HONOUR KILLINGS ON THE TOUCHSTONE OF
CONSTITUTIONAL AND CRIMINAL JURISPRUDENCE

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Abstract
Honour killings are long-lasting cultural practices in which family members attack a female relative by stabbing, stoning, shooting, or beating in order to kill her for reason that she brings disgrace or dishonor to their family. It is a major public health and social problem which requires a considerable attention as it causes serious psychological, social, emotional, and physical consequences. As a perusal of literature shows that majority of the explanations were based on cultural practices, this study analyze the constitutional and criminal laws in Pakistan in the context of honour killings, in which girls or women are killed by their relatives because of their provoking behavior that disgraces their families. Because in these cases, the defendants seek to introduce evidence that such killings, under such circumstances, are customary in their culture. By tracing how provocation ties into honour killings in Pakistan, this article seeks to shed light on how the criminal laws in Pakistan has been amended time to time in order to get rid from the curse of honour killings.

Keywords: Honour Killings, Constitutional Laws, Criminal Laws, Islamic Laws.

Introduction
Honour killing is a worldwide phenomenon (Warraich, 2005) and it has been reported extensively throughout countries such as Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Palestine, Brazil, Iran, Morocco, Ethiopia, Israel, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sweden, the Balkans, Saudi Arabia,
Uganda, Germany, Holland, Italy, India, Yemen, Germany and Pakistan etc. (Ali, 2008). The United Nations Population Fund estimated that every year around 5,000 girls and women are killed at the hands of their relatives in ‘honour killings’ all over the world (UNIFEM, 2007). Nevertheless Kiener asserts that the figure of 5,000 is thought to be gross under count and the number is closer to 20,000 per year all over the world (Kiener, 2011).

In Ancient Rome, honour killings were common when the male head of the family sexually abused on his daughters and adulterous spouses. This concept was carried over into the Armen Empire, where husbands found guilty of murdering their wives, were exonerated and granted lower punishments. Arman males were even known to brag about the deed in public to bolster their reputation. Interestingly, this concept was adopted from the French Penal Code of the nineteenth century, which was in use until 1975 (Ahmed, Shafi, & Masood, 2021).

Now-a-days, Honour killings are most commonly connected with countries in the Middle East and North Africa today. However, the heinous practice continues in other regions of the world including Europe, India, and the United States. Despite their ubiquity in the Islamic world, honour killings are not mentioned in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. However, in countries such as Jordan and Iraq, the judicial system implicitly condones honour killings by reducing sentence of murder if the victim is judged to bring dishonor to the family. In fact, criminals in Jorden were sentenced to no more than six months in prison. Queen Rania of Jordan has often spoken out against honour killings. The country's parliament, on the other hand, has opposed tightening loopholes that allow killers to avoid overall sanctions. The government's inaction is only one component of the problem. The most important issue is women's social subjugation. According to a study conducted in 2013, around half of Jordan's boys and one-fifth (20%) of its girls agree that murdering a woman who has dishonored or embarrassed her family is justifiable. Religion and political leaders in nations such as Pakistan and Jordan are pressing for more steps to end honour killings. The horrible act of honour killing, however, is certain to persist (Muhammad, 2018).

1.1. Definition of Honour Killings

According to an assessment made by the UN, there are around 5000 honour killings each year. But what exactly honour killing is? Honour Killing is the killing of a person by another person for reason that such person brings dishonor to the integrity of the family or community generally for reasons such as rejecting an arrange marriage proposal, having sex outside marriage, becoming the rape victim, dressing in a way which are considered unsuitable, or involving in homosexual relations (Heydari, Teymoori, & Trappes, 2021).

Honour Killing is defined by the Criminal Law (Amendment Act, 2004). In Section 299 of the Pakistan Penal Code as “an offence which is done on the pretext of Siyah Kari, Karo Kari or alike practices or customs or an offence done in the name of honour”.

1.2. Reasons behind Honour Killings
1.2.1. Honour Killings for Seeking Marriage

Living in a society where marriages are arranged by respective guardians or parents, if a person wishes to opt a partner for his/her marriage and actually contract a marriage with him/her, it is considered as one of the major act of disobedience. Because such like acts are supposed to disrespect the man’s honour to whom such woman belong, and it can also lead to expect bride price at her marriage. Though a woman who contract a marriage of her choice can take the recourse of the law of land but as the nature of her act ashamed her family, it leads her family members to resort to violence in order to restore their so called ‘honour’. Further Watta-Satta marriages also puts an additional liability on woman to adhere to the parenta(1)l marriage arrangements and neither refuses nor obtain a divorce (Bhanbhro, 2013).

1.2.2. Honour Killings for Seeking Divorce

Within the traditional honour scheme if a woman seeks divorce through courts, it is considered as public defiance and it calls for strict punitive actions in order to restore the male honour. Numerous women who have obtained their decree for dissolution of marriage have been killed or injured or have never been heard in a society where customs and traditions are strictly followed (Kanwal, 2021).

1.2.3. Honour Killings for Rape

In a society sanctioned by customs, a woman who has been subjected to rape ashamed her family and her consent in such a shameful act is irrelevant for her parents/guardians. According to Nafisa Shah, "A woman who has been raped brings shame to the community and resultantly dishonors the man. No distinction between fornication and rape is provided under the statutory law either. A woman is considered to have been committed Zina, fornication in case if she did not prove her consent to intercourse if raped, rather it attracts grave punishments and does not dishonor the rapist” (Shah, 1998).

1.2.4. Killings under the Pretext of Honour

For violation of honour codes, honour killings were considered as punishments. However, the tribes actually have destabilized the custom of killings not for the sake of honour but for obtaining damages which the tribal settlements awards to the aggrieved persons" (Shah, 1998). In honour killings, the matter ends with the killings of both the Karo and Kari. But if the karo escape and only the Kari is killed which usually happens, then the Karo has to recompense the aggrieved man for damage caused to his honour and for the worth of woman who has been killed and also in order to spared his own life (Janina & Jakab, 2020).

1.2.5. Lust for Money

An easy opportunity is provided by the scheme of honour killings for those who are corrupt to earn money by obtaining women in supposed damages or even to hide other crimes because they know that if they are dragged into the court, they will be dealt with leniency. It appears that the lure of monetary compensations motivated most of our men to blame their wives, mothers, sisters or other female relatives in order to get monetary benefits from alleged Karos who escape the killing (Singh & Bhandari, 2021).

1.2.6. Lust for Property

Lands are the main issue behind honour killings. If a woman owns some property, her husband or brother may killed her in order to obtain that property. Thus, the desire to acquire lands may lies
following the false honour killings (Cohan, 2010).

1.2.7. To Pay Loan

Sometimes men are unable to pay loan and in order to extinguished that load, they killed their own family members (women) and associate a person in borrower’s family to make sure that such loan would be adjust in compensation. It is reported in a magazine in 1997 that a Magsi tribesman murdered his mother and labeled a bank manager as Karo. Direction was given by the Jirga to the supposed Karo to pay compensatory amount to the aggrieved tribesman for killing his mother and spared his life (Kanwal, 2021).

2. Honour Killings in Pakistan

Pakistan consists of four provinces known as Punjab, Sindh, North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. In all these four provinces of Pakistan the menace of honour killings happens frequently. Honour killings originate from the Baloch Tribes in both the Provinces of Baluchistan and Sindh. Honour killings in Baluchistan were sparked from the invasion of Arab settlers and pagans. In Punjab, for reason that it has its extended boarder with Baluchistan, the tradition of honour killings has set to have Baloch origins. Most of the cases with regard to honour killings in recent past are reported in South Punjab near Sindh Boarder. As Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was center of most of the invasions, therefore in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province the tradition of honour killings is set to have Judaic ancestry and this Province is famous for having its tribal notions with regards to women. A woman who is adulterous is called in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as Zina- Kari, and in Baluchistan she is called as Siah-Kari (Gauhar, 2004).

Violence through so called honour killings against girls and woman remained in routine. It includes rape, acid attacks, murder, forced marriages and domestic violence. It is estimated by the Pakistan Human Rights NGO’s that every year about 1000 girls and women are murdered for the sake of honour (Nazar, 2020).

In Pakistan, killings in order to protect the community or family ‘honour’ have received serious attention in the year 2016. On 5th May, 2016, body of 16 year old girl named Amber was found in a burned condition inside a vehicle which had set on fire in Abbottabad, after the decision of Jirga who ordered her death for reason that she helped her friends in marrying a person of her choice (News, 2016). On 31st May, 2016 a 19 year old school teacher was tortured and burned to death by her family members for reasons that she refused an arranged marriage proposal (Watch, 2016). On 8th June, 2016, a mother burned her daughter, Zeenat Rafiq, to death for bringing shame to the family because she marries a person of her choice (Guardian, 2017). On 15th July 2016, 25 year old Qandeel Baloch who was one of the most controversial and famous Pakistani social media star, was killed by her brother in Multan for the name of honour (CNN, 2017). On July 20th, 2016, 28 year old British woman Samia Shahid, who was from Bradford and came to Pakistan to meet her family, was raped and then killed in the name of honour in Northern Punjab (BBC, 2017). Thus, the so called honour killings have a long-festering problem in Pakistan.
3. **Honour Killing: Analysis of Laws in Pakistan**

3.1. **Analysis of Constitutional Law**

3.1.1. **Fundamental Rights in the Constitutional Law**

Criminal laws are always used for discrimination against women in Pakistan even though there is backdrop of the legacy pluralistic judgements of honour killings. The Constitution of Pakistan provides equal protection to all its citizens. Besides women full participation in all spheres of life, the constitution also provides protection of marriages, mothers, children, and family etc. The constitutionally guaranteed fundamental rights are for all the citizens of Pakistan without discrimination (Gledhill, 1965).

Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan provides protection to those laws which are made for the protection of women and children. The protection, safety and interests of women are given special attention. It is stated in Article 8 of the Constitution of Pakistan that any custom or law or usages which are having the force of law and is not consistent with the fundamental rights protected by the constitution shall be to the extent of that inconsistency void. Security of every citizen is safeguarded in Article 9 of the Constitution of Pakistan. Protection to family, mother and child is provided in the Article 35 of the Constitution which says that it is the responsibility of the state to protect them all.

These are the examples of Constitutional Law of Pakistan where special attention and fundamental guarantees are provided for protecting women’s rights but customarily practices negate them especially in cases of the right to mitigate. Women in Pakistan are victimized against the violation of their rights provided in the Constitution. A systematic subordination towards man influenced by customary practices across regions, classes etc. are faces by women in Pakistan. The provisions made under the Qisas and Diyat Laws are usually used in honour killings for discrimination of women. Even in case of Tribal Judicial System, to suppress the constitutional rights of women, honour killings are legalized (Alam, 2019).

The violence of honour killings against women is not only violation of rights constitutionally guaranteed but is also a violation of International Laws wherein state parties are obligated for exercising “Due Diligence” in order to ensure, investigation, prevention and punishments of the offenders for committing such crime. As Pakistan is party to the Convention of Rights of Child and Women’s Conventions, therefore, it is responsible for failing to exercise the principle of due diligence (Raza, 2006).

3.2. **Analysis of Criminal Laws in Pakistan**

3.2.1. **Pakistan Penal Code**

Chapter 16 of the Pakistan Penal Code deals with the Laws which are applicable to the cases of murder, injuries and bodily hurt. Prior to the introduction of Islamic concepts on punishments, provocations were dealt under the Criminal Laws and were brought under the definition of Qatl-e-Amd. Clear difference was marked between Homicide and Genocides (Arnold, 2001). Some factors
clearly show the intention of the defendant, which includes the provocation, his mentality and possible causes leading him to take deliberate action in the furtherance of his goal (Nzelibe, 2008). This was considered as first degree murder under the common law as everything was almost clear enough. However, in most of the cases honour killings took place following provocation, thorough discussion and considerable planning before executing the plan by the members of the concerned family, in very rare case it would take place on the spot (Cohan, 2010). It provides an understanding that honour killing has a very small linkage between the action of killing and boost of fury.

Another factor for honour killing might be that of regaining the honour among the society, but evidence shows that in the majority of cases the murder took place even when the culprit was relax and has deliberately planned about executing his plan. Look into the case of Saba, 18 year old girl. In 2014, she got married with her neighbor against her father’s wishes. Her father took her with his brother to the spot already scheduled, and shot her there and tossed her body into the canal. Fortunately she survived. The attempt to kill her shows that it was a cool blooded attempt already pre-planne
d (Independent, 2014). Another example is of Qandeel Baloch murder case, her brother Muhammad Waseem’s explanation for murder was “I am proud of killing her because girls are born to be stayed at home. First I drugged her and then killed her” which shows the murder more than a planned murder rather than honour killing (Iftikhar, 2016).

This concept has been many times considered by the judges while looking into the cases of honour killings. Justice Syed Shafqat Ali Shah Masoomi in a case of Daimuddin noted that “Karo Kari is an offence bearing stigma not only on the name of Province of Sindh, but in comity of Nations and Muslims as a whole which sullied Pakistan” (Daimuddin and others vs. The State, 2010 MLD 1089, Karachi).

Now from this, the concept surfaced that serious consideration was given to the crimes committed deliberate planning and were considered as more serious and condemnable as compare to the crimes which involve passion. Therefore it was proposed in 2001 by the Parliamentary Commission that it should be taken as a murder rather than involving some sort of provocation and state of mind in it (Marlys, 2017). The introduction of Qisas and Diyat, which are purely the Islamic concepts, has replaced that exception which was provided under Pakistan Penal Code.

3.2.2. Law of Qisas & Diyat (Islamic Law)

Beside other laws as discussed earlier, some of the offences are dealt under the laws of Qisas and Diyat. These laws have altered the concepts of criminal accountabilities in a legal system and have conceptualized the offence in a manner as not directing legal order of states but against victims. The concept renders this thing as purely a family issue which can be solved through negotiation. Such a window for escape has been provided in Pakistan Penal Code under Section 306 and 307 by making it punishable under Qisas. The section provides some exceptions that such shall not be applicable to the minor, insane or if the victim is the grandchild of the culprit, giving free hand to father and also grandfather to feel free in the name of honour killing. Again the last portion of the section facilitates
the offender in the name of direct offspring (Palo, 2008).

Besides these there is another option for the culprit to avoid punishment under section 307 of the Pakistan Penal Code, where if the member of the family waives the right of Qisas to the perpetrator. There are some offences which are provided as compoundable under our Criminal Justice System. By the compoundability, we simply mean that the offender shall not receive any punishment as the members of the victim’s family have received some pecuniary compensation. In real sense the offence of death was not a compoundable offence. It was made compoundable with inclusion of Diyat and Qisas in the Pakistan Penal Code. With the introduction of these laws, rights were given to the legal heirs of the victims to get compensation (Wasti, 2006).

Vast powers are given to the courts under section 310 of the Pakistan Penal Code that it can even set him free or punish him under Ta’zir with some amount as compensation to the victim. Further the person against whom this right is compounded may undergo 14 years of imprisonment. Where it has been waived to the culprit, the Qisas cannot be imposed. Besides these, sections 310 and 309 can only be imposed where Qisas cannot be applied. Here the benefit is given to the person who has committed grave act of murder as section 345(2) of Criminal Procedure Code makes it compoundable for the purpose to exempt certain person from Qisas. It can be rightly said that these provisions are responsible for indirectly and impliedly privatizing a murder. Here, under the said regime, murder has become very much escapable offence as you can simply escape punishment by giving a sum of money to the victim’s family. In almost all cases of honour killings, the offenders escape the punishment by convincing the member of the victim’s family to forgive him against some amount as compensation (Hadi, 2020).

### 3.2.3. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2004

Murder and honour were considered as two distinct concepts prior to the amendments made in PPC through “Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2004” which incorporate the notion of honour into the murder lexicology. The decisions of the judiciary empathize the offender who commits honour killings, seldomly not holding the offender legally responsible for Ta’zir, Diyat or Qisas. The judicial decisions and the implied legislative endorsement with regards to honour killings steered to the movement requesting for a legislative deterrence to the crime of honour killings. Vocal and rigorous efforts made by civil society finally lead to enactment of “Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2004” which is an effort to mend the cataclysmic effect of the islamization of common law.

Clause (ii) of section 299 of the PPC 1860 was amended in order to categorize the honour killings offence, which states that it is an offence which is committed on the pretext of Siyah Kari, Karo Kari, or alike practices, or customs, or an offence committed in the name of honour.

In place of the full stop, a colon was added to section 302 (c) of the PPC, 1860, and the colon continued into a proviso that stated that if Qatl-i-Amd was committed under false pretences or in the name of honor, clause (c) of section 302 would not apply to that and would instead fall under clauses
(a) and (b), depending on the situation. Judicial Patronage was given to the compoundability of offences through amendment made in Section 338 E of PPC 1860, the compoundability of such killings was not ended by judicial patronage but complicated further the idea of compoundability through a proviso which provides that an offence committed in the name or on pretext of honour may be compounded or waived subject to certain restrictions which court may think fit to enact with the consent of the parties, having regards to the facts of each and every case.

The main object of the Act was to take out the statutory gaps evolving judicial ambiguities regarding women murdered on the pretext of honour. Killing a woman on the pretext of honour is murder and the killer would be punished as a murderer, and not as a man who was provoked by the sexual provocation of his wife. The possibility that a murderer that he may be the victim’s Wali was removed under the same regime of amendment. Killings in the name of honour were declared as crime against state and state can take cognizance as Wali. Imprisonment was amended from 14 years to 25 years under section 308 of the PPC.

3.2.4. Criminal Law (Amendment) Offences in the Name and Pretext of Honour Act 2016

On 6th October, 2016 the Parliament enacted an Anti-Honour Killing Bill. The need to pass a bill on honour killings arose as a result of the honour killings of two high-profile individuals, Qandeel Baluch and Samia Shahid, in 2016.

Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy who is an Oscar winning Pakistani film maker, addressed the problem of honour killing in her documentary named "A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness" in 2016. The documentary depicts the tale of girl whose family shot her in the face. The international acclaim of the documentary prompted Pakistan's Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, to promise that legislation on honour killings would be developed, and that more consideration would be paid to the legislation in prosecuting the murderer. Pressure on government to pass legislation banning honour killings arose when Qandeel Baluch's brother killed her in the name of honour. The sudden death of a strong, self-reliant woman in Pakistani society shocked the entire nation. The Act passed by the legislators, amends the criminal legislation, allowing the murderer to use the defence of compoundability of offences for murder in circumstances of honour killings. In cases of honour killings, the compoundability of offences of murder simply converts the death penalty into life imprisonment. With the aforementioned modification, it is anticipated that the so-called culture of forgiving murderer through choices made by jirgas in verandas, etc., will vanish. Section 311 of the PPC was amended to provide for life imprisonment if the offence is committed under false pretences or in the name of honour. The murderer could not seek to evade state law by making this substitution. With the insertion of clause (ee) in section 299 of the PPC, 1860, honour killing became known as "Fasad Fil Arz". "Mischief on Earth" is how the phrase "Fasad-Fil-Arz" is translated. The proviso that the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2004 added to Section 302 of the PPC was replaced by a proviso which states that, in situations where Fasad Fil Arz is applicable, section 302's paragraph (c) does not apply and that, instead, sections (a) or (b) of Section 302 are the applicable clauses. The said
proviso assured that the offender of honour killings would face life imprisonment rather than predefined sentences.

3.3. Analysis of Supreme Court Cases on Honour Killings in Pakistan

Here are some of the cases before the Honorable Supreme Court in which the problem of honour killings and the plea of sudden and grave provocation are analyzed for further clarification.

It was held in a case of Muhammad Akram Khan that “morally and legally speaking, neither anybody has a right nor anyone is permitted to take law in hands and killed anybody in the name of ‘Ghairat’ or ‘Honour’. Neither religion nor law of land allowed so-called honour killings. Such an act is also a violation of fundamental rights as are guaranteed under Article 9 of the Constitution of Pakistan 1973” (Muhammad Akram Khan v. The State PLD 2001 SC 96).

Justice Muhammad Nawaz Abbasi in a case of Muhammad Ameer stated that “there must be differentiation between the commission of crime due to family honour or ghairat, and the commission of crime committed in grave and sudden provocation, in the light of facts and circumstance of each case”. He elaborated that the plea of grave and sudden provocation to the accused may not be offered when a preplanned crime is committed (Muhammad Ameer v. The State 2006 PLD 283). He further provided clarification on the said issue supporting his viewpoint from the Judgement of Honorable Supreme Court wherein it is stated that “in our society it is true that the illegal relations of a female is not tolerable but it cannot be an excuse on the basis of mere suspicion”, and therefore, for mitigation of sentence it is not satisfactory (Muhammad Arshad v. The State 2006 SCMR 89).

Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jillani gave details in a case of Abdul Jabbar on the plea of grave and sudden provocation. In the said case, the High Court alleviated death sentence by stating that “no body in our society forgives anybody who marries his daughter or sister without their consent, and it caused grave and sudden provocation seeing the victim with her husband”. Justice Jillani reiterated the said Judgement of High Court, over-turning the decision by stating that for the plea of grave and sudden provocation, suspicion is not sufficient. He elaborated that “a mere charge of illegal relations without having any impeccable evidences would not establish grave and sudden provocation. It would give anyone the license to kill innocent persons if such pleas are accepted without evidences” (Abdul Jabbar v. The State 2007 SCMR 1496). He further supported his point of view by quoting the judgement given in a case which dealt with honour killing, in which the Supreme Court of Pakistan specifically mentioned that “generally, all cases which are of grave and sudden provocation would not fall ipso facto within the ambit of section 302 (c), specifically those of murder of sister, wife, daughter etc., by their relatives on the accusation of Siah Kari” (Zahir and another v. The State 2000 SCMR 406).

Conclusion

Though these laws are major milestones in the history of Pakistan, the sad fact remains that they have come a bit too late and still consist of major loopholes. The catch is that the killer can be pardoned by the victim’s party if he gets capital punishment. According to legal experts, high chances
are there that if a person killed a woman in the pretext of honour then he may declare it as simple murder in order to avoid punishment because in such a situation chances are that he may be released if the legal heirs pardon him. However, the perpetrator or criminal is to get the imprisonment of 25 years even if the victim’s legal heirs pardon him under the existing law on honour killings. Whereas in simple cases of murder, the convict may get 14 years life imprisonment or maximum of death sentence under Section 302 of the P.P.C.

In addition, the accused may be able to claim that murder had been committed for other reasons such as conflict over property or inheritance. And in these cases, the accused may not only be charged with the provision of Pakistan Penal Code i.e. section 302 but the family members may forgive him under section 309 of the P.P.C, which is the waiver of Qisas in cases of Qatl-i-Amd.

With regards to collecting evidence in cases of honour killing, the court and police are to follow the same procedure required in simple cases of murder. This is the reason that collection of evidence in cases of honour killing is too difficult and due to that reason, a person after killing a woman in his family is unable to be convicted.

Regardless of many gaps evident in these new laws, it is true that the government has in fact made a history by passing pro-women laws and in such a way making the sin of honour killing crime as a non-compoundable offence. At the end of the day, it all comes down to how well a law is implemented. It does not matter how many laws the state has unless it truly implements them.

If the government really wants to put an end to such murders and protect the women in this country, the option of forgiveness needs to be scratched and capital punishment to be ruled in favors of whoever abets or commits these crimes. Many would disagree with the concept of hanging as a solution; however, a strict law will get the job done and prevent murders of women in the name of so-called honour.
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