

**GENDER DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PAKISTANI WOMEN IN “BOL”; A STUDY OF CLASH BETWEEN CULTURE AND RELIGION.**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This paper aims to study the issue of gender discrimination against Pakistani women presented in a film Bol directed by Mansoor. Feminist theory is used as major theoretical framework for the present research. The discourse is analyzed through qualitative method and descriptive analysis. Kristeva’s feministic assumptions regarding ‘Gender Discrimination’ are implied in theoretical background. Her notion of abjection as an explanation for oppression and discrimination helps to shed light on the oppression and subordination of women and man chauvinism which is strictly prohibited in Islam. Moreover this paper will discuss about the psychological and sexual violence.*

**KEYWORDS:** Islam, feminism, discrimination, violence, oppression.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The expression "feminism", adopted from the French word *féminisme* in the nineteenth century, either as a therapeutic term to portray the feminization of a male body, or to depict ladies with masculine qualities. Yet, the definition developed like the one by Haart (1985) stating that feminism reforms movement going for the social, instructive and political uniformity of ladies and men, which emerged amid the late eighteenth century. Therefore, feminism takes side of women who exploited, ignored and discriminated. Feminism means talk about oppression, hegemony, unfair and violence.

In the movie Bol, people can find various sorts of gender discrimination that how the Pakistani women fight against it so that in this paper, the researcher is interested in performing feminism analysis on gender discrimination against Pakistani women in *Bol*. And what types of women’s violence are presented in the movie. Where Islam does not allow discriminating a woman and gives equal rights to her. Paper reveals male domination over female, women remain bound within male-constructed boundaries of piety and honour whereas men hold the ultimate deciding power.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Encyclopedia of Feminist Literature, feminism is “A doctrine advocating social and political rights for women equal to those of men” (Snowdgrass, 2006: 656). The dictionary of literary terms defines, “Feminism is an attempt to describe and interpret women’s experiences as depicted in various kinds of literature. It questions the long standing, dominant,

male interpretation in literature” (Cudden, 1998:7). Beauvoir (1949) claims that man has fabricated and constructed woman as „The Other“; as the one who is not oneself. Whatever characterizes men, in their own view indeed, women are defined as the opposite. “If men are active, women must be passive, if men represent good, then women must represent evil. In other words, all the negative characteristics of humanity as men perceive them are projected onto women”. According to Barkty (1990: 63), “Ladies' persecution under male mastery not just comprises of exclusively in denying ladies of political and legitimate rights additionally reaches out into the structure of our society and the substance of our culture and penetrates our consciousness”. In a nutshell, feminism is the conviction that society is prejudicial towards women, and it deprives them of individual choice, political authority, economic prospects and intellectual power-show in a very conscious and systematic manner. Mishra (2006) says about feminism, “The notion of being a woman should not be guided by the dictates of the patriarchal society”. Concerning language and its symbolic implications and meanings, Shree (2002) mentions, “It is difficult for women to express their feelings in a language which is chiefly made by men to express their”. Shree says, “This behavior is not limited to Pakistan only. Domestic violence is probably one of the worst cultural universals”.

In 2013 Baseer, Alvi and Zafran have written a paper applying Kristeva’s perspective of semiotic and symbolic language to explore Ibsen’s *The Doll’s House*. The paper concludes that “patriarchy is the cause of the ideas of man’s ascendancy and woman’s relegation on the basis of symbolic concepts associated with male-dominated linguistic code, and not on the basis of semiotic use of language” (Baseer, Alvi&Zafran, 2013:

Belas (2002) in *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Quran* contends that, when perused in full context, this verse alerts men to not treat their wives as sexual items when and how they please and, "if men read this Ayat [verse] as a permit to assault their wives or to abuse them, it might be on the grounds that they as of now are abusing their wives and are looking for religious defenses for their transgressions".

## **METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:**

Using the theory of feminism, Gender issues are completely broke down under Kristeva's feministic viewpoint. Julia Kristeva born on 24 June 1941. She is a Bulgarian-French philosopher, sociologist, psychoanalyst, literary critic and feminist. Kristeva points out that patriarchy makes the blueprints of Men's outstanding qualities and Women's otherliness on the premise of typical or social observation and not the characteristic ones. While both are indivisible, connected and free. Restraint or oppression of one and strength and control of different reasons danger to the smooth and actually running of social request. Element of patriarchy has caused a total disregard for women in the Pakistani society. The trend of male strength turns into a variable to create gender discrimination. Women are supposed inferior beings to be "controlled" by men for the better or, for the more regrettable. They can't raise their voice against the discrimination by men, i.e. fathers, brothers and, after marriage, husbands and their male relatives, who are in control of their physical being. In this way, when a lady's behaviour is seen to raise finger on the patriarchal culture, her body is punished.

Here focus is on four aspects of violence that are triggered by gender discrimination. Those aspects are psychological, physical, sexual, and economic. In general, people assume that violence is only physical abuse or anything that might hurt human’s body. However violence

has developed its category and definition into some more specific classification. A research on gender discrimination, therefore, has significant importance to the policy makers, social workers, even for the politicians, in the present national and international context.

## ANALYSIS

No country can triumph the stature of exaltation unless their women are side by side with males and it is crime against humanity that our ladies are quiet down with in the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no authorization anywhere for the awful condition in which our ladies need to live. BOL (speak up) is about social issues of Pakistani ladies instead of their confusion of the religion. There is a thin line between these two things and here light is thrown on how woman is socially a victim of discrimination.

### Psychological Violence

Psychological violence is an action or set of actions that directly impairs the victim's psychological integrity. Information about some of the infractions included in this category:

Intimidation, Harassment, Threats.

a) Intimidation; Someone is intimidating you if they use violence or threats to compel you to do something you are not lawfully obliged to do, or to keep you from doing something you have the privilege to do. For example: steadily following you, separating you of things you utilize, and constantly viewing your home or work environment. Zainab and her sisters were deprived of education while they desired. They were not allowed to watch TV to kill their time.

b) Harassment; Harassment is frequently connected with intimidation. It may take different structures: making or having another person make rehashed telephone calls to irritate you, tailing you over and over, more than once reaching you either straightforwardly or by indirectly, viewing a spot you frequently spend time, Zainab and her sisters were strictly watched for their day to day life. And her father behaved to her in a threatening manner.

c) Threats; Threats are words or activities by which somebody communicates, or has another person express for them, a longing to hurt you. It may be a threat: to kill a person or animal, to injure a person or an animal, to damage property, etc. The aggressor Molvi sb does not always truly intend to carry out the threat. Whether or not the threat is carried out, the victim as Zainab may feel distressed, stressed and fearful. Molvi sb threatens to his family that he will kill them all if anyone of them tries to go against him. When Zainab asks him for the permission of doing a job, he threatens to kill her. And all the girls are strictly watched in the home.

### Physical Violence

Physical Violence is the planned utilization of physical power with the potential for bringing on damage. Physical roughness incorporates, however is not restricted to: scratching or biting, pushing, tossing, getting, stifling, shaking, hair-pulling, slapping, punching or hitting, utilization of a weapon, utilization of limitations or one's body, size, or quality against someone else. Physical violence additionally incorporates urging other individuals to do any of these things. Physical violence is a genuine issue of societies where people are illiterate in all over the world. Zainab tries to converse with his father that he should plan his family when he starts beating his daughter for favouring this sin. He slaps on her face and then tries to kill her. Zainab says that you are a man when you become speechless when in another scene Zainab was talking about a cricket match, her father throws shoes on her cause he was disturbed with her discussion

on praying to God. In Almost all the scenes between Zainab and her father, she was slapped, pushed, shackled and hit by her father because he was unable to answer her questions.

### **Sexual Violence**

Sexual savagery is divided into three classifications: 1) utilization of physical power to urge an individual to participate in a sexual demonstration without wanting to, whether the demonstration is finished; 2) attempted or finished sex act including an individual who is not able to comprehend the nature or state of the act. Or a person is unable to convey unwillingness to take part in the sexual contact, e.g., as a result of sickness, incapacity, or the impact of liquor or different medications, or on account of intimidation or weight; and damaging sexual contact" (CDC, 2007). Sexual violence or ambush is any undesirable demonstration of a sexual nature. It can incorporate anything from exhibitionism and introduction to erotica, to unwanted sexual touching, to assault, to harming or jeopardizing the life of the exploited person. It is likewise viewed as sexual misuse to urge or weight somebody to participate in sexual movement or attempt to take part in sexual action with somebody who is not in his senses. Molvi sb's daughters were young and marriageable, while he remained busy in sexual activities with his wife in order to have a son who could support Molvi sb in his old age. He has no care of his wife's health. She is having a miserable life due to this unwanted sexual touching, as a result of this continuous marital rape, she remains ill. She was unable to participate in other activities of her house. Her husband does not believe on family planning, rather he considers it Haram (forbidden).

### **Economic Violence**

Economic brutality experienced included restricted access to supports and credit; controlling access to health care (Molvi sahib's wife bears the labour pain in house), vocation, training, including rural assets; barring from money related choice making; and oppressive customary laws on legacy, property rights, and use of communal land. At work ladies experienced accepting unequal compensation for work done equivalent in quality to the men's, were exhausted and came up short on, and utilized for unpaid work outside the contractual understanding. At home, some were barred from working by partners; while other men completely deserted family maintenance to the ladies. Economic abuse may proceed with even after the lady has left the harsh relationship. There is requirement for further large scale observation on financial violence to ladies. There was nobody in the house who could support the family financially except Molvi sb. Zainab tries to convince that other members will also have to work for the betterment of the family. But no one listens to her. Because according to Molvi sb only men can do jobs to support the family. Molvi sb does not take the girls equal to the boys. He does not allow them to go outside the home. Moreover, the skewed view of father that a daughter has no part to play in the family and she can not be a 'provider' nor a 'protector' bring about discrimination and viciousness

### **CONCLUSION**

Bol is a delineation of social oppression against women. This film illustrated the marginalized constitution against women. A nation that came into being with the name of Islam, it is saddening to see that religious and Qura'anic standards are twisted and avoided particularly regarding to status of women. The social evils against which Prophet Muhammad fought in his life entirely, are profound established in the Pakistani society. The practice of supporting viciousness and biasness for the sake of Islam needs to be obstructed. The lead character

(father) is not portraying a "Muslim father", actually he is depicting an uneducated and socially debilitated individual who can be found in any religion or society. In the last decades, some progress has been made towards the gender issue. For example, education rate among the ladies is increasing, and women participation in labour force higher than ever before. Despite of impressive advancement in reducing gender discrimination there still exists biasness against women for example, ladies have less access than men to economic opportunities and resources.

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