of helplessness, bewilderment, hopelessness, anger, guilt, humiliation, sadness, melancholy, anxiety, fear, doubt, and even flashbacks to other similar previous occurrences. Heard the news about the abuse of a friend may even lead to a secondary victimization, where the friend may also develop trauma symptoms due to the action of empathizing with the victim (Alaggia & Wang, 2020).

Already victimized persons were more likely to intervene and were less acceptive of rape myths (RMA). Also, individuals with a history of sexual victimization were more likely to endorse and encourage their friends or others affiliated with them to report their experience or incidence of sexual assault compared to individuals who had none (Schmitt et al. 2021). Victims of rape are the primary focus of the formation of attitudes that cause sexual assault and rape of women (Sjoberg & Sarwar, 2022). It has been repeatedly shown that sexual aggressiveness is predetermined by perceptions that support violence, beliefs in rape myths, and the lack of sympathy caused by psychopathy towards the victims of rape (Persson & Dhingra, 2022).

Methodology

This paper examined the interdependence of grandiose narcissism, support of myths related to rape and the social response to the said cases in Pakistan. The dual method was used to make sure that a detailed examination of linguistic structures and predominant themes in the discourse would be carried out. Most of the data was gathered using the Tik Tok, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram as the primary channels of social networking. Particularly, the focus was directed on the views held by the users represented in the form of comments on these sites. The commonness, availability, and existence of different public discourses on the selected platforms render them an excellent selection in this study. A purposive method of sampling has been applied in order to compile the most relevant comments. The sample size was 1000 comments, and the nonprobability sampling strategy was used to collect it. The major themes that the comments were examined with were victim blaming, pompousness and ingrained rape fallacies. The Corpus-based tool, AntConc was used to develop quantitative interpretations through determination of the most repeated key words and phrases in the data collected and narrowing down on the comments that contained the connotations of victim blaming. Nonetheless, the concealed ideologies enshrined in the discourse were construed in terms of Fairclough CDA model as a qualitative research tool. It gives a further explanation on the ways in which victim blaming discourses are validated through language and recreated in the social world.

Findings and Results

Case no: 1

Sana Yousaf Case

The new example of a social media influencer, Sana Yousaf, who was supposedly shot by a boy, has brought numerous questions and opinions into different social media. The immediate reaction by the IG Islamabad and Government officials to this case was because of the hype created by ordinary people on the social media. Such a big part of the population expressed negative emotions, accusing the victim on moral, ethical, religious and cultural levels, and some even rejoiced in the fact of her killing as the triumph of Islam and male traditions. Four hundred meaningful comments referring to this case were gathered and the analysis was carried out using the AntConc software to identify common patterns of victim-blaming. The CDA model designed by Norman Fairclough textual level was used to examine the ways in which victim blaming discourses, religious extremism, cultural conservatism and misogyny may be perpetuated via discourse. The analysis is also subdivided into three levels of analysis namely word level, phrase level and sentence level.

Table 1: Corpus Analysis of Sana Yousaf's Case Using AntConc Software

Linguistic Category	Ideologically Charged Words/ Phrases	Conceptual Meaning / Function	Frequency
Victim Blaming	She is responsible, Qasoor larki ka he, girls give opportunity, Larki k saath wahi hua jo usne apni liye banaya tha, why was she in contact, Ghar ka address kyun diya?	Shifting the blame from Victim to Perpetrator	33
Conservatism	Ghar baitho, Aurat ghar me Rahe, Char diware	Highlights societal rules	10

Extremism	me mafooz he, Ghairatmand log tawaja dein, Apni Khawateen ko Chadar me rakhein, Islam ne aurat ko chup kar rehne ka kaha he	set by society for women, Justified murder on moral and religious basis	56
	Acha hoa, Fitna khatam hoa, Zabardast, Good, Jahad hai ya, Gand Kam hoa, Allah Marne wale ko jaza de, Safai shoro ho gae he, Chun Chun kar manrna Chahiye, Ese hi ek ek ka number aye ga	Promoting vigilantism, glorifying murder and justifying extreme violence	
Misogyny	Behaya, husan marwa Sakta he, Aurat k liye parda farz he, Islam me aurat ko parda ka hukam he, Parda karo, cover yourself, Aurat social media p aye gi tu mard tu attract hon ge, Larki social media kiun chalate thi?	Shame Female Visibility, Objectifying the beauty of women and accusing women for enticing men	76
Negative Ideologies	Islam ki kami ki waja se ye sab hua he, Deen se dori ka nateeja, Influencer banne ka Anjam, Bure kam ka Anjam bura hota he, Side effects of social media, she broke the boundaries set by Allah	Framing death as logical consequences of disobeying divine laws	17

Textual Analysis

Positive Moral Evaluation of Death

“Acha hoa maar gai, fitna khatam hoa”

The language expressions in the data set in this case demonstrated the high exploitation by people to normalize and rationalize such acts of violence. Many people praised the criminal with such words as *“Acha hoa”*, *“Sahi hoa”*, *“Zabardast”*, *“Great job”*, *“Well-deserved”*. The fact that these words are repeated several times demonstrates the desensitization of the society to this kind of cruelty and places a female in the role where she deserves this kind of violence. It not only justifies, but also puts into the limelight the consent of the populace to gendered violence.

Justification of Religion and Moral Policing

“Islam me parda ka hukum he”

The terms that were claimed many times by the users were *“Parda”*, *“Quran”*, *“Allah”*, *“Islam”* and *“Deen”* which implied that the victim was violating the moral code of life that was given by the Almighty. Moreover, these terms are entrenched in religious and moral implications and point to the custom of easily discarding women to the religious judgments. The people were simply justifying her death by criticizing her social media look and failure to wear hijab. Through this, the maverick and radical women are brought out as possible dangers to the society, and this can be seen in the manipulative wording.

Dehumanization and Misogyny

“She was just a trash”

This was a challenge to the social standing of the victim and derogative words like *“Behaya”*, *“Shetan”*, *“Husan”*, *“Trash”* and *“Fitna”* were brought against her. She was depicted as the highest authority of chaos and perversion in the society which depicts the use of language, which was used premeditatedly to tarnish her identity. And not just that, in some cases, women are also accused of being the ones who provoke or tempt men with their natural beauty instead of covering themselves up to ensure that they are safe.

Conditional Statements and Idiomatic Expressions

The phrasal level of data analysis reflects the unnecessary involvement of metaphors and religiously disputed expressions, which easily justifies the crookedness of the perpetrator, all the consequences of which are placed solely on the victim. There is interlinking of the actions of the victim and the violence she experienced like the use of conditional sentences like *“Agar Parda Karte tu esa na hota”* and *“Na famous hote na marte”*. Besides that, even the metaphors like *“Bure kam ka bura anjam”* and *“Tali ek hath se nahi bajte”* justified the violence to the victim as a response that is hard to avoid to the indecent decisions she made.

Collocations

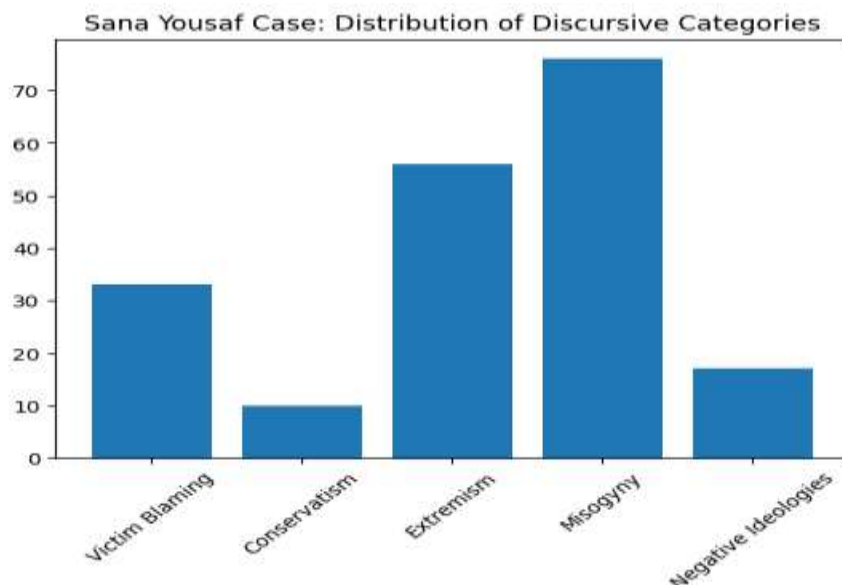
During the analysis process, it is possible to observe a strategic practice of validating arguments denouncing in the name of religion and culture. Close interconnection between *“Social media”* and *“Fashashi”*, *“TikTok”* and *“Behaya larki”* and *“Parda”* and *“Izzat”* has been made. These associations are misleading the minds of people by associating the exposure of women with shame

and exposure to social media with vulgarity and immorality. The repetitive nature of such unions works out to secure the traditional boundaries and prejudices of women within the society.

Rhetorical Questions

A good percentage of the individuals posed rhetorical questions to pass the burden to the victim and acquire the highway to get away with the crime. There were sentences like “*Social media kiun use karte thi?*” or “*How did he get her number and address?*” or “*Why did she not wear a hijab?*” that were repeated many times to bring the point home that the victim was quite conscious of the repercussions of her behavior. These are not questions to answer, they are applied to force questions on the agency of the victim in a judgmental manner.

Case 1 Graph



It is apparent that misogyny is the most prevailing discourse in the case of Sana Yousaf, which is closely followed by extremism as indicated in this graph. The misogynistic nature of the language is extremely frequent, which indicates a high level of misogynistic attitude to the appearance of women, particularly on social networks. The second category of extremism, reading as the second-highest, demonstrates the fact that a significant part of the population did not just accuse the victim, but also actively justified and glorified the violence. The victim blaming too takes a significant part, pointing out the manner in which the blame was placed systematically on the victim. Conservatism and negative ideologies, albeit having a lower frequency, are still supportive as they support moral and religious reasons behind the violence.

Academic Takeaway:

This allocation shows how gendered hate and moral extremist thinking together act to sanction violence against women who cross social boundaries. The social media response to the murder of social media influencer Sana Yousaf is indicative of a highly ingrained victim-blaming, misogynistic, religious fanatical, and moral conservatism that has been ingrained in the common discourse of everyday people. Language analysis of remarks on this case shows that language is not only one of the means of expression but also an ideological instrument that justifies violence against women. One of the most powerful aspects of the discourse about the murder of Sana is the systematic passing of the blame to the murderer into the hands of the victim.

Explanation

On the word level, the use of such morally charged lexicon as “*Behaya*”, “*Fitna*”, and “*Trash*” is repeated, which depicts how the identity of Sana was reconstituted linguistically as morally corrupt. These are words which deprive the victim of her humanness and reinvent her being in exclusively moral terms. When such labels have been placed, it is even more justifiable to be violent in the victim since she is no longer seen as a complete human subject worthy of empathy. Rather, she is fashioned as a social menace that her elimination is made to be advantageous to society. This dehumanisation is a key move to the justification of violence since the audience is enabled to be emotionless to the inhumanity of the act.

On phrasal level, common idioms and moral phrases which have become familiar to Indians like “Bure kaam ka bura anjam” and “Tali ek haath se nahi bajti” are used many times in the conversation. These words act as automatic explanations that do not warrant more explanation. Naturalizing the notion that damage is an unavoidable consequence of moral deviation, they conveniently deny the agency on behalf of the perpetrator. Through these phrases, speakers make their verdict appear as a popular wisdom and not subjectivity, and thus, make their words more ideologically powerful. The dependence on an idiomatic language makes it seem that the violence is socially acceptable and morally right.

Conditional structures at the sentence level also have a very influential role to play in strengthening victim-blaming stories. Comments like “*Agar parda karti to yeh na hota*”, build a non-true cause-effect linkage between the actions of the victim and her homicide. These rhetoric statements suggest that safety is relative to the compliance to moral and religious standards. Consequently, it is not the protection that is laid out as a fundamental human right but as a reward to be obtained by obedient women. This language structure changes the emphasis to the victim and her failure to fit in.

These stories are further enhanced through religious discourse by using “*Islam*”, “*Quran*”, “*Parda*”, and “*Allah*” in justifying the killing. Religion is selectively applied and used to criticize the lifestyle of the victim, but it does not blame the perpetrator but excuses him. The existence of Sana on social media is depicted as something that is against the divine boundaries and her death is even seen as divine justice as opposed to a human offense. This twisting of religious words does not only pervert religious teachings, but it also strengthens patriarchal power in placing men as the moral enforcers and women as objects who have to be controlled.

The other notable character of the discourse is the glorification of violence in terms of positive moral assessment of death. The terms like “*Acha hoa*”, “*Zabardast*”, and “*Fitna khatam ho gaya*” are open praises of the killing and they make it appear as a moral victory. This kind of language shows a troubling degree of desensitization to the violence against women and shows how in the discourse this violence is normalized when it fits into the culture of dominant patriarchy. The fact that the act is highly praised multiple times implies that it is collectively approved and helps to strengthen the notion that violence is a legitimate means to achieve moral order.

Rhetorical questions are resourceful to influence the perception of the population. Such questions as “*Social media kyun use karti thi*” and “*Ghar ka address kyun diya*” are not real questions but indirect charges. These serve to question the victim about their decisions and not question the actions of the person committing the crime. Directing blame as a question, speakers look unbiased, but uphold judgmental assumptions. This is a linguistic tactic which covertly compels the viewers to accept the alleged blame, which adds even more layers of victim-blaming ideologies.

Case no: 2

Eman Afroz Case

Eman was a student of a university living in a private hostel. On 22 April 2025, she was killed by a man who she apparently knew in the middle of the night. Among others who were preaching against this brutality, there was a section that was accusing the victim and rejoicing over her death as a performance of an obligation that was morally and religiously proper. The sample of data had 200 remarks. The data was then analyzed based on CDA model after being analyzed with the help of AntConc software with the aim of analyzing the way language is being used to build and support negative ideologies and victim blaming scripts in society.

Table 2: Corpus Analysis of Eman Afroz’s Case Using AntConc Software

Linguistic Category	Ideologically Charged Words/ Phrases	Conceptual Meaning / Function	Frequency
Victim Blaming	Khuch ghaltiya hoti hein, Something must have been done by her, Koi Kisi ko bil waja nahi Marta, Larki raat ko 1:30 baje Bahar kiun gai? Raat ko Bahar kiun ai, ashiqui ka anjam	Legitimizing violence by beholding female responsible for the incident on the basis of her actions, choices and presence	16
Conservatism	Apne betiyon ko parda karwao, Hijab is only solution, Females parda karein, Larkion ko ghar me rakhein, Islamic rules follow karo	Reinforces Gender-biased norms and limits female agency	9

Extremism	Done good job, Zabardast, Sher ka bacha, Sab ki bari aye gi ek ek kar k, Sare Apne kiye ka badla lete hein, Burai ka bura Anjam, Zina karo ge maro ge	Frames gender-biased violence as religiously justified and presenting the perpetrator as hero	12
Surveillance	Larkiyon ko university nahi bhejna chahiye, Izzatdar log hostel nahi bhejte, bf culture he, multiple affair hote hein, hostel me rok tok nahi hote	Restricting women's education under the guise of religion, safety and honor	35
Negative Ideologies	Social media SE dor raho, Islam ko follow nahi karo gi tu yahi ho ga, Deen se dori, Girls ko public nahi hona chahiye, Deen=System	Constructing a narrative that modernity, social freedom and deviation from religion cause moral chaos	12

Glorification of the Victim's Murder

"Zabardast kam keya ha, sher ka bacha ha"

Some of the comments even praised the offender and rejoiced about the atavistic killing of the victim, by use of words such as "Sher ka bacha", "Acha hoa", "Zabardast Kam kia" and "Mazaya aya". By doing so, the recurrence of words of appeasing remarks casts the perpetrator as the person who performed the religious duty and presents the victim as morally perverse. This shows how women can easily be sacked by the society when they fail to abide by the traditional norms and values of the society.

Religious Built and Family Honor.

"Quran majid me aurat ko parde ka hukam he"

The information shows the use of religious and culturally inspired statements occurring repeatedly. Such a tendency to manipulate and distort religious verdicts is manifested through such expressions as *Allah ka hukam*, *Deen se dori* and *Parda karo*. Then it holds that those who do not live by these moral limitations, are really deserving of such consequences. As a result, it leaves the burden of upholding respect of the family with women and makes men to be the custodians of religion.

Female Education and Agency

"Apne bachion ko hostel na bhejein, Yaha bohat azadi hote he. Koi rok tok nahi hote"

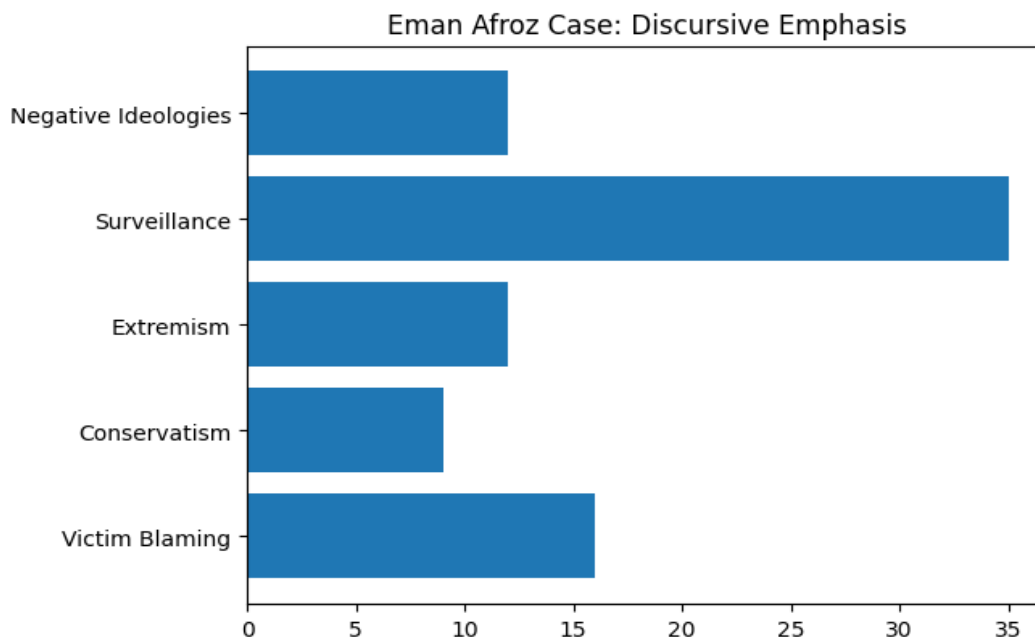
With the development of such events, the users have attempted to paint the universities and hostels in bad light as the channels of facilitating morally despicable actions. The "*Boyfriend culture*", "*Azadi*" and "*Affair*" have been used synonymously with "*Educational institutions*" and "*Hostels*". Perhaps the most widespread explanation which is brought forth to attack these institutions is that they lack the conformity to social norms which prevail by allowing women agency and co-education. This way, language serves as a tool to steal the right of women to schooling and maintain the status quo that is accompanied by the possession of a specific gender. This is a strong allusion to the division of women as caregivers and men as the one who has authority.

Collocations

The phrasal interpretations demonstrate in what ways the discourse was employed to establish common grounds concerning what is admissible and what is not especially to the women. The correlation of the term "*Izzatdar ghar k log*" and "*Universities*" displays the traditional concept of educating the boys and spoiling the girls in the family matters, reducing the empowerment of the women. Social media is a term that is linked with negative outcomes to suggest that the existence of women in the open can endanger their lives and privacy. This linguistic pattern generates a great connection between the results the victim has had and past actions and behavior. This way, it tries to eliminate the crime committed by the offender and instead victimize the victim.

Rhetorical Question

A lot of remarks were organized in the form of questions, accusing the victim and investigating her presence at the rooftop during the middle of the night. The judgmental sentences are masked in the form of, "*Raat ko 1:00 baje akeli chaat p kia kar rahi thi?*", "*Room se bahir kiun nikli thi?*" and "*Ik ilawa kisi aur larki ko kiun khuch nahi kaha?*" etc. It blames the victim of the crime, implying that her attendance to the specific site in the middle of the night was not ordinary and to be questioned, which should be investigated. It demonstrates the usage of language to gender-restricted ideologies, which means that the appearance of women in open spaces or places of publicity can bring about a grievous danger to their lives and dignity.

Case 2 Graph**Explanation**

The discussion about the murder of Eman Afroz, a student at the university, who lived in a private hostel, also shows somewhat different but also very worrying ideological pattern. Although there is the explicit glorification of violence, the main theme of the discussion is surveillance, control, and limiting the movement of women and their access to education. The use of language here is strategically arranged to support the argument that the independence of women especially in the learning environments is in itself suspicious and immoral. Similar to the one outlined above, the responsibility of the perpetrator is downplayed, and the appearance of the victim in open and semi-open areas is viewed as the main reason behind the violence.

Lexical level phrases like: “*Koi kisi ko bila wajah nahi marta*”, something must have been done by her etc. are also important. The logic of these expressions is based on the premise that murder is always justified and the justification has to be found in the actions of the victim. This disposition at assuming some unseen guilt makes the entire responsibility of clarification turn to the victim and the perpetrator to be a reactive agent rather than a criminal. Violence is therefore built up in the language as a reaction to a prompt instead of a completely independent act of cruelty.

One of the main themes in this case is the bad picture of hostels and universities. Terms like the “*Bf culture*”, “*Multiple affairs*” and “*Hostel mein rok tok nahi hoti*” relate the education institutions with immorality. These connections represent universities and hostels through which the discourse forms spaces of immorality by giving women freedom and autonomy. The ideological point of such framing is clear: it is a redirection to focus off the act of murder to the wider arguments concerning limiting access of women to education and of life in general.

At the phrase level, the restriction is protection where moral imperatives like “*apni betiyon ko parda karwao*” and “*hijab is the only solution*” are raised. Such words imply that the resolution to violence cannot be found in the systemic change or legal responsibility but in the control of bodies and movements of women. What this means is that women have the responsibility of safeguarding their own situation by being submissive to set standards, thus offloading the society and institutions with the duty of avoiding violence.

Sentence analysis shows that the overuse of rhetorical questions that seek to question the victim on her presence during the incident is high. Questions, like those of telling the time: “*Raat ko 1:30 baje bahar kyun gayi*” and “*Room se bahar kyun nikli thi*” serve as moral practices. They suggest that when a woman is out at night it automatically question her presence out there. These questions are made to appear as the issues of safety but at the end, they strengthen the notion of women mobility being unusual and perilous.

Religious speech in the case is connected with the stories of honor and reputation of a family. The control of women as being independent is exercised through the use of expressions that bring

about the idea of “*Deen se doori*” and the “*Islamic rules*”. This framing makes men the protector of morality and the female as a potential source of disgrace which should be checked and regulated. This leads to violence against women being repackaged as a punishment instead of a human rights infringement.

The argument is also indicative of a wider ideological opposition to modernity. The social media, education, and the appearance on the social platform of women are recurrently associated with the moral panic and deterioration. These aspects are correlated with bad things, which, in turn, creates a narrative in which the problem is modern life itself. Violence then follows as an unfortunate yet explicable response to this moral failure, as experienced.

Overall, the contextual debate of the case involving the Eman Afroz relies on words to support the limitation of the female agency in the name of safety, religion, and honor. Although there is explicit glorification of the murder, the ideological role of the discourse, which is more dominant, is to market surveillance and control. The social discourse about the danger and immorality of female freedom promotes the patriarchal system and shifts the focus on the necessity of justice, responsibility, and the change of the system.

Case no: 3

Ayat Maryam Case

On 29 April 2025, a social media personality, Ayat Maryam was murdered by her husband. It turned out to be the case of honor killing. At first, her husband did not care about her decision to put TikTok videos and make money on it. Their neighbors however revealed during the investigation that the couple would engage in disputes so frequently. They told that her husband no longer liked her appearance on social media and had countless times advised her against the use of social media, yet she did not heed. They had a hot argument one day and it led to her death. In order to examine the response of the masses on this case, 200 comments were gathered.

Table 3: Corpus Analysis of Ayat Maryam Case AntConc Software

Linguistic Category	Ideologically Charged Words/ Phrases	Conceptual Function	Meaning/	Frequency
Victim Blaming	Tali ek hath se nahi baji, ase koi na Marta, khuch kia ho ga, mat karo na kharab kam	Shifting the responsibility of on victim		26
Extremism	Zabardast, bohat acha Kiya, great, Mubarak ho, Nice Bhai, behayai ka khatma	Neutralizing crime and promoting violence as righteous moral solution		79
Misogyny	Baaz a Jana tha, shohar ki baat manni thi, BAAT kiun nahi manni? Tiktokers ka Anjam, begharti ki ijazat nahi, 100% sahi kia	Constructs with shame and social media presence		12
Negative Ideologies	Deen se dori, izzat ka mamla tha, Ghairatmand tha, fahashe, burai khatam hoe	Frames violence and moral decline as a result of modernity and religious disobedience		14

Validating Killing on Religious Grounds

“*Deen se dori society ko tabah kar rahi he*”

“*Bohat acha kia he. Allah bhai ko jaza-e- khair ata farmae*”

Here it is demonstrated that individuals justify the criminal as they use religious arguments as a defense. The terms of praise to the culprit consist of “*Good*”, “*Excellent*”, “*Behtareen*”, “*Sahi Kiya*” and “*Bohat acha kiya*”. Although it is driving the discrete identity of the victim to the ground, these words also criticize her act of neglecting her husband by making it morally grieved. By the expression “*Deen se Dori*” it means that the victim was damned by God. This does not only identify the consequences of the victims with religious penalties but also exonerates the rapist of his atrocious deeds. In it, one can understand that the religious teachings are frequently abused and misinterpreted in society to serve personal interests or even minimize the intensity of the criminal sin committed at the personal level.

Obedience to Male Authority

“*Shohar ki BAAT manni chahiye thi na*”

“*Husband ne 100% sahi kia*”

The dynamics of the relations between the husband and wife were revealed to be a universal phenomenon when analysing the data. Such words as “*BAAT manni chahiye thi*” and “*100% sahi kia*” strengthen the superiority of the male counterpart. In addition, it depicts women as submissive

and lower in position and authority as long as the men remain in power. This further reinforces the notion that the ill consequences that the victim undergoes were a payback to the fact she went against her husband.

Radicalized Ideologies and Misogyny

“Ebrat lene chahiye un sab ko Jo tik tok banti hein, Ic ka Anjam acha nahi hota”

“Ye tu hona hi tha”

There were individuals who showed the death of the victim to act as an example and a lesson to those who defy the rules established in the society. Some of the words used such as “*Hona tha*”, “*Lesson he*” and “*Ebrat*” indicate that the non-conforming women need to mend their ways unless they are prepared to suffer the same fate. It also supports the notion that there must be an ongoing monitoring and observation of the female behavior and actions. This displays the active involvement of the society in general in minimizing the female autonomy and promoting violence against women as a heroic deed.

Application of Metaphors and Idiomatic Expressions

On the phrase level, metaphors are employed to describe the victim negatively and even exterminating her as a human. The words used such as “*Burai Khatam hoe*” and “*Gand saaf hoa*” associate the victim with evil and crud. These expressions are a praise of the criminal and fellow like-minded individuals because they romanticize this evil deed as a bid to cleanse the society morally. This idea is also supported by the repetition of the idiomatic expressions such as “*Khas kam Jahan Pak*” and “*Jese karne wese bharne*”. In doing so, it purported that the greatest thing to maintain moral stability in the society is to destroy such women.

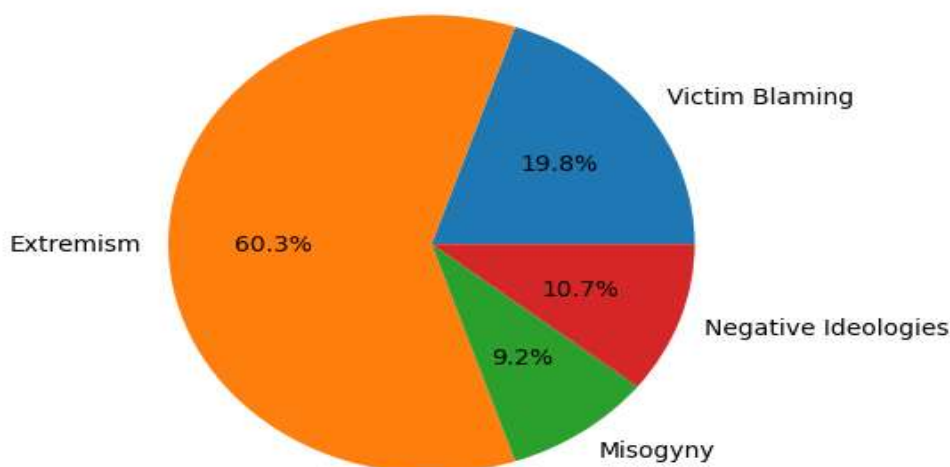
Declarative Sentences

This means that some of the actions have irreversible consequences, and this is supported by the commonness of declarative sentences in the dataset. This comprises of statements such as “*Ye to hona hi tha*”, “*Behayai ka anjam*” and “*Deen se dori ka natija*” that sanctioned extreme reactions, such that may disallow critical considerations of seeking the essence of these violent behaviors. By doing this, rather than taking the murder of the victim as a crime, it is brought forth as a necessary and natural reaction to the decision that she made.

Rhetorical Questions

The data at the sentence level contained several rhetorical questions even as the interviewer posed questions on the moral responsibility, character and personal choice of the victim. It repeats the fact that the victim was the wrongful party by implicitly responding to the social arguments of the wider society by using these questions as follows: “*Tu Tik Tok kiun banati thi*”, “*Shohar ki BAAT kiun nahi mani*”, etc. It also puts the husband in a moral and social authority position, teaching the woman to improvise her life as he desires. It points to a social convention of regulating and observing the female ways and lifestyles. It evokes no possibility to empathize and defend the victim by creating a controversy about her actions and choices.

Ayat Maryam Case: Proportional Representation of Ideologies



Explanation

One of the most extreme expressions of patriarchal ideology and religious moralization is reflected in the mass discourse of an honor killing of Ayat Maryam, a social media personality who was killed by her husband, which made headlines in the mass media. The issue of ambiguity or speculation, which is sometimes the case in other situations, does not occur in this instance, as the discourse overwhelmingly justifies the act of violence and makes it morally just. The patterns of language demonstrate that the normalization of honor-based violence is a source of disturbance, as the submission to the male authority is introduced as the highest form of moral responsibility that a woman has.

The expression of congratulatory and celebratory terms at the lexical level, including, but not limited to: “*Zabardast*”, “*Bohat acha kiya*”, “*Mubarak ho*” and “*Nice bhai*”, proves an overt acceptance of the murder. Such words are not just an indifference, they actually glorify the act as a moral victory. This type of language demonstrates a shared moral orientation with the killer and points to the social condoning of honor killings. Regularities and intensity of these utterances lead to an assumption that violence against women is not only condoned but glorified whenever it is put into context as a defense of honor and morality.

One of the main characteristics of this case is the preeminence of obedience discourse. The words “*Shohar ki baat manni chahiye thi*” and “*Baat kyun nahi maani?*” are repeated many times, which forms husband as the authoritative figure and the wife as a secondary one, who has the moral duty to obey him. Disobedience is not discussed as an individual decision, but as a severe sin that should be punished. By these speeches, the independence of the woman is undermined and the male dominance in the marriage relations is legitimized as the natural one and right.

On the phrasal level, responsibility is diffused and normalization of violence is achieved through the use of idiomatic expressions like “*Tali ek haath se nahi bajti*” and “*Jese karni wesi bharni*”. The implication of these words is two-sided blame or inevitability even in the case of murder. Through the application of culturally oriented idioms speakers portray their judgments as wisdom and not prejudice, which enhances the ideological influence of their utterances. Violence is therefore put in perspective as rational outcome of moral deviation and not a crime.

In this case, religious discourse plays a manipulative part. The euphemisms of “*Deen se doori*”, “*Izzat ka mamla*” and “*Ghairatmand tha*” justify the killing as a religious and cultural requirement. Selective application of religion in justifying male domination and punishment of females is done whereas main religious precepts of justice, mercy and sacrifice of life are abandoned. This partial expropriation of religious terms enables those who perpetrate such acts to be replicated as morally upright people who are defending divine and social order.

At sentence level, there are declarative constructions like “*Yeh to hona hi tha*”, “*Behayai ka anjam*”, and so forth. Such utterances eliminate agency and choice in the act of murder by making it appear to be unavoidable. The murder ceases being a choice that an individual has made but a natural consequence of the action of the victim. Such grammatical structure deemphasizes moral thinking and does not encourage critical thinking about the violence itself.

There is also the use of cautionary tales that are directed towards other women. The expressions that imply that the death of Ayat ought to be used as a deterrent mechanism or as something to teach other TikTok users make the use of violence appear as a means of deterrence. Women, who fail to conform to the existing norms, threaten to receive the same consequences implicitly. By thus making language a means of social control it is to impose conformity not by discussion or reform, but by fear.

On the whole, the discussion of the case of Ayat Maryam can be seen as an excessive meeting of misogyny, religious extremism, and patriarchal power. The victim is depicted as a rebellious and sinful person, and the rapist is justified, righteous, even heroic. In this instance, language does not simply condone violence, it in fact promotes and replicates it as an acceptable tool of upholding social and moral order.

Case no: 4

Noor Mukadam Case

Noor Mukadam is a young Pakistani-Jordanian woman who was living in Islamabad at the time when she was brutally murdered in 2021. She was kidnapped and kept two days in bad conditions and was lastly cut with a knife by a man who was familiar with her. Two schools of thought existed regarding

this case. One section believed that the offender was her husband and she wished to dispose of him, the other said that she was immersed in an extramarital affair with that man. The Supreme Court, according to the latest news, affirmed the death sentence of the offender of this brutal murder case on 20 May 2025. Up to this day, there has been a large-scale reaction towards this case. A total of 200 comments were examined, to identify victim blaming discourses and the rationales to justify such a violent act.

Table 4: Corpus Analysis of Noor Mukadam's Case Using AntConc Software

Linguistic Category	Ideologically Charged Words/ Phrases	Conceptual Function	Meaning/	Frequency
Victim Blaming	She chose it, freewill, sneak out, Raat mein kiun nikli? Tali dono hath se bajte he, waha kia kar Rahe thi	Blaming victim for her non-complaint behavior to culture and religion		25
Conservatism	Islamic rules, hijab, parda, namehram, Allah ki hadood, Islamic boundaries, aurat march, beti ko ghar rakho	Promotes strict religious and gender norms		17
Misogyny	Prostitute, Zina, dancer, naik nahi thi, behaya, immoral	Justify violence by questioning victim's character and choices		9
Negative Ideologies	Haram, live-in relationship, modern women, western culture, azadi, behraravi	Blame moral corruption, modernity and women's independence for violence		20

Establishing the Victim as Morally Sinful

“Haram Relationship ki mazhab me ijazat nahi he”

Most individuals opined that the murder of Noor was an expected development of her relationship with the criminal. The discussion in the comments left the perception that the actions and behavior of the victim were what caused her to the deadly end. It de-criminalized the crime coupled with inculcating moral narratives in the form of repetition of words like *“Live-in”*, *“Haram”* and *“Namehram”*. This is in shame of confirming that the modesty and obedience of a woman to religious instructions are the identifiers of her suitability in a society. Such societies view women who defy the traditional moral values to be rightfully punishable.

Female Autonomy as Menacing

“Wo adhe Raat ko akele ghar SE kiun nikli thi!”

The fact that Noor was in the house of the perpetrator was viewed as a suspicious behavior and this was evident in a majority of the comments. The freedom and power over her life was depicted as a curse with words such as, *“Akele”*, *“Freewill”*, *“Sneak out”*, *“Alone”* and *“Midnight”*. Although the two issues are closely interdependent between the safety of women and the conscious movements, it also remarks on the cultural tendency to keep a close eye on the autonomy of women.

Distribution of Insensitive Tags

“Behayai ka yahi anjam hota he”

Overall, the data reflected in the compilation of information, there are several ideologically coloring labels that are repeatedly thrown at the victim. Innocence of the victim was rejected and her identity was introduced in terms of morality terming her as a *“Prostitute”*, *“Dancer”* and *“Behaya”*. As such, having a discursive role, these labels do not only preserve the notion that the victim did not deserve sympathy or compassion, but also support the notion that the women that socialize with men, dress up strategically, or dance are not modest. In a bid to achieve community support and protection it maintains that the women who fail to conform to the traditional gender expectations are usually punished in the society.

Collocations and Idiomatic Expressions

A huge impact of some of these scenarios is echoed in the statistics with collocations occurring frequently and creating a strong link between religious deviance and some of the definite decisions of the victim. The religious doctrine, which does not allow the believers to possess any illicit relationship, is repeated in the coincidence of the words: *“Haram relationship”* and *“Islam”*. The term *“Deen se dori”* is connected with the words: *“Negative implications”* and *“Tabahi”* to reinforce the argument that religious negligence leads to social destruction. As it gives a moral weight to these constructions, it maintains the established code of conduct that women have in the society. The position of women is firmly dichotomized using some linguistic patterns that are designed to portray that they are either modest and obedient or radical or immodest. Whereas, in the idiomatic phrase of

“*Tali Ek hath se nahi bajte*”, the common tradition of sparing the culprit at the expense of the victim is clearly seen.

Conditional Statements

The users have tried to generalize the fact that there are certain default and obvious results of some actions by overusing hypothetical phrases in the discourse. It is through this that they were able to hide the violence and at the same time justify the violence as the moral and cultural wisdom. This atrocious deed is justified by giving unquestionable facts with the help of cause-and-effect sentences as “*Agar ghar rehte tu zinda hote*” and “*If she had followed Islam, this would not have been the case*”, hence developing a hypothesis. These verbal utterances support the cultural ideology of avoiding violence, which women can do by submission and humility. So rather than defining protection as the inherent right of all civilians, it is demonstrated as a reward of following instructions. The intentional use of such demeaning and victim blaming stories is extremely eminent throughout the dataset. It shows the accused as morally upright and a brave person and strengthens the existing patriarchal ideology.

Rhetorical Questions

Interrogative questions dominated the discussed discourse. The questions such as “Why did she go out at that time of night in such places?” and “What was she doing there were the doubts?”, which casts a question on the character and social presence of the victim. These are suggestive questions in their very nature and they subconsciously uphold that the responses to such questions are as egregious as the consequences that victimize the sufferer. Therefore, its ability to ask such questions as honest questions yet in a way that makes it sound like a mere inquiry suggests the way language is used strategically to blame the victims of the wrongs they are experiencing. This supports the thumb rule according to which the infraction of the traditional gender norms may be highly criticized and punished.

Discussion

Extremism and Moral Dogmatism

The language throughout all four cases demonstrates how each of the cases is viewed by the public through an extremist lens. In the Ayat Maryam and Eman Afroz case, most of the people assigned the responsibility of the gruesome act to the victim rather than rationally tracing the root cause of such incidents. It strengthened the ideology that treats every attempt to transgress established social roles as deserving of a serious penalty. Phrases like “*Jihad he*”, “*Marne ka haq tha*”, “*Chun Chun ka safya*” and “*Ese ghairmand log aur chahiye*” vividly demonstrate how extremist ideologies are linguistically created and socially reproduced. Similarly, the Noor Mukadam case that has received widespread attention on news outlets and social media platforms, till now, people strongly believe that the responsibility of the crimes lies with the victim. It shows how language is used to erase the agency and culpability of the perpetrator while indicating that the victim was at fault. In this way, vigilante behavior is perpetuated in a society where every person considers they hold the power and right to penalize others.

Anarchy and Distrust in Legislation

Such cases also hint at the objective disappointment of the public with the legal system. Each case under discussion reflects the tendency of people to glorify and celebrate the murder as an accomplishment. On the other hand, the culprit is often portrayed as a hero who makes an effort to maintain the moral balance by retributing the wrongdoers at the individual level. Since there was a little demand for justice and unprejudiced investigation of such cases, it evokes the idea that the public also favors personal revenge and self-regulated justice. This represents a society that considers such heinous acts as courageous if they are causing a threat to society or compromising the moral or religious norms. Such extremist beliefs at the collective level lead to an anarchic society that downplays the judiciary and laws in favor of personal motives. As a result of it, a destructive society is created where law and order are replaced by rigid personal ideologies, specifically when the subject matters are women or honor. The linguistic structure throughout the dataset subtly suggests that people should prioritize emotionally driven reasoning over the structured legal investigation.

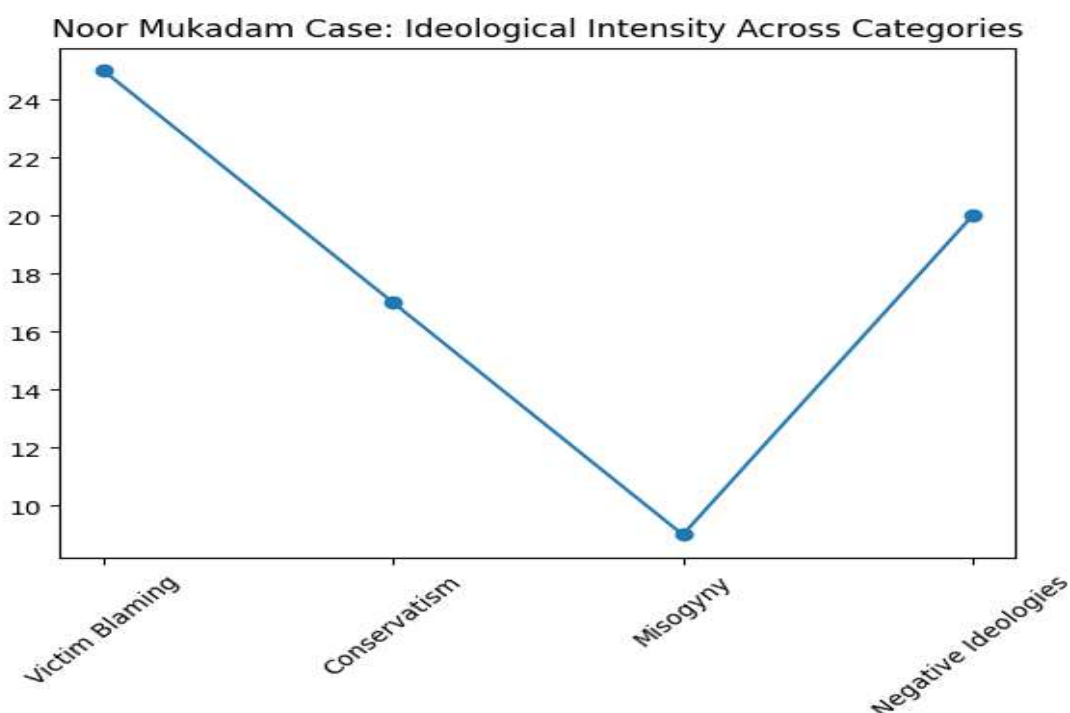
Misogyny and Gender Biasness

The discourse shows that in the Pakistani context, men hold the power and thus influence the decision-making process and shape public opinions. The comments across the cases reflect that women, even being the ones who suffer the loss, are treated with little empathy or compassion, while

suggesting that their actions caused them great trouble. The blame is often shifted to the victim by posing questions about their character, religious standing, dressing, personal life and social media presence. The victims are often set as an example or warning for others, rather than condemning the crime. The discourse under discussion was saturated with interrogative questions. Doubts were raised about the victim's character and social presence through questions like “*Why did she go out alone so late at night?*” and “*What was she doing there?*” These questions are suggestive in their very nature and they implicitly maintain that the answers to these queries are as obvious as the repercussions victimizing the sufferer. Thus, by posing such questions as genuine inquiries while sounding neutral, it indicates how language is employed strategically to impute the victims for the wrongs they suffer.

Language as a Tool to Promote Negative Ideologies

Through the employment of seemingly ordinary and neutral linguistic expressions, toxic ideologies are often reinforced and constructed by people, as can be seen easily in the collected data. The opinions of the public on such cases, specifically when the women are accused of having a bad character and are clung to death, are represented through certain phrases and words. While the frequent phrases involve “*Bure kam ka bura anjam*” and “*Aisa hi hona chahiye tha*”, the recurrent words were “*Fitna*”, “*Behaya*” and “*Fahash*”. Hence, the public perception of morality and honor is significantly shaped through the daily discourse and the ideological connotations it carries. The wickedness of the overall picture is elevated in one way or another through all the cases under discussion. Common reactions to these cases were that many people admired the offender and celebrated the death of Sana Yousaf as an achievement. Noor Mukadam was blamed for sneaking out of her home in the unearthly hours. A connection between the perpetrator and Eman Afroz was presumed to shift the responsibility. Her husband’s defiance was used as a basis to proscribe Ayat Maryam. It demonstrates the way patriarchal norms are preserved and non-conforming women are penalized while maneuvering discourse as an instrument to control, condemn, deter and supervise the women.



Explanation

The mainstream discourse of the killing of Noor Mukadam depicts how the narratives of victim-blaming still take place even in situations where the harshness is overwhelming. Although the crime was quite serious and involved abduction, torture, and beheading, much of the public discourse centered on an examination of the victim, her personality, sense of free will and ethical decisions. This discussion brings out the extent to which the principles of patriarchy and morality are firmly entrenched to the extent that empathy and righteousness are ignored in the wake of unquestioned violence.

On the word level, morally colored words like “*Haram*”, “*Zina*”, “*Prostitute*”, “*Immoral*” and “*Behaya*” take over. These labels are character assassination instruments, which lower the identity of Noor to moral transgression. Focusing on her firstly as someone who is sexually or morally deviant, the discourse makes the viewer not look at what the perpetrator did. The misery of the victim is dwarfed by the arguments on whether she deserves sympathy or not implying that compassion is conditional on conformity to morality.

One such repetitive language trend, which is present in the case, is the depiction of female autonomy as something dangerous. The terms used to portray the independence of Noor as reckless and suspicious include words and phrases, like “*Freewill*”, “*Sneak out*”, “*Alone*”, and “*Midnight*”. The construction of her movement outside the house is presented as the breach of the cultural and religious norms, and hence, her independence is put as the source of her victimization. This framing suggests that exercising freedom means that the women experience the risks that they incur.

The phrasal level of the discourse is based on the moral cause and effect phrases including “*Haram relationship ka anjam*” and “*Deen se doori ka nateeja*”. These expressions create a causal connection between crime and bloody murder. The crime is shown as an expected sequence of events, instead of an event that cannot be explained. This language technique clears society and institutions of guilt by putting them all on the woman.

This ideology is also strengthened by conditional sentences. The phrases like “*Agar ghar rehti to zinda hoti*” and “*Agar Islam follow karti to yeh na hota*” create an imaginary contract of morality where only those women who act according to the law will be provided with safety. The meaning of these sentences is that protection is not a privilege but a privilege with conditions. Consequently, the consideration of justice turns into the administration of conformity.

Rhetoric questions are important in perpetuating victim-blaming discourse. Such questions like “*Raat ko kyun nikli thi*” and “*Wahan kya kar rahi thi*” are formulated as a logical question but that serve as an implicit accusation. They assume misconduct and prompt the audience to regard the actions of the victim as being suspicious. These questions legitimize judgment and support patriarchal policing by framing blame as a form of curiosity.

It is also the anxiousness regarding modernity and the Western influence. Such expressions as “*Modern women*”, “*Azadi*”, and “*Western culture*” are incorporated to present independence among women as a moral danger. This framing creates a dichotomy between tradition and modernity, with tradition being synonymous with safety and morality, and modernity being synonymous with chaos and danger. The violence on women is then justified as a kind of defense to the cultural change.

Comparative Analysis of All Cases

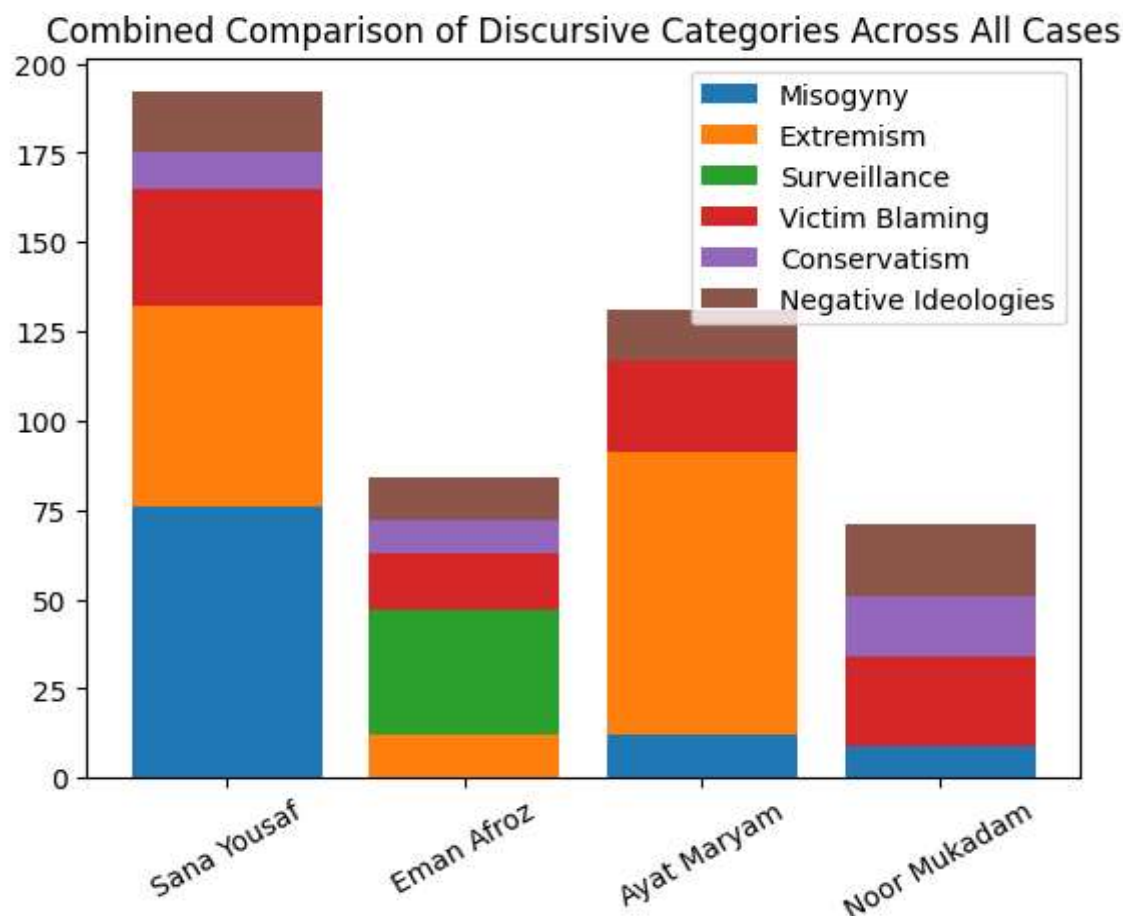
In all four cases, the same ideological trend can be noted whereby violence against women is justified through the use of language in order to reframe it as a moral wrong instead of a criminal offence. Though the context and circumstances are different, the discussion in both instances still takes a rather similar path: the victim is ethically questioned, the agency of the perpetrator is diminished, and violence is justified or justified by the cultural and religious discourses. This tendency illustrates the extent to which the ideologies of patriarchy are ingrained in the language of everyday speech and reproduced by seemingly common phrases.

Shifting of blame onto perpetrators and victims in a systematic manner is one of the most impressive similarities throughout the cases. Women and their clothes, their freedom of movement, their social networks, their education, and their personal relationships are once again brought up as violent stimulus. This attention to the actions of women hides the fact that gender-based violence is a structural and systemic phenomenon. The discourse rather than assessing the social conditions that facilitate such crimes individualizes the responsibility and is squarely thrown on the victim.

Religious language is central in supporting these discourses. In cross cases, religious language is used selectively to justify violence without considering ethical values that put emphasis on justice, compassion and sanctity of life. Religion turns into a disciplinary instrument governing the conduct of women and justifying the masculine authority. Such biased interpretation reinforces patriarchal authority and deters critical interpretation of religious doctrine.

The naturalization of violence through the use of idiomatic expressions and conditional sentences is another theme that is recurrent. Common expressions like “*bure kaam ka bura anjam*” and “*yeh to hona hi tha*” make violence a natural occurrence and make it morally justifiable. Such

structures of knowledge render complex social concerns to simplistic moral formulas, and thus violence seems reasonable and inevitable.



Extremism and Moral Dogmatism

The language used in all four cases illustrates how both of the cases are perceived by people with an extremist approach. In the Ayat Maryam and Eman Afroz case, the majority of individuals charged with the task of the horrific incident to the victim instead of following the logical approach of identifying the fundamental cause of such occurrences. It enhanced the ideology that considers any effort to violate set social roles as worthy of a severe punishment. Such expressions as “*Jihad he*”, “*Marne ka haq tha, Chun Chun ka safya*”, and “*Ese ghairmand log aur chahiye*” clearly show how the extremist ideologies are linguistically produced and reproduced in the society. In the same way, the case of the Noor Mukadam that has gained much publicity on news websites and social media platforms, up to this time, people are highly thinking that the victim is the one to blame. It demonstrates how language is adopted in order to forget the agency and guiltiness of the perpetrator and to suggest that the victim was guilty. That way, this contributes to perpetuating vigilante behavior in a society where each individual believes that he/she has the authority and right to punish others.

Anarchy and Mistrust towards Legislation

These cases also give a subtle connotation to the disappointment of the people with the law. It can be seen in each of the discussed cases and is an aspect of the people inclination to romanticize and laud the murder as a triumph. Conversely, the criminal is usually represented as a hero who will go out of his/her way to balance the moral level to punish the wrong-doers at the personal level. As the demand of the justice and unbiased investigation of such cases was little, it brings up the concept that the masses also support personal revenge and self-administered justice. This is a society that regards such heinous acts as a courageous act in case it is posing a threat to the society or jeopardizing the moral or religious standards. The collective level of such extremist ideologies will result in an anarchical society that diminishes the importance of judiciary and the law to suit individual interests. Due to it, a devastating society is formed where law and order are substituted with strict personal beliefs, namely when the topic of the subject matter concerns women or honor. The language format across the data

set implicitly indicates that individuals need to place an emphasis on the emotional reasoning as opposed to the legal investigation itself.

Misogyny and Gender Biasness

The discussion reveals that the Pakistani society assumes men to be the power structure thus contributing to the decision making process, and the opinion shaping. The remarks through the cases indicate that even despite the fact that women are the ones who are the losers, no empathy or compassion is shown towards them and the remarks imply that they caused themselves lots of trouble. They tend to make accusations of the victim, questioning his/her character, religious status, clothing, personal life and social network. The crime is usually condemned by setting the victims to act as an example or as a warning to others. Interrogative questions were filled with the discourse in question. Their character and social presence in society were doubted with questions such as “*Why did she go out alone at this time of the night?*” and “*What did she go to do in such a time of the night?*” These are the suggestive nature questions and they implicitly believe that the response to these queries is as self-evident as the consequences of victimizing the sufferer. Therefore, when such questions are formed as true questions but they are in a manner that conveys the impression of being neutral, it shows how language has been used tactfully to blame the wrongs that the victims go through. The use of Language to advance negative ideologies by use of apparently non-rhetorical and neutral language constructions, toxic ideologies are perhaps strengthened and created by individuals, which can be observed with ease in the data gathered. The views of the majority concerning such cases, that is, when the women are charged with having a bad character and are hanging on them, are expressed via some phrases and words. Although the common expressions were “*Bure kam ka bura anjam*” and “*Aisa hi hona chahiye tha*”, the words that were repeated were “*Fitna, Behaya*” and “*Fahash*”. Thus, the morality and honor are so influenced by the everyday discourse and the ideological connotations provided therein that the actual perception of morality and honor is largely formed by the everyday discourse. Through all the cases discussed, the wickedness of the overall picture is raised in one way or another. The most frequent response to such cases was that a significant number of individuals were in admiration of the criminal and celebrated the death of Sana Yousaf as a success. Noor Mukadam was accused of creeping out of her house during the unnatural hours. The responsibility was supposed to be transferred to Eman Afroz because of a connection that was assumed between the perpetrator and Eman Afroz. The defiance of her husband was the pretext on which Ayat Maryam was proscribed. It shows how the patriarchal rules are maintained and non-conformist women are punished as they play around with discourse as a tool of control, condemn, deter and monitor the women.

Conclusion

The current analysis has indicated that language is a potent ideological tool in the Pakistani socio-cultural setting, through which the victim-blaming discourses within the framework of harassment and murder cases are created, spread, and established. In the disguise of moral, ethical, and religious declarations, the day-to-day speech is systematically devolving the responsibility of perpetrators and handing them over to women. Instead of accepting the idea of violence against women as a structural and criminal process, social responses often view such events through the prism of a moral approach that questions the actions, decisions, and publicity of women. This discursive nature shows ingrained patriarchal ideology in which the independence of women is viewed as an unwanted destabilizer of the social and moral order.

The quantitative aspect of the given work reveals the salience of particular lexical entities, repetitive language patterns, which operate ideologically. Turning up very often words and phrases involving shame, honor, morality, religion, and modesty, one can see how the perceptions of the masses are linguistically constructed. The recurrence of these words does not only represent personal views but shows that there are more social ideologies regarding the repetition that are accepted and reproduced in general. Critical analysis using frequency helps one to realize that the predominant themes in the discourse that rule the masses are misogyny, extremism, and moral conservatism, which in turn makes it seem legitimate to resort to violence and, at the same time, dismiss the lived lives of women as legitimate at all.

Nevertheless, quantitative results cannot be used to reveal the ideological processes that lie behind discourse. To deal with this shortcoming, Critical Discourse Analysis model by Fairclough was adopted to analyze the meaning construction beyond the surface word frequencies. It addresses

the textual level specifically sentence structure, collocations and rhetorical devices to expose the subtle way in which language is used to legitimize violence and to accept gender inequality in the study. Conditional sentences, moral aphorisms and culturally granted idiomatic utterances act as instruments that naturalize the concept that nonconformity on the part of women is always sure to result in punishment. These structures turn the violence acts to be predictable and not condemnable crimes.

The discussion also highlights the systematic way women are denied their autonomy by means of language. Regardless of whether it is in the form of education, the presence of social media, mobility, or even a choice of her own, female agency is depicted as immoral, irresponsible, or dangerous. Discourse does not present women as people who have rights, but as moral subjects, whose responsibility is to be safe through obedience and compliance. This ideological construction implies that protection is not an inherent idea but a conditional one and it reinforces the idea that women have to act according to the norms set to be eligible to protection. This means that the burden of violence prevention is heaped on the women when the violators are either marginalized or exonerated linguistically.

One of the points that can be made about this study is the manipulative use of religious and cultural speech as a strategic tool to maintain the logic of patriarchy. Religious texts are often taken out of context and used to control the female behavior. The importance of concepts like modesty, honor, and piety is selectively highlighted, whereas such principles as justice, compassion, and accountability are disregarded to a significant extent. The use of religion as a moral shield used to absolve perpetrators and condemn the victims is made possible through this selective appropriation. Instead of being a means of providing ethical guidance, religious discourse is transformed into a legitimizing mechanism in regard to gender-based violence and social control.

Another theme presented in the study is the influence of the media and online platforms in forming the general perception towards women. Comment boards of social media platforms, especially, serve as platforms of ideological reproduction, where the mainstream discourse is enhanced and solidified. The opinion of people on social media does not exist on its own, rather, they mirror and cement social attitudes. By repeatedly exposing themselves to victim-blaming discourses, viewers come to internalize these points of view as normal knowledge. Consequently, media talk helps to make misogyny seem normal and empathy to female victims evaporate.

This paper offers a microscopic, but eye-opening evaluation of the language processes, which perpetuate patriarchal control in Pakistan through the lens of four high-profile cases. Nevertheless, it has a limited scope of the research. It only focuses on English and Urdu remarks, and this restricts its interaction with the complete linguistic plurality of Pakistan. Also, androgynic accounts and viewpoints are absent in the study and could help demonstrate how masculinity and male identity are created in these discourses. The present study can be further extended to the future by incorporating regional languages, multimodal media analysis, and comparative studies in different cultural settings. In addition, the discussion of the impact of media framing on the interpretation of the audience would also contribute to the study of the connection between discourse, power, and gender.

All in all, the results confirm that language does not have a point that is just a communication. It is a place of power in which ideologies are disputed, reinforced and institutionalized. Patriarchal norms, violence normalized, gender hierarchies reproduced: all through everyday linguistic practices. Raising these discursive patterns, this work is also a contribution to the wider knowledge of gender and discourse studies and the need to critically approach the language to question the established imbalances. Combating gender-based violence, then, demands not just a legal and institutional response but also a basic re-consideration of the language in which the society discovers and justifies the said violence.

References

- @divine_feminine_glow. (2025). *Sana Yousef was murdered for saying no. She didn't provoke. She didn't attack. She didn't deserve to die.* Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKeHSGDTR3q/>
- @divine_feminine_glow.(2025). *We need to educate our sons before we dictate our daughters. Sana Yousef's case is a stark reminder.* Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKcmC_joEmU/

- @newdity.pk. (2025). *A 22-year-old female student of Islamabad's International Islamic University (IIUI) tragically shot dead inside a private hostel in the G-10 sector.* <https://www.instagram.com/p/DIv2cDYKdRX/> instagram.com+1instagram.com+1
- @nimramaliks_treasury. (2025). *Itni piyari itni cute si bachi se kisi ko kya dushmani hogi. MashaAllah pretty.* Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKcAZiuNLMQ/>
- @sherrybutt.official. (2025). *Sana Yousaf ka qatil pakra gaya.* Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKcOgwYMdpT/>
- @socialdicted01. (2025). *Baaghi's last lines are enough to wake something deep inside us.* Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DKcHiLqiHCb/>
- @username. (2025). *A man shot dead a girl student of a university at a private hostel.* Instagram. <https://www.instagram.com/p/DKhbXY7MuuS/>
- 3 Women, 1 Story. (2021). *Noor Muqaddam case and Pakistani society* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/KNO6HIFwZBs>
- Abid Khan. (2025). *Make Your Day* [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBPvFTYY/>
- Alaggia, R., & Wang, S. (2020). "I never told anyone until the# metoo movement": What can we learn from sexual abuse and sexual assault disclosures made through social media? *Child abuse & neglect*, 103, 104312.
- Alsop, C. K. (2002, September). Home and away: Self-reflexive auto-/ethnography. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 3, No. 3).
- Aly, S. (2025). *Praying that our society learns to respect boundaries, values life, and develops empathy.* Instagram. https://www.instagram.com/p/DKcKJ-yM_Nt/
- Amin, S. (2025). *Why Sana Yusef's death is being celebrated? Victim blaming and ignorance at its peak* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/xLnSd8ODy3c>
- Bogen, K. W., Bleiweiss, K., & Orchowski, L. M. (2019). Sexual violence is# NotOkay: Social reactions to disclosures of sexual victimization on twitter. *Psychology of violence*, 9(1), 127.
- Burt, M. R. (1980). Cultural myths and supports for rape. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 38(2), 217.
- Clark, A. (1998). *Being there: Putting brain, body, and world together again*. MIT press.
- Crime News. (2025). *Make Your Day* [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBPn2Vyt/>
- Eigenberg, H., & Garland, T. (2008). Victim blaming. In *Controversies in victimology* (pp. 21-36). Routledge.
- Gul, U. (Host). (2021). *Wardaat with Ukasha Gul | Noor Mukadam case | Episode 6* [Video]. Aftabiyen. <https://youtu.be/Xgjiwc3obk>
- Howe, K. L., Achuthan, P., Allen, J., Allen, J., Alvarez-Jarreta, J., Amode, M. R., & Flicek, P. (2021). Ensembl 2021. *Nucleic acids research*, 49(D1), D884-D891.
- Lahore Police Lovers. (2025). *Make Your Day* [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBfXUngc/>
- Levant, R. F., Alto, K. M., McKelvey, D. K., Richmond, K. A., & McDermott, R. C. (2017). Variance composition, measurement invariance by gender, and construct validity of the Femininity Ideology Scale-Short Form. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 64(6), 708.
- Media Girl. (2025). *Make Your Day* [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBPt98cE/>
- Nizam, F. (2025, May). *TikToker Ayat Maryam Death – How Many Days Did the Body Lie*
- Oxford University Press. (2016). *Sexism*. In *Oxford English Dictionary*. Retrieved July 14, 2025, from <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/>
- Persson, S., & Dhingra, K. (2022). Attributions of blame in stranger and acquaintance rape: A multilevel meta-analysis and systematic review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 23(3), 795-809.
- Raftar TV. (2024). *Untold story of Noor Mukadam and Zahir Jaffer* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/OrTUscIIcsA>
- Ryan, W. (1971). The Social Welfare Client: Blaming the Victim. In *The Social Welfare Forum*.
- Saqlain, S. (2025). *Make Your Day* [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBfXMg5R/>
- Schmitt, S., Robjant, K., Elbert, T., & Koebach, A. (2021). To add insult to injury: Stigmatization reinforces the trauma of rape survivors—Findings from the DR Congo. *SSM-Population Health*, 13, 100719.
- Shahid S. Iqbal ShahidSaqlain. (2025). *Tragic incident at Islamic University hostel*. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/SAoRrmn1VxI>

- Sjöberg, M., & Sarwar, F. (2022). Two sides of the same coin: the relationship between modern racism and rape blaming attitudes among Swedish students and community members. *Psychological reports*, 125(1), 545-564.
- Syed Muzammil Official. (2025). *Sana Yousaf's nightmare story* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/ktQhmtNuTeE>
- The Bold Couple. (2025, May). Ayat Maryam Ko TikTok Bnany Per Husband Nay – This Story Will Shock You! (The Bold Couple, Ep 29) [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/9_o06MuDgXk
- The Truth Comes Out & FIR Story Under Question. (2025, June 15). *What Really Happened to TikToker Sana Yusuf?* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/23jt98KMJLU>
- There & for What Reason Was She Killed? [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/t64p2v-Vj0A>
- Unknown creator. (n.d.). TikTok video [Video]. TikTok. <https://vt.tiktok.com/ZSBf5RpMo/>
- Unknown uploader. (2025). TikTok Celebrity Ayat Maryam Murdered in Chilling Crime, Husband Arrested | Shocking Revelation [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/UKBoQqeIXiI>
- Unknown up-loader. (2025, May). TikTok Celebrity Ayat Maryam Murdered in Chilling Crime [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/FYskwg6DQSU>
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (2009). Accounting for doing gender. *Gender & society*, 23(1), 112-122.
- Yousafzai, S. Z. (2025). *Another daughter gone—Islamabad Police failing? (Interview with Zaid Khan regarding slain student Eman Afroz)* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/ck2EbYsvT4s>