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Womanly Guise as a Feminist Strategy: Unveiling Womanly Guise with Psychoanalytic and Feminist Psychoanalytic Lens

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Abstract

This paper interrogates the construct of "womanly guise" as a subversive feminist strategy through the dual lenses of psychoanalytic theory and feminist psychoanalytic critique. By deconstructing the performative enactments of femininity, this study elucidates how the womanly guise operates both as a mechanism of patriarchal complicity and a radical apparatus of feminist insurrection. Utilizing the theoretical frameworks of Freud, and contemporary feminist psychoanalysts such as Jessica Benjamin (2017), the analysis reveals the intricate interplay between societal interpellation and individual agency. Through a thematic analysis of eight online videos, the research examines the discursive representations of gender roles, cultural hegemony, defense mechanisms, and subconscious libidinal economies. The findings reveal how performers deploy humor and satire to destabilize hegemonic norms and foreground the tensions between sociocultural prescriptions and personal desires. This exploration contributes to a nuanced understanding of gender performativity, and emphasizes the insurgent potential embedded within the very structures designed to reify female subjectivity. By employing digital ethnographic observation and qualitative content analysis of the YouTube videos, this study elucidates how content creators and performers subvert or content gender stereotypes and normative roles through their comedic praxis.

Keywords: Womanly guise, Fun Videos, Online Enactment, Womanly men, Feminist Strategy.

Introduction

Womanly guise has long been a subject fraught with misconceptions and negative associations within existing scholarship. It has been linked to perceptions of perversion, fetishism, exhibitionism, sexual deviation, and even homosexuality

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(Freud, 1927; Mazaleigue-Labaste, 2014). However, in feminist theory and psychoanalytic discourse the concept of "womanly guise" is a major point of emphasis as it is a site where gender norms are simultaneously constructed and challenged.

On the other hand, Freudian psychoanalytic theory explains unconscious mechanisms that underlie gender identity and behaviour. Freud's journey into the unknown parts of the mind was fundamental whereas Lacan's notion of a symbolic order together with the mirror stage makes understanding what constitutes sex more complex as opposed to it being natural (Freud 1923; Lacan 1977). Feminist psychoanalytic feminists like Jessica Benjamin and Juliet Mitchell not only critique these theories but also build upon them to reveal and highlight how psychoanalysis can both uncover and perpetuate gendered power dynamics. (Benjamin, 1988; Mitchell, 1974). These theories lay out a base for the underpinnings about how in many cultural contexts, including Pakistan, it remains a deeply contentious and often stigmatized practice. However, different media genres and television shows have featured womanly guises, and have often garnered high ratings, indicating a widespread audience appeal for such content. One notable example is Ali Saleem's show, also known as Late Night with Begum Nawazish Ali, which captivated viewers with its unique portrayal of a gender-bending character. Despite the popularity of the show, controversies and accusations have sometimes marred its success. Ali Saleem, in particular, faced backlash and controversy surrounding his show, raising questions about the societal acceptance and reception of womanly guise in Pakistan in 2005.

Later, the emergence of digital platforms like YouTube TikTok, Facebook, etc. has provided a unique space for individuals to engage in womanly guise performances with unprecedented visibility and reach (Rouse, 2023). A notable point is the prevalence of womanly guise content on digital platforms. Not only the prevalence but also the success and popularity of numerous YouTubers who incorporate womanly guise into their comedic videos are also evident. These content creators have not only amassed substantial followings but have also found significant financial success through their endeavours. Figures such as Zaid Ali, Rahim Pardesi, and Amir Hamza, Shahvir Jaffery, Sunny Jaffery have captivated millions of viewers through their womanly guise portrayals, challenging conventional understandings of gender expression and identity. The success of these performers underscores the enduring relevance and popularity of womanly guise as a comedic device in Pakistani media. As a result, the womanly guise when employed in the comedic videos, serves as a tool for both compliance and subversion, illustrating the dual nature of gender performance as both a constraint and as a form of resistance. By exploring themes related to family dynamics, cultural traditions, and societal norms, these creators provide audiences with both entertainment and opportunities for reflection (Linke, Prommer & Wegener, 2020). This paper, by incorporating psychoanalytic and feminist psychoanalytic perspectives, sought to elucidate the complex interplay

between societal expectations, individual agency, and the subversive potential inherent in performative acts of femininity. The analysis reveals that these content creators and performers' use of fun and satire to expose patriarchal constructs and destabilize gendered dynamics ultimately has the potential to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of feminist resistance.

Review of the Literature

The existing scholarship suggests that the concept of "womanly guise" emerges from Freud and Lacan's psychoanalytic theories that highlight the performative nature of gender identity. Sigmund Freud's groundwork theories on psychosexual development (Freud, 1923) emphasize how early childhood experiences shape gender identity through unconscious processes. Jacques Lacan's extension of Freudian theory to include the mirror stage and the symbolic order further underscores gender identity as a socially mediated construct, where individuals perform and internalize gender roles through language and societal norms (Lacan, 1977).

On the other hand, feminist psychoanalytic scholars, such as Juliet Mitchell and Jessica Benjamin, have critiqued traditional psychoanalytic theories for perpetuating patriarchal norms and pathologizing femininity (Mitchell, 1974; Benjamin, 1988). Mitchell's analysis challenges Freud's biases towards women and argues for a re-evaluation of gendered subjectivities within psychoanalysis. Benjamin's concept of mutual recognition within psychoanalytic relationships offers insights into how gender identities are negotiated and contested through relational dynamics.

Past research studies confirm that womanly guise has been associated with perversion, fetishism, exhibitionism, sexual deviation, and homosexuality (Farooq 2020). However, it has been part of television dramas, films, novels, and plays. Dramas such as "Yentl" explore more serious themes of gender identity and societal expectations through the portrayal of a woman who disguises herself as a man to pursue an education. AP Archive (2015) discusses Ali Saleem who opts for a womanly guise to enact the character of Begum Nawazish Ali on a Pakistani private TV Channel. Now, in the digital age, digital YouTubers opt womanly guise for enactment purposes while deviating from culturally defined roles outlined by a gender culture, and gender code (West & Zimmerman, 1987), gender dictates or gender ideology (Butler, 1990). Many such figures deviate from the set patterns to gain fame and money like Nigerian crossdresser James Brown.

This trope often serves as a vehicle for exploring themes related to gender, identity, and social norms, traditional gender roles and expectations, and the fluidity of gender expression and provides commentary on issues such as sexism, and misogyny (Doe, 2023). Additionally, womanly guise narratives can offer opportunities for characters to subvert power dynamics, challenge authority, and assert their autonomy. Despite its prevalence in fiction and media, womanly guise is not without controversy,

perpetuating stereotypes or ridicule. However, when executed thoughtfully and sensitively, this narrative device has the potential to spark important conversations about gender, sexuality, and the complexities of human identity (Kotthoff, 2022). Research on womanly guise in video-making highlights its role in fun and socialization. Torhonenars et al. (2019) note that digital content creation often involves role-playing, dance, and music, which are forms of embodied labour producing immaterial products like socialization and entertainment. These performances not only create art but also engage audiences, framing the body as a labouring entity. While labouring bodies typically adhere to consumption patterns, they can also challenge and reshape existing styles through their performativity (Butler, 2011).

Research on womanly guise in digital content creation highlights its role in fun and socialization as Torhonenars et al. (2019, p.166) confirm that most digital users create content on digital sites for fun and socialization and how prosumerism creates new dimensions of technology-enabled labour practices through role-playing, acting, dance, and music as embodied labour producing immaterial quality products; affection, care, love, socialization, communication, entertainment, organization, planning, coordination that map closely onto the types of unpaid labour. Such performances not only create art but also engage audiences, framing the body as a labouring body and entity. Mostly, labouring bodies conform to available set consumption patterns while some rework, reject, or resist the existing styles or skills by their performativity (Butler, 2011, p.175). In Pakistan, many men use womanly guise (Farooq, 2020) to earn their living on YouTube or Ticktock. Yet, these YouTubers or Tiktokers do not necessarily wear a saree or a blouse but wear a headgear, or a wig, sometimes womanly clothes, make sensual postures, and use slang while portraying a woman Like Zaid Ali, Rahim Pardesi, Amir Hamza, and many others.

The discrepancy between the mocking of womanly guise in public spaces, and its appreciation on digital platforms, where millions engage with and support these performers warrants investigation. This study, thus, works as an entry point to examine womanly guise as a feminist strategy. It also fills critical gaps in existing scholarship by integrating psychoanalytic and feminist frameworks to analyze womanly guise in digital media, particularly in non-Western contexts like Pakistan. It provides empirical insights through thematic analysis of YouTube content, exploring how digital performers challenge local gender norms and navigate intersectional identities (UNDP, 2018).

Research Questions

1. How do the YouTubers employ a womanly guise as a feminist strategy in their fun videos online.

2. What defence mechanisms and subconscious desires are portrayed through their womanly guises?
3. How do psychoanalytic concepts inform our understanding of the portrayal of gender roles, social expectations, and norms?
4. In what ways, does feminist psychoanalysis offer insights into the subversion of gender norms in reclamation of female agency through womanly guise in fun videos online?

Theoretical Framework

This paper contributes by highlighting how womanly guise is used as a feminist strategy. It looks at the phenomenon with the digital feminist framework because the existing scholarship from Pakistan does not analyze the womanly guise on digital sites with a feminist lens. Thus, misses explaining how certain memes or fun videos create a renewed awareness. The digital feminist lens "mobilizes new modes of feminist critique and collectivity" (Thrift, 2014). That's why such memes feminist memes, which underscore the issues of privilege, difference, and access. Thus, the digital feminist lens enables me to figure out not only the rationale for the womanly guise for creating fun videos but also its impact on consciousness-raising or awareness purposes.

Methodology

For our study, we employed online ethnography to delve into the underlying motivations behind behaviours and sentiments, recognizing their context within specific communities and communication technologies (Blanco et al., 2021). This method mirrors traditional ethnography but focuses on online communities. Our research cantered on two case studies of Pakistani YouTubers, examining their videos and the audience comments. These individuals, part of the diaspora, share cultural backgrounds and interests, particularly in creating entertaining videos where they adopt feminine personas to convey their messages. Data collection utilized purposive and purposeful stratified random sampling techniques, guided by the Cornell method for gathering, organizing, reflecting on, and reviewing data. Thematic analysis, specifically a Two-Dimensional Thematic Analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2014), facilitated both surface-level semantic themes and deeper, latent themes beyond participants' explicit statements or written content.

Data Analysis

For this paper, the videos of two Pakistani YouTuber performers men like Zaid Ali, and Sunny Jafry who are known as celebrities are studied.

Profile of the YouTuber Performers

Zaid Ali

Zaid Ali is the first person who opted for a womanly guise to make fun videos online to portray Desi Pakistani women. His womanly guise has been used to highlight cultural and societal norms within the Pakistani community. It's also notable that he doesn't change his physical appearance to embody a more feminine character, instead relying on clothing and other accessories to convey his message. Rarely, he wears a completely womanly dress code “kameez salwar and dupatta” The fact that his videos have become so popular among viewers speaks to the impact that he has had in raising awareness and sparking conversations around gender and cultural issues in Pakistan.

Sunny Jafry

Sunny Jafry is a popular YouTuber who is known for creating humorous videos, in which he cross-dresses and portrays various characters such as Shahida (Mom), Dad, Shabana's daughter, and sons. He plays almost all the roles in his videos himself. To play mom's character he wears a dupatta, while for daughter he wears an unconventional headgear. His YouTube channel, named "Sunny Jafry," has over 1.2 million subscribers. The videos on his channel primarily feature comedy skits, vlogs, challenges, pranks, social experiments, and travel vlogs. Sunny is based in Karachi, Pakistan, and has gained popularity among the Pakistani youth and South Asian diaspora. He often collabourates with his brother, Shahvir Jafry, on their joint YouTube channel called "Shahvir and Sunny," which has also garnered a significant following on social media due to their relatable content, humor, and creativity.

Details of the Analyzed Videos

The basic details of the videos are presented in the table below:

Table: 1 Details of the Analyzed Videos

Video Title	Views	Likes	Date Posted
Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests	2.5M	26K	2014-11-23
Every Mom Does This!	2.1M	35K	2014-11-09
Brown Girls at Weddings Be Like	4.1M	79K	2015-05-09
Brown Moms and Exercise Machines	4.5M	85K	2015-06-22
When Girls Pick the Same Dress	3.6M	67K	2017-09-28
Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards)	3.9M	79K	2019-08-15
Every Mom Does This!	6.7M	120K	2018-02-14
Log Kya Kahengy	9.1K	150K	2023-05-01
Jalebi Bai	3.0M	79K	2019-08-15

Table 1: Details of the Analyzed Videos

Scenarios of the Videos

Table 2: Scenarios of Zaid Ali's videos

Video	Scene	Scenario
Zaid Ali - Video I: Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests	**Frustration over excessive restrictions on everyday items**	
	Zaid's game in the drawing room	Zaid's Mother restricts Zaid to another room.
	Trying on a black suit	The suit is for guests; Zaid gets frustrated.
	Using a glass from the showcase	Mother insists it's for guests.
	Taking out the cake from the fridge	Mother says cake is for guests; Zaid gets angry
Zaid Ali - Video II: Every Mom Does This!	**The disconnect between appearance and true feelings**	
	Zaid as mom does household chores.	Satire of desi moms concealing emotions
	Mom refuses help, growing frustrated.	Mom feels taken for granted.
Zaid Ali - Video III: Brown Girls at Weddings Be Like	**Expectations and surprises in social settings**	
	A girly guided boy Dancing at a wedding	The girl insists on joining the dance; Zaid as the girl eventually joins, surprises with wild moves.
Zaid Ali - Video IV: Brown Moms and Exercise Machines	**Initial enthusiasm fading into mundane use**	
	Mom with a new exercise machine	Enthusiastic start, declining motivation over days
	Using the machine for drying clothes	Shifts focus from exercise to household chores
Zaid Ali - Video V: When Girls Pick the Same Dress	**Simple decision-making versus conflict over similar items**	
	Two men with the same shirt	Mutual agreement on who should keep the shirt
	Two girls argue over the same dress	Both girls end up wearing the same dress

Table 2: Scenarios of Zaid Ali's videos

Table 3: Scenarios of the Videos of Sunny Jafry

Video	Scene	Scenario
Sunny Jafry - Video I: Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards)	**Unequal treatment and double standards in family roles**	
	Complains about household chores while brother sleeps	Unequal treatment and double standards in family roles
	Brother waking up	Mother greets him warmly and prepares breakfast.
	Mother justifying chores	Claims it's daughters' obligation to clean
	Brother's dirty dishes	Shabana was frustrated with the mess.
	Going out with friends	Brother allowed to go; Shabana was frustrated.

	Asking for money	Father gives Shabana a credit card; and slaps Sunny.
	Going out for a few days	Sunny's extended outing; Shabana denied sleepover
	Mother questioning sleepover	Asks irrelevant questions about the sleepover
Sunny Jafry - Video II: Jalebi Bai	**Struggles with domestic helper and inappropriate advances**	
	Requesting a maid	Shahida calls for a maid; Jalebi Bai enters.
	Jalebi Bai's demands	Requests salary, Wi-Fi, clean bedroom
	Dada ji's advances	Inappropriate behaviour from Dada ji
	Confrontation with Dada ji	Jalebi Bai accuses Dada ji of misconduct.
	Dada ji's accusations	Dada Ji accuses Jalebi Bai of theft and advances.
	Beating Dada ji	Jalebi Bai becomes violent
Sunny Jafry - Video III: Log Kya Kahengy	**Commentary on gendered norms and hypocrisy in Desi culture**	
	Social critique	Shahida, Rubina, and another girl discuss norms
	Rubina’s criticism	Rubina criticizes Sara for not covering her head.
	Shahida's reminder	Points out Rubina's hypocrisy

Table 3: Scenarios of the Videos of Sunny Jafry

Thematic Analysis & Discussions

Highlighting Gendered Expectations and Roles Through Womanly Guise

Traditional Gender Roles in Desi Pakistani Households

Zaid Ali’s videos like "Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests," "Brown Moms and Exercise Machines," and "Every Mom Does This!" depict traditional gender roles where mothers handle household chores and hospitality, while fathers remain less involved. This behaviour reflects societal expectations that prioritize caregiving over self-care for women (Kabeer & Khan, 2005; Sajjad & Ahmad, 2015; Zaman, 2015; Kausar, 2017).

Gender Role Division and Cultural Expectations

The use of the word "Desi" in "Every Mom Does This!" contextualizes culture, using the word desi in itself makes the viewers realize the context and culture from where this woman is coming from. A culture that expects women to be deferential and accommodating, often refusing help from male family members. This stems from

learned gender roles (Kabeer & Khan, 2005). It also explains “The Reproduction of Mothering” that how early mother-child relationships shape gender identity and perpetuate these norms.

Societal Pressure and Women's Frustrations

Zaid’s portrayal of women's frustrations and irritation of mom on eating the food that was for guests, laziness while exercising arise from constantly being told what to do and how to behave, and the feeling of being overshadowed by the needs and desires of others. Such as "Every Mom Does This!" highlights their irritation over unfulfilled personal desires and societal pressures. Studies support the observation that women's aspirations are often dismissed, reinforcing traditional roles (Sajjad & Ahmad, 2015; Zaman, 2015; Kausar, 2017). The studies by Zaman (2015) and Kausar (2017) also confirm that Pakistani women face pressure to prepare elaborate meals for guests, and they are stigmatized for serving ‘simple’ or "inferior" food.

Gendered Family Dynamics and Double Standards

Sunny Jafry’s "Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards)" the unequal treatment of siblings based on gender roles, challenging traditional family dynamics. Sunny also highlights cultural expectations imposed on Desi women in the guise of sisters. His video "Log Kya Kahengy" also explores the double standards within communities, highlighting how societal judgment and gossip are used as tools within common social dynamics within Desi communities.

Gossip and Social Norms

Sunny Jafry explores the dynamics of gossip among Desi women in his video “Log kya Kahengy”. Jafry illustrates different facets of Desi women engaging in gossip and perpetuating societal norms and expectations. He specifically focuses on the character of Rubina who comments on other women's appearance and behaviour, and on Shahida who questions Rubina’s criticism. He starts as Sunny by opening remarks *“Ab her khandan main aesi auntia bhi hoti hain”* which reflects common social dynamics within Desi communities.

Internal Conflicts and Societal Pressures

Where Zaid's video highlights traditional gender roles at home, his video "Brown Girls at Weddings Be Like" addresses gender roles within wedding contexts, showcasing societal expectations and pressures that women should be shy. Shahida Parveen's study (2018) confirms this in her biography that her mother tried to instill in her the traditional societal expectations based on religious and cultural knowledge, yet she could not follow her. So, through womanly guise as a girl, Zaid Ali highlights the experiences of such desi girls who at first conform to certain expectations, yet

expose themselves later on. It exposes that at the core of their hearts, desi girls want to participate in much fun stuff like dancing during weddings. Yet, whenever they are asked, they first refuse to be part of it. So, this is what Simon de Beauvoir referred to as “woman is not born but becomes a woman. Analyzing the video with a feminist psychoanalytical lens highlights the internalized misogyny and objectification of women, perpetuated by cultural traditions (Rahmani, 2020). However, analyzing the video with Freud’s psychoanalytical lens unfolds the issues surrounding Oedipus's complex idealizing mother figure, or the male gaze and desires. The exaggerated portrayal of female behaviour at weddings may stem from unconscious desires and anxieties related to sexuality and familial dynamics.

Impact and Critique of Cultural Norms

Both creators use humour to address complex, taboo subjects, making them accessible while sparking conversations about gender and cultural issues in Pakistan. However, their content risks reinforcing stereotypes without addressing root causes. Viewer relatability indicates both reflection on behaviours and potential reinforcement of negative perceptions. Overall, these videos challenge societal norms and promote awareness but must be critically examined to avoid perpetuating gender inequality.

Negotiating Subconscious Desires & Relational Dynamics Through Womanly Guise

The theme of subconscious desires runs through all eight videos, revealing how underlying motivations shape behaviour and interactions. Women want validation and appreciation and explore their self-worth by indulging in the pursuit of physical fitness and dancing at weddings. Zaid Ali’s "Every Mom Does This!" satirizes Desi mothers' roles, depicting a yearning for recognition amidst familial tensions resonating widely with viewers, indicating the relatability of how Desi mothers often mask their emotions (Dancus, 2023). Freud's concepts of id, ego, and superego shed light on these dynamics, balancing personal desires with societal expectations.

On the other hand, in "Brown Moms and Exercise Machines," the subconscious desire for self-improvement and validation is depicted as the mothers strive to meet societal standards of beauty and fitness. While in Brown Girls at Weddings a subconscious desire for overt expression at weddings is reflected. "Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests" depicts the subconscious desire for autonomy and validation, as the son expresses frustration with his mother's prioritization of guests-centric priorities unfolds. Jafry’s "Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards) portrays a subconscious desire for fairness and equality within familial relationships especially parental treatment towards son and daughter, highlighting the frustration and resentment that can arise from perceived double standards. "Log Kya Kahengy" shows the subconscious desire for conformity and social acceptance by engaging in

gossip and judgment to align with societal expectations, and in "Jalebi Bai" the subconscious desire for respect and fair treatment is evident as domestic helper confronts mistreatment and exploitation by her employer.

Feminist and psychoanalytic lenses highlight that these themes of improvement and validation; to be overt; frustration; autonomy and validation; fairness and equality; conformity and social acceptance, and lastly respect and fair treatment reveal women's quest for validation and self-worth across roles. Benjamin's concept of the "intersubjective third," (Benjamin, 2017) explains how shared spaces like homes and weddings shape identities and relationships. This framework reveals how brown girls and moms navigate identity, societal standards, and relational dynamics, with desi cultural context through home, marketplace, weddings etc.

Unveiling Defense Mechanism through Womanly Guise

Zaid Ali and Sunny Jafry use defense mechanisms in their comedic portrayals to address social and psychological issues. For example, in his motherly guise, Zaid uses “reaction formation” (Freud, 1923) as a defense mechanism to show enthusiasm for the exercise machine despite underlying insecurities that she has about her body. Similarly, in "Every Mom Does This! Zaid utilizes sublimation turning frustration into comedic performance to cope with maternal challenges. The same sublimation tactic is used in the "Brown Girls at Weddings Be Like," allowing characters to channel their stress into comedic anecdotes and exaggerated reactions at weddings.

In "Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards)," Sunny uses "denial" as a defense mechanism, where his sister persona questions the family's double standards, and his brother persona refuses to acknowledge them (Freud, 1923). Freud's theory of sublimation suggests redirecting negative emotions into constructive outlets like creative endeavours. Moreover, in "Jalebi Bai," Sunny in the guise of Dadaji and Shahida displaces their frustrations onto domestic workers, employing displacement as a defense mechanism to avoid confronting their behaviour. Freud described displacement as a mechanism whereby individuals transfer emotions from one object to another, often less threatening one. The use of “rationalization” as a defense mechanism by Sunny Jafry in his video "Log Kya Kahengy," justifies characters’’ gossip and judgment as ‘harmless’. Jessica Benjamin in her work (Benjamin, 1988) has explored the role of such rationalization in maintaining social norms. Finally, Zaid Ali uses sarcasm in "Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests” to express frustration with cultural norms and societal expectations indirectly.

The analysis with a feminist psychoanalytic perspective reveals that the use of these defense mechanisms plays an important role in negotiating social expectations and maintaining psychological equilibrium within patriarchal structures (Chodorow, 2023; Cloyd, 2014). Overall, the use of defense mechanisms in these videos reflects

complex processes of psychological adaptation and resistance to social pressures, highlighting the multifaceted ways individuals navigate their environments (Schmitt & Pilcher, 2004).

Table 4: Zaid Ali's Womanly Guise as a Feminist Strategy

Video Title	Womanly guise Representation	Feminist Strategy	Freudian Analysis
Video I: Brown Girls at Weddings Be Like	Zaid Ali portrays desi girls at weddings wearing traditional attire, including dupattas and jewelry.	Empowerment through humor: By parodying common wedding scenarios, Zaid Ali challenges gender norms and stereotypes, advocating for women's autonomy and self-expression.	Id manifestation: Through exaggerated dance moves and comedic antics, Zaid Ali's character expresses the unconscious desire for liberation and self-expression.
Video II: Every Mom Does This!	Zaid Ali adopts the guise of a mother, wearing a wig and dupatta.	Sublimation of frustrations: By using humor to depict the challenges of motherhood, Zaid Ali empowers women by highlighting the unrecognized labour of mothers and advocating for their appreciation.	Defense mechanisms: The character's comedic performances serve as a defense mechanism to cope with the stressors of familial responsibilities and societal expectations.
Video III: When Girls Pick the Same Dress **Video IV: Brown Moms and Exercise Machines**	Zaid Ali portrays desi girls shopping for dresses, and donning feminine attire. Zaid Ali portrays a desi mom, wearing traditional attire and a wig.	Media critique and gender empowerment: Through satire, Zaid Ali critiques gendered representations in media and advocates for women's agency and autonomy in fashion choices. Subversion of fitness stereotypes: By depicting a desi mom's pursuit of fitness, Zaid Ali challenges stereotypes surrounding women's physical activity and advocates for body positivity.	Gendered stereotypes: The video challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes by highlighting the absurdity of societal expectations regarding women's appearances. Superego repression: The character's desire for fitness equipment represents a repressed longing for self-improvement within the constraints of cultural norms and societal expectations.
Video V: Everything in A Brown House Is for Guests	Zaid Ali portrays a desi son and his mother, incorporating traditional clothing.	Critique of cultural norms: Through humor, Zaid Ali critiques cultural expectations placed on desi mothers and advocates for familial harmony and understanding.	Ego defense mechanisms: The characters employ defense mechanisms, such as sarcasm and denial, to navigate societal norms and familial dynamics, preserving their psychological well-being.

Table 4: Zaid Ali's Womanly Guise as a Feminist Strategy

Table: 5: Sunny Jafry's Womanly Guise as a Feminist Strategy

Video Title	Womanly guise Representation	Feminist Strategy	Freudian Analysis
Brother Vs. Sister (Double Standards)	Sunny Jafry portrays both brother and sister roles.	Critique of gender double standards: Through humor and satire, Sunny Jafry highlights disparities in societal expectations of men and women, advocating for gender equality.	Ego Defense Mechanisms: Characters employ defense mechanisms like denial and rationalization to justify their actions and navigate familial dynamics.
Log Kya Kahengy	Sunny Jafry portrays various desi characters.	Critique of gossip culture: Through satire, Sunny Jafry critiques the harmful effects of gossip and judgment within Desi communities, advocating for empathy and understanding.	Superego Repression: Characters engage in gossip and judgment to conform to societal norms and avoid feelings of guilt or shame.
Jalebi Bai	Sunny Jafry portrays a female domestic worker.	Representation of marginalized voices: By embodying the character of Jalebi Bai, Sunny Jafry sheds light on the experiences of domestic workers and challenges societal attitudes towards labour.	Id Manifestation: The character's confrontations with mistreatment and exploitation reflect unconscious desires for respect and fair treatment within the context of domestic work.

Table 5: Sunny Jafry's Womanly Guise as a Feminist Strategy

Conclusion

The findings conclude the two digital performers and content creators as feminist men who use a womanly guise as a tool for feminist expression and social critique of Desi communities. The results of their performance, through psychoanalytic and feminist psychoanalytic lenses, conclude that both employ various strategies to not only make their audience laugh but to reflect on gender roles division, societal norms, treatment or mistreatment, and many such issues of Desi women that are not tabled as such considering them not that important.

The findings highlight that the character in the videos uses various defense mechanisms such as denial, reaction formation, and sublimation, to cope with societal pressures and internal conflicts. They manifest subconscious desires, such as the desire for recognition, autonomy, and self-expression, through their actions and interactions. All this is understood using Freud's psychoanalytic concepts of id, ego, and superego, which provide a framework for understanding the characters' behaviours and motivations, and the complex interplay between human psychology and societal expectations. Lastly, by examining the videos with a psychoanalytic

feminist lens, the paper highlights that womanly guise has a subversive potential as a form of resistance against traditional norms, allowing for the exploration and reclamation of female agency and identity. Such strategical use of womanly guise to contest and challenge existing gendered dynamics and roles can be confirmed by the study of Nguyen (2016) in a Vietnamese context, where the practice of Vietnamese men's womanly guise and performing as "Miss" on YouTube is witnessed to challenges gender norms, and impacting viewer perspectives (Nguyen, 2016). However, LeBesco cautions that while these performances can subvert gender norms, they may also inadvertently reinforce stereotypes (LeBesco, 2015). Our study also confirms the chance that these videos perpetuate or reinforce stereotypes because these videos portray Desi culture and the stereotypes by performing them while attempting to critique them.

Overall, we conclude that while YouTube creators like Zaid Ali and Sunny Jafry advance gender equality through their content, they must ensure to navigate the complex effects of their portrayals on audience perceptions carefully so that their content can be termed fully as feminist memes (Thrift, 2014).

Limitations

While this research provides in-depth insights, there are limitations to consider. First limitation is the small sample size consisting eight videos, that were purposefully selected. So, this sample may not represent the whole body of work and breadth of the content of these two Youtubers on their perspective on Pakistani or Desi culture. Another limitation is that analysis doesn't consider the context in which the content creators created these videos, or their own approach. Thirdly, the interpretation of humour or satire remains subjective, as different viewers may perceive the same content differently. However, to mitigate these biases, we used a systematic approach. Being part of the same community, lingua, and culture, we share the vocabulary, tone, gestures etc. So, we analyzed the comedic cultural references and linguistic elements to bring more objectivity to the analysis. Lastly, since we focused on gender roles and cultural norms, other important themes remain unexplored that could include socioeconomic status, generational conflicts, cultural identity, power dynamics, mental health, and social commentary etc.

Recommendations

Given the limitations above, future research could examine the themes provided above with a quantitative or qualitative interdisciplinary approach incorporating cultural and media studies alongside psychoanalysis and feminist psychoanalysis to better understand the complexities in other digital performer's online content. In addition, the broader range of videos, creators' intentions while creating the videos can be sought out through interviewing them.

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