

A pragma-discourse analysis of language manipulation for suppression: absence of male voice in female writings

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Abstract

The study examines language manipulation to conceal the victimization, suppression, and oppression of males. The dissembled side of the language has been dissected by qualitative data. Two female authors' Bapsi Sidhwa and Anita Desai, texts were selected and analyzed to find the manipulation of language. Marginalized masculinity theory by Connell (1995) and Fairclough's (1989) critical discourse analysis model were applied, and thematic analysis as an approach was used. In the second phase, data was analyzed pragmatically using inference and implicature techniques to hit on the hidden side of the story. Findings reveal that language is manipulated to highlight female victimization while concealing male victimization. Female writers frequently use their oppression to blame the male gender. The social interpretation of the text reveals that both genders suffer equally and have equal rights, which should be discussed and highlighted. This study recommends that victimization, suppression, and oppression can also be studied from the male perspective. It will be helpful for future researchers to speak out about the most ignorant and repressed gender in society.

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1. Introduction

It is a matter of common observation that males are generally considered the real culprits in our society. It is commonly observed that female writers use their victimization as a tool in their writings to suppress the male gender, thereby turning the victims into perpetrators. Women are considered to be the true signs of victimization while men can never be victimized. There are always two sides to a story, however, the other side always remains unattended. Most of the research studies on the victimization relates to the suppression of women and children or the negligence of the male gender. The language is used to exaggerate some problems targeting the male gender. Literally, their text defines their own issues while on the other hand a new story is hidden in the text. Men also feel pain when they are humiliated by others. Gerda Lerner writes in, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, “gender is the costume, a mask, a straitjacket in which men and women dance their unequal dance” (Lerner, 1986). Men also feel suffocation in tough situations. This burden of proving their manpower and strength is affecting them mentally and physically.

The writings on colonization represent women as helpless creatures, first being colonized and second playing the traditional feminine role. When Judith Butler writes about bodily writings, it is supposed that only female bodies are disputed in cultural, social, and political writings. Rape and kidnapping stories such as “Lajwanti” by Rajinder Singh Bedi and the story of kidnapping “Women” by Urvashi Butalia are written and analyzed only from women’s perspectives. However, in “Lajwanti” the focus was on Lajo while Sunderlal’s pain was treated as the second concern. While in “Women” Zainab’s kidnapping was the main discussion while the sacrifice of her husband Bhutta Singh was taken as the second discussion. These readings intend to portray that only women can become victims of harassment and viciousness, but the males are vigorous enough to overcome or ignore anything. Gender and language studies have become a great part of the study of discourse and gender. While phonological, lexical, pragmatic, and other kinds of analysis of discourse have become an integral part of discourse analysis. It has been commonly observed that for discourse analysis only fewer books show the topic of *Gender and Discourse* as the title of the book (Tannen, 1994; Todd & Fisher, 1998; Wodak, 1997). Gender is a sociocultural phenomenon that assigns different roles to males and females. In the modern world, gender studies are changing radically. This field has developed so quickly that it is difficult to find an institute that does not include gender studies in its disciplines (Eagleton, 2003). Anne Oakley, a sociology professor, reveals, “The constancy of sex must be accepted, but also must the difference of gender” (Oakley, 2005). Butler (1990) states a different statement from the rest of the feminists “Sex is a socially constructed concept of culture, but in reality, it was always a gender, with these results that the difference between gender and sex is basically no difference at all”.

1.1. Pragmatics and discourse analysis

Discourse and pragmatics are interrelated fields. “In Linguistics, discourse analysis deals with

the spoken or written texts to explore the intentions of the writer” (Yule, 1996). Furthermore, he explains that discourse deals with contexts, and the same pragmatics also highlight what is unwritten or unspoken. He elaborates his statement as the pragmatics of the discourse explore what the author has in mind. Additionally, it is said that “The connection between discourse and pragmatics is that pragmatics deals with what is unwritten or unspoken, while discourse deals with the use of language in context and analyzing the hidden meanings of a language” (Paltridge, 2006).

1.2. Problem statement

Women have mostly neglected the male voice when talking about victimhood, oppression, and suppression.

2. Literature review

2.1. Masculinity and suppression

“Any male (or female) attempting to prove him/herself as hegemonically masculine, and unfortunately fails to prove it is considered as worthless, subordinate and loser” (Goffman, 1963). Males are considered as prepotent, and the wicked gender of our society and they are represented as heartless and careless brutes. Females consider males as the authoritative and bloodthirsty part of society. Gender inequality is a major problem in society. This inequality prompts violence and dominance in society. When the male gender will be targeted and taunted again and again, then this thing will raise violence in society. “This inequality raises the concept of domination and highlights ‘inequality’ and contains a gigantic deprivation of resources” (Connell, 2005).

Hegemonic concepts in many countries of Asia promote dominance, selflessness, and the negligence of the male gender (Sung, 1987; Chua & Fujino, 1999). The hegemonic idea of feminism represents feminism as attractive, innocent, and cooperative (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2015). In contrast, the concept of hegemonic masculinity represents dominance, power, and strength (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2015). In academics, boys who get good grades without putting in any great effort are considered ‘cool’ while success achieved by hard work is considered ‘uncool’ (Epstein, 1998; Archer *et al.*, 2001; Jackson & Dempster, 2009). Both genders face curtailments but males’ curtailments are more challenging than females. The concept of gender has been revolutionized in the last half-century, and this revolution extended the standards of feminism surrounding masculine concepts of dominance, power, and confidence, while masculine concepts are unchanged and narrow (England, 2010, p. 24). Masculinity standards are restricted to the femininity standards, male gender faces more restrictions than the female gender (Pascoe, 2007). For example, calling a girl ‘tomboy’ sounds cool nowadays while calling a boy ‘sissy’ is universally derogatory. Studies show how the male gender is cold-shouldered by our society.

It is paramount to look into female writings in literary works. Women writers' stages can be divided into three developmental stages according to Schwalter's analysis (mentioned in Karmarkar, 2014). The first stage consisted of Bronte Sisters, George Elliot and Elizabeth Gaskell from 1820 to 1880. They wrote under the concept of pseudonyms in order to highlight the power of the male characters. The second phase was the feminist movement from 1880 to 1920 and constituted by Elizabeth Robins and Francis Trollope. The women of this phase wrote against the male gender and highlighted the authority of the female gender. The writers of this age tried to highlight female dominance by protesting against the male gender. Many writers contributed to this race with them by emphasizing societal masculine concepts and the use of womanhood. The third phase, which spanned from 1920 onward, wrote for unequal representation of females in writings. It is stated for women writers that they are the producers of their own writing, defining their own thoughts, which elaborate their own feelings, and their own reaction" (Showalter, as cited in Karmarkar, 2014, p. 35). This quote is enough to elaborate on the female writings, which reveal that females are the only victims of our society and males are the real culprits. While talking about harassment and oppression, men are never seen as victims. A study shows that men are also sexually abused, but 32% of women and 39% of men are aware of this fact (Fiebert, 1996). Common issues such as domestic violence and ill-treatment may be considered only female issues not the issues of males. However, males are also ill-treated and degraded not only females (Atmore, 2001).

Scholars argue that men are rarely discussed as the main concern for any research work; they are only treated as the normative subject, a thing that is rarely discussed or problematized (Louie, 2002). They are researched and discussed only from the perspective of gender and only to discuss gender traits. In the context of Asia, much of the work has been done in China and Japan (Brownell *et al.*, 2002; Louie, 2002; Roberson & Suzuki, 2002; Louie & Low, 2003; Song, 2004) or in South Asia (Derne, 2000; Osella *et al.*, 2004; Banerjee, 2005). There has been very little research in South Asia, where it has been clearly explained that "masculinity and its concepts have been taken for granted" (Paletz, 1995). A large amount of South Asian work focuses on females and discusses males in contact with females as fathers, sons, and husbands. This ignorance of the male gender has been explored: How has the male voice been silenced to elevate the victimized female voice? How are females directly highlighting their issues by indirectly suppressing the male voice?

3. Conceptual framework

This section involves the Fairclough (1989) model of discourse analysis and thematic analysis approach to study the societal interpretation of the selected novels. Fairclough used the term 'discourse' to make the connection between texts and their social purposes. Norman Fairclough used the term 'discourse' to make a connection between texts and their social purposes. Fairclough's (1989; 1995) model for CDA consists of three interrelated processes of analysis tied to three interrelated dimensions of discourse. These three dimensions are:

- The object of analysis (including verbal, visual, or verbal and visual texts)
- The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.
- The socio-historical conditions govern these processes (Aronson, 1995).

According to Fairclough (1989; 1995) each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis.

- Text analysis (description)
- Processing analysis (Interpretation)
- Social analysis (explanation)

Thematic analysis is a method used for analyzing qualitative data that entails searching across a data set to identify, analyze and report repeated patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is a method for describing data, but it also involves interpretation in the processes of selecting codes and constructing themes.

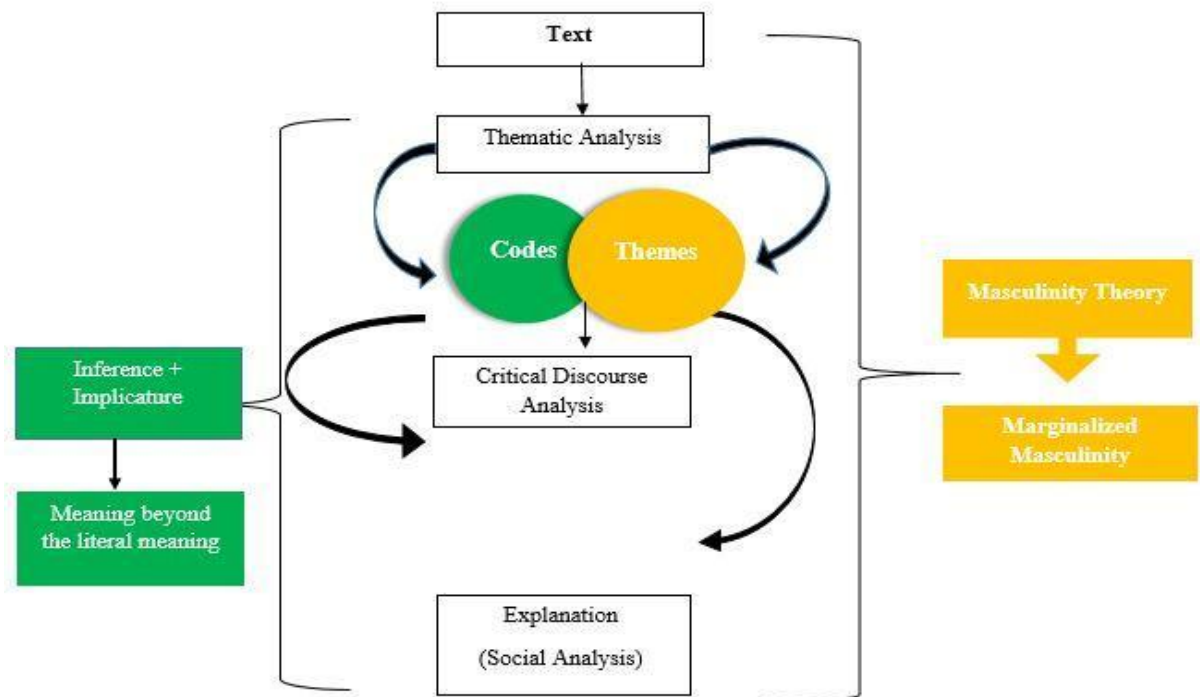
The thematic analysis with two dimensions of CDA processing analysis (Interpretation) and social analysis (Explanation) is used to find out the different interpretations of males by the female writers.

Masculinity theory by R.W Connell (1995) is used to study the hegemonic concept of masculinity in society. Masculinity theory defines four types of masculinity:

- Hegemonic masculinity: It defines masculinity as a practice that legitimizes men's dominant position in society.
- Complicit masculinity: It defines where a man may not fit into all hegemonic masculinity characteristics but does not challenge them.
- Marginalized masculinity: It defines masculinity that follows the cultural norms but is unable to access them fully.
- Subordinate masculinity: Men who do not fit into the hegemonic masculinity and therefore are treated as lower. For instance, gay men.

For this study, as illustrated in Figure 1, the concept of marginalized masculinity is used to define the cultural norms that subscribe men to the hegemonic concept of masculinity. Aggression, strength, and dominance are considered the core characteristics of the males in our society, and they are under extreme pressure to prove themselves according to these concepts. This study explores those marginalized voices of males suppressed poorly by society.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



3.1. The data

This is a qualitative study. The qualitative data was based on two female writers Bapsi Sidhwa and Anita Desai. Two texts by these writers were selected, *'Ice-candy man'* and *'Short stories.'* The rationale behind the selection of this text is to highlight the absence of the male voice. Female writers were selected purposely to study the manipulation of language by them to raise their voices by hiding the other side of the story.

Thematic analysis with critical discourse analysis has been used as a research approach. Masculinity studies by Connell (1995) have been utilized as a research paradigm to read gender relationships in female writings. Connell introduced the concept of marginalized masculinity, which defines the suppression of males. The aim of the study is to explore the male representation by female writers, and it will be a textual, pragmatic, and critical discourse analysis of the selected texts. The pragma-discourse analysis of the text was done to find the hidden side of the story. The hidden side of the narration was analyzed by inference and implicature.

The writings were both narratives and descriptive. Many different themes and ideas are manipulated to change the meanings, but this study specifically focused only on the language chosen to hide males' voices. Specific topics such as rape, kidnapping, harassment, and torture were focused on because most of the males are not considered part of such violence in our society.

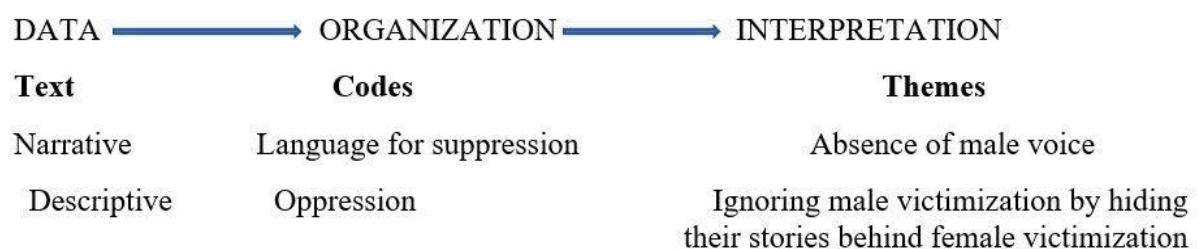
This study deals with Asian writers which is why two texts by Pakistani and Indian writers have been selected. In *Ice-candy man*, the writer talks about the challenges faced by women at the time of partition. In her *Short stories* Desai, talks about multiple themes related to men and women to highlight societal issues.

The selected texts are publicly available, so there was no need for ethical approval. The selected text was analyzed to find the meaning beyond the literal meaning and to give voice to the unvoiced creatures of our society.

4. Analysis

The selected discourse was analyzed using inference and implicature techniques to find the meaning beyond the literal meaning. By using the thematic approach different codes from the selected texts are separated to interpret their associated themes by applying masculinity theory. Connell (1995) marginalized concept of masculinity was used to analyze these themes in order to find the interpretation of males in society. Figure 2 shows the different codes, themes, and interpretations that suppress the masculine voice.

Figure 2: Data organization and interpretation



4.1. Oppression

Ice-candy man by Bapsi Sidhwa is a gender-biased novel, and the main preference of the writer remains female throughout the novel. It covers the sacrifices, pain, and struggles faced during the time of partition. The main focus was on females' sacrifices and the tortures they faced during the partition. "Up and down, they look at her stub-handed twisted beggars, and dirty old beggars on crutches drop their poses and gaze at her with hard alert eyes" (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 03). Shanta is a beautiful Hindu caretaker of Lenny, who is best known as Ayah than her real name. She is represented as the symbol of beauty and attraction. Ayah faces a lot of attention from males because of her charming looks. 'Beggars' and 'old beggars' were focused on without mentioning their genders, whether they are males or females, but this is an indirect way to hit the males because our society believes that only males can look at women with 'hard alert eyes'. The writer of the above-mentioned statement states that every beggar was looking at Ayah, those beggars could be females too, but every reader is going to think about males who are harassing a female. Because whenever we talk about staring at females, the first thing that comes to mind is male.

Females share a closer bond with each other than males. According to the set codes by our society, a male and a female can never enjoy a healthy relationship. Our society believes in the weak bonding of a male and female and always considers males as the cruel and harsh part of any relationship. “Flying forward, I throw myself at godmother, more satisfying than male-female relationships (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 03)”. Lenny’s Godmother loves Lenny unconditionally, and she is more attached to her Godmother after losing her Ayah. In the mentioned lines, the writer is trying to exemplify the strong bond between Lenny and her Godmother, but indirectly, the weak and hollow relationships of males and females are targeted. Godmother loves Lenny, and Lenny loves Godmother, which reveals the strength and understanding of the two females. The reader has been convinced that females are more responsible in their relationships than males. Males’ emotions and passions have been ignored badly to highlight females’ responsibilities and patience. Our society has such double standards for men that if a man is loving, caring, and sensitive to his relationships, he will be labelled as a ‘weak man’ for the rest of his life. To avoid such tags, males are really under pressure to behave as strong and careless creatures to maintain their masculinity. As John Beynon said, gender is a scientifically proven concept with its own pre-calculated standards that portray males as the cruel and careless part of our society. We have fixed our standards to judge male and female characters, and eventually, males fall into the category of cruelty.

Figure 3: Oppression of male

Data Extract	Codes/Themes	Social Interpretation
“Father offers a ten rupee note to Lenny, crying with pain, trading my future for ten rupees” (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 13). Lenny was crying with pain and her father offers ten rupees to stop crying.	Oppression/Males cannot feel the pain of anyone’s sufferings.	Males are considered as the cold-hearted creature of this society. They are not emotionally sensitive and take everything carelessly because their level of empathy is zero.
“I assume you want me to bring the boys home to my parents” (Desai, 2008, p. 238). Surface Texture a short story by Anita Desai elaborates the alumni problems at the time of divorce.	Carelessness/Males are careless creature and unable to support the female.	Males are considered a source of financial support for all the females. If they failed because of any reason they are blamed poorly.
“My mother picked up father’s wallet for money. Oye Ullu, Oye madwoman! My mother with dew in her eyes and a misty smile, gives him kisses” (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 71). Lenny’s father abusing Mrs.Sethi, Lanny’s mother.	Abusive language/Males use abusive language.	Males are considered more impolite and unmannered gender of the society. They are always blamed for harsh and rude behavior

4.2. Ignorance of the male voice

Child marriage is a widely discussed topic in our society. “Her voice is incredibly young; she could not be more than twelve” (Sidhwa, 2015). ‘Her voice is young’, inferring the innocence of the female and her challenges as a young mother and wife. It is inferred from the historically built-up concepts of our society that females are younger and more innocent than their

husbands. She is trying to call attention to the young age marriages of the females, their sacrifices, and the dominance of their husbands over them. The innocence and patience of women have been highlighted to reveal the cruelty and harshness of men. Early-age marriages have been utilized as a tool to prove the sacrifices of females throughout their lives. Female obedience demonstrates that males are cruel, and they only obey brutality regardless of their relationship. “She is doing great without school, is not she?” says, Dr. Bharucha (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 15)”. Dr. Bharucha explains to Lenny’s father that she is doing great even without schooling. ‘Is not she’ the writer uses this to persuade the reader that both males will agree on not sending girls to the schools. It has been implicated that males are against female education. They do not allow women to go out and get education because they fear being dominated by women if they get a good education. He is a doctor who knows better about the sick child, or maybe he is just trying to read their minds about whether they will send her to school or not. However, the language manipulation reveals that girls are under pressure and that males have suppressed and snatched their educational rights.

Female harassment is a term that has been used throughout history. Women are believed to be the real victims of harassment because they do not have dominant characteristics like males. Wherever the word ‘harassment’ is utilized, the first thing that comes to mind is women. This is a historically, socially, and culturally constructed notion that females can easily be harassed. Second, after discussing the causes of harassment, it is concluded that males are blamed for all the woman’s sufferings. In our society, males’ suffering or harassment has highly been ignored. No matter what the situation he is facing, whether he is suffering from any pain or not, his problems will never be discussed by our society. Female harassment is a leading topic these days, females have been taught how to protect themselves from these wild animals of our society, but no one is interested in teaching males about their rights and realizing that they are also a part of our society and have equal rights like females. However, they are always blamed for harassing women and making them uncomfortable. In *Ice-candy man* Sidhwa, highlights this issue through a very beautiful and charming lady named Shanta. She is described as the symbol of attraction and beauty, truly fulfilling all the definitions of beauty. Ice-Candyman, who is in love with Shanta (Ayah), is used by her because she loves Masseur. He is the true lover of Ayah, and he loves to tease her and enjoys being with her. He is a Popsicle seller and sometimes provides popsicles to Lenny baby and she really enjoys having those popsicles. “Ayah tries tactfully to escape from Ice-candy man” (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 28). Sidhwa is trying to reveal the irritating and comfortless environment a male creates for a female. In the presence of a male, females suffer and bear a lot of tension and suffering. She is describing the clingy side of a male, which never leaves women in peace. Women's helplessness has been utilized to prove the dominance of males over females.

Female harassment might be used as a tool to insult the male gender in our society. “One day, as she passed through the open kitchen door, the cook looked at her and sang, with blouse low and hair short, this memsahib is so beautiful” (Desai, 2008). “The rooftop dwellers” is a short story by Desai that describes the sexist issues faced by the women of India. Moyna is the

protagonist of the story, struggling for her future alone. She faces many troubles, from getting a residential place to a job, and she is considered suspicious. 'With blouse cut low, with hair cut short' the writer attempts to reveal the filthiness of the minds of society's men. She is attempting to reveal the struggles of a single lady living in our society, as well as many challenges created by the men of our society for females. She is trying to convince the reader about the victimization and helplessness faced by a female on daily basis. She cannot live alone and cannot wear what she likes because many wild eyes are on her, and she cannot enjoy her life. Not only males but also some females taunt females by wearing shorts, but the writer's main focus remains on the males of our society so that they can be insulted and suppressed badly to raise the female voice.

Harassment is not only taken as seduction or lust, but physical harassment is also very common in our society. If a female is not looking happy or satisfied, no one would be interested in knowing the actual reason behind her unhappy and unsatisfied behaviour, everyone concludes that she is suffering from harassment, or her husband is not good with her, or she is bearing his torture. "I will not live with him, does he mistreat you" (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 266). Godmother is the matriarch of Lenny's family, Roda, she is the symbol of experience and wisdom. When Godmother visits Ayah after her marriage to Candyman, Ayah reveals that she does not want to be with him now. Without elaborating or asking for the reasons, Godmother herself concludes that she must be mistreated by her husband. 'Does he mistreat you', it has been tried to convey that a male always punishes a woman, and he is so cruel to her. Why does she not want to live with him or maybe she has her own issues? However, it has been pointed out that she does not want to live with him presupposing that there must be a fault with him. She is trying to convince the reader that only females suffer, and they suffer because of males only. Our society has build-up this concept that females bear domestic violence from males. But violence against males is something that is indigestible by our society. These are the set codes by our society that males cannot be the victims of harassment or violence because they themselves are the culprits. In our society, males are harassed and abused more than females on a daily basis, but their gender is sufficient to conceal their voice.

David D. Gilmore, in his book, *Manhood in the making: Cultural concepts of masculinity* claims that men can also be regarded as nurturers. He says, "If a woman nurtures the society through milk, a man nurtures it through his blood, sweat, and themselves" (Gilmore, 1990). Rapes, kidnapping, murders, sacrifices, and pains, these words only define females, not males. *Ice-candy man* by Bapsi Sidhwa is a novel about the partition of India and Pakistan that discusses the sacrifices made during that time. The emphasis of this novel remains on women, in fact, throughout the novel, the writer tries to justify only female sacrifices. At the time of partition, both males and females suffered a lot and lost their loved ones, but the pain and victimization of females have been elaborated on throughout the novel, while males are highly ignored by the writer. "A woman with a child slaps her forehead; Hai, Hai, other women accompany her, Hai, Hai, older women beat their breasts, cry, save the young girls" (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 202). When Lahore was attacked by the opposites and left everyone helpless. By 'Save

the young girls' the writer is conveying the message of the suffering of women and their victimization. She emphasizes the pain of women, mothers, and daughters while completely ignoring the pain of men. Indirectly, she is trying to convince us that only females suffer, while males are strong and do not feel anything. 'Hai, Hai' by quoting this same word again and again in the sentence, she is trying to implicate the pain women felt at the time of partition.

The pain of women of all ages has been discussed in order to manipulate the reader's mind so that he only thinks about the torture of women and cannot imagine the pain felt by men. It has tried to portray the negative side of males to the reader's mind. When talking about murder, rape, or kidnapping, both writers stayed focused on women only, because, for them, only women have feelings and respect, while males have nothing to do with these kinds of emotions. "A husband is held for murder of his wife, how often does this happen" (Desai, 2008, p. 297). The short story '*Pigeons at daybreak*' by Anita Desai talks about love and acceptance. Mr. Basu is a man who is suffering from multiple diseases and is unable to move or work. Otima, the wife of Mr. Basu takes care of him and was reading the newspaper for him. In the newspaper, she reads the news of the murder of a woman by her husband. The writer is pointing out the injustice that happens to women in our society. She is trying to highlight female issues. 'How often does this happen?' She is conveying the meaning that this is a common sin that is happening in our society. Killing a woman is not so difficult for men in our society. She is trying to reveal the cruelty of men in our society. The domination of the male gender over females and females' sacrifices have been focused on by the writer. Through Otima's character, she is talking about the love between husband and wife, but indirectly, women are portrayed as the most protective and concerned creatures to fix a positive image of women in the reader's mind. The primary concern is to justify the wives' love and loyalty to their husbands.

Figure 4: Absence of male voice

Data Extract	Codes/ Themes	Social Interpretation
"Her voice is incredibly young; she could not be more than twelve (Sidhwa, 2015).	Child marriages/Female child marriage is considered a sin in our society.	Male is a sign of strength and he can face anything at any age. Whenever child marriages are discussed, male gender is ignored badly by the society.
"A woman with a child slaps her forehead, <u>Hai</u> , <u>Hai</u> , other women accompanied her, <u>Hai</u> , <u>Hai</u> , Older women beating their breasts, cry, save the young girls" (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 202).	Rape/Abduction/Males are not part of such violence.	Males are the reasons for such crimes like rapes, abductions and murders and they themselves can never be a victim.
"Husband held for murder of his wife, how often does this happen" (Desai, 2008, p. 297). Murder of wife by her husband.	Domestic violence/Females faced domestic violence.	Males are the reasons for all the sufferings of females and females have been tortured brutally by the males. While males are not considered a part of such violence.
"Ayah tries tactfully to get escape from Ice-Candy Man" (Sidhwa, 2015, p. 28).	Harassment/Females are awfully harassed by the males.	Females are emotionally and physically harassed by the males. Males are the only reason behind such crimes in our society. We believe males can never be harassed or tortured.

It is well known that society rarely talks about or addresses masculine difficulties. In our society, their voice is the one that is the most neglected. In all conditions of existence, they are regarded as sturdy and unaffected creatures. The adjectives victimization, victimhood, oppression, and suffering can never be used to describe a man. Female writers overlook male difficulties and instead highlight their nasty and violent nature. Morrison (1999) portrayed Cholly's character as being the most aggressive in *The Bluest Eye*. The persona of Pacola depicts the true struggle of a woman to survive in the company of ruthless males. Her father sexually assaulted her, showing the true black face of a man. Pauline, his wife, suffers from domestic abuse as a result of her husband's beating.

In *A good man is hard to find*, Flannery O'Connor reveals the cruel and strict side of the male by showing Misfit's character as the cruellest one. "She would've been a good woman if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life" (O'Connor, 1953). A heartless side of the male has been portrayed to prove his carelessness and aggressive nature. The grandmother moves to call her my son and is about to touch him and he responds by shooting her three times in her chest. Males' uncompromising and inflexible attitudes have been highlighted. The concept of murder, harsh attitude, and not even listening to the elders used to reveal the dominance of a male in society. Men are stereotyped as being harsh and nasty people who are incapable of feeling pain or emotion.

5. Conclusions

This research discusses how the male voice is intentionally suppressed. Male characters' presence is highly subdued in the presence of female characters. Men have been portrayed as the cruellest and most dominant creatures of society. Female writers primarily write about and discuss female issues to highlight them, while indirectly ignoring male issues and rights. Masculinity covers the concept of male dominance and cruelty. Language has been manipulated only to convey female issues and life challenges, hiding male challenges behind them. Language has been used to describe the beauty, suppression, challenges, harassment, sacrifices, loyalty, and emotions of females. Socially, culturally, and historically built-up concepts of masculinity have been used by female writers to suppress the male voice. According to Warren, "If an expected behaviour from females can hurt them, then an expected behaviour from males can also hurt them. If change is mandatory, then women should also work on it to change the concepts" (Warren, 2012).

Society has always ignored the male voices because they are regarded as powerful creatures of God who are incapable of feeling anything. Language and words are manipulated in a way that they really support female issues, but the main purpose behind their use is to ignore the male voice. For a female writer, it is just impossible to believe that a male can also be victimized and oppressed when fighting for life's challenges. The male issues are the most neglected topic by our writers, and no one likes to talk about them or to raise a voice in their support. If a woman has the right to be highlighted and to taste the justice, then a man has the same right to

taste justice and equity. Not all females are suffering and not all males are enjoying dominance and power.

The ignorance of the male voice while discussing oppression, suppression, and life challenges can negatively impact the society. When a voice is repeatedly targeted, it can explode violently, destroying the entire society. The males are considered as the most aggressive gender, so blaming them at each step of life can lead to severe reactions. The endless ignorance and restrictions may increase the anger and rude attitudes of the male gender. The males are always under pressure to prove their masculine qualities, which is itself a great pressure and responsibility.

The mentally disturbed males can never work productively and become the reason to transfer their frustration to others which also stigmatizes them and their roles. When such victimized males act against the wishes and requirements of the females, they are entitled to toxic masculinity. To keep society in balance, these stigmatizations of male roles, as well as their reasons or causes, must be addressed in a neutral way. Males and females are both the basic pillars of society and have equal rights in their respective domains. The only thing that needs to be done is to revise their roles according to contemporary requirements in order to create a healthy environment for the society. Giving, raising, and chanting about the rights of one pillar of society will disturb the social fabric and create chaos among children and the young generation of our future.

5.1. Delimitations of the study

Although this study is a detailed qualitative study on the suppression of the male voice, it has certain limitations. It has included two Asian female-authored texts *Ice-candy man* by Bapsi Sidhwa and *Short stories* by Anita Desai.

5.2. Recommendations

Farrell (1993) in his article, *The Myth of Male Power* wrote “Women’s experience of powerlessness had attained much attention, and now it’s time to give attention to the powerlessness of the male gender.” This research will be helpful for future researchers to highlight the males’ voices. It will be helpful for them to see the other side of the picture and understand that harassment, oppression, and victimization can also define the male gender in our society. When a researcher works on feminism, his/her main attention remains on the issues, victimization, and suppression of females.

This study is an attempt to help readers understand the intentionally hidden factor by society. Working on masculinity does not imply working on male dominance. It could also be interpreted as male rights, how their presence is frequently ignored and how they are under pressure to demonstrate their masculinity. No matter if it is a male or female voice, they have

equal rights to be discussed and highlighted. This study only discusses two female writers however, it can be expanded by selecting some other female and male authors as well.

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