



LUMS

Saida Waheed
Gender Initiative



Saida Waheed Gender Initiative

Spring Newsletter

2019

The Saida Waheed Gender Initiative (SWGII) had a busy Spring semester, which included several exciting events as well as extending support for gender-related research by faculty and students.

SEMINAR SERIES

Since its inception, The SWGI has been hosting monthly seminars, and inviting local scholars of gender studies to share their working research and/or published work with the community at LUMS. This semester started off with a talk by Dr. Gwendolyn Kirk who is an Assistant Professor at the MGSNSS, LUMS. Her talk titled, “*You need to know a little yes/no: Crossing gender and linguistic boundaries in Pakistani cinema*” examined two films in detail, 1957’s *Yakkey Wali* and 1979’s *Aurat Raj*, to ask how vocal drag and translanguaging perform identity crossings in ways that complement or complicate other narrative dimensions of these films. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

Sara Kazmi, who is currently pursuing a PhD in postcolonial literatures at the University of Cambridge, gave the next talk. Her talk titled ‘Postcolonial echoes of *Hir*: the feminist poetics and the vernacular imagination’ explored the feminist poetics of postcolonial Punjabi poetry, focusing specifically on Amrita Pritam and Nasreen Anjum Bhatti. [Please click here to see full video.](#)



This was followed by a book talk by Dr. Sara Rizvi who is an Assistant Professor at Forman Christian College in the Department of Sociology. In her talk she discussed her book ‘*Women, healthcare and violence*’ in which she shed light on the near million women healthcare practitioners across Pakistan who face some form of workplace violence almost daily during care delivery. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

We then hosted a talk by Dr. Kate Vyborny, who is a Postdoctoral Associate in the Department of Economics at Duke University and also a visiting researcher at the Lahore School of Economics and at the Lahore University of Management Sciences, and a Fellow of the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan and the Consortium for Development Policy Research in Pakistan. In her talk titled ‘Institutional reform and de facto women’s rights: Evidence from marriage registrars in Punjab, Pakistan’ she discussed the possible gaps between laws that govern marriage and divorce as they are found in law books and the de facto practice of the law. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

This was followed by a talk by Dr. Laine Munir, who is a Research Fellow in the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (SCAR) at George Mason University’s Korea campus. In her talk titled ‘No wealth for women: natural resources and gender inequality in Africa’, she surveyed the relationship between the resource curse and gender by drawing on illustrative cases in sub-Saharan Africa. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

Dr. Shirin Zubair is a professor of English at Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore gave our next talk. Her talk, ‘Negotiating Multiple Identities: Pakistani Women and Media Representations’, explored the ways in which media representations of Pakistani women are understood to represent broader international development discourses. [Please click here to see full video.](#)



The next talk was by Dr. Faiza Mushtaq, who is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Social Sciences and Liberal Arts at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi. Her talk titled, ‘Performing religious authority as a woman: resources, constraints, and cultural entrepreneurship’ was based on her research on Pakistani women who participate in the religious classes and reformist activities of the group called Al-Huda. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

Dr. Nida Kirmani, Associate Professor of Sociology in the Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Lahore University of Management Sciences delivered the last talk of the Spring Seminar Series. Her talk titled ‘Can fun be feminist? gender, space and mobility in Lyari, Karachi’ focused on one of Karachi’s original settlements, Lyari, and explored the multiple ways in which women and girls push the boundaries of gender norms through everyday experiences of fun and enjoyment. [Please click here to see full video.](#)

QUEER FUTURES WORKSHOP

What does it mean to be queer in Pakistan? What spaces exist for such an expression in Pakistan? Must a history of queer existence be traced or is queer presence in the now testament enough? Is there a need to develop a local queer vocabulary? How important is language in offering/countering rebuke? Who will shape the queer futures that we are envisioning?

These were some of the questions raised during the three-day workshop on Queer Futures at LUMS held from 14th – 16th March 2019. Centred upon gender and sexuality, this workshop was co-organised by Dr. Nida Kirmani, Associate Professor of Sociology, and Dr. Omar Kasmani, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Freie University, Berlin. More than 25 academics, activists, artists, comedians, writers, and students chaired discussions at the workshop, bringing in diverse voices into the conversation. Friends from across the border were also present, while those unable to show physical presence participated through Skype. The workshop drew upon a number of formats including academic talks, artist dialogues, literary readings, round table discussions, and a film screening.



Please click [here](#) to see full video of the keynote speech by Dr. Anjali Arondekar.

FACULTY RESEARCH GRANTS

The SWGI provides grants to faculty for the pursuit of creative and interdisciplinary research and projects relating to gender in Pakistan. In this round Dr. Karrar Hussain, Assistant Professor in Economics at LUMS, was awarded an amount of 150,000 PKR for research exploring reasons for low turn-out rates for female voters.

STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS

The SWGI also offers small grants for student-led research projects and senior projects that focus on, or use gender as a major analytical tool in their work. Undergraduate students from all departments/schools at LUMS are encouraged to apply and selected applicants present their work at the Annual Student Colloquium.

This year grants were awarded to the following:

- Women in prisons – *Aleena Shafique and Alina Noor Pasha*
- “Langhot mai hee taqat hai” – embodiment of masculinities among the Muslim Pehlwan of Lahore – *Awais Khalid*
- In search of sukoon: mapping the everyday at Bibi Pak Daman– *Fatima Mohsin*
- Women and women's Urdu magazines – *Keshaf*
- Women involvement in the Peasant Movement of Okara – *Maria Nazar and Ramsha Ijaz*
- Lady Health Workers and family planning – *Maryam Mansoor*
- Creating space in the everyday: stories of female community leaders of Mozang – *Umaina Mairaj*





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