

## **Patriarchal Ideology: A Feminist Study in Pakistani Short Stories Fiction**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper intends to examine the position of women during the patriarchal structure to become strong enough for honorable survival. We apply Gerda Lerner's creation of Patriarchy (1989) in the present study. Patriarchy provokes Women voiceless through various assumptions and ideologies. The study has been conducted through textual analysis of Pakistani Short stories while focusing on different customs and events represented by Pakistani feminists to highlight the patriarchal structures. It shows that women have been treated as objects without caring for their desires. Their disrespect for patriarchal notions may deprive them of their existence as human beings. It also pinpoints that women are oppressed, and subjugated, through patriarchal structures. We discussed female characters in the Pakistani Short story writers' works Shahrazad's Golden Leopard and Masroor's The Monkey Wound. Any struggle to get liberation from oppression results in sexist violence.*

**Keywords:** Oppression, Patriarchal, Feminism, Subjugation, Inferior

### **Introduction**

Feminism is a movement that began in the 1960s, many women writer challenges their work in representation of literature, belief, past, nation, politics, etc. countering the male voice with the female one. It's a reaction against the male-dominated literary studies that neglected the literature developed by the women writers. Women have no right to represent their works therefore they publish their work with a male pen name (Shahzad, 2017-18; p.23).

In literary works, women are considered as imaging objects, because women show their interest in the talk. Women have two sides, On one side women are craving whose charms can drive men crazy. On the other side, they are considered weak and weakness is used as a lame excuse by bad men to abuse their beauty (Sugihastuti, 2010; Akmaliyah 2019).

Angelou's seventh autobiographical book, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, was released in 1969. The memoir details her life from the age of three to sixteen, detailing a turbulent and occasionally tragic childhood that includes rape bigotry. In her autobiography, she wrote about the difficulties of being a Black author and poet. She frequently thought that because of the color of her skin, people were not listening to what she had to say. She explained all the racist oppression and freedom against captivity are highlighted in it (Angelou, 1969).

Dickinson emphasized the importance of feminism as an intellectual and political commitment to women. Feminism is the belief in social, economic, political, and judicial inequalities for specific rules. Men and women are treated differently in environments that support traditional culture, with men generally receiving preferential treatment (Dickinson, 2003; p.114).

According to Mambrol writing is also organized by a "sexual opposition," one that favored men and confined writing to his laws. While male authors can write whatever they want, this is not the case for female writers. To express their experiences, women often speak like men and tales to the globe. Consequently, individuals have very little flexibility because of writing. "Therefore, a woman's writing is required, one that will be a flow of excessive, open, never-ending, and luminous torrents, restrictive reasoning or control (Mambrol, 2017).

In My Feudal Lord by Durrani is a feminist autobiographical novel that sparked debate when it was released in 1991. Additionally, Pakistan and Egypt rejected, ridiculed, and outlawed this novel. She wrote some graphic details and upsetting truths regarding women's dilemmas that were largely stigmatized before and during the 1990s Muslim cultures. Her father abandoned her once the book was released. This propensity toward Women's authors' tales can be criticized, rejected, and even outlawed. Through Nasreen's words, clarified she that those who are "Insecure misogynists" who criticize "This male insecurity or sexism is merely a symptom of the sickness known as patriarchy. The symptoms will persist until this disease is eradicated in society (Nasreen, 2017).

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The present study takes up the writing of female Pakistani writers, they elaborated on the issues of women under the patriarchal social setup. The concept of Patriarchy" is the center of the study which is taken from the book "Creation of Patriarchy "by Lerner and also discusses the concepts of subjugation, male dominance, and oppression are also highlighted in the Pakistani short stories fiction.

In Pakistan, the majority of people believe that feminism is solely about hating males, which is a misperception of the term. The female authors who have written about a variety of topics on women's issues are always trying to neglect their voice and therefore women remain silent for a century years under a patriarchal society.

### **Literature Review**

Female characters in feminist fiction often struggle with a patriarchal and typically masculinist culture as a result of their search for autonomy. The unconventional female characters in these books have drawn sarcastic criticism, dismissal, and even mockery (Rollyson, Carl, 2010). According to Lerner male authority as we know it now was developed over around 2500 years, from roughly 3100 BC to 600 BC, according to Lerner (1989). Through that time, patriarchy developed as a process rather than as a single event. In her opening paragraph, Gerda Lerner (1989) emphasizes the part that women have historically played in the struggle for equality and the eradication of patriarchy. She asserted that patriarchy came before the emergence of class society and private property (Lerner, 1989).

The terms patriarchy and subordination are defined by different feminist writers. According to Mitchell, the familial structure in which men trade with women is referred to as patriarchy (Mitchell, 1990, p.24).

Patriarchy is defined as the social structures and behaviors known as patriarchy are those in which men consistently hold a dominant position and take advantage of women. (Walby, 1990, p.20) Patriarchy is the social relationship that exists between men and women, both have a material base and which, though hierarchal establish independence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women (Jagger & Rosenberg, 1984).

Subordination is defined by various feminist writers. It implies that another item is less important than the other thing (Cobuild, 2010).

According to the Advanced Learner Dictionary, Subordination describes when someone in a group or organization has less authority or power than someone else (Hornby, 2003).

For thousands of years, women faced a patriarchal setup in which women were considered meaningless creatures and suppressed their rights. Even feminist women have no right to express emotion, or feelings in their writing. The women always try to obey males and the underprivileged in their rights. They spend an exhausting life in which no freedom is given to the female gender. Therefore women express their issues best in their writing as compared to male writers because they suffer from these patriarchal norms. As in these Pakistani short stories, writers explained the issues and suffering of women in a patriarchal setup. According to the mentality of men, they think that they consider that they are superior creatures and women are inferior. This kind of injustice is common on the women's side and they remain silent due to society. Therefore they remain voiceless for their right and lower their femininity.

Feminism is a political movement, an ethical philosophy, and a social theory that advocates for the democratic rights of women as individuals. As a political act, it seeks to bring about change in the world rather than just understanding it (Fetterley, 1978).

According to Miller, from the historical perspectives of female feminist writers, men dominate society. In his description of the power, a man has to rape women, Brown Miller shows how this has influenced masculine dominance over women and male supremacy. (Brown Miller, 1989) Various writers discussed *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen from the viewpoint of feminism. In this study, it was determined that women's roles in the early nineteenth century were always seen as weak and devoid of rights to education, marriage, and property. Many distinct civilizations' social, legal, political, and economic structures all exhibit patriarchal characteristics. The study demonstrated how patriarchal culture is accepted in society. The parents desire for their daughter to wed a wealthy man. Elizabeth, the main character, was also discussed by the researcher. She demonstrates that she is capable of reversing her parents' desires, finding them again, and finding love on her own (Suaidi, Rusfi, & Wilujeng, 2010).

Critic Davis pointed out, that by focusing on the image of the housewife, they mistakenly assumed that the normative femininity of white and/or middle-class women in the second half of the 20th century represented the entirety of the female experience. She claims that Apartheid South Africa's policies aimed at the "deliberate dissolution of [black] family life" prove that the services provided by women at home are not a necessary component of wage labor under capitalism and that "domestic life" could actually "be dispensed with by the South Afro-can version of capitalism (Davis, 1981).

Feminism criticism is a particular type of political discourse that focuses on the fight against sexism and patriarchy rather than just addressing issues of gender in literature (Auerbach, 1953). According to the critic, men are typically viewed as competent, forceful, autonomous, masterful, and goal-oriented in patriarchal societal structures (Eisenclaus, 2013).

Feminist writers' exclusion from the traditional literary canon, illustrates how their works have influenced the body of literature already in existence. Writers have also taken a special interest in identifying themes that have been "sensitive" for women, such as the problem of household and public oppression, rape, silence, etc.

### **Objective of the Study**

This study focuses on the patriarchal setup utilized in Pakistani short stories writer fiction, The Shahrazad, The Golden Leopard, and The Monkey Wound to highlight the resistance women displayed to the domination and possessiveness of men who view them as their possessions. To examine how Pakistani feminist writers exposed the tremendous oppression that drives women to flee harsh realities and challenge society's patriarchal culture.

### **Research Questions**

This study demonstrates how feminist writers represented the idea of patriarchal repression. The focus of the current study is as

How do feminist authors depict the struggles of real women in Pakistani short stories set in a severe patriarchal culture?

How do men oppress women in patriarchal culture as exemplified by the Pakistani Short stories?

### **Research Methodology**

This study is an explanation of ideas given by the Pakistani short story writer. So this study involves the writers' perspectives that they conveyed in three short stories i.e. "Shahrazad. The Golden Leopard 'The Monkey Wound' ". An analysis of the quality of this text is made by Lerner's work in her book "Creation of Patriarchy", published in 1989. We explore the representation of women, their suffering, and brutality all are shown under the dominant power known as men. Textual analysis has been used for collecting and analyzing data from the text. This study analyzes three short stories by Pakistani writers. Being a qualitative study, the data holds words and sentences. The present study depends on the intensive reading of the text to find the shreds of data. Therefore, no other method is more accurate for the present study than textual analysis.

### **Theoretical Framework**

We chose three different short stories text by applying knowledge from feminism to uncover the issues of the status of women in patriarchal structures and to evaluate the given question. We used Lerner's book's framework, "The Creation of Patriarchy." Lerner suggests that.

Patriarchy is defined as the extension of male domination over women in society at large and the outward manifestation of male dominance over women and children in the household. "Men have power in all societal institutions, and women are deprived of this power. It does not, however, imply that women are completely devoid of rights, power, and resources. (Lerner, 1989:p.239) Similar "theories" were put out by Aristotle in this regard, who said that men are active and women are quiet. He saw women as "mutilated males," or people without a soul. According to him, a woman's inferiority in terms of biology extends to her capacities, capacity for reasoning, and ultimately, aptitude for decision-making. Man is born to dominate, and woman is born to be subject because man is superior to woman. He declared, "A man's courage is exhibited in commanding a woman to comply" (Lerner 1989:8-11).

Therefore, in this study, we adopt the Lerner perspectives of the feminist writer i.e. Lerner's creation of patriarchy is the main concern and other writers advance their voices against the patriarchal concept of women. In these three stories, the feminist writers faced a lot of problems due to the male-dominated society. They are considered inferior, subordinate, and powerless. They

became silent and tolerated the brutality of males both physically and mentally. So, we employed the Lerner work "Creation of patriarchy " as the framework of the study.

**Discussion and findings**

Shamsie is a Pakistani feminist author, journalist, editor, columnist, and bibliographer. She is a renowned author who emphasizes the position of women in Pakistani society. She has authored several tales that focus on the viewpoint of women to influence readers today. The Story of Shahrazad's Golden Leopard depicts male dominance as in the Lerner theory of the creation of Patriarchy males always try to suppress the women in the power structure.

The patriarchal society in which we currently reside is one in which men dominate all spheres of life. We occasionally hear a lot of tales in which women are being exploited. The most essential component of our society is women. The story of "Shahrazad's Golden Leopard" frequently brings up the subject of feminism. The narrative is expertly woven together by Shamsie's. If we went on a journey through it, we could readily grasp the supremacy of men, and the Shahrazad figure is portrayed as a female who has been repressed.

The main character, Shahrazad, suffers from gender prejudice. She is entirely disregarded by her family and in comparison to her brother. It was thought of her mother as the adoptive child. She constantly tried to win her over, but she was unsuccessful. Even Malcolm Carter's birthday party, which her mother forced her to go to, was not something she wanted to do, therefore she was unable to fulfill her desires. Her mother constantly compares her to her brother, which makes her a much-hated figure in the short stories. As in the few phrases of the short story, Even though Shah had torn Mummy, Shah Rukh apart, one must love her first (p.22).

Even if Shah Rukh had acted inappropriately, no one would have spoken up because he embodies male supremacy and constantly tries to stifle Shahrazad's persona because her originality is being restricted. As a result, gender discrimination occurs in Shahrazad's character because of the patriarchal system she has to deal with, where women are constantly considered inferior to men. As in the few lines, Shahrazad was raised by other slave women during colonial times, the author characterizes Shahrazad's liberal behavior in a few lines of Shamsie's account, along with the fat shaming, as being overlooked by her mother (p.24).

The above sentences illustrate that in the colonized period, women became a slave as in Shamsie's story because they are inferior creatures and have no right to speak in the patriarchal setup. The purpose of a slave woman is to obey the order and become a voiceless creature. As in the short story, Shahrazad portrays the slave woman's character and how she manages the home and looks after the children. Therefore, women are trying to suppress in the male-dominated society.

We also analyze another Pakistani Short story written by Masroor. She is the Pakistani prominent Pakistani feminist writer. She has raised the social, political, legal, and economic rights of women to be equal to those of men. As in the short story, The Monkey Wound the Masroor represents the suffering of Women in the male dominant society. According to Lerner creation of Patriarchy is applied as the framework of the study. In this theory, the male is associated with the active role, and the female role is considered passive because they don't have the power structure (Lerner 1989:8-11).

The writer describes the suffering of women. How do women spend their lives in a male-dominated society? At the beginning of the story, the female character describes her suffering in the following lines.

She was suffering from a fever and intense heat. Every fiber of her existence was tingling, and she would experience what seemed like the marrow melting from her bones.  
..... (p.92).

She is suffering from a fever and cough, and her body is heated like a hot sun. Even the fever melted her bones and weak like Jharu. The feminist author compared her appearance to the word "straw," which in Urdu means "jharu." She compares herself to a monkey because of her hardship in life, which has made her weak. The description of the monkeys' attacks on her reflected the male-dominant social order. This assault is a metaphor for how males criticize and limit women. The prohibition represents patriarchal social norms, which dictate that women must always remain within the confines of the home and adhere to the rigorous rules of the social hierarchy dominated by men.  
..... (p.93).

Her family belongs to the patriarchal setup in which women have no rights and always try to suppress them both physically and mentally as in the story. All the characters in the story are nameless.

The patriarchal society also highlighted the issues of marriage in society. If a girl is not married considered a burden on the parent as in the story *The Monkey Wound*. As in the following sentences

All of a sudden, the weight of still being unmarried would overwhelm him..... (p.93). the female character is compared to the other girls of her age, they have been married for years and had four and five children. As in the Lerner theory of Patriarchy (1989), the biological difference between and female is that the purpose of women is to give birth the children and look after the home in a patriarchal society. The Masroors the issues of marriage that girls face a lot and consider a burden. In the patriarchal society, the women are in both parent's and husband's houses even though everyone tried to depict the restriction. Women are always taken as private property under the patriarchal setup. All these norms were created by the male-dominated society and suppressed women for a century years.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Both Pakistani short story writers promote the idea that women should suffer every patriarchal horror in silence and should not question societal norms for fear of falling short of expectations. They seek salvation while obeying their men. The largest obstacle that women face is a restriction in a male-dominated society. Like feminists, they encourage them to speak out against the constraints and prejudice imposed on them since otherwise, they would continue to submit to patriarchy.

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