

Women and Technology: Behind the Scenes of Contemporary Pakistani Cinema

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Abstract

This paper focuses on gender disparity behind the camera, as seen in film industries worldwide, with a focus on contemporary Pakistani cinema. Not only is there an obvious lack of gender parity in on-screen film representations, but this disproportionality increases when one looks at the gender of individuals behind the lens. Directors, writers, producers, editors, cinematographers, and composers are just a few of the people who must work behind the scenes to bring a story to life on the big screen. As in many other industries, women are underrepresented in filmmaking while systemic biases in the film industry inhibit the inclusion of women within all technological departments. This study addresses this inequality by exploring local socioeconomic factors and questions the repercussions of this imbalance on the final screen texts. There has been no previous in-depth analysis of this issue within the Pakistani film industry, hence statistical models are presented using data from mainstream digital films released from 2013 to 2018. This analysis also relies on interviews of individuals currently working in the industry with the goal of including first-hand details of the industry's gender dynamics.

Keywords: Gender Disparity, Film Production, Pakistani Cinema, Pakistani Digital Cinema, Female Directors

Introduction

The dominant discourse on gender and film tends to focus on the representation of women on-screen: the unequal power dynamics, the hyper-sexualized objectification, the excessive use of the male gaze, and a conspicuous lack of main-stream female stories. Increasingly though the conversation has started to shift towards issues previously overlooked, including the widening pay gap, misogynistic discrimination and sexual harassment which have led to the emergence of charged global movements such as Me Too and Time's Up. Both these movements bring to the forefront the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the workplace and more specifically in the film industry. Prominent actors, actresses, filmmakers, politicians, lawyers, activists among others have joined together to quite literally state that "time's up" for inequality and harassment in the workplace.

At the 2018 Cannes Film Festival, the Time's Up Movement made an appearance in the form of a silent protest led by Cate Blanchett and Agnes Varda that aimed to highlight the festival's failure to include more women directed films. Blanchett stated, "We are 82 women, representing the number of female directors who have climbed these stairs since the first edition of the Cannes Film Festival in 1946. In the same period, 1,688 male directors have climbed these very same stairs" (BBC). Similarly, at the 2018 Golden Globe Awards, Natalie Portman took to stage to give the award for best director and remarked on the all-male nominees. To further illustrate this historical gender bias, one needs only to look at the

Academy Awards, more popularly known as the Oscars, in which only five women have ever been nominated for best director since the first ceremony in 1929, with only Kathryn Bigelow winning in 2010 (Perrone). Moreover, 72% of individuals with the power to vote for the Oscars are male (Perrone).

In Pakistan, the situation is even grimmer. While the movements did gain recognition in the country, their reach seems to be limited to only online media platforms. Prominent harassment allegations are distorted as defamation scandals, and the systems reinforcing power imbalances and workplace inequality remain firmly in place. Gendered character assassination is frequent and unequal pay is the norm. Although there are no official statistics to evaluate the gender wage gap specifically in the film industry, Pakistan as a whole “is the second worst country in the world in terms of gender parity, ranking 148 out of 149 countries in the ‘Global Gender Gap Index 2018’ report released by the World Economic Forum” (Ahmed).

In 2013, Meenu Gaur and Farjad Nabi’s co-directed *Zinda Bhaag/Run for Your Life* (2013) became the first Pakistani film in over fifty years to be submitted for consideration for the Oscar’s foreign language category. Critics labeled 2013 as ushering in a “new-wave of Pakistani cinema” (Paracha). Despite this new wave, there remained high levels of behind the scenes gender disparity and its depth can be seen through a cursory look at the most popular films running in cinemas. The world-wide top twenty highest-grossing Pakistani films of all time are all directed by men (LollywoodOnline). With the exception of two films (Syed Noor’s 1998 film *Choorian/Bangles* and Shoaib Mansoor’s 2011 film *Bol/Speak*), the highest-grossing films on the list were released post 2013 and have two female producers, six female co-producers, one female writer and two female co-writers between them, with no female editors, cinematographers or composers.

Three of the highest-grossing films are the work of director Nadeem Baig, namely: The two installments of *Jawani Phir Nahi Ani/Youth Won’t Come Again* in 2015 and 2018, and *Punjab Nahi Jaungi/I Won’t Go To Punjab* (2017). Bilal Lashari gained critical acclaim for his directorial debut *Waar/The Strike* (2013) and Shoaib Mansoor is revered for his films such as *Bol* and *Khuda Kay Liye/In The Name of God* (2007). Ahsan Rahim (*Teefa in Trouble*, 2018) and Nabeel Qureshi (*Load Wedding* (2018), *Na Maloom Afraad/ Unidentified Persons* (2014), and *Actor in Law* (2016)) are also popular with their light-hearted comedies and hence have been profitable.

On the other hand, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy received backlash for her Academy Award winning works, the documentary *Saving Face* (2012) and the biographical short-film *A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness* (2016), for portraying Pakistani society in a negative light. Obaid-Chinoy is also the director and co-producer of Pakistan’s first computer animated feature length film *3 Bahadur/3 Brave Ones* (2015) yet receives little praise. Similarly, Afia Nathaniel was subjected to criticism for her film *Dukhtar/Daughter* (2014) which focused on child marriages in Pakistan. Mehreen Jabbar, saw great success in television but, however, her movies did nowhere as well in the box office. It is unclear whether this lack of success was related directly to gender or whether other reasons such as lack of audience relatability or weaker marketing strategies were to blame.

Contemporary female directors have not able to turn as great a profit as their male counterparts, which could in part be due to the grave topics their films focus on. However, this raises the question as to why female directors are primarily only producing films with poignant social themes. Male directors tend to largely work on comedic dramas and war thrillers, with very little prominent work in other genres. Leading production houses are owned by men and even when they are led by women, such as Hum Network Limited owned by Sultana Siddiqui, they do not have gender equality within them. There is a perceptible lack of prominent female cinematographers, composers and editors and yet the reason for

this is left unexplored. These are all important facets to be considered in order to understand the gender disparity within the film industry.

In terms of methodology, this research paper employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Quantitative data was compiled from secondary sources, namely online Pakistani film archives such as Pak Magazine and Pakmdb. As previous research on behind the scenes gender disparity in Pakistan is next to non-existent, this quantifies different factors from films released in the 2013 to 2018 time period, which will allow accurate trends to be depicted and analyzed. The analysis begins from 2013 since, as discussed, it is widely recognized as the start of new Pakistani cinema. This paper primarily focuses on Urdu language films but also takes into account Punjabi, Pashto and Sindhi language films⁷⁰ when compiling the statistics.

For the collection of primary qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were mostly used. The interviews were conducted with individuals currently working in the film industry and can provide anecdotal accounts of their experiences. The interviews were informal and in-depth and use a memory aid of previously thought of questions to direct the flow of conversation. This method allows for first-hand insight into how the Pakistani film industry operates and whether the behind the scenes gender disparity is as obvious as it claimed to be. Some of the patterns discussed in this research paper are based on information found in unofficial online archives. As there is little available research on this issue in the Pakistani context, this paper makes an important intervention to understand the gender dynamics in contemporary Pakistani cinema.

Pakistani Cinema within a Global Frame

The New York Film Academy's (NYFA) film infographic combines statistics from various scholarly studies to present a world-wide trend of gender inequality in the film industry. It states that "women purchase half of the movie tickets sold in the USA" however there was a "5:1 ratio of men to women working behind the scenes on films" in 2017. Moreover, "women work more on documentaries (30%) as compared to narrative films (18%)" but when there is a female director there is a "5.4% increase in female characters on-screen" within narrative films. There is also a "10.7% increase when a female screenwriter is attached" (Perrone). In 2011 one study, found that of the 250 top grossing films "only 5% of directors, 14% of writers, and 25% of producers were female" (Smith). These numbers fluctuate slightly but follow the same pattern since 1998 suggesting that the industry has undergone little if any change. Another eleven-year study found that "22 male directors (were) hired (for) every 1 female director" (Smith).

A study led by the San Diego State University's Center for Study of Women in Television and Film found that "films with at least one woman director had higher percentages of women writers, editors, and cinematographers than films with exclusively male directors" (Lauzen). Moreover, within independent films "women fared best as producers (32%), followed by directors (29%), executive producers (29%), writers (26%), editors (22%), and cinematographers (11%)" (Lauzen). *The Celluloid Ceiling* is the "longest-running and most comprehensive study of women's behind-the-scenes employment in film available" in the United States and states that in 2017 "the percentages of women directors, producers, and executive producers increased, while the percentages of women working as writers, editors, and cinematographers declined" (Lauzen). Additionally, "ninety eight percent (98%) of films had no female composers in 2017" (Lauzen). Through the findings of these various studies it is certain that referencing

⁷⁰ See Appendix II for more on language and cinema in Pakistan

the behind the scenes gender disproportionality as merely an imbalance is an understatement. The film industry is primarily male dominated with the status quo reinforced as the norm. Female audience members are subjected to ingrained sexist themes that inform and develop the dominant narrative of how they view themselves and the world.

While similar statistics do not exist for Pakistan's film industry, unofficial databases allow patterns parallel to those described above to be deduced. In 2018, of the forty-one live-action films released only *7 Din Mohabbat In/Love in 7 Days* (dir. Meenu Guar and Farjad Nabi, 2018) and *Pinky Memsaab/Mrs. Pinky* (dir. Shazia Ali Khan, 2018) had female directors. To further understand these trends in specifically the Pakistani context, it is important to define the socioeconomic reasons that play a part in the formation of the industry. Socioeconomic factors include education, accessibility to technology, ideological responsibility and the market.

Film is a technical skill-based medium, but there is no dedicated film school in Pakistan. The only accredited institutions that offer an undergraduate degree in filmmaking in Lahore are the National College of Arts (NCA), Beaconhouse National University (BNU), Hajvery University, Iqra University, University of Lahore and Institute for Art and Culture. In Karachi, there is only Habib University. Apart from the National College of Arts (NCA), all of these are private universities, with the subject not offered in any government institution. To pursue a graduate degree in film one has to enroll in a program abroad, greatly limiting the number of people who have access to this education both abroad and in private universities in the country.

Even abroad, however, while graduate schools in America now boast a fifty-fifty class ratio, there are "unspoken biases in film school" (Rose). There is a lack of female work included in the curriculum offered and the specialized courses that are offered such as *Women and Film* and *Gender in Popular Culture* are categorized as electives rather than a compulsory part of a student's film education. Moreover, aspiring female filmmakers are not prepared for the industry's real-life problems such as "gendered financial barriers, male-dominated industry networks, and stereotyping on set" (Osterweil).

At the same time, technology required to produce quality film is expensive. The most basic equipment, such as a camera may be too costly for a large percent of the Pakistani population. Equipment and software are constantly being updated and innovated and there is a lack of accessibility to this technology in Pakistan when they are released. In addition to the lack of film education, this hindered access also limits an individual's ability to hone their skills and acquire the technological expertise needed for contemporary film production.

The moving image crosses and interweaves "gender, ethnic, national, and linguistic boundaries" and "the antiquated notion of an essential female or feminist identity is replaced by more polyphonic concepts of diversity, rupture, inequality, and disunity" (Osterweil). Cinema is entrusted to upholding ideological beliefs and the social norms and values present in the local culture. For female directors the struggle is then whether to propagate the same patriarchal nuances in their work or to break away and present a more balanced portrayal on-screen. Female directors may be held to different expectations by peers and the audience as compared to male directors, with the latter getting away with replaying the same gender dynamics found in real life. However, as Kathryn Bigelow is quoted as having said, she is "not a female filmmaker, but a filmmaker, period".

"Female directors are more likely to feature girls and women on screen than male directors" and "not only do female producers and directors affect the prevalence of girls and women on screen, they also impact the very nature of a story, or the way in which a story is told" (Smith). Thus, "the art of filmmaking charges the voice of women with political and social weight" and allows them to "tackle personal issues

as a way to encourage dialogue, alter public opinion, and effect policy change” (Heusel). The lack of prominent female directors and producers in Pakistan results in a dire underrepresentation of content that is reflective of the realities of women living in the country. In fact, Pakistani films directed by females are more often than not produced by themselves or have female producers.

Within the Indian cinema industry, movies made by female directors are “often branded as art movies or movies of the parallel cinema; these filmmakers, therefore, never enjoy the access to funds and publicity that makers of mainstream cinema take for granted” (Verma). These patterns are visible within the Pakistani film industry as well. Women filmmakers struggle with a lack of “access to mainstream film institutions, access to the avant-garde and private funding for non-mainstream projects, and access to exhibition” (Kaplan). In Pakistan, female directed movies are not on the same production scale as their male counterparts and have drastically varying levels of promotional budgets.

Production houses exert a lot of power as they control the “access to production and distribution” (Osterweil). Production houses have the choice to produce mainstream films that Verma refers to as “masala movies” in Indian cinema which have “a combination of tragedy, comedy, action, revenge, romance- all put together to make one ‘whole’ movie”. Storytelling takes a backseat to a proven formula of profitability. The majority of Pakistani production houses, such as Hum Films, Evernew Entertainment, Shoman Productions and Geo Films are owned by businesses who regard film as a profitable investment venture rather than a medium of art.

Mapping the Industry

During interviews, a few common themes on the experiences of individuals in the industry began to emerge. There was a sense of ingrained, closeted sexism that was based on the larger structures of patriarchy and honor present in the Pakistani society. Women were held to different expectations and there was a sense of restriction over the roles that they could take up. Even in those roles they were treated differently as opposed to their male colleagues. When interviewing more recent film graduates, who had relatively less experience working in the field, the conversation was more focused on systemic biases in the structures of their film schools. The male and female perspective differed over the cause of the problems, but both agreed that there is an inherent bias within their institutions.

In conversation, Sarah Tareen, who owns Concordia Production House and co-produced *Tamanna/Desire* (dir. Steven Moore, 2014), remarked on the concept of honor being inextricably interwoven with every role a woman is assigned in the Pakistani society. Quixotic notions of decency and honor are extended to the personal lives of female actors appearing on-screen and if they are seen lacking in their role of dutiful, moral Muslim women, they are subjected to public moral policing. For women working behind the scenes in the film industry, there is an expectation of upholding these standards and only producing content that is in line with the idealized morality present in the country. These are “our women” and so they must always be modest and righteous. Although film is a democratic medium, social and political facets weigh into the final product.

Female directors, writers and producers⁷¹ are pigeonholed to only produce work that is about women and for women. They are expected to work on “women stories” that resonate with the female audience and are excluded from mainstream commercial projects. An overall conscious realignment is needed within the industry so that varying sorts of work is accepted regardless of the director or writer’s gender. Tareen’s current project, *Kids Fight*, is a feature documentary on children living in a slum settlement of

⁷¹ See Appendix I for more on women in the industry

Lahore being given a healthy outlet through MMA fighting. She has had to defend why there are no female fighters in her film (simply because they are none in reality) but her role as a certified MMA trainer gave her legitimacy.

Fatima⁷² graduated from NCA in 2015 and her final thesis was a fictional short film on two cousins, belonging to the same gender, developing romantic feelings for each other. She recalls the backlash she faced from the start, from her professors at the university, from her jurors who were supposed to grade her and from audience members. There were no explicit scenes in the film but her work was judged as indecent and inappropriate. Her character was assassinated when the thesis was screened in the exhibition and it went so far as to her receiving death threats. She was accused of bringing dishonor to her family and portraying a relationship that was simply not present, much less accepted in Pakistan.

Tareen remarks that the Pakistani film industry has not seen stable growth, with many years of regression interrupted by sporadic bursts of revival. Due to this, the industry is still largely unorganized with no formal union or even informal unity that allows women to band together if they are facing the same problems at the workplace. Informal circles are based primarily on personal relationships and loyalties waver accordingly. Misogyny is closeted rather than out in the open and is the result of a mindset that prevails in the larger Pakistani society.

Women are portrayed in a sensationalist manner on screen, as spineless do-gooders, as emotional wrecks or as master manipulators. The content being produced uses the same hackneyed stereotypes and plot devices to tell age-old stories that are not reflective of the reality we are currently in. Adnan Sarwar's 2018 *Motorcycle Girl* is a biographical film featuring an unconventional female protagonist and is an important step in presenting women as multi-faceted and humane. *Cake* (dir. Asim Abbasi, 2018) is another effort to present intricate female characters.

Zainab,⁷³ a recent graduate from NCA, remarks that working on sets is a perceptibly different experience than it was a four years ago. In the wake of the Me Too and Time's Up movements, women have greater confidence and less patience when dealing with discrimination. Recalling an incident from a set she had recently worked on, she remembers a costume designer speaking back to an assistant director who had been treating her disrespectfully and repeatedly trying to assert himself in her work. The public confrontation made the assistant director wary enough to back off and since then all their interactions have been courteous.

Hashim,⁷⁴ a recent graduate from BNU, remarks that there is "anti-sexism" in the film industry. Females are allowed to have more flexible work schedules as it is assumed that they cannot be out till late. Working as an assistant director on *Janaan/Beloved* (dir. Azfar Jafri, 2016), he recalls being expected to be merely a phone call away and available to work at a moment's notice, while his female colleagues were treated with greater understanding and sensitivity to their schedules.

Maram Azmat and Aabroo Hashmi, the duo behind the Maram Aabroo Salon and Studio, have been working in the industry for over a decade. As working mothers, they stressed upon the sacrifices that they had had to make, both on the career front and with their families. Currently working on *The Legend of Maula Jatt* (dir. Bilal Lashari), they state how their professionalism has worked against them in a lot of cases. People do not appreciate their work oriented no-nonsense attitude since actors and their cliques want to be praised, pampered and have "fun". Their field increasingly has gay men gaining popularity, with their flirtatious attitude and comic relief being preferred. Some time ago, they noticed a lack in

⁷² Name changed for anonymity

⁷³ Name changed for anonymity

⁷⁴ Name changed for anonymity

repeat business with organizations that they had successful shoots with in the past. Upon inquiring why that was, they discovered that their professionalism deterred individuals from approaching them to cut under the table deals and working out a side agreement. Businessmen were “embarrassed” of initiating such a conversation with them and chose to give work to studios that were more “understanding of how these things run in the industry.”

Aabroo Hashmi has worked as a production manager on several commercial shoots and states that people have often remarked on the smooth running of her sets. They have commended her for being organized and providing a less chaotic behind the scenes experience, which has also resulted in saving finances on the overall project. Women are often accused of being “emotional” but she is level-headed under stressful situations and thorough. She has witnessed men getting into physical altercations because of tempers flaring up quickly whereas women generally avoided conflict. However, this is not to say that there is no conflict between women working in the industry. Female colleagues bad-mouth and pull down each other behind each other’s backs. Instead of fighting the system that pits them against each other, women fight one another to rise to the top. Since the strife is mostly indirect, it is harder to pinpoint what is the truth and what is not and even more difficult to reach a resolution.

They have been many instances where Azmat and Hashmi have had to interact with directors and producers who lack basic social etiquettes when engaged in a professional working relationship and they have turned down many projects because of this reason. However, they concur that they are fairly at the top of the industry in their department and so have the opportunity to pick and choose, not everyone has this liberty and are thus forced to put up with difficult, and at times unacceptable, behavior. While women do have to work with greater restrictions and may need more flexible schedules due to other responsibilities, Azmat and Hashmi argue that this causes them to take their work more seriously. Since they have to sacrifice other aspects of their lives for their work, the stakes are much higher and they have little choice but to be fully committed to their art and strive harder to be successful.

Zainab graduated in 2018 and stated that there were a total of 20 students in her batch, thirteen of them male and seven were female. Out of those seven, only two females graduated. Within the film school, internalized misogyny was the norm and female students had to work harder to be taken seriously by their professors. Recalling an incident from her second year, she states how the first time the camera was brought out for the students to use, the male students all took their turns first and when it was time for the female students to try the professor said it wasn’t compulsory for them. The camera was heavy and appeared to be complex and so she decided to take the out her professor provided, a decision she still regrets. She blames this lack of encouragement in part as being the cause of her hesitancy when using heavy equipment even after she has graduated and started to work in the field.

When being assigned group projects, the male students preferred to band together and not include the female students in their groups. Even if they were included, they were delegated the position of art director, make-up artist or costume designer. The male students claimed that the women would be unable to put in the same amount of work as they would not have permission for night shoots or be able to cope up with the hectic schedules. Zainab states that this forced the females to work together and over the course of four years they proved themselves by producing work that was much higher in standard than their male peers. However, they had to work twice as hard for their instructors to treat them as professionals committed to working on their art. They were many instances where they had to give in or agree to change more unconventional ideas to placate their professors so they could be given a decent grade.

Noor,⁷⁵ who is currently studying at NCA, agrees that it is a constant struggle for them to achieve the same recognition as their male peers. Most professors assume that they do not want to take part in the more physically rigorous aspects of filmmaking and this bias is so inherent that they do not even realize it. She recalls that her batch fellows partook in a much greater deal of gender-based discrimination in their first year but over the course of their degree they have realized that their female peers are not only as good as them but some are even better. Where they lack in physical strength, females use alternative methods to get the work done. Their work has been praised for being more thorough and nuanced and now several male peers often approach them for help, especially during the process of script writing and pre-production.

However, this is not always the case. Hashim, who graduated from BNU, airs his frustrations about working with females who were “free loaders,” who used permission issues as reasons to miss out on important shoots and who were enrolled in film only because they liked the “idea of being associated with the glitz and glamor” of the Pakistani film industry. He states he has come across very few females who are passionate about the subject and even then they cannot put in as much commitment as is required of them. He agrees that it is unfair to generalize the attitude of an entire gender based on a few bad experiences but he reasserts the fact that the women who have made it in the industry still want to be given special preferences, what he terms as “anti-sexism.” He hopes to work in an industry that is free from all gender discrimination.

Conclusion

This paper uses varying types of data to shed light on the issue of gender inequality in behind the scenes roles within the Pakistani film industry. Through the analysis of films released since the post 2013 new wave of Pakistani cinema, the extent of the lack of women in the industry is highlighted. While the struggle for gender equality is rooted in structures of patriarchy and culture that extend beyond film, the industry’s systemic biases further deter chances of leveling the access to opportunities. While this is a phenomenon not restricted to Pakistan, global discourse continues to evolve and there is greater diversity in the types of films that make it to the big screen. It will take much dedication and commitment for Pakistan’s industry to catch up. Film is a universal medium of storytelling and to be a filmmaker is to take up a responsibility for a large number of people. Film is not only informed by culture but also has a part in reinforcing it. It is important to research this topic in ever greater detail as it has repercussions for all of society.

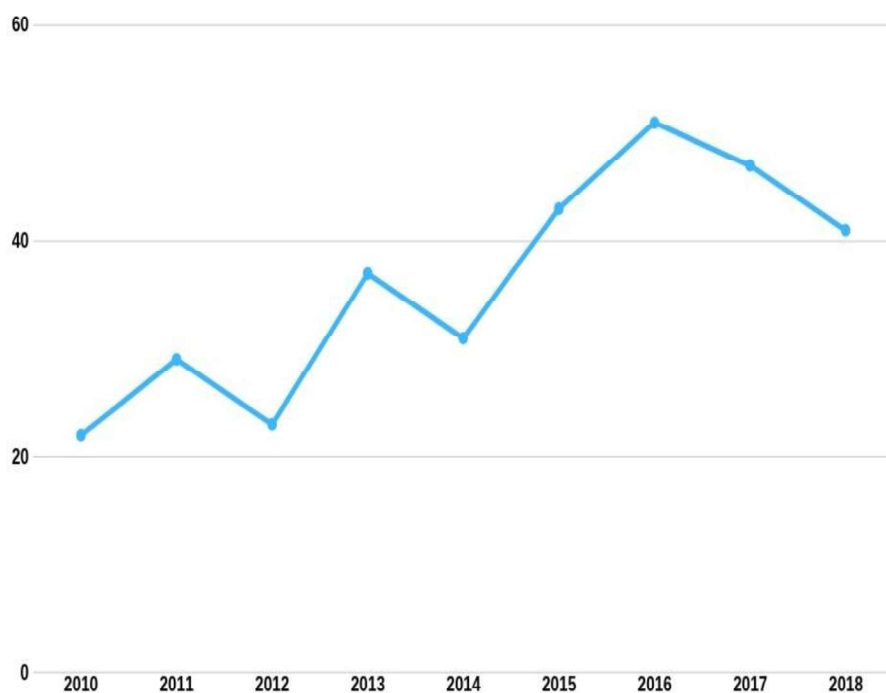
⁷⁵ Name changed for anonymity

Appendix I – Finding the Women in the Pakistani Cinema Industry

<i>Year</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>Urdu</i>	<i>Punjabi</i>	<i>Pashto</i>	<i>Other</i>
<i>2010</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2011</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2012</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2013</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>2014</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2015</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2016</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>2017</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>2018</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>

Figure 3: Total number of Films released 2010-2018

Figure 4: Films released 2010-2018⁷⁶



⁷⁶ All statistics are taken from Pakistan Magazine Film Magazine and may have discrepancies.

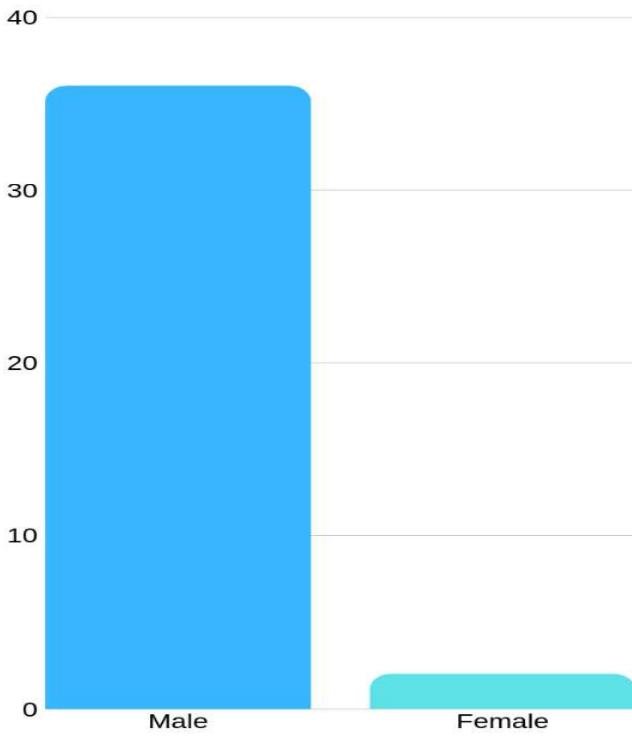
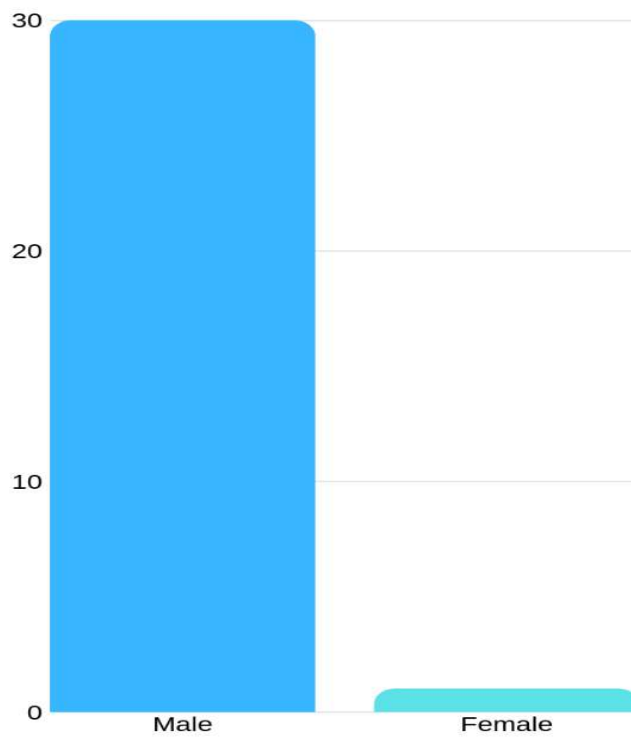


Figure 3: 2013 – 37 Films; Directors – 36 Men; 2 Women: Meenu Gaur (Zinda Bhaag w/ Farjad Nabi); Iram Parveen Bilal (Josh); Highest Grossing: Waar & Zama Arman

Figure 4: 2014 – 31 Films; Directors – 30 Men; 1 Women: Afia Nathaniel (Dukhtar); Highest Grossing: Na Maloom Afraad & O21



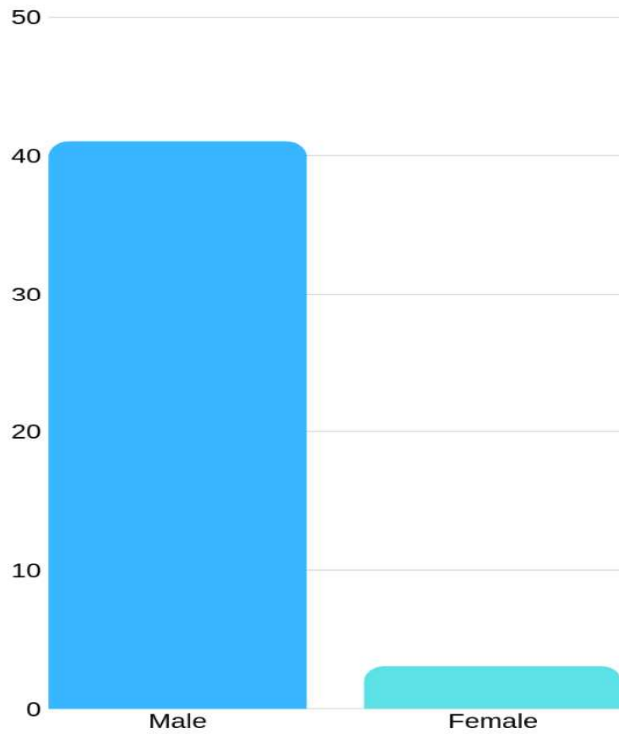
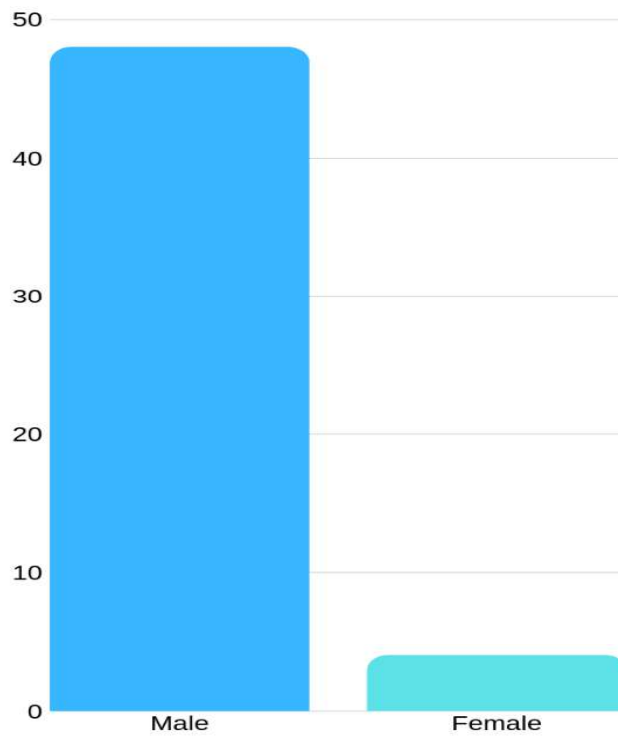


Figure 5: 2015 – 43 Films – 41 Men; 3 Women: Sabiha Sumar (Good Morning Karachi); Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy (3 Bahadur); Momina Duraid (Bin Roye w/ Shahzad Kashmiri); Highest Grossing: Bin Roye & Jawani Phir Nahi Ani

Figure 6: 2016 – 51 Films; Directors – 48 Men; 4 Women: Noor Bukhari (Ishq Positive); Meenu Gaur (Jeewan Hathi w/ Farjad Nabi); Mehreen Jabbar (Dobara Phir Se); Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy (3 Bahadur: The Revenge of Baba Balaam); Highest Grossing: Actor in Law & Janaan



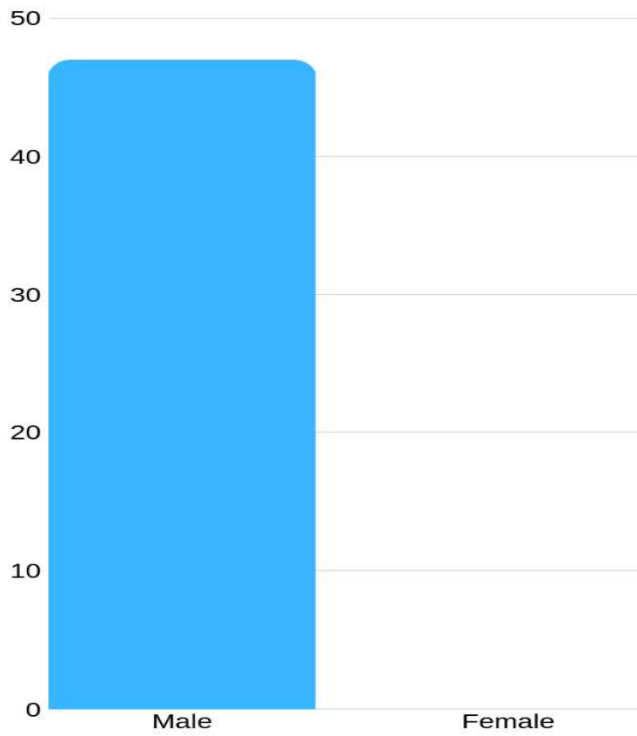
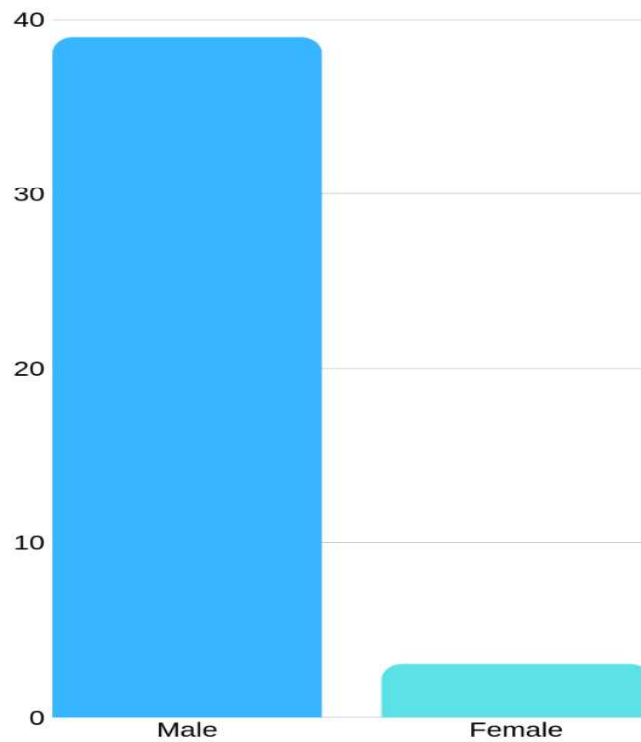


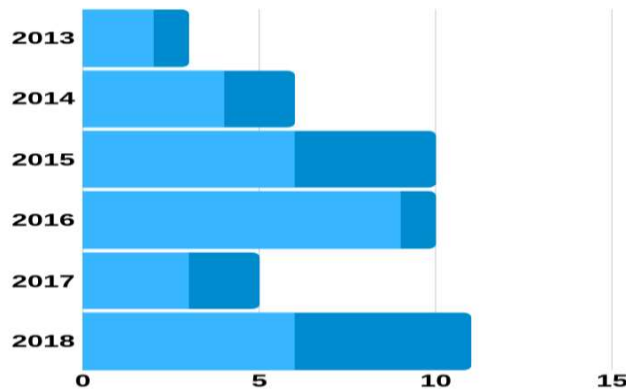
Figure 7: 2017 – 47 Films; Directors – 47 Men; 0 Women; Highest Grossing: Punjab Nahi Jaungi & Na Maloom Afraad 2

Figure 8: 2018 – 41 Films; Directors – 39 Men; 3 Women: Meenu Guar (7 Din Mohabbat In w/ Farjad Nabi); Shazia Ali Khan (Pinky Memsaab); Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy (3 Bahadur: Rise of the Warriors); Highest Grossing: Jawani Phir Nahi Ani 2 & Teefa in Trouble



<i>Year</i>	<i>Producer</i>	<i>Writer</i>
2013	2	1
2014	4	2
2015	6	4
2016	9	1

Figures 9–10: Women fared slightly better as producers and writers



In 2013, *Josh: Independence Through Unity* was not only directed but also produced, written and adapted to screenplay by Iram Parveen Bilal. Meher Jaffri was a co-producer for *Seedlings* (dir. Mansoor Mujahid). In 2014 Afia Nathaniel, who directed, wrote, produced and edited, released her film *Dukhtar/Daughter*. Fizza Ali Meerza co-wrote and co-produced *Na Maloom Afraad/ Unidentified Persons* (dir. Nabeel Qureshi), Sarah Tareen co-produced *Tamanna/Desire* (dir. Steven Moore) and Zeba Bakhtiar produced *O21* (dirs. Summer Nicks and Jami).

In 2015, Eman Syed produced *Jalaibee/Twist* (dir. Yasir Jaswal), Nazira Ali co-produced *Moor/Mother* (dir. Jami) and Hina Jawad produced and starred in the horror film *Maya* (dir. Jawad Bashir). Nida Yasir co-produced *Wrong No.* (dir. Yasir Nawaz) while Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy directed and co-produced the first installment of *3 Bahadur/3 Brave Ones*. *Bin Roye/Without Crying* was co-directed and co-produced by Momina Duraid and written by Farhat Ishtiaq while *Good Morning Karachi* was directed and co-written by Sabiha Sumar.

The following year, 2016, saw the highest number of female producers. Amna Shah produced *Revenge of the Worthless* (dir. Jamal Shah), Bushra Azeem co-produced *Maalik/Owner* (dir. Ashir Azeem) and Hareem Farooq and Reham Khan were co-producers for *Janaan/Beloved* (dir. Azfar Jafri). The female directed *Ishq Positive/ Love Positive* (dir. Noor Bukhari) also had two female producers, Dr. Shazia Hussain and Dr. Kashif Latif, while Mehreen Jabbar co-produced her film *Dobara Phir Se/Once Again*. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy co-produced the sequel *3 Bahadur: The Revenge of Baba Balaam/ 3 Brave Ones: The Revenge of Baba Balaam* (dir. Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy) and Fizza Ali Meerza co-wrote and co-produced *Actor in Law* (dir. Nabeel Qureshi).

In 2017, once again, Fizza Ali Meerza co-wrote and co-produced the second installment *Na Maloom Afraad 2/ Unidentified Persons 2* (dir. Nabeel Qureshi) of the franchise. Nida Yasir co-produced *Mehrunisa V Lub U/Mehrunisa We Love You* (dir. Yasir Nawaz) and Sadia Jabbar co-produced *Balu Mahi* (dir. Haissam Hussain). The romantic film *Chalay Thay Saath/ Walked Together* (dir. Umer Adil) was produced by Beenish Umer and written by Atiya Zaidi.

In 2018, *Parwaaz Hai Junoo/Soaring is Passion* (dir. Haseeb Hassan) was produced by Momina Duraid and written by Farhat Ishaq. Fizza Ali Meerza partnered with Nabeel Qureshi once again to co-write and co-produce his film *Load Wedding*. Sana Tauseef produced the computer animated film *Tick Tock* (dir. Omar Hassan), Momal Sheikh co-produced *Wajood/Existence* (dir. Jawed Sheikh) and Hareem Farooq co-produced *Parchi/Chit* (dir. Azfar Jafri). *Maan Jaa Naa/ Believe Then!* (dir. Aabis Raza) was co-written by Asma Nabeel and Shazia Ali Khan co-wrote her film *Pinky Memsaab/Mrs. Pinky*.

There are only two female cinematographers in these years: Sabahat Qamar for the thriller *8969* (dir. Azeem Sajjad, 2016) and Arooj Azam for the computer animated film *Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor* (dir. Uzair Zaheer Khan, 2018). With the exception of Afia Nathaniel for her film *Dukhtar* there are no female editors. Moreover, none of the 324 films released from 2013 to 2018 feature a female composer.

It is worthwhile to note that there are also female producer - male director duos that work exclusively with one another such as, Fizza Ali Meerza and Nabeel Qureshi, Nida Yasir and Yasir Nawaz and Momal Sheikh and Javed Seikh. Some of these professional associations are built on personal, familial relationships but in no way does that undermine the legitimacy of their positions.

Appendix II – Cinema and Language in Pakistan

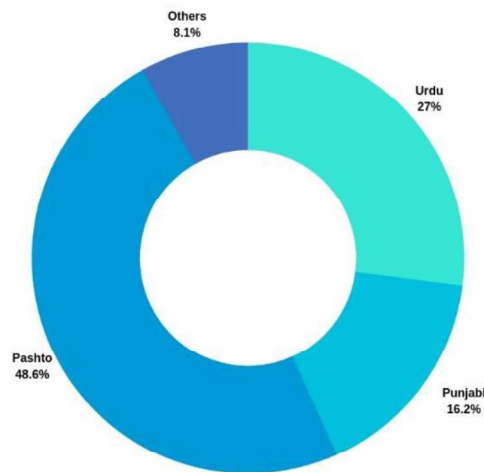


Figure 11: 2013 – Films in Urdu: 27%; Films in Punjabi: 16.2%; Films in Pashto: 48.6%; Films in Other Languages: 8.1%

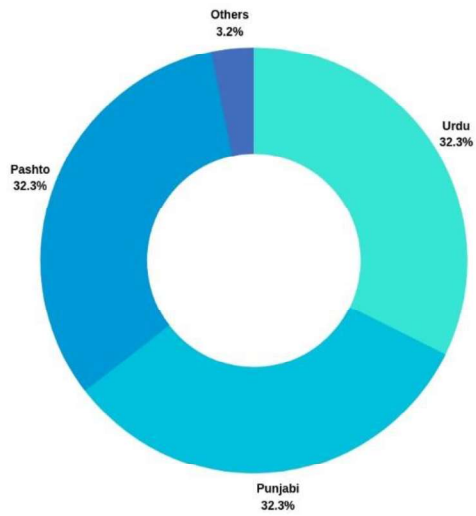


Figure 12: 2014 – Films in Urdu: 32.3%; Films in Punjabi: 32.3%; Films in Pashto: 32.3%; Films in Other Languages: 3.2%

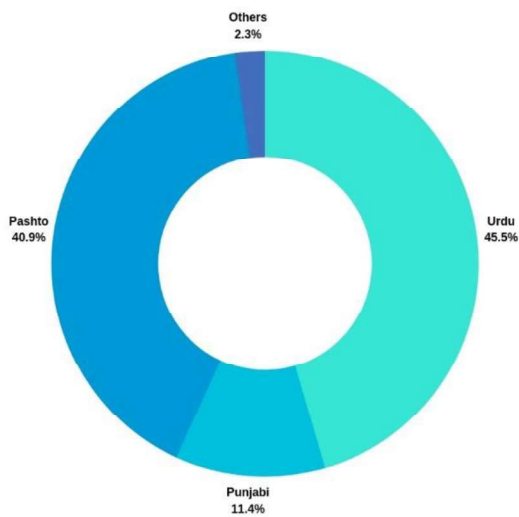


Figure 13: 2015 – Films in Urdu: 45.5%; Films in Punjabi: 11.4%; Films in Pashto: 40.9%; Films in Other Languages: 2.3%

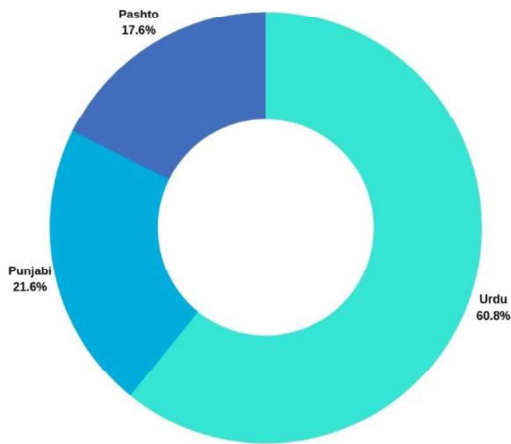


Figure 14: 2016 – Films in Urdu: 60.8%; Films in Punjabi: 21.6%; Films in Pashto: 17.6%; Films in Other Languages: 0

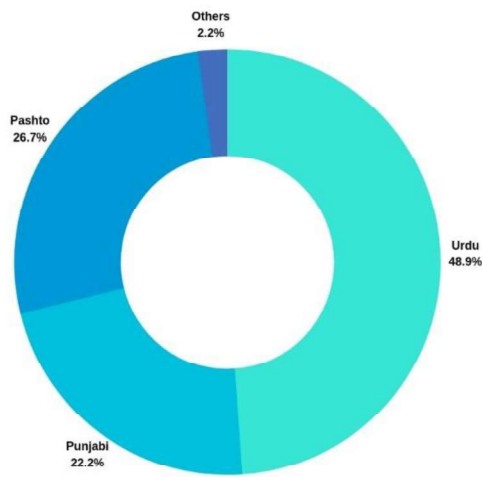


Figure 15: 2017 – Films in Urdu: 48.9%; Films in Punjabi: 22.2%; Films in Pashto: 26.7%; Films in Other Languages: 2.2%

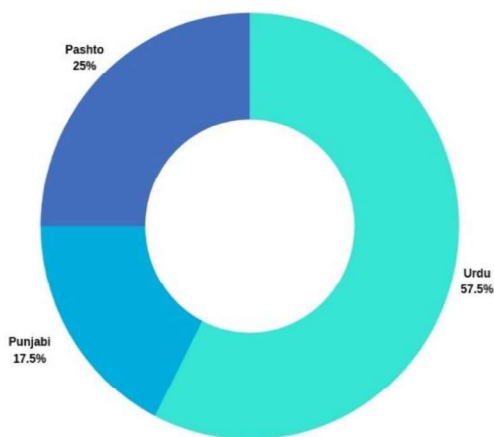


Figure 16: 2018 – Films in Urdu: 57.5%; Films in Punjabi: 17.5%; Films in Pashto: 25%; Films in Other Languages: 0

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Filmography

3 Bahadur/3 Brave Ones (dir. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, 2015)

3 Brave Ones: The Revenge of Baba Balaam (dir. Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, 2016)

7 Din Mohabbat In/Love in 7 Days (dirs. Meenu Guar and Farjad Nabi, 2018)

8969 (dir. Azeem Sajjad, 2016)

A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness (dir. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, 2016)

Actor in Law (dir. Nabeel Qureshi, 2016)

Allahyar and the Legend of Markhor (dir. Uzair Zaheer Khan, 2018)

Balu Mahi (dir. Haissam Hussain, 2017)

Bin Roye/Without Crying (dirs. Momina Duraid and Shahzad Kashmiri, 2015)

Bol/Speak (dir. Shoaib Mansoor, 2011)

Cake (dir. Asim Abbasi, 2018) is another effort to present intricate female characters.

Chalay Thay Saath/ Walked Together (dir. Umer Adil, 2017)

Choorian/Bangles (dir. Syed Noor, 1998)

Dobara Phir Se/Once Again (dir. Mehreen Jabbar, 2016)

Dukhtar/Daughter (dir. Afia Nathaniel, 2014)

Good Morning Karachi (dir. Sabiha Sumar, 2015)

Ishq Positive/Love Positive (dir. Noor Bukhari, 2016)

Jalaibee/Twist (dir. Yasir Jaswal, 2015)

Janaan/Beloved (dir. Azfar Jafri, 2016)

Jawani Phir Nahi Ani/Youth Won't Come Again (dir. Nadeem Baig, 2015)

Jawani Phir Nahi Ani 2/Youth Won't Come Again 2 (dir. Nadeem Baig, 2018)

Jeewan Hathi (dirs. Meenu Gaur & Farjad Nabi, 2016)

Josh: Independence Through Unity (dir. Iram Parveen Bilal, 2013)

Khuda Kay Liye/In the Name of God (dir. Shoaib Mansoor, 2007)

Kids Fight (dir. Sarah Tareen, in production)
Load Wedding (dir. Nabeel Qureshi, 2018)
Maan Jaa Naa/ Believe Then! (dir. Aabis Raza, 2018)
Maalik/Owner (dir. Ashir Azeem, 2016)
Maya (dir. Jawad Bashir, 2015)
Mehrunisa V Lub U/Mehrunisa We Love You (dir. Yasir Nawaz, 2017)
Moor/Mother (dir. Jami, 2015)
Motorcycle Girl (dir. Adnan Sarwar, 2018)
Na Maloom Afraad/ Unidentified Persons (dir. Nabeel Qureshi, 2014)
Maloom Afraad 2/ Unidentified Persons 2 (dir. Nabeel Qureshi, 2017)
O21 (dirs. Summer Nicks and Jami, 2014)
Parchi/Chit (dir. Azfar Jafri, 2018)
Parwaaz Hai Junoo/Soaring is Passion (dir. Haseeb Hassan, 2018)
Pinky Memsaab (dir. Shazia Ali Khan, 2018)
Punjab Nahi Jaungi/Won't Go to Punjab (dir. Nadeem Baig, 2017)
Revenge of the Worthless (dir. Jamal Shah, 2016)
Saving Face (dirs. Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy and Daniel Junge, 2012)
Seedlings or Lamha (dir. Mansoor Mujahid, 2013)
Tamanna/Desire (dir. Steven Moore, 2014)
Teefa in Trouble (dir. Ahsan Rahim, 2018)
The Legend of Maula Jatt (dir. Bilal Lashari, 2019)
Tick Tock (dir. Omar Hassan, 2018)
Waar/The Strike (dir. Bilal Lashari, 2013)
Wajood/Existence (dir. Jawed Sheikh, 2018)
Wrong No. (dir. Yasir Nawaz, 2015)
Zama Arman/My Wish (dir. Liaquat Ali Khan, 2013)
Zinda Bhaag/Run for Your Life (dirs. Meenu Gaur and Farjad Nabi, 2013)