

## **Double bind of Gendered Digital Activism in Pakistan**

In this paper I will investigate gendered digital activism in Pakistan, and the ways in which Pakistani women use technology to emerge from being a benign presence in a masculinist culture to occupying cyber-spaces of resistance. Radhika Gajjala writes 'ensuring that women are empowered by any kind of technology requires that we investigate issues that are much more complex than merely the question of material access to the latest technologies' (Gajjala 2002). In this context, Pakistani cyber-feminist technological environments are woven around those resistance strategies that are tailored to challenge the cultural determinism, and nationalist, religious, and patriarchal discourses that coerce to control and regulate women's bodies and necessitate to use them as markers of the nationhood.

I argue that even when Pakistani women activists bring visibility to gendered subjectivities within technologically mediated contexts, they are kept imprisoned in the double bind (Spivak 2001) where they are judged by patriarchy at home and are perceived as victims who need saving in the western hegemonic discourses. This double bind becomes that existential crisis for Pakistani women where despite all efforts of liberation they constantly find themselves struggling with the expectations and stereotypes of what it is to be a traditional/ liberated woman. To unravel the dynamics of cyber-power that are exerted to re-enforce existing hegemonies, this paper will investigate how voice and silence of the subaltern (Spivak/ Gajjala) in the gendered digital spaces shape online social networks in relation to offline hierarchies.

BIO:

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