

Meaning making of gender in Pakistan with interdisciplinary approach

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Abstract. The article draws upon the contradiction of meaning making in the West that view girls like Malala who stood for education and freedom as leaders and the meaning making among many in Pakistan who view her as Western tout and not their hero.

Keywords. Girls education, Female empowerment, SMEs.

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1. An introduction to: Deceptive actions under guise of nobility

The general degeneration of Islam in Pakistan and Outside is clichéd as ‘Talibanisation of the society’: most of whose victims had been from poor, down trodden and tribal areas of Pakistan. Nevertheless the biggest victims were the women and girls. The women folk were sent to the stone ages by making them live in terror in their private as well as public lives. Taliban were against entertainment and education; but particularly against women’s entertainment and education. They would bomb girls’ schools where ever they could; if not bombing and pillaging over life and property of a Pakistani citizen. Taliban were clearly at war with moderate Islam in Pakistan. It is an irony that there are still many who have soft corner for the Taliban but with no surprise that they are generally the in volunteer outcasts of the society all due to their impoverished economic status. The economic status quo in Pakistan that benefits the rich and excludes the poor has made Talibanisation relevant for the marginalized areas of Pakistan even today when Pakistan army has dismantled the groups of Taliban factions that had taken up arms against Pakistani state and population. In reality there are no good Taliban and bad Taliban. Pakistan can very well do without this concept and bring respite of awareness to the one’s who may sympathise with them.

For example Taliban have been against Women Empowerment and Women Education but would always seek lady doctors and female nurses for their female patients. To become a lady doctor or a female nurse is not an outcome of chance. It requires decades of physical, intellectual and monetary investments by the girls, their families and the society to be able to practice these professions. Secondly Taliban’s repression of women was never Islam; a religion that gave women their individual identity by giving them right over property, marriage and even divorce. The first woman who accepted Islam after initial advent of the religion some 1500 years ago was an entrepreneur.

A brave young girl namely Malala Yousafzai stood against the Taliban in Swat and became an overnight hero in the West. So much so that Taliban made an

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attempt on her life though she survived the onslaught. Soon Malala would get a Nobel peace prize in addition to many other notable international awards. It is an irony that many Pakistanis including many educated ones translate a fight of a young girl against Talibanisation of her country as a hoax staged by CIA .

Why would some among the Pakistani society defend Taliban over a young muslim girl fighting for her right to education and freedom? The meaning making by the West (Zubrowski, 2009) hugely facilitated by its popular media painted the color of extremism on Islam through the actions of Talibans whose leadership was generously funded by the CIA in 1980s in guise of Islamic jehad on communist infedals. So the jehad continued taking anyone who would talk about peace especially those among women. There is a point for reflection that why the majority of Pakistan that is also socially and economically impoverished make opposite meaning making of West's intentions and their outcomes despite of the West spending billions of their tax payer's hard earned dollars on alleged stability of the country by helping improve infrastructure and social sector.

If anything, the futility of direct aid money by developed countries in changing social norms in developing countries seemed like a futile effort according to academic literature. (Guess, 2010) For example improving mere literacy rate among women would not empower them despite its significant weight in human development indicators. It is more important to economically empower them by directly arranging for finance at town and village level for women who like to undertake business at small enterprise levels. If the women are economically empowered then they can arrange for the education and health for their family supporting her head of the household who is a male in most of the cases. This will also strengthen the unit of family in Pakistan such that girls and women and their individual choices would be heard and acted upon more frequently giving pride to their self identity in addition for them being just either mothers, daughters, wives or sisters.

References

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