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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Resistance Literature in Pakistan and Contribution of Kishwar Naheed**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objectives of this research are analytical study of Kishwar Naheed's work, her feminine writings and find out her the ways of resistance in her poetry and writings and highlights her experiences as women writers engaged in creative and civic areas. Literature always remains a mode of expression. In the country Pakistan where women have to face a lot of problems due to patriarchal norms, traditions, values and social discrimination. Kishwar Naheed (1940), a known poetess of Pakistan highlight the miseries of women in Pakistan through literature. She is known for direct and bold writings. She celebrates equal human rights, Justice and freedom through her writings. The names of her work are mostly feminine. She dealt with official, social and political backlashes. Poetry, articles and writings have chosen by the researchers to apply the Qualitative research method to draw some results about the status and role of women in Pakistani Society. Literature is mirror of society in which we can see the face of people. Literature is also the alternate source of history. History is not only reflected through achieves but also through writings of the contemporary period. The writings and poetry of Kishwar Naheed challenge patriarchy, social injustice, gender inequality in Pakistan. These writing paved a way for social reforms. This research also suggest the impacts of Kishwar's writings in Pakistani society. Women became more conscious about their rights. Literary always paves a way for reforms and women get legal and constitutional rights in Pakistan.

**KEYWORDS** Antilock, Assault, Cultural Norms, Patriarchy, Resistance

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**Introduction**

Women are considered the second-grade citizen in Pakistan due to patriarchal norms. Women have to bear violence, cruelty, decimation due to the power structure of male in this society. It is very difficult for women to make their own choices in Pakistani society. Kishwar Naheed, a poetess, writer felt these miseries of Pakistani women and tried to describe them in her prose, poetry and writings. The writing analysis of her work shows she emphasis on those patterns of society which create male domination. The inferiority of female is the outcome of the social structure which is the part of culture now. The masculine behavior stopped women to take their basic rights although they are equality contributing in the social milieu. Even the literature is under the domination of males in Pakistani society. As literature is expression of the culture of society so it very difficult that it comes out of the clutches of the social norms and traditions. The objective of this paper is the qualitative analysis of Kishwar Naheed writing. How she employ the cultural practices which leads toward the idea of inequality and gender discrimination in Pakistani society. Women are playing vital role in every society. But they are facing nominal issues in their private and public life. The world is moving toward the emancipation of women, but

Pakistani women are even not aware of these principles. This study is focusing on the status of women in society. Pakistani writers especially females like Kishwar Naheed engaged their literary works for the identification of female problems.

Females are the integral part of the society and playing a vital role in the development of society and other sphere of life. Having the highly importance she is still facing many major issues in her public and private life. Many writers across the world highlighted the status of women in a society. There is dire need to highlight the women position in context to Pakistani literature. So, keeping this point of view this study tried to find out the women position in society which predict in Pakistani literature especially focusing on the famous Pakistani female writer Kishwar Naheed.

### **Literature Review**

Mahmood stated that gender discrimination hindered women's empowerment. Society defines the different roles for both males and females. The public sphere is associated with the male and the private sphere with the female. But females have a great contribution to economic progress. The wage gap also exists between males and females. Women must be paid less as compared to men for the same work. Both men and women face different types of problems in society, but women are the most vulnerable. They face restrictions on working in a public place due to security reasons. Habib (2016) describe that the security responsibilities of females and children are attached to the male. In society, it is considered that it is the male who transfers the knowledge to girls otherwise if women do they have an empty mind. Female status in society is always judged by male status. Prostitution is mostly attached to a female because the male controls her. A Male can have many wives at a time, but women cannot act like him. (Mahmood,2015)

Ikramullah commented, as such the culture and traditions of the Pakistani people are a blend of continued adherence to Hindu values and customs by a majority of the converts to Islam in the region, on the one hand, and the values and traditions of Islam brought by migrants and conquerors on the other hand. Due to overt similarities and consistencies, the practices of the seclusion of women (Purdah) as status symbols and their exclusion from male-oriented work (which also is prominent among Hindus) remained intact and have been blended with the Islamic traditions of honouring and segregating women. However, orthodoxy in Pakistan usually invokes religious-injunctions rather than cultural norms to affect the status of women. (Ikramullah,1963)

Khan concluded that women face many issues because they have no proper guidance. They have no access to facilities. There are no proper facilities in rural areas and people have less awareness about the reproductive health and other problems related of women. That's why women face different issues. Females have fewer opportunities for education as compared to males because society is male dominated. A male member of the family was not allowed the women for education. They imposed restrictions on females that's why females have no access to education.( Khan,2014)

### **Material and Methods**

Qualitative research method is applied with the literature concerned to the few poems and writings of known writer Kishwar Naheed. The empirical research analyses the following issues which discuss in her writings.

## Oppression

I am not that woman" is probably the best example where we can discover pictures of female misuse and opposition of woman against man centric society. In this poem, Naheed speaks to the ambivalent connection between men, who represent male-centric society, and the female speaker, who is suffocated in male-centric culture. The female communicates her contempt and disdain toward male centric figures who have persecuted her and controlled her life. While talking about the oppression which women have to face in patriarchal society, Naheed, as a representative of all the oppressed women, claims:

I am the one you hide  
 In your walls of stone, while you roamed free as the breeze...  
 I am the one you crushed  
 With the weight of custom and tradition...  
 I am the one in whose lap  
 You picked flowers  
 And planted thorns and embers

These lines exactly exemplify the oppression women have to face in patriarchal structures, where women are oppressed and chained in domestic roles and men roamed free and do whatever they want. Women must face a lot of restrictions in society but there are no restrictions and limitations for men. These lines are full of violent imagery and Naheed has used very strong words and phrases like "chains," "thorns and embers," "commodity," and "crushed with the weight of custom and tradition" to show the strength of the oppression. She also gives us the hint that men have tried to replace her flowers of hope and aspiration with thorns and chains of contempt and oppression. This is another sign of entrapment and discrimination. This poem shows the issue of discrimination against women and how men treated them in patriarchal society but at the same time this poem is also directed towards empowerment and liberation of women. Naheed boldly asserts that women are being oppressed everywhere but they deserve to be respected and they are not "commodities." (Huzaifa,2013)

I am not that woman, identify those ideas through which woman is labelled. These poems draw the lines between actual liberty and actual identity. The actual bliss of woman is always taken by males. The woman asked for the justice and showed her resentment against the society's view to place them as second grade citizen of life.

## Patriarchy

It is we , sinful women  
 We don,t sell our lives  
 We don,t bow our head  
 We don,t fold our hands together

The oppression of patriarchy is very visible in this poem. The women are forced to be submissive and passive but the counterpart enjoys full freedom. It further proceeds to tell about her victimization under patriarchy but on the other side, she shows her potential to break the shackles of patriarchal norms. In this way, for her to accomplish help, freedom and independence, she needs to split away from male dominated society and dispose of male figures who have distorted her self-respect and integrity. Women finds no chance except for to perform the symbolic rejection and resistance of being a submissive( Mohanty, 2010) and inferior Naheed while claiming,

"I am not that woman/  
selling you socks and shoes...  
No, no, I am not that woman."

She refuses to disrespect herself while rejecting to objectify her body for others to see and receive pleasure. This is an act of resistance by a woman and these words are plainly observed as a danger to the man centric structures as the woman turns into her own saviour and she wants and endeavours to defy the guidelines forced upon her by men. A woman is fighting with the thoughts of the men by asserting again and again that "I am not that woman." This sentence demonstrates that the female candour to rejecting the notion that woman according to the will of men and she is going to stand up for the rights of equality. She might be the one whom patriarchy has crushed under the weight of custom, purchased and sold for the sake of purity, married off to get rid of burden; but she re-emerges and resurfaces like "light cannot be hidden in the darkness." (Hashmi,2014)

### **Stereotypes**

Women are treated as commodity for her loyalty, Chasity and motherhood, Naheed vows in theses word:

I am the commodity, you traded in  
My Chasity, my motherhood, my loyalty  
Now it is the time for me to flower free  
The woman on that poster, half naked, selling the socks and shoes  
No, no, I am not that woman

The woman in that poem is very optimistic and confident about her freedom. She is hopeful that her status will be changed very soon. Naheed is mourning about the women of east and west. According to her views eastern women are suffering from patriarchal norms and male domination and western women are becoming just a body who are selling socks and shoes on the poster. They are suffering-but their miseries are different. She is challenging Negative Stereotypes of Women. Kishwar Naheed uses different metaphors and symbolism to show the acts of resistance more clearly in this poem. The female speaker uses the metaphor of "light" for herself. This metaphor of light against darkness shows the potential and courage of speaker to break these norms. This light can also be described as a light of knowledge which gives us the hint that female speaker can lighten the darkness through her knowledge and wisdom. Women are usually considered ignorant and inferior in patriarchal societies and this images her negative stereotypes of women as ignorant, submissive, and inferior being. This metaphorical comparison of a woman with the light can be described as one of the "hidden metaphor" of what James Scott calls "weapon of the weak," who are diminished to restricted alternatives, which connotes the "vital role of power relations in constraining forms of resistance," but at the same time her symbolic and brave act has "revolutionary implications" ("Everyday form of Resistance," 1989).

### **Violence**

The poem "The rain within myself" deals with the torture of sexual violence in form of marriage. Marriage institution is very dominant in eastern societies through which women are facing everyday violence. The woman is failed to overcome her violence.

To you, I was a window

You opened me  
And enjoy the sense as you pleased  
And inhale the breeze and colour ( Naheed, 2009)

Naheed borrows the words in such a drastic pain to show the objectification of a woman. The man gets all pleasures from her but he never bothers the emotions of a woman. The body of a woman is a playful tool for him, and woman never enjoy the bond of her relationship with that man who is her husband.

To you I am a tunnel,  
Where you could shelter when you pleased  
And could cancel me too  
To keep your footprints from sight  
You walk in me for life

This stanza is very boldly defining the everyday rape of women through marriage institution. In. martial bond sexual assault is very common. The speaker tells us the condition of a woman and raising her voice. But mostly women remain quiet and serving their husbands unconditionally. ( Baghfalaki& Mahomoudibaha,2014)

Johansson accepts that opposition exists between a wide range of subalterns, and it is a "matter of the less visible and small actions by subalterns" (Vinthagen & Johansson,2013). There are two types of resistance available to all subaltern subjects: the "public/ practical" and the "disguised symbolic" resistance. Scott describes the assertion of worth by gestures, dress, and speech in public declared resistance whereas he refers to the disguised resistance as "hidden transcript of anger, aggression, disguised discourses of dignity, symbolism, gossip." (Scott, 1989). Naheed was writing in an environment in which the prevailing traditions and norms of women was of seductress or immoral, she specifically resists this negative stereotype of the woman as immoral seductress and counter this perception by presenting herself as a woman who is not ready to objectify herself while "selling socks and shoes half-nakedly" to the men for the sake of their pleasure and claims, "No, no, I am not that woman." She presented herself with integrity attributes her capacity to oppose enticement and protect her guiltlessness. (Ahmad,2009)

### **Submissiveness**

Defiance of Submissive roles through her allegorical opposing demonstration of "lighting in the darkness" and "walking on the water," the female speaker builds up an individual dream of freedom, fearlessness, and encounter to challenge the submissive roles in the public. Therefore, she demonstrates her mental triumph over the men by communicating her indignation, which is another concealed record of opposition, against the entire male centric and political framework and offending its agent while proclaiming toward the end. This disguised emotional act of resistance and defiance of submissive role is important for her to have the option to build up another life liberated from the pictures of her oppressors, and to be her own self with no male centric powers around her. She decides to free herself from the patriarchal structures and forces that had oppressed her for so many years. The female speaker refused to be the victim of patriarchy, denies vehemently to be commodified and declares herself free while claiming that now "it is time for me to flower free" which gives the hint of her liberation from male-dominated. This is also an act of resistance as she rejects the idea of remaining within the four walls of house and chooses to enjoy freedom while going against the typical norms of society. So, from a feminist perspective, "I am not that woman"

can be viewed as a poem of a female change from oppressive victim to emancipation, as the speaker who was once “hide in the walls” bluntly claims that now “my voice cannot be smothered by stones.” So, it can be said that Naheed’s “I am not that woman” is imbued with “feminist conquest, exemplifies the stereotyping of women in a typical patriarchal society with the help of chilling images and morbidity to let the world know that her identity is no more to be decided by men” (Hashmi, 2014).

In this poem, the female speaker moves from the condition of material exploitation and oppression to the condition of mental liberation and strengthening. Naheed is speaking against patriarchal figures. Anticlockwise is the poem by Kishwar Naheed that shows the “ugliest side of dominancy and marginality” (Hashmi, 2014).

### **Domescity**

In “Anticlockwise,” Naheed, who is the female speaker too, identifies herself as a victim of male dominated society. She says, “You have tied the chains of domesticity/ shame and modesty around my feet... You have paralyzed me.” These lines in the poem gives us a clear idea how women are treated in patriarchal societies and they are not allowed even to move freely outside of their homes. The female speaker claims that the patriarchal figures have tied the chains of domesticity around her feet and she has been restricted to roam freely in this world. In this poem, Naheed has given the message, she uses personal pronouns in this poem, still she is the representative of all the suppressed women in male-dominated societies. Women are burdened and exploited by the patriarchal norms of society, and so is the female speaker who sees herself as a victim of the patriarchal frameworks. But in any case of this recognition of the female, she declares her sense of self as she declares that even if men have “tied the chains of domesticity” around her feet, she can still “think” if not “walk.” This act of thinking intact of resistance against patriarchy to recapture her sense of self-identity. The female voice asserts that patriarchal figures can control her sight, sense of smell, they can control her from going outside or from walking even but they cannot control her thoughts. The lines, “even though I cannot walk/ I can still think” raise the issue of “embodied resistance from within, both conceptually and literally” (Ananthram,2009). While asserting her ability to find new ways to come out of oppression and her potential to think, Naheed resists the negative stereotype of women as ignorant, submissive, and inferior being. Thus, we can say that this is a symbolic form of resistance the female speaker manages to perform her rebellion towards patriarchy as an oppressive ideology. Kishwar Naheed draws attention to women’s exploitation and abuse in patriarchal society but she also portrays thieveries the female persona finds a new way to come out of her deformed sense of self as she says: (Riaz,2012)

Even if my eyes become the soles of your feet  
 Even so, the fear will not leave you  
 That though I cannot see  
 I can feel bodies and sentences  
 Like a fragrance.

These lines demonstrate that the speaker is not the woman who can be restricted by men. Her sight can be controlled by men but she claims that she would smell everything and find another way to survive and come out of oppression. Through her ability to “think” freely, she shows her resistance and refusal to adapt to the restricted values of patriarchy to be a submissive and weak woman who does not think but act according to the will of men. But Naheed refuses to be that kind of submissive and inferior woman who is a play a puppet in the hands of men. As a bold and emancipated female

figure, the poetess bluntly claims: "Your fear of my being free, being alive/ And able to think might lead you/ Who knows into what travails..." (Bhatt,2017).

Here, we notice how she moves from being the detached casualty of man-controlled society to the compelling woman who issues a threat to the men of society, as she claims that this fear of her freedom might lead the men of society into different shades of laborious efforts. She depicts how a free woman stirs dread in man who can't rest until he can limit and control every one of her capacities. This threat or warning which she has issued can be considered as a form of 'publicly declared resistance.' While claiming, "though I cannot smell/ I can still feel... though I cannot speak/ I can still walk...though I cannot walk/ I can still think," the female voice of the poem becomes the vigorous agent of resistance, who cannot be oppressed by men. Naheed composes that regardless of whether every one of her detects wither away under the pounding teachings of patriarchal society, she will in any case have the option to get to her considerations.

When you talk in your dreams  
I have to listen, lying awake  
But no dreams listen  
To my wakeful words.

This stanza shows a woman subordinate position in a society. Women have no voices. A dutiful wife must be submissive and listen the words of her husband even in the dreams. But her voice is never heard. The speaker in this poem regrets that her wakeful words are never listen by the society. She is obedient and loyal to her man but in return she faced cheating, negligence and carelessness. In eastern societies it is part of training of every woman to be loyal to her husband.(Basit& Ali, 2016)

## **Conclusion**

In this world of masculinity women are facing all kind of material and non-material discrimination and rejections. The excessive use of power in the patriarchal leads towards various problems in a society. Poets are considered the most sensitive people of a society who use the language of literature to highlight the loop wholes. Kishwar Naheed has given to voice to unheard people (women) in Pakistani society. She used different words, symbolical metaphors to identify women inner self. Her poetry and writing have different shades of resistance. She loudly spoke against the male objectivity of woman's body Although Naheed was vocal in 1970 but the situation in Pakistani society is still same. Female education increase but awareness is stagnant in Pakistan. Females are participating in professional life now, but the workplace harassment is increasing. Sexual and domestic violence ware still taking the lives of women in Pakistan. Now it's the need of time that women must be vocal in their issues. They should be spaces in relationship through which male and female can better understand each other. The health and progress of a society depends upon women. They should not be neglected.

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