

Tribhuvan University

**From Victim to Victor: Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* a Memoir of Courage and
Resistance**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Master of Arts in English**

By

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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Tirtharaj Gautam has completed his dissertation entitled “From Victim to Victor: Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* a Memoir of Courage and Resistance” under my supervision. I, hereby, recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voice.

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Shiva Raj Panta, PhD

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Date.....

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “From Victim to Victor: Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* a Memoir of Courage and Resistance” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Tirtharaj Gautam, has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

Mukhtar Mai's memoir In the Name of Honor vividly portrays the harsh realities faced by women in patriarchal societies. This research explores the profound significance of silence within her narrative, analyzing how power dynamics shape characters' experiences. Mai's ordeal highlights not just physical but also psychological exploitation, symbolizing broader challenges faced by women in conservative Muslim societies like Pakistan. Unlike many victims, Mai defies societal expectations by seeking justice through legal channels, despite the daunting requirements for proving rape. Her courage garners global media attention and support, ultimately catalyzing national and international advocacy efforts. Her resilience not only challenges patriarchal norms but also empowers other women, symbolizing a collective struggle against female exploitation. Theoretical insights reveal how silence and power dynamics shape perceptions of reality in Mai's narrative. This thesis employs a feminist lens to analyze Mai's resistance and the societal response to her case. The findings underscore the transformative impact of Mai's activism, demonstrating that perpetrators of female exploitation can be held accountable under the law. Mai's initiative in establishing a school for girls emerges as a creative resistance against patriarchal structures, empowering marginalized women with education and awareness of their rights. Her story exemplifies a broader movement for gender justice in Pakistan, highlighting the transformative potential of individual courage in challenging systemic oppression.

Keywords: Patriarchy, Oppression, Sexual Assault, Resistance, Empowerment.

This research focuses on Mukhtar Mai's memoir *In the Name of Honor* an account of her experiences as a woman in the ancient tribal justice; rampant, illiterate society with economic and social bondage. Instead of committing suicide after her gang rape she accumulates extraordinary courage and strength to fight against the existing society. Specially, the research explores the subordination of females who are treated as inferior at the

hands of patriarchy. Moreover, this research foregrounds the undercurrent tone of protest and resistance against the female subjugation. The exploration of this rising level is awareness among the females to go against the patriarchal domination. Hence, this research puts forwards the oppression of females and their resistance in the research.

At the start of the twenty-first century, Mukhtar Mai, a divorced woman from the lower caste in the village of Meerwala, Punjab province, Pakistan, found herself a casualty of a patriarchal judicial system. Though innocent, she faced severe exploitation, being charged with gang rape as retribution for her younger brother Shakur's alleged involvement with Salma, an unmarried woman from the Mastoi tribe. By 2002, the influential Mastoi tribe of Meerwala accused Mukhtar's brother of raping one of their women, demanding he be punished. Despite the falsity of the accusation, the Guzar caste, to which Mukhtar belonged, was forced to comply with the Mastoi's demands. It was a matter of tribal honor, and the Mastoi sought revenge by targeting a girl from the Guzar caste. Women were seen as tools for revenge, and Mukhtar was chosen as the victim. There was no female participation in this decision; women were expected to accept it without objection.

Living as a woman in Muslim society proved to be a curse for Mukhtar. Among a large crowd in the village, Mukhtar Mai was forcibly taken by armed men led by Abdul Khaliq, who wielded a pistol. They dragged her to a stable, where she was gang-raped. After an hour, she was thrown naked outside in front of the entire village at the Jirga. Mukhtar Mai's real story mirrors the experiences of thousands of women in Pakistan's feudal tribal groups, where powerful males exploit females. Despite societal expectations that she would commit suicide after her public humiliation and gang rape, Mukhtar emerged stronger than before, surprising everyone.

Mukhtar Mai received more support from the national and international level as the event was caught by the BBC and broadcasted worldwide, highlighting the peak of human

cruelty. Her protest male oppression gained momentum with this vast support, making her more determined to seek justice and punish the assailants. Her illiteracy made navigating the judiciary system challenging, and even the police, influenced by the patriarchal society, tried to exploit her by forcing her to put her thumbprint on a blank sheet of paper. With almost no female police officers, discussing the rape with male officers was difficult. However, unlike other rape victims, she bravely recounted the incident in court. In Pakistan, under the Hudood Ordinances introduced in 1979, women face the daunting requirement of providing four male eyewitnesses to substantiate their rape cases. Without male witnesses, the assailants won the case in the local court and continued to move freely.

As a pioneering woman, Mukhtar Mai refuses to accept such degradation, leading her to the central court, where she receives backing from the national government. The central court rules in favor of Mukhtar Mai, sentencing four of the rapists and two jirga members to death. With this court ruling, Mukhtar becomes a successful figure in the fight against female exploitation by men. Her victory represents the triumph of thousands of victims who have remained silent despite the cruel treatment they endured. Her battle against the patriarchal system serves as an inspiration for women in Pakistan.

Mukhtar's revolutionary spirit persists even after achieving justice; she continues her efforts to uplift women in a society dominated by cultural orthodoxy. Despite her oppressed role in society, Mukhtar musters the courage to live boldly. She steps out of the domestic sphere and travels globally. In contemporary Pakistan's tribal communities, where girls are forbidden from speaking to boys and are forced into early marriages with unknown men, Mukhtar Mai was divorced by her indolent husband without prior notice. Having endured the harsh realities of illiteracy, she recognizes the importance of education for girls and establishes a school for them using funds provided by the Minister for Women and Children.

Her establishment of a school for girls, where female education is strictly prohibited, is a bold act against a patriarchal society that seeks to exploit women by keeping them in ignorance. Mukhtar's school has made a significant impact on the lives of future generations of girls in Meerwala, a place where women have long been deprived of education. Additionally, her school contributes to the fight against female oppression by educating girls about their rights and the nature of their exploitation.

In third-world societies dominated by patriarchal norms, women are often condemned to lives of subjugation. However, increasing awareness among women is empowering them with the strength and courage to challenge a sexist and biased society. This thesis highlights the spirit of rebellion and resistance among women against persistent patriarchal control, illustrating the dire conditions faced by marginalized females who are repeatedly oppressed by societal injustices. The research examines the entrenched social conditions that perpetuate female suffering. Consequently, it aims to explore the unequal social dynamics between men and women, providing a voice for women who are otherwise voiceless, and significantly contributes to portraying the empowered status of women as they resist patriarchy.

Mukhtar Mai's memoir *In the Name of Honor* (2005) has garnered significant acclaim from numerous critics for its vivid depiction of the author's experiences under patriarchal domination. In his commentary on the book, journalist and literary critic Nicholas D. Kristof describes:

As you read *In the Name of Honor*, I think you will find a story that is tremendously inspiring rather than one tells of brutality and despair. By the alchemy of her courage and stubbornness, Mukhtar has taken a sordid tale of gang rape and turned it into something heart-warming and hopeful. And that is one more reason why, when I'm around Mukhtar I sense that this shy peasant woman is truly a great and historic figure. (Mai xv)

Kristof has praised the book as an inspiration for women worldwide. It also serves as a source of motivation for men who have faced exploitation by feudal forces in society. Kristof regards Mukhtar Mai as a bold, courageous woman and a significant historical figure.

Likewise, Natasha Walter, another notable critic, delves into Mukhtar Mai's perspective on the Muslim religion in her struggle against female subjugation. In her review of *In the Name of Honor*, she examines:

As a piece of writing, *In the Name of Honor* is much less successful than *Infidel*. Yet Mai finds her liberation not through rejection but reinterpretation of Islam, by trying to dissociate her religion from the tribal mores that would silence women. This book makes it clear that the liberation of women is a struggle that is being played out within Islamic societies, not just imposed on them from the outside. Mai does not want to stop being a Muslim, but she wants to have equality with men as well. Marvelously, she directs the attention that she gets towards raising money to build a school for boys and girls in her village; a school that may create a more equal future. For many Muslim women in traditional tribal societies, this path of incremental education and reform seems to hold out real hope. (Walter 6)

Natasha Walter has attempted to pinpoint Mukhtar's treatment of Muslims, who are typically thought of as a faith that never grants women any independence, in the sentences above. Her argument is that Mukhtar Mai is criticizing male cruelty towards females out of a sense of honor, not the Islamic faith. Walter discovers that Mukhtar opposes the patriarchal social structure while defending Islam.

Similarly, Juliet Wittman admires her dedication to freedom, human rights, and the fight against gender inequalities in modern tribal communities, where women are treated as mere objects from birth to marriage. As she asserts:

Looking at the cover one may hardly guess that its pages contain harsh and gore realities which actually challenge the very existence of women in a male dominated society. *In the Name of Honor* (2005) a book, which tells us about the arduous journey of a Pakistani peasant woman, in her own words, is nothing but an accomplishment in itself. In this rousing account, Mai describes her experience and how she has since become an agent for change and a beacon of hope for oppressed women around the world. Timely and topical, the book is the remarkable and inspirational memoir of a woman who fought and triumphed against exceptional odds. (Wittman 4)

Juliet Wittman views the book as a source of inspiration in the struggle against patriarchal oppression. She highlights the bravery of women seeking justice in a society unaware of women's rights. Indeed, Mukhtar's true story serves as a beacon of hope for all victimized women globally.

Although various critics have reviewed Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* from different perspectives, they have overlooked the underlying tone of protest in this memoir. Therefore, my research primarily focuses on uncovering female subjugation alongside the tone of resistance. Natasha Walter examines the book in relation to the Muslim religion, emphasizing that Mukhtar does not oppose Islam but seeks justice through it. Conversely, this research goes toward the direction of female resistance without focusing whether Mukhtar supports Muslim religion or not. It does not attempt to accumulate the evidence upon the Muslim religion rather tries to find how Mukhtar is an inspiration for the women who have been living in silent even after the exploitation of the males upon them. Therefore, the researcher purposes to carry out the research from the conceptual framework of Feminism in general and the theoretical framework of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Uma Narayan, Simon De Beauvoir, Ketu H Katrak etc. in particular.

In examining the condition of marginalized women, the researcher employs feminism as a theoretical framework. The term 'feminism' comes from the French word 'Feminism,' coined by Utopian socialist Charles Fourier. Initially, the term referred to the advocacy for women's equal legal and political rights with men. Today, feminism encompasses any theory that views the relationship between the sexes as characterized by inequality, subordination, and oppression. Thus, the objective of feminism is to identify and address all forms of oppression and subjugation.

The history of female subjugation starts from the time immemorial. The females have been experiencing the harsh domination from their male counterparts in every social aspect. The role of females has undermined and they are treated as if they are secondary and thus, they are Other. They are deprived of every opportunity and are alienated from the socio-economic sphere. Thus, to counter this sort of prevailing biased attitude of males towards females, feminism as a discourse evolved. This research seeks to excavate the subjugation of the female in one of the conservative Muslim societies of Pakistan and the sense of protest of the victimized women Mukhtar Mai in her memoir *In the Name of Honor*.

Feminism is a term that advocates for the social, political, economic, and educational and every kind of equality for women. It studies women as a suppressed and oppressed being to raise the level of awareness among females. Feminism as a movement appears as awareness about women's position in society, culture, and politics and even in literature. But it is reasonable to understand feminism as a discourse as per its function in the society rather to describe it as a theory treating it as a single and coherent way of thought.

Feminism attempts to bring women into the mainstream as it studies the marginalized condition of them. To change the world by promoting gender equality is the major goal of all feminist activity, feminist theory and literary criticism. Feminism can also be regarded as a form of activism which demands for the equal status of women to men through different

political activities like public demonstrations. The foundation of feminism or feminist criticism is the set of certain assumptions that: women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially and psychologically; patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which they are kept so. The woman is othered, objectified, marginalized and defined only by her difference from male norms and values in every domain where the patriarchy rules.

While defining the concept of feminism in third world context Ketu H Katrak puts forward her view:

. . . Literal or metaphoric connotations of exile, as well as the concept of internal exile of the female body from patriarchy and external exile as manifest in migration and geographical relocation necessitated by political persecution, material conditions of poverty, and forms of intellectual silencing in third world societies. Female protagonists undergo what I term 'internal exile' where the body feels disconnected from itself, as though it does not belong to it and has no agency. (Katrak 378)

She has emphasized the female body as a feminist. She defines the "female body" as having to do with a woman's identity, dignity, desire, and ownership of land and other property, as well as her choices, expectations, marriage, priorities, work, education, and other areas.

Through her rebellious voice, she asserts her female identity in this way. In this connection, another third world feminist Uma Narayan in her book *Dislocating Cultures* argues:

Feminism has been ridiculed and stereotyped worldwide and the issues we have raised have usually not been taken seriously by the media. But, remarkably, despite this bad press feminism has continued to grow. Women's groups all over the world, but especially in the Third World are taking up issues ranging from housing, nutrition, and poverty to militarism, sexual and reproductive freedom, and violence against women. (Narayan 191)

Here, Narayan also raises the issue of female and put forward her view along the line of Ketu Katrak. She defines that women in the third world space also raising their voice against the predominantly masculine's society. And in the same issue Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak, in her essay *Can Subaltern Speak* asserts: "It is rather, that both as object of colonialist historiography and as the subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keep the male dominant. If, in the contest of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is in deeply shadow." (Spivak 82) Feminist criticism comes in many forms and feminist critics have a variety of goals. Though there is century long struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements; and for women's social and political rights, as a distinct and concrete approach to literature, feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late 1960s, it came out in its full shape only in late 1960s. While dealing the issue of female Ketu H Katrak, Uma Narayan and Chandra Talpade Mohanty have played vital role in third world space.

Although women are forced to live subjugated lives under the patriarchal structures of Third World societies, leading to lives that are submissive, docile, and poignant, the increasing awareness among women is empowering them with the strength and courage to challenge a society that denies their subjectivity. Women are becoming more aware of their rights, which not only enlightens contemporary women but also educates future generations about women's rights, giving them the courage to stand against the biased and sexist patriarchal society.

Even in the 21st century, in the Muslim society of Pakistan, Females are considered as second object or other, secondary, darker, and marked as passive. They are sexually abused and mentally tortured. "As Mukhtar approvingly retells, 'a Pakistani woman activist explains, "Half the women of our country are the victims of violence"' (Mai 45). They are deprived of taking active roles in the society. Females are considered intellectually inferior and are thus

sidelined to margins. Females are taken as inferior/subordinate and this position is constructed through different discourses in patriarchal society. Female gender identity is consistently problematized. Patriarchal discourse fosters biased representations of women, aiming to establish and normalize their inferiority. In Pakistani society, the devaluation of women is widespread, as they are treated as puppets who must adhere to rules, values, and institutions designed to benefit men.

Corresponding to this, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak argues in *'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing the Historiography* that “woman is to the functioning of their discourse” (Spivak 356). She further states that in patriarchal society, women are compelled to accept patriarchal discourse. This discourse consistently excludes women from mainstream social politics, obligating them to reinforce patriarchal norms and values. As Spivak describes, Mukhtar and other women in Pakistan are manipulated by patriarchal codes of conduct, lacking free will and facing constraints everywhere. Mukhtar was gang-raped according to the discourse shaped by orthodox patriarchal culture. She cried for help before her assault, but no one came to her aid. "Men's arms have seized mine, pulling at my clothes, my shawl, my hair. 'In the name of the Koran, release me!' I scream. 'In the name of God, let me go!'" (Mai 9). After her rape, she stopped crying and determines to fight against the local authorities and the group of those cruel persons who has raped her. It is her father who covers her with a shawl and takes her towards her home. Her condition is pathetic and poignant in such a way that one can hardly imagine in her life.

Mukhtar Mai is a divorcee who belongs into the peasant Gujar caste in a remote village of Pakistan. As the Gujar tribe is powerless in the village the people of this tribe have been victimized by the people of Mastoi tribe. Mukhtar Mai is one of those victims. Mai is exploited in such a horrific way. On 22 June, 2002, the Jirga of her small village, on the southern fringes of the Punjab in Pakistan declares a punishment for an offence supposedly

committed by her twelve years old brother named Shakur. The punishment is ‘rape’ of a woman by the group of men belonging to Mastoi tribe. Her family chooses her for this, unaware of the true purpose.

On that day, Mukhtar is taken to a stable, where five armed men surround her. Despite her pleas, her clothing is torn off, and she is sexually assaulted by four village elders and the five men, who brutally rape her. After an hour, she is dragged out, partially clothed, in front of all the men in the village. Her father covers her with a shawl and carries her back home. Thus, Mukhtar Mai, a powerless woman, is subjected to sexual abuse by a conservative society driven by patriarchal ideology.

However, Mukhtar Mai does not remain silent as society anticipated; instead, she steps forward to resist such oppression. Although society expects her to be shamed into suicide, she defies these expectations by demonstrating remarkable resilience and finding the strength to live. She demands that her attackers be prosecuted, and all six receive legal punishment. Mukhtar's determination to protest is evident as she persists despite numerous threats and obstacles. She not only seeks justice for herself but also aids other women suffering under the oppressive patriarchy.

Mukhtar Mai vividly illustrates the tragic and distressing conditions resulting from victimization under patriarchal oppression. Her experience of sexual exploitation, carried out under the guise of punishment, is not due to any crime she has committed but simply because she is a woman deemed inferior. In a patriarchal capitalist society, women are often viewed as mere tools for satisfying male desires. The primary value attributed to women is reduced to their physical bodies. In this context, Spivak argues in *A Literary Representation of the Subaltern: Mahasweta Devi's Standayini* that “if to identify women with her copulative or reproductive body can be seen as minimizing and reductive, women’s orgasmic pleasure, taking place in excess of copulation or reproduction, can be seen as a way out of such

reductive identifications” (Spivak 118). She further contends that patriarchal society values women not for their rationality but for their emotionality. Men regard women as mere objects. Reflecting on this, Mukhtar Mai recalls how the four men from the Mastoi tribe viewed her as an object. As she recalls:

They rape me, on the beaten earth of an empty stable... For them, a woman is simply an object of possession, honor, or revenge. They marry or rape them according to their conception of tribal pride. They know that a woman humiliated in that way has no other recourse except suicide. They don't even need to use their weapons. Rape kills her. Rape is the ultimate weapon: it shames the other clan forever. (Mai 11)

The above expression vividly clarifies the perception of female in the eyes of male, who looks her from the perspective of their own honor. Males have honor in abusing females sexually. To sexually abuse Mukhtar, an innocent woman in the society, the Mastois accuse her brother Sakur of making sexual relationship with Salma. "Mukhtar points out that: 'The Mastois invented a new account in which Shakur had had sexual relations with Salma, who was supposedly a virgin. A dreadful crime' (Mai 15)." In Muslim patriarchal societies, women are treated as instruments of revenge and are mere pawns in the hands of patriarchal sexual predators. These patriarchal enforcers also exploit women under the guise of superstitious beliefs, promoting the notion that virginity signifies purity. Under such superstitions and traditions, women are coerced into humiliation by patriarchal authorities.

When a girl is raped, it becomes the matter of pride for male for maintaining the honor, but on the contrary, it is the matter of humiliation for victim. It is the pride of whole tribe to rape a girl from another tribe in Meerwala, a society where Mukhtar is born. "She says, 'The councilors themselves have fixed upon a gang rape as a means to what they call their honor justice' (Mai 10). But on the contrary, it is the 'woman's place to humiliate her, to beg for forgiveness before all the men of the village assembled in a Jirga in front of the

Mastois' farmhouse' (Mai 6)." A woman is made to appear submissive in front of the entire village. The men involved in the rape walk with full honor, while Mukhtar is condemned to remain hidden at home. Each day, people anticipate her suicide following the gang rape, but no one expects similar consequences for the men involved..

Apart from the rape, marriage is also associated with tribal pride of males. Marriage is legal bond and social construct between men and women in all culture. Marriage in Islam is considered to be top of the utmost importance, which is the precious gift of god. *Quaran* says:

O mankind! Reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women;— reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you. (Surah An-Nisa 4:1)

There is extreme domination over girls in the name of marriage. Marriage is the social license which provides right to male over female. After marriage males gets permanent right even to 'rape' the female. As the rape is decided by the tribal council of males so is marriage. Females have no rights to decide about their own marriage. "Mukhtar's ideas are further examined by Beauvoir, who expressed in her essay *The Second Sex* a critical perspective on the institution of marriage. Beauvoir asserts, 'Woman as a slave or vassal, is integrated within families dominated by fathers and brothers, and she has always been given in marriage by certain males to other males' (Beauvoir 446)." Simone de Beauvoir argues that marriage is the legal institution to recognize male supremacy.

Through an arranged marriage Mukhtar Mai is wedded at the age of 18 to a man whose face she had never seen until the day of her marriage. She observes that in Pakistan a girl/woman is not free to choose a husband for herself:

A young woman does not have the right to choose for herself. Some women who have taken that risk have taken that risk have been threatened, humiliated, beaten, and sometimes even killed, although there are new laws that support this right to choose, in theory. Islamic law does not support this right, however, and each cast has its own traditions. Couples who decide for themselves have huge difficulties providing the legality of their marriage. The woman, for example, may be accused of zina, a sin that includes adultery and sex without a sanction of marriage. She may then be condemned to be stoned to death. (Mai 99)

The above lines clearly illustrate the dire situation of women who dare to choose their own husbands in Pakistani Muslim society. Laws that support women's rights remain largely theoretical, having little impact on their actual lives. If a girl decides to marry a man of her choice, she may be labeled as adulterous by society and sentenced to death. Although no specific law punishes women for choosing their own spouses, conservative society treats it as a grave offense, causing the girl to endure lifelong suffering. In a tragic incident, in 2008, in the Punjab province of Pakistan, 19-year-old Saima Sarwar was shot dead by her father and uncle for marrying a man of her choice against her family's wishes. This honor killing drew significant attention to the issue of violence against women who choose their own partners in Pakistan (BBC News).

In Pakistani Muslim patriarchal society, women are compelled to spend their entire lives with the husbands chosen by their parents. If a woman initiates divorce proceedings in a court, her husband's family may view it as a dishonor and seek retribution. In Mukhtar's situation, the marriage agreement required her husband to reside with Mukhtar's family, but he chooses to live with his brother's family instead. Consequently, Mukhtar returns to her home after a month and is granted a divorce by her husband. Men have full custody over

women's body and he can use the body as he pleases as a protector and maintainer of women.

Quaran asserts:

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has made one of them to excel the other, and because they spend from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in the husband's absence what Allah orders them to guard. As to those women on whose part you fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them, refuse to share their beds, and beat them. But if they obey you, seek no way against them. Indeed, Allah is ever Exalted and Grand. (Surah An-Nisa 4:34)

Mukhtar's memoir, *In the Name of Honor*, highlights the issues with arranged marriages and depicts the severe consequences faced by those who challenge this system by pursuing love marriages. Mukhtar provides examples of the tragic outcomes associated with love marriages, where newlywed husbands are often murdered by the girl's brothers, as such unions are seen as tarnishing family honor. She describes Jirgas punishing women for attempting to marry freely, despite national laws allowing it. Additionally, Mukhtar details how families sometimes take the husband of a love marriage to court, falsely accusing him of rape. However, she does not entirely reject arranged marriages; her primary demand is the cessation of mistreatment of women.

In patriarchal society women face different sorts of domestic violence, gendered discrimination, dowry murders, child marriages, mismatched arranged marriages, which are completely different problems and other. In patriarchal society, the position of women is relegated to the secondary position to male sex. They do not have identity, in this connection Spivak in her essay *Can the Subaltern Speak* points "It is rather, that both as object of colonialist historiography and as the subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keep the male dominant. If, in the contest of colonial production, the subaltern has no

history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is in deeply shadow.” (Spivak 82). In the long history patriarchal society, there is binary between male and female where women’s subjectivity is always denied. They are treated as if they have no significance in the community. Male is always privileged in the patriarchal Indian society. The ideology is constructed by the male that is why; it always plays the vital role to exercise the male superiority upon female.

This concept of Spivak is applicable in the life of women in third world space. In third world space women are deprived from ongoing social happenings, they are limited within the four walls of the house and they are also supposed to be second class citizen in their own nation. Women in patriarchal society are objectified, they are objects to be consumed or possessed by males according to the will of them. Mukhtar displays: “They are either forced into marriage, or raped, or used as objects of exchange among men. It does not matter what the women think, because they are not supposed to think at all!” (Mai 45) Women have been heavily exploited and treated as secondary human being under the prejudiced values and norms of the patriarchal society. They do not have opportunity to think about themselves. It is the men who decide for the women and thinks about their way of life. Women are taken as the means of exchange. Although most of the girls are forcefully married and a lot of women are raped, none of them raises the voice against such exploitation, for they are threatened to keep such things secret to save the honor of the males.

Indeed, women, having subordinate position in the predominantly masculinist society, have been obliged to accept whatever imposed upon them. Women in patriarchal society are sabotaged towards the bottom rungs of social ladder; they are taken as sexual object as per the male’s desire. They do not have freedom of choice; they must follow the patriarchal codes and conducts because all the patriarchs evaluate woman as if they are inmates in iron shackles. While justifying this claim Mukhtar reveals this event:

Men are the ones who “know” women must simply keep quiet and wait. Why tell us anything? Men make the decisions, rule, act, judge. I think of the goats tied up in courtyards to keep them from wandering around the countryside. I don’t count for more than a goat here, even if I haven’t got a cord looped around my neck. . . . When I was a child, and then a young woman, all I could do was listen intently to the grown-ups to try to understand what they were talking about. I could neither ask questions nor speak up on my own—I could only wait to figure out what was happening around me, by piecing together other people’s words. (Mai 35-36)

In the above lines, Mukthar Mai clearly reveals the way women in the Muslim society of Pakistan have been treated. Men are always in leading position, they make decision, because they think that they know everything; women don’t have right to participate in decision making. They even do not have any right to get information about what males are deciding about females. Women should remain quiet and should do in accordance with the decision that males have made. In this regard, she compares the position in the society of Meerawala with the goats tied up in the courtyard. Even if women don’t have a cord looped around their neck, they are tied up by the norms and values made by the males in the society. The comparison of goats with women shows how women in Pakistan are condemned to live within the four domestic walls. They don’t have freedom as cattle have.

In patriarchal society women should follow the norms and values existing power system, they have to be submissive, innocent, passive, docile, meek and humble in front of the patriarchal agency. They have to just follow the order of males in very critical condition too. This memoir of course deals with Indian patriarchal culture which was ruled by a furnace of binary codes that subordinated females to males. The grievances and tribulations of the female were unheard by the patriarchal agents of the then patriarchal society. Even women did not have right to select their life partner. While choosing their partners they have to take

permission of their elders, it is outcome of the role of oppressive patriarchal society. While illustrating such condition of female, Uma Narayan in her book *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism* claims that: "there is connection between One's early experiences of oppressive gender roles within the family." (Narayan 10) The way Uma Narayan defines is the way Mukhtar has collected the bruised experiences. Understandably, she realizes that she has no longer been treated as the human being with sentiments rather treated as an object. As Mukhtar Mai narrates:

A woman is nothing more than an object of exchange, from birth to marriage.

According to custom, she has no rights. That is how I was raised, and no one ever told me that Pakistan had a constitution, laws and rights written down in a book. I have never seen a lawyer or a judge. I know absolutely nothing about the official justice reserved for wealthy and educated people. (Mai 28)

These lines clearly indicates that women in patriarchal society are kneeled so as to maintain their existence. They have to follow the norms and values imposed by patriarchal agents. They are judged on the basis of their submissiveness in front of the patriarchs. The laws, customs, superstitious beliefs and other things always go for victimizing them according to their own will. All the bureaucratic spheres, social happenings and mainstream social politics are foreign to them. The law, judgment and the implementation of constitution are mirage for them.

Women in patriarchal social structure face different sorts of discriminations that ultimately lead towards the destruction of their own life, they lose their self-respect, and do not get social respect because they are deprived from ongoing social happening. While illustrating such condition of women, "Uma Narayan in her book *Dislocating Cultures: Identities, Traditions, and Third-World Feminism* shares her experience:

I remember my mother's anger and grief at my father's resort to silencing, neutrality that refused to interfere in the domestic tyrannies that his mother inflicted on my mother. The same mother who complained about her silencing enjoined me to silence, doing what she had to do since my failures to conform would translate as her failings to rear me well. (Narayan 7)

This event shows the mirror reality of women in patriarchal social structure where women have no space to involve themselves in the ongoing social happening. They just have to wait for the permission of their elders.

The trap of patriarchal society is so powerful and pervasive that it does not let any women to get out of it. It always entraps women mentally, psychologically and economically, it also sometimes raises the voice in the favor of women for life, liberty and pursuit of happiness but it is totally false promise. In such model of patriarchal model of exploitation, Muslim women are more victimized in every sphere of social happenings. They have been like inmates in iron shackles in front of the laws and rules of patriarchal custodians. Such condition of women has been illustrated through these lines:

Silly girl, you must never claim that. Everything you have said up until now, I will write down, and I will read you the preliminary report. But tomorrow, I will be taking you to court, and in front of the judge, you will be careful, very careful: you will say exactly what I am telling you now. I have prepared everything, and I know that it is in your best interest, and in the best interest of your family, and of everyone concerned.

You must not say that you have been raped! (Mai 37)

These lines illustrate the clear history of women in patriarchal social structure where a girl has been facing horrendous discrimination, her voice is unheard and she has been obliged to bow in the feet of patriarchal agents. Mukhtar has been not only victimized through the use of derogative word like 'silly girl' but also threatened by the policemen not to accuse whom she

has been accusing for involving in her rape. It suggests that she has no her own agency to freely speaking about her exploitation oppressive authority of Muslim patriarchal social structure. It is because various females have been obliged to live by hiding such violence that has been done upon them.

Males consider females as the creature to bear whatever done upon them. To make the females docile in front of the males, various myths are made and tried to exercise those myths into practice. Males just take the women as identity less creatures and want to play with their sentiments. In fact, such myths are created to limit women within their own framework. While defining such condition of woman Simone de Beauvoir in her essay *The Second Sex* claims:

Myths are very differently orchestrated by our authors. The Other is particularly defined according to the particular manner in which the One chooses to set himself up. Every man asserts his freedom and transcendence but they do not all give these words the same sense. For man, transcendence is a situation: he is the transcendent, he soars in the sky of heroes; women crouch on earth, beneath his feet; it amuses him to measure the distance that separates him from her, from time to time he raises her up to him, takes her and then throws her back. (Beauvoir 994)

These lines uttered by Beauvoir are illustrating the position of women in the society where males are soaring in the sky and females are crouching on the earth, the distance between sky and earth is distance between male and female. This sort of myth is created to dominate the female existence. She has further said that patriarchal custodians create such myth to hold the superior position in the society.

The way Beauvoir defines is the way Muslim patriarchy has imposed its law and order over innocent female creatures. Assimilating this, Mukhtar Mai says that although laws and orders are made to support the females' rights it is merely confined in the books. Instead

of applying those rules even the people working in the position of giving justice follow the rules of myths in which women are considered as inferior creature and supposed to be submissive and silent in every action of the males. As she says:

Even in the most enlightened families, women have a duty to respect their parents' choice. And so, what if the choice was made when they weren't even born yet! In recent years, Jirgas have condemned young women for trying to wed freely, even though our national Islamic law permits this. Bureaucrats prefer to side with tribal laws, however, instead of protecting these women. (Mai 124)

As is clear from the above lines, females are to live for the others' choice in the Islamic patriarchal society. When they use their own mind to make their life, they are collectively discarded so as to keep others under the patriarchal social structure in which females have a little space. Although in national law, women are permitted to act in accordance with their own will, thus has allowed freedom for women. But it is nothing more than the 'showing teeth of an elephant' which is so great and nice but never works. As the actual working teeth are inside the mouth, so is the laws of Muslim society in which there is difference between appearance and reality. The tribal laws formed based on the patriarchal myths have been taken into practice in order to dominate the females. Rather than protecting the females these laws make the way of exploiting females clear.

Although males have been exercising the full freedom throughout their life, females are destined to live under the strict guidance of the males who even do not allow them to walk freely and talk with their male peers. From their childhood they are taught about the restrictions; they are restricted to talk with boys. Mukhtar is also brought up in the similar type of the family where such rules have been given much importance while upbringing the children. Mukhtar's father has raised Mukhtar and her sister by teaching them "to respect tradition" so she has "learned that it was forbidden to speak to boys when she was ten" which

she admits that she “have never broken that taboo” (Mai 54). Mukhtar Mai’s brain is hard wired in patriarchal teachings such a way that she cannot cross the boundaries even though she has crossed some lines of patriarchal norms. She has revolted against the Jirga but not against the religion.

As the women in the Muslim patriarchal society are taught the myths about men as powerful and women as inferior from their childhood, their mentality is also formed in the similar way, so they hesitate to break it considering it as the rules of human life. When such mentality is developed, they accept their own immanent position for they are unknown that they are restricted by the coveted desire of patriarchal agents who want to be powerful by domination others. The restriction imposed upon girl for not having position to speak with any boy suggest that Muslim girls are leading hell like animal life in the patriarchal mode of social structure.

Islamic patriarchal society of Pakistan has created binary opposition between males and females as it believes that female is full of lacunas. Females are merely taken as a pleasing creature, coquette, with no other intellectual skills except caring and praising for their own beauty and wondering how to win male’s heart. Patriarchal society has gripped females to chains. Males enjoy freedom and supremacy whereas females are obliged to remain indoors under physical and psychological exploitation. Muslim patriarchal society of Pakistan has annihilated the existence, identity, position, and self-respect of females. Males have dominated every part of social sphere.

Despite the then existing strong patriarchal doctrine, Mukhtar Mai fights for the women rights by revolting against the Islamic norms and values. She questions upon the ‘so called’ truths which have been constructed by the males as the powerful rulers in the society. When a person or organization holds power, he creates certain type of discourse. In his book "Discipline and Punish," Foucault argues that "power produces knowledge... power and

knowledge directly imply one another" (Foucault 27). Gradually, those truths are assimilated in the culture and become a part of their life. In addition, the females who are under power internalize such truths as knowledge. This type of silent domination by the consent of the ruled is what Gramsci calls hegemony: "A culture of endurance, the consent of the ruled to be ruled: ruled themselves agree to be ruled in hegemony" (Gramsci 32). This is the basic way through which patriarchy holds a tight grip on the society. In spite of such hegemony, Mukhtar succeeds to get justice, in the society where no woman ever has got justice to the violence done upon them.

We can excavate the undercurrents of the sense of protests in every action of Mukhtar Mai that she has taken against the oppressive patriarchy. In Pakistan, divorce is strictly forbidden from the side of female, only male can grant it to their wives. Considered it as a truth everybody follow it. But Mukhtar Mai divorces with her husband when she finds him not so better to spend the whole life together. As she portrays:

Only the husband may grant a divorce. When a woman begins proceedings to obtain a divorce in a state court of law, the husband's family may then consider itself 'dishonored' and demand punishment. On top of which, recourse to the official law courts doesn't always lead to the legal decision. In my case things turned out differently, and I obtained the divorce I wanted. That's when I found out that I was eighteen years old when I got married. (Mai 100)

As is clear from the lines above, nobody accepts divorce as normal event from the side of the wife. It is the truth constructed by the males who are powerful in the society. If a woman initiates the legal process of divorce from the court, her husband and other family members may demand punishment by regarding it as the 'dishonored. But the very fact is that from the very beginning of her marriage she does not like her husband. The so-called truth that only the husband may grant a divorce fails to stop her; she begins the process of divorce. She has

the strong evidence to support her action, for her husband has violated the contract of marriage. In Mukhtar's case the marriage contract had specified that her husband should live with Mukhtar's family, but he has decided instead to move in with his brother's family. So, Mukhtar returns home after barely a month and gets a divorce.

Mukhtar Mai's father comes to know the truth about the conjugal life of his daughter, he begins to support her and ultimately succeeds in separating his daughter with her husband whom she does not like. Her father turns out to be courageous and full of strong determination, for he never becomes afraid of from the society while supporting his daughter in achieving liberty from the husband with whom the life of her daughter is not so good:

After he realized that the man chosen to be my husband was a disreputable lout who didn't keep his promises, my father supported me in divorce. He never wavered, and neither did I, until I have obtained the talaq, which can be given only by the husband.

It is his agreement to release his wife, and without it, a woman cannot be divorced:

her cause must be pleased before a judge, which is expensive, and not allowed, in any case. I regained my freedom. (Mai 41)

With her strong determination and the support of her father, Mukhtar eventually succeeds to regain freedom from her husband. After marriage, she has lost all her freedom. She becomes mere possession of her husband that frequently disturbs her inner psychology and loses her freedom of life. "Stubbornness, the only weapon women have against men" (Mai 41) Since there is no legal basis for the divorce, she finds the only way as the regular pressure for it, which is later supported by everybody else.

Most of the women remain silent owing to the fear of social humiliation in spite of the unbearable violence done upon them. Even Mukhtar has also contemplated for suicide after the gang rape, "I have made up my mind: I want to kill myself. This is what women in my situation do" (Mai 19). She has gone through the traumatic situation "for several days, I go

insane with helplessness. I cannot go on living like this, lying down, shrouded in my shawl!” but a woman with such strong determination and having such strong sense of protest can never kill herself rather she comes up to revolt against the oppressive patriarchy; she cannot go on living like this instead “finally, out of nowhere, a surprising fit of anger saves from that stupor” (Mai 19). After all, she decides to fight against those assailants.

In this connection Simone De Beauvoir argues “on the day when it will be possible for woman to love not in her weakness but in her strength, not to escape herself but to find herself, not to abase herself but to assert herself” (Beauvoir 53). What Beauvoir tries to argue is that the insight of subjugation inspires the females to be assertive against the predominantly masculinist society. In the way Beauvoir argues is the way Mukhtar Mai begins to love not her weakness but her strength, so, decides to fight against those who rape her collectively rather than killing herself. She changes her mind suddenly when she comes to know that many others have been supporting from the various parts of the country:

Nothing will be as usual from now on. I am myself already different. I don't know how I am going to fight, but I want justice, and that will be my revenge. The direction of my new path, the only one possible, is clear in my mind. My Honor and that of my family depend on it. Though it might cost me my life, I will not die humiliated. I have suffered for days, contemplated suicide, and cried my heart out. I am changing, behaving differently, which I would never have thought possible. (Mai 30)

The above-mentioned lines make her different from rest of the voiceless victims of systemic oppression. She no longer hangs herself in the dilemma of suicide rather becomes determined to fight for justice, that is eventually for her honor as well as of her family. She determines not to die in such humiliation rather to use it as weapon to fight for justice. She makes her way clear and straightforward to fight and punish those assailants in any cost. She is

confident that her revolution will not be stopped by any obstacles and barriers that come most often in the life of women.

Mukhtar's strong determination to fight for justice help all the women who have living by hiding the violence that the males have done upon them. Due to the fear of social discard, most of the women have been living by hiding those crimes incurred upon them. But the courage of Mukhtar "I have decided to fight" (Mai 27) and the support of various organizations and social institution towards her bring various incidents of such shocking violence into fore. Her self-determination not only gives her new life but also helps to give new lives to various women like her.

Mukhtar Mai never returns from her determination even if she is threatened by Mastoi. They use the policemen in order to threaten her but she is not such meek and docile woman. Rather than making her weak, it makes her more powerful internally. She herself says: "All this strengthens my determination to keep going, to keep seeking justice and truth, in spite of the police pressure and a tradition that wants women to suffer in silence while men do as they please" (Mai 45). Instead of being afraid of when the police come to threaten her, she becomes more determined to fight against those assailants.

To frighten her she is taken into police office and is kept for whole day. Their intention to take her is nothing more than frightens her. Although they attempt to frighten her by supporting those Mastois who had involved in rape, "Look here, Mukhtar, we know the Mastois very well, they are not bad men, but you are making accession against them!" but she never admits that it is fake rather she tells it more powerfully, "they raped me" (Mai 37). The many times they force her not to say that she has been raped. The many times she repeats her complain of revolt against such sexual violence.

Mukhtar Mai has full of undercurrents of sense of revolt which never lets her to be docile in front of the oppressive patriarchy rather it forces her to stand with the sprite of

defiance against the oppressive and suppressive forces. When those policemen offer her to save the leader of the gang who had raped her, her anger goes out of the limitation. Her revolutionary spirit can be vividly realized in the following communication with the policemen in the police station:

You must not mention Abdul Khaliq's name. You must not say that you have been raped. You must not say that he was the one who did anything.'

'But he was there'

'All right: you may in fact say that Abdul Khaliq was there. Everyone knows that. You will say for example that called out, 'there she is! Forgive her!'

I storm out of the room in a rage. 'I already knew everything I must say, because I have already said it! I don't have to listen to your nonsense. (Mai 38)

In the interaction between Mukhtar Mai and the police, Mukhtar appears more assertive, while the police seem influenced by notions of conspiracy, even though they should be more assertive themselves. Mukhtar challenges the traditional masculine/feminine binary, where men are linked with power and strength, while women are considered weaker by comparison.

In order to further assist this idea, it is noteworthy to bring the idea expressed by Judith Butler in the first chapter of *Gender Trouble* in which she describes how gender 'congeals' or solidifies into a form that makes it appear to have been there all along, and Butler asserts that gender is a process which has neither origin nor end, so that it is something that we 'do' rather than 'are'. In her early article, 'Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*', Butler declares that 'all gender is, by definition, unnatural' before she proceeds to upraise sex and gender from what many would assume to be their inevitable connection to each other.

Butler challenges the conventional belief that sex, gender, and sexuality are inherently interconnected. For instance, it is often assumed that a biologically female person should

exhibit 'feminine' characteristics and, in a heteronormative context (where heterosexuality is considered the norm), should be attracted to men. Instead, Butler argues that gender is 'unnatural', so that there is no necessary relationship between one's body and one's gender. In that case, it will be possible to have a designated 'female' body and not to display traits generally considered 'feminine. In other words, one may be a 'masculine' female or a 'feminine' male. Assimilating the idea of Butler, Mukhtar Mai too subverts the traditional concept of masculine and feminine as she shows the masculine quality despite being female. Although she is poor and illiterate but she never depends upon males, "but I have ears to hear and eyes to see. Plus, a voice to speak and to speak for myself!" (Mai 38). She feels herself capable to speak for herself.

In spite of her strong determination, it becomes so much difficult for her to prove that she has been raped because according to the national law in Pakistan, four male eyewitnesses are necessary to prove the incident of rape. Being an illiterate woman, it is so much difficult for her to go through the matters of law and women rights. As she depicts:

Here in Pakistan, it is difficult for a woman to prove that she has been raped, since she is legally required to provide four male eye witnesses to the crime. This is to ensure that the law and chiefly the punishment for rape are not misused. Unfortunately, the only eyewitnesses to both my brother's rape and mine are the criminals themselves!
(Mai 55)

The law of any nation should serve and protect the victims and punish those who break it. The law of any nation should not violate "The Theory of Natural Justice". Pakistan under Hudood Ordinance has successfully brought all women on their knees and have deprived them from justice. In the case of Mukhtar Mai's gang rape, it is ridiculous to bring the four male eyewitnesses, for all the witnesses are the oppressors in it.

When they fail to convince Mukhtar to remain silent in the case of rape, they take another way to defeat her. At first, they take support from the biased law. Even though the entire village know what has happened, “all the testimony that supports [her] has been thrown out”. Eventually, the court gives its verdict in favor of the Mastrois to save their “so called lost honor to the Mastrois by adopting the defense’s arguments, word for word and by turning time into the defendant. The investigation is botched; the rape has not been proved” (Mai 142). Then, everybody begins to suggest her to remain silent. At this moment she again feels the rape, “I’m being raped all over again” (Mai 142). It is not the physical rape like before rather it is the psychological rape that the oppressive patriarchal society has done upon her by defeating her in the case of rape.

But Mukhtar Mai is not the ordinary woman to accept whatever injustice is done. In *The Rope and the Sword*, Nicole Leroux states: “the only one to take flight is those who are too feminine, but those who go against the males are manlike and rebellious females” (Leroux 242). She further states that those females who go against the existing patriarchal norms of patriarchy by tearing the veil of illusion, they are rebellious females. The way she defines:

But I want more. Much more. I want them all to go back to prison, I want the Supreme Court to re-examine the files . . . I want justice! Even if it costs me my life. I am not afraid of anymore. My anger is a wonderful weapon, and I am angry at this system that would like to force me to live in fear, in my own village, just down the path from the men who rape me and got away with it. (Mai 152)

The above lines illustrate that Mukhtar Mai is guided by her revenge motif towards patriarchal system where women are merely taken as object to be possessed or consumed as per the will of patriarchal agents. When they play in the holy river of women, they kick them as the bee kicks the flower after finishing its nectar. But the patriarchy is challenged by Mai

through her resisting attitude. As she is demanding for the fair justice she is not satisfied with the verdict of the local court, so she further demands for the verdict of the Supreme Court.

Mukhtar's sense of revolt against the patriarchal domination is materialized even though there were various hindrances and obstacles. She gets justice which she has long cherished for: "On August 31, 2002, the court delivered its verdict during a special session outside the court hours. Six men are condemned to death and ordered to pay fifty thousand rupees in damages and costs: four of the defendants for the rape as members of the Jirgas, namely Faiza, the clan leader, and Ramzan." (Mai 73) Her success in getting justice is not only her individual success rather it is the success of all the violence-stricken women in Pakistan.

No men have ever been condemned to death for sexually abusing the females in Pakistan. It is the historical success in the context of females in the Muslim country of Pakistan where many of the women in Pakistan have been suffering from the wrath of their husbands; they have their noses cut off, have acid thrown in their faces or are "accidentally" killed in the explosion of a cooking-gas container. In spite of all these persecutions they have been remaining in silent due to the fear of exposition and the social humiliation. If they attempt to fight against such injustice nobody speaks in favor of them. But after the success of Mukhtar Mai in fighting against the patriarchal violence upon the women, various other women, having similar problem, are inspired to fight for justice. In this connection, Chandra Talpade Mohanty asserts the need for "a unity of women" (Mohanty 25) to challenge the patriarchal domination. She further says that the resistance is necessary phenomena for women to assert their identity in the vast horizon of patriarchal domination. Mukhtar's close friend Naseem is also inspired to fight together for their right. As she begins to assert:

Men and women are equals. We have the same duties. I'm well aware that Islam gives men some superiority, but here, men take advantage of that to dominate us

completely. A woman must obey her father, her brother, her uncle, her husband, and finally every man in her village, the province, and the entire country. (Mai 86)

Naseem used to fear to talk about her husband though he never let her go outside. But now onward, she frankly speaks of the husband who won't let his wife see a movie because he wants to keep her in ignorance in order to control her. For many a Pakistani wife, Naseem explains, "The world exists only through her husband" (Mai 87). If she wants to go outside, she must take permission of her husband. Her individual decision has no longer value in her life, and they can never revolt against it. But after the incident of Mukhtar Mai, the behavior of the wives has been changed; they no longer fear to go against their husband if it is appropriate.

Moreover, while fighting against the exploitation of males, Mukhtar Mai has been supported by many of the women activists. At the time of suffering from dilemma, they come to make bond on the basis of the shared experiences of suppression and oppression that eventually helps to strengthen her determination aroused from the sense of revolt. In this connection, Chandra Talpade Mohanty while defining the resisting concept of oppressed female, in her book *Feminism Without Borders*, conveys:

The homogeneity of women as a group is, in turn, predicted on a definition of the experiences of oppression where difference can only be understood as male/female. The analytic elision between the experience of oppression and the opposition to it illustrates an aspect of feminist osmosis thesis: being female and feminist are one and the same; we are all oppressed and hence we all resist. Politics and ideology as self-conscious struggles, and choices necessarily get written of such an analysis. (Mohanty 112)

The above lines illustrate female bonding on the ground of their struggle against the exploitation and the experience of victimization in the predominantly masculine's society. It

further clarifies that when women are oppressed, they perform the action for resistance to break the patriarchal base. Corresponding to Mohanty the woman activists also resist collectively and support Mukhtar Mai to resist against the violence as all of them have been victimized by the vast domain of oppressive patriarchy:

A Pakistani Woman activist explains to me . . . They're (half of women of our country) not allowed to learn to read and write, to find out how the world around them works. That's why illiterate women cannot defend themselves: they know nothing about their rights, and words are put into their mouths to sabotage their revolt. But we support you! Just have courage. (Mai 45-46)

With the support of other women, Mukhtar Mai ultimately gets justice by giving due punishment to those assailants. While struggling to get justice in her life, her illiteracy turns out to be an obstacle as she fails to go after the law and women rights. Indeed, women in such Muslim society are not allowed for education because males are fearful that the females can know about the women right and revolt against such domination. Due to the lack of education, women are unaware about the world and the law. Such lack of knowledge about laws and rules makes them difficult to choose the proper way of revolt against patriarchal domination. Mukhtar realizes the lack of education has made her "crippled I am by my illiteracy" and because of which she has loosened her ability "to make up own mind about important things" (Mai 48).

Knowing about the real condition of Mukhtar Mai, various organizations begin to provide economic support to her. One day, a government minister comes to visit her with an economic support of half a million rupees. While knowing the very sum of money, Mukhtar thinks to establish a school for girls. She had the poor experience of being uneducated, and to save the upcoming generation from being illiterate she desires to open a school. So, she

responds to the woman who provides her check of half a million rupees by indicating her desire. As she later narrates:

‘I don’t need a cheque,’

I tell her in the end. ‘I need a school!’

She smiles. ‘A school?’

Yes, a school for the girls in my village. We don’t have one. If you really want to give me something, then let me say this: I don’t need a cheque, but I need a girls’ school for our village’. (Mai 56)

Mukhtar Mai chooses the path to educate the children of her village. She knows that she became victim of oppression because the small village lacked fundamental education. She wants to educate the children to reduce or eliminate the future abuser and abused. She argues that without education, women cannot effectively challenge patriarchy; any attempt to do so will inevitably encounter numerous difficulties.

To support her argument, it is relevant to reference Mary Wollstonecraft, who contends that education is essential for women to attain reason, equality, and virtue. She emphasizes the importance of teaching children analytical and generalizing skills. Wollstonecraft advocates for women's right to education to earn respect and become less vulnerable to prejudice. She further argues that when women have reason, which she views as a divine attribute, it upholds virtue. This discussion extends to defining the reasoning capabilities of both women and men, Wollstonecraft in her book *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* argues: “The protection of our nature and capability of happiness must be estimated by the degree of reason, virtue and knowledge that distinguish the individual and direct the laws which binds society and that form the exercise of reason” (Wollstonecraft 39).

Wollstonecraft focuses upon the urgency of education to develop the reasoning capability of women, which she believes to make women equal to the men. Corresponding to

Wollstonecraft, through education, Mukhtar wants to save the life of women from the cycle of indulging in household work of “cook rice and lentils, wash clothing and hang it up to dry on palm trunks, cut grass for the animals, harvest wheat and sugarcane, prepare tea, put the youngest children to bed, fetch water from the pump” (Mai 76) within the narrow space of four walls.

Even though many men like to marry her, after she gets money, Mukhtar denies their offer considering it as the new way of conspiracy. In fact, they have rated her as “A broken branch” which they think “should not be thrown away: it must be kept within the family! If she agrees” (Mai 61) One of her relatives wants to take her for [his] son as his second wife, Mukhtar quickly comprehends his coveted desire of money that she has “What did he want for his son me or Cheque? Personally, I want a school” (Mai 61). She rejects such offer for her personal desire to educate the women of upcoming generation.

Conclusion

To sum up, in the Muslim Patriarchal society of Pakistan, women have been victimized by the patriarchal ideology that has contaminated the culture and the whole society itself. Mukhtar Mai is one of the victims who have been sexually abused on the direction of conservative society guided by the orthodoxies culture. Such excessive subjugation of Mai obliges her to revolt against such injustice that has been done upon women in the Pakistani society. Indeed, it is her undercurrents of sense of protest against the oppressive patriarchy that not only helps her in getting justice but also makes the contemporary women and the girls of upcoming generation aware about the women rights. The school that she has established for girls is the symbol of great revolt against the predominantly masculinist society that never give chance to the girls in education.

Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* is a short memoir of the courageous women. Mukhtar Mai, a divorced woman, is from the tribal community of Meerwala, Pakistan, the

country which lacks the law of divorce from the side of female. The patriarchal social system never lays females the freedom; the woman is gang raped as revenge against the alleged sexual relationship of her brother with a woman from the higher cast, which, in fact, is the fake pretence to exploit the innocent women in the society. The human brutality of gang rape of an innocent woman is taken as revenge and the matter of an Honor in the patriarchal society of Pakistan.

This research has analyzed the memoir of Mukthar Mai as an embodiment of female subjugation in the Muslim society of Pakistan. Drawing upon the conceptual framework of feminism, it has excavated female domination and exploitation in the patriarchal social system throughout the memoir. Mukthar Mai represents the women having the pathetic and poignant image after the exploitation under the patriarchal claptrap. In fact, Mukthar Mai has not only been exploited physically but also mentally and psychologically, for she has been thrown in the big mass naked after the rape by a group of six males. This research has explored how the females Pakistan have been exploited both sexually and psychologically.

Mukthar Mai, in contrast to other oppressed women in the traditional Muslim community, does not take her own life or keep quiet out of shame. Mukthar Mai defies patriarchal society's expectations and the expectations of other women by calling the police and knocking on the door of the court to obtain justice, even in a nation where the presence of four male eyewitnesses is required to establish a case of rape in court. Instead of backing down from the challenge posed by those attackers, she becomes even more committed to fighting against Pakistani female abuse. With the assistance of media professionals, the event grows globally, and she receives more and more support.

The research has analyzed the memoir *In the Name of Honor* as the story of female resistance against the subjugation of women by the patriarchal society. As a courageous woman with a revolutionary spirit, Mukthar Mai becomes successful to defend the existence

of woman which she considers as equal to the men, the powerful group in the society. She becomes the example for the women in the days to come in the matter of female resistance. Drawing upon the conceptual framework of the revolutionary feminist theorists, the research has foregrounded the revolt of Mukhtar Mai and has set an example for upcoming generation.

Mukhtar Mai is not content with merely winning her case against the assailants and receiving global support and recognition; she is driven to empower future generations of women to advocate for their rights. She realizes this ambition with funds provided by a female minister, NGOs, and INGOs. She establishes a school for girls in a society that restricts women to their homes. In her community, women are prohibited from venturing outside or interacting with boys. Mukhtar Mai's initiative to open a school aims to secure women's rights and provide education to girls who would otherwise remain illiterate and unaware of their rights. Her establishment of the school represents a groundbreaking challenge to the patriarchal society that exploits women by keeping them in ignorance and darkness.

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