

## Gender Construct Through Visual Culture in Pakistan

**Abstract:** *Culture is an expression of society that is reflected in the visual arts. It interprets events from a socio-cultural point of view about the issues arising in that setting. In Pakistan, people have greatly imbibed gender perceptions through visual culture. Therefore, it has resulted in bigoted people in society. A visual culture is a visual presentation of gender that is conditioned by bigotry, racism, and sexism. Visual artists and development professionals have noted the gulf between the contents of visual culture and the real facts. Even the art students enormously agreed with the contrasting depiction of gender, which leads to the imbalance of gender constructs in society. This research aims to explore in detail the dynamics of Visual Culture concerning gender representation and encourage people to talk about gender issues, especially through art. Moreover, it aims to orient society to the norms that may be helpful to reduce gender discrimination.*

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**Key Words:** Gender, Visual Culture, Gender Stereotypes, Gender Norms

### Introduction

Throughout history, Societies have been judged by the quality of their art and craft. Past civilizations are remembered for their contribution to visual art. In the present time, visual art is considered an essential means of communication that creates a collective understanding of society. It is a comprehensive way to build cultural knowledge. Visual culture impacts society by shifting opinions, inculcating new values, changing norms, and illustrating experiences over space and time. We show our culture through art that reflects the present and envisages our future. When we are looking into it, all we can see is us. Therefore, Visual Culture is merely a depiction of us and preserved and imparted in the forms of paintings, drama, films,

music, and public art. It reflects the society that interprets the prevailing issues in a social setup. In simple words, visual culture means visual art with technology that is more easily accessible to the masses. Therefore, it is an effective means of inculcating the positive norms in society. It orients our consciousness silently, and artists can use it to mute the negative vibes and triggers positivity to induce spaces against stereotyped gender norms. It may also help to remodel the gender norms in society. Stereotypes about gender are significant because gender is the main element to consider in a person that is noticed and remembered in no time. In other words, gender is a commonly occurring cue for stereotypic thinking. ( Hentschel, Heilman, & Peus, 30 January 2019)

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Recently, artists' role has been considered a catalyst of social change and has been widely discussed in the context of socio-economic and political issues in Pakistan. In visual culture, the subject matter, contents and themes such as gender-based violence, violence against women, child abuse, poverty and other socio-cultural themes occupy significant space that circulates nationally and internationally over the globe and creates a long-lasting impact. (Mripa, 5th October 2017)

While studying art and design in graduation, researchers acquire vast knowledge about art. Apart from the other basic functions like self-expression accumulation of history, we can use visual art effectively to bring about positive change in society. Thus, taking visual arts as a learning process- defined and operationalized in social learning - this research is an attempt to identify the dynamics of visual culture as perceived by artists, development professionals and art students of the selected locale concerning the gender representation when carrying out different programs, which aim to create consciousness and prevention.

Undoubtedly, tremendous literature is available on visual arts and gender issues. A literature review shows a multifaceted picture of gender issues through visual arts. It covers varied issues based on gender and the dimensions and frameworks to measure them. However, it can only be effective if artists use real subject matters related to gender in visual arts and can impact the minds of people and finally instill in existing norms.

### **Review of Literature**

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This section elaborates on some of the literature that has influenced the research topic –gender constructs through visual art – over the years. It starts from the study of visual art and artists' perspective on gender constructs and the role of visual art and artists in creating awareness and preventing gender issues in society, then elaborates the contribution of visual art to transform gender construct. The section then illustrates creating spaces and bringing positive norms through visual art in society. As approached by the distinguished artists, experts, authors, institutes, and organizations over the

years as evidence of its symbolic(representative) nature and finally, offers literature on gender constructs through visual art in the Pakistani context, highlighting the need for my research perspective – representation of gender constructs through visual art.

### **Global Context**

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Gender is a conditional term, and commonly people refer to it or combine it with sex. The biological characteristics of a body like chromosomes and genitalia determine sex, and the social attributes of society determine gender. Gender is socially constructed based on the cultural meaning derived from a person's personality, behavior, and expression. The term masculine and feminine is associated with gender like if a boy talks or walks like a girl, people start labeling him as gay. Gender has been constructed through our behavior and personality. Therefore, social scientists are always interested in the pattern of social perspectives in which people communicate themselves. (Lindqvist, 2020).

All aspects and concerns related to women's and men's lives and the state of society are considered gender issues. These include how they interrelate, their differences in access to and use of resources, their activities, and how they react to changes in policies or interventions. (EIGE, 2014). Globally, gender issues affect both poor and rich societies. Gender-based violence can take many forms: physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and even economic violence. It can occur at home, in communities, or in the workplace. A World Health Organization study released in 2013 estimated that over 35% of women have been victimized by violence with their partners or non-partners. (The World Bank, 2020)

Art forms that fall under the realm of visual arts can include ceramics, illustration, sculpture, printmaking, design, craftworks, photography, video, and filmmaking, all of which exhibit aesthetic characteristics. As a result, visual arts also play a significant role in a large number of artistic professions such as performing arts, conceptual art, and textile art (unboundvisualarts, 2019). Visual arts are considered an expression of emotion through skill and imagination (britannica, 2021). The current study uses visual

art as a communicating tool for spreading awareness and preventing Gender issues in society. How visual art contributes to transforming gender stereotypes and creating spaces to bring positive norms in the community. Thus, visual art can be seen as the vehicle of change in society.

### **Gender Representation in Visual Culture**

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There has always been a strong connection between gender and visual art. Gender is a social construct. And this includes norms, behaviors, and roles that are associated with being a girl, a woman, a man, or a boy and their relationships with each other. It is pertinent to note that gender is a socially constructed construct and that it varies from society to society and can change over time. Gender equality is a significant issue that gained momentum in recent years. Gender-based violence is becoming a serious issue and needs to be addressed more seriously due to its increasing prevalence. At this point, art plays an extremely crucial role since art is an effective means of communicating collective messages through the artists' work. During the second half of the twentieth century, the content of art has assumed the same importance as the aesthetic value of art (Akdemir, 2017). In this study, gender construct in visual art has been researched through the social function of art. Moreover, the data collection has shown that the concept of gender and gender issues has found its place in visual arts.

Violence or discrimination based on gender is a universal menace that is growing at such a fast rate that it frightens us all with no sign of dying out soon. This fact has driven the attention of many social activists, artists, and other bodies to fight against gender-based violence. Generally, the term gender-based violence is used to capture violence based on expectations associated with each gender (International Journal of Gynecology & Obstetrics, 2002). Women are mostly more likely to be victimized based on gender because women are considered sub-human with unequal power relationships between the two genders. That flows from one generation to another without alteration. Although many NGOs, activists and other bodies are working to address these issues. However,

several social practices and institutions support cultural acceptance of gender-based violence. These issues emerged and were promoted by existing established norms of the society. It is a dire need to change these norms.

Gender discrimination can be considered the first gender issue, and female artists start examining the representation of the body in visual art and at this point, they begin to analyze the representation of the female body in the artistic field because it relates in some way to the fact of being a woman or man. Women were considered one of the primary art subjects in the past, and naked figures frequently represented them. Nude representations of women are the most popular discourses, says Berger. In his book "the ways of seeing" in 1972, he said, "being naked is to be yourself. But being nude is to be seen naked by others". If we study art history, we can see many artworks about nude women as an object. So, art history can explain this point with the term gender discrimination over women's bodies. Because in those artworks, we cannot see man as an object (Nihan, 2017).

Artists of the 20th century challenged gender identity in certain ways. After WW1, the golden twenties began, also known as the era of economic prosperity. New technologies and new art movements appeared, such as "surrealism." The government notably expanded women's rights with the growing popularity of liberal ideas. Tamara De Lempicka is a terrific example of what the 1920s represented. She was born in Poland in 1898 in a wealthy family married in 1916. Her husband was a successful lawyer. In 1917 the Russian revolution caused the newly married couple to leave 1918 and move to Paris, where Tamara decided to study art. She borrowed lots of cubism and André Lhote Neo-Classicism and created her style. In 1927 and painted a very powerful nude painting of a woman, "La Belle Rafaela," who was her lover. She also stopped working on her husband's painting and divorced him. In 1929, she was commissioned by "Die Dame magazine" to make a cover. She painted a self-portrait "women in a green Bugatti."

The Portrait represents the emancipated, boundless image of a woman. She slept with other women, is independent, divorced her husband, and is now driving a car. She is in control. "A car

is a symbol of liberty, power, masculinity in the twenties. Her painting shows a powerful image of a woman. She is unapologetic, defined the viewer with her stare that she is independent and free". Tamara represents a modern woman in her artwork who is equal to a man in a social context and who is strong and free (Nihan, 2017) (Canvas, 2009).

The Guerrilla Girls, a group of feminist activists who first emerged in the United States in 1984, have worked to end discrimination against women in numerous fields of art. In 1989 the poster by Guerrilla Girls about the women's representation in visual culture was quite a sound. The poster criticized the slogan, "Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum?" This work criticized gender discrimination in two ways: first is about the number of women artists, and second is about the naked figure in paintings.

The Guerrilla Girls also point out that this system is controlled by wealthy white men, and museums depend on these super-rich art collectors in order to survive. In addition, "women can't paint that well. It's a fact." this statement is not from when women were not allowed to vote or to set up a bank account in their name. Yet it was a statement made in 2013, not too long ago, by one of the world's most famous and successful painters: German artist Georg Baselitz." (Baumann, 2017) Gender stereotypes exist everywhere, although we claim to be civilized, not that much to accept the existence of women as equal to men.

Japanese multimedia artist, singer, songwriter, and peace activist Yoko Ono was born in 1944 in Japan. (Born February 18, 1933, Tokyo, Japan), who was an influential practitioner of conceptual and performance art in the 1960s and became internationally famous as musician John Lennon's wife and artistic partner? In addition to her art practice, she also creates performances in both English and Japanese, and produces films (One, 1964). Shirin Neshat's work provides another perspective on women within the context of gender. The internationally renowned artist was born in Iran's Qizam city in 1957 and studied art in Los Angeles in 1974. The Iranian visual artist is best known for her paintings, photographs, video, and films. Aside

from exploring the religious and cultural values of a society, she also explores women's relationships. Her work aims to leave audiences with something that touches them on an emotional level, not some heavy political statement. This was stated in one of her interviews. (Shirin Neshat Profile, 2016) (Shirin Neshat, 2021).

A lot of her photography and film narratives deal with gender identity and society. In the mid-1990s, she created a series of paintings called "Women of Allah". In both Iranian and western cultures, she addressed themes based on public and private identities. Neshat won the First International Prize at the Venice Biennale in 1999 for her "split-screen video Turbulent" (1998). She believes that it is very important for young people to think about the world on a broad spectrum. In addition to enriching the lives of young artists, she encourages them to become socially aware and to step outside of their homes. Otherwise, people don't feel connected to their work because it doesn't have a place beyond a very small narcissistic approach. Since she was born and raised in Iran, and studied and lived in America, she feels Western culture encourages a self-centered approach. Her view is that America has a very individualistic and capitalistic society in which people are urged to think only about themselves. According to her, our lives could be more meaningful if we could find the compassion to open our eyes and minds to the problems of others. She believes that artists should be open to the struggles of others as well as aware that art is one of the most powerful means of communication. (Survey of ground breaking artist Shirin Neshat, 2019-2000) (Neshat, 2018).

### **Local Context**

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Evolution is a constant process, and this is an undeniable fact. It also initiates new and innovative paradigms for developing visual arts and literature in Pakistan. (Kamran, 2017). Visual art in Pakistan has experienced different shifts from the traditional style of expression into the contemporary style, which includes experimental forms of expression. However, this shift never happened once but can occur in different phases. The first phase is in the art history of Pakistan is

before the inception, the classical period in which we find the influence of Mughal art.

The second phase is the period of modern art. The art produced between the mid of the 20th century and the beginning of the 1990s is known as modern art. It has British influence. In the Zia-ul Haq regime, artists become very active, and feminism has become a major theme in contemporary art. All these phases in the art history of Pakistan overlap the past and present approaches and infuse the local and global styles. It exists in many layers. Pakistan has a rich and diversified culture with extraordinary art forms, developed by influences assimilated by the phenomenal pioneer artists of Pakistan. These legendary artists include Abdur Rehman Chughtai, its progressive entry into the modernity of Zubeida Agha and Hajra Mansoor, Shemza, Sadequain, Rasheed Araeen, Shakir Ali, and many other artists (Shah, Shah, & Xianfeng, 2018).

### **Representation of Gender in Pakistan**

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In Pakistan, gender is always represented on pre-defined grounds. Either the woman is represented as a good (perfect) woman or a bad woman. Such types of gender representation promote stereotypes in society. These stereotypes reinforce the patriarchal system of Pakistan. In dramas, artists portray perfect women as extremely beautiful with fair complexion, ultraslim, and wearing a simple, modest dress, mostly belonging to the middle class. It is only because of financial difficulties that she can do household chores and work outside the house. Conversely, the bad woman is always depicted as career-oriented, rude, outspoken, well-educated, belonging to an elite family, and wearing western attire. (Ashfaq & Shafiq, Volume No. 55, Issue No. 1 (January - July, 2018)).

There is no universal pattern of representing gender. Moreover, it is a culturally oriented phenomenon that controls representing gender. For example, Pakistani visual arts promote gender stereotypes. In society, they promote patriarchal ideologies such as submission to family, dressing in a simple and modest manner, doing household chores, and never doing anything that is not allowed in the family. These

attributes are considered important to be a good woman.

On the other hand, there are also some attributes attached to the image of a bad woman. For example, if a woman is independent, empowered, educated and modern, she can voice her rights to discourage discrimination. She is perceived as a bad woman. Visual art can create positive and negative images of gender in society.

The connection between gender and visual art has been around for a very long time. Artistic representations of gender in visual art have taken on various forms, highlighting different gender roles. The representation of gender in the visual arts, however, is largely based on stereotypical depictions of men and women based on stereotypes. However, the content of the gender stereotype has changed over the years in the relationship between men and women. Visual art reinforces the concept of gender stereotyping through its themes, subject matter, and contents. The development of technology and the evolution of the internet change the portrayal of gender stereotypes in visual arts. Furthermore, social media has given a platform to discuss ideas that challenge the existing gender norms of society (Dasgupta, 2018, Vol. 8, No. 1 ).

### **Research Methodology**

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This research applied qualitative methodology. Metaphorically qualitative research is a beautiful and complex process like fabric production on the loom. The fabric is intertwined with tiny threads of different colours, textures, and intricate designs. Moreover, the loom holds the threads intact, interwoven fabric. Similarly, the researcher holds the worldviews and perspectives intact in qualitative research. (Creswell, 2007).

Data collection is very critical in the research process. And makes the research more valuable and enhances its quality. The qualitative method is applied to collect data from 39 respondents, and the multiphase sampling technique is used to acquire the required information. The data is collected in three groups, top-notch artists of Pakistan who have tremendous experience in this field, expert development professionals who had the experience of using visual art in different projects, and art students. In-depth interviews

were conducted physically and online due to the Covid-19 situation. The locale of the study is Islamabad. Moreover, the researcher also carried out focus group discussions with the art students. It allows the researcher to understand the narrative of respondents more comprehensively.

### **Theoretical Framework**

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Within the parameters of critical bounding assumptions, theories described, speculated, and predicted phenomena or challenged or strengthened existing knowledge in an effort to comprehend phenomena. By presenting the theoretical framework, we become aware of the theory that explains why the research question under study exists to understand how social learning can be acquired for gender representation through visual art. We will analyze social learning Theory (SLT), developed by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1977.

### **Main Core Concepts**

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Three main core concepts of a theory include

- The first idea is that people can learn through observation
- The next point is that internal mental states play an essential role in this process.
- The theory also recognizes that just because something is learned does not mean that it will lead to a change in behavior.

Visual culture shapes our thinking by preparing us to interpret our visual world. It affects how we see the objects and visuals around us and formulates our perceptions and interpretations about them. They shape our critical thinking, conversation, cognition, and understanding of the world we live in.

### **Discussion**

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"Pakistan ranks 3rd out of 153 nations in terms of gender equality, according to the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report 2020. Gender inequality is a major barrier to Pakistan's efforts to tackle poverty and promote sustainable development. Gender-based inequalities affect the following dimensions: reproductive health, empowerment, and economic security. The

overall trends of inequalities are reflected at the provincial level as well. The Women's Economic and Social Wellbeing Survey (WESW) in Punjab (2017-18) conducted by the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women and Punjab Bureau of Statistics supported by UNFPA found that the labour force participation rate of women, aged 15-64 years old is approximately 36%. About 39% of women of the same age group have not attended school, and close to 52% of women cannot read and write. The above figures indicate the boundaries of women's economic participation and empowerment in the long run." (Global Gender Gap Report, 2020). From the above details, it is devastating that Pakistan ranked from the bottom third of 153 countries. Therefore, to fill the gender gap, it is necessary to change existing gender norms. Positive gender norms will eventually help acquire a better position in the coming future. Visual Culture is an effective means of communicating changing gender norms and making Pakistan a better and safer place for women.

Visual art is a multi-dimensional concept that is dynamic in nature. However, the anthropology of arts emphasizes the poetic and pragmatics of art forms so that art and social relations are inseparable. It shows the importance that the term entails presently – with its elevated status in the mainstream discourse of development. It is considered an affirmative way to address gender issues and positively change. There is a dire need to change the social construction of gender through visual arts in Pakistan and convert its abstract pre-determined perceptions of gender into operational and realistic ones.

This study aims to play its part in achieving its goal and has a threefold significance in this regard. The first theoretical utility is its ability to fill the gaps in the literature about the representation of gender in visual culture in Pakistan. Rather than assuming what gender signifies, the study aims to formulate the perspective of prime artists of Pakistan in the process as well as the opinion of development professionals being working in NGO Idara Taleem-o-Agahi Center of Education and Consciousness (ITACEC), designing, and conducting various programs related to gender

issues- the beneficiaries themselves (art students). Second, it is not only important to bring the perspective of the artists into the fold, but it is also important to investigate the conceptualization of gender in visual culture as a tool of change by the development agency that has the authority on how, why, and where visual art can be useful in projects. It is important to determine whether both parties are on the same page or not.

As this study evokes a new way of understanding gender constructs through the anthropological context of visual arts, it opens up a new perspective on the visual arts. Since the beginning of time, people of all cultures have used the visual arts to communicate a wide range of values, beliefs, and ideas. There is no doubt that art is a fundamental part of the human experience, reflecting the world and time in which we live. The fact that it does not rely on language or written language means that it can be used to educate people, persuade them, and convey ideas across cultures and classes. Consequently, it is one of the most powerful communication tools that can be used today. The in-depth qualitative nature of the present research allows accurate data for monitoring and evaluating the study. It provides a detailed perspective of visual art and its importance for society. The prevailing gender norms in Pakistani society are deeply studied from the respondents' responses. Furthermore, how visual art promotes certain gender norms impacts people and helps transform gender stereotypes.

Unfortunately, some of my respondents were not comfortable sharing their perspectives of gender. Therefore, a conclusion has been drawn from the responses we get.

According to the obtained responses, the social perception of gender is the understanding of the people towards the assigned gender roles in society. Gender stereotypes are adaptive functions that characterize others based on their simple observations. The problem with stereotypes is that they can lead to faulty assessments of individuals - i.e., assessments based on generalizations from beliefs about a group that doesn't correlate with an individual's unique qualities. Consequently, these incorrect evaluations can negatively or positively impact

expectations about performance and influence subsequent decisions that affect opportunities and work outcomes for both men and women.

Different art forms highlight gender issues. Pakistani artists are working on this topic and changing people's perspectives regarding gender stereotypes and gender norms. Every person is beautiful in their way. Our scars are our beauty. One of the respondents has explained that gender representation in visual art largely depends on the media's depiction like film, dramas, and tv. Because it reaches the masses and has a huge viewership, some artists depict gender naturally in their work. Some want to disseminate awareness regarding gender issues through their projects to bring positive societal change. Some Respondents believe that drama is a powerful means of conveying messages. It reaches the masses. Dramas are part of our day-to-day life and depict gender issues in a form that people can relate to it. One of my respondents said that dramas enable people to discuss gender issues. Visual art can create a long-lasting impact. According to social learning theory, dramas can consider as a symbolic model. It holds the attention of the people by showing glamour, relatable stories, with attractive caste. They grab the audience's attention, and for example, a respondent shared his experience that in various projects, they grasp the crowd's attention through theatre performances, even in the areas of Khyber Pakhtoon Kha. Similarly, visual art makes the message impactful, becoming a part of cognition.

Respondents placed the importance of breaking the gender stereotypes in society. One of my respondents shares that ITACEC has used visual art forms to tell stories about breaking gender stereotypes. Furthermore, it also plays a vital role in depicting gender issues in society. Visual culture creates both positive and negative impacts on the mind of people. Some of my respondents believe learning takes place at home. If a child witnesses his father abusing his mother intentionally or unintentionally. Beating a woman becomes a normal act because he learned this behaviour from his environment. Our visual culture massively worked on these themes, as Syed Noor discussed his experience that when his third daughter was born, people started pitying him that the poor guy had a third daughter. After

that, he decided to raise this issue in a film. He also mentioned a drama, "Mubarak ho Beti Hui Hai," based on the same theme. All the respondents, artists, art students, and development professionals agreed that representation of gender in a visual culture impacts people. And enhance the social learning of gender issues through live models (theatre performances, puppet shows), symbolic models (dramas, films, documentaries), and verbal models.

### **Changing Trends**

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As we discussed, the representation of gender is based on gender stereotype norms. Patriarchal themes also dominate films. The main audience or the target group of films are men of the society. However, a change can be observed in themes, like the diversity of gender roles also shown in films. Topics related to women's education or women's rights are now discussed in films that promote gender equality. Although many drama serials, like Humsafar (2011), Zindagi Gulzar Hai (2010), and Bin Roye (2016), have strong female heroines, not like the typical image of women. (Zaheer, 2020)

Respondents believe that changing gender norms in visual culture cannot take place abruptly, but it doesn't mean the change is not happening. Visual culture silently enters our lives and becomes a part of our cognition, therefore, causing a permanent change in our cognition. We cannot unlearn things. Visual culture creates more impact on us.

Moreover, we discussed the themes with our friends and family, which means we retained the observation. Visual art can be a strong tool to change gender representation in society by challenging gender norms and breaking stereotypes. Recently Pakistani fashion designer Ali Xeeshan has come up with a bridal couture collection that tries to make a statement against the very old rustic tradition of dowry. The title of his collection is "Numaish," meaning "show off," He makes a short video and pictures that feature a young bride wearing a traditional bridal dress and accessories. She is pulling a cart of dowry with the tall, strong indifferent groom is standing on top of it. (<https://alixeeshan.online/pages/blogs>, 2021)

### **Conclusion**

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Gender issues are increasing day by day. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), 11 rape cases are reported every day, 13 women have been murdered in the name of honor killing, lots of women are subjected to violence every day in Pakistan. Moreover, Pakistan is declared the second-worst country in the world regarding gender equality by White Ribbon Pakistan. These issues are increasing every day, as we can see in the cases like Noor Muqaddam, Minare-e-Pakistan harassment case. And gender issues are not going away soon. It is a dire need to create awareness regarding gender issues. The patterns or parameters used to represent gender need to be changed. Therefore, the researcher tries to analyze gender representation and visual culture through anthropological analysis. In-depth interviews have been carried out with the top-notch visual artists of Pakistan to discover the thought process behind gender representation in their work.

Furthermore, the opinion of art students has been taken along with the development professionals. Visual art can be used as a catalyst of change because the respondents believe that visual art is a strong tool that it can use to bring positive change in society and create spaces for gender. Artists are working in changing the perspectives of people of seeing things. Due to the digital era, the Internet has made everything so accessible that there is no need to watch movies and attend seminars or exhibitions. Now everything is happening online. As a result, the intensity of visual art audiences has been increased. There may be few people who attend the seminars or exhibitions on zoom link has been displayed on WhatsApp statuses and everyone interested can visit it or join it. We are in the initial stages of change, but we cannot achieve this change soon. There are lots of factors that influence gender representation in visual arts. For example, gender stereotypes in visual culture society either endorse them or negate them. There is not a specific arrangement of gender representation in visual culture. It depicts what is trendy what people want to see and shows the existing image of gender. However, this research tries to sketch out how visual art can play a

beneficial role in creating awareness regarding gender issues and bring positive change in society.

This research is intended to study the dynamics of visual arts concerning gender. Visual culture represents gender in two different extremes either a weak dependent devoid of all rights or represented as highly qualified, powerful, independent, modern, and blunt women. Therefore, it is needed to work on moderation. Many artists worked on changing the ways we perceive gender issues. Pakistani society is patriarchal, and our men are not yet ready to accept such a vivaciously strong woman. Visual culture initiates new approaches toward gender representation to develop a positive, strong image of a woman as a person. The development sector has been used different visual art forms to develop a positive image of a woman in society. We cannot achieve the necessary change very soon; it takes time to normalize the extremes. We need to accept that the patterns of gender representation in visual culture are greatly important. We need to consider it a serious problem; only then can we move to the solution, and visual culture can play a pivotal role in providing requirement-based solutions. It can help in projecting out the gender issues. But it is not successfully channelized by the authoritative bodies, and there are many taboos attached to it.

In a nutshell, the government and civil society organizations need to be worked together to deconstruct the prevailing representation of gender in visual arts. If we need to bring change, policy formulation is followed by its implementation. Moreover, the government should engage civil society organizations and visual artists to make the public aware. Without planning, Pakistan will fail in challenging situations where the survival of gender protection is concerned, for example, as we witnessed in the Minar-e-Pakistan incident. It is high time to make certain decisions to make Pakistan safe for women. With proper art education, we can make healthy, productive individuals, which eventually benefit society and country, where we lead Pakistan if we produce patriarchal, aggressive, and depressed people. It is time to concentrate on these issues, which look small, but in reality, they are very big problems to sort out. We need to come out from this gender discriminated mentality towards the positive norms, which encourage equality. The topic's essence is that either we are talking about gender representation or any other depiction or representation of social issues. The main purpose of art is to elevate our lives by eliminating the negativity inside and around us.

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