

Can Legislation Alone End Honour Killings in Pakistan?

The Outline

(1) Introduction

(2) Expounding causes of honour killings in Pakistan

(3) Pakistan needs holistic multi-faceted solution to end honour killings in the state alongwith legislation

(a) Legislation alone can't reshaped entrenched patriarchy in Pakistani society, seeking cultural reforms

(b) Awareness and education are crucial to reconsider women from symbolic source of honour into humanitarian perspective

(c) Inclusion of women in decision-making can address structural flaws, empowering them as equal citizen in the society

(d) Implementation of legislation is equally crucial alongside formulation to cultivate required outcomes.

- (e) Thorough police investigation is necessary to prevent immunity of perpetrators of honour killings, strengthening legislation's outcomes
- (f) Timely judicial decisions are indispensable to prosecute criminals, ensuring law and order against honour killings
- (g) Financial empowerment of women is significant to transform them from weak symbols of honour into strong partners of society
- (h) Religious education and re-interpretation are needed in Pakistani society to raise awareness about dignity of women
- (i) Government should use digital platform to reshape ancient structural flaws and gender stereotypes alongside laws to ensure desired results of legislation
- (j) Parallel justice system (jirgas) must be excluded from honour killing cases to ensure justice in Pakistan

(4) **Conclusion**

The Essay

Honour killing is not merely a murder of a woman, but it is a complex interplay of community, laws and culture of society that produce discretion for such heinous act. Once stepped into margins of rural Sindh, south Punjab, Balochistan or KPK, one can clearly see deeply entrenched inequality in the society. Power imbalance between men and women seems to be rigidly normalized. People acknowledge honour killing as outcomes of some evil acts and disloyalty. Due to this acceptance, honour killing has risen as a serious concern in Pakistan. The major causes include its wide acceptance, weak laws, rigid cultural norms, and exclusion of women from being equal part of society. Pakistan needs a holistic solution alongside legislation to end honour killings in the country. Cultural reshaping is an important pre-requisite. Additionally, awareness about women's rights, and inclusion of women in decision-

making can reshape place of women from merely symbolic part into equal citizen. Alongside legislation, adequate implementation, thorough police investigations, and ~~strong~~^{honest} and timely judicial decisions are necessary to end honour killings in Pakistan. Financial independence can transform women's status as well. To radically reform cultural stereotypes, religious scholars must participate to counter this challenge in Pakistan. In today's digital era, social media platforms must be used to address ancient structural flaws of society. Hence, legislation is a first step to end honour killing. Alongside legislation, Pakistan needs to address structural imbalance, cultural stereotypes, power differences, and exclusion of women that create vacuum for perpetuation of this heinous act in Pakistan.

Before delving into discussion, of major causes of honour killing in Pakistan are discussed, one of the most important cause is structural

power imbalance between man and woman. man is portrayed as provider and protector whereas - female is considered dependent and symbolic sign of honour. This deeply inculcated difference manipulate thoughts of man to be supreme. To worsen the situation, weak law and order and delayed decision making help perpetrator to elude from prosecution of crime. Alongside this, religious misinterpretation and limited awareness about women rights further compounds the challenge. Therefore, legislation alone can't end honour killings in Pakistan because of multi-dimensional reasons behind this rising challenge.

First of all, legislation alone can't reshape entrenched patriarchal imbalance developed in Pakistani society, seeking cultural reforms. The patriarchal culture ~~is~~ dominates status of man as compared to woman. ~~Inculcated~~ ^{Inculcated} at individual, and family and community level, it must be addressed at root level. Society must be aware about this imbalance.

The informed citizens, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and independent groups can play their role. Through campaigns and community engagements, cultural reforms are possible. Therefore, honour killings can't end through legislation alone, they need reformation of whole narratives of communities of Pakistan.

Apart from this, education is crucial to enable reconsidering women from symbolic source of honour into humanitarian perspective. The present form of education in Pakistan must be reformed to include gender sensitive topics, so that students get to know about these evils and their societal implications. Additionally, education of man helps to reshape their extreme perspective about women as a sign of honour to equal part of society. Furthermore, (curriculum must include)* the government must ensure education for all as mandated in **Article 25A of constitution of Pakistan**. Through education, extreme conception of man about women can be changed into

moderation. Hence, legislation alone can't end honour killings in Pakistan; they seek informed citizens that understand women's wider role in the society.

Furthermore, inclusion of women in decision-making can address structural inequalities, empowering them as equal citizens in the society. Women are widely excluded from decision making roles in Pakistan. They face deeper marginalization in political, social and financial decisions. This exclusion portrays women as weaker and trivial being. Hence, men overlook their potential and intellect. Subsequently, they consider them as ^{mere} symbolic honour instead of equal human beings. Additionally, as major decisions in policymaking are taken by men, hence these policies also remain biased. Resultantly, sidelining women's role in the society. Therefore, legislation against honour killing can't end it ~~untill~~ unless women are empowered and included in important ~~politic~~ decisions and policymaking roles.

Equally important is the implementation of legislation alongside formulation to cultivate required outcomes. For instance, Pakistan formulated many laws such as Criminal law (amendment) (offences in the name or pretext of honour) act, 2016. However, according to human rights organization's estimation, Every year still 1000 women are killed in the name of honour. This illustrates that mere legislation can't end honour killings in Pakistan. The perpetrators must be held accountable for their crimes. ^{Hence} Without adequate execution, the government can't end honour killings in Pakistan.

Additionally, thorough police investigation is necessary to avoid immunity of perpetrators of honour killings, ensuring outcomes of legislation. In Pakistan, police's role in gender sensitive issues has been criticized. The reason behind criticism is more focus on character

assassination or undermining family's honour during investigations. To end honour killing, police must play positive role and conduct thorough investigations. It will encourage victim families to report such cases without intimidation. Therefore, the government must give gender sensitization training to the police along with legislation to end this evil act in Pakistan.

In parallel to police investigations, timely judicial decisions are indispensable to prosecute criminals, ensuring law and order.

~~honour~~ against honour killing in Pakistan. It is a famous saying that **Justice delayed is justice denied.**

In Pakistan, millions of cases are in the backlog, undermining^{ing} justice system in the country. This discourages

(weakens) reporting mechanism because public loses trust in the institutions.

Additionally, similar to police sectors, judges must be given gender sensitive training in Pakistan to conduct these cases. It proves that legislation

alone can't end honour killing in Pakistan but it requires multi-dimensional efforts to counter it.

Additionally, financial empowerment of women is significant to transform them from dependent and weaker citizens into strong and equal partners to man. Financial dependence not only weakens women but also burden men in the society. This burden may cause frustration in them. Additionally, dependency renders women on mercy of men to provide. Men exploit this imbalance and seek dominant status in the community. Subsequently, dominance creates thoughts of considering women as property and honour. In most of the cases, men kill women on the basis of doubts, calling them as **Karo Kari**. Therefore, the government can end honour killing through empowerment of women along with legislation.

In addition to this, religious education and re-interpretations

are necessary in Pakistani society to raise awareness about status of women. Not only Islam but also major religions of the world have given high status to women. Instead of symbol of honour, Islam advocates them as equal part of society in economic, political, and social spheres. Hence, families must be given this awareness through religious scholars.

It will ensure prevent societies to remain reluctant from reporting.

Additionally, awareness about women's honour will counter ^{its} acknowledgement of society as a norm. Therefore, acknowledged citizens will report covert incidents of honour killing. In this way, this evil act can be ended uprooted from ~~at~~ levels ~~in~~ Pakistan.

Another important step is the use of digital platforms to reshape structural flaws and gender stereotypes alongside legislation to ensure multi-layered solution to end honour killings in Pakistan. In most of the areas, especially marginalized

communities, men are expected to maintain their family's honour. So, in societal pressure and fear of dishonour, they kill women. To address this patriarchal rigid culture, government must use digital platforms in this scientific era. As more than 60% of the population of Pakistan is youth, and they use social media. Therefore, social media campaigns can change their entrenched narratives about honour killing and karo kari. In this way, honour killing can be ended in Pakistan.

Lastly, the jirga system must be excluded from justice system, especially in honour cases. The parallel system (jirga) functions in Pakistan, commonly in alienated areas where honour killing is frequent. They give decisions in favour of criminals or ~~also~~ ^{mostly} give compensation to victim families. This jirga system undermines social justice and hinders equality in Pakistan. Therefore, the government

must ensure to conduct these sensitive cases in formal courts. This illustrates that legislation alone can't end honour killing in Pakistan, but it seeks to end jirga system to ensure social justice in the society.

To sum up the above discussion, honour killing in Pakistan is a serious concern. It is becoming common because of entrenched patriarchal norms, imbalanced power structures, and exclusion of women from social, political, and economic arena. Hence, legislation alone can't end honor killings in Pakistan. They seek multi-layered reforms from local to national level. The ^{informed} society must play role in cultural enlightenment about women's right. Additionally, education and awareness are crucial to bring change in the society. Alongside formulation of laws, their implementation is ~~as~~ important to convert them into outcomes. In addition to this, policy and judiciary must be given gender-sensitive

training. Similarly, women should be empowered through financial independence. Religious misinterpretation should be addressed through religious re-education. Lastly, government should use social media platforms to change societal narratives and end honour killing in Pakistan.

