

Social Taboos And Ethics Of Responsibility: A Feminist Study Of Girard's Girl Mans Up

Sana Sajjad¹, Dr. Qasim Shafiq², Dr. Umar-Ud-din³

Abstract

Men and women are constructed in diverse social forms of ethical reasoning and moralities: women are related to the ethics of concern and the ethics of responsibility. Hence, women are essentially perceived as peaceful, healing, creative, and non-dominating, so they became more associational, emotional and sensual in their opinion, whereas males who are aggressive, violent, and dominating became authoritative. In ¹the perception of possible self-reliance and self-independence, phallogocentric discursive and non-discursive practices publicize women as inferior entities concerning race, gender, class and nation. Ironically, this phallogocentric brouhaha helped feminists understand social taboos, especially in third-world countries where women do not have even freedom of thought. This study argues how women's writings help women to challenge their manipulated and constructed identity by men as monsters or angels and reconstruct their lost selves to be 'human'. The deconstructionist approach of this study delimits M-E Girard's Girl Mans Up as a case study to uncover how and why the male-dominated society pays no attention to women's historical achievements and, also, highlights how phallogocentric discursive and non-discursive practices publicize women as a monster or an angel but not as 'a woman/human'.

Keywords: ethics of responsibility, feminism, Girard, phallogocentrism, social taboos.

1. Introduction

Feminists highlight women's suffering and their confinement in the social hierarchy or in the narrow rooms where they hardly breathe. Feminists, unlike phallogocentrism, which only focuses on males, do not talk only about women's rights but also about the beneficial relationship between women and men. However, it is difficult because many women have been taught from their childhood a primitive concept of womanhood or maternity that builds up their consciousness and makes them submissive and docile. This study uses M-E Girard's Girl Mans Up as a case study to find out how women's writings challenge the predefined roles of males and females. The involvement of the strong and brave female protagonist in the selected novel makes superior/inferior ends of the sexist binary equivalent. "[T]he female character [does not] crush her individualism to fit into society; her empowerment, her independence, her choice, and her nonconformity are admitted and even celebrated" (Trites, 1997, p. 6). The woman as a protagonist narrates the true existence of women in patriarchal societies, including first-world countries. Girard presents her women characters as they are—not monsters or angels but

¹MPhil, Department of English, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

² Assistant Professor, Department of English, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Pakistan

³ Assistant Professor/Head, Department of English, Government Graduate Islamia College Civil Lines, Lahore, Pakistan.

women with all their shortcomings—and concludes that society must accept them as it has accepted the shortcomings of men.

This study sheds light on trends, social problems, and issues that are otherwise misidentified or overlooked by the dominant masculine vision in the social approach. The primary concern of this study is to highlight the exclusion and discrimination of women in patriarchal norms where women are being Othered on behalf of gender, objectification, economic and structural inequality, oppression, and power by generating stereotypes about their limitations. This study deconstructs how, historically, agency has always been associated with men, and therefore, all discursive and non-discursive practices are man-made and establish the tradition of ‘the eternal feminine’ that never acknowledges and appreciates the woman’s agency. This study argues that in the patriarchal social order, the role of women “in the house” is domestic ladies responsible for all the chores of the house (Wollstonecraft, 1797), and “outside the house” is laborer responsible for her full duties in low wages (Shwaller, 1979).

2. Literature Review

Jamal (2013) argues that there is a conflict between various discourses of feminism that explain women’s Othering more largely and help understand marginal feminist contexts. Since childhood, the body of women has been circulated in discourses that denounce phallogentric literature and all writings against women as a default, a type of false coin. On the other hand, women who write about gender are remarkably honest. They persuasively define the reality of intolerant clashes, which are the essence and parcel of woman-man issues. However, for Kuizenga (1997), the text is not considered reliable in constructing the identity of a person because the body constructed in a language can change as the language changes. The foundation of language is established in the woman’s body. Therefore, women must let themselves be well aware of their reality instead of living in a reminiscence of past suffering. Every woman must think independently because no already organized model helps women identify their existence. Vintges, (1992) argues that the individual must realize the cultural distinctions that develop the man/woman binary and focus on the convention of her own body. Women must dare to project women’s writing to express their selves. However, understanding their literary and non-literary works is neither a comfortable nor a simple proposition because these works define a profound sense of face-to-face humiliation, anger, pain and recrimination; these works describe several interpretations of several critical situations. According to Kuizenga (1997), if females could regain their natural language, they could also write about themselves in history. Research on the history of women’s writings promotes the natural monotony between women and men with the belief that essential human nature governs by sensible consciousness dwelling in women and men alike.

Ebert (2017) says that there is a “controversy within feminism itself over theoretical, political, social and strategic priorities” (p. 88). Zia (2018) argues that the diversity explicates that females are not othered by men only but by political entities “containing men, mullahs, money and the military” (p. 30). In this one-faceted political frame, women have no option but to negotiate on their othering. For Jamal (2013), these schools of feminism “refuse the distribution of the world into regions of . . . traditionalism” (p. 58). He argued that any division between women and men is the result of a prejudiced society that shuns females and their human nature. For instance, women continue to struggle for political rights, economic freedom, and education in numerous regions of the world because patriarchal stereotypes restrain them from obtaining social, political, and economic opportunities. These stereotypes distort women’s identity. According to Ebert (2017), the male/female binary in patriarchal societies is “a political exercise” (p. 88). A long list of female writers who had to write under patriarchal

names and styles and thus cannot discuss their areas of suffering exposes the politics of patriarchal hegemony. Thus the issue of gender, primarily, is not the focus of any class, so there is a requisite to define the role of social perception in the construction of women.

3. Research Methodology

The waves of feminism urge women to understand the reasons and solutions to their suffering instead of becoming a silent part of prescribed phallogocentric norms. Beauvoir urges women to challenge the ‘transcendental signified’ of the phallus, which defines women according to its hierarchical benefits. Through her own empirical experiences, she argues that women understand the gender politics that oppress women by encouraging them not to ask about their rights. Therefore, deconstructing ‘the eternal feminine’ Beauvoir claims that phallogocentric writings and social order do not address women’s issues, though they pretend to be because neither they are worried about understanding the problems of women nor have any experience of womanhood. Therefore, women must recover their true selves from their one-sided identity, where they are presented as monsters (Beauvoir, 1949). Beauvoir emphasized the significance of social context rather than biological differences in the advancement of sexism. She argued that daughters and sons are equally treated by their parents until they reach the age of 12. After that, traditional socialization leads them to transform into men and women. This socialization is known as “the eternal feminine” (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 17). This concept relates sexism to the socialization of girls and boys and insists on focusing on children’s literature in which male and female children are portrayed differently (Rosenblatt, 1965). To balance the social hierarchy, Simon de Beauvoir (1949) focuses on the falsifying reality of “the eternal feminine” that makes women biologically other (p. 25). She concerns about women’s socialization of their lost selves, which had phallogocentrically been presented as a mystery. Her writings explain a woman’s body because no alternative plan can help women recognize their existence. They expose cultural distinctions concerning the conventional perception of their bodies (Vintges, 1992) and allow women to reconfigure them against ‘the eternal feminine’ (Beauvoir, 1949). Beauvoir (1949) argued that a woman in the absence of her ‘self’ is silent, speechless and visionless; hence, she cannot fight for her rights and consequently accepts herself as a patriarchal ‘other’. So, to be humanized, women must rebuild their history. Rebuilding their history means rethinking, rewriting, reimagining, and reinterpreting the documents and events that represent them (Gilbert, 1980).

4. Text Analysis

Girard does not view humanization as a supernatural concept, contrary to what feminists generally consider it. For instance, her female characters are common human beings with their weaknesses and do not represent superior races with unusual powers, as most women are presented in books and movies. Her female characters are fighting for their ‘agency’ which is the most serious issue in the domain of feminism. They express their fears and hopes while challenging the popular narrative of ‘the eternal socialization’ propagated in phallogocentric writings (Ghaussy, 2009). In *Girl Mans Up*, Girard constructs female characters in language through their differences with other male and female characters in terms of fashioned socialization. Different discursive and non-discursive practices describe the nature and manners of various female characters to explain how and why the patriarchal hierarchy accepts a woman as a human being – accepts her with all her drawbacks rather than expecting her angel, a completely good entity, or monster, a completely bad entity. Penelope, the protagonist of the novel, is a young girl who is eager to challenge patriarchal norms. Her portrayal defines Girard’s mindset as a woman and demonstrates how a woman’s perspective on herself differs from that of a man who looks into her body. This study explores how Girard humanizes her

women in patriarchal societies by expressing her social experiences. The novel unfolds the confusion surrounding Penelope's gender. People want to know if she is "a boy or a girl. They wouldn't let [her] leave until [she] proved" her gender (Girard, 2016, p. 168). In her town, newcomers are always confused about Penelope's gender. Therefore, she sometimes feels awkward and wishes that "[i]t would be nice if there were a few other girls in this damn town who looked more like me" (Girard, 2016, p. 60). This pressure from social norms made her parents seize their girl-child at home and forced her to obey the prescribed rules of a feminine attitude that did not have any concern with her ways of thinking about herself and the people around her. Penelope's parents became so conscious of patriarchal socialization that they forbade her from engaging in common activities. Whenever Penelope asks her mother to work with her brother in the backyard outside their home, she strictly refuses. Johnny, Penelope's brother, also could not understand the problem if she worked or played with him in their open backyard. However, instead of replying to Johnny, their mother orders Penelope to stay in the house to make things better and help her with household chores.

Therefore, females should behave according to prescribed social rules; otherwise, they will be accused as bad girls or monsters. Penelope "want[s] to learn to different things" (Girard, 2016, p. 10), but her girlhood is the problem. Even though she does not bother about what other people think. For instance, she cut her "stupid hair ... drop[s] it into the trash (Girard, 2016, p. 17). Her long hair was the only girlish thing that defined her feminine beauty. But it was a continuous irritation for her. Her bold attitude and fearlessness about cutting hair, without even telling her mother to explain her irritation. After cutting her hair, she feels relaxed, and there are no marks of sadness on her face. Instead, she was happy with her short hair. However, at the same time, she was afraid of the furious and bizarre reaction of her parents, who might be upset and annoyed and think of her as "punkie druggy" but when she stood in front of the mirror, she forgets everything because she watches her "real face in there" (Girard, 2016, p. 19). Girard presents her female protagonist not as a typical girl who accepts the prescribed social context but as a growing human being who learns about the world from her regretful and happy feelings. Her ambivalence about accepting 'the eternal socialization' of her society describes her desire to reject the prescribed norms.

Penelope does not want to be a boy. The novel tells that she has desires that are usually reserved for men; for instance, she plays a video game with her male friends and uses the word 'dude' for herself and her male friends. Despite all these attempts, she knows well she is not a boy "in the first place" (Girard, 2016, p. 1). She just has a stance that discursive and non-discursive practices should not be based on sexism, for instance, particular things, like video games, are allowed for males but not for females. By the same token, in the video game, the female characters are full of makeup and half-naked, and Penelope does not like this perception of girls and likes to pick up male characters, who are presented as gentlemen, for playing a video game. She accepts her being as a girl, but she refuses to become a girl according to 'the eternal feminine'. It made her different as she distinguished herself from the rest of the girls who followed the phallogocentric ways of women and, simultaneously, was satisfied as a girl. She does not have any interest in femininity, but she likes video games. These traits of her personality helped her defeat the conventional figure of a woman (Cixous, 1975).

Penelope likes soldiers in video games and hence likes a manly get-up and the company that she finds in her male friends because the females in her neighborhood are not like soldiers. On the other hand, she wants to be like her brother, who is always ready to help. She accepts his words like 'solid', and 'man up' for her and hence tries to be "solid like [her] brother (Girard, 2016, p. 2). Therefore, she always introduces herself as a boy, as she "wear[s] a black T-shirt, faded jeans, and skater shoes" (Girard, 2016, p. 3). Whenever she goes to the mall to

meet a girl with Colby, she wears a T-shirt, jeans, and skater shoes. The girls at the mall assume she is a boy. However, girls with strong muscles and bodies are not perceived in a patriarchal social order, so they are condemned for their desire to be strong, rather than for the people to ask them to be meek, shy ladies. Such an inquiry made her realize that she was different from the other girls. She feels that she belongs somewhere else.

Girls are not supposed to behave in a boyish way. They cannot dress up in boys' clothes and do not spend time with boys. Penelope knows that she is not acting and living her life in a way that her parents generally and society demand from her. She wants to set up new examples in which girls can also do whatever they like and have agency just like men. For this reason, her mother calls her punk druggie and does not allow her to go outside in a boyish get-up. She expects her to behave like a normal girl and urges her to perform household chores. She wants her to wear the pretty dresses of girls and go to college to be a nurse so that a good boy accepts to be Penelope's husband. Penelope also thinks of herself as a girl. After cutting her hair, she looks in the mirror "a girl's body" (Girard, 2016, p. 26). She does not want to be a boy, as the people around her think. She wants the characteristics prescribed by the eternal social order for boys. Therefore, her bold and daring steps prove her to be a strong girl, a boyish characteristic. In patriarchal socialization, a girl must be delicate, and she should not accept the teachings of socialization that disturb the rest of society. A woman desires to live her or her own experiences of the psyche, body, and language (Showalter, 1981). The cultural environments in which women reside affect how they view their bodies and reproductive and sexual functions (Showalter, 1981).

People think that Penelope's short haircut and boyish dress cause disturbances in the whole family. This is a new "argument when [they] all get together" (Girard, 2016, p. 47). The cutting of hair is paradoxically given much notice because instead of giving attention to the basic issues of females, for instance, their socio-political status as humans, people are busy condemning a girl's choice of a short haircut. Surprisingly, Penelope's uncle calls her a tough girl whom no boy likes. He encourages Colby to be good and pretty like her mother to help her friends and family. Different questions about her relatives also make fun of her. They also say that no one would like a girl like her for a better half. For her short hair and clothes, they called her "[s]mall one Johnny" (Girard, 2016, p. 46). Penelope's mother felt embarrassed by such comments from her relatives.

Girard argues one must not change unless one wants to. There is no need to care if someone calls you funny because of your different choices, appearance, and behavior. A girl must learn not to pay attention to what people think about her. This is the very point of her humanization. However, she needs patriarchal support in the process of 'becoming a being'. For instance, Penelope's brother is the main factor in her humanization. She discusses strange and annoying reactions of people with her brother. Her brother always takes her side and advises her to man up against what people think of her. He is the inspiration behind her beliefs that girls must not live according to prescribed gender politics. Johnny represents the patriarchal sect that also dislikes the stereotypes concerning 'the eternal feminine'. He encourages Penelope not to bother about people's attitudes. He supports her to live life in a way she is happy with and to do things of her own choice not of people's. He urges her not to bother if she likes ponytails and wears dresses of her choice. "You don't have to change. Unless you want to" (Girard, 2016, p. 34). Johnny always encourages her against the so-called consideration of people in a bid to humanize her. He holds the opinion that "no one would look at you weird if you decided to do that stuff" (Girard, 2016, p. 34). Therefore, whenever her parents and other family members, including her neighborhood, try to pin down her for her short haircut, boyish clothes, and attitude, she does not care about their comments. Instead, of

getting annoyed by the comments, she says, “thank you.” Because she is fully convinced and self-confident in all these choices and has the support of her brother.

Another aspect of women’s humanization is that the female characters Penelope, Olivia and Blake, realize that everyone demands from girls for the so-called harmony of the social order. Being female, they cannot make any decisions about their lives, not even about their haircut, their job, their education, etc. The women who act accordingly without any objection are the ‘angels’; otherwise, they are the ‘monsters. These social expectations ultimately made them fed up and let them go against the eternal social standards. Penelope encourages Olivia to move on by leaving behind all the nonsense. She holds the view that if something wrong is done even by a female, like a male, she must move on and not spoil the rest of her life. These thoughts made Olivia face the difficulties of her life. The continuous courage made Olivia better, and when Penelope met her after her abortion, she was a different person. It might be Olivia’s “manning up right in front of [her]” (Girard, 2016, p. 154).

The girls are believed to be responsible caretakers of the house and to make food for their family members. When Penelope adopts a boyish manner, a boyish haircut, T-shirt – her social order reacts to it. The eternal social thinking “guess[s] that’s not enough (Girard, 2016, p. 27) to have a girl’s body and name, a girl has to behave in the prescribed manners for girls’ socialization. It assumes that there is nothing left in her that makes her a girl because she is not behaving and living according to the prescribed gender role. Therefore, Penelope’s mother convinces her to take an interest in the kitchen, in “mak[ing] massa” (Girard, 2016, p. 34). Therefore, when Penelope set her spikes because she had a plan to hang out with Colby, her mother from the kitchen called her to engage her in household chores. However, Penelope behaves differently to girls of her age. She dresses up in T-shirts with a short haircut and likes “Ninja turtles” (Girard, 2016, p. 127). Her lifestyle and social expectations made her a strange person. Her ambitions and societal expectations made her ambivalent, “not a guy ... not exactly a girl either (Girard, 2016, p. 42).

At the party at Blake’s house, she was the only one who was different, so her relatives looked at her strangely. Penelope wished that there were two or three people who looked like her, so it would give her some support. She feels queer because the people around her make her feel stranger. After all, she cannot be fixed in the framework of ‘the eternal feminine’. She did not pay attention to her expressions and comments, but she was worried about her family members, especially her brother. Sometimes she wanted to stay in her room to avoid discussions that would explain her inward weakness. For instance, in a restaurant with her brother, some men whispered about Penelope, and “probably thought [she] was a dude” (Girard, 2016, p. 60). The vulgar and nasty comments in the restaurant made her feel embarrassed. When Johnny learned about the group of men who were passing nasty comments on Penelope, he threatened them by pointing at them with a knife. Penelope asked her brother to leave. After this incident, they came out of the restaurant and got in their truck on their way back home, Johnny told Penelope that being an elder brother was his job to protect her sister in front of bad guys, but Penelope replies that she is no more a kid and “can take care of [her]self” (Girard, 2016, p. 61).

Beauvoir (1949) describes the importance of culture about the expansion of sexism. She stated that her parents treated their sons and daughters equally until they turned 12. After the time ‘the eternal socialization’ makes them the man and the woman. Penelope tells Blake that when she was little, she used to think that she was born as a boy. “But the older I get, the less that made sense to me. Because “I don’t feel wrong inside myself. I don’t feel like I’m someone I shouldn’t be. Only other people make me feel like there’s something wrong with

me” (Girard, 2016, p. 72). Penelope claims that she does not feel anything strange. She is female, which is why she is not expected to violate gender roles. Expect her brother and everyone at her home and outside to not allow her to live according to her desires. They were not happy with her haircut, her tough look, her boyish look, and her untraditional ways of living. Therefore, her mother forbids her to go against ‘the eternal socialization’ in a patriarchal hierarchy because she was worried about “[h]ow [Penelope] gonna get married?” (Girard, 2016, p. 118). She thought it would be her failure to accept Penelope as a wife. Such thoughts often made her furious, as she yelled at Penelope and cursed herself, perhaps not a good mother, and she could not bring up Penelope in a good way. The severity of the alarming situation made Penelope strict: “This is my house.” I decide!” ... “You a girl, Penelope. You be a girl now. You mǎe decide. You gonna be a pretty girl” (Girard, 2016, p. 119).

Childhood memories and experiences impact Penelope. In her childhood, when she was in Grade 2 and trapped by two boys in a changing room who wanted to know whether she was a boy or a girl, her parents ignored her complaint about the social taboo and did not ask the school authority or the boys’ parents. Another childhood memory, when Victor, her classmate “pull [her] pants down in front of his friends” because he wanted to know the gender of Penelope, he teased her often (Girard, 2016, p. 169). She was rescued by a teacher who accidentally visited a changing room. However, when Penelope complained to her mother about the incident, she did not pay attention because of the negative impact that it would have had if it had been publicized. Instead, her mother taunted Penelope for talking about social taboos that were not suitable for a nice girl. Such behaviors by her parents made her upset with her fears about patriarchal social norms. At that time, her brother Johnny helped her stood by her side and fought with men who teased her; he became her hero and source of inspiration. Hence, she respects him and tells him more than anyone else. She copied her style. At an early age, no one noticed her coping with her brother’s style, but when she turned 12, it became trouble for the family, who abruptly forced her to change her dress and ways of living. She disregarded her parents because they did not pay any notice to her problems. She held the view that her mother was twice her age, so she should know that those kids would not leave her and kept chasing her, but she remained afraid of social taboos. It was Johnny who fixed the problem for her, not her mother. Therefore, she respects Johnny more than her parents because he always stood by her side and helped her in all situations. Therefore, when her parents “kicked him out” (Girard, 2016, p. 169), they lost her trust.

The generational gap between Johnny and his father results in tension in the home. He feels that his father does not like him, whereas his father thinks that his son has no respect for him. Johnny left the house because he was blamed for everything that went wrong. He wants to live his life according to his ways. When Penelope learned about her brother's departure, she was sad to lose her support. Her mother was also sad, but she thinks that Penelope may become normal and stop behaving like a boy. Her mother suspects that Penelope’s bold attitude is due to her brother. Penelope negated her parents’ perceptions and claimed to be bad when there was a reason to be bad. After Johnny’s departure, her mother convinced her to grow up and behave like a girl. She convinced Penelope to wear a pink dress with the Disney princess printed on it. She said that she would buy more girlish clothes and make-up for Penelope, but Penelope refused such a lifestyle. However, her parents never thought of the strong affiliation between Penelope and Johnny, so they ordered Johnny to leave the house without knowing its impact on Penelope. Penelope only respects her brother Johnny and thinks him to be her best friend, who always helps her: “Johnny bought me my Turtles. Johnny took me to the movies ... Johnny gave me his clothes. Johnny let me play hockey outside with him” (Girard, 2016, p. 168). So they made her rude enough to insult their genuine concerns. Thus, she also involves unusual things like smoking, drinking, and dating that are strictly unacceptable even in matriarchal

norms, but no one tries to know the factors behind it and claims that “[s]omething wrong with [her]” (Girard, 2016, p. 95). Society prescribes rules and demands that girls obey them.

With her vision of bravery, Penelope did not accept Colby’s rudeness to her and answered him severely. Both hit each other, and Penelope punched his face. After the fight with Colby at school, Penelope was suspended for one month, so Blake informed her about the different comments of the students about her. Blake told her that there are “girls who have been writing ‘Team Pen’ on their hands with black marker (Girard, 2016, p. 171) because she showed courage against a boy she did not expect. However, different arguments prevail to support patriarchy. The common patriarchal perceptions were as follows: Some are saying [she] should just never come back to St. Peter’s ... since Catholic schools are for religious people ... and [she is] not allowed to be religious when I’m so queer” (Girard, 2016, p. 171). Being female, she was supposed to be weak and helpless and did not punch a boy but by cheating.

After the punishment from school, Colby returned without any argument with his father. Still, Penelope’s mother was too annoyed and blamed Penelope for such an incident and pointed out her dressing for their social problems because even the dressing “clothes matter because that’s what people see” (Girard, 2016, p. 166). She warned her to accept her gender roles and become a normal girl because “[g]irls can’t decide they’re not girls anymore” (Girard, 2016, p. 166). Her mother was completely afraid of her social context and wished her daughter would follow their social values for the betterment of their family. She is right as well because the prescribed stereotypes about girls penetrated society. Being a female, she had witnessed bitter experiences and did not want her daughter to be a part of them. However, Penelope condemned her thinking of the social context shaped by women’s acceptance. To some extent, her mother also understood her hidden desires and sometimes thought about helping her. But her eternal way of life had made her confused. “Sometimes [she] says yes to stuff, then she changes her mind.” (Girard, 2016, p. 70). She is worried about her daughter’s future in a powerful patriarchal social order that will never permit Penelope to choose her course. Therefore, she repeatedly asked her about her social activities and forced her to ask before making any decision. When Blake visited her, she was impressed by her mother’s hospitality. She asked Penelope, who was exaggerating about her mother’s strictness and could not convince her mother to restrict her to her home. With her conversation with Blake on music, Penelope also acknowledged her mother’s love for her but both would not convince each other of their stances. However, for love, Penelope often refused her friends for late-night parties, for which her mother strictly advised her.

Penelope has a great understanding of video games. She always wins the video game, and her friends know her good command of it, but they never acknowledge it. Blake works in a game store, and her boss favors female jobs. Hence, Blake is “pretty sure he’s a feminist (Girard, 2016, p. 121). At Blake’s request, he gives the job to Penelope. He believes that females are as competent as males are. Hence, with Blake’s help, Penelope gets the job at the Game Depot. She was also impressed by Mitch, Blake’s boss, and his style of sitting and copying him, which she described as “pulling a leg up to rest his ankle over the other knee” (Girard, 2016, p. 121). However, she had to sit like a decent girl because a proper sitting posture is assumed to be a delicacy for females, and they were supposed to behave sophisticatedly. She accepted the job’s demands and felt joy and freedom to some extent because she knew the reaction of her parents, who never let her do such a job. However, she decided to go against stereotypical norms: “I shouldn’t be out this late, so it’s a good thing I don’t care about that anymore” (Girard, 2016, p. 123). Her happiness is genuine as the job gives her a strong reason to stay outside the maximum. For her, this job is a blessing as the girls in her society are

forbidden to stay outside their homes late. Working women in a feminine circle, teaching and nursing somewhat escape domestic boundaries and responsibilities from this social attitude. Penelope's excitement about getting a job reflects her feelings of independence. She had got a job, so she could "probably start paying for" her phone bill (Girard, 2016, p. 129). She was no longer dependent on anyone. It could engage her and prevent her from social stereotypes.

5. Conclusion

This study focuses on how Beauvoir's explication of 'the eternal feminine' helps M-E Girard presents the ways women become human beings because women need to be represented in multiple ways in literature instead of as having romantic love interests or as mothers (Kolodny, 1980a). This study focuses on how M-E Girard in *Girl Mans Up* (2016) regards the humanization of her female characters and explains how they are being suppressed in the name of eternal social hierarchy that signifies the patriarchal social order exaggeratedly (Gilbert & Gubar, 1979). It values the phallogocentric writings and privileges them as literary canons. This single-handed approach to social hierarchy has spoiled the present and the past and has hindered what has been done to improve a balanced social order. A common belief about women's writings is that it focuses especially on the supremacy of women and has the essential purpose of enhancing the superiority of women over men. However, women writers approach a vision of the social universe, not a political one that supports and creates inequality, injustices, and oppression. Since the perspectives and experiences of various girls and women have been chronically eliminated from social science and social theory, many women writer's approaches have stressed their experiences and interactions within society because they constitute half of the world's population and are a part and parcel of society.

References:

1. Beauvoir, S. d. (1949). *The second sex*. New York: Vintage Books.
2. Cixous, H. (1975). "The laugh of the Medusa." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*.
3. Elbert, R. (2017). *Awake in the dark*. University of Chicago Press.
4. Girard, M-E. (2016). *Girl Mans Up*. Canada: HarperCollins.
5. Gilbert S. M., & Gubar, S. (1979). Infection in the sentence: The woman writer and the anxiety of authorship. In R. R. Warhol & D. P. Herndl (Eds.), *Feminisms: An anthology of literary theory and criticism* (pp. 21-32). New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press.
6. Gilbert, S. M. (1980). What do feminist critics want? Or a postcard from the volcano. In E. Showalter (Ed.), *The new feminist criticism: Essays on women literature & theory* (pp. 29-44). New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
7. Ghaussy, S. (2009). *Writing the feminine in diasporic spaces*. Purdue University Press.
8. Jamal, A. (2013). "Feminism and "fundamentalism" in Pakistan: Gender and class in the secular/religious divide." *Dispatches from Pakistan*. Memon, Q. & Prashad, V (eds.) 141-160. New Delhi: Left Word Books.
9. Kuizenga, D. (1997). *Women writers in pre-revolutionary France: Strategies of emancipation*. New York, Garland Publishing.
10. Kolodny, A. (1980a). Dancing through the minefield: Some observations on the theory, practice, and politics of a feminist literary criticism. *Feminist Studies*, 6(1), 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3177640>
11. Rosenblatt, L. M. (1965). *Literature as exploration*. New York: Modern Language Association.
12. Showalter, E. (1979). Toward a feminist poetics. In Showalter, E. (1985), *The new feminist criticism: Essays on women literature & theory* (125-143). New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
13. Showalter, E. (1981). *The female malady: Women, madness, and English culture, 1830-1980*. Pantheon Books.
14. Trites, R. S. (1997). *Waking sleeping beauty: Feminist voices in children's novels*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press.

15. Vintges, K. (1992). *Philosophy as passion: The thinking of Simone de Beauvoir*. Indiana University Press.
16. Wollstonecraft, M. (1797). *A Vindication of the rights of woman: With strictures on political and moral subjects*. New York: G. Vale.
17. Zia, A. S. (2018). *Faith and feminism in Pakistan: Religious agency or secular autonomy?* Sussex Academic Press.