Semiotic Analysis of Evil Eye Beliefs among Pakistani Cultures and their Predetermined Behavior

Shazia Akbar Ghilzai¹, Asma Kanwal²

Abstract

The article seeks to analyze the evil eye construct semiotically and its intricate relationship with fate and destiny within sociocultural values-systems. The results indicate that fear of being envied makes people hide their success, achievements of their family members, future plans etc. The evil eye construct hinders them to celebrate or share their success or happiness openly. The fear of possible destructive effects of evil eye may have psychological insinuations. However, on the other hand, there are interesting cross cultural techniques and procedures used to ward off evil eye and its in-depth analysis can be helpful in understanding human psyche. On the basis of ethnographic evidence it can be said that the process of warding off the evil eye effects very from culture to culture but overwhelming majority almost in all cultures have beliefs in evil eye and have ways of fortification. The evil eye is perceived to be the most dangerous force that can either harm them and their near and dear ones but also can influence their lives and their destiny. The evil eye has received a substantial attention in literature and researches tried to explore numerous aspects of the complex and ambiguous phenomenon but very little research is available in Pakistani context. The study focused on different techniques used in Pakistani cultures to ward off evil eye. Pakistani culture is very diverse and consists of many contrasting values and beliefs ranging from Punjab to Sindh and from Baluchistan to KPK.

Keywords: semiotics, evil eye, fate, warding off evil eye, values and beliefs

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Introduction

The evil eye is a belief as old as the mankind may be. It’s alleged to be a curse cast by a malicious glare to people when they are unaware of it. Many world cultures believe that evil eye will cause misfortune, harm and calamity. “Evil Eye” causes many different cultures to pursue protective measures against it. The idea concept and protection against evil eye vary significantly from culture to culture and religion to religion more specifically in Asia. But it does not imply that western culture is free from this superstitious belief. There is much evidence available about the beliefs of evil eye in the old and historical books and literature.

Envy is believed to be the basis for casting evil eye. Envy is a multifaceted and perplexing emotion. Casting evil eye is undoubtedly considered as a worst sin. It is very commonly charged with being unreasonable, irrational, reckless, jealous, vicious, or wrong to feel. Having an envious or evil eye is a human look which can bring some harm to others. This harm may cause anything from a slight harm, a bad luck to sickness, grievance or even death. The evil eye is a harm that is usually transmitted or given by someone who is envious, jealous, or desirous. The person may not necessarily have intentions for it. Evil eye can also be called the invidious eye. So a person who is not malefic or harmful in any case can bring a harm or bad luck to your family, business and children. The victim and the envious person may both be unaware totally in most of the cases. So in other words the result and outcome of evil eye is usually bad luck and misfortune but the person who has caused the evil eye may not necessarily be an evil person.

The emblem and the superstitious belief of the evil eye are very old and despite of its appearance in any of the world culture it has almost same value and meanings. Evil eye is clearly considered as an eye or human look that can bring sufferings and harm to its victims. The belief of evil eye states that the malicious eye is so powerful that it can in fact bring serious damage for the effected person.

Evil Eye Belief around the world

The oldest belief of evil eye can be traced back to the ancient Greece and Rome where it was believed to be the strongest and largest threat to a person who is praised a lot. The person actually praised would become so proud that he would bring his own bad luck. In the old times till today the disease that had no clear symptoms for its cause was considered to be a result of
evil eye. It was also a common belief in those days that evil eye is a punishment to the victim for his act of proudness.

Jewish culture believes that the excessive praise can cause evil eye, they in case of evil eye say a Yiddish phrase excessive "Keynaynhoreh!" which means “no evil eye”. This will protect from the evil eye. Jew culture believes that a person with an evil eye feels stressed when other people around him prosper. Such person will always feel happy and rejoiced when people around him will suffer. Jew culture is very superstitious they avoid talking about their valuable items and achievements in front of others.

Europeans culture believes that an envious eye brings bad luck. Germans fear that those with red eyes bring harm to the success of others. In Ireland, those with squinty eyes are feared to be evil eye sorcerers. The evil eye is seen as impolite and a warning that the source has bad intentions. Brazilians call evil eye as “fat eye” which can cause the prosperity of others to ward off.

In all these above mentioned countries a pinch on the rear or back is thought to be a remedy against the evil eye. Christians do make a sign of crosse also used by them to prevent evil eye. They also point their index and pinky finger towards the source of evil eye. Different recitings from holy books and rituals are used to ward off evil eye

Evil eye belief is also found in the Islamic history. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was casted with evil eye it is very clear from His (PBUH) statement that, “The influence of evil eye is a fact”. Many ways of warding off the evil eye have been used by the Muslims. Authentic practices of warding off the evil eye are also frequently practiced by Muslims, Muslims while appreciating others success, beauty and achievement say Masha’Allahor TabarakAllahor which means Allah has willed it. Muslims recite Surah Ikhlas, Al-Falak and Al-Nas as a first mean to get protected from evil eye.

**Words used for evil eye concept in various languages**

Almost all languages of the world have specific word (lexical item or Vocabulary) to describe the concept of evil eye. This means all cultures around the world have evil eye beliefs. As discussed earlier almost all religions whether Jewish, Christian or Islam, have conversed evil eye concepts. Some words for evil eye from different languages are as follows:
Different kind of words and phrases are used in every culture to reverse, repel or to ward off evil eye. Serotte (2006, 1) mentions phrases used in Turkey to repel evil eye as:

“Dire warnings were always followed by this incantation: “whoever wishes you harm, may harm come to them!” …. The first phrase was enough to repel evil, as long as you said it right away. Considering how many thousands of times in a week I heard these words, it seems I must have been in constant mortal danger”.

**Evil Eye Amulets, Blue beads and Positive Energy**

Decorations with eye like symbol are common from Palestine, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Iraq, to Nepal. The use of Blue beads Amulets with blue orb are common in Greece and Turkey. Indian Jews and Muslims use ‘Hamsa’ palm forward hand with eye in the center. The word ‘hamsa’ means five and it refers to the digits on hand. Hamsa is popular throughout the Middle East. In all faiths it is used as a sign of protection and is believed to bring happiness, success, luck and health to its owner. Showing right hand palm with fingers slightly open also means to blind the malicious stare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Words for Evil eye</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>邪眼的 (Xié yǎn de) or 邪眼 (Xié yǎn)</td>
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<td>German</td>
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<td>Japanese</td>
<td>邪眼 (Jashi)</td>
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<td>Romanian</td>
<td>deochi</td>
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<td>Russian</td>
<td>Сглаз (sglaz), дурной глаз (durnoy glaz)</td>
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<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Aojo , mal de ojo</td>
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It is a common belief that envious look and jealousy carries with it power and energy to affect their health and fortune. Evil eye jewelry is used to ward off negative energies and to keep off the bad eyes looks. It is believed that evil eye jewelry can provide protective shield against wicked eye, hatred, fear, jealousy and other negative energies that can affect their health and can bring misfortune for them. Evil eye jewelry like bracelet, necklace, pendant, anklet, earrings, blue evil eye talismans and home decorations like wall hangings are believed to bring good luck. The blue beads with orbs or evil eye shape jewelry are supposed to protect the wearer from harm and evil thoughts. The blue eye symbol is supposed to have positive power defy evil forces.

“A person’s envious gaze or look carries with it a great deal of power that can be harmful” (Dundes, 1981-pg.258)

In Greece and Turkey blue eye amulets are used against evil eye. In Turkey, People hang evil eye amulets at the doors of their houses, on their mirrors, in their cars, key chains, hang them on their walls and even gift them to their guests. ‘Blue evil eye beads of Turkey also known as Nazar Boncuk’ are considered powerful talisman. Serotte (2006, 2) mentions Turkish evil eye amulets and other methods as:

“Most Turks wore something to ward off the evil eye: a bead, a real looking blue eye, a tiny hand or a small sack of garlic mixed with a clove that was pinned to the underclothing”.

In Israel, however the hamsa is used to degree that it appears everywhere in daily life in jewelry, key chains, wall decorations, telephones, advertisements etc. In Israel it is considered as a good luck charm. The evil eye belief is strongest in south Asia, Middle East and Europe.
Evil Eye Beliefs In Pakistan

In Pakistan evil eye is commonly known as *Nazar*. The influence of religion is very obvious and visible. People frequently say *Masha’Allah* or *TabarakAllah* which means *Allah has willed it*, while appreciating the success, beauty and achievement of others. If a person in a Pakistani society fails to say and recognize these linguistic terms to ward off evil eye it is considered very rude. The understanding and importance of evil eye also varies by the level of education. People who are not very literate mostly use black color to get protection from an envious eye. This is a practice common in all four provinces. We can very easily see the trucks and vehicles in Pakistan having a black cloth tied to thwart the evil eye. People also use *Taweez* to ward off the evil eye. Being Muslims they recite *Surah Ikhlas*, *Al-Falak* and *Al-Nas* as a first mean to get protected from evil eye.

Pakistanis also believe that the times of great change in one’s life and status e.g. getting married, getting a new job, giving birth to a healthy child is the most sensitive and vulnerable time to get an evil eye. Pakistanis considered most men and women can cast an evil eye but women are considered more envious than men. To get protection from the envious eye people in Pakistan wear *Kajal* put *Surma* in the eyes of new born. *Kajal* and *Surma* are black in color and hence are considered to be a proven source of preventing one from the harmful eyes of others. Several other methods are also commonly used to ward off evil eye which include using seven red chilies or sugar. These items are put in a piece of paper and are rotated around the victim seven times while also reciting last three surah of the holy Quran also called *Mauz-e-Teen*. After this the chilies or sugar is burnt on fire, if it is smelly than it is believed that the victim had been casted with evil eye, otherwise if it’s not smelly the person is considered safe. Sometimes in KPK and Baluchistan people put a black dot on the fore head of the new born baby to save him/her from evil eye.

In Punjab at the time of wedding there is a custom that the sister in law of the groom puts *kajal* in the eyes of the groom. This is a preventive measure for evil eye as the groom is considered most vulnerable to it during his marriage. The sister in law for preventing her brother gets some expensive gift as well. Bride and groom are also made to wear a *Taweez* sewed in black cloth around their arm to save them both from any unwanted situation at the most important event of their lives. *Saddaqa* is also given to prevent evil eye in all provinces of Pakistan. The quantity
and type of this *saddaqa* does vary from area to area. In some areas of Punjab a black cock or the black head of a sheep is used to ward off evil eye. The black cock or black head of sheep are sometimes kept for night in the room of the victim; sometime they are revolved around the victim seven times and then given to a poor person or thrown in open to be eaten by birds and animals. Money is also a common form of *saddaqa* used to ward off evil eye. Commonly on birth of a new born or on marriage or while celebrating any other significant success in one’s life money is again rotated around the baby or person and then given to the needy.

People in all provinces of Pakistan try to hide the news of their success, achievement and any other milestone of their life from the people they consider envious. If a girl gets engaged at a very young age or to a rich man mothers commonly are observed to hide the news. They think declaring the news will cast evil eye by the other girls of family who are over aged or not getting any proposals. Families hide the extra ordinary exam results of their children to prevent evil eye. If a person gets a good job first thing is he or she will try to hide the news and if told they hide the benefits attached to it. They think that others who are jobless or not getting such benefits will get envious.

In Pakistan if a girl gets pregnant this news is made to hide as long as possible and told to only some very reliable sources of the family. If a pregnant mother knows that she will deliver a male baby she hides it to save her male offspring from the evil eye of such women who don’t have a male child. New born babies and especially girls are made to wear black bangles and black kajal, dots are made on their faces to save them from harmful eyes in most Pashtoon and some Punjabi cultures.

The myth of evil eye has very strong roots in the Pakistani society. It is believed that fame, good fortune and success are very vulnerable and can invite evil eye. Evil eye beliefs are so strongly penetrated in the Pakistani society that almost every channel broadcast special shows on the issue. Certain Islamic and other scholars regularly appear on these talk shows and tell measures to first avoid and if casted measures to minimize and cancel its effects. People from all walks of lives especially women appear in these talk shows. It seems that every disaster and harm caused to anybody in Pakistani society revolves around evil eye. People very easily and abruptly blame any disliked person as the cause of their sufferings and start using different measures to prevent envious eyes rather than looking for the actual cause of the suffering.
Pakistan is a farming country. Farming is the main source of earning livelihood in almost all four provinces, any loss in the production of crops or any disease caused to the livestock is considered to be a result of evil eye. People fear evil eye because there is a serious loss of economic earnings attached to it. It is believed that evil eye can cause damage to one’s wealth and upward social mobility. In Pakistan this belief is so intensely rooted that people fear their own relatives of casting an evil eye.

**Literature Review**

Many of the world scholars have given much importance to the issue of evil eye. These beliefs have been studied in different disciplines of social sciences. From a purely anthropologist study to being a topic of gender studies as well as sociology this topic has gained much importance. This topic has also been studied by many of language students as well to unveil the linguistic measure and practices to ward off its effects. Many books and articles have also been written about the subject. Alan Dundes (1981) in his article “Wet and Dry” has argued that the evil eye can cause living things to dry up and the most vulnerable to it are babies, milking animals, young fruit trees and nursing mothers. He claims that the symptoms of an envious glance can be sudden vomiting or diarrhea in kids, drying up of milk in nursing mothers and withering of fruits.

According to Alan Dundes “the victim’s good fortune, health and looks may invite or provoke an attack of evil eye. If the object attacked is animate it may fall ill. Other symptoms include loss of appetite; vomiting and fever. (The Evil Eye: A Casebook, 1981)

After a close analysis of literature written on evil eye it has been observed that the root cause of apprehending evil eye is fear of getting harm and suffering from someone’s faulty, jealous and malic intentions. Most scholars of social sciences believe that envy serve as basis for casting an evil eye, the sociologist Schoeck (1969) speaks about the origin of envy that it serves as the basis for forming the human society. He argues that envy was a natural part of human evolution and could not be suppressed. In his book he has has stressed that a widespread set of pan cultural norms serve as a basis of evil eye. Schoeck (1981) has placed evil eye belief as a convincing fear which revels man’s deep knowledge that, no matter what our situation in life regarding our fortune and assets, there will always be someone less favored by life. And he is a potential enemy.
Tobin Siebers (1983) insist on the phenomenon and psychology of starring as the starting point of an explanation of evil eye belief and practice. He indicates features of fascinator that often mark him/her as a stranger, outsider but actually an insider whose membership to the group is put to question. He treats evil eye as a “Communicable dieases” with deleterious social impacts.

Pierre Gravel’s wide ranging anthropological study The Malevolent Eye, 1995 examine cross cultural male and female evidences of evil as linked with fertility and reproduction.

The evil eye belief is a widespread superstition according to which people can cause harm by an envious eye is believed to cause misfortune, damage to materialistic earnings such as property or vehicles, a sudden loss in business etc. Sketchy indications of evil eye can be seen in all world cultures.

According to Ghosh (1983), the consequences of being a victim of the evil eye could range from miscarriages to having fatal car crashes, (Ghosh, 1983; Blackman, 1968). He writes that In Nacaawy, which is an Egyptian village, “the harmful effects of the envious glance are accepted as an article of faith” (Gosh, 1983). In this village the main source of earning and success is the number of livestock one owes. Livestock therefore is kept in the backyards of the house to prevent an evil eye attack.

To avoid evil eye the villagers in Teneek, Mexico “weave the agave fiber in the darkness of their houses” (de Vidas, 2007). In another village of Mexico villagers reject to install glass windows in their houses because they feared that it will invite evil eye (Foster, 1972). In Caixa de Agua, Brazil it is believed that, “envy dries crops, slays cattle, fells trees, pollutes water and food, causes houses to collapse, and can even kill small children” (Ansell, 2009). (Schoeck, 1969) reports that, “an old Indian villager refused to use a new fertilizer for his crop because he feared of NazarLagna”.

New Testament scholar Van Der Loos H (1968:99) explains evil or envy as, “The belief in the supernatural forces, both good and evil, which produce disease is common to the whole of mankind”.
Spooner (1976) distinguishes between witchcraft and the evil eye, “witchcraft is considered an extraordinary phenomenon, whereas the evil eye is thought to be an everyday unwilled act”. Those who invoke the evil eye seem to have no control over it, and may not even be conscious of why or how they perform such evil deeds (Fakhouri, H. 1972). Like other parts of the world the Egyptians also take the evil eye very seriously, as Blackman (1968) comments, “To the Egyptian peasants the fear of the evil eye is a very real terror from infancy to old age.” Blackman (p. 218). Also, Ghosh (1983). (Aquaro, 2004) considers envy as the core emotion causing an evil eye that drives certain sinful behaviors in people who have an envious eye.

Many studies on the subject of evil eye stress a deep link of it to the socio economic state of people in a society.

Children being considered the most vulnerable to evil eye are protected from it in all world cultures.

“Beautiful children were the number one target of evil eye and for that reason they were never to be excessively praised or complemented. Beauty was a curse, combined with talent, it invited disaster”. (Serotte, 2006, 2)

They are protected from evil eye in most Mediterranean cultures by wearing a blue bead (E.F. Coote-Lake, 1933). In Hungry children are protected from evil eye by making them wear a red ribbon. A person or a stranger in order to prove their intentions innocent while they praise a child must spit on the child’s face in Hungry (Lykiardopoulos, A.(1981). In Hungry people also have to pinch nose of the child in order to avoid any evil eye blame (M. Benedekfalva, 1941).

Serotte (2006,2) mentions how people fear of evil eye and are even afraid of praising or complementing each other.

“If someone told me how beautiful, how cute, how talented I was, they had to repeat “who so ever wishes to harm you ….” right away to keep the evil eye at bay. For good measure it was good to shout, “Ugly! Ugly” at me. For the first four years of my life I was confused: was I ugly or not? Couldn’t they make up their minds? Then, when I was around six, I figured out the part about charm reversal. Even today, I am affected by the frequent warnings not to laugh a lot or become overly happy with anything because laughter always turns in tears.”

Evil eye is a powerful superstition in many Asian cultures especially in the subcontinent. This research is focused to analyze the prevailing evil eye beliefs in Pakistani cultures. People belonging to any city and province of Pakistan certainly have a strong belief on evil eye.
Pakistan is a developing country with a low literacy rate. The number of people getting an access to education and jobs is low as compared to people who are deprived of it. People in rural areas of Pakistan don’t get an access to education and mostly rely on farming for their livelihood. Hence in all four provinces of Pakistan the situation is almost the same. “The belief turns out to be more widespread in agricultural and pastoral societies which rely more on visible and vulnerable material wealth and sustain higher levels of inequality compared to foragers and horticulturalists” (Borgerhoff Mulder et al, 2009).

The collection of fourteen anthropological essays on the evil eye and assembled by Clarence Maloney (1976) marks another interesting research on evil eye. Evidence of evil eye belief and practice around the world is subjected to certain social markers. Maloney calls for considering the core of the complex in cultural evolutionary terms and the essential meaning of it in behavioral terms.

Kathryn P. Sucher and Pamela Goyan Kittler (2011) explain evil eye as a social explanation of envy. She says sickness attributed to social causes occur around the interpersonal conflicts with in a society. It is very common in a community to blame an enemy for any pain and suffering.

Client theories on the etiology of sickness. (Reproduce from the book: Food and Culture)
Purposeful malice is considered the cause of sickness in many cultures around the world. One of the common causes is evil eye. It is the social explanation of sickness in many cultures. In this social world of sickness according to Kathryn and Pamela, children are considered more vulnerable. Common cause of any child’s hiccups, coughs or fever at first place is always believed to be an evil eye.

Methodology

A qualitative and quantitative study was carried out among participants from all four provinces. Participants were chosen ranging from well-educated social class to the uneducated lower class. Different cases of evil eye were observed and the ways to avoid or get rid of it were recorded. A questionnaire was developed to measure the evil eye beliefs of Pakistani people. The researcher also arranged focus group discussions at her home by inviting families residing in the capital territory belonging to all four provinces. The researcher also gathered personal views and opinions of people belonging to different fields and professions. The data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Case 1: Protecting a Child from evil Eye

Respondent from KPK and Baluchistan

A mother from KPK said that it is very necessary for me to keep my child protected from the evil eyes of people around us, “We cannot judge the envy hidden inside any one’s heart”, she said. “I keep my child away from the eyes of people who are not relatives; I don’t allow anyone outside the family to carry my kid or to play with him/her. I always make my child to have black kajal (or black bangles in case of a girl child) in his/her eyes. Black color has strong power to ward off evil eye”. Some Pashton families also make their children to wear a gem stone called Feroza with a green thread around their children necks.

Respondent from Sindh and Punjab

Same answers were given by mothers belonging to other two provinces. They said that they avoid and forbid their kids to mingle with unwanted outsiders. For all of them wearing kajal (commonly called surmna) and black bangles worked the best for avoiding any evil eye. Girls
are particularly made to wear black bangles, whereas boys are generally made to wear a black thread around their neck. Respondent from Punjab told that in some areas of Punjab if a person is charged of giving evil eye to a child he/she has to spit on the child’s face to ward off the casted evil eye.

**Case 2: What if your child gets an evil eye?**

**Respondent from KPK and Baluchistan**

She replied that, “I take an egg an wrap a green (some mothers said black) thread and move it over the body of my child, than I put it on fire. The egg explodes and the frequency of explosion tells me that if the evil eye was less or more” (Mother from KPK and Baluchistan).

**Respondent from Sindh and Punjab:**

For a similar case a mother from Sindh and Punjab both gave the same answers. They said that we take seven some (or seven in some cases) chilies and while reciting last three Surahs of the holy Quran we move it seven times over the bodies of our kids and then we burn it. If the kid has an evil eye there will be no smell of chili burning, which otherwise is very smelly process. Another similar process was to burn sugar or alum (phitkari) in the same way chilies are burnt. This is also commonly done in all four provincies.

**Case 3: How to celebrate any success or achievement**

**Respondent from KPK and Baluchistan**

People from KPK and Baluchistan as well as from Punjab and Sindh said that whenever there is a good in the family or house we first give Saddaqa. This is a process of giving food, money and other household things to the needy or poor. This is an Islamic way of warding off any calamity caused by evil eye or envy.

“When we buy a new thing for example a car we first of all throw water over it. This helps to ward off an evil eye”, said a man from Baluchistan.

“We throw water on our home’s main entrance. This is an old belief to prevent any one with envious intentions from entering into our house,” Said a man from KPK.
On any occasion to prevent evil eye people from KPK and Baluchistan use an ancient herb called *Sapalni*. They put it on a plate, sometime this plate is also very special i.e. from Makkah or Madina made of silver. They put this herb on fire and take it all parts of their home. This is a very old and regularly used way of preventing evil eye.

**Respondent from Sindh and Punjab**

People from Punjab and Sindh and from other two provinces as well recite Quran before any important function. They give the needy and poor children food of their choice. It is believed making the poor eat food of their choice will turn evil eye off. *Taweez* are also used to prevent envy. Generally people put them around their necks or arms. They are believed to ward off evil eye.

**Case 4: Social answer of sickness**

**Respondents from KPK, Baluchistan, Sindh, Punjab**

1. For any adult and children if he or she gets a disease the first cause is always considered evil eye or envy.
2. Certain diseases are specially attributed to evil eye. If a child starts crying mother will instantly say that, “*Nazar lag gai*” meaning that he/she has got an evil eye.
3. Sudden misfortune, accident or illness the social explanation of all these things lies on the belief of evil eye.
4. A person had a serious accident of his car on motorway due to lack of sleep, he fell asleep while driving and after the accident the car was totally crashed but he remained save with few major and some minor injuries. When I asked his mother about the accident she didn’t accused him of anything instead she said that, “Nazar kha gai hamari khoshion ko koi hath ka dia kam a gia jo jan bach gai”.
5. A very pretty girl got divorced after a few months of her marriage. The cause was a lack of communication and understanding between the couple. They both belonged to different strata of society and had a different approach to life. Everyday clash and argument resulted in a divorce. After the divorce no one from either side of family considered their lack of understanding a reason for divorce, rather everybody blamed evil eye for this.
6. A mother lost her pregnancy in her fourth month. The cause was some medical issues concerning her and babies health. She was in a very depressing, sad and miserable condition. Her husband and all family were also suffering from the same condition. Rather than consulting a good doctor and resolving her health issue, they all blamed evil eye a cause of this unfortunate incident. There is also a term as *Sukhy Ki Bemari* in Punjab and Sindh, in which a woman who is unfertile is treated for having an evil eye. This evil eye is cured using different charms and Taweez. The woman is not given any medical treatment. She is also made to avoid meeting other married women because she can give or transfer her evil eye to them.

**Quantitative Data Analysis**

**Evil eye Beliefs in Pakistan**

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<th>Belief in Evil eye</th>
<th>Take any protection</th>
<th>Religious formula</th>
<th>other protections</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage</strong></td>
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Table 1: shows percentage of people who belief in evil eye, take any protection or use any religious formula at Pakistan

It is very obvious from the above table that people in Pakistan have a strong belief on evil eye. All of the respondents believed on the existence of evil and envious eye. They all take protection against it. As evil eye exist in the Islamic doctrine, therefore being Muslims majority of people use some sort of religious formula to ward off evil eye and minimize its effects. Other protections are also very common which have strong cultural roots.
Beliefs of people to any loss in case of evil eye in Pakistan

Table 2: shows percentage of people who believe evil eye can cause any loss to them i.e. loss of health, loss of wealth, loss of success, loss of family etc. in Pakistan.

The data from the above table shows that people have a common belief to blame evil eye for majority of their losses. The social explanation of health issues ranging from a minor head ache to infertility are blamed to be caused by evil eye. If a child gets stomach pain or diarrhea the first cause is always evil eye for most mothers of Pakistan. It is a common belief that all kinds of pains, illnesses, epileptic fits and handicaps can be caused by a malovent eye. Evil eye is also held responsible for any sort of misfortune. This misfortune can cause a loss to materialistic items including ones money and wealth and the associated items like livestock, property and bank balance. Misfortune can be a failure in any test, exam or interview. Being not able to attain desire results and outcomes people generally find easy to blame evil eye for it. A loss to family is also treated to be result of a malicious eye. Any
accident or a sudden or untimely death in a family is thought to be caused by evil eye.

People’s beliefs to proclaim their success

Table 3: shows percentage of people’s tendency to proclaim their success

From the data it is very clear that people try to hide their success and achievements. They generally avoid talking about their success in front of strangers and persons who they think can cause evil eye. They believe that some people who are unable to get their desired success can have negative and covetous intentions. He/she can be jealous and can cast an evil eye which in return can harm their success and achievements. People avoid talking about their future plans in front of strangers.
Conclusion

People from all four provinces were found to have a very strong belief on the evil eye. Being Muslims they commonly consult to the Holy Quran for first preventing the evil eye, and if one gets an evil eye different Surah from Quran are recited and wore as well (Taweez) to minimize evil eye effects. Different shared cultural measures are also taken by people of Pakistan belonging to all provinces to avoid evil eye. Some very distinct measures are also observed in all said cultures.

The study has revealed that Pakistani society has a strong belief on the evil eye. People use different religious formulas while communicating and praising others in a Pakistani society. Pakistani people belonging to any culture use frequent measures to ward off evil eye. “Sadaqa” is another important practice that is frequently used by Pakistanis to defuse evil eye along with reciting last three Surah of the Holy Quran. The liking for faith healers and black magicians also spans the Pakistani society. People from the educated class belonging to the urban areas to the lower class of rural areas regularly visit different faith healers to minimize the effects of evil eye.

References


