

Case study: Sharmeen Obaid

Introduction

For a very long time, international human rights law has been silent on violence against women. This is because until the late 1980s/early 1990s, violence against women in particular domestic violence, was not considered a matter to be dealt with human rights law. For instance, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979. After this step of international body, women then came forward for their rights in order to have the equality in the society. This is same happened in Pakistan, when women activist came forward for their rights such as Malala Yousafzai, Muktar-ai-Mai, and Sharmeen Obaid worked for the women rights.

Background of two Oscar Winning documentaries by Sharmeen Obaid

1) Background of Sharmeen Obaid

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, born on 12 November 1978, is a Pakistani-Canadian

journalist, filmmaker and activist known for her work in films that highlight the inequality with women. She is the recipient of two Academy Awards, six Emmy Awards and a knighthood International Journalism Award. Further, Pakistan government awarded her Hilal-e-Imtiaz. Further more, Time magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

b) Her work for Women Empowerment

Sharmeen Ubed Chinoy is a beacon light for the women in our society who do not believe in making tall claims about bringing change, rather who are always ready and affirmative to contribute to raising the awareness about social issues and proposing solution. She has a believe that women have rich potential of affecting change in so many spheres of the society. Her all documentaries is about how society could change the perspective of women rights.

c) Fight Against Domestic and Social Violence

Sharmeen lives close to the reality to discern good from bad. She has worked with refugees and marginalized communities from Saudi Arabia to Syria, Timor to Philippines;

and to Pakistan. After her deep rooted commitment, she was voted one of the five millennial women who have been fighting against domestic and societal violence. Hence, her work is prove that women are being oppressed, subjugated, discriminated, marginalized and sexually assaulted.

d) Oscar Winning documentary: Saving Face:

i) Summary of Saving Face

In Pakistan, a woman's face is deemed to be her greatest asset. Someone seeking to punish a woman need only destroy her face to do her permanent harm, both physically and socially. Saving face exposes how acid attacks affect women in Pakistan, including Zaira, whose husband attacked her outside a courthouse when she filed for divorce, and Bulchana, whose spouse attacked her in marital home where she still lives because she cannot afford to care for her children alone. The film focuses on one courageous man trying to help this community.

ii) message of Saving Face:

Saving Face documentary shows women in Pakistan are moving ahead and fighting for justice in a male dominated society. It also shows how, contrary to popular opinion, the courts do sometimes dispense justice. Another great aspect of Saving Face is that it brings to light the philanthropist mindset of our society where individuals feel the need to give something back to their country.

e) Oscar winning documentary: A girl in the River

i) Summary of A girl in the River

The documentary unfolds a true story of an 18 years old girl Saba, hailing from Gujranwala, Pakistan, who was almost killed by her own father and uncle and dumped into a river. Her sin was the violation of the so-called family honour by eloping with her fiancé of four years. Saba had to take this crucial step when her family refused to marry her to the love of her life, as they wanted her to live (not with her

Uncle's brother in law because he was a rich man.

ii) Message of A girl in the River

The Oscar winning documentary: A girl in the River, by Sharmeen Obaid gave a great message to society. In her capacity, Sharmeen did her job marvellously, it's society's turn now to echo her voice and take it to the point where it will become the voice of all these unheard sabas who came silently in the deepest depths of the rivers and the rest who buried alive, all in the name of honour.

f) words of Sharmeen Obaid

Chinoy said she hopes the cases in her films will resonate for others in Pakistan. Once again she said:

"They are stories of hope with a powerful message for the Pakistani audience. I felt this would be a great way to show how Pakistanis can

help other Palestinians overcome their problems."

Conclusion

In conclusion, Sharmeen Obaid with her work established that nothing is impossible if women themselves have determination to take the first step, which is observed in her documentaries. With her Oscar winning awards she made all Palestinians proud and gave hope for a greater brighter future of the country.

Furthermore, Her documentaries show women can fight themselves alone you can't fight and women can bring change to the society for development. Hence, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy teaches us to believe in our dreams and pursue them because dreams are easy to achieve, we only have to believe in ourselves and keep on knocking at doors, and doors of opportunity will open for us.