

A REVIEW ON POSTCOLONIAL ANALYSIS OF AURAT MARCH AND THE DYNAMICS OF FEMINISM IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Although women's activism has existed in Pakistan since its inception, the country witnessed a new type of activism in the shape of the "Aurat March" in 2019 and 2020 onwards. This study investigates the history, aspirations, and outcomes of Western feminism. Using discourse analysis, this study investigates women's activism in Pakistan, the 'Aurat March, and the public hostility met by organizers and supporters as a result of the event's strange chants and comical signs. Pakistan is more than just a Muslim country; it is also a Third World country with a brief postcolonial history and this inquiry delves into the intricate web of Islamic culture and feminism at work there. This article examines the 'Aurat March' movement in Western civilization for social, cultural, and religious transformation, as well as its relationship to feminism. Instead of focusing on minor issues, the study also emphasizes the need of women's rights advocates raising a rational and effective public voice with widespread support if we are to finally abolish social evils. Women's rights in the context of western feminism have been compared with limits on women's emancipation in the Islamic context, and a framework has been proposed to clarify this distinction.

Keywords: Postcolonial analysis, Aurat March, Feminism, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

As a direct result of globalization, women's political status has substantially transformed in a number of countries all over the world. This is the case in both developed and developing nations. This can be seen to its fullest extent in nations where Islam is the predominant religion in the majority of the population. The global women's movement has grown in tandem with the increase in the number of activists fighting for women's rights. (Weiss, 2003) During the course of the 20th century, the movement became increasingly globalized, which resulted in the notion acquiring an additional degree of complexity as a direct result of its evolution. Historians have devised a

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diverse array of responses to the subject at hand after giving the matter some thought and pondering its implications. All of these answers are dependent at the idea of gender, and more specifically, on the perspectives held by men and women with regard to the parallels and distinctions that exist between the sexes. (Leila J & Verta, 1999)

The feminist movement is the most revolutionary social force that has surfaced in the modern period. In some quarters, it is also known as the fight for the emancipation of women needed. It is in the process of rethinking the entirety of the social structure and making changes to the entirety of the foundation upon which human interactions are established at this time. This procedure has been going on for a considerable amount of time at this point. (Jameelah, 1998). Women of the Muslim faith living in Western countries can usually count on receiving a lot of sympathy and help from the general public. This status is unlikely to alter, however, as long as the rest of the Islamic world labels them as heretics and dissenters. Some people, meanwhile, realize that despite their problems fitting in with Muslim culture, they have just as much trouble fitting in with western or secular society. This is so despite the fact that they have a hard time relating to Muslim traditions. They conclude this is the right conclusion to draw after giving some thought to the idea that they have problems associating with Muslim culture. (Hussain, 1996)

When it comes to tackling gender-related problems in Pakistan, there is virtually always a considerable level of dispute and complexity involved. Furthermore, feminism in Pakistan has always defended itself against charges of Westernization or having an international agenda. For as long as the movement has existed, these charges have been leveled against it. It has been under examination for these charges since the beginning. (Narayan, 1997)

This paper will look into the problem of women's activism in Pakistan, specifically the "Orat March," as well as the frequent conflicts that arise between activists and the general public and the root causes that lead the general public to condemn such activism. This paper will examine women's activism in Pakistan and the "Orat March" movement they spearheaded. Women's NGOs and the portrayal of women's political activism are areas that need immediate attention, as is the nature of these organisations themselves. In any case, it not only limits the reach of their activism but also, in a variety of ways, specifies the confines of the conflict in which it is fought. (Jafar, 2007)

The research intends to clarify some of the confusion surrounding feminist methods and tactics for advancing women's rights in Pakistan. Recognizing the role that societal shifts play in cultural and religious differences is also essential. Therefore, this research has the potential to contribute to the development of a rational and methodical framework for understanding the debate surrounding women's activism in Pakistan from the perspectives of the social, cultural, religious, and constitutional rights that are already guaranteed by the Pakistani constitution of 1973.

Research intellectuals have long debated the topic of women's activism in Pakistan for the purpose of securing various rights, but the topic of the "Aurat March," which was initiated in March 2018 on Women's International Day, is a very recent one that happened in the history of Pakistan. In reading the literature review, numerous sources were referred, including but not limited to books, research papers, reports, and newspaper articles written by scholars in the United States and elsewhere. By way of example, in her recent article titled "Maintaining Momentum in Changing Circumstances: Challenges of the Women's Movement in Pakistan," Farida Shaheed briefly examines some of the conceptual difficulties connected to ideas of the women's movement and the 'Aurat March in Pakistan. The younger generation of feminists, especially those who place a premium on the politics of sexuality in their efforts to effect social change, were the focus of her study. These feminists focus primarily on sexual politics in their fight for equality. (Shaheed, 2019)

In her book, "The Women's Movement in Pakistan: Challenges and Achievements," she delves into the various eras of the Pakistani women's rights movement and how different contexts, as well as supportive and opposing factors, influenced activism and its outcomes. She has reviewed briefly some of the conceptual issues surrounding feminism and women's rights activism from the perspective of Pakistan. (shaheed, 2010)

Aurat March in Pakistan (2018-2020)

Urgent research is needed into the lives of Pakistani women who identify as activists or feminists, as well as the gender roles and relationships that they observe and project in relation to religion and nationalism. Their methods of observation and projection of these ideas are also worth investigating. (Anjum, 2019)

Women in Pakistan have recently come out to participate in social and political women's movements in order to gain empowerment and a voice in their country's affairs. As a result, they decided to mark International

Women's Day by organizing the "Aurat March" (2018) in Pakistan. (Munazza, 2020)

The term "Aurat March" refers to a series of campaigns that are aimed at reforming societal issues such as women's suffrage, reproductive rights, domestic violence, equal pay in the workplace, maternity leave, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. These campaigns are part of a larger movement known as the "Aurat March." The "Aurat March" movement encompasses all of these concerns in its entirety. (r Baig, Aslam, Akram, Fatima, Malik, & Iqba, 2020)

Karachi's young feminists in 2018 spearheaded the movement that would become the first 'Aurat March, with the slogan "Hum 'Auratein" prominently displayed on the march's banner. Some of these women had previously worked in Shirkat Gah or participated in other activist group in order to raise public consciousness about the problem of violence against women. Therefore, this march was organized. This demonstration took place in January (We Women). There were people of varying ages and backgrounds in the crowd, as well as transgender and rainbow activists. Some of the older feminists who helped out were also very helpful. A separate, less significant protest occurred at the same time in Lahore. (Munazza, 2020) One of the ways that major cities across Pakistan commemorated International Women's Day on March 8 was by having residents take part in an event called the "Aurat March." (Alam, 2020)

The Placards of 'Aurat March

Slogans have been delivered using a variety of media, including banners, posters, audio instruments, speeches, and songs, during the course of any rally, march, or campaign. Catchphrases or slogans that communicate socio-cultural issues have always played a vital role in inspiring people to work together to achieve specific goals. Catchphrases or slogans that communicate socio-cultural themes have long played an important role in this context. Slogans, flags, and anthems will forever represent the struggle you face in your pursuit of the cause, the goal, and the will to fulfil the provided issues. Slogans serve as a forum for the discussion of numerous sociopolitical concerns, some of which might otherwise go unmentioned. This is due to the fact that slogans' primary role is to inspire action. The employment of slogans allows message composers to make their claims while feeling secure in the knowledge that they would not face the same political or social repercussions as those who hold opposite ideas within the community or by the government. (Sowaidi, Banda, & Mansour, 2015)Participants in the

movement had diverse feelings and viewpoints about the 'Aurat March. Since the term "feminist" is still controversial, some people were offended by the posters, claiming that they were improper, that they distracted attention away from the challenges that rural and grassroots women confront, and that they would turn off many women. Others, felt that the issues were being brought to the public's notice at last. Self-made placards by the rally's attendees were consistently more creative and humorous than those produced in advance. (Munazza, 2020)

The signs were captured by the media, and as a result, they went viral not just in the country but also internationally. One of the contentious signs that the 'Aurat March displayed included the phrase "Mera Jism Meri Mari," which has now evolved into the primary symbolic slogan for the 'Aurat March. The phrase "my body my choice," which has been the subject of a social movement driven in the West and which "aims to break the silence and end the stigma around a critical sexual and reproductive health issue: access to safe abortion," is where the term "my body my choice" came from, and it has been directly duplicated and translated into English. (Asfand, 2020)

A Study of Western Feminism

At the time of the French Revolution, women in Europe had the epiphany that "their subjugation to men was a product of a determined ideology," which meant that they could reject this ideology and that they might do so with their own concerted ideology. This realization occurred around the time of the French Revolution. (Popkin, 2015) Feminism, on the other hand, is a movement that has spent decades showing to it and others that women can feel hopeful and content when they have complete independence. Many women would appreciate having some of their jobs done for them on a regular basis. Because it was undeniably fascinating. They, like anybody else, may find the prospect of being apart from their partner and the responsibilities of parenthood appealing at times. Having children and getting married both necessitate a lifetime of effort and, more importantly, genuine sacrifice. (S Venker & P Schlafly, 2011) Women in Europe and the rest of the Western world did not have the same economic or educational prospects that they had today a century ago. This was particularly evident in the United Kingdom. Last but not the least, a United Nations resolution declares plainly that "Human Rights are Women Rights." (Offen, 2017) Over the last half-century, there has been a dramatic transformation in attitudes about women who, rather than relying only on their male counterparts for financial assistance, have chosen to assume responsibility for themselves as

well as others who rely on them. The feminist movement was responsible for this shift toward attitudes. Alternative lifestyles, such as the trend towards later marriages, an increase in the number of single parents, and a fall in marriage rates, are among the reasons that have affected the social and cultural environment. Other concerns include rising divorce rates and a shift towards later marriages (Abdnor, 2004). There are several physically active pursuits that could help modern women become more socially responsible and personally evolved than the time and energy they commit to improve their exterior appearance, whether through cosmetic surgery or another method. This is one of the reasons why so many women in the twenty-first century experience mental health issues such as clinical depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, divorce, and shattered homes. Faludi's observation can be summarised as follows: Being a woman in America at the turn of the century and being conscious of that fact is a blessing. Women have "so much" access. Finally, women have access to all of the resources they require to function effectively in society. (Weiner, 1992) At the same time, in the twenty first century, it is explained that in the name of "freedom of speech," this type of pornography is on the rise, and it threatens the future of our youth, especially our girls and boys, by promoting and implicitly endorsing retrograde and fundamentally unhealthy images of relations between the sexes that objectify women and promotes unethical material. In addition, it is stated that this type of pornography poses a threat to the future of our country because This kind of pornography endangers the future of our country because it encourages and tacitly endorses antisocial behaviours. (Offen, 2017)

Culture Shift, Western to Eastern

The goals of feminism, as it is understood in Western civilizations, are not necessarily relevant or transferable to the goals of feminism in other communities because of the various cultural differences that exist across different countries (Munazza, 2020). On the other hand, the search for happiness has not advanced in tandem with the development of feminism. The realm of homes and families, not the workplace, will always and inexorably be the location of the most significant and valued sources of happiness, purpose, and identity for both males and females. This is because the workplace isn't the only place where these things may be found. This won't ever be different. (Charen, 2018)The debate over the problems, accomplishments, rights, and demands faced by women serves no value and ought to be abandoned because of this. Forget everything you've heard about women's emancipation, girl power, and overthrowing some made-up version of the patriarchy. By framing the conversation in feminist terms, we are

contributing to the gender conflict that already exists. Stop the sexist rivalry that is preparing the road for matriarchy and put an end to it. (Breslaw, 2014) When seen from the point of view of social issues, religious beliefs, or political philosophy, the ideology of feminism is generally regarded in a negative light and has a reputation for having a poor reputation. Out of all the emblems of social progressivism and emancipation, the feminist has been subjected to the most extreme forms of distortion and slander there are. When seen from the point of view of social issues, religious beliefs, or political philosophy, the ideology of feminism is generally regarded in a negative light and has a reputation for having a poor reputation. Out of all the emblems of social progressivism and emancipation, the feminist has been subjected to the most extreme forms of distortion and slander there are (Kanner & Anerson, 2010).

CONCLUSION

Feminism, sometimes portrayed as a "tool" for improving women's status in society, is in reality a complete fabrication created by the power elite to advance their own narrow interests. Many of the women had their minds changed after seeing a picture of strong women. This, however, leads them to become single women, women who are strong but confused because they lack male companionship. Instead, it tricks them into thinking they've been whisked away to another century entirely. Although such protests tend to be met with hostility in countries like Pakistan, their influence on the country's youth cannot be denied. The vast majority of Pakistanis are devout Muslims who follow ancient religious traditions. All involved, from organisers to backers, must remember that the United States is not a secular nation. Our commitment is not to worldly pleasures but rather to Islam and IPn (Faith). They lack the strong religious convictions that characterise the Western world. The fight for women's rights in the Western world was never limited by religious or cultural standards.

One of the most important things to remember is that many of the goals of Western feminism are not transferable to other cultures because they are not acceptable to those cultures. It is imperative that we as a Muslim nation, be taken into account before we formulate any policy or pursue any international objectives. It is unlawful to violate Islamic standards and customs. Because the West cannot embrace the values and ethics of other countries that are not compatible with their own, it is not desirable for any nation to acquire Western culture in order to advance and be deemed a modern civilised nation. Despite the Qur'an's and prophetic traditions'

extended protections for women, restrictive notions regarding women's rights have arisen in some communities across the country as a result of social, cultural, and even patriarchal dominance. Mercy, kindness, unconditional justice, equality, freedom, and humanism are all universal Islamic teachings. As a result of these restrictions, women are denied their rights. This, however, does not mean the adoption of any foreign practises or policies. Feminism that resonates with Muslim women must be altered to reflect the Muslim world's specific history, customs, and culture while remaining consistent with Islamic precepts. Despite overwhelming opposition, no one asked for a total ban on the 'Aurat March; rather, they urged a rewriting of the protest's slogans and posters, as well as the removal of stolen notions. A group that feels ignored, such as 'Aurat March,' must understand that getting attention through silly concepts is not growth. If they cared about women's rights and positions, they would change their policies, goals, and ambitions to fit with our religious and national values.

RECOMMENDATION

Here are some suggestions for potential new endeavors. Several of the highlighted topic.

In order to explore, there is an immediate need for research into goals, resources, and strategies of such groups attempting to shape cultural and religious norms it's important to differentiate between the rights of women in the context of western feminism and the constraints on women's liberation in the Islamic environment.

It's necessary to shed light on such concerns and the group's goals if we're to alter our moral compass. It is further proposed that the actual social and cultural evils that exist against women in Pakistan may be highlighted, and that the current norms and legislation for women's protection be highlighted in contrast.

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