



Generalisation of Patriarchy in Pakistan: Analysing Negation Concerning Women in Ziauddin Yousafzai's *Let Her Fly*

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ABSTRACT

Negation is a linguistic tool used to express denial, contradiction, non-existence, or falsification of a proposition or a sentence. This paper highlights the use of negation as a strategy to misrepresent Pakistani society as highly patriarchal. Patriarchy exists in every culture, but its intensity varies in different cultures. The present study examines how Ziauddin Yousafzai and Louise Carpenter employ negation to illustrate the concept of patriarchy in Pakistan. However, this view cannot be extended to the whole country. Gerda Hedwig Lerner and Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy supports the argument of the paper. Gunnel Tottie's model for the identification of negation words and negative propositions has been used to analyse textual references. The model is used to highlight negation on a syntactic level that gives a compound effect in the propositions, thereby generalising patriarchy in Pakistani society. The memoir serves as a window that lets the reader look into Ziauddin Yousafzai's social life in Swat, Pakistan. The study of negation in the paper is significant as it attempts to highlight the misrepresentation of Pakistani society as being patriarchal. The strategic use of recurrent negation words concerning women seems to add the writers' narrative to the list of ones who talk about gender inequalities in the East with aims to gain Western readership and praise. The research concludes that non-affixal negation (both in no-negation and not-negation types) has been generously used concerning women to misrepresent Pakistan to Western readers by focusing only on a smaller group and generalising it all over Pakistan.

Key Words: *Negation, patriarchy, Pakistani society, women, generalisation*

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Introduction

Negation plays a crucial role within a language, serving both formal and functional purposes. The use of linguistic negation carries the ideologies of writers, shaping the meaning and interpretation of their expressions. According to the Oxford Dictionary, negation is defined as the act of causing something to not exist or to become its opposite or expressing the exact opposite of a given concept (Hornby 2015). In English grammar, negation functions to deny or contradict the affirmative nature of a statement, effectively conveying a message that is the opposite of what is initially asserted. Negation has attracted the attention of logicians, thinkers, linguists, and psychologists for decades. Martinez (1995) emphasised the significance of negation across different levels of language structure, like phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. He highlighted how negation's presence and function at these diverse linguistic levels underscore its crucial role in shaping the meaning and structure of language. This comprehensive integration of negation throughout these layers demonstrates its fundamental impact on how language is formed, understood, and used in communication. According to Deprez and Espinal (2020), negation encompasses a broad range of concepts such as opposition, falsification, failure, non-existence, refusal, rejection, resistance, correction, evasion, disappearance, denial, and so on. By employing negation, writers and speakers can challenge prevailing notions, negate assumptions, and express disagreement or disbelief.

Similar is the case with Ziauddin Yousafzai and Louise Carpenter, who shed light on the pervasive influence of patriarchy in their memoir *Let Her Fly* by skilfully employing negation to depict the women in Yousafzai's life throughout the narrative. The text, *Let Her Fly*, reflects the author's perspective of Pakistani women and his portrayal of Pakistani society to the Western world. The incidents narrated in the text highlight the notion of patriarchy which is generalised with greater intensity by the representation of women through the use of negation. Through the deliberate use of negation, the authors skilfully accentuate the struggles faced by Pakistani women. Yousafzai and Carpenter strategically generalise instances of patriarchy in Pakistan within their narrative, aiming to gain readership and resonate with a Western audience. By portraying the mistreatment of women in a patriarchal society, particularly in a remote area like Swat, under specific political circumstances – Taliban's rule, they align their storytelling with prevailing Western narratives on gender equality and human rights. Eastern-affiliated cultural producers challenge an Orientalised East, especially by meeting the perceived demands of Western readers (Lau and Mendes 2012). Yousafzai, being a cultural producer, tries to appeal to Western readers by exotically depicting Pakistan. It's a calculated effort to draw attention to the pervasive nature of patriarchy in Pakistan. In doing so, Yousafzai and Carpenter potentially contribute to the broader conversations on gender issues on the global stage.

Let Her Fly, a touching and inspiring memoir written by Ziauddin Yousafzai and co-authored by Louise Carpenter, published in 2018, offers a touching and inspiring narrative

that extends beyond personal storytelling to describe the broader social and cultural landscape of Pakistan. The title, *Let Her Fly*, captures the central theme of the memoir, which revolves around the detection of gender equality, education, and women empowerment. Ziauddin Yousafzai, the father of Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai, takes readers on a journey through his life, sharing the challenges he faced while advocating for the education of his daughter Malala in a society marked by patriarchal norms and conflicts under the Taliban's control. Malala gained international recognition after surviving an assassination attempt by the Taliban in 2012. Malala also wrote the memoir *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, providing insight into her life, activism, and the challenges that she faced in an underdeveloped area. The memoir *Let Her Fly* by Yousafzai and Carpenter captures the essence of Yousafzai's commitment to breaking down barriers restricting women's access to education and opportunities. The narrative not only serves as a touching exploration of a father-daughter relationship but also as a compelling commentary on the socio-political dynamics of Pakistan. Being brought up in a conservative family, he thinks that all the men and women of Pakistan face the same challenges that he and his family suffered in the least progressed area.

Patriarchy, which can be understood as the dominance of males within a family structure, perpetuates inequality between men and women. In 1902, Frederick Engels stated it as "the defeat of the female sex" (121). It manifests as a system where men wield power, and this phenomenon is not exclusive to any one country; it exists worldwide, including Pakistan. However, the extent of patriarchy may vary across different regions. Yousafzai and Carpenter's memoir, particularly in its portrayal of women through the lens of negation, effectively captures their perspective on Pakistan as a deeply patriarchal nation. By recounting specific incidents from a particular area during the influence of the Taliban, they broaden the representation of patriarchy to encompass the larger context of the country. Through these narrative choices, the writers highlight the prevailing ideology that permeates Pakistani society and underscores the need for change. The memoir, *Let Her Fly*, effectively utilises negation to highlight the widespread existence of patriarchy throughout Pakistan through the portrayal of women and girls from a specific area within a unique socio-political context. In employing the tactics of negation, the writers seem to open up the possibility of generalising the oppressive nature of patriarchy in the country.

The present study aims to analyse the strategic use of negation in relation to women in *Let Her Fly*, illustrating how it reinforces the prevailing patriarchal norms in Pakistan. Furthermore, this paper examines the specific negation words employed and their incorporation at the constituent level to underscore the oppression faced by women in a male-dominated society. This paper aims to explore these linguistic nuances to uncover the mechanisms by which patriarchy is perpetuated and normalised within Pakistani society. The paper suggests that Yousafzai and Carpenter have incorporated the elements of negation in the text which could potentially offer readers valuable insight into the writers' opinion of Pakistani society. Furthermore, it highlights the patterns of negation through Gunnel Tottie's

(1991) model for the identification of negative words and negative propositions, which can be applied by future researchers in various domains, including syntax and discourse analysis, to support their claims. In this paper, no other elements than negation have been taken to analyse the selected instances that depict Pakistani society as patriarchal. Findings and conclusions are aligned to the instances taken from the text as evidence.

Historical Background of Negation in Linguistics

Different researchers have offered diverse definitions of negation. Laurence R. Horn (2010) explains that negation differentiates us in various ways, enabling us to refute, lie, misinterpret, contradict, and express irony. Active sentences with negated subjects represent the passive voice of the same proposition (Muntana 2008). The sentential negation not only involves the contracted form of “n’t” such as in “doesn’t,” and “didn’t” but also incorporates other negative words such as “no,” “not,” “nothing,” “never,” and terms with negative connotations like “hardly,” “prevent,” and “restrict,” among others. Talmy Givon (2018) adopted a functionalist approach, viewing the purpose of negation as the negation of words in a sentence or proposition at the semantic or syntactic level, negating the entire sentence or clause. All these definitions of negation support the central notion that negation challenges or reverses the ideas presented by the speaker or writer by essentially opposing the propositions stated in sentences. This opposition is essential to comprehending how negation serves as a strategic means for communicating denial, absence, or contradiction in language, in addition to being a linguistic tool.

Examining the historical background of negation, we observe a shift in its usage, with a transition from a structure like ‘I do not say’ or ‘he doesn’t say’ in Old English to the more prevalent form of ‘I say not’ during the fifteenth century. However, during the Elizabethan era (in the second half of the sixteenth century), the auxiliary verb ‘do’ was employed to form negative sentences. In modern English, the negative element ‘not’ is placed between the operator, which is often the first auxiliary verb, or the main verb ‘be’ or ‘have’ and the proposition to create the negation of a simple sentence. Gibbons and Whiteley (2018) state that the concept of negation in contemporary linguistics revolves around negative and positive polarity, with the process of negation involving a conceptual journey to identify the positive polarity before converting it into negative polarity. In language, negation occurs when affirmative statements are opposed. Negation is employed as a tool to analyse textual instances and in this paper, it contributes to emphasising the concept of patriarchy.

Negation manifests in various linguistic forms and at different levels, including semantic, morphological, and syntactic. At the discourse level, negation contributes to the meaning within a sentence. Negation is found in forms such as “isn’t,” “weren’t,” “hadn’t,” and many others (Gibbons and Whiteley 236). Edward Klima (1964) identified negation at both the constituent and sentential levels, where sentential negation negates the entire idea of a sentence. Liliane Haegeman (2009) explains that the difference between propositional

negation and constituent negation is tied to their function as operators. Haegeman notes that “negative parts of words (constituents) that cause inversion work as operators, while those that do not are not” (271). She further says that negation can act within a sentence (intra-sentential) or across multiple sentences (inter-sentential) to negate the meaning of specific elements or the entire proposition. At the semantic level, negation focuses on words that alter meaning. Talmy Givon refers to this category as ‘inherent’, as it not only carries meaning but also serves an interpretive function at the word level. Negation can also occur through the affixation of negative morphemes to various types of morphemes or sentences, resulting in morphological negation at the lexical level. Examples include “negative prefixes such as un-, de-, in-, dis-, and negative suffixes like –less” (Gibbons and Whiteley 237).

Literature Review

Although there is not much research done on the memoir *Let Her Fly*, a significant number of reviews shed light on how the world has interpreted the text. One such review by Daud Khattak in 2019 from the international current affairs magazine *The Diplomat* portrays this memoir as a story of a father who defied gender discrimination in a male chauvinistic society deeply entrenched in patriarchy. The review emphasises how the father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, began raising his voice for his daughter Malala Yousafzai to ensure she had equal rights with boys. In the society depicted, the birth of boys was highly celebrated while girls were regarded as having lower status and were often used to settle family disputes and blood feuds. Both Yousafzai and his daughter faced threats from the Taliban, which they criticised as ‘wrongdoers’ for prohibiting girls’ education. Ziauddin Yousafzai boldly brought his daughter forward to challenge the Taliban’s ban on girls’ education.

Another notable column, published by the leading news channel *France 24*, lauds Ziauddin Yousafzai as a father who championed girls’ rights during a critical time. While women’s voices are crucial in feminism, the column highlights the significance of a man’s or a father’s voice in bringing change within a patriarchal society and commends Yousafzai for fulfilling this role (“Malala’s Father on Becoming a Feminist and the Battle for Gender Equality”). These reviews and columns highlight the importance of Yousafzai’s activism and his efforts to challenge gender inequality, as well as the recognition of his role as a father in advocating for the rights of girls and women. They highlight the wider impact of his actions and emphasise the need for diverse voices in the fight for gender equality.

An e-paper published a review in 2018 that praises Ziauddin Yousafzai’s bravery and determination in challenging patriarchal norms for his daughter’s education, which was considered a taboo in Pakistani society (“‘Let Her Fly’ — Ziauddin Yousafzai’s Fight Against Patriarchy and for Equality - Daily Times”). It highlights that Yousafzai himself was raised in a society where boys were treated as special, while girls were often disregarded and treated as non-existent entities. The review contends that girls are confined within households like caged birds, with their wings clipped by chauvinistic males, preventing them from achieving their aspirations.

Since not much research has been conducted on this memoir, reviews of the memoir have been analysed, and they have praised Yousafzai as a feminist who stood against a patriarchal society and fought for women's rights and education. No one has taken the stance to analyse the text as the generalised representation of Pakistan through the use of negation words concerning women. To emphasise the oppression that women experience in a male-dominated society, this paper analyses the negation words and how they are incorporated at the constituent level. This paper combines the linguistic element of 'negation' with the text *Let Her Fly* to showcase the potential cause of why Ziauddin Yousafzai and his daughter Malala Yousafzai did not receive widespread praise in Pakistan by highlighting the foregrounded notion which tends to intensify the patriarchal image of Pakistan to the world. His misrepresentation of Pakistani society as a strict male-dominant setup has created an intense image in the world. The personal narrative of Ziauddin Yousafzai and Malala Yousafzai is what they faced and went through in a specific political background where the Taliban invaded Swat and banned girls' education. In *Let Her Fly*, non-affixal negation is used to highlight the absence of freedom and opportunities for women and girls in Pakistan. Ziauddin Yousafzai and Malala Yousafzai's accounts of their personal experiences are set against a backdrop of specific political situations. The Taliban's invasion of Swat Valley and the subsequent ban on girls' education form the core of their narrative. However, this depiction can lead to a generalised view of Pakistan as uniformly oppressive towards women, overshadowing the diversity and complexity of the various regions and cultures of Pakistan.

The narrative of *Let Her Fly* is deeply embedded in the political context of the Taliban's control over Swat. The Taliban imposed strict regulations, particularly targeting women's rights and education. Yousafzai and his daughter's resistance to these measures and their advocacy for girls' education brought them international acclaim but also criticism and lack of widespread praise within Pakistan because they painted an overly negative picture of the entire country. Pakistan's poor socio-economic conditions also played a crucial role in the persistence of patriarchal norms. Increased poverty, lack of access to quality education, and limited economic opportunities for women contribute to the reinforcement of gender inequalities. The text, *Let Her Fly*, highlights these issues, yet the broader socio-economic struggles faced by the nation can sometimes be overlooked in favour of focusing on cultural and religious factors. The combination of political, cultural, and socio-economic factors must be considered to fully understand the reception of the text within Pakistan.

Theoretical Framework

The current paper is grounded in Gerda Hedwig Lerner's (1989) and Sylvia Walby's (1991) Patriarchy theory, providing a theoretical foundation to understand the generalisation employed in the selected text. The study adopts Gunnel Tottie's conceptual model for identifying negation words and negative propositions to systematically analyse textual references in *Let Her Fly*. This model aids in identifying instances of non-affixal negation and exploring its syntactic impact. Purposive sampling is employed to select specific textual

excerpts from *Let Her Fly* that prominently feature instances of negation related to women and patriarchy. Purposive sampling facilitates in-depth analysis of the syntactic impact of non-affixal negation in compound propositions. The deliberate selection of specific instances enables a thorough examination of how negation functions at the syntax level within the chosen passages. The goal is to focus on passages contributing to the generalisation of patriarchal norms throughout Pakistan. Textual references containing instances of non-affixal negation are systematically identified and extracted from *Let Her Fly*, forming the data for analysis. The identified textual references undergo syntactic analysis using Gunnel Tottie's model, facilitating a detailed examination of how negation is employed in negative propositions and contributes to the generalisation of patriarchy. The central objective is to uncover the nuanced role of non-affixal negation in shaping the portrayal of patriarchal norms in Pakistan within the selected text.

Gerda Hedwig Lerner is an Austrian-American historian who has put forth her theory of patriarchy in her book *The Creation of Patriarchy*. According to her, patriarchy, in its broadest sense, refers to the expression of male supremacy over females in household relations and the expansion of men's power over women in culture as a whole. The patriarchal structure can only survive with women's cooperation. Educational neglect, denial of women's awareness of their past, gender indoctrination, and the separation of women through establishing "respectability" and "deviance" are all used to secure this cooperation (Lerner 217). She implies that men dominate all significant societal institutions, while women are often denied access to such power. It does not mean that "women are either completely helpless or completely stripped of rights, authority, and wealth" (Lerner 239). There lies variation in power in the hands of men and women. They can both be in little power in some societies and might be more powerful in some or powerless at all.

Sylvia Walby, in her book *Theorizing Patriarchy*, defines patriarchy as a social system in which women are dominated, exploited, and oppressed by men. She questions the inequalities women face in society and the ways through which they are subjugated. She defines patriarchy as six structures: "the patriarchal mode of production – patriarchal relations in state, cultural institutions and sexuality – women's property, economic resources, and mobility – are under patriarchal control" (Walby 20). The main impediment to women's progress and growth is patriarchy. Regardless of the degree of dominance, the basic rules remain the same; men are dominant. The condition where one is compelled to remain under the authority of another is known as subordination. Subordination of women is thus a term that automatically takes its place in patriarchal discourse. In short, it refers to the social state in which women are compelled to remain under the influence of men.

Patriarchy refers to a system where women are subjugated by men. It exists all over the world but its intensity varies from place to place. As Lerner (1989) mentioned, not all men are in complete power, and not all women are completely powerless and oppressed. The same applies to the Pakistani context, where women also cherish equal rights with men. Yousafzai and Carpenter, in their memoir, portrayed women from poor social backgrounds

as having not sufficient privileges in life and generalised them to the whole of Pakistan. Girl's education was only banned in Swat due to the Taliban's forceful law. At the same time, girls from other areas of Pakistan were free to get education in their realms. Their depiction of women and girls from a specific area of Pakistan has created an image of Pakistan as a strict patriarchal society where women are not given equal rights to men.

Gunnel Tottie's model for the identification of negation words and negative propositions (including clauses) is chosen to provide support for analysis in this paper. Though she proposed this model in 1991, it is still valid and used by contemporary linguists. Apart from the identification of negation words and propositions, it analyses and highlights the function of negation words in a sentence. She classified the negation words first at the inter-sentential level and then at the intra-sentential level. According to her, negation at the "inter-sentential level" signals the word "no" which functions in a sentence grammatically (Tottie 7). She gave two types of negation: *No-negation* negates clauses through negative markers such as negative adverbs: never, nowhere, and negative pronouns such as nobody, no-one, and nothing. *No-negation* works to negate the constituents of a clause instead of negating the whole clause. *Not-negation*, on the other hand, stands for not or n't followed by words with the suffix 'any' such as anyone, anywhere, anybody, anything, the adverb 'ever' and the indefinite article 'a'. *Not-negation* functions to do negation at the clause level.

Tottie (1991) also observed negation with indefinite outside and within prepositional phrases. It is a place where no-negation is more frequently found in the constituents of the sentence rather than in a whole sentence. In noun phrases, no-negation is less likely to be used in pre-modification than not-negation. Verb phrases are also affected by no-negation and not-negation. She says that complex verb phrases incorporate the combination of either an auxiliary verb with a verb, or a modal verb with a verb, while single phrases consist of a single lexical verb. The following figure presents Tottie's model of Negation.

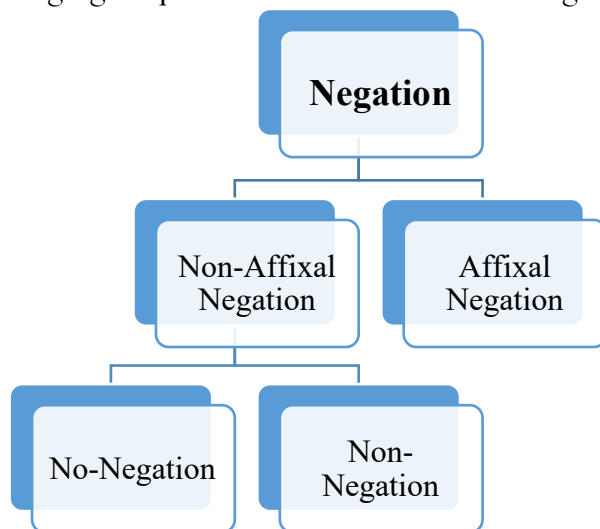


Fig. 1. Tottie's Model of Negation (1991)

As can be seen in the model, negation is classified as non-affixal and affixal negation¹. Moreover, both non-affixal and affixal negation types can occur at either the sentence level or at the constituent level (such as verb phrase, noun phrase, and prepositional phrase). Non-affixal negation includes words that are explicitly negative in both semantic and syntactic forms. Affixal negation has an indefinite verb type that contains pre-head and post-head modifications (for example, unhappy, senseless, fearless, etc). Whereas non-affixal negation encompasses no-negation and not-negation which carries lexical or auxiliary verb type. These words are *not*, *no*, *nothing*, *no one*, *nobody*, *never*, *none*, *neither/nor* and the like. It also includes implicit words such as ‘ignore’, ‘reject’, ‘doubt’, ‘forbid’, ‘refrain’, ‘prevent’, and so on, which assert the absence or denial of the propositions. Therefore, it is said that syntactic negation can be done either by the negation of the lexical verb or the auxiliary verb or by the negation of the non-verbal part of the sentence (Tottie 1991). It is important to mention here that the analysis is based only on the classification done by Tottie on the constituent level (semantic level).

Analysis of Negation in *Let Her Fly*

In *Let Her Fly*, Yousafzai and Carpenter separate the complex layers of gender inequality pervasive in Pakistani society. The memoir, personal reflections, and broader societal critiques offer readers a glimpse into the deeply rooted patriarchal norms that govern the lives of women in the region. Yousafzai and Carpenter craft a narrative that navigates the complex interplay of familial expectations, cultural traditions, and societal constructs, all of which contribute to the extension of gender inequalities. The thematic exploration of gender inequality within the memoir excels in the recounting of individual incidents and extends to a broader context, addressing systemic issues that hinder the empowerment of women. By boarding on this thematic analysis, we seek to unravel the various dimensions of gender inequality that Yousafzai and Carpenter present in *Let Her Fly*. This approach enables a comprehensive examination of the forces shaping the experiences of women in Pakistan. Through this lens, we aim to explain the broader implications of Yousafzai and Carpenter’s narrative depicted in the text.

Narrating the incident from family life, Ziauddin Yousafzai describes women as ones who are not treated equally with men. As evidenced by the text, “The juicy bits of chicken they were preparing, the legs, the breast, would not pass their own lips” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 15). Non-affixal negation “not” is used to deny the lexical verb ‘pass’. The auxiliary verb ‘would’ determines the tense of the sentence. Non-affixal negation denies the proposition that women would eat the juicy bits of chicken they prepare, the legs, and the breast. In these lines, Yousafzai asserts the ill-treatment of women and shows how women are not allowed to cherish the food equally with men rather, they would make it with “bonier

¹ Affixal negation is also called ‘clausal negation’ by Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum (2017) and ‘syntactic negation’ by Talmy Givon (2018).

parts” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 15). The use of not-negation followed by the lexical verb ‘pass’ negates the proposition of women eating the fleshy parts of chicken. Women, being deprived of the privileges at the food table, are shown as the victims of a patriarchal society, which is actually because of the poor socio-economic condition of Yousafzai’s family in a remote area of Swat. The depiction of the ill-treatment of women from a rural area of Swat seems to generalise women all over Pakistan.

In another incident, Yousafzai talks of the role of his mother, saying that his mother would make tea, pour for his father and him (as he was “a cherished son”), and wait for them to finish. She would ensure that both had finished their refreshment before taking her own. He says, “Sometimes my father would express gratitude, but not always” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 16). Non-affixal negation (not-negation type) ‘not’ is used which denies the lexical verb ‘express’ preceded by the auxiliary verb ‘would’. The use of ‘not-negation’ functions to deny the proposition ‘his father would always express gratitude’. The use of the explicit negation word ‘not’ proposes the notion that men are not usually grateful to their women. Women’s role is to serve men without getting appreciation and gratitude. The adverb phrase carries ‘not-negation’ which refers to the head noun ‘father’ to deny the proposition of men being grateful to their women. Women are shown as the subjects to fulfil all the domestic chores and serve men in priority, holding back their own selves, yet still not praised for it. Through the lens of non-affixal negation, he reinforces the idea that women despite prioritising others receive an insufficient acknowledgement.

Yousafzai has depicted that the birth of boys in his family is like a ‘prize child’ born to them. The first was when his elder brother was born and the second time when he was born. But the birth of the girl is not celebrated. They were never even named for themselves. Yousafzai names all his sisters in the text, and he claims that they were never named in their lives. He says, “I never once saw their names written down, they were described only in relation to men” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 22). The explicit use of the non-affixal (no-negation) word ‘never’ followed by the lexical verb ‘seen’ strictly denies the idea of the presence of the girl’s names in written form. The function which non-affixal negation is performing here is to deny the proposition ‘He once saw their name written down’. The writer here seems to share an idea that women in Pakistan do not have identity; rather, they are named in relation to their men. This could imply the stereotypical representation of male-dominant society all over Pakistan, where women are not given their names but rather described in relation to their male members of the family.

The same concept is evident on another occasion where Yousafzai affirms, “[t]hey were never named in their own right” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 22). Non-affixal negation (no-negation type) is used in relation to the lexical verb ‘named’. It functions to deny the proposition ‘they were named in their own rights’. The repetitive use of the non-affixal negation ‘never’ in the text emphasises the denial of the fact that women were ever named in their families. The word ‘never’ is used in the post-modification of the head noun ‘they’ (referring to women), thus negating the whole proposition of women being named in

Pakistani society. The writer affirms that his sisters ‘were never named in their own right’ rather they would be called as daughters of Rohul Amin, sisters of Ziauddin or Ramzan Yousafzai. They had no identity of their own, thus intensifying the strict patriarchal system all over Pakistan. Yousafzai affirms that his sisters were identified solely in relation to male family members.

Moving on, Yousafzai continued the stance of generalising the patriarchal society as he narrated that Pashtuns have feuds. They fight frequently and when a fight takes place, “sons” accompany their fathers. “Sons” means a man has an “army,” whereas daughters are thought of as “no resource” to stand by their fathers in fights as he says, “My sisters were no resource at all” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 23). Non-affixal negation (no-negation type) ‘no’ is used preceded by the auxiliary verb ‘were’. The absence of lexical verbs shows their detachment from any useful activity, such as helping their father in a fight. Non-affixal negation performs the function of denying the proposition ‘his sisters were resource at all’. In this sentence, the use of explicit ‘no’ asserts that Yousafzai’s father would only consider his two sons as his army and strength where upon rejecting the strength of his daughters. The non-affixal negation word ‘no’ is used in post modification of the head noun ‘sisters’, which refers to daughters in this context, and denies them as a ‘resource’. Daughters were seen as mere “a few things that put” their “father in a bad mood” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 23). Here, the *objectification* of women is vividly portrayed by Yousafzai who appears to generalise that women are objectified in Pakistani society. By mentioning his personal experiences from a particular region, he portrays Pakistan as a patriarchal society while presenting himself as an advocate for gender equality.

When the writer talks about enjoying the privileges of life, men are shown relishing the hot food served, whereas women are seen at the periphery. He says that while preparing food, the best and healthier meals will be made for him and his father. However, he notes that “when it came to eating” their food, his mother and sisters were “not” at their table, as evidenced by the text, “my mother and my sister were not at our table” (Yousafzai and Carpenter 25). Non-affixal negation is preceded by the auxiliary verb ‘were’ which denies the proposition ‘his mother and his sister were at their table’. The absence of lexical verbs signals the absence of females at the family dining table. In this line, the use of ‘not’ in post-head modification of the head nouns ‘mother’ and ‘sister’ negates their presence at the dining table. They would wait until men finished the meal “hot from the stove,” steaming and sizzling (Yousafzai and Carpenter 15). Such depictions foreground the intense patriarchal social setup in Pakistan, thereby backgrounding the values that are an integral part of Pakistani culture. In Pakistani culture, the customs related to food and dining illustrate a blend of traditional norms and the notable privileges that women enjoy. One prominent aspect is the practice of women often dining separately from men, typically in the kitchen or a designated women’s area within the household. This separation, rooted in cultural norms, also provides women with a space for social interaction and bonding away from male company. Beyond dining arrangements, women hold considerable authority in culinary matters, excelling as skilled cooks who

specialise in preparing traditional Pakistani dishes. Within family dynamics, women commonly make decisions regarding meal planning and dietary preferences, influencing the nutritional and cultural upbringing of their households. During cultural festivals and religious celebrations, women play a central role in preparing and sharing traditional delicacies that symbolise communal unity and shared heritage, enhancing their visibility and importance in cultural practices. These customs not only define women's roles but also underscore their integral position in shaping and preserving Pakistani cultural identity through food and communal rituals.

In the text, girls' births are shown as not celebrated. While talking about Toor Pekai's age, Yousafzai says her exact age is not known as her date of birth was not recorded by her parents. He claims, "being a girl, nothing was noted on paper" (Yousafzai and Carpenter 42). Non-affixal negation (no-negation type) 'nothing' is used followed by the auxiliary verb 'was' in relation to the lexical verb 'noted'. This kind of negation here denies the proposition 'being a girl, nothing was noted on paper'. The presence of no-negation 'nothing' denies the task of noting down the birth record of a girl when born to a Pakistani family. The lexical verb 'noted' is used in the post-head modification of the head noun 'girl'. While talking of the age of Toor Pekai, Yousafzai explicitly uses non-affixal negation to reinforce that in Pakistan, no record is kept when a girl is born in the family.

Conclusion

Ziauddin Yousafzai, in his book *Let Her Fly*, directly denies the freedom and equality of women in Pakistan by the explicit use of non-affixal negation. He tried to cling to the cultural schema of the West through the denial of the fact that they are given equal rights with men. In the text, he portrayed women of Swat — seems to generalise his view of those women all over Pakistan, affirming the notion that Pakistan is a state where women are *not* given their rights. Women in this narrative are represented as *silenced* beings who have *no* voice of their own. They are shown as passive, *not* having their identity but rather being referred in relation to their sons, fathers, or brothers. When it comes to having a meal, they are shown *absent* from the dining table. They wait until their brothers, sons, or fathers finish eating the hot steaming food before they take their turn. The narrative seems to have represented women as weak creatures who are *unable* to become the strength of their fathers. Whereas sons are thought to be the army of the father. He was favoured the most in the family because of his gender. Regarding a girl's birth, *nothing* is noted on the paper (birth documentation) and their births are not celebrated. All these pieces of evidence from the text are likely to sum up the stereotypical representation of Pakistan which might influence the readers' perceptions. It may reinforce that Pakistan is a state where women are not given equal rights with men rather, men are valued more.

The present article started with the claim that Yousafzai and Carpenter seem to generalise the notion of patriarchy in Pakistan by the generous use of negation markers such as not, no, never, etc. in relation to women. The claim has been supported by analysing such

negation words through Gunnel Tottie's model for the identification of negation words and negative propositions. It is found that negation is a significant feature of the text, representing women as oppressed at the hands of men. The findings of the paper depict that there are sufficient instances in the text *Let Her Fly* that reflect Yousafzai and Carpenter's view of depicting women as silenced, oppressed, and unnamed who need their men to refer to. Through the depiction of women living in Swat, Pakistan, under poor economic conditions and political upheaval, the generalisation of patriarchy is made across Pakistan. The text is widely perceived as a narrative account of a father who promotes a significant role in promoting gender equality, the transforming power of education, and the courage needed to defy social norms and encourage girls' education. Yousafzai's memoir could also perhaps be viewed as a real and personal narrative rather than an explicit attempt to appeal to Western viewers as it addresses universal issues like gender equality and education based on his personal life experiences and keen understanding of cultural dynamics. He has advocated for girls' education by taking a stand for his daughter and other girls from his locality. But in doing so, through the recurrent use of explicit negation words, he has intensified the portrayal of Pakistani society as undoubtedly patriarchal, thereby underscoring the progressive side of it that provides women the right to education and empowerment. The memoir may open up the possibility for future research to focus on the complexities of Eastern patriarchies, as well as how personal narratives might redefine Western engagement with gender issues.

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