

## **Socio-Cultural Determinants of Honor Killing in Pakistan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Honor killing is a critical issue in the contemporary era that has encompassed the whole of the world in it. It is not an issue of a particular region rather it seeks the efforts of international organizations to eradicate this evil. South Asia is a region that is the home of 1/5 population of the globe and its member states are also facing the issue of honor killing. In the current article, the researchers have focused especially Pakistan to find out the causes of honor killing. Although researchers also discussed India briefly but the prime objective is to explore the findings related the Pakistan. This study is based on purely qualitative data in which the researchers collected primary and secondary data. In the primary data, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews of the students of law and gender studies. These students were selected by the purposive sampling technique that allowed targeting the most suitable students that had rich knowledge about the topic. On the other hand, in the secondary data, the researchers focused on the related books, articles and research reports. This article will provide the socio-cultural determinants of honor killing in Pakistan.

**Key Words:** Honor killing, Cultural aspect, Pakistan, Feudal lords and Tribal areas

### **Introduction**

Honor killing is not the issue of a single region or state rather it has encircled the whole world. Today, all of the regions of world are facing the problem of honor killing but the intensity of this phenomenon may vary from country to country or region to region (Warriach, 2005). Honor killing is being widely observed in countries such as Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Bangladesh, Algeria, Brazil, Ecuador, Morocco, Israel, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, the Balkans, Sweden, Holland, Germany, Italy, Yemen, India and many more countries (Ali, 2008). Honor killing has such a fatal emerging problem that has become the reason of death of a lot of people across the globe. According to United Nations Population Fund, round about 5000 only women and girls are killed per year in the name of this so called phenomenon “Honor Killing”

(UNIFEM, 2007). But on the other hand, Kiener (2011) reported that this figure of 5000 is gross and the actual numbers are so alarming that are about 20,000/year across the globe.

Honor killing of women is an act of murder in which a woman is killed for her immoral behavior rather it is actual or perceived. Such immoral behavior may be refusing to an arranged marriage or marital adultery. The concept of women as property and honor is deeply rooted in the social, political and economic fabric of South Asian countries through the centuries. It is deeply entrenched in the social and cultural norms not just in rural and urban Pakistan but around the world. The notion of considering father as a dictator on the lives of children especially on girl child persists in many countries; it makes father to believe that he is entitled to punish them unto death if they stray especially in sexual matters. A study of United Nation in (2000) stated that there were as many as 5000 women and girls killed each year as part of some honor crime by a family member; but no one can really be sure if this is not just the tip of an ice burg. These incidents involved Muslim, Hindu and Christian families in South Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and many other countries like Canada, the U.S. and Europe among immigrant communities.

If this barbarism named as honor killing looked upon from sociological angle, it is the act of bringing family's status down in the eyes of society, because it is considered as the failure of man in bringing up her correctly who is the sole protector of the female in patriarchal traditions. Even if a woman marries to a person of any other especially lower caste is considered an act of disregard of family by the women. Women are supposed to follow the family decisions especially about their marriage if they challenge it are taken as a challenge to family and cultural values. Man is socially as well as psychologically affiliated with the norms of society and considers it as moral obligations. His behavior is controlled by these socio-cultural norms transferred to his mindset during his socialization through the notions of good and evil, sacred and profane, honor and dishonor, moral and immoral. In every society there are certain patterned behaviors according to status and role of various members considered by the society as forbidden; their violation is acknowledged as dishonor and punishment is obvious as per nature and extent of violation vary from society to society. The phenomenon of honor killings is the outcome of that socio-psychic milieu of typical societies where certain patterns of the behavior of human beings, particularly the females, are recognized as bringing dishonor to their families and communities and the lost honor is recompensed by killings them.

### **Conceptualizing honor killing**

The Oxford Dictionary of Law Enforcement defines honor killing as;

“The purposeful pre-planned murder, generally of a woman, by or at the command of members of her

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family stimulated by a perception that she has brought shame on the family” (Oxford Dictionary of Law Enforcement, 2007).

Human Rights Watch (2004) describes that;

“Honor crimes are acts of violence, usually murder, committed by male family members against female family members, who are perceived to have brought dishonor upon the family. A woman can be targeted by (individuals within) her family for a variety of reasons, including: refusing to enter into an arranged marriage, being the victim of a sexual assault, seeking a divorce — even from an abusive husband — or (allegedly) committing adultery. The mere perception that a woman has behaved in a specific way to "dishonor" her family is sufficient to trigger an attack.”

Amnesty International observes that;

“Honor killing of a woman by a male relative is not an individual act of violence, but one which is collective, planned, sociologically predictable, and socially approved by both men and women in the family and community concerned” (Amnesty International, 2011).

### **Honor killing in cultural aspect**

Honor killing is perceived in a sense of bravery because the murderer has committed the crime in order to follow the cultural rituals. The society also sees him with great honor because now he is perceived as a strong and brave person that shows that he can do anything for his family and culture. It may be based on personal satisfaction because sometimes society does not force you to commit any such crime but an individual performs the act of honor killing for his self respect and honor (Brandon & Hafez, 2008).

Honor killing is basically performed as a cultural tradition that is passed by one generation to another. It is carried out against the women as mostly the victims are women. Although there are males also that are killed in the name of honor but the ratio of women is comparatively more (Maded, 2005). Some of the thinkers explore that honor killing is linked with the religions and particularly to the Muslims that is the wrong perception. It is not a religious as it is explained by some of the philosophers because honor killing existed even before the institutionalization of the Muslim countries that indicates that it is a cultural practice not religious (Hussain, 2006).

Currently, honor killing is a part of religious practice especially in the Muslim countries. In the Muslim countries, the incidents of honor killing taking place more than the non-Muslim societies that shows its relation with religion Islam (United

Nations, 2002). But the religious teachings are something else. The every inhuman activity is labeled as religious practice that is basically not religious rather it is personal. The religion of Islam does not allow killing anyone without any reason. Honor killing is a religious practice as it is performed in different religions such as Sikhism. The example of Sikhism honor killing is the killing of Harpeet who was murdered as she married without the consent of her family. She was pregnant when murdered by her mother. Another example of honor killing is visualized in a very clear way by Anushka Sharma's movie N.H.10. This movie circles around the murder of a boy and girl in a village of India and the major reason behind their honor killing was the girl's affair with a boy and both wanted to escape with the boy. Unfortunately, they were caught by the brother of that girl and later murdered. It shows the culture of India that a couple is killed by a young boy and he is appreciated by the family and society as well.

### **A gender based phenomenon**

The honor killing is closely related to gender because mostly the victims of this evil are the females. The females have to take every step with a conscious way because the eyes of the whole family are on the females especially on the young girls. There are also some cases in which the females became the victim on the basis of perception and the reality is something different. For example, there is a young girl alone at the home and suddenly a boy jumps in and out of the home and she really does not know that who is he but family beats and sometimes kills her on the basis of their perception. The important thing is to note that we keep an eye on our girls but we do not do the same with our boys. We do not kill the boy that he has unfair relations with a particular female. It is all because in the South Asian states are male dominant societies in which the males have more power and prestige than the females.

Honor killing is basically a gender based crime in which usually the male members of society kill the females in the name of honor and dignity. Most of the scholars describe honor killing as gender motivated crime because it is only initiated when the females take a step that is considered contrary to the cultural norms of the society like she marries without the consent of family or she has sexual relations with anyone that is beyond the marriage (Bernard, 2013). The honor killing is not always attached with the sexual relations of a female with a male without marriage rather there are certain other reasons as well that lead to honor killing. For example, the disobedience of the females is also a motive that is considered like dishonor of the family (Button, 2008).

### **Honor killing in Pakistan**

The honor killing constitutes diverse forms and known with different names across the regional boundaries. In Sindh Province, It is called as 'Karo-Kari, in Baluchistan as Siyah Kari, In Southern Punjab as Kala Kali and in NWFP as Tor

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Tora'. In every language, meaning is the same that the men and women fated by their family and local community as guilty of illicit relations or sexual misconduct (Shah, 2002).

Pakistan is considered one of the crucial countries in the regard of honor killings because there always have been circulating news about the killings of women in the name of honor. The rate of honor killing is at large scale in Pakistan. Honor killing is basically known the assault and violence against the women. There are some researchers that link honor killing with Islam (Muhammad, Ahmed, Abdullah, Omer & Shah, 2012).

In Pakistan, when a man takes the life of a female due to some sexual and other issues that they consider against their social and moral status they kill that woman that is known honor killing. Sometimes the act of honor killing is appreciated by their cultural traditions that a man did a good deed. There is a close relationship between honor killing and cultural traditions because the men are usually motivated by their cultural patterns that inspire them to commit the killing of a woman in the name of honor (Ali, 2001). Pakistan is one of those countries in the world that have highest rate of honor killing. A survey conducted by Thomson Reuters indicated that Pakistan is among the top five countries in the respect of honor killing (Greiff, 2010).

In Pakistan, there are certain social groups that lead to honor killing in different areas. The role of these social and pressure groups varies from area to area. The main motive behind the honor killing in Pakistan is social and cultural traditions. The males of the respective female are motivated by the traditional pressure to perform the act honor killing. One who kills his sister or daughter in the name of honor killing is perceived very brave (Iqbal, 2006).

According to the report of Shirkat Gah (2003) the cultural traditions are diffused from one region to the other regions of Pakistan. In this regard, the report of Shirkat Gah indicated that Baluchistan is very crucial area in the respect of honor killing. Furthermore, it is explored by this report that Larkana city of Sindh is also of great concern with honor killing (Shirkat Gah, 2003).

The numbers of honor killings in Pakistan are increasing day by day. Amnesty International explained that honor killing has become very serious phenomenon not only for a single country rather in the whole world. Pakistan is among the most affected countries about honor killing. There are a number of cases of honor killing that are not reported due to social and cultural values (Iqbal, 2006).

It is difficult to find out the exact figures of honor killing in Pakistan especially on the contemporary era. But the history shows that the phenomenon of honor killing existed in Pakistan since a long period ago. The roots of this social evil can be traced back to the inception of Pakistan. The available data shows that at least 183 women were killed in 1998, more than 1000 in 1999 and 240 in the first six months of 2000 year (Amnesty International, 1999). In 2001 there were almost 1000 cases of honor killing reported in the whole country. These are only those figures that were reported somewhere directly or indirectly. There are other cases as well that are not reported. Despite such crucial condition, the lawmakers

and government are not seriously paying attention about this issue to get rid of this social evil. If it is not stopped by iron hands, it will continue to grow that will be very fatal for the state (Ahmed, 2000).

## **Honor killing in India**

Like the other countries of South Asia, India is also suffering from the issue of Honor Killing. The phenomenon of honor killing is not new in India because it has a long history of centuries (Welchman & Hossain, 2006). Although the incidents of honor killing occur in all of the states of India but some of the states like Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh are suffering more than the other states of India. The incidents of honor killing are routine in these states that people take for granted (Vishwanath & Palakonda, 2011).

The ratio of occurring of the incidents of honor killing varies from country to country and within a country state to state. By the same token, the occurrence also has variations in different states of India. Several studies have been conducted on this issue in India that reveal that approximately a thousand people including males and females are killed in India in the name of honor killing every year (The Times of India, 2010).

There are different reasons that lead to honor killing and in India even the marriages in the same Gotra (same descendants and lineage or clan) is considered the cause of honor killing in some parts of northern India. It is a unique characteristic of Indian culture that to marry within the same descendants becomes the cause of honor killing although normally the marriage outside of the family may be the cause of honor killing. On the other hand, the inter-religious marriages may also be the reason of honor killing. For example, in the Indian society, the marriage of a Hindu girl with a Muslim boy may also be the cause of honor killing. The dominant religion of a country is more ethnic in this regard than the less dominant (Baxi, Rai, & Ali, 2006).

## **Research problem**

In Pakistan, certain social groups perceive honor killing, a traditional justified practice that entails different shapes with regard to particular backdrop of four provinces. The practice is named differently across four provinces in Pakistan. In Sindh, it is termed as Karo Kari. Karo is associated to a man whereas Kari is professed a woman, who brings shame to her family. Honor killing means the practice in which male members of the family kill a female who is perceived as bringing shame or dishonor to the family. The woman declared as Kari by Jirga (Tribal court), is usually killed by gunshot, burning with oil, acid throwing, flogging and sometimes through blood poisoning. Every year hundreds of women are killed in Pakistan in the name of honor, many cases go unreported, and perpetrators of honor killing are not punished. It is claimed that traditional practices are the manifestations of such acts but state also seems to be failed

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combating the practice of honor killing. The negligence by the state and the ineffective justice system gave momentum to mostly remote tribal structures boosting up brutal practices in the country. These tribal structures possess sufficient pretexts to legitimize women killings. Despite the enormity of the practice, the government, lawmakers and judiciary have demonstrated a silent behavior in this regard. The persistence of honor killing in Sindh has been observed on frequent move because of tribal feudal structure. The spaces left open by the state rule has given momentum to informal dispensation of justice by tribal courts. However, the tribal councils seem to be especially concerned with offences against honor and perceive to be sole executive power where women's voice often remains silent.

### **Aim of the research**

The research question primarily aims to contribute to understanding of the problem of honor killing, and more specifically the socio-cultural reasons of honor killing in Pakistan.

### **Literature review**

This section reviews the existing literature related to honor killing with a core concern of honor, power and justice in Pakistan. As the topic is multidimensional, therefore the literature in this section covers related issues and concepts. The basic objective of the literature review is to come up finally with progressive and unique studies about this topic, which would add to the existing knowledge. There is need to mention that Pakistan has been created in the name of religion Islam which lays greater emphasize on the principles of equality, justice, mutual help, social assistance, recognition of the dignity, welfare and prosperity for all.

It is imperative to cite here Aase's observations regarding honor in Tangir community, North Pakistan. Aase (2002) argued that the core meaning of the feud over honor is not mainly concerned whether it is women's chastity, rap, killing or assault, but to see the family power and ability to revenge the offender's family and to restore honor by defending its interests. He pointed out that; this is a part of struggle for legitimate power, a key element being one's ability to defend one's honor.

Becker (2004) while discussing honor killing under human rights perspective argued that the traditional religious practices sometimes violate the rights of women. The practice of honor killing still contradicts with International Human Rights Law (IHRL). International Human Rights Law has failed to ensure women rights and eradicating practice of honor killing. Sometimes, it differs with state national laws, which support the perpetrators of honor killing. The researchers also identified the contradiction between universalism and relativism. Universalism advocates killing of women as a crime and human rights violation and, the offender of the case should be punished whereas the relativists' point of view is

entirely opposite to universalism. They argued that the honor killing will be a crime for some cultures but it may accord with the norms and traditions of native culture where the practice exists.

Iqbal (2006) conducted a study on the topic of “Honor Killing and Silence of Justice System in Pakistan”. The researcher collected both types, primary and secondary data. The surviving victims of honor killing were interviewed in which they explored different reasons behind the social evil of honor killing. The researchers used snowball sampling technique to reach their required respondents. Three major cities of Pakistan; Islamabad, Karachi and Jacobabad were taken under consideration to reach the required population. It was analyzed through the analysis of data that there is a strong relationship between honor killing and power. The powerful feudal lords play an important role in honor killing.

Faqir (2001) pointed out that there are raised many issue about the sexual abuse in society. There are some occasions in which these issues are solved but it does not mean the honor of the affected family is restored. The relatives only perceive the restoration of their honor after killing the victim female. The killing of that female gives them a sense of pride in the society otherwise they feel ashamed. They have to face shame in the society if they don't kill her.

Aase (2002) explored that there are many problems attached to affected family. In the cases of honor two families are involved, one family of the male side and the other of female's family. The family of female suffers more than the male's in developing countries like Pakistan. So the female's family wants to get revenge at any cost in order to restore its dignity and honor.

Akman (2002) revealed that the females are raped in revenge of enmity. The females become the victim of such brutality. In most of the cases, the females become the victim of this enmity that is not attached to them rather the roots of clashes are somehow different. It may be the cases of property of other martial affluences but to rape the girls is used as tactic to take over the other party.

Lasine (2000) pointed out that in countries where the issue of honor killing is prevailing have a particular cultural tradition that allows them to take such step. The acts of women are noticed seriously in which they become the prey of an attentive visual system. In some countries there is legal provision to kill the women who a sexual relations with unknown person like Middle East.

Ali (2001) explored that the role of tribal chiefs cannot be ignored in the cases of honor killing because they have a particular concern about such issues. In the tribal areas like Pakistan, the cultural traditions are very strong and the people are strongly linked with their cultural traditions. They consider the practice of honor killing as an integral part of their culture. In Pakistani case, most of the chiefs are well educated and even they have got education from the well known universities of the world. They are well aware about the global cultural patterns but they are not ready to change such immoral and illegal practices in Pakistan because they too are strongly attached to this tribal culture.

Hussain (2006) explained that the issue of honor killing is of very concern for Pakistan. The most of the cases of honor killing are found in the backward areas of

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Pakistan where there is lack of education and awareness. There are formed tribal councils also known as “Jirga” for particular areas. These councils have sole authority to order for anything. In the cases of honor killing, these tribal councils have a special reference. These tribal councils are consisted of the ruling elites of those areas where they are formed. These courts are framed in order to fulfill their motives and the cases of honor killings are also mostly backed by these tribal councils. These tribal areas do not recognize the constitution of Pakistan that gives freedom to live to every citizen of Pakistan. The legal courts and constitution is totally ignored by these areas.

### **Methodology**

The topic of study is complex and culturally sensitive with particular reference of the societal setup of Pakistan. In rural and tribal areas, the people are strongly attached to their cultural traditions and their culture perceives the honor killing a brave act. Therefore, the topic requires in-depth understanding so that factors leading to the prevalence of honor killing may be explored. So, on the basis of the study setting and objectives of the study the researchers opted the qualitative research design. The researchers focused on qualitative nature of the topic so that they may grasp a detailed picture about this sensitive issue.

### **Population, sample size and sampling technique**

For the purpose of data collection, it is very important for the researchers first to identify the sources of data collection. The population of the current study is all students of three departments Gender Studies, Law and Religious Studies of University of the Punjab. The purpose of selecting these departments was based on the level of their knowledge about the said issue and expectation of the researchers that such students are in a better position to explain the issue as the topic is related to their area of study. So, it was decided by the researchers to collect data from 4 senior students from each department. So the sample of the study was 12 students from the aforementioned departments from university of the Punjab. The sample of the current study is chosen while following the purposive sampling technique. In this sampling technique, the researchers choose those respondents that are most suitable to the study and willing to participate. The researchers tried to reach the most suitable respondent so that rich data could be extracted from the respondents. Respondents that were willing to share their knowledge and understanding of the topic were interviewed by the researcher.

### **Data collection and analysis**

For the purpose of the data collection interview guide was constructed and face to face in-depth interview was conducted by the researcher. In-depth interview is

used as a tool for data collection because the researchers wanted to have an in-depth understanding of the respective area.

### **Data analysis technique**

The data of the current study is purely qualitative form so it is analyzed through thematic analysis. The researchers generated themes on the basis of the data. The researchers also obtained help from existing literature to formulate the themes for the study.

### **Analysis and discussions**

The data of the current study is purely qualitative form so it is analyzed through thematic analysis. On the basis of the data following themes have been extracted by the researchers. Each theme is supported by valuable comments of the respondents.

#### **Respondents' understanding of concept (Honor Killing)**

Understanding the concept of Honor killing is very important with particular reference of the cultural context of the Pakistan. Honor killing is having a broader sense however the respondents of the study only attributed the honor killing to female eloping and extra marital affairs. One of the respondents said,

*“In my point of view when a female elopes with anyone else or a female have extra marital affairs and killing of such female is called honor killing”.*

This shows the narrow mindedness of the people regarding their understanding of the concept of honor killing. One important factor is also important that mostly honor killing is referred to the killing of a female by a male. Another respondent pointed out in the following words,

*“Honor killing is a killing of female by male when male is ashamed of any act by the female”.*

This shows another dark side of the concept of honor killing in Pakistani society where females are subjected to the honor killing. People's lack of knowledge is an important factor that triggers the problem and female suffer a lot. On the basis of above comments and justifications it can be inferred that people's knowledge about the concept of honor killing is very low and ambiguous. People don't understand rightly the concept of the honor killing and they attach subjective meaning and subjective understanding to the concept of the honor killing. Most of the respondents replied almost in the same way about honor killing.

## **Factors responsible for honor killing**

When it comes to understanding the factors of honor killing it was very difficult for the researchers to comprehend it as there were many factors attached to the honor killing. However, keeping in view the objectives and scope of study a few factors have been mentioned and supported by the respondent's observations. At the first place lack of knowledge and low literacy rate have attributed to the occurrence of the honor killing. One respondent said,

“To my point of view lack of knowledge on part of the people is greatly responsible for the occurrence of this cruel activity. People don't understand the true situation and thus do such activities”.

Another respondent explained the situation by saying.

“Overall literacy rate is very important factor in determining the honor killing as overall societal attitude changes towards a particular situation and occurrence of such issues becomes more prevalent”.

So, it is quite understandable that knowledge, awareness, education and literacy rate are responsible for honor killing. In addition to that a few respondents attributed the honor killing to the patriarchal setup of the society which gave more power to the male and women are subjected to violence. One respondent said,

“In a male dominant society males enjoy more power and they have authority to enact such criminal activities”.

Another respondent explained,

“Male chauvinism triggers the man to enact such activities. It becomes very difficult for the men in the society to bear any meager hurt to their male chauvinism. Honor killing is directly associated with the male chauvinism”.

So, apart from education, male chauvinism is an important factor that contributes to the occurrence of such activities. One important factor has been pointed out by the respondent is the acceptability of the society pertaining to the honor killing. He explained,

“People in our society have accepted this type of killing and have often attributed it to the courageous act by some segments of the society. This attitude by the society makes the occurrence of such activities widespread”.

Another respondent pointed out that legal provision in the law and loopholes in the legal processes often trigger the issue and found to be an important factor in honor killing. One respondent explored,

“Our legal system does not have enough credibility and deterrence that could help in controlling the issue

of honor killing and often culprits escape the legal process by exploiting the loopholes in the system.”

So, the findings of the study prove that lack of knowledge, male chauvinism, societal attitude towards accepting the honor killing and legal deficiencies are most important factors that contribute to the occurrence of the such criminal activities in Pakistan. All of the above mentioned factors collectively or separately contribute towards the honor killing in Pakistan.

### **Prevalence of honor killing in Pakistan**

One of the important objectives of the study was to find out the prevalence of the honor killing in Pakistan and different areas of Pakistan. The study is based on qualitative data hence it only gives the understanding and does not try to predict the prevalence rate in different areas of the country. However, it generally illustrates how the practice of honor killing is distributed among different areas of the country.

One of the respondents pointed out that,

“Level of education in a particular area of the country determines the prevalence of honor killing. So, low education areas such as south Punjab and some areas of Sindh are found to have more cases of honor killing”.

Another respondent said that,

“Prevalence of honor killing is in every nook and corner of the country. However, its severity and shape can be different in different areas. Areas like central Punjab and core areas of other provinces have lower level of prevalence of honor killing due to media and higher level of education”.

So, the study found that the prevalence of honor killing is present in every area of the country however; it varies with the education level and responsibility of the media in it. Media has played a pro-active role in controlling this heinous crime in the country and it is very important to raise the awareness and education level to curb this issue.

### **Honor killing: cultural or religious practice**

Honor killing is often attributed as a religious practice in Pakistan and women have been seen as a symbol of pride and honor by the Islamic tradition and value system. This raises many questions on the socialization pattern of the religion and how religion cultivates the society. Hence, it was very important to unpack the true reason behind the honor killing in Pakistan. The study tried to explore whether honor killing is a social phenomenon or a religion practice.

One of the respondents pointed out that,

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“To my point of view social setup and how society has shaped our mind set towards female is the core reason. In some cases religion can also be an important factor but we cannot completely attribute the honor killing as the religious practice”.

Another respondent revealed,

“Any religion and Islam in particular does not allow killing of any person for any reason. So, I don’t believe that honor killing is a religious practice, rather I would say it anti-religion activity as religion suffer a lot due to honor killing. Honor killing has strong societal basis not the religious”.

So, the comments by the respondents rightly point out that the society is chiefly responsible for such activities and religion has very little part in it. Religious sentiments can be a factor but it is the society that has shaped the male mind set and how women have been name as a symbol of pride in the society.

### **Awareness about honor killing laws**

Curbing any social issue requires political will translated into firm legislation so that law enforcing agencies could perform law and order in a more comprehensive way. However, when it comes to the laws pertaining to the honor killing the level of knowledge about these laws is very low among people and legislation is also not appropriate.

One of the respondents pointed out that,

“I think there are no laws pertaining to honor killing as honor killing is equal to a murder or any other such criminal activity”.

Another respondent pointed out by saying that,

“Honor killing is a serious human rights violation and the situation even becomes worsen when gender equality is involved in it. However, political will is invisible in this regard and we find no strict legal provision in criminal procedures pertaining to honor killing”.

One respondent also pointed out that,

“Due to lack of strict legal provision often culprits escape the legal process. It is very important that strict legal provision must be enacted to curb this evil”.

So, it is evident that legal provisions are very low in this regard; lack of political will is the prime hindrance in curbing this issue. On the other hand societal acceptance of this issue is also another factor that increases the prevalence of honor killing. The prevalence of honor killing is found in almost every area of

the country with minor differences based on education and involvement of the media. However, to conclude and sum up the severity of the issue is very high and it must be stopped at any cost. Human rights violation is not acceptable in any society and particularly Pakistan which is on the course of development.

## **Findings**

The current study is based on primary and secondary both types of data that explored the following findings.

- Honor killing is attached to the killing of females mostly
- The incidents of honor killing vary from locality to locality
- The lack of education and awareness is an important factor of honor killing
- The male dominant societies like Pakistan have more chances of honor killing
- The feudal/tribal lords are the sole power in the tribal areas that inspire people for honor killing in Pakistan
- There is lack of legal system to control this heinous crime in Pakistan
- Majority of the people are not aware about the laws related to honor killing in Pakistan
- Honor killing is more cultural activity that religious

## **Recommendations**

The researchers point out the following recommendations to control the issue of honor killing.

- Firstly, a serious effort should be made to implement the system of punishments
- The role of police is very critical so the police should be trained to control the occurrence of such incidents
- The society should be educated through media and NGO campaigns
- The awareness should be given to the females about their rights
- To strengthen the democratic system that gives rights to all members of society

## **Conclusion**

Society is facing many social evils that are creating serious problems for the human beings. The most important of those is honor killing that is killing thousands of the people especially the females across the globe (Kiener, 2011). It is not a problem of a particular territory or region rather the whole of the world is confronting this heinous crime. It is a general perception that the cases of honor killing are more in the Muslim societies that is a myth not reality. It is also perceived that honor killing is religious activity that a religion inspires the

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members of society to kill a specific male or female that is also not based on truth as this heinous activity is more cultural than religious. The situation of honor killing in Pakistan is very critical because there is lack of legal drafting and especially its implementation as the feudal lords are involved in this practice (Ali, 2001). In the tribal areas, the feudal lords and tribal courts known as "Jirga" has sole power to perform or to refrain to do any act (Hussain, 2006). In the tribal and backward areas, the occurrence of honor killing is at large scale as compared to the urban areas (Iqbal, 2006). The reason of more incidents in backward areas is lawlessness, uneducated people and little awareness through media. There is dire need of iron legal drafting and its implementation through the law enforcement agencies otherwise it will become a fatal crime that will be more harmful than any other crime.

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