

**Representation of 'Honour Killing' in Pakistani
Newspapers: A Critical Discourse Analysis**

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Representations of 'honour killing' in Pakistani newspapers: a critical discourse analysis

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Context I -



■ Pakistan - 3Cs (180.44 million population)

- Political instability
- Corruption
- Religious extremism



■ Violence is virulent

- Women
- Children
- Minorities
 - Shia
 - Hindu
 - Ahmedis
 - Christians

Context II -



- ❑ Vibrant media is considered as a panacea
 - Newspapers - 1500
 - TV Channels - 80+
 - Radio - 250+
 - Social Media - 10 million users



Context III-



- A murder of a person mainly a female accused of bringing shame upon his or her family or community.
- UN estimates at least 5000 women & girls are murders each year in the pretext of honour (UN, 2000)

■ HK in Pakistan

Year	No. of HKs
2013	869
2012	913
2011	943
2010	791
2009	647
2008	618

Sources: HRCP, AF, RDHR & IG Investigation Sindh Police

Methods: Data

- Two national English newspapers' coverage
 - [Dawn.com](#)
 - [The Express Tribune](#)
- news items, articles, editorials, pictures, letters to editor, blogs, features, book reviews and stories.
- Related to 'honour killings'
- Period Jan - Dec 2013

Material

Dawn

- News items - 57
- Articles - 07
- Editorial - 01
- Reports - 03
- Letters to editor - 02
- Book reviews - 01
- Features - 09
- Pictures - 11

Express Tribune

- News items - 37
- Articles - 05
- Editorial - 03
- Blogs - 02
- Pictures - 20

Total items = 158

Methods: Analysis

- CDA principles
- Assumptions in CDA that media representations are regarded as constitutive rather than representative of common notions (Fairclough, 1992).
- The objective was to elucidate the social effects of discourse that is how events, relationships and people are represented in discourse concerning honour killings.
- Used NNIVO v10

Framing the incident - Headline

Dawn

Honour killing

Two women killed 'for honour'

Two girls killed for 'honour'

Two killed in name of 'honour'

Three shot dead in name of 'honour'

Two fall victim to honour-killing

Three women shot dead for 'honour'

Three women shot dead in "honour killing"

TWO KILLED FOR HONOUR

Two Afghans killed in name of 'honour'

Youth killed for 'honour'

Man kills sister for 'honour'

Man kills 55-year-old wife for 'honour'

Express Tribune

Double murder: Man kills six-month pregnant wife

In the name of honour: Man, woman killed over alleged karo-kari

Karo-kari murders: Four people shot dead in honour killings

Honour killing: Body of a woman found

Honour Killing: Girl gunned down allegedly by brother

'Honour' killing?: Man kills daughter and her 'boyfriend'

Crimes of honour: Girl gunned down by her uncle

'Honour' crime: Man thrown acid at 'by in-laws'

'Honour' crime: Man kills daughter, her alleged boyfriend

Crimes against women: 'There are more honour killings than we know'

'Honour' crime: Three women killed 'for loose morals'

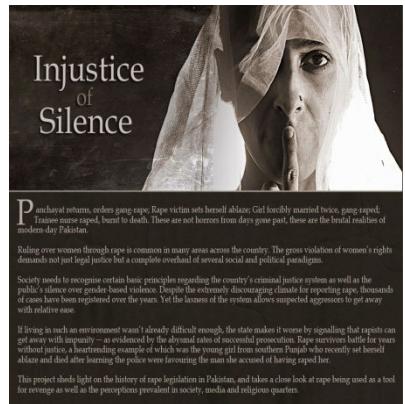
'Honour' crime: 20 arrested for declaring nine-year-old vani

Framing the incidents - terminology

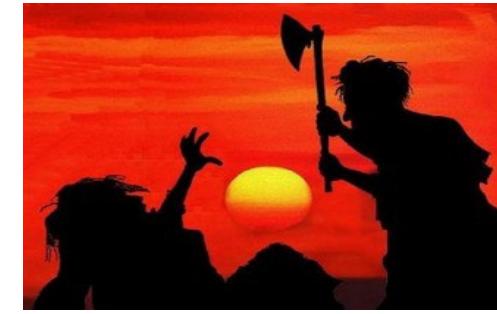
- 'Honour Killing' over used
- Regional names but Karo -kari is over used
- Not presenting as a crime
- Rare use of term 'murder'
- Presented as a 'honour crime' [ET]
- Little information about the context
- Emphasis on numbers

Pictorial presentation

Dawn



Express Tribune



Honour Killing as a Cultural Practice

- Part of cultural value system
- Made it sensitive
- Underreporting
- Society as 'tribal, feudal and patriarchal'
- Ethno-centric representation of incidents
 - Occurs across Pakistan in all ethnic groups
 - Stereotypes of ethnicity, class, place and gender
- Violence took a cultural face
 - such presentation prevents addressing the problem
 - Political processes that shape it

Presentation outside the legal framework

- Presenting killings outside the legal framework
- Law is not problematized
- Law and concerned institutions and their flaws are rarely discussed
- Incidents not covered fully
 - Police case registration
 - Court proceedings or verdict
 - Settlement outside the court

Discourse constrained to:

- Victim - perpetrator and their families sphere
- Mostly the incidents were presented by newspapers as it is a family/private matter and let's respect their privacy.
- State institutions are mainly spared in this context
- Such presentation limits:
 - the understanding of factors and mechanisms that maintain and encourage such practices
 - prevents to address the problem.

Danke!

