

# Gender Studies (2020)

(Q)

Discuss the background of the two Oscar-winning documentaries by Sharmeen Obaid. (20 Marks).

## INTRODUCTION:

"Her films are one of a kind.  
You will be moved to tears  
and inspire to action".

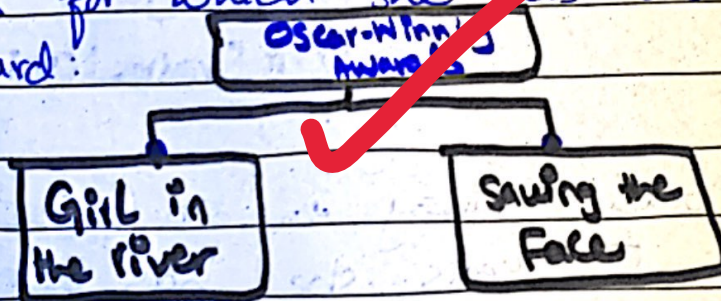
Angelina Jolie  
(About Sharmeen Obaid)

Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy is an asset of Pakistan. For years she has been highlighting the sufferings and miseries Pakistani women have faced. She has introduced herself as a person who wants to engage in difficult conversations. Moreover, she has created so many films out of which 2 documentaries have won an Oscar. People have usually criticized her for the work she has done. Contrarily, she has

only highlighted the gender-based issues women of Pakistan have faced. 2 out of 3 women in Pakistan have faced some sort of harassment in their lives but every such incident goes unreported. Thereby, Sharmeen Obaid has given the voiceless women a voice.

## Oscar-Winning Documentaries by Chinoy:

Chinoy has ~~been~~ <sup>discussed</sup> two most brutal kinds of violence in her movies. One is honour killing and the other is acid attack. Following are the documentaries for which she has won Oscar award:



Following is the explanation of her documentaries and their background:

### Girl in the River:

This is a story about an 18-year-old woman who fell in love with a boy named Qaiser. She married the

guy he loved and did not get the approval of her father and brother. One day, her father and brother and threw her in the river but she survived to let everyone know about her story.

## Honour killing: The background of the documentary:

In Pakistan honour killing is a serious issue. Amnesty International has stated:

"Most of the honour killings in Pakistan take place in Pakistan. Most of them are women and girls".

Amnesty International

Most of the cases in Pakistan also go unreported which is why the issue has not been highlighted <sup>very</sup> much on state level.

inadequate laws:

There are inadequate number of laws protecting women against honour killing. However, even if laws are passed, they are not implemented properly. Pakistan has passed a law to protect women against honour killing but it has not been implemented properly. According to **World Bank Reports**, around **150** women die each year in Pakistan due to honour killing, other cases go unreported.

Where does it happen?

Usually, honour killing takes place in **Chitral, Swat** and areas in **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**. More surprisingly, the cases of honour killing have also begun to take a rise in **Balochistan**. A very <sup>recent</sup> incident of **Qandeel Baloch** was recognized by the media. Her brother killed her in the name of honour because of several reasons. ~~This~~ To end this **toxic culture**, **Chiray** came forward and made a documentary to highlight the issue.

## SAVING THE FACE:

"I have another oscar!"

Sharmeen Obaid

When Sharmeen Obaid received the second oscar, she triumphantly said that now she had another oscar. Saving the face was a movie/documentary created by Chinoy to create awareness about acid attack victims.

### What was the movie about?

The movie/documentary was about a two women, **Zakia** and **Rukhsana** who had been attacked with acid by their husbands and in laws. To save such victims, **Dr. Jauzel Rana** came to Pakistan from United Kingdom to help such acid attack victims. Moreover the doctor and victims worked together to get justice from the Pakistani justice system as well.

The documentary <sup>also gave</sup> reflected a ray of hope to for such victims that they are being heard by Pakistan's authorities.

## Background of the Story:

The story raised the issue of acid attacks in Pakistan. Women have been a victim of misogynistic <sup>behaviour</sup> ~~society~~ <sup>in which</sup> ~~there~~ men have the so called authority to de-shape and burn woman's face for their own satisfaction. The documentary ~~work~~ worked with **Acid Survivor Foundation** which estimated that around **100 women** get targetted every year by men who ~~use~~ <sup>throw</sup> acid at their beautiful faces.

## Acid Attacks in Pakistan:

Women like Ms. Shama and Fakhra Yousif have shown the reality of Pakistan's justice system. Ms. Fakhra Yousif died two times: One when she got attacked with acid, second when she **attempted suicide** and succumbed to death because she did not get justice from Pakistan. Ms. Shama was also a victim of acid attack. Her husband attacked her because he was jealous of her beauty.

## Laws related to acid attack in Pakistan:

Laws related to acid attack are weak in Pakistan. Moreover, there is **life imprisonment for 25 years** for those who throw acid at a woman's face. Unluckily, women like Fakhira Yousaf died without getting justice for such purposes, according to **Chinoy's mother**, she has developed funded acid attack victim **centres** to help the traumatized women.

Good attempt!!!

## Conclusion:

Speaker **Oravid Chinoy** has highlighted how the women of Pakistan are facing serious issues in Pakistan. She has helped women of Pakistan through international media and this led to the development of **an acid attack Bill** in Pakistan as well. She highlighted Dr. Jawed's efforts to help women and also highlighted honour killing which was brought into **big policy making** <sup>circle</sup> **notice**. Thereby, there are laws in place to help

Such women out, yet they are not  
enough

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