

**Representation of women in the Oscar winning films by  
sharmeen obaid chinnoy**



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**DECLARATION**

I, Naveed Anjum hereby declare that the matter presented in this dissertation is my original work and has been carried out under the supervision of Dr. Farsat Rasool, Department Media and communication, UMT, Lahore. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis does not contain any material that has been submitted for the award of any other degree in any other university, neither does this thesis contain any material published or written previously by any other person except in the text for which due references are given.

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**DECLARATION**

I, Dr Farasat Rasool, Department of Media and Communication University of Management and Technology, Lahore hereby declare that the matter presented in this dissertation is original work of my student Naveed Anjum. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis does not contain any material that has been submitted for the award of any other degree in any other university, neither does this thesis contain any material published or written previously by any other person except in the text for which due references are given.

Dr. Farasat Rasool

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To my daughters.

## ABSTRACT

Saving Face (2012) and A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness (2015) is landmark films in the history of Pakistani media. Directed by Sharmeen Obaid Chinnoy, these Oscar winning films were produced by HBO and broadcasted in America. The subject of both the films is violence against women in Pakistan. This study uses qualitative analysis of the films in order to take out different themes and understand their connection to the message of violence against women as presented in these films. At UMT, Lahore, a group of 67 (males and females) of media students (Masters Level) was used as sample. They were shown the two films. A quantitative analysis on reception of the message of violence against women in Pakistan was done on the basis of reception theory by Stuart Hall. In the group that responded in favor of the dominant view, female respondents (58%) outnumbered the male respondents (42%). In the group which belongs to the negotiated and oppositional responses, male respondents (71%) outnumber the female respondents (29%). This difference in the response has significance in the process of communication. This refers to the question whether there is inherent bias towards opposite gender in the male and the female components of Pakistani society or is that the subjective point of view of the filmmaker in these films that makes the difference in reception.

**Keywords:** *violence against women in Pakistan, Sharmeen Obaid Chinnoy, Saving Face, A Girl in the Rive, Reception Theory.*

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## **1. Introduction**

Pakistani media has witnessed various phases in the course of its history. It has also been under the influence of different ideologies, movements and political changes. Documentary film takes its own specific place in depicting and presenting culture and social realities to the audience at home and outside. Unlike fiction film, the non fiction film has been treated differently in giving it access to the cinemas for having almost no glamour and other commercial values. Though it found its place in television as PTV started producing documentaries on various cities and rural areas of Pakistan exploring indigenous culture, landscape and traditions. Here documentaries were used to promote bright side of the society and Pakistani culture.