STEREOTYPING GENDER AND SEXISM THROUGH MEMES ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A SOCIO-COGNITIVE DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

People on social media create memes as a strategy to communicate significant messages: such messages embed multifarious covert and overt meanings and consequently impact user's understanding of the self and world. The present study aims to investigate the memes on social media regarding the role of husbands and wives in a patriarchal marriage. This is a qualitative study which employs Van Dijik's Socio-cognitive approach for the critical discourse analysis of the matrimonial memes on social media. For this purpose, ten memes have been selected by employing purposive sampling from popular Facebook pages. The research design is based on the notion that such memes serve as a tool to inform about polarization between husbands and wives and determine the boundaries in terms of their roles and responsibilities in a particular social setting. The construction of this polarization and power structures are made natural on social media by repetitive use of context models and mental models that popularize past social cognition of the role of women and men in marriage. Moreover, it also goes parallel to the concept of dynamicity and fluidity of the construction of identity (ies) in the Reconceptualised Model of Multiple Identities (Jones, McEwen and Abes: 2007) which provides insight into how these external factors including social norms and practices, stereotyping, sociopolitical status influence people's perception of self particularly regarding gender roles in the social institutions such as marriage in this particular research. The data have been analyzed by making three categories based on the discursive, cognitive and social components. The findings reveal that the socio-cognitive representation of wives' in such jokes are as domineering, quarrelsome, inefficient, and shopping lovers and husbands' are portrayed as oppressed, lazy and useless. Such ideological assumptions are encouraged, supported and propagated on social media through such content which definitely has strong influence on social cognition of society regarding patriarchal power structures.

Keywords: DISCOURSE, SOCIO-COGNITIVE, CONTEXT MODEL, MENTAL MODEL, IDENTITY

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is considered as a source of communicating thoughts and meanings. All human beings obliquely or directly say what they desire. Particularly, ideologies are conveyed in indirect ways to avoid unwanted circumstances or to avoid resistance. In current social globalized scenario, Memes are the source of humour and entertainment for the social media users, but these may have serious impositions involved if these target someone or something particularly. The memes are not always created to be laughed at, but also involve serious repercussions including insult and disappointment for any other social group. Touchingly, every discourse has a purpose that is planned by the dominant group. Since language is arbitrary and it can be manipulated according to the desires of the discourse creators. Though universe exists on natural binary systems yet human beings intervene to shape language with unnatural binaries. The binary system of language is a handy tool for human beings to make certain divisions among human beings, groups and institutions. Husbands and wives are also two binaries defined by language. Jokes about husbands and wives are no doubt humorous but language is not free from that unnatural binary division. Therefore, it is necessary to

look how language of memes ideologically extends one's dominance to marginalize and hegemonize the other.

The present study aims to analyze the pragmatic aspect of memes relevant to husband and wives. Grice (1975) expresses that jokes and humour are supposed to be against politeness because these are devoid of manner principle. Men and women are two social groups defined by language as language is sexist and divides them into two imbalanced groups as it is suggested by Spender (1981), Beauvoir (1949) & Lakoff (2004). Keeping in view the above assumption, this study focuses on the representations of husbands and wives as two social groups in a patriarchal marriage.

1.1 Significance of the Study

The current research is significant as it brings forth the impact of the language used in memes on the construction of gender identities and ideologies particularly regarding power structures and the roles assigned to husbands and wives in a patriarchal marriages. By employing Van Dijik's socio cognitive approach (2015), the research categorizes the use of language in connection with social factors that cause its users to associate themselves and others with certain gender identities constructed through such memes. These memes on social media serve as a tool to allocate certain roles to husbands and wives and then central to this, is the process of naturalization making people believe in such constructed realities. For example, in most of the memes, husband are portrayed as powerless, oppressed and carefree and wives are showcased as bossy, quarrelsome, and imprudent. It has been found by many feminist researchers that such type of online sexism is now considered as acceptable by making it a form of humour. This way, the current research benefits to point out the complex role of humour in the establishment and acknowledgement of gender stereotyping and ideological assumptions that consequently lead to the imbalanced social order.

1.2 Research Questions

Q#1   How contemporary gender stereotypes and ideologies are exhibited and sustained   through matrimonial memes posted on social media?

Q#2   What role language of these memes does play in stereotyping gender distinctions and naturalizing hegemonic power structures particularly regarding roles assigned to husbands and wives?

2.LITERATURE REVIEW AND RELATED RESEARCHES

Graeme (2004) opines that humour involves complexity, incongruity and puzzling nature and he declares humour a form of human behaviour. For making the analysis valuable for future researchers, there is a need of appropriate theory. Graeme's views about analysis of jokes and humour show a special concern and highlight the need of a comprehensive research paradigm that could cater concrete solutions to questions based on scientific inquiry. For Hamuddin (2012) CDA as grassroots methodology examines how the composition of a text encodes opinions and relationships among the thoughts that are consistently present in the text. According to an article *How to Use Discourse Analysis* published by Emerald Publishing, Fairclough is the originator of critical discourse analysis and he presented his first model of discourse in 1989. After long unceasing efforts he formulated CDA as a multidisciplinary paradigm. Likewise, Henderson (2005) approves critical discourse analysis as a multidisciplinary approach to analyse any discourse through her scientific inquiry of this approach step by step. She related it with her work and found that critical discourse paradigm helped her solve every emerging problem during her research work. According to Van Dijk (2008) CDA is a comprehensive research methodology, it mainly scrutinizes the ways social power abuse, hegemony, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in social and political situations.

 The socio-cognitive theory by Van Dijk (2001) has been comprehensively discussed by Van Dijk (2008) as an approach to analyze any discourse. Because it provides ground for the prevalence of certain discourses with insightful proofs. According to his theory, every use of language is a social repertoire or *context model* which prepares the *mental models*. Both of these facilitate the intentions of the dominant group. According to Searle (1983) *"context model shapes mental model and to an extent, it is like a plan"*. For evidence, Van Dijk, states that hatred about the immigrants

is also produced through context and mental models designed by language. *Wave, Tasunami and Avalanche* are metaphors used for immigrants to negatively express concepts about them on the behalf of majority to process their social mental models. Such metaphors and their cognitive effects on recipients are not socially or politically innocent because mental models and negative metaphors assert hatred and prejudices for people in different discourse situations.

According to Van Dijk, human memory is time and again revived through discourses to keep the social-cognition alive and to promote the powerful ideologies. The micro and macro analysis of discourse identifies the (re)production of power abuse, on the behalf of the influential through schematic structures for promoting polarization, identity diffusion, and demonic others' representations. It is very difficult to come out of the schema developed through social networking. The powerful and dominant ideologies are continually penetrated in the human social system. The good things are presented in a chronological order with active sentences, repetitions, hyperbole, and positive metaphors and the bad things are represented through euphemisms, collective nouns, passive sentences, backgrounding and small letter type.

Another significant concept used in this study is the Reconceptualised Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Jones, McEwen and Abes (2007)). According to this model there are different social dimensions and factors that influence the construction of people's identity. These social constraints include identity markers like sexuality, religion, culture, ethnicity, gender, political connections, geography, and socioeconomic class and more. In the context of socio cognitive analysis of memes on social media, the dimensions which play a substantial role are gender, culture and sociopolitical historical context; these factors contribute to the meaning making process of people regarding their gender identities and sexism. The process of the construction of identity is always in the state of flux; it is not fixed. The hegemonic power structures constructed through these dimensions in the order of primacy is subject to contextual influences, so constructions of identity are dynamic responses to events and the environment of the individual (Jones, McEwen & Abes, 2007).

According to Jones and McEwen's(2000) model of multiple dimensions of identity and the reconceptualized model of multiple dimensions of identity (RMMDI; Abes et al.,2007)there are multiple and intersecting circles of identity which surrounds one's core sense of self. In these frameworks, identity development is conceptualized as a "planetary orbit" where multiple identities float around one's core sense of self based on the relative salience of each identity. These external contextual factors contribute to the meaning making process of individuals and society expects these social groups to behave in a certain naturalized roles such as these memes on social media play a substantial role in the construction of stereotypical discursive gender roles assigned to husbands and wives in a marital relationship. Such meanings are made natural through these platforms and people start believing in these constructed realities.

Humour and Jokes are not new. These are seen as situated discursive practice. It was in fact an oral and pastime tradition of human beings. Traditionally, people used to enjoy oral stories, riddles and jokes thousand years ago. Similarly, Bremmer (1997) states that humor has been the behavioral repertoire for human beings since unknown times. Greek books inform of jesters and joke books. According to Wikipedia, the Greek philosopher *Democritus* was well-known for his mirthful disposition. He used to make people laugh by his humour and used to enjoy the follies of his fellows. Though in past, humour was oral tradition as well as a recreational activity. Presently, different genres have evolved and they are found significant with respect to political effects they produce. Humour as a recreational and political genre has power to target people's behaviour, language, thinking, bodies and relationships.

Like all other genres, in the field of humour and jokes, researchers have found out plentiful examples of women's being targeted particularly. Likewise, Kotthoff (2006) relates the marginalization of women in jokes and humour with respect to social status, gender, aggressiveness, and sexuality. Contrarily, it is also common that men and women both may target each other in their jokes produced to target a particular person with respect to his/ her habit or distinctive quality. The same point of view is forwarded by Crawford (2003) who contends that women and

men use humor as a tool for producing their significant genders in same-gender and mixed-gender settings.

Sexism is very commonly used in descriptions when there is no other topic left for men and women to distort each other's image. They laugh at people's weaknesses through planned humour. Rappoport (2005) endorses the social fact that the humor specialists provide their expertise in the field. The main purpose of sexist discourse in jokes and humour is mostly to strengthen the patriarchal practices. The jokes logically value the powerful and disgrace the less privileged.

Fairclough (1995) also follows the same that media texts are built upon those versions of reality that support the social interests of the powerful producers of discourses. Attardo (2001) contends that in *Republic* a Socratic dialogue by Plato (375 BCE) and *Politics* by Aristotle (4th-century BC) the classical scholars Plato and Aristotle delineated women as inferior but they also disliked humour and laughing as sources of women's marginalization.

Likewise, Woodzicka & Ford (2010) share their views that jokes represent women stereotypically to marginalize them. Under the cover of diversion, our society promotes tolerance for sexism. Beauvoir cited in Siddiqui (2014:87) disapproves this social approach as unfair. She expresses her sorrow over social injustice that women are characterized and distinguished with reference to men not men with reference to women. Siddiqui (2014) adds that jokes are written for two effects: healthful and the hurtful. According to him, most of them are stereotypical about women and are mostly unkind for women. Cixous (2000) gives the similar stance that historically, writing supports the privileged and it is male-centered.

3.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For conducting the present study, 10 memes were selected from popular Facebook pages on social media by employing purposive sampling.The data has been analyzed by applying Van Dijk's Socio cognitive Approach (2008) because it explores social scenario by exploring the development of human cognition channelized through language and semiotics. According to Van Dijk social cognition is involved in any discourse and it is processed continually in society linguistically and non-linguistically. He claims that CDA needs to account for various forms of social cognition shared by social groups, organizations and institutions. He states that social cognitions are socially shared representations of arbitrary societal arrangements, groups and relations, as well as mental operations such as interpretations, thinking and arguing, inferencing and learning.

Keeping in view the discursive, cognitive and social components of Van Dijik's socio-cognitive approach, the data have been analyzed by making following categories:
1.   **Power Structures:**
2.   **Stereotypical Social Component**
3.   **Misogynist Behaviors**
4.   **Naturalization of Misrepresentation of Women:**
3.1   **Power Structures:**

Wives are socially cognitioned to perform house chores and men are supposed to be doing nothing, sitting comfortably on a sofa and yelling at their wives as depicted in meme no. 1,

Meme:01

The relationship between husband and wife has been represented stereotypically. Woman has been working in the kitchen while husband is relaxing on sofa. Language has been used mischievously that apparently, favour the wife. Husband is exposed complaining his wife for her bad habit that she does not concede to whatever he says. Wife's prompt reply confirms her habit of disagreeing with her husband. But the semiotic analysis helps understand the foregrounding and back grounding involved in language. Apparently, language is being used like a game in the meme that is expressing typical husband wife relationship. At the same time, semiotics show that woman has been backgrounded because she is shown from her back while husband is shown shouting at his wife. It means that whatever she says is of no importance for her husband. Though words suggest that wife is insolent but semiotics rigorously disclose the reality that husband holds the control, he has been taking tea, his legs are on the table and he is sitting quite informally on sofa. All these things show that woman says what is actually expected from her to say. Her back shows that it is expected from her as a weak marriage partner to say something opposite to her husband. Because social models and context models suggest the women and the weak can just say something meekly to soothe their discomfort and practically they cannot deviate the system. The language and expression of husband exhibit him powerful and dominant. The body posture of woman exposes her powerless and shows that she does not intend to say this rather it is expected from her to say at the back of her husband as per her social cognition that developed from the past. Similarly, according to Van Dijk and Fairclough cited in Henderson (2005) everything is made a part of our cognition through different social settings by social groups. The context of this meme explains that powerful people express their power to control or hegemonize through their expressions. The power ideologies of a social group contain context models and mental models in social settings to maintain the imbalance of power between two groups like husband and wife who are shown as opposite groups. Through the schema developed through context models, women are hegemonized particularly. Men are socially and mentally not cognitioned to be of any help and share the household responsibilities with their wives. It ensures the powerful and authoritative position of males and submissive female status from social model and context model.

Similarly Meme no. 2 shows that females are kept submissive to the extent that they do not realize that the terms of endearment further subjugate their social status.

Meme:02

 The wife likes that her husband calls her "honey" but does not realize that social and mental models of socio-cognition expect husbands to be unbothered about the liking and disliking of their wives. He calls her honey because he cannot remember her actual name. Such power imbalances create polarization in a marriage. This meme exposes a particular cognition of the powerful group. The speech bubbles represent social and mental models of husband and wife to display their social cognition. The expression by wife shows that females are usually idealistic and they adore the belittling expressions to replace their real names as endorsed by Beauvoir (2015) but she did not

like ladies' nicknames like honey, sweethearts , baby, little, doll, sweety and etc., because she believed these depreciative words were used to make females inferior and subjugated.

Moreover, linguistic choices and practices that are prevalent in culture perpetually determine and re (produce) social gender. Meanwhile, the titles nd the way of addressing are an essential and established category of it that also substantiate culture special meanings. (Baig & Ahmad 2019). It can be noted that the wife is thinking romantically that her husband had been calling her honey since last five years. She is thinking so because ladies are not taught to expect from men to remember things related to wives and married life. An acceptance for men's forgetfulness and weak memory are promoted through discourses. At the same time, the words in the speech bubble by husband disclose the suspense that he did not remember wife's name thus he was calling her *honey*. Society has made men's life carefree and easy through social cognition by processing social and mental models. Language and semiotics expose macro perspective involved in meme i.e., husband as powerful and privileged and wife as less powerful and less privileged. Wife's posture and smile expose her as an emotional and sanguine woman while husband has been exposed quite cool and normal through facial expressions and semiotics. The cunning husband is exposed possessing his social cognition and past learning. He is actually exercising power through dealing wife shrewdly. The same is expected from the powerful group to behave with the less powerful in an indifferent way. The indifference of husband is exposed with his forgetting the name even of his wife who has the closest relationship with him. Ladies cognition is also developed with a particular social perspective that favours the powerful group. Girls are taught to be a little sophisticated thus inferior to boys and they are taught to feel proud of being called romantically *little* which becomes their long term schema.

3.2   Stereotypical Social Component:

Society plays a major role in giving men a powerful status over women. Negative connotations are associated with women in memes. Her problem in cleaning is associated with her bad driving skills which is unjustified.

Meme:04

The same has also been very clearly evident in another meme where wife holds a broom in her hand and husband, a book. The behaviour of men towards deviant and resisting women are very negative. Commonly, so far patriarchal set up is concerned, men do not like powerful women and their driving is the most hostile phenomenon. Shahid (2010) expresses in an article on Express Tribune that men love discussing the road mishaps that happened because of female drivers. While the statistics verified that all over the world a very few accidents happened because of women drivers. Similarly, Levine (2012) answers to this query on Quora that women make driving mistakes

just because women drive very few times and men drive most often. Hence, it is an injustice to suppose women bad drivers. In the present context, women are target of negative humour. Here, husband highlights women's bad driving skill with a pithy remark. He does not appreciate his wife for her incessant routine work. Rather, he posits a serious joke on the expertise of women as drivers. He unjustifiably compares women's driving with the act of cleaning the home. No such quality is appreciated in women that equalize them with men. The picture shows husband is holding a book in his hand; on the other hand, wife is holding a broom for cleaning the house. The socio-cognitive schema of a husband is particularly exhibited i.e., to hate women as someone powerful and skilled. The husband has been tagged to be educated and authoritative through book in his hand and wife has been tagged to be domesticated lady through a broom in her hand. From macro level analysis, we can see husband exercising his power and dominance over his wife through a taunt. Husband and wife, as two opposite groups of a society are differentiated through language. The domesticated wives are embedded inferior and husbands are exposed superior through language and semiotics. Language and signs play thoughtful role in determining the baseless disparity between husband and wife. No word and sign in the meme is free of gender ideology.

Meme:05

Likewise, Meme no. 5, "Man: Work accident? Husband: No, she knew my FB password", demands the social sexual tendency of men to be normalized. It can be seen that the man is beaten for this reason by her wife but it is presented humorously. It is believed that wives should accept this behavior of husbands as the society encourages this tendency of men. This meme indicates the presence of two men. One man is present and foregrounded as husband of an absent and backgrounded wife. The wife is backgrounded as an arrogant and quarrelsome woman. The bandages on the body of husband indicate that wife beat him badly. The reason (i.e, FB password was disclosed to wife) for beating husband has been exaggerated to spotlight the domineering and possessive nature of a wife. It is bad representation of a woman and simply, by wife's misrepresentation, the tolerance for husband's extra-marital affairs is being demanded to naturalize it. From macro perspective the agency of male superiority and power can be detected in the discourse of this meme. An unnatural acceptability is demanded from women to stop doubting male honesty that is actually absent. It is the social cognition of males that is being privileged in the meme that men have natural instinct to develop infatuations and women have to tolerate it. Simultaneously, women's past social cognition of bearing the anomalies is being reanimated and reinvigorated through the meme. The presence of third person exposes the society as a mediator in the discourse cognition.

Mem: 08

Another significant meme highlights an authoritative wife who is socially cognitioned to keep the marriage intact. She has to keep sexually pervasive men in check because woman is a meek and weak partner in a marriage. Men are not faced with this pressure. For this reason she is made fun of in this meme. The foregrounded posture of woman and semiotics foreshadow a suspicious and aggressive wife. The selection of tools to penalize her husband for the violations of her set rules is seemingly ridiculous. On the contrary, these semiotics imply justifications for husband's betrayal. This meme delineates an authoritative wife while showing her weak relationship with her husband. The negative image of a wife is being represented who she wants to control her husband with household and dangerous tools because she lacks guts of a good wife. Late coming and drinking alcohol are undermined as the tools suggest here. In case of marks of lipstick, she is suggested to use the gun. Sexuality for woman is the serious crime. But it represents her own cognition that she perceived from her surroundings. Socially, it is in the best interests of women to control their sexual desires but ironically it is not applicable on men. So wife's control on husband's sexual perversion is actually being ridiculed in the meme. At the same time, wife is receiving the social cognition to handle her uncontrollable powerful husband in every possible way for a successful marriage. A wife's social cognition is utilized to forward it to the other women. At macro level, the husbands' dominance is naturalized and justified through the meme at the cost of the weakness of wife.

3.3   Misogynist Behaviors:

In meme no. 3, "Husband: We always hold hands when we go shopping. If I let go she'll buy fabric", women are compared to a dog where men are taming them both so that they do not run away. It shows that the love of women for shopping is regulated according to social models to benefit men. It also highlights that women do not resist this as in the image it is seen that the wife is happily standing beside her husband.

Meme: 03

This meme has a misogynist context because it exposes women as shopaholic in an unjustified way. This hate for women's shopping is socially popularized by patriarchal society to control their desires and choices. Similarly, hatred about women's shopping is highlighted in a poem "*Ambulances*" where Larkin (1961) compares shopping women with children who keep playing in all circumstances either it is time of war or the other. In this meme, the husband has been explaining about his wife's habit of shopping to another person. Presently, language as a double-edged weapon is expressing husband's social cognition as well as developing the social cognition of the listener. The present context is developing a social control over women's needs. They are indirectly being taught to follow their husbands. The macro perspective offers serious intentions of the discourse. The husband is used to expose the social and mental models to regulate the behaviour of wives. The domination is exercised through postures and language over the weak who are made weak by socialization. Women behave like kids because they profess to be weak. In *To the Light House,* Woolf (1927) shows women weakness by the way she exposes Mrs. Ramsay holding the hand of a child while going out of home for shopping. The same weakness of women is being exposed here. The 3ʳᵈ person involvement confirms that it is desirable on the part of the powerful to propagate the agenda of dominance. The two groups are differentiated by the use of power. Husband is on the commanding position. The use of *we* shows that wife and husband are socialized cognitively to be agreed on a given social pattern. As Dijk (2008) says that to hide the control and to show good image of the dominant group *collective pronouns* and *euphemism* are used in discourse. Identically, collective noun and euphemism are used here. Similarly, wife shows no resistance, thus accommodates to the power ideologies.

 Similar misogynist attitude is shown in meme no. 10, "Wife: I told him to study. You will get a good wife. He said Dad studied a lot…. what did he get?" that children are seen to be propagating the same social and mental cognition that they observe in the daily conversation of their parents which are demeaning towards each other.

Meme: 10

They construct a mental cognition based on sexism which taints the beautiful institution of marriage as something intolerable. A child's innocence has been utilized to endorse and forward past social cognition among new generations to stop challenging the traditional values though they are inappropriate and frustrating. Such representations forbid innovative thinking of the people. Like Hoeschmann & Poyntz (2012) point out that media literacies are *culture jammers*. As social media uses language and social practices for twisting and processing a desired social cognition of others with the help of characters. Mothers and wives are equally responsible for the development of social cognition of new generation without knowing the harms. In one way or the other, wives and husbands in memes are shown professing their faults and exaggerating them. The domineering display of wife and mother is representing all mothers' association with their children. This context asserts the fact that mothers have taught many sexist discourses to their kids and still doing it. Marriage is a source of social bondage and happiness, but it is being negatively magnified as a snare

for men. The hatred and breach between husbands and wives is being expanded. This kind of past cognition breaks lovely healthy relations and results in disintegration of family and society.

3.4   Naturalization of Misrepresentation of Women:

The wife is shown sinister who is torturing her husband in meme no. 6.

Meme: 06

The husband is handing her gun to kill herself. It socially voices the hateful image of women. Such social images create negative mental models that penetrate human minds. Here, husband and wife are represented as two antagonist forces. The husband is foregrounded for having hatred for his wife. Just two words are used to background wife's love for her husband while the socio-cognitive hatred for wives is highlighted with a number of pithy semiotics. The wife has been exaggerated as an undesirable, dangerous and sinister character. The husband's old and ugly appearance aggravates the impact of the scene. It seems that he has been tortured for a long time and he is using a chance to get rid of his wife. The constitution of marriage is also being ridiculed with words and pictures. The backgrounded wife is the target of hatred in the present context of meme. According to Fairclough (1995) voices and discourses are produced and negotiated by authors who live in a society and work as social actors. Same social voices and discourses are working as mental models through this meme. The mental model is created through social models and penetrated into human memories that get frozen for unlimited time. Frequently represented ideologies confirm the hegemony of a group and that hegemony transforms into hatred as it is evident in this discourse.

Meme: 07

In meme no. 7, wife is shown to handle her uncontrollable and powerful husband in every possible way for a successful marriage. She is visually represented with a negative and violent connotation but in fact it is the reaction of women towards their misogynist and domineering husbands. At micro level, this meme is seemingly funny fight between husband and wife. Actually, wife is being shown possessive and dominating. The institution of marriage is being disparaged to develop a hate schema of the viewers and readers to make them believe marriage as a hateful relation. The language and semiotics project hatred for wife and sympathy for the husband. Such memes are negative metaphors and mental models about marriage and husbands that remind husbands to suppress wives. Presently, the husband is exposed as dominated one and wife is shown the dominating one. At macro level, a contemptuous learning is being offered to the new generation as well as to husbands to treat the women and wives. Husband's tagging his wife as Covid-19 is being justified and popularized actually. The complaint of wife has been exaggerated by words and

semiotics to produce hatred for wives in the society. By words and semiotics husband has been backgrounded and wife's negative representation has been foregrounded.

Meme: 09

One of the significant stereotypical ideologies that is constructed through such discourses is related to wife's role as powerful partner who controls her poor husband. Husbands are the ones who can only make jokes about their miserable condition instead of rebelling against it. In Meme No. 09 it is shown that empathy is being drawn towards men that they are being controlled by their authoritative wives without saying no to them. Even machines have stopped working but men cannot do so. It is a misrepresentation of socio-cognition that women are supposed to give orders and men only follow the given orders. The discussion between husband and wife suggests that wife is clever as compared to her husband. She can control her innocent husband but she fails to control computer system. Here, the husband and wife have been exposed in a light mood. But even in this light mood discussion, wife has been ironically shown as a dominant partner who controls husband. The machines are shown to resist to the orders of wives. Language indicates that wives are so irritating that even machines start saying them no. One one side, the husbands are being empathized for working more than machines in terms of following wives' commands. On the other side, authoritative wives are being taught to be thankful to their husbands. The readers and the social media followers are given a message about women's nature of ordering and desire for perfection. This context is a result of a past socio-cognition of human beings and simultaneously, it is directing husbands and particularly wives to continue behaving in a particular way in future as suggested by the society.

4.   FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Critical discourse analysis as a comprehensive research method helped analyze the discourse of memes on social media. It provides a thoughtful insight to observe the involved politics in memes related to matrimonial relationship between husbands and wives. To answer the questions posed, language and semiotics are found to be socially constructed that incessantly support the dominant social group. It shows that the way women are being represented, it is actually an agency to control their resistance. Feminists are apprehensive of losing their efforts because change is a very slow process and there are possibilities that dominant may have more time and chances to control the change. Persistent negative representation of women in these memes are evidence for this apprehension.

The memes posted on social media are found to exhibit and sustain gender stereotypes and sexism. The memes were designed to invoke laughter through misrepresentation of women as aggressive, torturous and quarrelsome who do not understand the natural sexual tendencies and carefree style of their husbands. Through such pictorial representations, men are exhibiting their misogynist and sexist ideologies and are trying to make women understand their submissive status in society. Secondly, the negative image of women in memes at one side picturizes them negative and at the same time suggests them to control their certain resisting attitudes. Modern world no doubt has made policies regarding facilitating women to run the social and official systems smoothly because women are reported to be 52 percent in population as compared to men. But our society including

women is still not prepared to digest the change. Batliwala (2007) & Cornwall and Eade 2010) add some facts and figures in this regard. They express that there are many abstractions regarding feminism which add to ambiguity of social constructions and acceptance. Change is possible when women assert their power logically as Eckert & McConnell-Ginet (2013) suggest women to bring a broader social change by themselves. Similarly, Sunderland (2009) cited in Mills (2011) highlights that there is negativity about feminism in parts of the world as an anti-family and anti-male approach. Hence, for removing negativity about female's rights, women and feminists still have to work to mitigate the hatred for women as it is observed in this research endeavor. Last, but not the least, the change is possible if women keep resisting the misperceived notions though it is slow process.

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