



## Typing Patriarchy: A Critical Analysis of Cyberbullying against Female Politicians in Pakistan's Digital Discourse

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.71145/rjsp.v4i1.579>

### Abstract

In this research, FPDA is used to understand gender discrimination and hatred targeted at women politicians through the use of social media sites for political discourse. Based on the discourse analysis of the comments made under the tweets of female politicians and in-depth interviews carried out with six women politicians belonging to different political parties of Pakistan, this study highlights how social and cultural comparisons, personal attacks, and sexually explicit comments serve the purpose of demeaning and insulting women. Use of offensive names, body shaming, and sexist language help reinforce patriarchal standards in a society where such acts have no place at all. In accordance with SIT, the results of the research prove that political affiliations contribute to cyber-bullying and make political discourse more divisive than ever before.

**Keywords:** Cyberbullying, Female Politicians, Social Media, Political Discourse, Social Identity Theory, Pakistan

### Introduction

*"When one woman is a leader, it changes her. When more women are leaders, it changes politics and policies."* - Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile

Social media has revolutionized how people interact within their environment. Whether for the better or worse, all one needs to get into any sort of public discourse is a smartphone, even that which consists of insults and trolling, often in an anonymous fashion. Although social media platforms such as X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, and Facebook have been able to create new forums for democratic discussion, they have equally turned out to be platforms where individuals engage in online bullying and harassment. The phenomenon of cyberbullying, at its most general level, consists of harassment, body-shaming, false allegations, blackmail, threats, and spreading misinformation via electronic means. However, its especially sinister nature within the Pakistani society is that of normalization. For instance, when a negative comment is ignored, and worse, becomes popular and approved of, public perception is influenced, bigotry is perpetuated, and a climate of fear is instilled among female political aspirants. According to Bhatti (2022), there are numerous kinds of cyberbullying facing Pakistani women; for instance, it includes the creation of fake profiles, stalking, trolling, identity fraud, and sexual harassment. Cyber harassment targeting feminist voices in Pakistan manifests in five key forms: gendered

and sexualized abuse, coordinated trolling, moral policing, real-world threats, and reputational damage, causing lasting emotional and professional harm to its victims (Ahsan & Ali, 2026). Female politicians are an especially vulnerable group. They are public figures working in an arena that has long been perceived by Pakistani society as male-dominated. Everything they say, everything they do, is fair game to those who feel that women should not be in politics. Social media has made this aggression even more intense. As Rajper (2023) argues, while social media has helped to engage more young people in politics in Pakistan and given citizens a means to call their leaders to account, it has also provided an avenue for harassment, especially towards female politicians. The role of X cannot be understated in Pakistani politics. Media outlets depend on trends emerging from X to report on current events; politicians interact with other politicians and citizens directly on the platform; and citizens hold discussions that can influence the direction in which public debate is heading (Zaman & Abbas, 2022). However, this prominence does not benefit female politicians, who face greater harassment online based on their gender, appearance, past, and even fashion choices. Analysis of online comment sections reveals that women politicians are routinely subjected to body-focused humiliation and sexist disparagement, with overweight female politicians facing the most intense targeting regardless of their media visibility (Lacalle et al., 2026). There are a number of ways in which this research can be considered important. For instance, the study provides attention to an aspect of violence that does not receive much recognition in the realm of Pakistani politics. The study analyzes the nature of online bullying in terms of the repetitive language used, the strategies adopted, and the topics involved so as to provide a clear understanding of gender discrimination in online forums. Another importance is that this research highlights the experiences of the victims by interviewing the politicians.

### **Objectives**

The study explores the impact of cyberbullying against female politicians on X and analyzes the role played by political identity in creating an online environment for female politicians. The study explores the prevalence and types of cyberbullying experienced by female politicians in Pakistan and the societal-political environment which fosters such bullying. The study will also focus on how culture influences cyberbullying and the possible ways to protect victims.

### **Literature Review**

Sexist online backlash against female politicians is deeply rooted in patriarchal gender role beliefs, and the heightened visibility of women in political roles frequently invites misogynistic hostility that overshadows their actual political work (Reich & Bachl, 2025). Women parliamentarians face disproportionate abusive responses on Twitter compared to their male counterparts, reflecting systemic gendered inequities embedded in digital political communication (Boukemia, 2025). Violence against women in politics increasingly unfolds in digital spaces, with attacks revolving around fabricated misconduct that objectifies women, reinforces harmful stereotypes, and erodes their credibility as political actors (International IDEA, 2025). The patriarchal system and conservative attitudes persist in Pakistani politics. According to research conducted in Balochistan province, men's control in domestic decision-making processes and misinterpretation of Islamic teachings constitute obstacles to women's political involvement (Khayyam, 2016). While the authorities have made progress in policy reforms with the adoption of the National Plan of Action in 1999, setting up the National Commission on the Status of Women in 2000, and adopting the National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women in 2002 (Tahir, 2016), female politicians still suffer from discrimination at both local and federal levels. Moreover, despite being placed in prominent positions, they receive criticism concerning personal issues rather than legislation passed (Anees,

2023). Social media platforms have reinforced pre-existing patriarchal and sexist ideologies, making women politicians from opposition parties particularly vulnerable to coordinated trolling and misinformation campaigns driven by gendered political bias (Ahmed et al., 2025).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Feminist Post-Structuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA)**

FPDA will be used as the main tool for analyzing this paper. FPDA has emerged based on the theoretical foundation put forth by feminist post-structuralism, formulated by Chris Weedon, then modified again by Judith Baxter, in the year 2003. The very name FPDA implies the analysis of how the system of patriarchy is maintained through language, which now serves as a means of control and power rather than communication.

In this particular case, FPDA will be utilized in order to explore how the language of hate speech against female politicians on X. FPDA includes such elements as analysis of lexical choice, sentence structure, use of rhetoric, and the socio-political context within which such statements are being made. According to Van Dijk (2001), Critical Discourse Analysis is defined as a research method that takes into account how social oppression, domination, and inequality of power are enacted and resisted via language. Using this technique, not only can one analyze the message aimed at female politicians, but also its implications.

### **Social Identity Theory**

In addition to FPDA, this present study also incorporates the use of Social Identity Theory (SIT) which was suggested by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the early 1970s. The theory sheds light on the way that individuals build their identities and identify themselves as members of specific social groups and how the process of group identification affects their behavior and views about things (Harwood, 2005). SIT plays an important role in explaining the reasons behind the occurrence of political motivations in cyberviolence as those supporting one political group consider others as the out-group. Intersections for women in politics become especially complex. These individuals belong to multiple social groups at once, including gender categories, political affiliations, and regional/class communities. Through SIT, we can analyze the ways that their intersecting social identities influence both the abuse they suffer and their strategies for coping with it.

### **Research Questions**

RQ1: What is the role played by language in tweets, replies, and comments in the perpetration or subversion of gender-based discrimination of female politicians?

RQ2: In what way does language play a part in constructing gender stereotypes and power imbalances in discourse between female politicians and others online?

RQ3: What is the experience of female politicians in cyberbullying cases on social media, specifically X?

RQ4: What are the common forms and themes involved in cyberbullying that female politicians face within the political discourse online?

RQ5: To what degree does identity, including political party and gender, impact the cyberbullying of female politicians online?

## **Methods and Research Design**

### **FPDA Model**

The first stage of the methodology used for this study is a Feminist Post-Structural Discourse Analysis of hate messages made against Pakistani female politicians belonging to different

political parties. At least 18 tweets from each politician were chosen, along with at least two responses for each tweet. Various topics and events were chosen so that the content context was diverse. Criteria of choosing the response tweets included traits associated with hate speech, defamation of character, body shaming, and sexual discrimination. The linguistic analysis method included an investigation of lexical choice, syntactical structures, power relations, genres, communication strategies, and sociocultural background in each group of posts. In particular, such an approach enabled the mapping of language patterns, recurring topics, and the strategies of rhetoric used by people to insult and demean women politicians online. In this regard, FPDA's emphasis on language as a reflection of patriarchy helped highlight its role in the issue under discussion (Lamorte, 2022).

### In-Depth Interviews

The second stage consisted of semi-structured interviews of six female politicians belonging to the most prominent political parties in Pakistan and using X. Interviewees were purposefully chosen to represent different political backgrounds, varying degrees of seniority, and experiences of cyberbullying. The interviews included discussion about participants' strategies for engaging in online spaces, cyberbullying they have encountered, coping strategies, and suggestions for how to improve social media platform functionality for addressing cyberbullying.

### Findings and Analysis

#### FPDA of Responses on Tweets

In light of the above-mentioned research about the comments on the tweets posted by the female politicians in Pakistan, an initial probe reveals the disturbing prevalence of hate speech, character assassination, and body shaming in the social media discourse. It is hoped that this analysis will bring to light the issues related to the life of women politicians in Pakistan's politics in the digital era. The following paragraphs will elaborate on the aforementioned issues under:

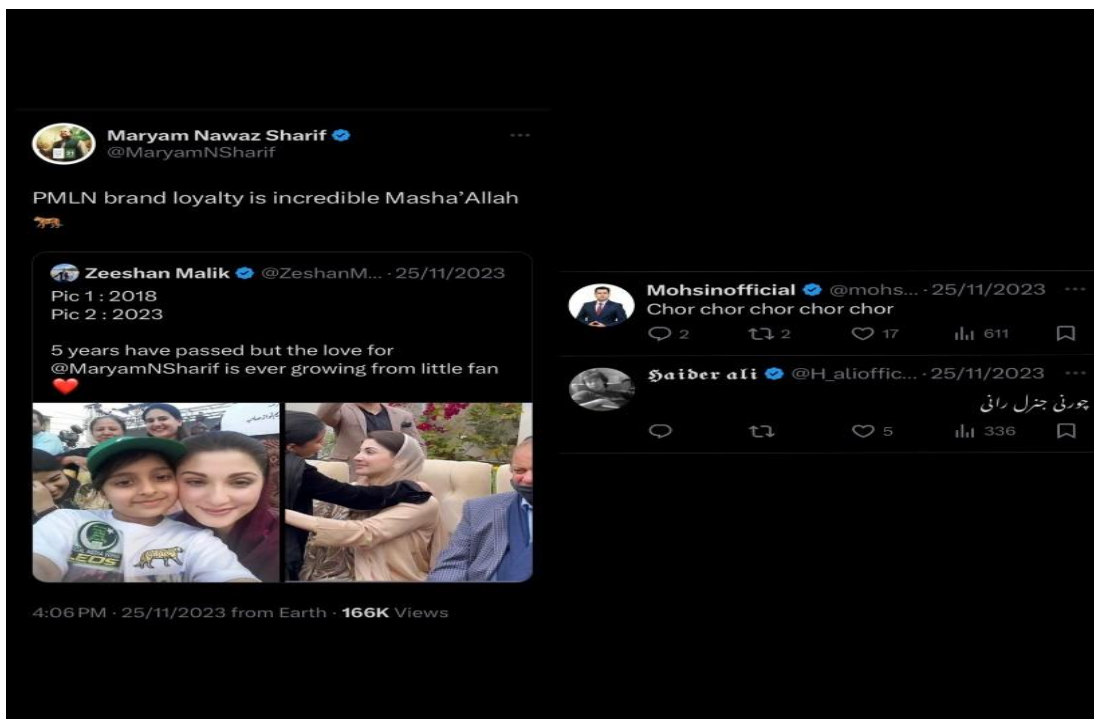


Fig 1: A collage of Maryam Nawaz 1st tweet with the most debated comments.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Textual Analysis</b>	<b>Word Choice &amp; Language</b>	Chor, General Rani
	<b>Sentence Structure &amp; Syntax</b>	Repetition of the word chor and giving Maryam Nawaz a name of a woman who had a bold and controversial character.
<b>Discourse Exploration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	Reply on a Political xet
	<b>Power Dynamics</b>	Freedom of the “X” users to express hate towards the opposite party leader.
	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	Repetition of word “chor” shows aggressiveness and General Rani is a double meaning statement. Both comments are showing personal attacks.
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	Public’s comparing Maryam Nawaz with a historical character to reinforce an assumption that she has a negative character and relations with the establishment. Maryam Nawaz has been called as “chor” because of the assumptions of the public that she is into corruption.
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	The mention of General Rani is implementing a double meaning. This is an intentional comparison made between the characters is suggesting that Maryam Nawaz has a scandalous behavior similar to the General Rani. This comment is beyond criticizing political decisions in fact, this comment is attacking the personal life and character of Maryam Nawaz. The comments like this one are creating a negative image of Maryam Nawaz. The repeated use of the term "chor," the comparison to General Rani, are influencing public opinion about her character and discrediting her.
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	The educated society of Pakistan places a high value when it comes to respecting a woman. Labeling Maryam Nawaz as a thief is offensive to her honor and it goes against the cultural values that prioritize the protection of women.

*Table 1: Analysis of comments under Fig 1*

### **Discussions:**

Comparing Maryam Nawaz to ‘General Rani’ in a xet involves invoking a specific sociocultural discourse that relies on historical and cultural references. Here are some aspects of the sociocultural discourse implied in such a comparison. Firstly, referring to Maryam Nawaz as ‘General Rani’ suggests a connection to misconduct and controversy. Using the term ‘General

Rani' implies that there might be similarities in behavior, influence, or personal relationships, based on historical associations with General Rani. This comparison suggests a parallel between Maryam Nawaz and Ayesha Sadiq in terms of perceived influence over political figures. 'General Rani' was believed to have had a significant influence on General Yahya Khan, and by making this comparison, it insinuates a similar level of influence in the political world. (Hameed, 2023). The use of a term associated with a Maryam Nawaz, "General Rani," may bring gender dynamics into play. This comparison could suggest that women in politics gain influence through personal connections rather than their own abilities. This is a personal attack on Maryam Nawaz and can have an impact on her reputation. The comparison of her with a controversial figure like General Rani, makes it clear that the public is familiar with the historical context and controversies of that time in Pakistani politics. This comparison is a personal attack on Maryam Nawaz's character and also has given her a nickname.

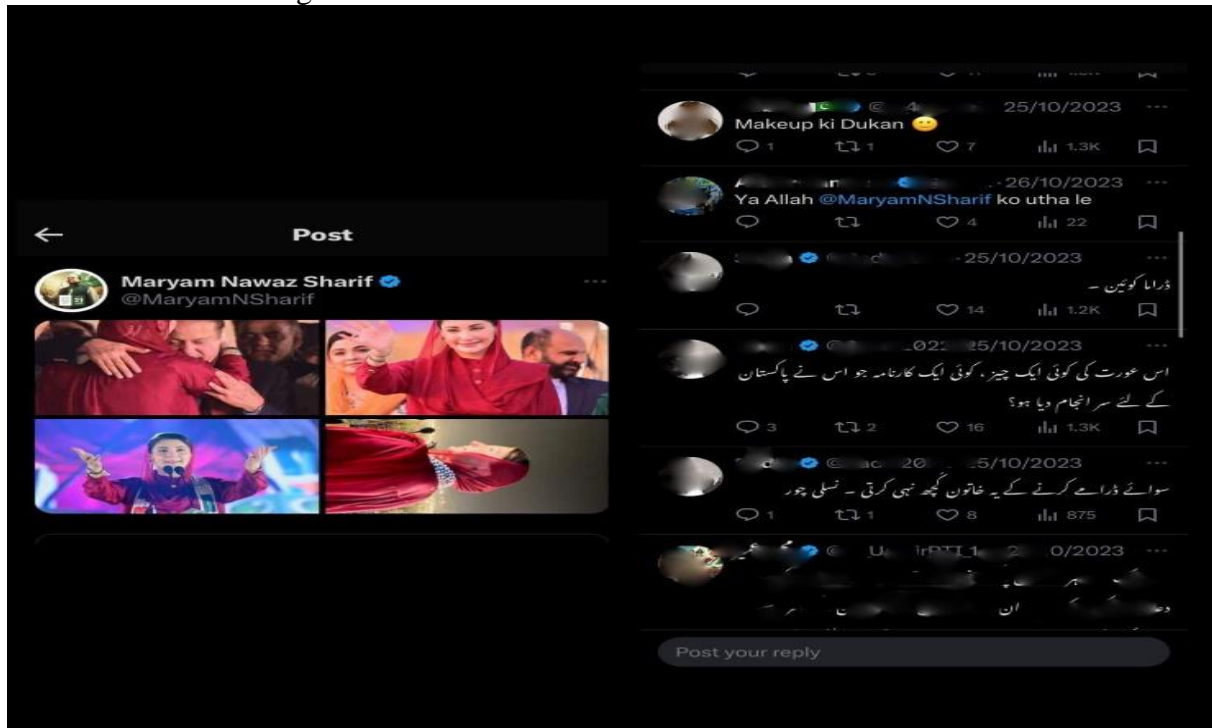


Fig 2: A collage of Maryam Nawaz's 2<sup>nd</sup> Xeet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	"Makeup ki dukaan, Drama Queen, Nasali chor" To influence others and gain likes under the comment they called her drama queen when she was crying on the shoulder of her father and wearing a lot of makeup.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Character assassinating replies under Maryam Nawaz's xeet.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Due to the unsafe environment provided by "X" to its users.
	Power Dynamics	Harassers and cyberbullies feel free to make groups and bully people.
	Communication Tactics	In order to criticize her on her looks people started calling her "Makeup Ki Dukaan" to make people believe that she only pretends to be nice

<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	Context	people they called her “Drama Queen” and to accuse her and her family of being in corrupt activities she has been called as “Nasali chor” Maryam Nawaz is bullied by the opposite party supporters because of wearing makeup, crying on the arrival of her father and called as “chor”.
	Identity Construction	Name-calling her as drama queen and nasal ichor can impact the career of Maryam Nawaz, it can influence her party supporters and she may lose her votes and love she get from many Pakistanis. It can affect her and her family’s mental health after being referred as “nasali chor” There is an assumption made by the non-supporters of PMLN that their party is involved in corruption.
	Cultural Values	Which in the past few years has spread a lot. This is how easily an assumption of someone passes across the world and influences people.

Table 2: Analysis of comments under Fig 2

### Discussion:

A video uploaded by Bol news showed, in a Jalsa where Maryam Nawaz was giving her speech and the moment she stopped talking, a group of non-supporters in that Jalsa start shouting “Maryam k Papa Chor Hain” (Maryam’s father is a thief). Which made her so devastated that it can be seen on her face (Bol, 2023). Just like that there was a video of her with a woman who came to her pretending as a fan then asked her to click a picture with Maryam Nawaz, she started recording a video in which she asked Maryam Nawaz to say “My family are thieves”. In response to that Maryam Nawaz remained calm she smiled and left. (Aajtv, 2023). And those who can’t face-shame, criticize, harass her on her face are these commenters, they know no one is going to report them or harm them until they are behind their mobiles with anonymous identities.

This is how female politicians are treated in Pakistan and criticizing her on putting makeup on her face is not even related to politics, it is her personal preference which is not been respected or accepted by the society. She is often criticized because of wearing expensive clothes, bags and shoes, the public has made an assumption that she buys from the money of Pakistan which has influenced the opponents to call her a thief (*Chor*).



Fig 3: Xeet of Marriyum Aurangzeb with the most debated responses in the comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	“Daddu Charger” “khotay” Criticizing her imperfections in the comments to make her feel uneasy in public about herself.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Hate comment on a political xeet.
	Power Dynamics	The commenter may feel a sense of superiority or control over the politicians on “X”.
	Communication Tactics	The use of such words is attacking Marriyum Aurangzeb’s appearance which is most common way and the first thing people do to hurt someone.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	The label “Daddu Charger” was given to Marriyum Aurangzeb by the opponent party supporters comparing her with a frog because she has a small neck with extra fat. The label was chased by the public later on.
	Identity Construction	Public is intentionally and openly calling her a frog which is an attack on her looks and appearance. It is very disappointing for a woman to be called ugly and the term “frog” is implying a negative perception of Marriyum Aurangzeb, potentially suggesting unflattering qualities and ugliness. Saying that her looks resemble with a frog might had an impact on her self-confidence. She might feel underconfident in public and her work place.
	Cultural Values	The society we live in is very crucial when it comes to people we hate, especially the ones we hate. Female politicians unfortunately

have a bad image in our society. Our people can do whatever it takes to make them feel unwanted or to hurt them so Pakistani's choose the simplest way to do that which is judging someone by her looks.

Table 3: Analysis of comments under fig 3

**Discussion:**

Not supporting someone is not at all wrong but supporting someone by judging others and mocking them is wrong and no one has stopped this yet. Marriyum Aurangzeb has been one of the biggest victims of trolling. People are unstoppable when it comes to Marriyum Aurangzeb she has been a criticized where ever she goes by that nickname. There came a video of her, she was attacked by mockers on the streets of London people kept making her videos on the phones and kept calling her “Daddu Charger”. She was very calm and kept giving them a smile (Dawn, 2022). The mockers were wearing PTI (Opposite Party) colors which cleared that the public has resorted to mocking as a means of showing support for Imran Khan.

She has been a victim of body shamming which is a major issue in our society especially when it comes to women. She has faced the issue very now and then because of her body shape. The disappointment she must have been feeling is unimagined when she was called out as a frog on streets of london. Calling Marriyum Aurangzeb with such nicknames is not only being disrespectful towards her but also a sexist act. The nickname given to her is harmful and undermining her capabilities on the basis of her appearance. People are throwing away the hard work they do every day and only focusing on her looks which is unfair.



Fig 4: A collage of Marriyum Aurangzeb’s Xeeet with the most debated responses in comments.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Textual Analysis</b>	<b>Word Choice &amp; Language</b>	“Kaneez (slave), Lannat” The word Kaneez is used to say that she is a slave of Shahbaz Sharif sb and the word lannat is used to curse her.
	<b>Sentence Structure &amp; Syntax</b>	Reply on Marriyum Aurangzeb’s political xheet The commenter is trying to influence people with his perspective about Marriyum Aurangzeb by calling her a slave.
<b>Discourse Exploration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	Lannat is a cursing word commenter has used it is a way of showing to someone by words. The user, calling a politician a slave is promoting the fact that women will always have a low standard in politics she needs an upper hand she can work with.
	<b>Power Dynamics</b>	Calling Marriyum Aurangzeb a slave is a deliberate act to make people give a new nickname for her. And cursing her is a way of sending hate to her.
	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	The language used in the statements can reinforce the fact that women in politics are unworthy of respect, they are dependent on our male politicians and male politicians have higher standards than female politicians.
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	Pakistani people have always thought that women can not work as hard as men can they do not have enough strengthen bones to work like men. This belief is still present in the minds of many men who are unable to overcome their prejudice against women.
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	

*Table 4: Analysis of comments under fig 4.*

### **Discussion:**

Marriyum Aurangzeb called as a slave and cursed highlights the challenges women face in politics when they are given a certain power in politics and these are one of the reasons which can overcome the progress of females of Pakistan in politics. A politician is cursed by public shows the amount power is given to the public by “X”. They can say whatever they want to the politicians behind the screen of their mobile phones with fake or real identities as long as they are not been blocked by the politician. Marriyum Aurangzeb has been called a slave of Shahbaz Shareef sb as she works under her. The commenter wants to indicate that she and like her many other female politicians deserves to be a slave of male politicians that’s what they are capable of and that’s the job of female politicians. Lannat is a word used when you do not like someone’s act or someone’s personality in Pakistan. Cursing is a common way for Pakistanis, because

mostly the public can say bad things to politicians on their faces so they use comment sections to tell politicians that they are not being liked.



Fig 5: A collage of Hina Pervaiz Butt's Xheet with the most debated responses in comment.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	Porn star
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	The term 'porn star' is used with the intention of sexual harassment.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Reply on a Political xheet
	Power Dynamics	The culture of online harassment which has not come to an end is the power public have.
	Communication Tactics	Hateful comments such as giving label to Hina Pervaiz as a "porn star" on her xheets is promoting sexism against female politicians. This intentional use of sexual words against her are to attack her personally, creating a bad image of her in the society.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	Hina Pervaiz called as a "porn star" is to make a bad impact on her character.
	Identity Construction	The impact on the social life of Hina Pervaiz after such comments are beyond our expectations. The difficulties she might have faced in her work life with all the male co-workers and public must have caused a lot of trouble to her.
	Cultural Values	Labeling Hina Pervaiz as a "porn star" on her xheets is highlighting how much Pakistan's cultural values women who work with men. this is how men think of a woman who has to work to run his family or wishes to be independent. Speaking of which a woman who wishes to be independent is also usually called as a bold woman

with open mind. These are the misogynists who make an account of such platforms and promote their mindsets online by harassing women and forcing them to quit their lives.

Table 5: Analysis of comments under fig 5.

**Discussions**

The intentions of the commenter can clearly be seen as he/she is promoting sexism against female politicians. The sexual language used in the comment is to get the attention of Hina Pervaiz butt so that she could get hurt by the words of the opposite party supporter. This form of bullying is also called harassment which is faced by every female politician almost every day. They are not remembered by the work they are doing instead they are remembered by the work they are doing with men. Harassing comments under her xheet might had an impact on her work, personal life and public image.

The society is still in the phase where the one of the reasons behind not letting women work independently is that the patriarchal system does not like that the women in the house work with strange men. The other reason is misogynists who feel that if their wives were to work and earn more than them, it could threaten their status and control within the household. These people get an account on the social media platforms and spread the misogyny in the way of harassing the female politicians. These toxic hateful comments are because of the social platforms which have tolerated and normalized these acts by not making any strict terms and conditions or taken any strict actions on their platforms against harassers.

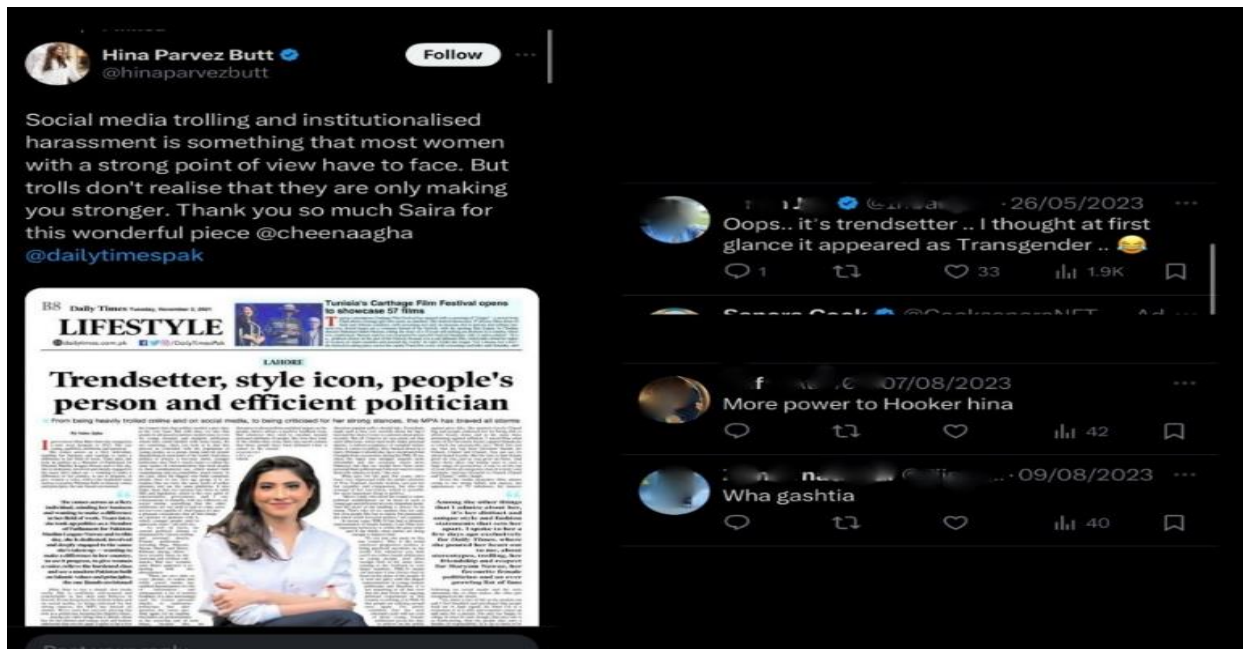


Fig 6: A collage of Hina Pervaiz's pinned xheet with the most debated responses in comments

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	“Transgender, Hooker, Gashti” Referred as “Transgender” is promoting sexism and the words “Hooker and Gashti” are the words used to assassinate Hina Pervaiz's character by accusing her of having
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	

<b>Discourse Exploration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	sexual affairs. Hateful replies on a female politician's xheet.
	<b>Power Dynamics</b>	"X" does not impose any requirements regarding age, qualifications, or personal details on its users, which is a positive aspect for those using the platform to bully others. The sarcastic comment of a user calling her a transgender is to gain likes under his/her comment and nothing else. The comment with the word "hooker" is made to show their own issues with the Political leader and so is the comment with the word "Gashti" in it.
	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	Sexist comments under a Hina Pervaiz's xheet after she was given a title of "Trendsetter". After being called as a transgender and hooker she can face discrimination and character assassination. Comments like "hooker" imply that she is involved in sex work which is the least a woman wants to known for. This can make difficulties for her to engage and work with men which is something she can't even change.
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	Pakistan has always been a country which has not accepted the role of a transgender in a society. The word "Transgender" is like an abusive yet funny word to Pakistani's and the reason behind this is how they are dressed up and how they wear makeup. Referring someone with transgender is found amusing in Pakistan.
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	

*Table 6: An analysis of comments under fig 6.*

### **Discussion:**

Judging a book by its cover has been a trend in Pakistan and it is not just about books, people are also judged by their looks. No one wants to dig in the personality of a person as looks are more important to us. Hina Pervaiz is business woman, who has been elected as Member, Provincial Assembly of the Punjab in general elections 2013 against one of the seats reserved for women. She is a fashion designer and has given new trends to this field (PAP, 2023).

She has been given a title of trendsetter which is a big achievement for her as she is a fashion designer also but the opponents couldn't stand the fact that she was appreciated so they tried to make her feel upset by putting hate comments under her xheet which were face-shaming her and accusing her of having affairs with men and involved in sex work. The impact it can create on her work life and personal life is beyond the commenters.

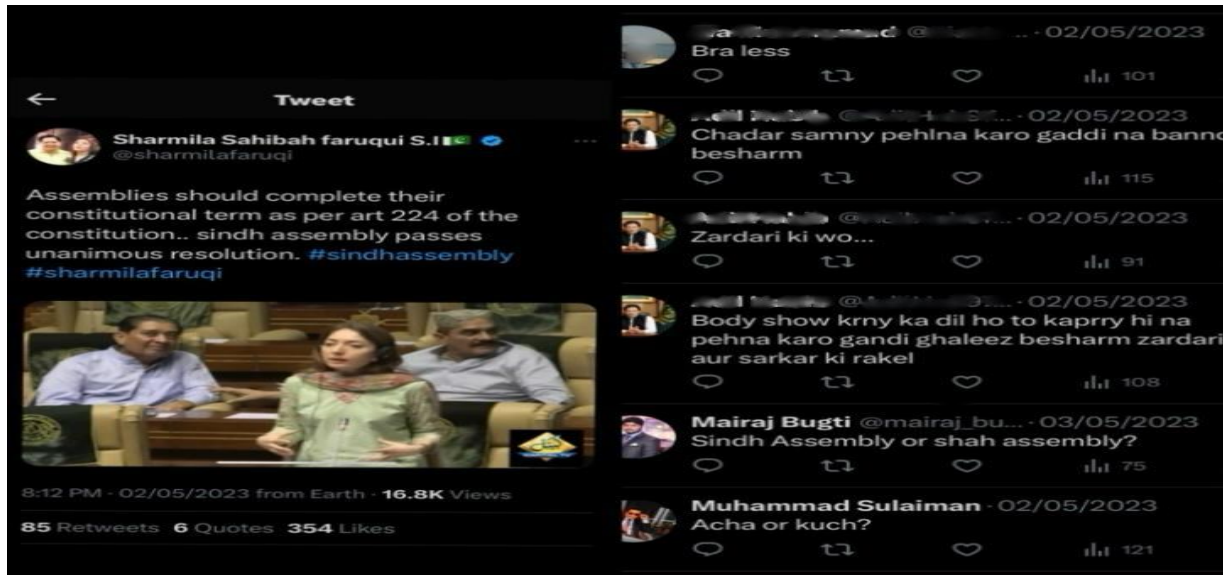


Fig 7: A collage of xet of Sharmila Faruqi with the most debated responses in comments

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	“Bra less, Gandi Aurat, Ghaleez, Rakhel & Zardari ki wo”.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Objectifying and sexualizing her calling her bra less, character-less and rakhel based on the fact that she is not covering her chest with a Chaddar (scarf). Accusing her of having a relationship with Zardari sb.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Harassment in the reply of a politician’s xet.
	Power Dynamics	Freedom to pass judgments on the character of female politicians on “X” without any restrictions.
	Communication Tactics	The first comment of the person is defaming her for not wearing a bra to convince people to talk about that in the comments section. Second commenter is passing his personal opinion about Sharmila Faruqi as a characterless woman who is not covering her chest with a scarf.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	The statements are based on commenter’s assumptions just to make people call her characterless as she’s not covering her chest with scarf which is still not acceptable in Pakistani societies.
	Identity Construction	Calling her a Rakhel and Characterless is trying to damage her reputation and make people doubt her honesty and integrity it can harm her career and personal life.

### Cultural Values

Pakistan in this century is still number one in calling a woman bold, clever and characterless if she is wearing jeans or dressed according to her own taste. It is in nature of our men to point out a woman covered in burqa or chaddar. They are still perceived as “Gandi Aurat” bad character in our society.

Table 7: Analysis of the comments under fig 7.

### Discussion:

Criticized by comments like *Rakhel* of the government, bra-less and character-less can cause a major impact on Sharmila Faruqui’s career. It might have affected her reputation in her career place, calling her “*Rakhel of Zardari*” is making a false accusation on her character and it is reinforcing the idea that her success is dependent on her relationship with Zardari sb. Without even thinking people are throwing such unfounded allegations on her face. Pakistani women are told to wear presentable clothes to be safe from the eyes of bad men or rapists. Wearing a scarf is a sign that you belong to a respectable family, it is a symbol of modesty and respectability which might save you from getting rapped. If you don’t wear it you will be considered as a shameless, bold woman. People of Pakistan have a societal expectation from a woman to dress up nicely and cover her body with chaddar, these are mostly from the side of men in our society with double standards and a firm belief in patriarchy, who wants upper hand in society. Not only the men, the women with conservative mindsets, influenced by patriarchal system are also the ones who criticize those who are willing to live independently.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	Badsuraat (Ugly), Manhoos Aurat (Unlucky) Direct attack on her spirituality. By calling her non attractive, ugly and unlucky. the people are saying that she’s ugly because her sins are showing up on her face.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Face-shaming replies on a politician’s xect.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	The personal remarks on someone’s personality are in the results of no restrictions imposed by the “X” on the commenters.
	Power Dynamics	Both commenters have added an Islamic touch in their comment trying to reinforce that Sharmilla Faruqui has a bad character and even after performing Umrah her sins will still be visible on her face.
	Communication Tactics	The statements are based on Islam and the words used in the comments are indicating that Sharmila Faruqui is sinful.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	This is personally attacking Sharmila Faruqui by judging how strong her religion is. The impact it can make on her reputation and mental health is unimaginative.
	Identity Construction	

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## Cultural Values

Being called sinful is the least any political leader could expect by their followers.

People of Pakistan have an assumption that if a person commits a sin, the sin appears on his face as a “lannat” (curse). It is showing the strong beliefs of Pakistanis in such silly things. By commenting such things on social media platform they are reinforcing their beliefs on others.

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Fig 8: A collage of Sharmilla Faruqui's xeat with the most debated responses in comments.

Table 8: Analysis of the comments under fig 8.

### Discussion:

A supporter of some other party thinks it is his responsibility to show hate towards a different party leader and the way they always choose is personal attack. It is their way to support their political leader. But what they do not understand is that politicians have their personal life and personal matters to deal with. In this xeat Sharmila Faruqi shared a picture of herself where she went to perform Umrah for her late father. This must have been very hard for her and full of emotions and love so she shared it with her followers but the public started calling her sinful and manhoos. Which is questioning someone's spirituality and not respecting the fact that she performed an Umrah for her father who just passed away. Having her spirituality questioned can cause emotional distress, anxiety and loss of self-esteem.



Fig 9: A collage of Sherry Rehman's tweet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	"Anabelle doll, freaking scary, churail"
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Criticized on her looks by the public. The use harsh words like "churail" and the use of "Freaking scary" shows how much hate the commenter has inside her for Sherry Rehman.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Mocking replies under a political tweet.
	Power Dynamics	No response from the politicians and freedom from "X" to write whatever they want.
	Communication Tactics	The commenters have used words full of hate to make Shery Rehman feel unpleasant. The use of word "freaking" is making the comment more powerful.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	Both the commenters are passing hateful comments on how Shery Rehman looks, as she has some sharp facial feature which they are relating to scary Anabella and a witch.
	Identity Construction	Criticizing a female politician's appearance, can shape how she is seen by others. This can make people think that her looks are more important than her qualifications or ideas. This criticism can make society believe that women in power should focus on looking a certain way instead of being judged on their skills and achievements.
	Cultural Values	Pakistani society has certain beauty standards that are given a lot of importance or considered valuable

in a woman’s personality. People can make anyone a victim of troll if he/she has prominent flaw on his/her face or body.

Table 9: Analysis of comments under Fig 9.

**Discussion:**

Offensive comments like these can be seen a lot under the xeets of “Shery Rehman”. She has constantly been a victim of bullying because of her looks. Comments like “Freaking Scary” is showing that people really want to tell her that how immensely they hate her and hate how she looks. Calling her a “churail and Annabella doll” is to intentionally make her think about how people find her ugly and scary. In this society, there is a problem with how women are treated in society. They often face unfair treatment because people focus more on how they look rather than their abilities or accomplishments. This incident shows that women in politics have a hard time because people judge them based on their appearance instead of their skills and ideas. It's important for our culture and society to respect a woman on the basis of her their intelligence and abilities. They shouldn't be treated unfairly or criticized just because of how they look.

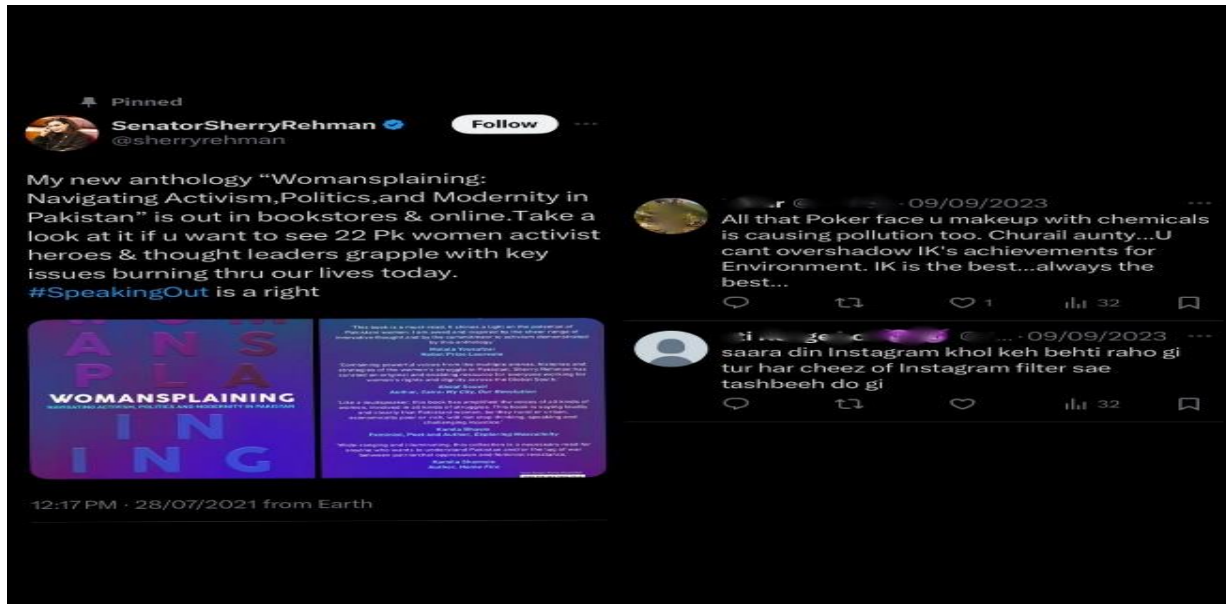


Fig 10: A collage of Shery Rehman’s xheet with the most debate responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	“Poker face, Churail Aunty”
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Face-shammed and criticized by her looks with the words like Poker face and churail.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Face-shaming replies under Shery Rehman’s xheet.
	Power Dynamics	The allowance of perceived anonymity by “X”.
	Communication Tactics	The comments on her looks and her makeup are to humiliate her and degrade her because of her looks.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	Shery Rehman has always been attacked because of her looks by her followers. She is criticized because of her use of makeup.
	Identity Construction	Such comments might have given

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her a nickname like “churail”. she might have faced discrimination and unfair treatment in her work place because of being disrespected publicly.

Being referred as a “churail” because of wearing a lot of makeup is in the culture of Pakistan a woman who always wears dark makeup is often criticized in Pakistan. if women regularly wear a lot of dark makeup in Pakistan, they might face judgment and criticism from society. This is because the beauty standards of Pakistanis often expect women to look a certain way.

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Table 10: Analysis of comments under fig 10.

### Discussion:

Sherry Rehman is a victim of face-shaming because she uses makeup a lot. Pakistan is a country where people judge each other on the basis of their looks. It is considered that women are responsible for only getting married, nothing other than that, and only a pretty lady can have a successful married life. It reinforces the idea of how women should look and act, putting pressure on them to fit into narrow beauty standards and also forced to be dependent on their husbands which puts a side the abilities and qualifications of a woman. Face-shaming is when someone is attacked and made to feel bad about their looks. It is an abuse that can seriously affect a person's mental health. Face-shaming shows the unequal treatment of women in Pakistani society, where the appearances of women are unfairly judged. Pakistani culture is an example of a place where traditional gender roles and conservative values are common, and face-shaming can be especially harmful.



Fig 11: A collage of xet of Shehla raza with the most debated responses in comments.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Textual Analysis</b>	<b>Word Choice &amp; Language</b>	<p>“Zardari ki chamchi and an emoji of showing middle finger and abusive words for her mother.”</p> <p>The abusive words for Shehla Raza’s mother are to directly attack her personally. “Zardari ki chamchi” is to say that female politicians no decisions making powers in politics. The emoji of middle finger is used to disrespect her.</p>
	<b>Sentence Structure &amp; Syntax</b>	
<b>Discourse Exploration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<p>Comments under a political xheet No limitation in the choice of words given by “X” to its users gives a power to the users to comment whatever they want.</p>
	<b>Power Dynamics</b>	<p>Use of sexist language t harm the feeling of the politician, the use of the emoji of middle finger to show disrespect towards the politician as she is a female and questioning her credibility in politics by calling her a “chamchi”.</p>
	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	<p>The comments directed towards her family and work life are to affect her personal life and her work life. Being called a "Chamchi" is affecting her image as a politician who does not have decision-making power. Such comments might make people think that she is not capable of fulfilling her responsibilities as a politician. People would start disrespecting her by calling her underconfident. She would be known as a female leader who has not been valued in politics.</p>
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	<p>The amount of acceptance of females in politics still lacks in Pakistan. These are the misogynists who can not see women with higher standards than themselves. There is still no acceptance of women who work with men in an open platform like politics. There is still a belief that women should not be given power or hold in politics. The grudge these misogynists have against the female leaders can be seen in these comments.</p>
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	

*Table 11: An analysis of comments under fig 11.*

### **Discussion:**

Politicians in many cases are criticized by involving their personal matters or families. Which weakens their efforts in their work. The comments attacking their families are to intentionally hurt them, this happens because there is no restraint on “X”. Shehla Raza is a PPP’s politician in the Sindh province of Pakistan. In the Thirteenth Assembly of the Sindh Assembly in 2008, she

was chosen as the deputy speaker and in 2013 she was re-elected for the same position in the Fourteenth Assembly. These achievements can tell her hard work in politics. Her achievements are showing how much women are capable of.

Being called as a "chamchi" of male politicians highlights the issue of gender inequality in politics. It suggests that female politicians have fewer opportunities and are not valued as much as their male politicians. The reason behind the gender inequality are the misogynists of Pakistani society who are unable to accept that women can be given hold in politics ir any other work place.



Fig 12: A collage of Shehla Raza's xeeet with most debated responses.

Dimension	Category	S
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	Kutiya,
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Kutiya is Bitch in English used to abuse someone.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Cyberbullying in the reply of a political leader's xeeet.
	Power Dynamics	"X" is a space for everyone people are free to spread their opinions which people are misusing.
	Communication Tactics	Kutiya is an abusive word of Urdu to call someone a bitch and the most common word a person uses to hurt someone's feeling.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	Shehla raza xeeeted against another party's leader and in response that opposite party's supporter used abusive language against Shehla Raza and her party in the comment to support his/her leader.
	Identity Construction	Being called as a bitch can make a bad impact on Shehla raza's professional life. As people get influenced by each other and give a nickname to politicians this might had become a nickname for her also.
	Cultural Values	Gender inequality, discrimination, racism has become the second language of Pakistani society.

Without even thinking people keep cursing each other because they know it is not a crime. But when it comes to females, there are a few limitations for everyone which are being rapidly ignored. There are no boundaries set for Pakistanis when it comes to females.

Table 12: Analysis of the comments under fig 12.

**Discussion:**

The public who leaves comments trying to show support for their own leader under the xeets of leader of the opposing party always choose to hurt the feelings of the political leader by using disrespectful language towards them, all in an effort to support their own leader. Many female politicians like Shehla Raza are cursed in their comment sections. The comments are almost full of hateful comments from the opposite party supporters but not even a single comment is removed by “X” not even a single commenter is blacklisted by “X”. Which is giving confidence to the “X” users to say anything bad for the political leaders from opposite parties. sEffects of Cyberbullying on mental health can be defined in a very simple word which “depression”. The commenters do not understand how a single word of abuse can make an impact on someone’s mental health. The hard work and the reputation gained by the politicians are been rotten by such comments in seconds. The commenters should understand that the political life and personal life are two separate things to curse someone based on their jobs is useless and it can harm someone mentally.



Fig 13: A collage of Dr. Yasmin Rashid’s xeet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	Dayan, ghatia Repetition of the word dayan attacking on Yasmin rashid’s character calling her an ugly old witch.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	Racism replies under a female Politician’s xeet
Discourse Exploration	Genre	The allowance from “X” to its users to use it as an open platform of sharing opinions.
	Power Dynamics	Repetition of word “dayan” shows disrespect and aggression towards
	Communication Tactics	

<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	Context	to the politician. Both comments are showing personal attacks. The term "dayan" is used to imply that Dr. Yasmin Rashid is an ugly old witch. While 'beghairat' and 'ghatia' implies that she is a characterless woman.
	Identity Construction	Hateful comments such as 'dayan' (Witch) and 'ghatia' (Characterless) made on Dr. Yasmin Rashid in her xeets can harm her image among the public. The public can give her a nickname of Dayan and bully her every time she appears on the social media.
	Cultural Values	By subjecting a prominent female figure like Dr. Yasmin Rashid to disrespectful language, these comments are reinforcing gender inequality. Such disrespectful language is crucial not only for the mental health of the targeted female politician but also it is also promoting misogyny and gender biasness which is already present in many areas of Pakistan.

Table 13: Analysis of comments under fig 13.

## Discussions

Hateful comments like 'dayan' and 'ghatia' on Dr. Yasmin Rashid's xeets implies intentions of gender-based discrimination or an attempt to destroy her professional image. The use of such language not only effects Dr. Yasmin Rashid's reputation but it is also creating a negative image of a Female politician in the politics. On significant social media platforms, such comments promote the acceptability of disrespectful behavior, creating a toxic online environment. The reason people make hateful comments is because they hide their identities on "X" create an account with a fake name so if they get caught, they can still be safe but the sad thing is no female politician is giving them a response and "X" is also not taking any actions against fake accounts.



Fig 14: A collage of Dr. Yasmin Rashid's xheet with the most debated responses in comments.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Textual Analysis</b>	<b>Word Choice &amp; Language</b>	Besharam, qabar mein paun, makaar, faraibi.
	<b>Sentence Structure &amp; Syntax</b>	Criticizing on her age and using words such as 'jhooti', 'besharam' and 'makaar' implying personal remarks.
<b>Discourse Exploration</b>	<b>Genre</b>	Age-shaming reply on a Female politician's xheet
	<b>Power Dynamics</b>	The fact that "X" has not taken a serious action on bullying comments people feel free to bullying anyone they want.
	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	The use of terms such as 'makaar' and 'besharam' implies hateful personal attacks and language such as 'qabar mein paun' is used to criticize and taunt the politician about her age and how that lessens her capabilities to be a politician.
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	The term "makaar" is used to imply that Yasmin Rahid is a liar. And "qabar mein paun" is supposed to imply that people of her age are not suitable for politics.
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	Hateful comments like 'makaar' and 'besharam,' are age-based criticism at Dr. Yasmin Rashid, intend to uphold ageism against female leaders. These comments are reinforcing a mindset people have that a woman's involvement in politics should be based her age. Dr. Yasmin Rashid might had faced the impact of these comments on her image and self-confidence. This might had affected her presence in a political environment and she might have felt awkward in the company of people younger than her.
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	Pakistan is a country with a mindset of people thinking that when the age of 60s come people should stop working and sit back at their homes and relax. In the case of Dr. Yasmin Rashid as she is a woman and still healthy enough and capable of doing work she is being criticized and not only her many others are criticized in Pakistan because of their age. Pakistanis are only focusing on their ages and not their work achievements and capabilities.

*Table 14: Analysis of comments under fig 14.*

## **Discussions**

Hateful comments like makaar (deceiver) and besharam (shameless) on Dr. Yasmin Rashid's xheet are attacking her personally and professionally. The use of such language is an effort to

discredit her character and authority to work in politics. Being called as “makaar” under politicians xeeet destroys their reputation, creating a negative image that can be used to affect her shared opinions, actions, or role as a public figure, especially as a female politician. Such remarks not only attack Dr. Yasmin Rashid on a personal level but also contribute to a broader pattern of gender-based discrimination. The question raised on Dr. Yasmin Rashid's abilities based on her age is a negative impact on how the public perceives her, damaging her reputation and reinforcing harmful ideas about women as leader also giving rise to a new trend that suggests “X” should add age-based restrictions for users on its platform. These comments on “X” create standards for how female politicians are treated.

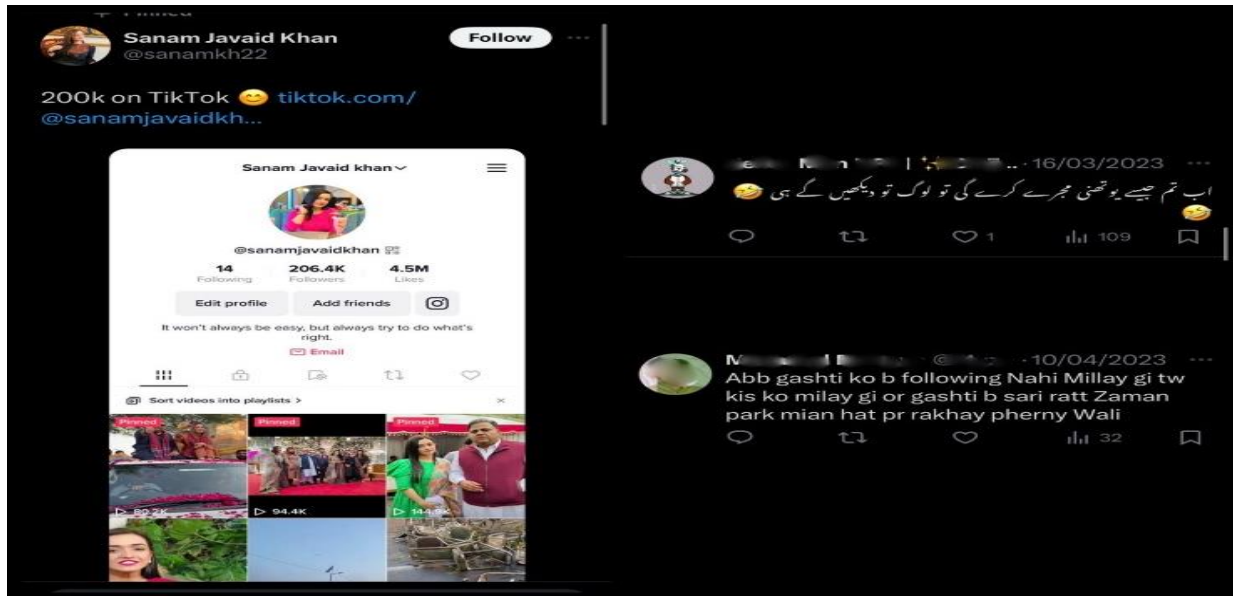


Fig 15: A collage of Sanam Javaid Khan’s xeeet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	Mujray, Gashti
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	The terms ‘mujray’ and ‘gashti’ are attacks on the politician’s character.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Abusive comments under a on a Political xeeet
	Power Dynamics	“X” users making personal comments like 'mujray' and 'gashti' against female politicians shows how easy it is to harass a woman on such platforms and there is no harm in it.

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	<b>Communication Tactics</b>	The commenter is calling her a “gashti” to make her look like a bad character and the word “mujray” is to compare her with woman who dances around men.
<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	The terms being used are implicating personal attack on the politician’s character.
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	The abusive comments under her xheet can create a negative image of her in the public and impact her family’s image.
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	Hateful comments like 'gashti' and 'mujray' on Sanam Javaid Khan's “X” post is because she made an account of Tiktok and Tiktok is famous because of the dance and acting content on it. Which is not liked by most people who live in the backward areas of Pakistan.

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*Table 15: Analysis of comments under fig 15.*

**Discussions:**

Hateful comments like 'gashti' and 'mujray' at Sanam Javaid Khan’s joining Tiktok is to intentionally make her feel ashamed and to degrade her for her online activities. These comments by “X” users are in attempt to make female politicians fearful of public’s point of views and opinions on their actions and personal life. The impact of being called as “gashti” can lower her confidence in sharing personal matters with her followers on “X”, potentially causing her to hesitate or feel uncertain about doing so. Tiktok is a broader platform which is used by people who are interested in making public content like acting, music and dance. The fastest way to become famous is creating a public account on tiktok. Pakistanis from backward areas feel that Tiktok is for those who have a bold personality which is why the word “mujray” was used in the comment. This brings up the issue of politician are forced and expected to be focused on their political life only and not their personal lives.



Fig 16: A collage of Sanam Javaid Khan's xheet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	'fasadi' and 'beghairat'
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	The hateful comment is implicating personal hate towards the politician due to their political choices.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Reply on a Political xheet
	Power Dynamics	Freedom of "X" users to use harsh language to scrutinize the image of the politician instead of participating in a healthy discussion.
	Communication Tactics	Criticizing the politician's political choices and humiliating her family's character and morals over her opinions.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	The terms being used are implicating personal attack on the politician's family's character and her political choices.
	Identity Construction	The intention behind the criticism the politician faced on her xheet is due to her political stance regarding the situation that was caused on the 9 <sup>th</sup> of May when a woman was dragged by her hair while she was protesting, Sanam Javaid spoke up against the immoral act as her right to do so however she was criticized over it.
		This implicates the hate that emerges when women express their opinions in public with which people don't see eye to eye and instead of creating a healthy digital space to discuss their conflicts, the users instead spread hate against the public figures. Such behaviors need to be sorted so that this online platform can be utilized equivocally by all to express their personal

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thoughts. These hateful comments implicate a shadow on the cultural values of Pakistan that promote respect for women and their rights however the hatred spread through such comments tarnishes those values.

*Table 16: Analysis of comments under fig 16.*

**Discussions:**

Over the arrest of PTI chief Imran Khan on 9th of May triggered protests across the country. A video went viral of a woman standing alone in front of police officers in Lahore’s Cantt area. In the video, the woman, identified as Tayyaba Raja, threw a black chadar on the ground and stride towards the police. A policeman then grabbed her by the hair and pulled her towards a larger contingent of law enforcers (Dawn, 2023). Sanam Javaid in her xheet criticized the law enforcers over their heinous acts however, soon enough that backfired and she was criticized for sharing her opinion and hateful comments like 'beghairat' and 'fasadan' directed at Sanam Javaid Khan on her “X” post, where she criticized authorities for dragging a woman by the hair, reveal a disturbing inclination to silence dissent and suppress voices that challenge authority. Moreover, such language not only tries to defame Khan as an individual, but it also tries to defame her for coming up against such perceived injustices. The very fact that such provocative and inflammatory language is being used goes to show that she is being tried to be discredited.



*Fig 17: A collage of Zartaj Gul’s xheet with the most debated responses in comments.*

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	‘MMS’ (multimedia messaging service) The commenter made a statement that the woman in the video is Zartaj Gul, and she sent it as an MMS to Imran Khan.
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Reply on a Political Xheet
	Power Dynamics	Freedom of the “X” user to express hate towards the opposite party leader while invading her privacy.
	Communication Tactics	Invasion of the politician’s privacy and personal attack on her

<b>Sociocultural Practice</b>	<b>Context</b>	<p>character.</p> <p>There is an alleged video clip of a female that was posted on the comment section and whose authenticity is not clear as yet. There is an allegation against Zartaj Gul in the sense that she is the girl featured in that video clip, and criticizing her character regarding the same issue. There is an allegation that she is indulged in a love affair with Imran Khan. Comments that violate Zartaj Gul's privacy, share contentious images, and defame her public image is probably part of a hostile attempt to discredit and disgrace her. This comment is not a mere political critique, but rather an attempt to harm the individual by bringing up private information. The image that Zartaj Gul has created has been severely tarnished not only in the sense that it undermines her credibility as a public figure but also in the creation of a negative narrative about women in their choices. These abusive comments on popular social media platforms suggest a troubling trend where people feel free to violate someone else's privacy. This adds to the atmosphere of the public figures especially women are unfairly scrutinized and judged.</p>
	<b>Identity Construction</b>	<p>These kinds of behaviors create a culture of disrespect and ridicule of women, thereby promoting old-fashioned notions that criticize women based on their personal decisions. These actions go against the principles of privacy and respect, and contribute to the creation of a story that discourages women from being involved in the outside world.</p>
	<b>Cultural Values</b>	

*Table 17: Analysis of comments under fig 17.*

**Discussions:**

With a view to tarnishing the reputation and image of Zartaj Gul, defamatory remarks that invade her privacy by releasing her controversial pictures along with her "X" post where she faces character assassination have been made. Her reputation is sullied by these kinds of acts, and they could also dissuade other women from entering the political arena because they stress more on

their personal qualities instead of professional ones. Such invasive scrutiny has a lot to do with the perception held by people about Gul, who faces negative stereotypes about being a woman because of this. It is worrying that xeets like this on prominent social media sites indicate a worrisome phenomenon where people think that it is appropriate to delve into the private lives of public figures, particularly those of women. The political narrative would be impacted by the cultural memory surrounding such events, creating precedence that women could possibly be discriminated against based on personal issues rather than on their skills and achievements as professionals. The violation of the privacy policy of social media sites must be taken seriously since it facilitates a culture that promotes online bullying, harassment, and degradation based solely on someone’s personal choices. The media houses are responsible for both the aftermath and the prevention of such events. The policies of social media websites that prohibit sharing sensitive personal data without consent must be strictly followed. Furthermore, they need to prioritize the safety and well-being of their users by taking action against any privacy violation, deleting offending posts, and even suspending the user if necessary.

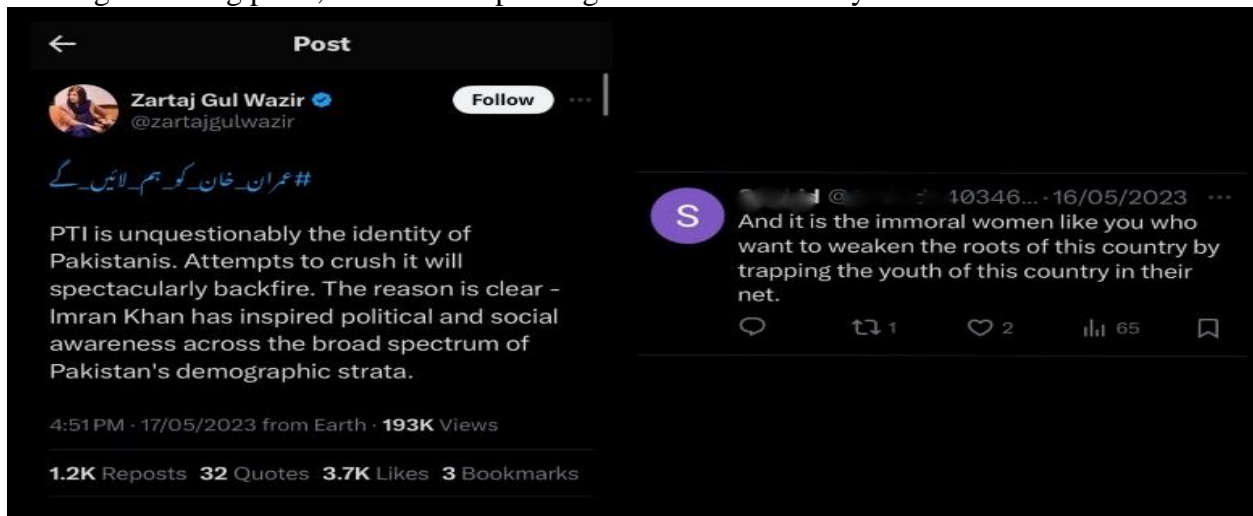


Fig 18: A collage of Zartaj Gul’s xeet with the most debated responses in comments.

Dimension	Category	Description
Textual Analysis	Word Choice & Language	“Immoral”
	Sentence Structure & Syntax	The terms being used imply criticism over the politician’s character.
Discourse Exploration	Genre	Reply on a political xeet
	Power Dynamics	The freedom of “X” users to spread hate and personally attack public figures due to a conflict of opinions.
	Communication Tactics	Criticizing the politician’s personal choices and humiliating her regarding her character.
Sociocultural Practice	Context	The terms being used are implicating personal attack on the politician’s character.
	Identity Construction	The underlying motive behind such derogatory statements made against Zartaj Gul in her post on “X” about calling her “immoral” is that it attempts to malign her character. These statements seek to negatively project Zartaj Gul and damage her

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### Cultural Values

reputation as well as distract from her professional accomplishments. The influence of this statement on the perception of Zartaj Gul among the general public is negative. It creates an unhealthy pattern where the behavior of women in the public sphere is judged and shamed according to societal standards of morality. This is especially true in light of the growing popularity of such hateful tweets on popular social media sites, where it is common practice to morally condemn celebrities, specifically women. Harsh remarks characterizing Zartaj Gul as 'immoral' on social media seek to discredit her and reinforce outdated perceptions about Pakistani women. This inaccurate representation feeds into a culture that discourages women from taking on public responsibilities, strengthening gender stereotypes and impeding the advancement of inclusivity. It is essential to address such behavior in order to promote cultural change and establish a climate that is more respectful of women.

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*Table 18: Analysis of comments under fig 18.*

### **Discussions:**

It refers to Zartaj Gul's right to express her opinion regarding her political party. These offensive remarks, which include name-calling and personal attacks such as referring to her as 'immoral', are designed to tarnish her reputation. It has negative impacts on her public image by being involved in this unfair scrutiny of her as per the traditional moral codes. It not only tarnishes her reputation but raises an important matter involving social networking sites wherein individuals are encouraged to make moral judgments about people of public interest, particularly women. They are thus engaging in acts of online harassment while maintaining some archaic beliefs concerning the role of women in society. Another major concern on the social networking site relates to the invasion of privacy. It leads individuals into thinking that this form of harassment is justified and acceptable simply because one does not like someone for no particular reason other than the person's preferences. Rather than merely protect the users and ensure the proper handling of any case of privacy invasion, it is also important that they implement certain restrictions with respect to the distribution of private material. The social networking sites can contribute to the formation of a cyber-environment that promotes respect and personal space through this approach. In a society where individuals are evaluated based on their professional abilities instead of their personal aspects, individuals, especially females, have been victims of character assassinations when the issue of privacy violation is not given much consideration. In conclusion, the purpose of such derogatory statements not only reflects upon the name of the person being targeted but also plays a role in determining the behavior of society toward women in general.

## **Qualitative Analysis of In-depth Interviews**

In this detailed examination of interviews conducted with six female politicians, there is a rich discussion of their experiences with cyberbullying, providing insights into the persistent problems that exist in political discourse through social media. The themes that follow capture the various ramifications of cyberbullying, the gendered nature of the attacks, and the shared cry for improved measures against cyberbullying.

### **a) Gendered Cyberbullying in Political World**

The first common issue raised by one of the interviewees is the use of images as a means to spread lies about the victims. For example, an image that went viral on social media during an Eid event showing some female politicians from competing parties interacting with each other is used to spread negative information. This kind of cyberbullying strategy was done to give the impression of solidarity between politicians from competing parties when discussing issues publicly. From the interviews, it is clear that cyberbullying may not only be a spontaneous activity; there are instances whereby cyberbullying is done deliberately through encouragement from political parties. Various political groups utilize the various social media sites to threaten and persecute women politicians in order to achieve their goals. It is clear that cyberbullying can be used as an assassination strategy, which exposes the malicious nature of political discourse on social media. Female politicians mention that character assassination is common on various social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. For instance, one of the participants states, “They use these platforms to vent abuses, making it easy for any person to become a target of verbal abuse.” There is also the emphasis on the absence of measures aimed at controlling the abusive nature of social media users. The difficult situation is due to the rise in the occurrence of cyberbullying, which is associated with the growing number of social media users. The posting of daily activities on social media makes the public more interested in the personal lives of politicians and the ensuing remarks lead to cyberbullying. The cumulative findings of the interviews indicate that the increasing use of social media platforms has led to the absence of previous constraints that once characterized cyberbullying, making it more than just an infrequent event but a worrying trend, especially within the political context. Cyberbullying of politicians, especially women, is identified as one of the most pressing issues. Remarks made by people below political figures’ tweets have been found to result in dire consequences, both personally and professionally for the victims.

### **b) Politically Motivated Cyberbullying**

In the interviews conducted on the female politicians, a common issue that emerged is politically-motivated cyberbullying and the extent of damage it causes in the social platforms. From the responses given by the female politicians, the interviews bring out clearly the impact that political affiliation can have on the nature of bullying. Politically-motivated aggression emerges in all the interviews conducted, where most of the victims have faced personal attacks due to their affiliations. In other words, the nature of attacks is determined by political affiliations since the anonymity that comes with online platforms makes the individuals resort to misogynistic attacks. However, it is intriguing to note that through the interviews, the issue of political cyberbullying has been perceived in a different light by those of the opposite party, with them recognizing the fact of political motivations behind the cyberattacks while asserting that they are relatively immune to this form of cyber-victimization. While recognizing the fact that cyberbullying exists because of political affiliations, there were certain interviewees who felt safe and perceived themselves to be selective victims in the highly politicized atmosphere of the social media environment. Through the interviews, the role played by social media as a platform of political warfare was depicted, with people taking advantage of their accessibility to propagate differing views, victimize others, and socially ostracize other political factions. It goes to show the importance of social media in politics today as a venue for political discourse but also as a

forum for coordinated attacks against others. According to one of the respondents, the lack of recognition of other political views has contributed to the acceptance of criticizing others and cyberbullying, “The lack of recognition fosters an environment of animosity, which seeps down the ranks into public condemnation and cyberbullying.”

The interviews highlight a more sinister element in the cyberbullying campaign which is politically driven, suggesting the presence of organized groups who are employed by specific political parties. This is evident from the fact that these groups deliberately participate in the act of organizing a cyberbullying campaign under the pretense of being politically active.

#### **c) Resilience and Refusal to be Silenced**

In totality, the responses obtained from the six interviews clearly demonstrate the widespread existence of cyberbullying activities on Twitter, especially during political transitions. The overall theme of these interviews focuses on the perseverance shown by female politicians despite persistent cyberbullying acts directed at them. In addition, the responses from the interviews help explain how Twitter has evolved into the present-day platform that is plagued by cyberbullying groups responsible for the deterioration of its discourse norms. One common element in all these responses is that cyberbullying acts are common occurrences in the daily life of female politicians. Although they endure these cyberbullying acts, all respondents exhibit the will to not be silenced by their perpetrators. In this regard, the interviews make a significant differentiation between political communication and cyberbullying. Political communication, which includes civil exchanges of views, is differentiated from cyberbullying that goes beyond discussion and includes abuse, hate, and harassment. Cyberbullying is viewed as an attempt to censor and stifle any dissenting opinions, going against the very foundations of positive political dialogue. The interviews provide the example of cyberbullying in cases of political transition. When switching their party affiliation from one to another, female politicians experience cyberbullying through being shamed for their age, political party, and even appearance. Bullying takes on a higher level of severity due to the difficulties involved in political mobility. Interviewees emphasize a conscious approach to working on the Internet, focusing on the necessity to interact with competent people who will demonstrate a decent attitude towards others. An interesting aspect here is that there is an opinion that some Internet users follow the principle of the cult, deliberately bullying others and lacking any kind of knowledge whatsoever. This situation resulted in some politicians choosing to instantly block other Twitter users to protect themselves from verbal assaults. One thing that all the interviewees mentioned is the change in the nature of Twitter. Now the platform became home to some cyberbullying groups who use the platform for bullying instead of participating in intellectual discussions.

#### **d) Emotional Toll and Personal Well-being**

Overall, all the answers from the interviews show the emotional impact of cyberbullying for female politicians. The main idea concerns the negative consequences that cyberbullying brings in terms of personal health as well as professional reputation. Even amid challenges, it was stated that everyone remains determined to be strong and not give in. All the interviews provided information about the effects of cyberbullying on one's health as well as overall emotional state. In particular, there is a person who faced such an issue as the development of diabetes due to cyberbullying. Mental pressure from becoming a victim of cyberbullying is quite widespread. When attacked, individuals continue fighting for their health because it affects not only their private life but also their professional activities. Overall, cyberbullying is an issue that influences both private and professional life. The deliberate actions undertaken to damage one's professional reputation are clear indications of how cyberbullying affects victims in multiple ways, extending from psychological effects to influencing one's professional and social life. One of the most disturbing aspects of cyberbullying highlighted in the interviews is its progression into threatening situations. Cases where co-workers were subjected to blackmail and even

considered suicide are an indication of how grave cyberbullying can be. The interviews make it clear that addressing the issue as a personal problem and a societal one with significant repercussions is crucial. The interviews have shed light on the negative spillover effects of cyberbullying on the families of female politicians. Examples where cyberbullies did not limit themselves to the politicians alone but also attacked their families, especially children, point to the wider societal implications of cyberbullying.

#### **e) Coping Strategies and Advocacy against Cyberbullying**

The overall findings of the interviewees reveal a strategic and proactive way of dealing with cyberbullying among female politicians. The key themes are those of developing a strategy for dealing with cyberbullying, using social media, and advocacy to make the platforms accountable. It comes out that there are some personal strategies for dealing with cyberbullying among these female politicians. Some of the strategies include avoiding negativity, seeking support from others, and practicing self-care. Self-protection is one of the things that they try to do to protect themselves from the harmful effects of cyberbullying. Another interesting aspect that comes out clearly in the interviews is that of social media being transformational. Another politician believes that social media, which is the epicenter of cyberbullying, has the possibility of transformation into something better. Highlighting the necessity to upgrade the internal mechanisms of such websites, the politicians believe that social media should be viewed not only as the battlefield for cyberbullying but also as a venue for combating this form of abuse through reforms. The proposed method includes the active reporting of abusive content and calling for social media website accountability. The respondents agree on how they deal with cyberbullying: choosing to ignore it. Understanding that there is no point in responding to online trolls, the politicians emphasize the significance of blocking their comments. Blocking abusive commenters is considered a preventive step toward limiting negativity. One of the key themes is the advocacy of female politicians against cyberbullying. In this way, they help build a common drive towards improving systems and policies to deal with online harassment. The interviews reveal the gravity of the problem, with cases where coworkers were involved in blackmail and even suicide attempts. These are cautionary tales that highlight the necessity of taking preventive action. Patience, ignoring the abusive messages, and keeping a positive frame of mind altogether constitute a form of prevention of online bullying.

#### **f) Role of Social Media Platforms**

The emerging trends in the interviewees' answers revolve around the idea of the responsibility of social media platforms in establishing a safe forum for political discussions and the immediate need for effective policies to curb cyberbullying, specifically in the political scene. Indeed, all interviewees stress the importance of establishing the responsibility of social media platforms in establishing a safe zone for political conversations. There is an expressed need for effective policies that would include stricter policy implementation and improved reporting systems. This theme focuses on advocating for better civility and safety measures that would ensure that cyberbullying incidents are kept to a minimum. The key aspect that emerges from the theme revolves around the advocacy of anti-cyberbullying laws and policies within the political sphere. However, this advocacy does not only pertain to the immediate online platform but also involves legislative approaches against cyberbullying. It is notable that all the interviews indicate an issue with the current policy and enforcement mechanisms against cyberbullying on social media platforms. The interviewees state that either there are no specific regulations against social media bullying or, if any, they are not being implemented properly. In other words, the ambiguity associated with this issue allows cyberbullying to continue without facing any repercussions. There is an interesting take on how social media platforms generate money, which may pose some difficulties in dealing with cyberbullying entirely. The interviewees believe that social media platforms make money from users and, thus, their actions against such issues are not fully

transparent. Although there are various reporting and blocking features available in social media, interviewees believe that their implementation does not seem effective enough. They emphasize that one should not equate non-disclosure of the problem by the media with lack of any action. The interviewees point out the necessity of using more complex approaches than only preventing access, proposing a combination of methods such as awareness-raising, training sessions, and workshops, which should be held especially for politicians who encounter cyberbullying issues. Finally, the topic is summed up with suggestions on improving the internal conditions in social media through introducing additional safety rules, promoting awareness of cyberbullying issues, and conducting training courses for politicians on dealing with cyberbullying problems.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

It is evident from the research results on the FPDA approach how widespread the issue of gender prejudice and hatred against female political figures is. First, sociocultural comparisons: The comparison of women politicians to historical figures such as 'General Rani' exhibits the presence of gender discrimination. Such comparisons show that women are likely to get into trouble, making them look unreliable.

*Attacks against Personal and Physical Characteristics:* Female politicians have been repeatedly attacked against their personal characteristics and physical appearances. Face-shaming, body-shaming, and the way they dress show what society expects from women. Society expects women to follow certain beauty standards. It is a manifestation of gender stereotypes, where women are judged not by their capabilities but by their beauty standards. Sexist words used to refer to women, including gashti, mujray, and chamchi, manifest the sexism in degrading women according to their genders. These words carry hate speech towards women and continue promoting harmful gender roles. Statements made concerning personal issues, relationships, and spirituality instead of professional success show gender discrimination against the importance of women in politics. It shows how society judges women based on their personal life instead of their work in politics. The results show societal double standards. Women are expected to dress conservatively. The critique of female politicians regarding their looks or choice of attire like putting on makeup is another instance of gendered stereotyping norms which do not extend themselves to male politicians. The deployment of sexual language against these politicians by addressing them as 'dayan' or 'ghatia' is an illustration of the relationship between gender and online abuse. Not only does criticism extend to the professional realm, but it also includes insults which seek to harm these politicians on the basis of their gender. The invasion of their privacy, circulating contentious images, and attacking them personally further adds to their overall discrimination based on their gender.

Thus, the findings reveal a deeply rooted gender bias that exists in the language used when discussing women politicians. The hate towards them does not stem only from their political views or activities but is largely informed by social norms and stereotypes associated with women in politics. It is important to address this gender bias to create a more balanced political dialogue.

Qualitative analysis of interviews of female politicians reveals the multi-dimensional context of cyberbullying that occurs in the realm of politics and is consistent with Social Identity Theory. In this regard, the sexist approach to cyberbullying through the manipulation of photos and attacks on reputation relates to the Social Identity Theory in the sense that political affiliation affects the development and escalation of online aggression. In politically driven cases of cyberbullying that emerge from the interviewed females, there is an emphasis on the polarized atmosphere of today's political debate and its transformation into the domain of online platforms. The implementation of stricter rules related to the fight against cyberbullying, the transparency of actions against online harassment, and the legislation in this sphere will help create a safer environment. The promotion of awareness, the provision of special training for politicians, and

the advocacy of online civility will facilitate the transformation of culture. The issue of money involved in social media websites and the way it influences the fight against cyberbullying is the key focus of the discussion. Finally, this study urges all people to unite in the process of changing the norms of online communication in politics and protecting the interests of female politicians.

Thus, it can be seen that the study not only enriches theoretical knowledge but also provides practical suggestions on how to overcome difficulties faced by women politicians. It is important to note that the findings can be utilized in the field of policymaking, public awareness campaigns, support networks, educational initiatives, and even legal issues.

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