

## **Honour Killings of Women in Punjab: A Socio-political Context**

**Afshan Kiran Imtiaz**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

**Farah Malik**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

**Raana Malik**

*University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.*

### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the relationship between the violent practice of honour killing and the role of the socio-cultural institution, such as, the law-makers, i.e., politicians about the reinforcement of this customary practice. The qualitative method has been used to get the in-depth information about the subjective experiences and perceptions of various politicians. By employing purposive sampling comprising of five representatives from the law-makers, i.e., politicians who were working with the cases of the honour killings of women, data were taken from the largest province of Punjab. The Interpretative phenomenological approach (IPA) was used to analyze the semi-structured interviews of various participants. This study discussed the collusion of politicians with other functionaries, lack of effective law enforcement by the police force and the failure of the criminal justice system in combating the honour violence committed against women in Punjab. The resolution of the problem involves the change of mindset of all the associated stakeholders. Various measures have been advocated to address the honour crime through the execution of the relevant policy strategies and pertinent legislation.

**Key Words:** Honour Killing, Women, Violence, Legislation, Law-Makers

### **Introduction**

Institutions in Pakistan have played an important role in shaping and reinforcing the culture by contributing to the dominating discourses. At the institutional level, existing laws encourage violence against women. Law-enforcing agencies, like police force, judiciary and lawyers, and lawmaking functionaries, like politicians and religious scholars, have a discriminatory attitude towards women (Hussain, 2006; Kakakhel, 2004; Gadit and Patel, 2008; Shah, 1998). The concept of men guardians of women's chastity is so deeply ingrained in the social fabric that it is difficult for judiciary and the police to condemn any man who is seen as acting for his honour (Hussain 1995). The selective use of religious ideology plays an important role in shaping gender relations in Pakistan (Muhammad, Ahmed, Omer, & Shah, 2012). The religious framework in which 'purdah/veil' is upheld is one example (Madudi, 1978). Any woman seeking release from the prescribed rules and norms of society has to face bitter consequences which often ends in the loss

of her life (Hussain, 2006). Moreover, media plays a role to socially shape choices of women through the lens of conception of the manufactured consent, under the false guise of culture, norms and traditions (Amnesty International Report, 2010).

Honour killings are widespread in South Asia and Middle East prevail in various countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Libya, Afghanistan, Morocco, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen, and Pakistan (Bayoumy & Kami, 2012). Such killings are also committed in migrant populations in the United States, Europe and Canada and are rampant in India (Amin, 2015; Menon, 2006; BBC News, 2010). In South Anatolia (Turkey), honour killings have become a severe challenge (Kardam & Murray, 2005).

Across the globe, females do not mostly enjoy equivalence in comparison to males in social, familial or economic spheres (Amnesty International Report 2010) and is true for Pakistan as well. In Pakistan women are considered socially inferior and are thwarted from rightful privileges and benefits which are entitled to them, for instance, the inheritance of the familial land (Mohammed, 2011). The lack of education of women as well as men leads to the deficiency of awareness of effectual legal regulations which also reinforces violence against women.

Honour killing is also a result of these power relations, which are endorsed and sanctioned by all the institutions, whether it is the family or social institutions. Layder (2006) while describing the concept of disciplinary power of Foucault stated that its methodology was to keep people under constant surveillance whose effects were more psychological instead of the physical torture which disciplined subjects.

Honour and power, both at the institutional level as well as at the government level, coordinate as well as compete with each other (Shachar, 2005). Furthermore, Cash, Ancis and Strachan (1997) affirmed how various cultural attributes seeped through female's physical reflection which affected her gender as well as her feminist distinction within the social order. Eminent researchers who studied the field of multi-culturalism like Shafir and Peled (1998), Mamdani (1996) and Smooha (1990) cautioned about communal strategies and plans of action that harden distinctive identity of culture, with traditions and behaviours direct towards the structural disparity and severe dominance of male traditions in a cultural milieu. These comments are valid in Pakistani culture, where institutional disparity of the feudal system influences directed towards patriarchal system overcomes the females' right to be heard against aggressive acts. Thus, Alvesson (2002) concludes the practice of the honour killing is applied and developed through social, cultural and historical pretexts.

Jehanzab (2004) indicated that violence in Pakistan has been created by the authoritative males not meant for debilitated and underprivileged females and indicates that customary aggressive practices within the family are usually carried out by the male family members where women play a subjugated role. Thus, honour killers are not even detained, and if arrested and rarely reach conviction (Warraich, 2005).

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The Constitution of Pakistan (1973), The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) regulate entitlement to free life and non-discriminatory treatment due to gender (Nishtar, 2010) or other characteristics.

Honour killings are mainly predominant in places wherever social associations can be characterized as feudal or tribal. Islam forbids killings of an individual without any logical cause. In Islam, violence is unacceptable and women have specific rights, "And live with them [women] in kindness" (Quran, 4:19) Hussain (2006), adds honour killing is an offense which has no place in Islam; "honour" is the deep-rooted conventional perception that developed in the primeval tribal society in pre-Islamic eras. Ali (2001) states that honour crimes are widespread in conservative patterns which combine specific patriarchal and feudal interests. These materialized from the creations that are embedded in patriarchy where it was essential to be in command of females' sexuality and have naught to do with the faith of Islam. This can be denoted to as a crazy effort to level justification for terrible acts in order to receive leniency in sentencing. Nonetheless, practice of honour killing exists nearly in all faiths.

As Gill (2011) pointed out that the honour based violence got across as the gender related violence; thus, its carrying out communicates well with the interconnected concepts of men's honour and female shame, which assigns gender roles and responsibilities which shapes various features of her gender sexuality, mind-set, feminist identity and growth within the existing cultural traditions. This usually results in familial/collectivistic acts, frequently directed towards the killings of the female to recover collectivistic honourable standing and the repute of the close relatives of the family unit. The present study is an attempt to contribute to the deconstruction of the structural relationships and socio-cultural institutional working of various politicians that reinforces the practice of honour killings of women in Punjab.

Honour killing is a complex phenomenon. From the appraisal of the literature about the subject (Standish, 2013; Sen, 2005; Ginat, 1997), it is explained that significantly the main constituent of the gendered based violence is the societal construct that confines female's fiscal, political, basic privileges. As disparate and uneven power relationships amid males and females are created in the social context and tend to be "historically justified" (Engle, 2006), instead of being naturally formulated. The aversion of the gendered violent hostility entails a strict application (Penn & Nardos, 2003). Masculinity is generally linked with supremacy and command over females, as violent aggression is considered to be a way through which males are able to execute their masculinity (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). Females, owing to their communal and societal isolation, consequently turn out to be the prime prey. Therefore, males may easily use them which make them uncomplicated and unchallenging victims involving the horror of honour killings.

Reddy (2008) scrutinized the deliberations to consider honour killings as gender-based violence or as cultural tradition, along with consequences of each standpoint to guard from and avert such offences in the United Kingdom. The author affirmed that it necessitated a strategy which was receptive to the framework of each instance. The violent behavior in the name of honour was positioned directly in the array of the gender-based violence.

Vandello (2009) expresses that the cultural scripts may implicitly promote domestic violence. In two studies, men from “honour-based cultures such as Brazilians, Hispanics and Southern Americans” usually accept a female who prefers to linger on in a violent relation, thereby, conveying that “domestic violence” is rather better endurable than from “non-honour based cultures such as Canada and the northern United States”. The author states that the society tends to recognize a female spouse's illegitimate relationship usually indicative of a sign of her male spouse's non-masculinity.

Kogacioglu (2004) analyzed various acts of organizations in Turkey dealing with honour offences in indigenous, nationwide and global frameworks which were essential to eradicate such offences. Ineffectual, underfunded and corrupt institutions could perpetuate honour offences. Neglecting to report for institutional upshots might fail to notice the politically motivated scenario that propagated honour killings strategies that were instrumental for the continual of the violent behavior.

Hadidi, Kulwicki and Jahshan, (2001) carried out a thorough analysis of sixteen instances of honour killings within Jordan. The authors tried to establish various grounds of demise, the procedure of applying the punitive regulations and verdict. They investigated that there was frequent reduction in the blame and prison terms when crime was committed by the real brothers of the killings women.

Amin (2015) conducted a study on the instances of honour killings within the Muslim communities living in Canada. He accentuated that the relationship amid sexuality of women and honour killings was intricate. The author affirmed that the sexual activity of the female in an honour related culture pertained to be the primary means which conferred shame on the male family member.

Welchman and Hossain (2005) compiled articles of a range of viewpoints regarding the available and possible reactions to honour-based violent behavior in varied areas, societies and ethnic traditions. Both the authors have considered the global human rights perspective and traced honour related violent aggression in legalized and socio-cultural framework.

According to the HRCP Report (1999), the standing of females in the Pakistani society was explicated by the interaction of ciphers characteristics of tribes, Shariah rulings, Sub-Continental juridical and traditional customs that were responsible for creating an ambiance of repression for females, whereby, any benefit presented to females through one legal ruling got annulled by another. Jilani, a civil liberties campaigner, stated that the right to live of females in the Pakistani social setting was provisional to complying with the societal customs

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and mores (Amnesty International Report, 1999). Such two quotes summed up the appalling conditions regarding the status of Pakistani females.

Most of the major research analysis in the Pakistani culture have scrutinized the practice of honour killings as a traditional procedures and their investigations were restricted to scrupulous perspective to comprehend the issue; either thought-out as an instrument of politically manipulated behaviour (Khalil and Sheikh, 2010) and the outcome of worsening fiscal and societal circumstances (Raza, 2006). Nasrullah et al. (2009) observed the problem from the viewpoint of the communal healthiness which was later supplemented in a brief account publicized in "Lancet" with a narrative of a female victim survivor of honour killing from Pakistan (Solberg, 2009).

Gadit and Patel (2008) observed honour killings in the Pakistani social set up from the perspective of the psychological health issues and deduced that an enhanced comprehension of the social and patriarchally motivated milieu, whereby, such killings took place which had permitted the psychological health practitioners to intercede before time so that as patients susceptible of a killing came up with circumstances of family quarrel.

Muhammad, Ahmed, Omer, & Shah, (2012) looked at the honour killings through the standpoint of Islam in the context of the Holy Quran and Hadaith. The author emphasized that the Islamic teachings forbade killings of any human being and stressed upon to cover the physical relationship of males and females than to expose such personal dealings.

Hussain (2006) examined a relative scrutiny of the process of making and enacting laws about the honour killings within the Pakistani society, whereby, it was inferred that in order to reprimand and recognize the rigors of the violent hostility against females, not enough laws prevailed; The implementation of the legal enactments and all-inclusive policies did tend to be the essential to contest the features directed towards the honour killings.

Shah (2016) mentioned flaws in the anti-honour-killing law, passed in 2016, which mandated a minimum jail sentence of twenty-five years and deprived relatives to forgive the accused persons of the crime, by pointing out that under that law, the judiciary could convert the capital punishment into an imprisonment for the rest of accused person's life, by asserting that it was done for the sake of "honour", thereby, averting the compulsory period. Nonetheless, it would be difficult to obtain the guilty verdict that could easily be upturned on the plea petition, either due to the absence of proof or unwillingness to impose a fair decision in case of a female hitherto deceased.

Nasrullah et. al. (2009) analyze print media reports of honour killings from 2004-2007 to establish their general characteristics and reasons in Pakistan. The report presented the typical age-group of sufferers, the motives and the number of such killings, the familiar weaponry employed as well as the relation between the sufferer and the killer. The author recommended that an improved understanding of the sufferers of honour killings would offer further useful preventive steps.

Moreover, the present literary texts revealed that at times, honour killing not only occurred as a result for breaching a cipher of honour, but was often considered as a procedure for killing females to recompense, resolve individual disagreements, take revenge from somebody and various reasons something else as compared to the female unfaithfulness (Phulpoto, 2012; Gadit and Patel, 2008; Shah, 1998).

Kakakhel (2004) examined the genesis of honour killings in Pakistan. The author insisted that although the honour killings were profoundly aground in the Islamic culture, but such killings certainly had no foundation in the Islamic legal regulations. The writer further scrutinized in which way the global, imperial, shariah and the existing legalized rulings in Pakistan applied to various instances relating to honour killings.

A study by Cheema (2008) emphasized that the judicial system in Pakistan is significantly influential in reinforcing the honour-related crime by applying a discretionary attitude in punishing the accusers of the honour killings. The author envisaged that the modification of the Criminal Law Act, 2004, would prove to be a failure to tackle the state of affairs as sentencing under the new law, along with the tapered characterization of honour killing, and judges' analysis of the severe and abrupt provocation clause left a lot to be desired.

Hussain (2006) reflected upon the features which lead to the honour killings in Pakistan and questioned the unwillingness of the Pakistani regime to restructure. The author also, in general, elucidated the lawful regulations of the Islamic states, as a large number of honour killings occurred in the Muslim world.

### **Implications of the study**

There are many research gaps and uninvestigated areas regarding the practice of honour killing of women that warrant urgent investigation. Thus far, there has been a lack of systematically investigated study regarding the cultural violence and the political framework. The present study aims to fill that research gap; it intends to measure the prevalence of honour killings and its overall association with the role of politicians in a Punjab provincial setting, thereby, providing an original contribution. The research also offers the policy makers some achievable goals to devise panoptic strategies for policy analysis and standardization of relevant criminal legislation about honour killings in Punjab which will be more victim-focused. This, in turn, will enhance the status of women.

### **Objectives**

- To explore as to how the practice of honour killing is perceived by the law-makers, i.e., politicians through their perceptions and personal experiences in a traditional Punjabi society;

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- To help devise vital inputs for policy analysis and standardization of relevant criminal legislation which can further lead to significant criminal legislation about honour crime

### **Method**

#### **Design of the research**

The qualitative method is employed in the present study to get the in-depth information about the subjective experiences and perceptions of various politicians in a traditional Punjabi society.

#### **Participants**

Five male participants were selected by employing the purposive sampling who were politicians (law-makers) by career. These politicians had closely worked with or on cases that dealt with issues of honour killing in Punjab.

#### **Instrumentation**

The instrument for interview was developed by help of the relevant literature. A subject-focused interview guide was developed for conducting the in-depth interviews from the selected representatives; there were a total of forty questions in that guide. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions that included questions like “As a politician, do you think that violence against women is deep-rooted in the socio-cultural context of Pakistan?”; “Do you think that politicians play a role in reinforcing the violent practice of honour killings of women in Punjab?”

#### **Data collection**

The open-ended interview guide was used as a tool of data collection. The collection of data from the participants was accomplished via face-to-face interviews. The data were acquired by exploring other relevant record from I.G. Police office, NGOs and various libraries. The written informed consent was taken from all the participants. Moreover, the privacy and the confidentiality of their responses had also been maintained through coding each participant with a unique ID.

#### **Procedure**

The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) was applied to analyze various semi-structured interviews taken from participants. The phenomenological outlook engaged a comprehensive assessment of the living experiences and personal version of a happening, rather than an effort to construct an objective

account (Smith, 2007). According to Conrad (1987), the researcher tries to have an 'insider's perspective'.

The collected data were handled by generating various categories, based on a range of themes; it was then used to represent the emerging shades of data. The collected data were transcribed and coded, followed by reducing that into substantive findings and then interpreting the data. Then content analysis was done for looking at meanings and identifying messages grounded in the text and for making inferences through a systematic way (Smith, 2007).

## **Results**

The IPA produced various themes, and provided a rich penetration into the subjective experiences and the shared perceptions of participants and their prevailing circumstances.

Politicians, who form the most important part of the law-making process often becomes a hindrance in the implementation of those laws. As one politician participating in the research, stated, "According to the Pakistan's legal system, violent practice like honour killing is a criminal offence; nevertheless, they often ignore the Article 2 of the Constitution of Pakistan which safeguards the basic rights of the citizens of Pakistan. The accepted malfunctioning of politicians to support such cases often leads to further reinforcing the honour crimes, as during the year 1998. Mr. Mushahid Hussain who was the then State's Information Minister purportedly referred to accusation of violent behaviour towards females as a feudal characteristic of the Pakistani culture and should not be taken as a component of any state strategy or a corollary of any legal regulation".

In the rural set up, the feudal head frequently colludes with the perpetrators of honour crimes, influencing police to pursue and align their decisions with him deliberately ignoring the poor woman directly involved in the criminal context. As a participant remarked, "The police force often colludes with the Wadera (the Feudal Lord) and purposely neglects the plight of the woman in the honour crime. Hence, people have a preference for the jirga/tribal councils in their local societies. Consequently, their intercession, disconcerting the rights to life protection and property of the population in Punjab are not uncommon and the politician's compliance or involvement in such practices has hither not gone unnoticed."

The patriarchal mind-set is also very much apparent in the Jirga system prevailing in the province of Punjab. It comprises of only men. One politician participant indicated, "In my opinion, the patriarchal mind-set exists in the feudal configuration and in multifaceted juridical system where Jirga comprises of only men; no women is member of any Jirga now. The state has limited power over rural/tribal public; thus, the state juridical structure is often ignored which highlights the importance of Jirga."

The Punjabi society is an honour based society. A false rumour is enough to form the basis of honour killing of woman. She has to prove her innocence. As a politician of the research stated, "I think, in Punjab, honour and shame are two



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faces of the same coin; the female's shame represents her status and collective eminence in the community, typically in the same mode as honour holds that for males. Even if it is rumored that a woman is sexually active, she becomes an easy target of honour killing. She has to prove her innocence. Through the separation by Purdah/Veil, men tend to dictate women who are close to her in the family. Females who are killed are liable to be blamed for tarnishing the honour of the family as well as community."

According to the Islamic religion, all humans get rewarded as to how they perform their roles. Honour killing is not religiously motivated. As one politician participating in the study stated, "Islam affirms all human to have their due share according to their deeds. Islam allows women to become an important component of public dealings instead of their restriction only in the domestic task. Honour killing is not a religious phenomenon; Islam is often used to justify the practice of honour killing. In fact, the patriarchal system exists from the pre-Islamic times. Honour killings are more rampant in the Islamic world but it persists in the non-Islamic societies too. The Islamic religion and Pakistan's Constitution oppose such an application of power which promotes inequality but the customary practice is still prevalent within the patriarchal society."

A female's virginity/chastity is considered as a mark of regard for the whole family in the Punjabi society. If it is lost, then whole of the family feels ashamed. One politician participant of the research stated, "A female's maidenhood is a sign of esteem for the entire family and a sexually righteous wife is always desirable in our Punjabi society. The extreme form of punishment for a woman losing virginity/chastity is killing her. In an arranged marriage, a woman is not even given the choice to decide about the most important decision of her life."

Female subordination generates domestic violence in Punjab. Honour killing is a form of domestic violence. As one politician participating in the research indicated, "Female subordination generates domestic violence in Punjab which is looked at as a usual behaviour to make women subservient to men. Honour killing is a form of domestic violence. Familial brutality often manifests in planned honour killings. Gender Based Violence is bounded towards female particularly on the ground that she is a female."

Mostly, politicians because of their feudal background are reluctant to make strong laws against the honour offences as they consider honour as a personal issue of the family. As one politician participating in the research indicated, "Politicians with the feudal outlook in the national and in the provincial parliaments are averse to make tough laws against the honour crimes as they support honour as a private issue. Although, a few female parliamentarians tried to present a bill about the dowry killings, but the outcome was rather unsuccessful. Nonetheless, the Hudood Ordinances, Qisas and Diyat law and other legal regulations were prejudiced and fundamental in reinforcing women leading to increased violence."

Women need education to significantly participate in the socio-cultural life. Due to the lack of proper education, they are unable to enhance their standard of

living. It causes the subjugation of women and in the long run, contributes towards the reinforcement of the practice of honour killing. As one politician participating in the research stated, “Due to the lack of education of woman, her logical understanding usually diminishes which develops subjugation and makes her more fiscally deprived. This makes utterly dependent on the male relatives and, hence, becomes one of the reasons of honour killings of women.”

**Table 1**

**Major Theme: The Law-Makers’ Opinion**

Sub-Theme : Politicians	Verbatim
<p><b>Politician-1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Politicians, who form the most important part of the law-making process often becomes a hindrance in the implementation of those laws</li> <li>❖ Their support to the accused family members in the honour killing cases leads to further increase in the honour crimes</li> <li>❖ They often ignore the Article 2 of the Constitution of Pakistan which safeguards the basic rights of the citizens of Pakistan</li> <li>❖ The accepted malfunctioning of politicians to support such cases often leads to further reinforcing the honour crimes</li> <li>❖ Lack of Education of woman diminish logical understanding</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Politician-2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ In the rural set up, mostly, the local politician who is usually the local feudal high up is frequently blamed for colluding with the perpetrators of the honour crimes</li> <li>❖ Although, Jirga has become obsolete and it often ultra vires the law, yet it still appears to be thriving owing to the political support that it grasps</li> <li>❖ It still carries out its own culturally translated principles and its likely collaborator is generally the local feudal lord who is often the local politician</li> <li>❖ Lack of Education of woman develops subjugation</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Politician-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The police force often colludes with the Wadera (the Feudal Lord) and purposely neglects the woman’s plight in the honour crimes</li> <li>❖ Hence, people have a preference for jirga/tribal councils in their local societies</li> <li>❖ Consequently, their intercession, disconcerting rights to life of the population in Punjab are common and politician’s involvement in such practices is mostly there</li> <li>❖ The patriarchal mind-set is also very much apparent in the jirga system in province of Punjab where Jirga comprises of only men</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Politician-4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mostly, politicians because of their feudal outlook are reluctant to make strong --- laws against honour offences as they consider honour as family’s personal issue</li> <li>❖ The Hudood Ordinances, Qisas and Diyat law and other legal regulations were prejudiced and fundamental in reinforcing women leading to increased violence</li> </ul>	

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❖ Lack of Education of woman makes her more fiscally deprived
<b>Politician-5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Protection of Women Act 2006, changed rape laws from Shariah to penal code</li><li>❖ But it gave the authority to the judge to decide for rape as a civil or Shariah trial</li><li>❖ Thus, power then rested with the judge to decide that vital direction of the case</li><li>❖ Offenders could be granted pardon by heir of the victim, thus open to compromise</li><li>❖ Actually, laws are present but there is no effective implementation as there is the Domestic violence Act, 2009, and the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, but there is no proper execution of laws by institutions</li><li>❖ Similarly, the Protection of Women against Violence Act, 2016, proposed the formation of 24-hour, Violence Against Women Centres</li><li>❖ This was formed to bring all the needed services under one roof, but as of yet, but not effectively it is operational, hence, a lot is still left to be desired</li><li>❖ A zero tolerance policy must prevail at the government level for gender violence</li></ul>

### **Discussions**

Pakistan follows the parliamentary system of government, where members of the parliament form an important part of the judicial process as they are responsible for making laws. Most of those law makers, i.e., politicians belong to the feudal class.

Power tends to be the fundamental idea as far as the occurrence of honour clashes is concerned. Most of the participants virtually observed that in the Punjabi culture, honour is used as the tool for control and command. The violent actions done for the sake of honour shall eventually be considered as steps for authority and domination (Michaud, 1975).

While males possess honour, females hold shame. The data showed that honour represents the societal control of its member and the practice of honour killings is predominantly linked with sentiment of shame of the male family member. Due to the sexual misconduct, rape or marriage held without the consent of the family of the female, the entire family has to bear that shame. In order to eliminate that disgrace, the male family member carries out what the culture and customs require (Nancy, Peter & Beker, 1999). The killings of that stained woman is well thought-out as a purification action for all members of the family unit (Jafri, 2008). Consequently, violence against women by the male family members is mostly taken as a private and family matter. There is a lot of pervasiveness of the domestic violence within the family structure which ultimately leads to the honour killings, whereas, there is an extensive resistance on the part of the judiciary to criminalize actions of bloodshed in the family. Jirgas/local councils has the benefit of being endorsed by customs, and can easily be comprehensible by the illiterate people and the judicial verdicts do not encourage assurance based on

worth or objectivity (Irfan, 2008). That usually gets supported by the local politician, too.

A careful look at the data showed that the police officers are usually observed as politician/feudal controlled agents that support and authenticate the issue of the honour crimes. In the existing power configuration, the police force is present only to implement the 'dominant ideology' of the feudal heads.

Patriarchy demands females to remain loyal to their better-halves by guarding their chastity. In the study, one of the participants referred to a case, as of in 2004, the then Provincial Minister for Livestock, Sind, Sardar Manzoor Panhwar, in a TV talk show justified a large majority of honour killings of women (Irfan, 2008), by stating that honour killings were part of the customary traditions of tribes. He further contended that those were centuries-old patriarchal customs and he would persist to guard them (Shah, 2008). Hence, it is difficult to find remorse from the accused persons in cases of honour crimes when a member of the National Assembly can overtly raise such public statements.

The presently imposed Constitution of Pakistan (1973) is the premier legal charter of the state. It forbids killings of any person and safeguards security for all individuals regardless of gender, under Articles-8, 9, 20, 24 and 25. The section-9 relates to the basic privilege of life and liberty as per the legal regulations. Hence, the Pakistan's Constitution prevents all types of dominance on any resident; it pledges equivalent standing to all citizens. Therefore, honour killings becomes a grave crime as regards the Articles of the Pakistan's Constitution.

According to the data collected, patriarchy is not acceptable under Islam. Instead, the socio-cultural forces provide enough ground for men to hold all power whereas females occupy a subservient position. This culture is mostly widespread in the Muslim countries. Nevertheless, this comes from a pre-Islamic period which is against the traditions of Quran and Hadaith. It's the paucity of the understanding of the teachings of Islam which primarily becomes a cause to misconstrue that into cultural justification regarding the issue of honour crimes against of women.

The data referred to some shortcomings in the Act concerning the Qisas & Diyat law (1979). The law catered to the punishment for honour related crimes and was also intended to stop the abuse of the Blasphemy Law and Hudood Ordinances, whereby, the extent of the investigative examination was elevated to the senior officer, the Superintendent of Police (SP), instead of the Station House Officer (SHO). The law also permitted the woman accused of adultery to be taken into custody with the permission of court, whereby, the close family relative (Wali) of the killingsed women could pardon the offenders. Therefore, "impunity" or exemption from punishment was the chief feature that significantly supported the honour offences; it lead to a major clash as "Qisas & Diyat laws" proffered a reason for a lenient treatment which further motivated offenders of honour killings.

Under President Musharaf, "Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006" was passed that did set apart sexual assault as that of infidelity by modifying "rape laws from religious laws to the penal code", thus

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there existed no requirement for a female victim so as to bring forward four eyewitnesses of the sexual assault. That Act permitted circumstantial and technical method to detect criminal evidence that can be utilized for the purpose of investigative procedures as well as the reduction of the prison term, as in case of adultery from twenty-five years to a maximum of five years' imprisonment along with the financial penalty worth ten thousands rupees.

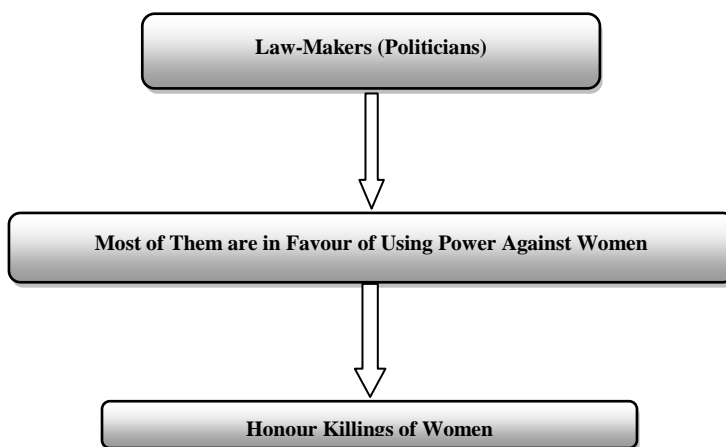
As regards the issue of domestic violence, being in the private domain, its gravity is highly compounded. Hence, the data suggested that for the development and empowerment of women, it was essential for the democratic government to adopt a zero tolerance policy for violence against females. The "Domestic violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2009" was passed after a period of three years. In 2010, another long-awaiting bill was also approved by the Parliament as the "Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010" while another bill concerning the menace of acid-throwing is still pending for approval. The Federal Shariah Court (FSC) asserted that fundamentals of the "Protection of Women Act, 2006" are incompatible with Islam as they contradict the Hudood Ordinances which further repressed the chance of a fair litigation for females.

The data showed that the 2016-Protection of Women against Violence Act was a significant legislation that enhanced the legal protection available to the women. The Act amended the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) according to which it became bailable for the accused female in case where bail was not allowed, except in a few criminal cases. Consequently, 1200 females got free from the jails all over Pakistan after that regulation by the President. But the data suggested that according to that Act, the judicial officer had to take the decision to follow the procedure of the trial of rape either as the civil proceeding or under the Shariah law.

The data showed that in Punjab, females have no open ingress to acquire education, to have means of securing the income to support the necessities of life, to partake in the vital family matters about their consent in making choices about selecting grooms, to have the possession of land and property, and to undertake the professional employment. The data showed that in Punjab, women are usually not properly educated. Hence, they remain incapable to elevate their lifestyle. This dearth of edification also produces deficiency of awareness that amplifies her subservience. It is also the root cause of her dependency on the male family members who can wield their power and finish her life if she taints the family honour.

The state frequently had to face difficult circumstances as how to respond to these honour killings. The data showed that the local government could sometimes face its political death, by losing the backing of its support base and, hence, it usually preferred not to respond. The human rights of woman and their deference as being sovereign with individual philosophical standards are free to opt to venture with such cultural limitations. These absurdities enhance the predicament of the honour crimes with tremendous challenges.

## **Relation amid power and law-makers**



The problem of honour killings is particularly challenging and aggravating in Pakistan. Thus, it can be said that most of the politicians are in favour of using power against women. As a type of familial violent behavior that gets reinforced, especially in Punjab, through the domination and control of the male family members, ethical principles of various tribes, illiterate minds, and unproductive legal systems as well as the uncommitted and indecisive outlook of law-makers. The study showed that the solution of the problem requires the change of mindset of such institutional functionaries which will help improve the condition of the distraught women of our society.

## **Limitations**

Difficult as it is, ideally this study should have included interviews of perpetrators of the crime. But, as honour killings had been stigmatized in the Pakistani society, it was difficult to approach the concerned parties as huge challenges involved with asking intimate questions. Bearing in mind the understandable caginess of the concerned parties, legal as well as ethical upshots, and access in such cases was extremely intricate. On being inquired, a large majority preferred to remain anonymous; hence, their identification was not revealed. The collected data were construed generally to a certain extent. A scarcity of research material in such honour cases made it even more complicated. On top of these complex situations, explosive and volatile political scenario in Pakistan, somewhat hampered what so ever likelihood there was of carrying out those interviews from the participants.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the study, the following recommendations surfaced: There is dire need to adopt apt *legislative procedures* together with punitive authorization to shield females from honour based violent behavior; Enhanced decentralized structures

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and female-centric policies should be introduced; A review of the existing criminal and civil laws should be carried out; Certain *preventive actions*, together with policies concerning education should be adopted that can be instrumental in prevailing over the discriminatory biases towards females; A certain percentage of female judges and female police officers should be appointed to decrease the communication gap between female victims and the government officers; *Protective mechanisms*, such as counseling, rehabilitatory efforts and sustainable work plans for females in danger of being harmed by the honour crimes should be strictly taken. There should be constant attempts on the part of the government and NGOs to exercise social pressure on the political and religious groups to resist such killings; A transformation in mind-set and outlook could break atrocious traditions and patriarchal social structure. A multi-pronged array of synchronized responses by numerous groups of actors is mandatory to achieve the feasible goals.

### **Conclusion**

By examining the part of the study of honour killing related to politicians, the end findings revealed that beside other institutional functionaries, most of the law-makers, i.e., politicians are in favour of using power against women. The findings also showed in the present study that the traditional mind-sets of the politicians press hard the female victims to lead towards extreme violence and discrimination. The deficient legal mechanism and the complex judicial procedures further reinforce the preeminence of politicians, as it gives way to the cultural legitimization rather than the legal one. The gaps left open by the official judicial system facilitate the amplification of the power configuration of jirgas. The existence of politicians who are mostly feudalists in the national and provincial legislative bodies significantly influence the effectual law making process about women-centric matters, as they constantly interfere with the constitution of viable policies and strategies during that process. Laws concerning the honour killings have been mostly prejudiced and unjust in nature. Instead of becoming a helping hand for the distressed females, politicians, mostly become an obstacle for the honour killing cases. The present study revealed that the violence embedded in our Punjabi society, predisposed by bigotry and bias, bestowed by historic traditions and feudalism gets reinforced through our socio-cultural institutions of law-makers, i.e., politicians which require women rather being disciplined and controlled.

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### **Biographical Note**

**Afshan Kiran Imtiaz** is Ph.D. Scholar at Department of Gender Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Farah Malik** is Director at Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

**Raana Malik** is Chairperson at Department of Gender Studies, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.