

Transgender Marriage in Pakistan: An Appraisal Analysis of Transphobia in Facebook Discussions

Abstract

This paper explores the APPRAISAL systems as they are enacted in (non)heteronormative discourses of the social media. The focus is on Facebook comments posted in response to broadcast media news of a fatwa issued by Pakistani clerics allowing transgender marriage in the country. In order to achieve its ends, the paper takes Martin and White's (2005) framework to study appraisal in discourse as a theoretical framework. The analysis shows Facebook users encode a range of appraisal items to evaluate transgender individuals' marriage. The study reveals that the differences between transphobic and transphilic argumentation are realized most notably through APPRAISAL markers of JUDGEMENT and AFFECT. The analysis further illustrates that the dialogic positioning taken by discussion participants is predominantly monoglossic (meaning one sided and totalitarian with utter disregard for alternative viewpoint and ideology) which exhibits the hold of hegemonic heteropatriarchy on the society.

Keywords: *Transgender people; Pakistan, social media, discourse, appraisal systems*

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to unveil how transgender community is viewed and evaluated by common Pakistanis and how a majority of them fail to view the transgender community beyond a mere spectacle of misery and an object to be pitied at and feared by. This study shows, a majority of Pakistanis does not empathize with transgender community which may in turn guarantee trans-community equality and rights. One such right includes the right to marry and live with a life partner. The transphobic lens of the people evaluates transgender marriage negatively and equates it with sin and homosexuality. It is in this connection that this paper intends to demonstrate gendered appraisal systems incorporated in social media discussions and the way these appraisal systems are employed to encode and interpret transphobia in text and talk. So, this paper aims to “comment on the interface between APPRAISAL and different modes of meaning in order to make contact with broader approaches to (gender and) discourse semantics” (Martin and White, 2005: 210). The hetero-

Dr. Snobra Rizwan

Assistant Professor, Department of English, Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan
E-mail: snobrarizwan@hotmail.com

patriarchal/homophobic discourses under analysis attend specifically to localized interactions between ATTITUDES and ENGAGEMENT with the purpose of developing the account of how, by such interactions, people construct a model of a presupposed addressee and position themselves with respect to that addressee (White and Martin 2005: 210). A range of discursive strategies formulate the evaluative mode of interactive social media texts. The interpersonal functionality of texts develops the idea of potential alignment between text producers and text recipients as they strategically invest the text's experiential content with different (non) heteronormative attitudes. By this it could be assumed in Bakhtin's (1981) terms, that social media are both ideological and axiological. "In these terms, ideologically speaking a text unfolds as rationality – a quest for 'truth'; axiologically it unfolds rhetorically – an invitation to community (cited in Martin & White 2005: 211).

To accomplish this, (non) heteropatriarchal discourses on social media are focused on following Martin and White's (2005: 210) analysis of enacting appraisal. This study, it is expected, will not only lead to observe and exemplify the texture of appraisal in discourse but also interpret the materialization of gendered evaluations as they unfold in the texts. The objective is to take a more comprehensive view of the gendered and sexist operation of various systems of appraisal which co-exist across various sub-cultural spheres. While discourse samples making representative samples for this study can be said to be attending to systematic patterns in the use of appraisal resources, nevertheless they exhibit varying emphases.

Taking all these issues into consideration, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. To what extent do Facebook commentators evaluate, appraise and challenge transphobia and *transphilia* (i.e. this study uses this label for the supporters of trans-community's rights) in the context of transgender people's marriage in Pakistan?
2. How are transphobic and transphilic values encoded discursively through interaction between AFFECT and ENGAGEMENT?

Background information

Transgender is an inclusive label for intersex, transsexual and transgender individuals in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the transgender community does not enjoy any respect and is flagrantly denied rights in Pakistan (see Massad 2015: 227). The 'transwomen' and 'eunuchs' are the visible members of trans-community in Pakistan because of their subversive enactment of gender (Butler 1990, 1997) in public space.

On June 26, 2017 a group of Islamic scholars belonging to the Barelvi school of thought issued a *fatwa* (religious decree) in Pakistan stating that transmen are allowed to marry transwomen (Bakshi 2016; Samaa Web Desk 2016; ARY Web Desk 2016; IANS 2016 & Khan and Marszal 2016). According to Mufti Muhammad Imran Hanfi Qadri, “A transman can marry a transwoman and vice versa, but intersex person – people born with physical sex characteristics that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies – cannot marry at all according to Islam” (Tanveer 2016:2). At the present there is a substantial opposition in Pakistani Muslims to this *fatwa* and a majority of people on the social media, Pakistani and non-Pakistani conservatives, posted comments to confront this *fatwa*, arguing in opposition to the said group of clerics and characterizing the supporters of this *fatwa* as ‘immoral’ and ‘lewd’.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical approach taken in this study was developed by Martin and White (2005) who built their approach on Halliday’s (1994) *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (hereafter referred to as SFL) paradigm. SFL identifies three modes of meaning which operate simultaneously in a given text, the ideational, the textual and the interpersonal (Halliday 1994, Halliday & Matthiessen 2013). Martin and White’s (2005) approach to study appraisal in English is concerned “with how writers/speakers approve and disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud and criticize, and with how they position their readers/listeners to do likewise” (Martin and White 2005: 1). Following Martin and White (2005) this article focuses on interpersonal meaning in written discourse. According to Martin (2000: 145), APPRAISAL can be defined as the semantic resources used to negotiate emotions, judgments, and valuations, alongside resources for amplifying and engaging with these evaluations. APPRAISAL consists of the systems of ATTITUDE, GRADUATION and ENGAGEMENT. It is the interaction between the systems of ATTITUDE and ENGAGEMENT which is of most interest in this paper. Within the APPRAISAL system, there are three broad subsystems of attitudinal positioning, i.e. AFFECT, JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION. The linguistic resources deployed in AFFECT(s) serve to construe emotional responses of the people; the linguistic resources of JUDGMENT construe moral or social evaluation of people’s behaviour; and in APPRECIATION linguistic resources serve to construe the ‘aesthetic’ qualities of processes and natural phenomena (see Martin 2000). ENGAGEMENT refers to **dialogic positions** and “groups together...all those locutions which provide the means for the authorial voice to position itself with respect to, and hence to ‘engage’ with, the other voices and alternative positions construed as being in play in the current communicative context” (Martin and White 2005: 94).

Operational definitions of variables under analysis:

- AFFECT – [The people] will be urged to understand and accept alternative gender and sexual identities.
- JUDGMENT – [A body] devoted to enlightening the masses
- APPRECIATION – World’s fastest growing religion

The attitudinal sub-categories of JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION emerged as comparatively more frequent in the analysis; therefore, their sub-systems were discussed in more detail. These categories can either have a positive or a negative value. The examples found in the data have both negative and positive values. These values ENGAGE the people in a given discursive space, where their **dialogic positions** may either be **monoglossic** [this view excludes the dissenting view from “any possible solidarity with the writer” and places it “outside the discursive community which the text constructs for itself” (Martin and White 2005: 157)] or **heteroglossic** [this view takes divergent voices and alternative viewpoints (see Martin and White 2005: 93)]. APPRAISAL categories, it is argued, are intertwined with discourse practices of the people in a particular socio-cultural context (see Foucault 1978, 1980; Fairclough 1992a, 1992b; Mills 1997; Lazar 2007).

Table A: Kinds of ATTITUDE

ATTITUDES		
A.1: ATTITUDE: Affect	A.2: ATTITUDE: Judgement	A.3: ATTITUDE: Appreciation

Table B: Kinds of AFFECT

AFFECT		
B.1: Affect: Un/happiness	B.2: Affect: In/security	B.3: Affect: Dis/satisfaction

Table C: Kinds of JUDGEMENT

JUDGEMENT				
ethics/ evaluating behavior				
C.1: Judgement: Normality (Is s/he special?)	C.2: Judgement: Capacity (Is s/he capable?)	C.3: Judgement: Tenacity (Is s/he dependable?)	C.4: Judgement: Veracity (Is s/he honest?)	C.5: Judgement: Propriety (Is s/he beyond reproach?)

Table D: Kinds of APPRECIATION

APPRECIATION (aesthetics, evaluating text/process, natural phenomenon)			
D.1: Appreciation: Reaction and its kinds		D.2: Appreciation: Valuation (Was it worthwhile?)	D.3: Appreciation: Composition and its kinds
↓			↓
D.1.1: Reaction: Impact (Did it grab me?)	D.1.2: Reaction: Quality (Did I like it?)		D.3.1: Composition: Balance (Did it hang together?)
			D.3.2: Composition: Complexity (Was it hard to follow?)

(adapted from Martin and White 2005)

The attitudinal sub-categories of JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION emerged as comparatively more frequent in the analysis; therefore, their sub-systems would be discussed in more detail. These categories can either have a positive or a negative

value. The examples found in the data have both negative and positive values. These values ENGAGE the people in a given discursive space, where their **dialogic positions** may either be **monoglossic** [this view excludes the dissenting view from “any possible solidarity with the writer” and places it “outside the discursive community which the text constructs for itself” (Martin and White 2005: 157)] or **heteroglossic** [this view takes divergent voices and alternative viewpoints (see Martin and White 2005: 93)]. APPRAISAL categories, it is argued, are intertwined with discourse practices of the people in a particular socio-cultural context (see Foucault 1978, 1980; Fairclough 1992a, 1992b; Mills 1997; Lazar 2007). So, ‘performativity’ (see Butler 1990, 1993, 1997) of marriage of a transgender couple {of transmen (i.e. bio-physiological females with a masculine gender identity/expression) and transwomen (bio-physiological males with a feminine gender identity/expression)} (see Reddy 2010; Kotak 2000; Sharma 1989)} is an instance of subversive acts because *hijra* (a label for transgender people in Indo-Pakistani context) in women’s clothing is “subversive to the extent that it reflects on the imitative structure by which hegemonic gender is itself produced and disputes heterosexuality’s claim on naturalness and originality” (Butler 1993: 125). In order to address the research questions, the comments on Facebook pages of newspapers and magazines which highlighted the news of *fatwa* allowing transgender marriage in Pakistan were studied. An overwhelming majority of comments (70%) from Pakistani commentators immediately following the news headline took to moralistic preaching, reprimanding the clerics for their wrongdoing. There is a minority group of commentators who welcomed this *fatwa* and declared it a progressive move. Social media comments, at first, seem varied, even disjointed with no homogenous argument, no clearly encoded hypothesis and no systematically presented facts and stats. In fact, if one intends to extract gist out of *anti-fatwa* arguments, they appear biased, orthodox and perhaps implausible – for example: transgender people are always involved in immoral activities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The general aim of the data collection process was to identify, for micro and macro-textual analysis, the different ways in which transphobic or transphilic sentiments were invoked by the commentators. Given this context, the following framework was used as the comments were reviewed:

- (1) Identifying relevant texts by examining a range of discussions on comment sections of different newspapers and magazines about the said *fatwa*
- (2) Text selection according to explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria and;
- (3) Discursively analyzing the data for themes.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were:

- Those written in English;
- Posts that were about *fatwa* allowing marriage of transgender people in Pakistan and;

- Those posted when the *fatwa* allowing transgender marriage was first issued.

Following is the breakdown of 655 comments making representative sample for this study:

- I. *Samaa* 56 comments
- II. *ARY* 111 comments
- III. *Express Tribune* 14 comments
- IV. *Global Citizen* 80 comments
- V. *Khaleej Times* 47 comments
- VI. *The Telegraph* 115 comments
- VII. *Vice News* 343 comments

The discussions under analysis were initiated on June 27, 2016 when the said *fatwa* was issued. Here, it must be added that the comments comprising data were not selected or picked by the researcher. These are actually the total number of comments posted on the Facebook pages of the said newspapers. If a news/story manages to attract people's attention, thousands of people comment on it, but this was not the case here, showing that people in general are not interested in the transgender community and their rights.

4. Appraisal analysis of Facebook discussions

4.1 Axiology – Social media discussion forums' value orientation

An in-depth study of Facebook comments demonstrates following ATTITUDES of the commentators:

- a) AFFECT: Empathy, sympathy and pity for transgender community who is denied rights and is considered inferior to a man and a woman
- b) APPRECIATION: applause and appreciation for clerics who issued the religious decree
- c) JUDGMENT: declaration of moral outrage, contempt, anger and hatred for clerics, their supporters and transgender people who are considered prostitutes and lesser humans.

The hybrids of evaluation (see examples on the following pages) construe an approving or disapproving attitude to gender-variance and can be treated as affectual inscriptions invoking (i.e. implying) JUDGMENT or APPRECIATION (satisfaction/dissatisfaction, respectful/contemptuous, disgust/revolt). Thus, different value orientations interconnect and interrelate in order to build ultimate gendered appraisal system within an order of discourse. By such interconnections and interrelations, the discourse constructs 'high order meaning complexes' or 'meta-relations' (Macken-Horarik 2003: 286). Eventually, these meta-relations provide

dialogic position to readers which leads them to adopt **monoglossic or heteroglossic** attitudinal alignments.

Key

+	positive attitude
-	negative attitude
des	affect: desire
hap	affect: un/happiness
sec	affect: in/security
sat	affect: dis/satisfaction
norm	judgement: normality
cap	judgement: capacity
ten	judgement: tenacity
ver	judgement: veracity
prop	judgement: propriety
reac	Appreciation: reaction
comp	appreciation: composition
val	appreciation: valuation.

(from Martin and White 2005: 71)

The Headline – setting field and tenor

The headlines listed below seem to take a position and this is how field and tenor of Facebook discussions for different individuals is set (appraisal items underlined):

- i. Pakistani clerics declare transgender marriages legal in Islam (The Telegraph)
- ii. Clerics issue *fatwa* allowing transgender marriage in Pakistan (SAMAA)
- iii. Fatwa allows transgender marriage in Pakistan (Khaleej Times)
- iv. A surprisingly progressive move: Transgender marriage is now legal under Sharia law in Pakistan (Global Citizens)
- v. Can transgender marry? ‘Yes’, says new *Fatwa*. (Express Tribune)
- vi. Pakistani clerics declare transgender marriages legal under Islamic law (Vice News)
- vii. New *Fatwa* allows transgender marriage (ARY)

Out of these five headlines the fourth and fifth seem to exhibit AFFECT: **insecurity, surprise** towards transgender community. The rest of the headlines attempt to take a neutral position without expressing any ideological leaning. Despite this neutrality, they seem to exhibit positive APPRECIATION, **valuation** marked by underlined appraisal items, since positive APPRECIATION, here, is used to refer to newsworthy information that is valuable enough to print (Martin and White 2005: 73).

Table 1 on the next three pages presents the summary of “ATTITUDE analysis”. The category which does not emerge in the given example is marked with x sign. The examples mentioned in Table 1 are discussed in detail on the following pages of the paper (please refer to *Key* to for analysis codes in Table 1). The multiple appraisal items in the same example are numbered a, b, c.... Since the study is based on Facebook comments, the examples are numbered C.1, C.2, C.3 ..., where C stands for ‘comment’.

A majority of comments posted by Pakistani people identify the homophilic group as westernized liberals (see C.1 below: in this and all the following examples, the appraisal items are underlined: refer to *Key*):

C. 1 This is another slap (a. -prop) on our moral values. These molvis are paid mullas (b. -cap). There are many westernized (c. -cap) liberals in our society who want to change our religious values. In fact transgender people’s rights means homosexuality(-norm)...(Posted by ZAA on Facebook page of ARY on June 27, 2016).

Thus, the hypothetical Muslim text recipients who are written into the text right from the beginning tend to take a negative JUDGMENT (**propriety, capacity, norm** respectively: see underlined attributes) of those who campaign for the transgender community’s rights. The aligned text producers and text recipients are construed as in-group members positioned against the ‘otherness’ of the ‘progressive’ section of the society.

Table 1: Attitude analysis

Sections	Appraising items	Appraiser	AFFECT	JUDGEMENT	APPRECIATION	Appraised
4.2	i. declaring ii. allowing iii. allows iv. surprisingly v. Interrogative and response "Yes" vi. declares vii. allows	i. THE TELEGRAPH ii. SAMAA iii. Khaleej Times iv. Global Citizen v. Express Tribune vi. Vice News vii. ARY	i. x ii. x iii. x iv. - sec v. - sec vi. x vii. x		i. +val ii. + val iii. + val iv. x v. x vi. + val vii. + val	i.clerics ii.clerics iii.fatwa iv. fatwa v. fatwa vi.clerics vii.fatwa
4.2 C.1	C.1 a.slap C.1 b.paid mullahs C.1c.westernized C.1.d homosexuality	C.1a ZAA C.1b ZAA C.1c ZAA C.1d ZAA	C.1a x C.1b x C.1c x C.1d x	C.1a.-prop C.1b.-cap C.1c.-cap C.1d.-norm	C.1a x C.1b x C.1c x C.1d x	C.1a.fatwa C.1b.clerics C.1c.clerics C.1d.trans-community
4.3 C.2 to C.8	C.2 manufacturing fault C.3 people of Lot C.4a only about marriage, divorce, eunuchs and pedophilia C.4b never C.5 be forced C.6aharamkhor C.6b incapable C.7a Good C.7b "OL ...world" C.8a Wow C.8b unbelievably C.8c Good	C.2 BJ2 C.3 TAH C.4 SL C.5 QMB C.6 QMB C.7 VV C.8 TK	C.2 x C.3 x C.4a -hap C.5 x C.6a -hap C.6b x C.7 x C.7 x	C.2 -cap C.3 -norm C.4a x C.4b -prop C.5 -prop C.6a x C.6 b -cap C.7a x C.7b +prop C.8 x	C.2 x C.3 x C.4a x C.5 x C.6a x C.6b x C.7a +reac C.8a +reac C.8b +reac C.8c +reac	C.2 transgender people C.3 transgender people C.4a, bclerics C.5 Clerics C.6a ,b Clerics C.7a Fatwa C.7b trans people C.8, a, b, c Fatwa
4.4 C.9	C.9a already made C.9b already decided	C.9 KX	C.9a x C.9b x C.9c x	C.9a -norm C.9b -norm C.9c -norm	C.9a x C.9b x C.9c x	C.9a the world C.9b the world C.9c the world

	C.9c bother C.9d thanks again		C.9d x	C.9d x	C.9d + val	C.9d The Telegraph
4.5 C.10 to C.13	C.10a a long ... person C.10b draconian... law C.11a much more C.11b meaningless C.12a Look ... talking C.12b should ... humans C.12c The more ... politicians C.13a harami C.13b alcoholic C.13c Fazlu diesel	C.10 AC C.11AC C.12 MIA KZ C.13 AS	C.10a x C.10b x C.11a x C.11b x C.12a x C.12b x C.12c x C.13a -hap C.13b x	C.10a +nrom C.10b x C.11a x C.11b - norm C.12a -cap C.12b - prop C.12c -ten C.13a x C.13 b - prop C.13 -prop	C.10a x C.10b -reac C.11a +reac C.11b x C.12a x C.12b x C.13 x C.13a x C.13b x C.13c x	C.10a Pakistani culture C.10b The West C.11a trans- community's rights C.11b Fatwa C.12a clerics C.12b trans- people C.12cclerics C.13a clerics C.13b clerics C.13c clerics

* In Table 1 the second and third columns list appraising items and acronyms of the commentators' names respectively.

Rhetoric of sin and morality

An overwhelming majority of social media comments about transgender marriage are loaded with the rhetoric of sin and morality. The use of methodic strategies such as the cataphoric reference of *they, these people, people of Lot* and politically incorrect language such as *half-man, curse, God forbid* and *sinners* for transgender people are some of the hallmarks of Pakistani transphobic discourse. The interpretative paradigm which operates for such heteropatriarchal appraisal discourses comprise strategic chains of attitudinal values which lead in-group members to construe the depicted world through the eyes of the text producer, and hence to empathize or sympathize with them. In the case of Pakistani social media, an overwhelming majority of the commentators (i.e. the moralists and the religious ones) organize attitudinal meanings so as to align the in-group members into a transphobic community which shuns deviation from gender norms and forbids subversion of normative gender performance. The effect is achieved by firstly aligning the in-group members into a communality which maintains the status-quo of gender roles. Interestingly, this is achieved mainly by invoked attitudinal *tokens* (i.e. indirect emotions) rather than *inscriptions* (i.e. direct expression of feelings).

C. 2 Their baby making machine has manufacturing fault (-cap) (Posted by BJ2 on Facebook page of ARY on June 28, 2016).

[factual token of -ve JUDGMENT: incapacity, hence normative contempt for transgender community]

C. 3 *Because of such practices, God destroyed People of Lot (-norm) (Posted by TAH on the Facebook page of ARY on June 28, 2016).*

[factual token of -ve JUDGMENT: normality, people of Lot stands for homosexuality in Quran, hence sinful life of married transgender people]

C. 4 *These clerics like to issue religious decrees only about marriage, divorce, eunuchs and paedophilia (a. -hap). People are dying in Syria, Iraq and many other countries of the world... They would never(b. -prop) talk about these issues. (Posted by SL on Facebook page of SAMAA on June 28, 2016).*

[-ve AFFECT: **unhappiness**; indication of dislike, hate and abhorrence for Pakistani clerics; -ve JUDGMENT: **propriety**]

C. 5 *First of all, the clerics who issued this fatwa should be forced (-norm) to marry transgender individuals (Posted by QMB on Facebook page of ARY on June 28, 2016).*

[token of -ve JUDGMENT: **propriety**, condemnation of the clerics and *fatwa*]

At times, transphobic attitude is inscribed rather than invoked. It typically happens in case of values of condemnation. The direct negative AFFECT: **un/happiness: dislike** (e.g. *haramkhor*) towards, and JUDGMENT: incapacity (e.g. incapable) of, clerics and transgender community could be observed in C.6.

C.6 *the haramkhor (a. -hap) (someone who earns money by dishonest means) clerics are incapable(b. -cap) of talking about important issues (Posted by QMB on Facebook page of ARY on June 28, 2016).*

There are others who express positive JUDGMENT and AFFECT regarding this issue. Under the conditioning of the text recipients' knowledge of socio-cultural scenario of Pakistan, seemingly neutral statement of facts may have a force to evoke a positive reaction (i.e. APPRECIATION: **reaction, quality**) which is, perhaps, more strongly felt on account of being alluded to rather than directly stated (e.g. see C.6). In Facebook pages of foreign newspapers and magazines, the dominant attitudinal motif is positive APPRECIATION (**reaction: quality**, e.g. good, wow) and positive JUDGMENT (**propriety, ethics: moral**, e.g. *Ol humans have der own rights in the world* and **capacity: productive** e.g. *still a lot to do*) of the sympathizers and right activists typically conveyed via inscription (see C.7 and C.8.):

C. 7 *Good step (+reac)Ol humans have der own rights in the world (Posted by VV on Facebook page of Khaleej Times on June 28, 2016).*

C. 8 wow (a. +reac)! That's unbelievably progressive (b. +reac)! Very good (c. +reac) step but still a lot to do (Posted by TK on Facebook page of Khaleej Times on June 28, 2016).

Intriguingly, this sort of positive labeling, APPRECIATION: **reaction, quality**, (e.g. Wow and good in C.7 and C.8) is punctuated with material which has the potential to evoke the sense that the 'transgender community' has been mistreated and to provoke feelings of sympathy for them. The outcome is to position the text recipient as aligned into a community of feeling by which an undeniably 'natural' connection between celebration of a good move and hope for a better future is maintained.

Juxtaposing competing discourses

One group of social media which exhibits *condescending* behaviour seems to mix positivity with negativity (e.g. C.20):

C. 9 *Hollie Carter that's the mind-set all the world already made (a. -norm) regarding Pakistan. They have already decided (b. -norm) about Pakistan. even they never bother (c. -norm) to research the things about us □ Telegraph, thanks again (d. + val) to help us* (Posted by KX on Facebook page of The Telegraph on June 28, 2016).

This is the same monoglossic taken-for-granted approach which marks the discursive practices of non-Pakistani commentators. The negative JUDGMENT: **normality** (see underlined chunks in C.9) that Pakistan is an orthodox, conservative and extremist society is construed as a position which is definitive and unquestionable for all non-Pakistani commentators. The texture of discourse in C. 9 is quite intricate, with both positive and negative lines of APPRECIATION. The positive APPRECIATION: **valuation** is both for the newspaper (for publishing positive news about Pakistan) and Pakistan (for initiating a progressive move of legitimizing transgender marriage).

Sorry state of ethical values of Facebook commentators

The social media discussion forums provide a series of factual tokens which the users offer to the text recipients as evidence of just how aggrieved and discomfited Pakistani transgender community is (see C.10).

C. 10 *The subcontinent, including Pakistan, has had a long tradition of recognizing transgender persons (a. +norm) --- BTW, the draconian anti-LGB laws there came from British law (b. -reac) during the period of British colonialism/oppression* (Posted by AC on Facebook page of Global Citizen on June 28, 2016).

This evidence, then, is allegedly presented as further premise for why ‘we, the normal heterosexual Pakistani people’, should empathize with the transgender community in continuation with our historical tradition. This is how a meta-relationship of ‘confirmation’ is established with the preceding comment, i.e. C.9: the negative APPRECIATION: valuation that Pakistan is viewed as an intolerant and oppressive society by a majority of people in the West. In other words, C.10 (the underlined relational clauses) provides a point of possible attitudinal alignment for both Pakistani and Western readers – in which a long-standing and deep-seated negative APPRECIATION: **valuation** of Pakistan and Pakistani society is invoked – namely the view which condescends Pakistani socio-cultural tradition, seeing it as crude, gauche or unrefined and underdeveloped as compared to the West. This comment and many others like this serve to highlight ‘transformation’ or devolution of Pakistani society: the practices of tolerance and acceptance of a pre-colonial Indo-Pakistan are recalled in juxtaposition to current intolerant and exclusionary practices. The core value being invoked is one of positive APPRECIATION: **normality** of Indo-Pakistani culture regarding status of transgender community (see underlined chunk ‘a.’ in C.10), and hence an invocation of negative APPRECIATION: **reaction** of the West (see underlined chunk ‘b’ in C.10).

In their unequivocal evaluative language (their inscriptions of attitude), a majority of Pakistani social media commentators (i.e. the skeptics and the ambivalent ones) avoid being directly sympathetic to the transgender community. At the level of explicit attitude, the said *fatwa* legitimizing transgender marriage is perceived as a matter of APPRECIATION: **reaction** rather than JUDGMENT.

C. 11 Agree that Much more (a. +reac) is needed but do not agree that it's ‘meaningless’ (b. +norm) (Posted by AC on Facebook page of Global Citizen on June 28, 2016).

No human agent has been mentioned in C.11. Once again, the juxtaposition of ideas is observed here. The phrase ‘much more’ is juxtaposed to ‘meaningless’ which allows the explicit, literal meaning to be affirmative rather than disapproving. In terms of attitudinal alignment and the negotiation of solidarity, the attitude of some of the commentators is somewhat mixed.

C. 12 Look who is talking (-cap)... Transgenders should be treated as human(+prop) but.... The more fatwas they issue, the more it looks like religion is a means of control over people, by politicians (-ten) (Posted by MIA and KZ on Facebook page of Khaleej Times on June 28, 2016).

Here, as it has been mentioned, the skeptic commentator is proposing a somewhat disapproving view of the said *fatwa*. A range of JUDGEMENT: **capacity** (Look who

is talking), **propriety: obligation** (should be) and **usuality** (The more ... by politician) acts to present this negativity as contentious and likely to be debated in the communicative context of social media discussion since this is a view which the commentator herself repudiates (when she says, ‘Transgenders should be treated as humans but’), even though she dismisses it later. The community into which the text-recipient is being aligned, therefore, is noticeably one which is sympathetic towards transgender community but is not in favour of allowing them sexual liberty. This disapproval takes the shape of ‘factual’ statements which act as tokens of -ve AFFECT: **un/happiness** (see ‘a’ in C. 13) and -ve JUDGEMENT: **propriety** (see ‘b’ and ‘c’ in C.13).

C. 13 Google" Mufti " in Pakistan and it will mean a Harami (meaning bastard) (a. -hap).....Like Ashrafi alcoholic (b. - prop) or Mufti Qavi and QandeelLiaqat Amir , FazluDiesel (c. -prop) and many more (Posted by AS on Facebook page of Khaleej Times on June 28, 2016).

Both attitudinally and dialogistically, some commentators exhibit ambivalent feelings. Attitudinally the text-recipient is made to share feelings of both sympathy (i.e. transgenders are humans) and condescension (i.e. Pakistani clerics are incapable of doing anything good). Dialogistically, some statements are held to be non-contentious for the readers (for example, ‘The subcontinent, including Pakistan, has had a long tradition of recognizing transgender persons’) while others are held to be a little more problematic and less plausible to be shared, at least primarily (for example in C.12, ‘it looks like religion is a means of control over people, by politicians’)

Table 2 shows a synoptic view of complex meta-relations of appraisal values.

Table 2: Overview of meta-relations

Analysis sections	Dominant attitudinal terms	Dominant dialogistic positioning
4.3 Rhetoric of sin, morality	inscribed -ve judgment	monoglossic: taken-forgrantedness
	tokens of -ve affect	
4.4 Juxtaposing competing discourses	inscribed -ve judgment: about Pakistan	monoglossic: taken-forgrantedness
	Inscribed +ve judgment: about clerics and fatwa tokens of +ve appreciation: of clerics, fatwa and The Telegraph	heteroglossic
4.5 Sorry state of transgender community in Pakistan	invoked -ve judgment: incapacity	monoglossic + implied heteroglossic
	invoked +ve judgment	
	+ve affect: appreciation	heteroglossic
	invoked -ve judgment invoked -ve affect	monoglossic+ implied heteroglossic

Table 2 shows how discourses of/on transgender marriage in Pakistan demonstrate strategic use of affectually-based alignments (predominantly negative and monoglossic) and reject transgender marriage equating it with homosexuality and sin.

CONCLUSION

The analysis, provided in this study, reveals complex processes by which Facebook commentators construct a range of points of alignment with the said *fatwa*, and strategically vary the terms of these alignments depending on their respective ideological leanings. More specifically, this study unfolds various points of alignment in relation to the transgender community's rights in Pakistan, thereby displaying a wide range of rhetorical force exhibiting transphobia. The transphobic discourse of Pakistan comprises a careful modulation of alignment with a long-standing ambivalence towards the transgender community. By this modulation, Pakistani people characterize transgender individuals as wronged against while at the same time disrespecting and ridiculing them for their immoral activities and unworthiness. Since these unworthy elements have long-standingly been stereotyped targets of suspicion and criticism in heteropatriarchy (for example, disapproval of religion and equation with homosexuality), the picture painted by the text is compatible with Pakistani culture's heteronormative images of gender. This evaluative logic provides the (non)compliant individuals with a community of shared ATTITUDE within which heteronormativity enjoys hegemony. This analysis also demonstrates the way Facebook commentators exhibit certain intersubjective positioning in order to construe transphobic and homophilic groups. An overwhelming majority of discourse samples demonstrate **monoglossia**. One of the propositions which was extensively **dialogised** and hence characterized as contentious was the assertion that religion is intolerant of transgender marriage and transgender marriage equates with homosexuality. Solidarity for comments with +ve EVALUATION of transgender community's rights is overwhelmingly a matter of alignment with an axiological community for which values are not taken for granted and in which there is space for alternative viewpoints.

REFERENCES

- ARY Web Desk. 2016. "New Fatwa allows transgender marriage". In *ARY News*. [Electronic Edition]. www.arynews.tv Retrieved June 12, 2016.
- Bakshi, Garima. 2016. "Transgender marriage is now legal under Sharia law in Pakistan". In *Global Citizens* [Electronic Edition]. www.globalcitizen.org. Retrieved June 12, 2016.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail Mikhailovich. 1981. *The Dialogic Imagination* (translated by C. Emerson & M. Holquist) Austin: University of Texas Press.

- Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble. Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith. 1993. *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "sex"*. London: New York & Routledge.
- Butler, Judith. 1997. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performatives*. New York: Routledge.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1992a. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fairclough, Norman. 1992b. "Discourse and text: Linguistic intertextual analysis within discourse analysis". In *Discourse and Society*, 3(2), 193–217.
- Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality, Vol.1: The will to knowledge*. New York: Pantheon.
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge*. Brighton, Harvester.
- Halliday, Michael, A. K. 1994. *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 2nd ed. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, Michael A. K. & Matthiessen, Christian M. I. M. 2013. *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, New York: Routledge.
- IANS. 2016. "Fatwa allows transgender marriage in Islam". In *Khaleej Times* [Electronic Edition]. www.khaleejtimes.com. Retrieved June 12, 2016.
- Khan, Muhammad Zubair & Marszel Andrew. 2016. "Pakistani Clerics Declare Transgender Marriage Legal in Islam". In *The Telegraph* [Electronic Edition]. www.telegraph.co.uk. Retrieved June 12, 2016.
- Kotak, Ash. 2000. *Hijra*. Oberon. University of Michigan.
- Mills, Sara. 1997. *Discourse*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Macken-Horarik, Mary. & J. R. Martin (Eds.). 2003. "Negotiating Heteroglossia: Social Perspectives on Evaluation". (Special Issue of *Text* 23.2).

- Martin, J.R. 2000. Beyond exchange: Appraisal systems in English. In S. Hunston and G. Thompson (eds) *Evaluation in Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 142–75.
- Martin, J.R. 2000. Beyond exchange: Appraisal systems in English. In S. Hunston and G. Thompson (eds) *Evaluation in Text*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 142–75.
- Martin, J. R. and White, P. R. R. 2005. *Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Massad, Joseph A. 2015. *Islam in Liberalism*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.
- Reddy, Gayatri. 2010. *With Respect to Sex: Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Samaa Web Desk. 2016. “Clerics issue Fatwa allowing transgender marriage in Islam”. In SAMAA. [Electronic Edition]. www.samaa.tv. Retrieved June 12, 2016.
- Sharma, Satish Kumar. 1989. *Hijras*. Gian Publishing House. Originally from The University of Virginia.
- Tanveer, Rana. 2016. “Can transgender marry? ‘Yes,’ says new Fatwa”. In *Express Tribune Electronic Edition*. Published June 27, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017.