

Female Subalternity in Urdu Literature: A Feminist Critical Analysis of Umera Ahmed's *Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan*

Muhammad Akbar Khan (PhD)
University of Sargodha, Lahore Campus

&

Shazia Riaz Dar (PhD Scholar)
Air University, Islamabad

ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the horned dilemma of sustenance of women's suppression in Pakistani patriarchal society by critically analyzing a renowned Pakistani Urdu novel, Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan, by Umera Ahmed. Apparently, the novel seems to raise voice in favour of oppressed Pakistani women, but behind the lines, it works as a tool to reassure the women to bear the injustices and inequalities in the patriarchal society as their destiny. The analysis of the novel is carried out under the umbrella of critical discourse analysis by employing three-dimensional framework of Norman Fairclough (2015). The research design of this qualitative study consists of the basic tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminism, Lacan's Psychoanalysis and Moscovici's theory of social representations. It has been found out that the narratives like Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan have been paving the ways for the sustenance of male's hegemony. They impart the message that the women are subaltern and subservient to the traditions, values and norms of the society. They are bound and restricted to the boundaries raised by the demons of the societal and cultural norms. The writer stamps the destiny of the women through the depiction of docile and subservient female protagonists like Saba. The chains of social, cultural and religious norms are only for women whereas the men of the system are considered mostly as exempted from these restraints.

Key Words: Subalternity, patriarchal system, feminist critical discourse analysis

1. Introduction/Background

Language is usually described as a way of communication but for many theorists and scholars, it is more than that. Language provides us ways of saying, being and doing things (Gee, 2011). It is a tool through which ideologies of individuals as well as groups are constructed. Language provides the ways to practice power and coercion in any society (Fairclough, 2015). The unequal power relations help the powerful to

enjoy the fruits of life and oppress the powerless. One such dimension is the oppression of the female.

This research paper evaluates the ways in language use in which the male's hegemony is established and maintained in a patriarchal system which sets different standards of living for men and women. The living styles of any society could be seen through its literature. The portrayal of women in any work of fiction usually considers the part of feminist movement that raises voice for the equal rights of women (Ahmed, 2009). The representation of women in Pakistani fiction is also the part of post-colonial criticism. The aftermaths of partition of the subcontinent are quite vivid in the writings of Pakistani feminist writers who have shown their heroines as submissive and docile bearing all sorts of exploitation. They are portrayed as bound, restricted and docile beings. The examples of such characters are Zaitoon from Bapsi Sidhwa's *The Bride* (2006), and Mumtaz from Mohsin Hamid's *Moth Smoke* (2000). These writers are apparently portraying the miseries of women but actually there is a hidden message for the women that it is the destiny of this gender to be submissive and oppressed. They cannot help bearing all the victimization and exploitation.

Under the umbrella of critical discourse analysis, the emphasis of this research study is to analyze the selected novel which has been playing a prominent role in promoting the ideology that women are subservient to the male hegemonic values, traditions and honor. The researchers intend to critically evaluate the ways through which men exercise power over women. By doing so, the researchers aim to demystify the hidden perspectives of the selected discourse. This research work addresses this horned dilemma of Pakistani society by analyzing the famous novel *Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan* by a Pakistani female Urdu writer, Umaira Ahmad.

2. Literature Review

Language provides humans the ways to communicate with one another through sounds and symbols (Chapman, 2000). It also elaborates how to

convey information; it too helps in identity building and also in establishing power practices (Gee, 2011). These roles of language are called discursive practices or discourse.

2.1. Discourse

Simpson and Mayr (2013) enunciate, “discourse basically is what happens when language gets done”. They see language as an abstract set of patterns and rules that work concurrently at various levels. For them, discourse is the externalization of these very patterns of language in actual context. Discourse captures the ways language is used in social, political and cultural arenas by working above the levels of grammar and semantics. Discourse is basically used to denote the usage of language in stretches and in some social context.

2.1.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

According to Fairclough & Wodak (1997), Critical Discourse Analysis is the kind of discourse analysis which explains how language works and also offers deep explanations in order to demystify the underlined power relations (as cited in Mirzaee&Hamidi, 2012; Tenorio, 2011; van Dijk, 1993). CDA has become a research paradigm with the major goal of evaluating texts or talks which cause any unequal social relations. Its major inclination is towards the fundamental variations which have been occurring in concurrent social life and also with how discourses probe into the procedures of change. The issues under investigation in CDA are the actual problems concerning with the lives or well-being of many people (van Dijk, 2001; Meyer, 2001). It is not a personal or ad hoc based critique; instead it is systematic with the specific focus on power relations between individuals and classes. CDA provides the amalgamation of various theoretical backgrounds along with the methodological frameworks to the researchers in order to scrutinize the power relations based on inequality.

2.2 Feminism

Feminism, a movement of women's rights, started in resistance to male's hegemony. Feminism can be defined as a recognition and critique of male supremacy combined with efforts to change it. The movement organized around the belief that the sexes should be equal socially, politically and economically. Feminists are concerned with exploring the inequalities that exist between men and women in a society from a female perspective and illustrate how males dominate social relationships and restrict the opportunities for women. Feminism involves political and sociological theories and philosophies concerned with issues of gender difference, as well as a movement that advocates gender equality for women and campaigns for women's rights and interests. "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (1792) formed the basis of modern thoughts of equality. Women are systematically degraded by men (Wollstonecraft, 1792 as cited in Heywood, 2012). In 1970, the movement focused on "mechanisms of patriarchy" and views how language, science and social structures reproduced inequality. By the 1980s, the increasing influence of poststructuralist, psychoanalytic and postcolonial theories was making its mark. Such theories questioned the transparency of language, the fixity of meaning, claims to universalism and singular truth.

2.2.1 Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA)

Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) brings together, for the first time, an international collection of studies at the nexus of Critical Discourse Analysis and Feminism. The aim is to advance a rich and nuanced understanding of the complex workings of power and ideology in discourse in sustaining a gendered social order. FCDA aims at combining recent forms of critical linguistics as well as post-structuralist and third-wave feminist theorization of gender (Lazar, 2005; Lehtonen, 2007). According to Lazar (2005), CDA should add the feminist theory in its analysis. Thus, feminist critical discourse analysis hopes to bring the analysis of gender closer to practice, by looking at the linguistic and discursive construction of gender in specific texts and contexts.

Therefore, the 'new' input is the detailed linguistic analysis of gendered discourses that CDA makes possible, by concentrating not only what is said or represented, but on how things are represented through language.

2.3 Lacan's Psychoanalysis

Lacan used the term discourse to show that a society's primary social link is founded on language, reflected back through society in the form of discursive practices. According to Lacanian discourse theory, a subject's movement into language and the social bond that is created between people as a result of this movement are at the center of our current cultural condition. More mainstream approaches to organizational behavior have traditionally focused on observed human action to explain human behavior and the correlation of this behavior with possible remedial actions. Lacanian discourse theory, with its foundation in psychoanalytic theory, enables the formulation of a model of institutional behavior that goes beyond more mainstream approaches by focusing on behavior at the unconscious level. The theory maintains that language and discourse are linked to distinct patterns of social behavior and social organization. Through more extensive considerations of culture and identity, Lacan provides a broad, generic framework for explaining human action as it relates to both human behavior and institutional practices.

2.4 Social representations by Serge Moscovici

Briefly, social representations are about different types of collective cognitions, common sense or thought systems of societies or groups of people. They are always related to social, cultural and/or symbolic objects, they are representations of something. It focuses on phenomena that becomes subjected to debate, strong feelings, conflicts and ideological struggle, and changes the collective thinking in society. As a theory of communication it links society and individual, media and public. It specifies a number of communicative mechanisms explaining how ideas are communicated and transformed into what is perceived of

as common sense. This touches the very heart of mediated communication – how the media naturalizes social thinking and generates collective cognition. The theory offers the possibility to develop a theoretically based model of analysis. This is exactly the aim with the present research.

3. Research Methodology

This qualitative research work is undertaken under the paradigm of CDA. Following the traditions of CDA, the researchers have presented an amalgamation of five theories in this research paper. CDA is a hybrid field in its approach with various theoretical backgrounds and multiple methodological frameworks (Tenorio, 2011). Likewise, in this paper, the researchers have merged the basic premises of Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminism, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, Psychoanalysis and theory of Social Representations. Both CDA and FCDA are interdisciplinary in nature. They aim to challenge the cases where language and other semiotics are used by those in power to maintain domination and also to demystify the hidden truths by deciphering hegemonic ideologies. Feminism raised the voice that women should be treated equally in every stratum of life, society and culture (Heywood, 2012). The psychoanalysis and social representations theory inculcate the phenomenon of identity/ideology. These theories help in understanding how language is used to establish ideology of individuals as well as groups.

3.1 Research Questions

1. How does UmeraAhmad in her novel, *Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan*, help to sustain the norms of patriarchal society?
2. How doesUmera Ahmed portray woman as subaltern in her discourse?

The primary data is a novel written by Umera Ahmed with the title*MeriZaat Zara-e-Benishan*.With the aim to see beyond the level of

description to demystify the hidden perspectives of the selected novel and to answer the above mentioned questions, the researchers selected three-dimensional model by Norman Fairclough (2015) as a research model triangulated with the theories mentioned above.

3.2 Fairclough's three-dimensional model

Fairclough (2001) describes language as embedded in social identities, set of beliefs and social relations. For him, discourse is a form of language and also the internal part of society. Discourse is not external to social practices. Fairclough (2005) proposed a three-dimensional framework for scrutinizing the texts, keeping in view the connections between discourse and social practices. This model comprises the following three levels of analysis.

3.2.1 Description (Text analysis)

It is the first step in Fairclough's model. At this level, the researcher identifies and labels the linguistic features or formal characteristics of a text. Basically, the researcher highlights the linguistic items, used in that particular discourse before proceeding further to the analysis of the discourse in question. The researcher has focused on the following linguistic items in the selected discourse of this research work.

3.2.1.1 Implicature

Implicature is the meaning that is conveyed indirectly or through hints and understood implicitly without ever being explicitly stated (Yule, 1996). In simple words, it does not convey the direct information. Rather, it carries the implicit information; it denotes what is suggested in the particular spoken or written data. Implicature is always context dependent.

3.2.1.2 Presupposition

A presupposition is background knowledge, related to an utterance. The presuppositions are assumed by the speakers; they are not conveyed in the sentences (Yule, 1996). In fact the presupposition unveils the connection between two statements or propositions.

3.2.1.3 Metaphor

It is a figure of speech that makes an implicit or indirect comparison between two things which are unrelated but share some features. In simple words, when someone paints a person or an object as something else whereas that person or object is actually not that particular thing, this picture is painted metaphorically.

3.2.1.4 Simile

A simile is a figure of speech that makes comparison by showing some similarities between two different things by employing a direct and straightforward similarity marker such as 'like' or 'as'. Basically, it is a comparison between two things.

3.2.2 Interpretation (Processing analysis)

The second step of Fairclough's model shows the cognitive procedures of the participants. The interpretation stage unmask the relation between text and interaction and also perceives the text as the product of the procedure (Fairclough, 2015). Basically this level helps the researcher to grasp what is in text by exploring the background knowledge.

3.2.3 Explanation (Social analysis)

This third step highlights the relationship between interaction and social context. It underpins the social sides, embedded in that discourse or vice

versa. At this level, the researcher delineates the detailed background of the discourse under investigation comprehensively (Fairclough, 2015).

Keeping in mind the aforementioned ideas, the researchers have analyzed the selected text critically that is as under.

4. Analysis of Data

The glimpses of male hegemony of patriarchal society in the title phrase of the novel, *Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan* (Myself is a speck that is undefined) are quite obvious.

In the title phrase, the metaphor of speck is used for women. The line implies the speck which we could not see even. The phrase carries the presupposition that a woman is such a small entity in the world that it cannot be defined. The metaphor of speck is apparently denoting the heroine of the novel, Saba. Saba is a speck in this world generally and in this male dominated society particularly. But actually it carries the message for all the women of this society that they are a tiny speck in the patriarchal structural system. It implies that a woman, like a speck, is invisible that could be put anywhere and could be tilted in whatever shape.

The selected novel describes the story of a girl's victimization by the males of her family for a sin which she has not committed. But she was forced to lead a helpless and homeless life. The author might be portraying the real picture here but she is affirming women that they are destined to be a tiny speck. They are part of this patriarchy to bear injustice, inequity and tyranny of the demons of the society (Tarar & Pulla, 2014). Ahmed has denoted the objectification of females by using the word "speck" for them regardless of the fact that she also comes under this very title. Moscovici (1984, p.38) explains the phenomenon of objectification, "To objectify is to discover the iconic quality of an imprecise idea or being, to reproduce a concept in an image". Likewise, Althusser too elaborates that language plays a

prominent role in the constitution of subject. In a similar vein Lacanian psychoanalysis describes how the subject is shaped through social interaction (Belsey & Moore, 1997). Ahmed seems quite successful in portraying the image of women as submissive, oppressed and weak right from the onset. The label of a woman by Ahmed also endorses Freud's views that women are made by this system through language.

The context of the following lines is that Arfeen has come from USA to attend his sister's wedding. He goes to meet Saba at her home and faces her questions on education of the women. Saba wants to get admission in a university but she has been facing the rigid attitudes of her family. She asked him, "What is this thing, called education? Why is your father so against girls' education? He sends his own son to USA for higher education but will not allow me to step out of the house" (Ahmed, 2000, p.25).

This paragraph implies that the education of girls is not welcomed in the patriarchal cultures. Under the names of traditions, the system has set the different standards for men and women. The lines imply that men own a dominant and superior place in the family. They have more rights to everything than women. Saba, the female protagonist, wanted to study in university but was forbid by the men of her family because by doing so, she could cause harm to the family norms whereas the male of her family was sent abroad for higher education.

Arfeen's father who is her uncle as well as father in law began a major block in her education. They are against Saba's desire to go university or in a co-education institution because they take her desire as a threat to their traditional family norms. Arfeen's father is the epitome of supreme authority, power and high solidarity like other men of the patriarchal society. They enjoy the power and hold being the head of the family over all the family matters. He exercises his rights to maintain the control over the female subjects of his family.

Being a decision maker and head of the family, he cannot allow a tiny speck Saba to go to the university and get education with boys because this action would be a stigma to the family honor. But Saba's uncle has sent her son to USA for higher education which is not dangerous for family norms. In her confusion, Saba put her queries before Arfeen. By doing so, she tried to clear her confusion by asking this question from an educated male of her family. In the patriarchal structure of Pakistan very few women get the chance to get education. Women particularly in rural areas are not allowed to go out of their homes. In these circumstances, to gain education poses is a big question mark. Many of the women are killed who raise voice against their male's consent. The males won't let the tiny specks to get education because of the fear. The education could make the tiny specks aware and they could raise voice against them. In these hegemonic social structures, only males are allowed to get education. This system gives the right to male to dominate every circle and position in the society. The lines from the novel endorse the hegemonic representations of men and the objectification of women. Ahmed reassures her gender that you are destined to be oppressed in the chains of taboos and customs of this social system.

Following the above discussion on education from Saba, Arfeen is taken aback by her questions and replied her in the following words: "I am a man; I have to earn to support my family. I need higher education to be able to earn more" (*MeriZaatZara-e-Benishan*, p. 26)

In these lines, there is also an implication in the words, 'I am a man'. The phrase implies man is powerful guard and have right to do everything. Arfeen's answer provides the glimpse of hegemonic representations which this patriarchal system has given to the males. There is a set ideology, that men are strong, powerful, independent, in the world generally and in patriarchal systems specifically. Pakistan is geographically situated within a patriarchal zone where 'classic patriarchy' hegemonizes the social structure (Chaudary, 2013; Tarar&Pulla, 2014). *MeriZaatZara-e-Benishan* presents the

dilemma of women at the backdrop of a fragmented authoritative patriarchal order within Pakistani social system.

This grand narrative, 'I am a man' also implies men are regarded superior because they are men; women are inferior because they are women. Moscovici's hegemonic representations are quite vivid here which mark the role of high solidarity group. This phrase also endorses that the status of the woman in this male hegemonic structure is not more than a property or a body. The women live with a firm belief that they do not deserve education or an existence outside the domestic sphere. In fact they have accepted their identity of subjects who have submitted to the authority of social formation, as Althusser describes it the Absolute Subject (Belsey, 2002). There are neither laws nor social norms nor religious values that could indemnify women an established status as citizens equal to men; such hegemonic values are further enhanced under the guise of cultural mores and practices along with the continual twisting of Islamic codes specifically which enhance the desires of misogynists. With such grand narratives, the writer reassures the women that it is the destiny of your gender to live an oppressive life under the imposition of social and religious parameters. Ahmad has portrayed most of her male characters moving to the other cities and countries for higher education or for business or work but her female characters like Saba are always presenting the picture of submissive and dependent entities. By portraying such round characters, she is playing with the psychology of the women because when we keep saying someone that you are bad, someone is accepting this thing subconsciously that I am bad. The women believe subconsciously that they are tiny particles in this male dominated world as Lacan pinpoints that identity is constituted by means of the effects and images, portrayed through language. Moscovici's social representations too endorse that values, perspectives and traditions are employed to manifest an individual's identity.

After this debate with Arfeen, she succeeded in getting permission to study in university but her uncle put a condition of veil for her. She could

go university only with the veil. The following extract has been taken from their conversation.

"I am joining the University to gain education, and I am aware of my self-respect and honor. I will not go unveiled, but take a chador. My head and body will remain covered, but I will not wear the traditional burka. Do you want to force the traditional burka on me so that, once I enter the university, I remove it and roam unveiled? Would that kind of veil help me or our family honour?"(Ahmed, p.28)

The words, "chador", "traditional burka" and "unveiled" in these lines are regarded as the symbols of honor for a man. The lines imply that men cannot bear the women to go out without covering themselves. The extract too denotes that a good woman must possess the qualities of procreation and docility. Saba tried to raise voice for the individual identity of women by refusing to do veil. She supported her arguments in front of her uncle by saying that she is not against this code of honor named Burkha. She sustained her viewpoints that it is useless to cover mere your body in the name of religion; the character of a person determines his honor and dignity rather than this symbolic code of veil. For such modern and liberal ideas, Saba was titled RuswaeZamana or a wild girl by her aunt and uncle. Because they think that by refusing to wear the typical veil, she is rejecting the cultural and religious norms, affiliated with the black gown. They too infer from her ideas that she is disrespecting the heads of her family and hence opposing the traditional mentality as well. The mentality of the males of this patriarchal system is to confine women within the four walls of home otherwise they would become a stigma to their honor as Shaheed explains, "to control their access to information.

Purdah has been used to channel and, in some ways, restrict women from education or to certain fields of education. It also symbolizes the imprisonment and oppression for women. The women are supposed to wear it in order to sustain the honor of the man. To go out unveiled

implies a serious threat to male's hegemony and supremacy. They use the religious taboo of Purdah in order to exercise their hegemony and power over this subordinate group. Ahmed again portrays the objectification of women in this extract. The lines show the hegemonic roles of the demons of society and also depict how the men chain the women on the name of honor and respect and treat the women as a thing rather than human being. By using the element of objectification, she assures and reassures her gender that it is your destiny to be used at commodities.

The background of the following extract is the wedding ceremony of Arfeen's sister in which Saba was blamed of adultery. Saba's passion for studies has made her unfavorable for her whole family in general and for Arfeen's parents specifically. Arfeen's soft passion towards Saba added fire to the fuel. Arfeen's mother takes her only son's association with such a wild lady is a threat to her bond with him. She makes a plan to defile Saba's character through accusing her of adultery with the consent of her husband/Arfeen's father. She achieves her purpose by tricking Saba and Aadil, another male cousin, into a room, on the pretext of an errand, and locks them in. Then she calls her husband and gathers other family members outside that room to show that Saba and Aadil have been caught together in a room. She informs everyone that she has witnessed their shameful act.

"You wanton, witch, liar of a woman. Why would I send you to this room? You shameless, brazen woman! How dare you carry out your evil act in my son's room!? How could we even think of taking such a woman as our daughter-in-law?' Her aunt kept beating her breasts (Ahmed, p.52)."

The extract contains the metaphors of wanton and witch for Saba. She is regarded shameless due to her bold ideas. These metaphors imply the evil and bad character associated to women, awarded by the demons of this patriarchal system. The extract also reveals that it is very easy to exploit women through their sexuality. The medal of adultery for a

woman makes her skeptical and avoidable entity. She is placed in such a condition that she cannot prove that she is innocent. She cannot justify herself even for a sin she has not committed. A single accusation is enough in this patriarchal system to ruin the life of a woman. She is disowned spontaneously from any of her relationship. After the accusation, she would no longer be a daughter or a mother, sister or a wife. She faces rejection for her all the positions.

These lines bring to light another horned dilemma of this system that the religion and society has set different rules and principles for men and women. On the name of religious and social values, the demons of the society have been exploiting the women for many centuries. She is being sacrificed in every condition, for example, in forced marriages, in honor killing; in rapes and abductions etc. she is bound to follow the social constraints whereas men are free to do whatever they want to do. This social set up let the males to rape them, to murder them and to ask them for sacrifices on the names of religious and cultural values.

In this case of Saba, firstly she was stopped on the name of Purdah but after her refusal to this taboo, she was blamed as a characterless and evil woman. Likewise, the writer is stopping the women from disobeying the masters and lords of the system. Otherwise, they might be ready to bear any punishment. After reading such descriptions, how a woman could raise her voice against the violence or even for her basic rights. Instead these descriptions have been causing to suppress their voices.

On this incident, Arfeen's response is very important because Saba is his wife. Saba tried to speak and defend herself. But Saba's words, which used to be inspiring and full of meaning for Arfeen, fail to satisfy his male ego on this occasion. Arfeen is highly educated male and the audience hope that he might verify the truth but his response is vivid in the following lines. Arfeen exclaims: "don't give me your philosophy today Saba, talk to me in a language that I can understand...that can convince me of your innocence"(Ahmed, p.64).

The extract implies that a man, whether educated or non-educated, wants her wife pure. Arfeen is the master of Saba's fate in the same way all the men do. Arfeen exercises his power, hegemony and supremacy in demanding proofs from Saba to prove her innocence. He needed only the things that could prove Saba's purity. Saba begged him to believe her and trust her but all the evidences spoke against her. Instead of standing with his life partner in this trial period, Arfeen is asking to prove her innocence because subconsciously her male ego has accepted that her wife has done adultery. Arfeen used to be the great appreciator of Saba's words and intellectual ability has denied believing the words about her innocence. Murtiza and Baseer explain this dilemma in these words, "Pakistani society cannot afford similarity between men and women because it wants to see a man as more than a man and a woman less than a woman. Any breach in this hierarchy of existence is profane".

Saba made efforts to prove her intellectuality and rejected to be subservient to the family norms for education but her desire was scrambled by her family in the name of social values. By highlighting these issues, Ahmed showed how difficult it becomes for women to prove them innocent in such matters of sexuality; how they have to suffer due to the lack of evidence, so they must not need to prove. Instead Ahmed endorses that the women must accept the adultery as well as the punishment for it. Like Arfeen, the women have believed in their hearts that they are tiny specks; anything could be done to them, their voices could be suppressed and above all they are destined to be oppressed.

As Saba makes her way back home after the incident her mother in rage and anguish asks, "What have you come here for, after brazenly blackening your face? You shameless woman! Go and drown yourself to death. Saba you have proved to be a poisonous snake for my family. Why didn't I strangle you to death when you were born?" (Ahmed, p.62).

Arfeen's mother falsely swears on the Holy Quran in order to prove Saba's adultery in a Kachehri (court), organized by Arfeen's father. After

her oath, no one believed Saba due to the authenticity and reverence associated with the Holy Quran. Arfeen divorced her on the spot. Afterwards, she was married with an old man, having four children. Her miseries of life got worsened after her marriage with this illiterate widower. Saba's second husband refused to own the baby when he heard the news of her pregnancy and hence he divorced her too. Saba, a twice divorced woman, disowned by the family, begins to make her living by initially working as a house maid and later, after the birth of her daughter Sara, she works in a factory. Years later, after her aunt confesses of her plotting against Saba, Arfeen, after much struggle, locates her and begs forgiveness for her dying mother. Saba replied, "I forgave all of you. I do not have anything in my heart against you. I forgave all of you" (Ahmed, p.59).

These lines carry a presupposition as well as an implicature that a woman is and must present the example of patience and sacrifice. In this patriarchal system, a docile and subaltern woman is acceptable. It further elaborates that the feature of forgiveness must be embedded in every woman of the society. The protagonist Saba's life is the epitome of sufferings and miseries which every woman of this society has been facing since long under various labels. Saba was punished for adultery but actually she was innocent and pure. Her ordeal is greater than her sins i.e. to foster the passion for education.

In the end, the writer shows that after such a terrible punishment, a woman must forgive her masters. Saba forgave her whole family, which was the reason of her miserable life. This is how every woman lives her life in the patriarchal system. The women face violence and coercion over small issues. They are traded like goats in the families. The men could throw their goats out from their houses even for the sins they have not committed. This is the horned dilemma of Pakistani society. The author, portraying Saba's life miserable, gives the message to the women that it is their destiny to be butchered on the name of religion, culture and society. She has affirmed that women are destined to bear the sufferings and miseries.

5. Conclusion

This research work has been aimed at evaluating critically the selected discourse which tends to reproduce the specific ideologies for each gender by paving the ways for dominance, coercion and control. In Pakistani society particularly, the definition of good woman is being docile and obedient to her master (Chaudary, 2013; Bhattacharya, 2014). Through this research work, the researchers took the plunge to critically evaluate such gender stereotypes by analyzing the literary piece, which endorses the docile image of women in Pakistan. The aim of this investigation was to demystify the hidden perspectives in the selected discourse, which show how the language use enhances the so called practices of this patriarchal society.

The research was carried out by formulating a model by mixing the key elements of some major theories, relevant to the theme of the study. The model comprises of three-dimensional framework by Fairclough (2015), taken from the heterogeneous school of CDA, key points from FCDA and Feminism along with the touch of two psychological theories named Psychoanalysis and social Representations by Lacan and Moscovici respectively. The following findings of this research are reached at.

The analysis of the dialogues of the selected novel reveals that language is used to formulate identity of an individual or a group. It also elaborates that language is the basic tool to exercise power and coercion. The selected novel portrays the picture of power and control in a true sense. The readers could see that the docile and subservient heroine of the novel could do nothing except weeping and suffering from her ill situation. The writer is quite successful in portraying the subaltern woman. Through such depiction, she verifies the submissive identity of women. Saba from *Meri Zaat Zara-e-Benishan* could not prove her innocence throughout her life and led a miserable life as a punishment for a sin which she has not committed. Her family, parents and husband did not believe the innocence of this tiny speck (the heroine). Our social set up does not bother to investigate the truth behind the mistake of a woman whereas

the very society declares men right even if they are wrong. This horned dilemma has destroyed the lives of many females like Saba. The pathetic thing is that she forgave all her relatives in the end. In this patriarchal society, the woman bears all the sufferings and miseries and at the end she also forgives. The writer basically asserts that a good woman must be a subaltern one in order to survive in this classic patriarchy. She must possess the features of procreation and docility in order to survive in this patriarchal system. Her treatment with the heroine clearly shows that woman is dependent entity; she cannot survive or lead a free life in Pakistani society.

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