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**Perceived Gender Discrimination, Benevolent Sexism, and Women's Collective Political Action Intentions: The Mediating Role of Gender-Based Anger**

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**ABSTRACT**

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This study examined how perceived gender discrimination and benevolent sexism shape women's collective political action intentions through the mediating role of gender-based anger. Drawing on the Social Identity Model of Collective Action and Ambivalent Sexism Theory, the study aimed to explain whether women's recognition of gender inequality and exposure to protective sexist beliefs influence their willingness to engage in collective political action. A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used, and data were collected from 478 female students enrolled in six public universities in Lahore and Islamabad. The data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4 through measurement model, structural model, and mediation analysis. The findings showed that perceived gender discrimination positively predicted gender-based anger and collective political action intentions, whereas benevolent sexism negatively predicted both. Gender-based anger also positively predicted collective political action intentions and partially mediated both relationships. The findings highlight the need to challenge subtle sexist ideologies and strengthen women's emotional and political mobilization against gender inequality.

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## 1.0 Introduction

Globally, the politics of gender equality is increasingly shaped not only by formal exclusion from institutions but also by subtle legitimating ideologies that make inequality appear natural, protective, or morally acceptable. Recent scholarship on ambivalent sexism shows that benevolent sexism remains especially consequential because it frames women as deserving respect and protection while simultaneously prescribing dependence, purity, and traditional femininity (Barreto & Doyle, 2023; Bareket & Fiske, 2023). This soft justification of inequality matters for collective political action because women's willingness to challenge discrimination depends on whether unequal treatment is recognized as illegitimate and emotionally mobilizing. Contemporary collective-action research indicates that witnessing gender discrimination can strengthen women's intentions to act for gender justice, while group-based anger remains politically important but socially risky because angry women may be penalized for violating feminine norms (Uluğ et al., 2023; Radke & Hanson, 2025). Thus, gender-based anger can be conceptualized as a mediating mechanism that converts perceived discrimination into collective political action intentions

Recent studies undertaken in the context of Pakistan show that women perceived on aspects concerning gender exhibited higher levels of hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, social-dominance orientation, employment skepticism, and traditional gender roles than their American counterparts, indicating that even gender attitudes that supposedly protect women continue to be linked with discrimination in their political participation (Shahid et al., 2025). Likewise, similar studies from the Indian context demonstrate that attitudes of benevolence toward women may contribute to violence against them perpetrated by outside groups while maintaining martial control of women (Sengupta et al., 2024). From a body of literature specifically dealing with Pakistani politics, the following factors can contribute to the exclusion of women in politics: patriarchy, economic dependency, ignorance, gender segregation, immobility, party restrictions, and culture-specific stigma (Begum, 2023; Zaman et al., 2024).

Gender discrimination perception refers to the awareness of women on the fact that they are experiencing inequality, marginalization, and undervaluation not due to their personal inadequacy, but on account of gender differences (Uluğ et al., 2023). Hence, apart from being an experience of oppression and subordination, gender discrimination perception is a way for women to see their experiences in the light of legitimacy and social justice (Uluğ et al., 2023). With regards to collective action literature, the significance of gender discrimination perception lies in its importance in the process of politicizing an injustice, as the latter can only take place when it becomes recognizable (Thomas et al., 2022). In relation to this current study, gender discrimination perception serves as the cognitive stimulus that could elicit gender anger by bringing awareness among women that their exclusion from politics is not an incident, but a consequence of patriarchy (Moscatelli et al., 2025).

Benevolent sexism involves seemingly positive beliefs regarding the hierarchical nature of society by portraying women as being pure, compassionate, virtuous, and in need of male protection. Although benevolent sexism appears to be respectful, it reinforces the existing

hierarchical structure of society by portraying women as weak, vulnerable, and naturally suited to traditional roles (Barreto & Doyle, 2023). Unlike hostile sexism, benevolent sexism works through love, protection, and moral support that make it difficult to label it as discrimination (Bareket & Fiske, 2023). With regard to the current study, benevolent sexism becomes highly relevant as it may decrease female recognition of injustice as it may disguise oppressive behaviors with caring ones, thus decreasing women's anger and willingness for collective political action. However, when women perceive this kind of protection as patronizing and constraining, it may increase anger and resistance. It is especially relevant to political spheres where women's public activism is measured by their respectability and adherence to stereotypical feminine characteristics (Winter, 2023). In Pakistan, benevolent sexism has been found to influence prejudice towards women's professional and public roles (Shahid et al., 2025).

By gender-based anger, the researchers mean women's emotion resulting from experiencing injustice associated with gender. Anger is a reaction that arises in women as a result of feeling that discrimination against them is unjustified, group-related, and based on patriarchal relations. It should not be confused with any regular irritation since it represents an emotion of political meaning. When women realize that they or other females experience discrimination because they belong to a certain social gender group, this triggers the emergence of such an emotion (Radke et al., 2022). As part of this study, gender-based anger will serve as the mediation channel for the transformation of perception into a motivation for action. Research on moral outrage reveals that people's anger leads to their readiness for participating in collective actions to solve an issue (Green et al., 2023). In a gender perspective, anger is particularly important as it motivates women to oppose their situation, although in society, they may experience punishment for displaying aggression (Cohen-Chen et al., 2024).

The concept of women's intentions of collective political action entails women reporting about their intention to engage in organized activities designed to oppose gender inequality, improve the political position of women, or change existing power dynamics. Examples of these intentions would include signing petitions, engaging in political activism, participating in protests, being involved with women's rights organizations, promoting political awareness, and pursuing gender-sensitive institutional reforms (Besta et al., 2024). For the purposes of this study, this variable refers to the readiness of women to take organized action against injustice rather than their participation itself. Research from multiple countries demonstrates that knowledge of gender inequalities contributes to both normative and non-normative collective action intentions; however, such a connection depends on a set of sociocultural factors (Yang et al., 2025). Furthermore, adolescents have been found to show increased readiness to act for gender equality based on experiences of gender discrimination regardless of the national context (Celikkol et al., 2025). Conceptually, this variable should be broadly defined since collective action encompasses both conventional and confrontational forms (Uysal et al., 2024).

The fundamental problem here does not simply relate to the fact that women are still underrepresented in political activism; rather, it is due to the reproduction of gender inequality through direct discrimination and protective forms of sexist attitudes that are seen to be culturally

acceptable. According to recent findings in political attitude studies, there are many ways that different types of sexism can affect attitudes towards gender-related public issues. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate benevolent sexism on its own account since this type of sexism should not be considered as part of the same construct (Gothreau et al., 2022). For women in Pakistan, this gap becomes even more critical since political activities by women are influenced by family traditions, sociocultural limitations, institutional constraints, societal pressure, and male dominated political channels (Noreen et al., 2026). As a result, the main challenge here involves not only the perception of gender discrimination by women, but whether this leads to gender-related anger, motivating them towards political activism.

The significance of this research can be seen from two angles, theory, and practice. The theoretical contribution of this research will be seen when it helps advance literature on collective action. One major aspect is that this research combines the concept of gender discrimination, benevolent sexism, and gender anger all in one framework for the sake of better understanding the relationship between discrimination and political action. Another theoretical significance is that it explains the process through which discrimination leads to political motivation through emotions. In terms of practical implications, this research can help universities, NGOs, political parties, and gender-based advocacy organizations understand how to motivate women to act politically by enhancing their sense of awareness, emotional response, and collective action. This would particularly work well in countries like Pakistan where there is protectionist discourse around gender roles in politics.

### **1.1 Research Objectives**

1. To investigate the direct effect of perceived gender discrimination on women's collective political action intentions.
2. To examine the direct effect of benevolent sexism on women's collective political action intentions.
3. To analyze the relationship between perceived gender discrimination and the manifestation of gender-based anger.
4. To determine the relationship between benevolent sexism and the manifestation of gender-based anger.
5. To evaluate the mediating role of gender-based anger in the pathway between perceived gender discrimination and collective political action intentions.

To evaluate the mediating role of gender-based anger in the pathway between benevolent sexism and collective political action intentions.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

#### **2.1.1 Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA)**

SIMCA, developed by van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears (2008), is extremely pertinent as it accounts for how the perception of injustice translates into collective action via emotions, collective identity, and collective efficacy. In the present research, gender discrimination constitutes an injustice appraisal that allows women to perceive discrimination as a group-based problem rather than an individual issue (Xiao & Overton, 2022). Gender-related anger is the

component of SIMCA associated with the affective path because the emotion makes injustice perceptions motivating factors for engaging in political actions (Valizadeh et al., 2022). Intentions for collective political action on behalf of women constitute a behavioral consequence of this motivational process, such as willingness to mobilize people, participate in campaigns and protests, and fight for gender equality (Xiao & Buckley, 2025). Thus, SIMCA supports the mediation logic used in the study by providing theoretical explanation for the idea that discrimination will not automatically lead to action unless motivation emerges out of it first (Valizadeh et al., 2025).

### **2.1.2 Theory of Ambivalent Sexism**

The Theory of Ambivalent Sexism, introduced by Glick and Fiske (1996), is equally important for the same reason that the study not only analyzes sexism in terms of its hostile aspect but also as benevolent, protective, and culturally accepted gender ideologies. Benevolent sexism seems positive since it idolizes women as angels who are caring, loving, pure, and in need of protection. However, benevolent sexism also serves as a constraint on female freedom as it ties the worth of a woman with her feminine nature (Davis et al., 2022). In the current case, the theoretical framework can be used to explain the rationale behind the lack of identification of the paternalistic behavior among women as gender discrimination despite limiting their political freedoms (Gutierrez & Leaper, 2024). International research also suggests that hostile and benevolent sexism exist as complementary ideologies responsible for the reproduction of gender inequalities worldwide (Zawisza et al., 2025).

### **2.2 Perceived Gender Discrimination and Collective Political Action Intentions**

As the perception of gender discrimination make the women see the act as an unjust system that favors men in a discriminatory way, their engagement in collective political action to solve this problem will be greater (Bongiorno et al., 2024). Moreover, this prediction is aligned with the literature that discusses collective political actions and the importance of justice appraisal on the readiness of people to engage in such actions (Szóstakowski & Besta, 2024). The involvement in collective actions increases among disadvantaged groups whose perception of unequal treatment as injustice and something related to the whole group increases (Begeny et al., 2022). There is evidence that other disadvantaged and marginalized groups also tend to show behavioral intentions for collective action when their situation is viewed as a shared disadvantage by the whole community (Chin et al., 2023). Hence, perceived gender discrimination will have a positive effect on women's intentions for collective political action

*H<sub>1</sub>: Perceived gender discrimination significantly and positively predicts women's intentions to engage in collective political action*

### **2.3 Benevolent Sexism and Collective Political Action Intentions**

Benevolent sexism would be predicted to negatively correlate with the intention to engage in collective political action, as it views gender hierarchy in terms of affection, protection, and virtue rather than oppression. In cases where women believe benevolently sexist assertions about gender, they would view restrictive social relations as either natural or good, resulting in less motivation to fight against them politically. There has been recent empirical validation on the

relationship between benevolent sexism in the workplace environment and the intention to take collective action, as well as the tendency to justify the system (Warren et al., 2023). The bystander literature similarly suggests that benevolent sexism is even more difficult to recognize and address than hostile sexism since it is “cloaked” by acts of benevolence (Hall & Dhanani, 2023). Additionally, benevolent sexism in political discussion could be used as a form of rhetoric that reinforces essentialist claims limiting women’s autonomy under the guise of protecting them (Atwood et al., 2024).

*H<sub>2</sub>: Exposure to or endorsement of benevolent sexism significantly and negatively predicts women’s intentions to engage in collective political action.*

## **2.4 Perceived Gender Discrimination, Benevolent Sexism, and Gender-Based Anger**

Gender discrimination is presumed to be positively correlated with gender-specific anger, as women’s awareness of unfair gender treatment makes gender inequality an emotionally significant phenomenon. The existing empirical evidence demonstrates that women identify gender inequality in various areas, such as gender inequality at work, harassment, gender imbalance at home, and societal expectations, and this process is associated with people’s emotional reactions to gender-related disadvantages (Ciaffoni et al., 2025). Moreover, studies on gender biases indicate that anger is one of the primary emotions related to gender-related biases and that this emotion predicts readiness to act against discriminatory behavior (Yang et al., 2025). Overall, studies on collective action have revealed that anger based on perceived injustice plays an essential role in making people engage in collective actions (Choma et al., 2024). By contrast, benevolent sexism is likely to be negatively correlated with gender-related anger because of the emotional acceptability of restrictive arrangements that are presented in positive terms.

*H3a: Perceived gender discrimination positively predicts gender-based anger.*

*H3b: Benevolent sexism negatively predicts gender-based anger.*

## **2.5 Gender-Based Anger and Collective Political Action Intentions**

Anger due to gender will be positively associated with collective action intention among women since anger converts perceptions of gender injustice into motivation for resistance. There is political psychology literature suggesting that consciousness for change, including anger at inequalities, fosters collective action by rendering disadvantage both emotionally urgent and politically meaningful (Hechler et al., 2024). It is also suggested by experimental evidence that group-based anger influences collective action intention through the association of perceiving injustice and responding with the group action (Yin & Fei, 2024). In addition, studies focusing on emotions involved in protest suggest that anger about injustice continues to motivate collective actions because people believe it to be necessary for bringing change through peaceful mobilization (Landmann & Naumann, 2024). According to deprivation theory, affective reactions to collective disadvantage motivate collective action by reinforcing individuals’ belief about the necessity of social change (Lalot et al., 2023). Consequently, anger about gender injustice among women leads to collective action intention.

*H<sub>4</sub>: Gender-based anger positively predicts collective political action intentions.*

## **2.6 The Mediating Role of Gender-Based Anger**

Anger arising out of gender plays a critical role in connecting both variables with collective political action intentions. Gender discrimination would lead to political action intention indirectly, through emotional interpretations where injustices become mobilizing forces when women understand unequal treatment as a collective injustice (Lizarazo Pereira et al., 2022). There is ample evidence from studies conducted on collective action of women that anger serves to motivate continued action when movements for gender equality have been framed as dealing with external injustices (Bilali et al., 2025). However, benevolent sexism is likely to weaken the link because it is framed in terms of care and thus makes gender hierarchies appear less discriminatory, consequently not arousing outrage or anger. Indeed, recent organizational research reveals that benevolent sexism often leads to anxiety more than anger (Chawla & Gabriel, 2024), which implies an indirect link. Thus, gender-based anger will serve as the mediator in both cases.

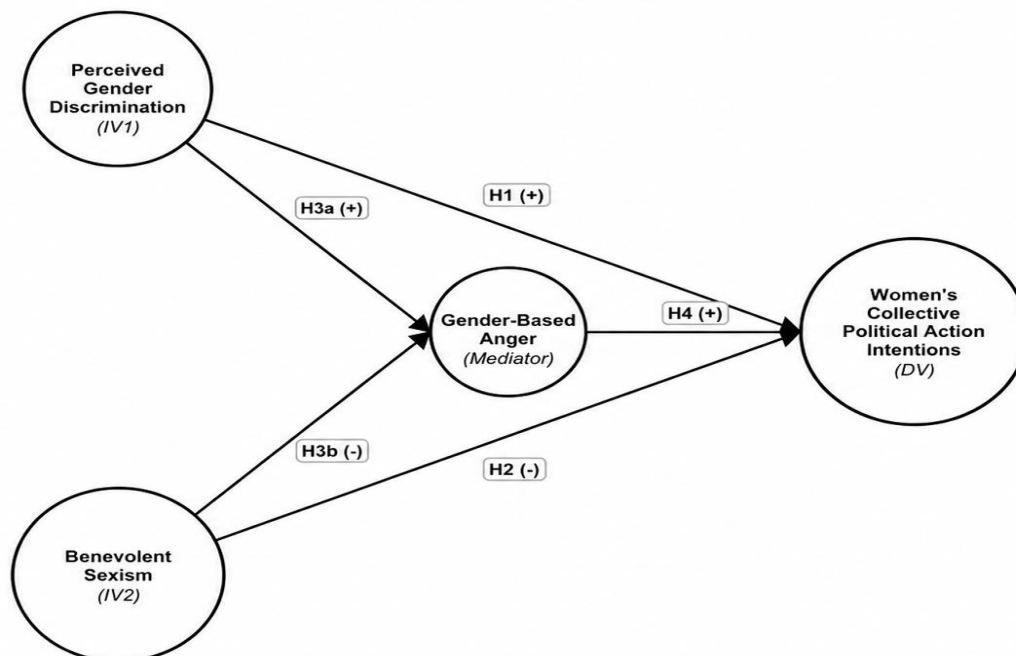
*H5a: Gender-based anger mediates the relationship between perceived gender discrimination and collective political action intentions.*

*H5b: Gender-based anger mediates the relationship between benevolent sexism and collective political action intentions.*

## 2.7 Research Gap

While past research has investigated each of these four concepts in isolation, little empirical evidence exists linking perceived gender discrimination and benevolent sexism together through one mediation model in order to predict the effect of such perceptions on women’s political action intentions. Hostile discrimination has been widely researched while less attention has been paid to the consequences of benevolent sexism, especially when patriarchal ideals are culturally prevalent. Furthermore, most research treats anger simply as a general protest emotion and fails to differentiate gender-based anger as the psychological process by which perceived gender discrimination leads to collective political action among women. The importance of investigating such a relationship in a patriarchal society such as that of Pakistan is evident because women can suffer from blatant exclusion as well as moralized control, both of which lead to a sense of injustice for women.

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework



*Figure 2.1 Conceptual Diagram*

Within the theoretical framework, the two independent variables will be gender discrimination perception and benevolent sexism, whereas the mediating variable will be gender anger. The dependent variable is women's collective political actions intentions. The assumption here is that gender discrimination perception leads to increased gender anger, which consequently reinforces intentions of collective political actions. On the other hand, benevolent sexism decreases gender anger and consequently collective political action intentions.

### **3.0 Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional, explanatory survey design with a post-positivist research philosophy. Quantitative research design is necessary because of the nature of this study, which requires the use of theory to test hypotheses involving the relationships between perceived gender discrimination, benevolent sexism, gender-based anger, and women's intentions for collective political action using numerical measures. The use of cross-sectional design will enable the researcher to collect information from respondents at one time to measure their current perceptions, feelings, and intentions. This is possible since the research adopts an explanatory approach, which enables researchers to test the presence of direct and mediating effects between variables (Slater & Hasson, 2025). Post-positivist research philosophy will fit well with this study because it assumes that social phenomena can be measured empirically but not necessarily absolutely and perfectly (Hodge & Drake, 2025).

The target population included female university students enrolled at six public universities in Lahore and Islamabad. Both cities were selected since they are higher education centers in which students hail from various provinces, districts, social-economic backgrounds, and educational streams. For this purpose, a multi-stage non-probability sampling technique was employed. Universities were selected in a first step by using purposive sampling because they fulfilled the selection criteria of being big public sector universities. Respondents were sampled using the convenience and quota-based sampling techniques for participating in the survey. This sampling technique is applicable when the complete list of the population is not available. However, the problem with this type of sampling technique is that it cannot be considered as a representation of the whole nation but only of the sample (Stratton, 2023). Surveys need to report how sampling was done and who was excluded and included in the sample (Crick, 2024)

Minimum sample size is determined through the conventional method of single population proportion where the minimum sample size can be calculated using the formula  $n = Z^2p(1 - p) / d^2$ , at 95% level of confidence, 5% margin of error, providing the maximum sample required. This resulted in the minimum sample size of about 384 respondents, which is normally considered sufficient for large or undefined populations in an attempt to make survey perceptions precise (Naing et al., 2022). In consideration of incomplete, biased or unfeasible answers, a total of 510 questionnaires were initially acquired by the study. Data cleaning reduced the number of responses

by 32 because of missing, inconsistent answers, straight lining, or incompleteness, resulting in a total of 478 respondents in the final dataset. This shows a retention rate of about 93.7%. Data cleaning is important because it can affect the validity of the statistical estimates in the analysis (Sharifnia et al., 2026)

Data analysis was done by applying PLS-SEM in SmartPLS 4, since there was need to test a predictive model having direct as well as indirect/mediating relationships among the independent and dependent variables. Data analysis was done in two steps. In the first step, the measurement model was analyzed based on the indicators’ loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted, Fornell-Larcker criterion, HTMT ratio, and multicollinearity. In the second step, the structural model was analyzed based on path coefficients, *t*-values, *p*-values, confidence intervals, R<sup>2</sup>, f<sup>2</sup>, Q<sup>2</sup>, and mediation analysis using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. Ethical issues have also been adhered to in this study. This is because the participants have been told the academic purpose of the study and their participation was voluntary, anonymity, confidentiality has been maintained, and there has been no use of personal identification information.

## 4.0 Findings and Results

### 4.1 Reliability Analysis

**Table 4.1 Reliability Analysis**

Demographic Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)	18–20	154	32.2
	21–23	172	36.0
	24–26	152	31.8
City Location	Lahore	258	54.0
	Islamabad	220	46.0
Field of Education	STEM	162	33.9
	Management Sciences	156	32.6
	Social Sciences	160	33.5

*Note.* N = 478.

The demographic profile of the respondents selected for the research is provided in Table 4.1. With respect to age, the majority of respondents (*n* = 172, 36.0%) belonged to the 21–23 years age group, followed by 18-20 (*n* = 154, 32.2%) and 24-26 (*n* = 152, 31.8%) age groups. As far as the city location of respondents is concerned, they came from Lahore and Islamabad, with an edge for Lahore (*n* = 258, 54.0%), while Islamabad had a slightly smaller number of respondents (*n* = 220, 46.0%). As to the field of education, the respondents were quite evenly distributed between STEM (*n* = 162, 33.9%), Social Sciences (*n* = 160, 33.5%) and Management Sciences (*n* = 156, 32.6%). Thus, the demographic distribution is indicative of diversity in age, geographic location, and field of education of the respondents in the study.

### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Constructs

Construct	Mean	SD	Variance	Skewness
PGD	3.027	.991	.982	-.018
BS	3.021	.996	.992	-.092
GBA	2.997	.983	.966	.030
CPAI	3.027	1.000	1.000	-.026

**Note.** SD = Standard Deviation.

Table 4.2 provides the descriptive statistics of the study variables. The results show that the respondents indicated moderate levels of perception towards gender discrimination ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ), benevolent sexism ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ), gender-related anger ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ), and collective political action intentions ( $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 1.00$ ). The near similarity in mean values indicates that the respondents have demonstrated moderate perceptions regarding all of the study variables. Moreover, the standard deviation values reflect an appropriate level of variation in the responses of the respondents. The skewness values range from -0.092 to 0.030, showing that the data is normally distributed. In summary, the descriptive statistics show that the data set is appropriate for further analysis.

### 4.3 Measurement Model Assessment

#### 4.3.1 Reliability and Convergent Validity

Table 4.3 Measurement Model Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Loading	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ )	AVE
PGD	PGD1	0.819	0.896	0.920	0.658
	PGD2	0.808			
	PGD3	0.833			
	PGD4	0.805			
	PGD5	0.818			
	PGD6	0.784			
BS	BS1	0.793	0.895	0.920	0.656
	BS2	0.776			
	BS3	0.818			
	BS4	0.844			
	BS5	0.816			
	BS6	0.812			
GBA	GBA1	0.800	0.894	0.919	0.654
	GBA2	0.796			
	GBA3	0.817			
	GBA4	0.813			
	GBA5	0.841			
	GBA6	0.785			
CPAI	CPAI1	0.790	0.898	0.922	0.663
	CPAI2	0.812			
	CPAI3	0.788			
	CPAI4	0.795			
	CPAI5	0.849			
	CPAI6	0.848			

**Note.** AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

Table 4.3 displays the reliability and convergent validity assessment of the constructs used in this study. The standardized factor loadings varied between .776 and .849, which were above the required level of .70, showing satisfactory indicator reliability. Values of Cronbach's alpha were between .894 and .898, whereas those of composite reliability were between .919 and .922, showing high internal consistency of the constructs. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) varied between .654 and .663, exceeding the required value of .50. This means that each of the constructs accounts for more than half of the variance of the related indicators. In summary, this means that the constructs have satisfactory reliability and convergent validity in terms of Perceived Gender Discrimination, Benevolent Sexism, Gender-based Anger, and Collective Political Action Intention. Thus, the measurement model was satisfactory for the analysis of discriminant validity and structural relationships.

### 4.3.2 Discriminant Validity

Table 4.4 Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

Construct	PGD	BS	GBA	CPAI
PGD	<b>0.811</b>			
BS	-0.527	<b>0.810</b>		
GBA	0.535	-0.527	<b>0.809</b>	
CPAI	0.589	-0.595	0.514	<b>0.814</b>

**Note.** Diagonal values represent  $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ .

The findings of the Fornell-Larcker criterion to test discriminant validity are provided in Table 4.4. The square root of the average variance extracted in each construct was higher than its correlation with other constructs in the model. In particular, the values on the diagonal varied between .809 and .814 and were higher than those of the inter-construct correlations. It means that each construct is more related to its own indicators than other constructs in the model. In this regard, Perceived Gender Discrimination, Benevolent Sexism, Gender-Based Anger, and Collective Political Action Intentions were empirically different constructs from each other. Hence, satisfactory discriminant validity was obtained. As a result, the measures demonstrate discriminant validity, which ensures that the structural model analysis is valid.

### 4.3.3 Correlations Matrix

Table 4.5 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Study Constructs

Construct	M	SD	PGD	BS	GBA	CPAI
1. PGD	3.027	0.991	—			
2. BS	3.021	0.996	-.525***	—		
3. GBA	2.997	0.983	.532***	-.525***	—	
4. CPAI	3.027	1.000	.588***	-.593***	.513***	—

**Note.** \*\* $p < .001$ .

Table 4.5 displays the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study variables. There were significant positive associations between Perceived Gender Discrimination and Gender-Based Anger ( $r = .532, p < .001$ ) and Collective Political Action Intentions ( $r = .588, p < .001$ ). On the other hand, there were significant negative correlations between Benevolent Sexism and Gender-Based Anger ( $r = -.525, p < .001$ ) and Collective Political Action Intentions

( $r = -.593, p < .001$ ). Further, there was a significant positive correlation between Gender-Based Anger and Collective Political Action Intentions ( $r = .513, p < .001$ ). All correlations were statistically significant and consistent with the predicted directions. The correlation coefficients varied from moderate to moderately high strength, suggesting meaningful relationship between the constructs without being at a level that may suggest multicollinearity issues.

#### 4.5 Structural Model Assessment

##### 4.5.1 Collinearity Diagnostics

Table 4.6 Collinearity Diagnostics for Structural Model Predictors

Dependent Variable	Predictor	VIF	Tolerance
GBA	PGD	1.381	0.724
GBA	BS	1.381	0.724
CPAI	PGD	1.579	0.633
CPAI	BS	1.562	0.640
CPAI	GBA	1.578	0.634

**Note.** VIF = Variance Inflation Factor.

Table 4.6 provides the collinearity diagnostics results for the predictor constructs used in the structural model. The variance inflation factors (VIFs) had values between 1.381 and 1.579, while tolerance values varied between .633 and .724. All the VIFs were significantly below the maximum acceptable value of 5.00, whereas all tolerances were above the acceptable criterion of .20. This is an indication of no multicollinearity problems among the predictor constructs. This means that the constructs of Perceived Gender Discrimination, Benevolent Sexism, and Gender-based Anger provided unique explanatory power to the structural model. This suggests that the predictors were sufficiently independent to each other and allowed for estimating the structural paths reliably. Thus, the structural model satisfied collinearity assumptions.

##### 4.5.2 Structural Path Estimates

Table 4.7 Structural Model Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	SE	t	p	95% Bootstrap CI	Result
H1	PGD $\rightarrow$ GBA	0.356	0.042	8.472	< .001	[0.274, 0.437]	Supported
H2	BS $\rightarrow$ GBA	-0.339	0.040	-8.567	< .001	[-0.419, -0.264]	Supported
H3	PGD $\rightarrow$ CPAI	0.324	0.042	7.740	< .001	[0.238, 0.404]	Supported

H4	BS → CPAI	-0.338	0.041	-8.156	< .001	[-0.422, -0.258]	Supported
H5	GBA → CPAI	0.162	0.043	3.751	< .001	[0.078, 0.247]	Supported

**Note.** Bootstrap = 5,000 resamples

Table 4.7 depicts the estimates of the structural paths employed in the assessment of the hypotheses proposed. It was found that Perceived Gender Discrimination exhibited a significant positive relationship with Gender-Based Anger ( $\beta = .356, t = 8.472, p < .001$ ). This finding supported the first hypothesis, H1. In addition, there was a significant negative relationship between Benevolent Sexism and Gender-Based Anger ( $\beta = -.339, t = -8.567, p < .001$ ). This finding supported H2. Moreover, Perceived Gender Discrimination significantly positively influenced Collective Political Action Intentions ( $\beta = .324, t = 7.740, p < .001$ ), while Benevolent Sexism negatively influenced Collective Political Action Intentions ( $\beta = -.338, t = -8.156, p < .001$ ). This finding supported H3 and H4, respectively. Additionally, Gender-Based Anger showed a significant positive impact on Collective Political Action Intentions ( $\beta = .162, t = 3.751, p < .001$ ), supporting the fifth hypothesis, H5. Thus, all the hypothesized relationships were statistically significant

### 4.5.3 Mediation Analysis

Table 4.8 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Effect	$\beta$	SE	95% CI
PGD → GBA → CPAI (Indirect)	.058	.017	[.027, .093]
BS → GBA → CPAI (Indirect)	-.055	.017	[-.090, -.024]
PGD → CPAI (Direct)	.324	.041	[.242, .404]
BS → CPAI (Direct)	-.338	.041	[-.420, -.260]
PGD → CPAI (Total)	.381	.038	[.303, .454]
BS → CPAI (Total)	-.393	.037	[-.469, -.323]

The results from Table 4.8 regarding the mediation analysis investigating the indirect effects of Perceived Gender Discrimination and Benevolent Sexism on Collective Political Action Intentions via Gender-Based Anger are provided below. The results indicated a significant positive indirect effect of Perceived Gender Discrimination on Collective Political Action Intentions through Gender-Based Anger ( $\beta = .058, SE = .017, 95\% CI [.027, .093]$ ). Likewise, Benevolent Sexism had a significant negative indirect effect on Collective Political Action Intentions through Gender-Based Anger ( $\beta = -.055, SE = .017, 95\% CI [-.090, -.024]$ ). Since the confidence intervals for the two indirect effects do not contain zero, the mediation effects are statistically significant. In addition to this, the direct effects of Perceived Gender Discrimination ( $\beta = .324$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\beta = -.338$ ) on Collective Political Action Intentions are significant as well. The above findings imply partial mediation as Gender-Based Anger partially explains the relationships between the variables

### 4.5.4 Predictive Relevance and Effect Sizes

Table 4.9 Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ ) and Effect Sizes ( $f^2$ )

Endogenous Construct	Predictor	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>	Effect Size	t
CPAI	—	0.475	0.469	—	—	—
	BS	—	—	0.139	Small	-8.156
	GBA	—	—	0.032	Small	3.751
	PGD	—	—	0.126	Small	7.740
GBA	—	0.369	0.360	—	—	—
	BS	—	—	0.132	Small	-8.567
	PGD	—	—	0.145	Small	8.472

**Note.**  $Q^2 > 0$  indicates predictive relevance

Table 4.9 reveals the results of the structural model evaluation in terms of explanatory power, predictive relevance, and effect sizes. The structural model accounted for 36.9% of variance in Gender-Based Anger ( $R^2 = .369$ ) and 47.5% of variance in Collective Political Action Intentions ( $R^2 = .475$ ). Such results confirm moderate explanatory power of the model. The values of predictive relevance ( $Q^2 = .360$  for Gender-Based Anger;  $Q^2 = .469$  for Collective Political Action Intentions) exceeded zero which proves the predictive ability of the model. In addition, effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) varied within the range of .032 to .145, suggesting that the predictor variables had small effects on the endogenous constructs. Specifically, among the predictors of Gender-Based Anger, the largest effect belonged to Perceived Gender Discrimination ( $f^2 = .145$ ), while Benevolent Sexism was the most effective predictor of Collective Political Action Intentions ( $f^2 = .139$ ). Thus, the presented analysis indicates the presence of satisfactory explanatory and predictive ability of the proposed model.

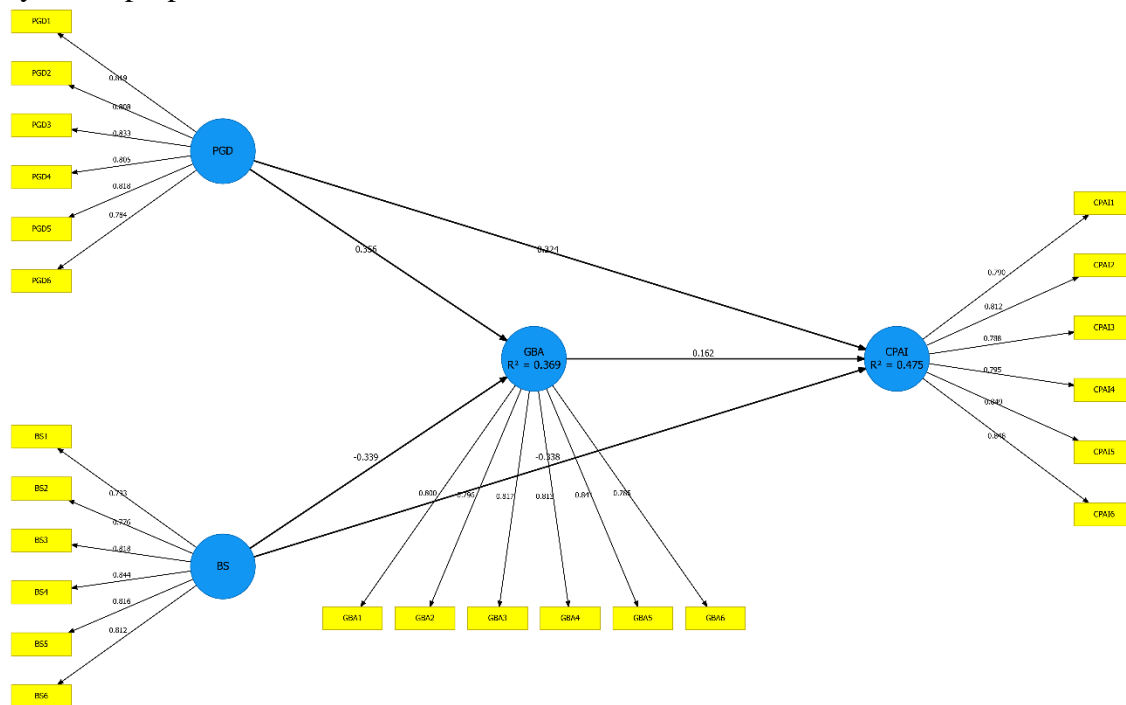


Figure 4.1 PLS-SEM Path Coefficients and Structural Model Results

## 5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

Firstly, the results demonstrate that the measurement model was reliable since all constructs showed reliability, convergence validity, and discriminant validity. It is crucial because constructs used in the study such as perceived gender discrimination, benevolent sexism, gender-based anger, and collective political action intentions are conceptually similar, yet different from each other empirically. Mean values that are neither too low nor too high show that there were no extremal opinions but rather balanced ones. The results get better due to the fact that this model does not rely on the respondents' polarized views. The results obtained in terms of reliability and AVE show that six indicators adequately measured their constructs. Such a result is essential for gender attitude research that is aimed at developing an evidence-based approach to dealing with gender-related issues (Costa, 2024). Thus, the study confirms the need for a multi-level gender equality strategy based on individual attitudes, organizational context, and broader cultural norms (Lau et al., 2023).

The positive relationship between perceived gender discrimination and collective political action intentions means that those women who see gendered inequality are ready to take political steps against it. In this case, discrimination becomes politically salient if it is understood as a structural form of injustice and not a personal experience. The positive relation between perceived gender discrimination and gender-based anger demonstrates that the process of recognizing injustice is emotionally charged and may become a basis for mobilization. It is consistent with evidence suggesting that gender threat may increase solidarity and social change support among women if inequality is viewed by women as being relevant to a group (Cortland & Kinias, 2025). Moreover, this finding confirms the claim that women's reactions to inequality will depend on their identification with those groups that resist the existing gender order and not accept it (Mikołajczak et al., 2022). Thus, H1 and H3a prove the thesis that discrimination serves as a trigger of political action both cognitively and emotionally.

The negative influence of benevolent sexism on gender-based anger and collective political action intentions is theoretically significant since it demonstrates that sexism may undermine the political empowerment of women even if it is not overtly hostile. While benevolent sexism seems polite and protective, the research results suggest that it decreases anger towards inequality among women and their participation in collective political action. It implies that protective gender stereotypes may lead to normalization of dependency, blurring the perception of injustice, and acceptance of unequal political relations. Contemporary experimental data from political context suggests that benevolent sexism is usually more difficult to address than hostile sexism due to being framed in terms of politeness, care or traditions (Rydzewska & Gendźwiłł, 2026). The findings also relate to existing evidence suggesting that gender stereotypes narratives may act as barriers for achieving gender equality in cases when they are used as defense of traditional hierarchical structures within groups' protection or moral order rhetoric (Golec de Zavala & Keenan, 2024).

Significant positive impact of gender-based anger on intentions to participate in collective political actions proves that anger is not an exclusively negative state of mind and it may be

politically productive when expressed in response to gender injustices. However, the connection between gender-based anger and collective political action intention was less significant than direct influence of perceived gender discrimination and benevolent sexism. This implies that while anger is important, it is insufficient to account for women's collective action intentions. The results of mediation analysis also validate this claim, since both indirect effects were significant; however, direct effects were still significant, which indicates partial rather than complete mediation. Therefore, one may conclude that the processes of collective political action are influenced by both emotional processes and cognitive-ideological evaluations directly. Studies of progressive and reactionary collective action also demonstrate how identities and ideologies can affect mobilization regardless of the role of emotions (Marinthe et al., 2022). This result is significant since sexist environments can decrease participation even when women feel injustice, especially in political contexts (Reich & Bachl, 2025).

On the whole, the structural model had moderately high explanatory power, accounting for 36.9% of variance in gender-based anger and 47.5% of variance in collective political action intentions. These coefficients show that the model possesses some predictive validity. However, the small sizes of these values imply that apart from the three constructs mentioned above, women's intentions to engage in political activities can be impacted by other factors, such as political efficacy, feminist identity, institutional support, family constraints, safety concerns, as well as past activism. Hence, although the research findings provide adequate grounds for validating the suggested model, they are too small to be viewed as comprehensive. In practice, this implies that the initiatives aimed at improving gender equality cannot be limited to addressing the issue of open discrimination but have to address benevolent sexism that seems to be courteous while stifling the independence of women. Specifically, this has to be taken into account because gender hostility and public criticism are likely to generate representational costs for women in politics (Håkansson, 2024).

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The results have demonstrated that the perception of gender discrimination, benevolent sexism, and gender-based anger are among the key predictors of women's intentions of engaging in collective political actions. The study results revealed that the perception of gender discrimination has a positive impact on both the level of gender-based anger and women's intentions of engaging in political actions. At the same time, benevolent sexism has a negative influence on gender-based anger and intentions of participating in political actions, which means that protective and traditional attitudes towards gender relations can weaken women's emotional resistance and political mobilization.

The study has also provided evidence of the mediating effect of gender-based anger on the relationship between independent variables and collective political action intentions. In other words, the presence of significant indirect effects has proven that gender-based anger plays a partial role in the process of explaining how the perception of gender discrimination increases women's intentions of engaging in political actions and how benevolent sexism decreases their intentions of taking such actions. In summary, the current research has contributed to literature on

gender and political psychology because it has shown how the political action in the group is formed through cognitive recognition of injustice as well as emotional response to gender inequality. Additionally, the study revealed the importance of overcoming benevolent sexism as an invisible obstacle to political agency of women.

## 5.2 Limitations of the Study

Nevertheless, there are limitations associated with the research conducted. First, the sample of the population was taken from female students studying in six public universities from Lahore and Islamabad. Hence, the results of the study are not generalizable to the whole population of women in Pakistan including those who do not receive higher education, rural or working women, and those who are politically active. Second, the cross-sectional survey was conducted, which means that no conclusions can be drawn about causality since the hypotheses are based on theoretical premises. Third, all variables were assessed using self-reporting techniques and thus there may be some social desirability and common method biases as well as subjective interpretation of discrimination and sexism. Fourth, the researcher investigated gender-based anger as a single mechanism which can mediate collective action.

**Rawaha Arshad:** Problem Identification and Theoretical Framework

**Muhammad Usman Arshad:** Data Analysis and Drafting

**Bilal Ahmad:** Methodology and Revision

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest in this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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