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Feminist Lens on Educational Content: Analyzing "Sughar Zaal" in Sixth Grade Sindhi Textbook

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abrar.anum94@gmail.com**Abstract**

Curriculum in the native languages narrates the societal outlook and reflects the cultural norms about the gender and its role prevalent in the community. This study critically examined the lesson "Sughar Zaal" from the Grade six Sindhi language textbook by the Sindh Textbook Board. By applying Walby's patriarchy framework integrated with Fairclough's framework, this study explored how these roles are perpetuated through the content, highlighting how societal structures shape students' perceptions of gender. For this purpose, qualitative case study was undertaken, and the text was analyzed using content analysis by Critical discourse analysis (CDA). The analysis revealed that the portrayal of women in the lesson predominantly reinforces traditional gender roles, positioning women primarily as caretakers and homemakers. The findings suggested that such representations contribute to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes, influencing students' understanding of women's capabilities and place in society. The study advocates for a revision of textbooks to align with more progressive and equitable representations of gender, emphasizing the need for educational content that challenges traditional norms. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on gender bias in educational materials and calls for further studies into the impact of textbook content on students' gender perceptions.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Gender Roles, Sughar Zaal, Sindhi

INTRODUCTION

Textbooks are not just tools for delivering knowledge; they also carry implicit messages that shape students' understanding of the world. These hidden messages, embedded in the content, can influence how students perceive social norms, roles, and relationships. In Pakistan, where

textbooks are the primary educational resource, these implicit messages play a significant role in shaping students' thoughts and beliefs.

This study examines the Sindhi language textbook for Grade 6, with a focus on the lesson "Sughar Zaal" (The Skilled Woman). By combining Walby's (1990) and Fairclough's (1995) frameworks, this study delves into how educational content reflects broader societal norms and ideologies. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) involves a close examination of language to uncover hidden biases and power imbalances. The term "critical" refers to the approach of questioning and analyzing communication to reveal underlying issues. "Discourse" includes all forms of communication, whether spoken, written, or through social practices like rituals and media, all of which carry cultural and ideological messages. "Analysis" means studying these forms of communication carefully to identify hidden meanings and power dynamics. CDA provides a comprehensive understanding of how language reflects and sustains social power structures and reveals how seemingly neutral language can carry hidden social and ideological messages. The term "discourse" generally refers to anything "longer than a sentence" (Schiffin et al 2001). Jaworski and Coupland (1999) explain discourse analysis in three ways: analyzing anything beyond a sentence, examining language use, and exploring social practices that involve language. For this study, Fairclough's (1989) definition is used: discourse is part of social interaction, and a text is just one part of it.

Problem of the Study

Textbooks play a key role in shaping students' knowledge and understanding of the world. However, they can also promote certain ideologies, biases, and stereotypes, especially regarding gender roles. In Sindh, Pakistan, textbooks are the primary learning tools, making it essential to analyze their content critically to ensure they encourage fairness and inclusivity.

Despite their importance, the Sindh Textbook Board materials have not been thoroughly examined from a feminist perspective. This lack of attention raises concerns about the subtle messages these textbooks convey, particularly about gender. These messages can shape students' views of themselves, their roles in society, and how they perceive others. This study focuses on the lesson "Sughar Zaal" to explore the underlying biases related to gender. Using Walby's feminist framework, which examines structures that maintain gender inequality, and Norman Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research objective is to uncover hidden messages in the text.

The lesson "Sughar Zaal" (The Skilled Woman) from the sixth-grade Sindhi language textbook was selected because of its portrayal of women and their roles. Textbooks are not just educational tools—they also carry cultural and social messages that shape students' perceptions. While the lesson appears to encourage women's abilities, it is important to explore if it also reinforces limiting stereotypes by depicting women in specific roles tied to domestic responsibilities. Aziz (1993) criticizes textbooks for focusing on rote learning, stating that "A textbook is a book that students must read, memorize, and reproduce in exams to pass." This approach can prevent students from thinking critically about the ideologies embedded in their lessons.

Harwood (2005) points out that textbooks are also influenced by market demands, which often prioritize content that reflects societal norms rather than challenging them. As a result, lessons like "Sughar Zaal" may reinforce traditional roles rather than promote progressive ideas about gender equality. Through a feminist lens, this study examines the messages in "Sughar Zaal" and their implications for shaping students' understanding of gender. It aims to reveal whether the text challenges or upholds patriarchal norms.

Despite the significant role textbooks play in shaping students' understanding and perceptions, there has been limited research focused on how these educational resources represent gender roles, particularly within the context of Sindhi textbooks in Pakistan. Existing studies, such as those by Zubair (2013) and Shams (2021), have highlighted the gender bias in Pakistani textbooks, but there is still a lack of in-depth analysis of specific lessons and their implicit messages about gender, especially in the Sindhi language curriculum.

While gender biases have been studied in textbooks from other regions and educational systems, research focusing specifically on the Sindh Textbook Board's materials, using feminist and CDA approaches, is scarce. This study aims to address this gap by examining the lesson "Sughar Zaal" through these critical lenses to uncover the hidden ideologies and implicit messages about gender roles, responsibilities, and societal expectations.

Research Question

The central research question guiding this study is:

- i. What implicit messages are conveyed in the lesson "Sughar Zaal" from the Sindhi Grade 6 textbook?

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of gender representation in "Sughar Zaal" is grounded in two key theoretical frameworks: Feminist Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). These frameworks help examine how gender ideologies are embedded in language and how texts, like textbooks, contribute to reinforcing societal norms and power structures.

Feminist theory, particularly the work of scholars like Walby (1990) and Hooks (1994), provides a framework for understanding how gender roles are socially constructed and how patriarchal structures perpetuate gender inequality. Incorporating Walby's (1990) theory of patriarchy into the analysis of gender representation in educational materials, such as the Sindhi textbooks, offers a robust framework to understand the systemic subjugation of women within both public and private spheres. Walby (1990) introduces the concept of patriarchy as a complex set of social structures and practices where men govern, oppress, and exploit women across various historical and cultural contexts. Her theory identifies two primary forms of patriarchy: private patriarchy and public patriarchy. Private patriarchy, as discussed by Walby (1990), operates in the home, where a dominant male figure exerts control over a subordinate female, often through abusive or manipulative practices (Walby, 1990). Public patriarchy, on the other hand, refers to the broader institutional and cultural structures that place men in power over women in many aspects of public life, including paid employment, cultural production, and the political sphere (Walby, 1990). This duality between private and public patriarchy demonstrates the pervasive

nature of gendered power dynamics in society, influencing both personal and institutional interactions.

Walby identifies six interrelated patriarchal structures that contribute to the systemic oppression of women, including paid labor, household production, culture, sexuality, violence, and the state (Walby, 1990). These interconnected systems are not isolated but instead interact in ways that compound women's marginalization. For instance, paid labor continues to disadvantage women, who are disproportionately concentrated in low-paying, part-time, and precarious jobs while men dominate higher-paying positions. Walby (1990) emphasizes how the gendered nature of the labor market perpetuates patriarchal norms, marginalizing women's work and reinforcing gender inequality.

Walby's analysis highlights the malleable nature of patriarchy, asserting that these systems are not fixed but can evolve and be challenged over time (Walby, 1990). This dynamic characteristic of patriarchy offers hope for challenging and dismantling these oppressive systems through collective action, both by men and women. In educational contexts, such as textbooks, these patriarchal ideologies may be subtly reinforced or challenged depending on the portrayal of gender roles and responsibilities.

Incorporating Walby's theory into the study of gender representation in Sindhi textbooks allows for a deeper understanding of how patriarchal ideologies manifest in educational materials. The lesson "Sughar Zaal" from the Grade 6 Sindhi textbook, for instance, may implicitly reinforce traditional gender roles by positioning women primarily in domestic roles and men in active, public spheres. By examining these implicit messages through the lens of Walby's theory, this study aims to explore how such portrayals perpetuate the gendered power structures that Walby critiques and how they can influence students' perceptions of gender and social roles. Using feminist theory in this study allows us to critique the gender portrayals in "Sughar Zaal" and analyze whether the text reinforces or challenges the social structures that sustain gender inequality in Sindhi culture.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) focuses on the relationship between language, power, and society. CDA emphasizes that language is not neutral; it reflects and perpetuates social power relations. According to Fairclough (1995), CDA operates on three levels: the textual level (language analysis), the discursive practice level (production and consumption of the text), and the social practice level (social context influencing the text). CDA is particularly useful in analyzing how gender is represented in textbooks, as it helps uncover the power dynamics embedded in the language used. In textbooks, language often reflects gender hierarchies, with men portrayed as active, authoritative figures and women as passive, supportive characters. Fairclough's (1989) approach encourages us to look at how the text constructs gender relations through lexical choices, sentence structures, and discursive practices. By applying CDA to "Sughar Zaal," this study examined how language in the text shapes students' perceptions of gender, revealing underlying messages about gender roles and societal expectations.

Methodology

This study utilized qualitative case study approach. Qualitative case study is the appropriate strategy as it focuses on exploring the meaning of the text. The case study approach has been adopted, because it focuses on Sindhi language with particular importance to the lesson content and its representation. The data was collected using purposive sampling, as the research focuses on analyzing the different themes as highlighted in the objective of the study (Creswell, 2014). The data for this study was derived from a specific lesson, "Sughar Zaal", which is part of the Grade 6 Sindhi language textbook used in schools under the Sindh Textbook Board. This lesson was selected because it provides a detailed portrayal of gender roles in a cultural context and offers insights into the ideological messages conveyed through language. Since textbooks are a significant medium through which societal norms and values are communicated, examining one lesson will help identify how gender is represented in the educational content.

This study employed content analysis using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), integrated with feminist theoretical framework to examine the lesson "Sughar Zaal". CDA for analyzing language because it allows researchers to explore how language reflects and reinforces power structures, ideologies, and social inequalities (Fairclough, 1995). Since the goal of the study is to uncover the implicit messages, CDA helps to unpack how these messages are embedded in the text.

This study ensured that the analysis was conducted ethically. Since the research involves publicly available textbooks, no ethical issues related to participant consent or privacy arise. However, the researcher ensured that the findings are presented in a manner that is respectful and constructive, with the aim of contributing positively to the discourse on gender equality in education.

This study focused solely on one lesson from a single textbook, and thus, its findings may not be representative of all content and chapters in Sindhi textbooks. The limited scope of the study means that it cannot fully capture the diversity of gender representation across the entire curriculum. Additionally, the study focused exclusively on gender-related messages and does not delve into other potential biases or ideologies within the textbook.

Findings

The word "Sughar" means "skilled" or "talented," which is generally a positive term, suggesting that the woman in question is capable and good at something. The word "Zaal" means "woman." Together, the title "Sughar Zaal" points to a woman who has skills. However, through a feminist lens, we can also see that while the term "skilled" is positive, it can still limit the way we think about women. It implies that women's value is mostly linked to specific types of work, especially those that are traditionally linked to home and family life. This might suggest that a woman's worth is tied to what she can do for her household or community, rather than in public, leadership, or professional roles.

Implicit Messages of Gender Roles in the Title

Even though the title highlights a woman's skill, it still hints that women's roles and abilities are often seen as limited to specific areas. The focus on being "skilled" may suggest that women's worth is mostly seen in the context of traditional roles such as cooking, cleaning, or caring for

others. This reflects the patriarchal structure that Sylvia Walby talks about, where women's contributions to the family and home are valued, but their contributions outside the home or in leadership roles are often overlooked (Walby, 1990).

From a feminist perspective, this can feel limiting because it reinforces the idea that women are only valuable when they fit into certain roles. It suggests that women's skills are important, but only when they are used in ways that fit traditional expectations.

Gender and Power

The title also brings attention to how patriarchal structures work. By calling a woman "skilled," it may seem like a compliment, but it can also be read as reinforcing gender roles. In patriarchal societies, women's talents are often recognized in private and domestic spheres, while men's talents are often celebrated in public, professional, or leadership spaces. This is a clear example of how patriarchy shapes what we think of as "valuable work" and where it happens. The title "Sughar Zaal" suggests that women's skills are valuable, but they are mostly seen in limited, traditional roles.

Reflection on the Title

Although the title "Sughar Zaal" recognizes women's skills, it may limit their potential by placing these skills in the context of domestic duties, which are traditionally seen as the woman's domain. This can reinforce outdated ideas about gender roles, where women are expected to be skilled in caring for the family and home, rather than being leaders or taking part in public, economic, or political life.

Using Walby's (1990) theory of patriarchy, we see that this title, while recognizing women's abilities, subtly reinforces the idea that women are best suited for traditional roles within the home, limiting their opportunities and the way society sees their potential. The title sends a message that, even though women can be skilled, their skills are mostly valued when they fulfill socially expected roles, rather than breaking out into new, equal spaces with men.

Example from the Text:

آهي ماهر پڻ ۾ پرورش جي خاندان سان مهارت ۽ صبر پر آهي ماهر ۾ سنڀالڻ کي ڪمن جي گهر رڳو نه زال سگهڙ هڪ

Translation:

A Sughar Zaal is not only adept at managing household chores but also excels in nurturing the family with patience and skill.

Analyzing Text 2: "Sughar Zaal is not only adept at managing household chores but also excels in nurturing the family with patience and skill"

This sentence reflects several important gender norms and expectations, which can be analyzed using a feminist perspective, particularly through the lens of Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy.

Acknowledging Women's Skills, but in Traditional Contexts

The sentence starts by acknowledging that "Sughar Zaal is not only adept at managing household chores," which seems to recognize a woman's competence and skill. However, it specifically ties these skills to household tasks—an area traditionally associated with women. The use of the word "household chores" places the woman's abilities in a limited and gendered sphere. While

men may also perform such tasks in some families, society often views them as the primary responsibility of women.

From a feminist perspective, this creates a subtle reinforcement of the idea that women's value is based on their domestic roles, such as cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the home. Although the sentence acknowledges that women are skilled, it positions those skills within the boundaries of the private sphere, where women are expected to work in ways that support the family but do not challenge traditional gender roles. This is a perfect example of how patriarchy structures women's roles and limits the recognition of their skills to the private and domestic realms.

The Role of Nurturing

The second part of the sentence—"...but also excels in nurturing the family with patience and skill"—highlights another stereotypical aspect of women's roles: nurturing. The idea that women excel in nurturing the family is tied to the expectation that women are inherently more patient and caring than men. While nurturing is an important and valuable skill, the association of this role exclusively with women reinforces traditional gender expectations.

Through Walby's framework, this aligns with the patriarchal structures that place women in roles that involve caregiving and emotional labor, often undervaluing these contributions compared to the roles men occupy in the public sphere (Walby, 1990). The emphasis on patience and skill in nurturing also suggests that women's value lies in their emotional labor, which is often invisible and underappreciated, reinforcing gender inequality.

The Imbalance of Gender Roles

This sentence subtly reinforces the patriarchal idea that the primary role of women is to manage the private, domestic space and focus on caring for the family. While men may also take on some of these tasks, the sentence implies that women are naturally better suited for them, which can be seen as a reinforcement of traditional gender roles. In contrast, men's roles are more likely to be framed in terms of public, leadership, or professional duties, which are often more highly valued and compensated.

The focus on women's domestic and nurturing roles also contributes to the idea of women being less visible in the public, economic, or political spheres.

This is a key part of Walby's theory, where patriarchal systems uphold gender inequalities by reinforcing traditional roles that restrict women's opportunities to engage in public life or pursue careers outside of the home (Walby, 1990).

Implicit Messages in the Text

In addition to reinforcing traditional gender roles, this sentence sends implicit messages about the expectations placed on women. It communicates that women should not only be skilled in managing the home but should also be naturally nurturing and patient. These qualities are seen as essential parts of their identity, while men are often not expected to demonstrate the same level of nurturing or domestic competence.

Moreover, the sentence implies that the woman's role is to support and sustain the family emotionally, which is an important but often undervalued contribution. It suggests that women's

primary worth comes from their ability to care for others, rather than being recognized for skills in broader areas, such as leadership, business, or public life.

This text highlights how societal expectations around gender roles continue to be reinforced through the portrayal of women in educational materials. It implicitly conveys that women's value is tied to domestic skills and emotional labor, while simultaneously minimizing the recognition of women in public or professional roles. Through Walby's framework, we can see how these implicit messages reflect and reinforce the patriarchal structures that limit women's roles and opportunities in society.

Example taken from the text:

آهي ڪم جو زال ڦٽائڻ ۽ ٺاهڻ کي گهر

Translation:

It is the wife's job to build or destroy the house

Analyzing Text 3: "It is the wife's job to build or destroy the house"

This sentence offers a complex portrayal of gender roles and responsibilities, especially in the context of the relationship between a wife and her household. The phrase "It is the wife's job" highlights the expectation that women are primarily responsible for the domestic sphere, including both the creation and destruction of the home.

The Wife's Central Role in the Home

The sentence begins by stating that "It is the wife's job," which immediately assigns a specific responsibility to women. By framing the wife's role as the primary determinant in the fate of the house, the sentence reinforces the idea that women are fundamentally responsible for the success or failure of the household. This aligns with traditional views that women's primary role is within the home, emphasizing their influence over the family's environment, which includes maintaining the household.

However, the phrase also implies that women have the power to "build or destroy" the house, which presents a double-edged interpretation. On one hand, the idea that the wife can "build" suggests that women are capable of nurturing and creating a stable, loving home. On the other hand, the use of the word "destroy" suggests that if the household is not in order, it is the wife who is to blame for the failure of the home. This dichotomy places a tremendous amount of responsibility on women, reinforcing the notion that their actions or inactions directly influence the stability of the family, an idea rooted in patriarchal gender norms.

The Concept of Power in the Domestic Sphere

The notion that a wife has the power to either "build or destroy" the home can also be viewed as reinforcing patriarchal control. While the wife is given some power in this context, it is still power within a highly limited sphere—the private, domestic world. This suggests that women's agency and power are seen as valid only within the confines of the home and that their roles are largely restricted to maintaining the family and household, rather than having power in public or professional spaces.

This mirrors Walby's theory of patriarchy, which explains how women's roles are often confined to the private sphere of domestic labor and caregiving, while men are positioned in the public

sphere of work, politics, and leadership. The sentence reflects the way patriarchal structures limit women's agency by framing their power as relevant only in domestic settings and often tied to the maintenance of traditional Gender roles.

The Imbalance of Responsibility and Blame

By framing the wife as the one responsible for the "building" or "destroying" of the home, the sentence implicitly places the weight of the family's success or failure on the woman's shoulders. This presents an unfair and one-sided view of domestic life. While both partners contribute to the home and family dynamics, this text overlooks the involvement of the husband or any external factors. This aligns with patriarchal expectations where women are disproportionately blamed for any failure in family life.

From a feminist perspective, this statement reflects the unequal distribution of responsibility in heterosexual relationships, where women are often expected to bear the brunt of household management and emotional labor. This expectation overlooks the shared responsibility that both spouses should have in the upkeep of the home and family.

Implicit Messages in the Text

The sentence conveys several implicit messages:

1. **Women's Primary Role in the Household:** The phrase "It is the wife's job" reinforces the belief that a woman's primary role is within the home. This suggests that a wife is expected to focus on domestic duties, such as managing the household and ensuring its stability.
2. **Unequal Blame:** The idea that the wife can either "build or destroy" the house places an unfair burden on women, implying that the success or failure of the family rests solely on their shoulders. This indirectly reinforces the stereotype that women are responsible for family well-being, often to the exclusion of other factors, such as the husband's actions or societal circumstances.
3. **Limited Agency for Women:** While the wife is given the power to influence the home, the context suggests that her agency is confined to domestic matters. This limits women's roles and authority to the private sphere, reinforcing gendered divisions of labor and power in society.
4. **Reinforcement of Patriarchal Norms:** The text reinforces the idea that women's contributions are primarily tied to maintaining the home, while men's roles are typically framed in terms of external work or public life. This underscores the patriarchal belief that women are most valuable when fulfilling traditional domestic roles.

The sentence "It is the wife's job to build or destroy the house" subtly reinforces patriarchal gender norms by placing the responsibility for the household's success or failure on the wife. While it acknowledges the wife's influence, it also implies that she bears the blame for any failure in family life. This framing of women's roles, primarily in the private, domestic sphere, highlights the unequal distribution of power and responsibility in society, where women are often tasked with managing the household while men are allowed to occupy more public roles. Through a feminist analysis, we can see how such texts continue to reinforce gendered expectations and limit the roles and agency of women in society.

Example from the Text:

سگهي ڪري نٿو مقابلو جو زال سگهڙ به ڪو ۾ پڄاڻڻ
آهي عادي جو مزدوريءَ ۽ ڪم جي گهر جسم جو زال سگهڙ

Translation:

No one can compete with a good wife in cooking.

The body of a good wife is accustomed to housework and labor.

Analyzing Text 4: "No one can compete with a good wife in cooking." and "The body of a good wife is accustomed to housework and labor."

These two sentences from the lesson provide a glimpse into the portrayal of the "ideal wife" in traditional gender roles. Both texts, when analyzed through a feminist lens, reveal underlying messages about women's roles in the home and how these roles are deeply connected to their physical capabilities and self-worth.

"No one can compete with a good wife in cooking."

This statement elevates cooking as one of the defining qualities of a "good wife." The phrase implies that a woman's value is directly linked to her culinary skills and ability to serve the family through food. In this view, cooking is not just a mundane task but a form of excellence that defines a woman's identity and worth.

The statement suggests that a woman's primary role and identity lie within the domestic sphere, particularly in the kitchen. By framing cooking as a competition, the text implicitly suggests that there is a benchmark for what constitutes a "good wife"—and this benchmark is set by her cooking ability.

This places undue pressure on women to meet such standards, portraying cooking as not just a skill but a moral obligation.

From a feminist perspective, this text reinforces the traditional gendered division of labor where women's roles are confined to domestic chores, and their self-worth is often tied to their ability to fulfill these tasks to the highest standard. The message is clear: a woman's value is contingent upon her ability to perform in the kitchen, highlighting the limited scope of women's roles within the household.

"The body of a good wife is accustomed to housework and labor."

This sentence emphasizes the physical labor expected of women in the domestic sphere. It portrays the "good wife" as someone whose body is "accustomed" to constant housework and physical labor, reinforcing the idea that women are expected to endure and perform domestic chores without complaint. The term "accustomed" suggests that women are conditioned to accept this labor as part of their identity and role in society.

This statement also subtly ties a woman's physical well-being to her labor. It suggests that a woman's worth is not only defined by her ability to cook but also by her capacity to engage in the physical work of maintaining the home. The implication is that the wife's body is meant for continuous labor, which can be seen as a form of exploitation.

The feminist critique here is that such a portrayal confines women to a narrow, labor-intensive existence that values them primarily for their ability to perform domestic duties. This narrative ignores the broader aspects of women's lives, such as their personal ambitions, professional

aspirations, or intellectual contributions. By reducing a woman's worth to her physical labor, the text reinforces patriarchal ideas about gendered division of labor, where women's roles are predominantly shaped by their utility within the home.

Implicit Messages in Both Texts

When considered together, both texts convey several implicit messages about women's roles in society:

1. **The Importance of Domesticity:** Both statements reinforce the idea that a woman's primary function is within the domestic sphere. The wife is valued for her cooking and her physical labor, suggesting that her contributions to the household are central to her identity.
2. **Women's Self-Worth Tied to Domestic Skills:** The first statement, "No one can compete with a good wife in cooking," elevates domestic skills as a measure of a woman's worth, positioning her value within the confines of her domestic performance. Similarly, "The body of a good wife is accustomed to housework and labor" links the woman's physical body to her ability to perform labor, indicating that a woman's worth is tied to her continuous work and endurance.
3. **Limited Agency for Women:** Both texts imply that a woman's body and mind are primarily suited for housework, which limits her agency and personal freedom. There is no acknowledgment of the woman's intellectual, creative, or professional potential outside of the domestic sphere. The portrayal suggests that a "good wife" should be content with these limited roles and should be physically and emotionally conditioned to accept them as her primary function.
4. **Reinforcement of Gender Roles:** These texts reinforce traditional gender roles where men are not expected to participate in the domestic labor to the same extent. The focus on the wife's role in cooking and housework implies that these duties are inherently feminine and that women should take pride in fulfilling them, while men are free to occupy public, professional, or political roles.
5. **The Physicalization of Women's Roles:** By associating the wife's body with housework and labor, these texts reduce the woman's role to her physical capability to perform tasks. The repeated focus on the physical body reinforces the idea that women's labor is undervalued, often unseen, and taken for granted.

This aspect of the text contributes to the stereotype that a woman's identity is tied to her physicality rather than her intellect or other attributes.

Connection to Patriarchal Ideologies

Both of these texts align with Sylvia Walby's concept of patriarchy, which highlights how women's roles are largely confined to the private sphere, particularly through domestic labor.

In Walby's analysis, institutions such as the family structure perpetuate patriarchal norms by limiting women's access to the public sphere and professional opportunities. These texts reflect this by emphasizing that a woman's primary duties are within the home, shaping her identity around domestic chores and family responsibilities.

Additionally, the physical nature of the labor described in the second text aligns with Walby's idea that women's roles are often undervalued in economic and social structures. The depiction

of women as being “accustomed” to labor suggests that women’s physical contributions to the household are taken for granted, reinforcing the unequal value placed on women’s work compared to men’s.

Both of these texts work together to shape a restrictive and limiting view of women’s roles in the home. They suggest that a woman’s worth is directly tied to her domestic abilities and physical endurance, reinforcing traditional gender roles and patriarchal expectations. By framing cooking and housework as women’s primary responsibilities, the texts implicitly suggest that women’s roles should remain confined to the private sphere, with little regard for their potential outside of it. This highlights the need for a more equitable and inclusive representation of women, where their identities and worth are not solely defined by their ability to perform domestic tasks.

Example from the Text:

آهي ويندي پئي ڏسي حالت جي گهر سندس خبر جي نياڻيءَ جي گهر ٿا، رڪون قدم ۾ گهر به ڪهڙي

Translation:

We can observe a daughter's manners / upbringing by looking at her house.

Analyzing Text 5: “We can observe a daughter's manners / upbringing by looking at her house.”

This text provides an intriguing glimpse into the social expectations surrounding women, specifically daughters, and the way their upbringing is perceived through the state of their household. At first glance, it suggests that a woman’s ability to manage her home is a direct reflection of her upbringing and character. However, upon closer examination, this sentence reveals several underlying messages and assumptions about gender roles and societal expectations.

Implicit Messages in the Text

1. **Association of a Woman’s Value with Domesticity:** The statement implies that a woman’s upbringing and manners are observable through her ability to maintain and organize a home. This places the responsibility of managing the home squarely on the daughter’s shoulders, suggesting that her worth is tied to her skills in housekeeping and domestic duties. It reflects a common cultural belief that women’s primary role is to care for the household, and their value can be measured by how well they fulfill this responsibility.
2. **Judging Women by External Appearances:** The idea that a daughter’s “manners” or upbringing can be judged by the state of her house indicates that women are often judged based on external appearances, particularly in the domestic sphere. A well-kept house is seen as a reflection of a woman’s virtues, such as discipline, cleanliness, and moral character. This reinforces the idea that women’s worth is dependent on how well they perform domestic chores and manage their homes.
3. **Reinforcement of Traditional Gender Roles:** This statement reinforces the traditional view that women, particularly daughters, are responsible for domestic tasks. It places the expectation that a daughter will inherit the role of caretaker of the household, and her success in this area is indicative of her upbringing. There is little room in this narrative for the acknowledgment of women’s abilities outside of the domestic realm, such as professional achievements or intellectual contributions.

4. The Physical and Social Burden on Women: The implication that a daughter's behavior is visible through her housework suggests that women are burdened not only with domestic duties but also with the social pressure of maintaining the appearance of an ideal household. This burden is often placed on women as a measure of their character, which can be overwhelming and limiting. It overlooks the autonomy and independence of women by reducing their role to a caretaker of the home.

Connection to Patriarchal Ideologies

The statement "We can observe a daughter's manners / upbringing by looking at her house" is deeply tied to patriarchal ideologies. Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy underscores how women's roles are often confined to the private sphere, particularly in the home. This text reinforces this idea by suggesting that the worth of a woman (or daughter) is determined by her ability to fulfill her domestic duties. Women's roles are reduced to maintaining the home, with their character being judged based on how well they perform in this private space.

Additionally, the phrase reflects the patriarchal tendency to define women's worth through their physical and social roles within the household. It perpetuates the notion that a woman's primary value lies in her ability to maintain a well-run home, rather than her contributions outside the domestic sphere. This ties into Walby's point that patriarchal structures are sustained by limiting women's autonomy and confining them to roles that primarily serve the private, familial domain.

A Feminist Critique

From a feminist perspective, this statement can be seen as reinforcing gender inequality by placing the entire responsibility for domestic duties on the woman. It assumes that women are naturally suited to housework and that their upbringing and character are entirely defined by their ability to perform these tasks. The pressure to maintain a perfectly organized home as a measure of personal value can lead to a form of social control that limits women's freedom and autonomy. It suggests that women's roles are confined to the private sphere, and any deviation from this role could be seen as a failure or a reflection of poor upbringing.

Furthermore, this view fails to recognize the diverse roles that women play in society, both inside and outside the home. Women's worth should not be reduced to their domestic abilities or how well they manage household chores. The statement reflects a traditional, restrictive view of women's roles that limits their potential and reinforces patriarchal structures.

The statement "*We can observe a daughter's manners / upbringing by looking at her house*" highlights the deeply ingrained societal belief that a woman's character is defined by her ability to manage domestic responsibilities. It reinforces traditional gender roles that place the responsibility of the household on women, reducing their worth to their domestic abilities. Through a feminist lens, this text reveals the limited expectations placed on women and the ways in which patriarchal ideologies continue to shape perceptions of women's roles in society.

The analysis of the "Sughar Zaal" lesson from the Sindh Textbook Board's Grade 6 Sindhi textbook reveals implicit messages reinforcing traditional gender roles. The text portrays women primarily as caregivers and homemakers, reinforcing patriarchal ideologies that limit women's agency. Through a feminist lens and Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy, the study highlights how

educational content reflects broader societal gender inequalities, shaping students' perceptions of gender roles.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

The study highlights the need for gender-inclusive educational content that challenges traditional roles. By addressing these biases in textbooks, Pakistan can promote gender equality and empower both men and women to break free from outdated stereotypes. The researchers can expand the areas by conducting future research on the following topics and areas below:

1. Examine textbooks across different subjects and grade levels to identify widespread gender biases.
2. Research how these gendered messages influence students' career aspirations and attitudes.
3. Recommend integrating gender-neutral language and inclusive representations of women in textbooks.
4. Equip teachers with strategies to critically engage with gendered content and promote inclusive discussions.
5. Advocate for gender sensitivity guidelines in textbook development to foster equality in education.

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