



Exploring the Negative Impact of Traditional Rituals on Women of Sindh Regarding Shirley Jackson's Short Story "The Lottery"

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Abstract

Sindh is a multilingual and multicultural region in which a large number of populations from different religions, castes, and languages have also settled since an ancient era. Sindh is a rich province fraught with various huge cultures from distinct clans. Sindhi people are amiable and best known for their hospitality. On the other side, Sindhi society presents drawbacks to the victimization of women through their tradition. The paper aims to analyze the negative impact of tradition through which women are victimized in Sindh by giving reference of an American short story "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson. This story presented certain traditional factors which are annually practiced, through which women are victimized. The research aims to relate those traditional factors to the Sindhi tradition. In the Lottery women's voices are suppressed and they do not protest against them in the patriarchal society. Sindh also presents some traditional factors in which women are suppressed, and deprived of their basic rights. Tradition can be harmful and it can deteriorate someone's life. Some regions particularly settled in rural areas of Sindh treated women as others and did not allow them to participate in any decision-making at home. Women are treated on a minority level. They are neglected and worst represented in patriarchal society due to tradition they are presented with a low status and less respectful in human society. These all occur through tradition because in rural areas women are forced to follow the limitation which is imposed by their ancestors. In addition, women are butchered owing to honour matter in the society. This study uses the method of close reading as a research tool.

Keywords: *Women, Victimization, Tradition, the Lottery. Qualitative*

Introduction

Following traditions without thinking can make us do things that don't really make sense. Traditions can be good because they help us to connect and give our lives meaning. This above quote spontaneously illustrates that blindly adhering traditional rituals leads to enhance issues. Somehow, traditions are beneficial for connection towards our moral and ethical values of the ancient era. As well as believe that traditional rituals are the root cause of women's issues. People of Sindh used to follow tradition according to their ancestor's guidance. Tradition created a gender distinction in various areas of Sindh, where women were treated on a minority level. They have been intentionally deprived of their social rights. Sindh is known as the heart of Pakistan located in the southeastern region of the country. Although it concerned as the second largest populous province of the country, the various clans, communities, and castes have been settled since an ancient era. They habitually practised and followed ancestors, customs, laws, traditions and social values in the society. Sindhi people are very friendly and hospitable. The current will explore women's victimization due to traditional rituals by giving the reference of Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery". The Lottery has been written by Shirley Jackson. Jackson was an American author primarily known for horror and mystery works. Women's victimization from tradition can be seen in "The Lottery". It could be a powerful instrument or lens through which we can find similar practices in Sindh. The story represents the dark side of blind adherence to tradition. The lottery is annually conducted every year in which selected participants are stoned to death. Similarly, in Sindh particularly in rural areas various traditional factors are practiced. Those practices arise as the result of women's victimization. In addition, society is based on a feudal viewpoint that has deprived women of their rights, making them voiceless in society. Women are victimized due to tradition and they have been hindered from rights.

Women are neglected in every field of social life due to male dominancy and kept away from their fundamental rights for instance education, freedom of decision and so on. In various rural areas of Sindh, Pakistan women face significant barriers. They are not allowed to get an education due to traditional rituals and customs. One of the reasons that most of the families believe that women's primary role is to stay at home and help with household chores. As well as they are treated as the baby maker machine. Additionally, the other traditional factor that is largely practised is "Watta, Satta" marriages. This factor is largely practiced in various areas of Sindh in which a brother and sister are married with another pair of siblings. In this trade marriages, if there is no exchange match available at the time, pregnant women in the family promise to give a child when it is born. This tradition is not only practiced by the lower in order to cut off dowry but also it is practiced by the middle class. Then the factor that is considered as the brutal factor is "Karo, Kari" honor killing" blackened men and blackened women. Karo Kari is ostensibly practiced to avenge the family honor, when a woman violates traditional customs and norms. It is Practiced when men and women have an illicit relationship, then both men and women kill women's families in order to maintain their reputation in society.

Conclusively, blind faith on tradition can be a harmful as it would lead on the verge of destruction. Women in society are represented as inferior and baby-maker machines due to tradition. They have been ignored and considered as the object of need. Traditionally women have been hindered from their fundamental rights such as education, freedom of decision-making, and moral values.

Research Objectives

- To find out the certain elements of tradition that contribute to women's victimization.
- To closely analyze the women victimization in “The Lottery by Shirley Jackson.
- To identify the role of women in Sindhi culture, and highlight some traditional factors through which women are victimized.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of tradition in women's victimization?
2. How does parental illiteracy contribute towards women's victimization?
3. What is the state of existence and key areas of domestic violence; identify the root causes of domestic violence towards women.

Theoretical Framework

The term subaltern was described by Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci examined this term in a more Marxist context. This term showcases many meanings and shapes such as history, political scenario, and so on. This theory was popularized by Gayatri Chakarvardi Spivak through her essay “Can Subalterns Speak”. Although the essay was written during the post colonial era, it represents the women subjugation and highlights the situation of subaltern women. In her essay lays a great stress on struggled of subaltern women who have been ignored in subaltern discourses. This theory represents the women as inferior in the society. As well as they have been deprived of their social rights. “The Lottery (1948)” was written by female American author Shirley Jackson (1916-1965). The story represents the consequences of blind adherence to tradition. In the story selected victim women are forced to obey the tradition with or without her will. Throughout the story writer showcases a woman's victimization traditionally implemented by her ancestors. Same way in sindh women have been marginalized throughout the ages (Zaib, 2017). Women are kept away from men stream. They have lost their voices represented as inferior and dispossessed. They are suppressed, psychologically hindered, socially and culturally voiceless, economically weak, politically powerless and so intentionally marginalized. Women are not solely marginalized but hindered by some factors. Such as in some rural areas of Sindh, they are not allowed to get an education and participate in other social practices. They are forced to live under the four walls of their home like prisoners. They are suppressed from raising their voices because according to their tradition, women who step against their limitations are not considered good women.

Literature Review

In order to investigate the dark side of tradition in which women are victimized. This research seeks to examine women's victimization through tradition in Sindh by giving reference to Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery”. Lottery presents women's weakness and their victimization through tradition. The same practices can be seen in Sindh, Pakistan.

Dr. Azeem Z.M alKhamaiseh (2019) argues that the short story “The Lottery” represents the male dominancy supported by villagers adhering blindly adhering the tradition. This factor contributes much to marginalization of women and representing them as inferior and weak creators. Throughout the story, thoughtless adherence to the tradition represents an example of violence against women.

Selma Haque highlights the gender inequality in “The Lottery”. She argues that the story portrays the miserable reality of women who do not uphold their social rights. Women are victimized in a patriarchal society. Further, she says that in the story women cannot use their mouthpiece and do not use language to protest against men.

The research follows the theory of “Subaltern”. The term Subaltern was initially given by Italian Marxist and political activist Antonio Gramsci in his book “Prison Notebook (1930)”. Gramsci presented this term in Marxian to classify the economic inferiority of the Italian “Proletariat” working under the Fascist party, elite Benito Mussolini and his followers (Zaib, 2015). Later Gayatri Spivak popularized this theory through her essay (Can Subaltern Speaks). It clearly explains the situation of subaltern women. In her essay a great stresses on the struggle of subaltern women who have been ignored in subaltern discourse. So many scholars from Pakistan used this theory of Subaltern from different perspectives.

Sahab Zeb, et al (2019) analyses two contemporary stories regarding women both fictional and real stories, by providing the chronological background of Sindh. They argue that women are considered objects of sexual need who are willingly or unwillingly subjugated in the male-dominated society. Women have been marginalized for ages in the patriarchal society. (Salim Rind, et al. 2022) analyses the novel Home Fire by Kamila Shamsi (2017) to examine the marginalized and subordinated group of people through the Spivak concept of “Subaltern”. They argue that Subalterns are ignored at different levels such as social, cultural, political, and religious. Subalterns are represented differently like inferior, uncivilized, and lower rank people.

Mashori (2015) examines human inequality in Qaizra Shehraz’s short story Zamindar’s Wife through a subaltern. Through the paper, the researcher seeks to examine the Zamindar’s domination versus villager villager’s subordination, zamindar is represented as a dominant or elite group possessing all powers, contrary to villagers including men, women, and children represented as the lower class.

Zareer Qadeer, et al (2021) argues that Sindhi society represents the history on account of women's victimization in the form of tradition, socio-cultural religiosity and the patriarchal nature of the society. Sindh is a largely rural-based populated area and a feudal mindset in which women are victimized. Women's victimization created a low status and respect of women in the male dominant society.

Dr Nadeem et al (2011) argue regarding domestic violence against women in Sindh, Pakistan thorough investigation. Finds out that women in Sindh, Pakistan encounter multiple forms of violence mostly domestic violence. Women are deprived from their basic rights and the biggest challenge they are facing through tradition is early marriages, watta satta marriages,

mostly in the rural areas of Sindh women are married at an early age. Further they revealed that in rural areas of Sindh women are less confident and they are controlled by their husband.

Saddique Bhabhro et al (2013) argue that in rural areas of Sindh, women are victimized in the form of (Karo, Kari) murder of honor. It is ostensibly practiced to avenge the family's reputation if a woman violates any traditional factor. Further, they argue that those murders not solely occurred out of custom and tradition, but also feudal culture, male dominant social structure.

Naheed Abrar, et al (2010) argues that women in Pakistan are surviving with various problems one of them is violence. Women are struggling with violence in Pakistan such as discrimination, and gender inequality in almost every aspect of life. They survive in a strict family, religious, and tribal customs. They are supposed as helpless with respect as being a victim.

Waheed Abassi et al (2012) investigate the female victim of murder in Sindh, Pakistan. Argues that women have been mostly killed in Sindh through culture or the patriarchal nature of the society. Women belonging to a poor sanction of society, married or teenage girls become victims of violence like murder in Sindh. Women's victimization leaves a larger impact directly on the children and indirectly on society. Women victimization plays a greater role in orphanages of children who in most cases become ignored and have psychological problems like trauma. Women are victimized in so many contexts; their social rights are ignored and neglected. Women in Sindh face discrimination and victimization on their social cultural and economic basis.

Methodology

It is qualitative research following a qualitative approach. In this current work, close reading used for the sake of getting information. A careful interpretation of the text is known as close reading. In addition, the study investigates that how women are victimized due to traditional rituals by giving reference of Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" and intended apply the theory of subaltern by Gayatri Chakarvardi Spaivak. As well as explore women's suppression in a patriarchal society especially in Sindh.

Textual Analysis

The Lottery" was written by Shirley Jackson, it represents the power of tradition and rituals. Shirley Jackson was a very prominent writer and had a different writing in which she presents a lot of truth. In this short story, Jackson represents the dark side of tradition and how people blindly adhere the tradition. Throughout the story author showcases that traditional rituals could be harmful, it play a vital role in victimization of women.

"The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with fresh warmth of a full summer day".

In the initiative lines of the story writer portrays a picture of a small village in which the annual tradition of the lottery takes place by the people. The setting was very clear; an event of the lottery began around 10:00 on 27th June. The villagers began gathering in the square, and

children began to select small stones. According to their tradition, the selected victim in the annual lottery will be stoned to death by other villagers.

“Mr. Summer arrived carrying a wooden black box and Mr. Graves followed him carrying a three lodged stool”.

An event of lottery was conducted by Mr. Summer who arrived at the spot with a black wooden box. The black wooden box was very which represents their tradition that the annual lottery practices through very long time. The lottery is owned by Mr. Summer and it has been practiced through years back in the village. Villagers were feeling pity for Mr. Summer because his wife is mean and they have no children.

“Mr. Adams said to old man Warner, who stood next to him, that over in the north village talking of giving up the lottery”.

While the households were taking their chance Mr. Adams and old Man Warner were talking about giving up the Lottery, arguably Mr. Adams told to him that some of the village were talking about giving up this tradition. The old man Warner refuses him by saying that it is his seventy-seventh participating in the lottery.

“After a distribution of slip, there was a long pause a breathless pause, until Mr. Summer holding his slip of paper in the air. For a minute no one moved, then all the slips were opened, and suddenly all the women began to speak, who is it? The voices began to say it is Bill Hutchinson”.

The villagers became voiceless a few times when the slips were distributed to everyone. Then Mr. Summer opened his slip earlier and others did that after him. Unfortunately, Tessie’s husband Bill Hutchinson was selected.

“Tessie Hutchinson shouted at Mr. Summer you didn’t give him time enough to take any paper he wanted”.

Tessie was complaining to Mr. Summer that Bill did not take enough time to select the slip. Then Mr. Summer asked to other family members of Hutchinson to select their chance. He took slips and put them again in the black box. The entire Hutchinson family member took their chance Davy, Nancy, and Harry selected the blank slips. And then Bill Hutchison opened his slip and it was a blank. Then Mr. Summer said that it was Tessie Bill’s wife. Then Mr. Summer asked the villagers to finish it quickly. Tessie protested for her life, by saying that it wasn’t fair.

Like in “The Lottery” some Sindhi traditions are followed because they have been handed through generations. This can include rituals, festivals, and social norms that people rarely question.

Findings

The research aims to find out some traditional factors through which women are suppressed and deprived of their basic rights particularly women in Sindh. This study took the reference of Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery. In the Lottery study finds out that some traditional

elements blindly adhering from the villagers on an annual festival. Jackson represented a woman suffering in her short story Lottery, she mentioned that they are forcefully suppressed and are not allowed to run out any protest against male dominancy. On the other hand, the study also relates this story to the Sindh province of Pakistan, study finds out that in Sindh various traditional factors are practiced through which women are victimized and treated on a minority level. Sindh is based on a feudal mindset that has hindered women from their basic rights and needs. Women are victimized or killed in the name of honor. If a woman violates traditional rituals and goes against their family restriction, if she is caught in an illegitimate relationship with another man, then both man and woman are killed by the woman's family to maintain their reputation. The study runs out the theory of "Subaltern" has been given by Antonio Gramsci and later popularized by GC Spivak. GC Spivak introduced this theory in her book "Can Subaltern Speak" Throughout the work Spivak discussed colonized women, representing them as voiceless. She argues that in the colonial discourse, women are represented as others and they don't have the power to speak about that discrimination. Study finds out that women are represented as others in society and they don't have the right to speak about whatever they are facing in the male-dominated society.

Discussion

Shirley was an American author who was well-known for her works of horror and mystery. She wrote so many works including novels and short stories. As she was famous for horror and mystery, "The Lottery" is the best example in which she represents the horror practices through tradition. Throughout the story, Jackson showcases the worst picture of tradition. The author represents women's marginalization through the cultural tradition in a patriarchal society. Through the main character woman, author represents how women are ignored neglected and they are suppressed through tradition. The same practices can be seen in the Sindh. In Sindh lot of traditional factors are practiced which results in the victimization of women. Victimization of women made less status and respect for women in society, despite the specification and services of women for families, clans, tribes and communities are numbered less in a patriarchal society. From the psychological and religious perspective, women are considered as the feeble part of the society. The nature of women remains exceptionally soft and kind. Despite the burden imposed upon them in the society for rearing children. Women faced difficulties and encountered the experiences of social life. Sindhi society represents lots of barriers and hindrances and is submerged in the various trends towards women. Male dominancy remained as the element of victimization and demoralization in society.

Conclusion

Tradition is very beneficial because it connects us to an ancient era, but when it practiced thoughtlessly it can be harmful. The focus of the research is to find out the role of tradition in women's victimization, especially in Sindh. Sindh is based on a feudal mindset population as well as a patriarchal society in which women are deprived of their social rights such as education, decision-making, freedom of expression and lots of others. In some regions of Sindh

are not allowed to get an education but are forced to live under the four walls of their home. Seemingly, some regions particularly settled in rural areas of Sindh treated women as others and did not allow them to participate in any decision-making in home. Women are treated on a minority level. They are neglected and worst represented in patriarchal society due to tradition they are presented with a low status and less respectful in human society. These all occur through tradition because in rural areas women are forced to follow the limitation which is imposed by their ancestors. In addition, women are butchered owing to honour matter in the society.

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