

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology
of Egypt / Egyptology

**FEMALE STRATEGIES OF RESISTANCE: A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF
MARRIAGE IN THE HOUSE OF CLAY AND WATER AND NOBODY
KILLED HER**

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Ms. Javeria Zia, Dr. Aisha Jadoon, Dr. Imran Ali*, Female Strategies of Resistance: A Feminist Analysis of Marriage in The House of Clay and Water and Nobody Killed Her. Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 18(10), 913-927. ISSN 1567-214x.

Keywords: Female strategies, resistance, feminism, patriarchy, marriage, fiction.

Abstract

Marriage as a primary social institution appears one of the most celebrated themes of both male and female fictional writers. Women writers often fictionalize their sense of social experience which usually gets ignored in the dominant androcentric discourses of marriage. From a feminist standpoint, oppression of married females is regarded patriarchal cataclysm. Breeding inequality, such marriages enslave wives to husbands resulting in women's direct psychological and material discontent. Nancy Harstock thinks, women as an individual never ceases to resist against the unjust patriarchal constraints. Advocating women's autonomy, this paper draws on Faiqa Mansab and Sabyn Javeri's fictional narratives, *The House of Clay and Water* (2017) and *Nobody Killed Her* (2017) respectively to signify and augment the resisting strategies and struggles of married women in Pakistan.

1. Introduction

Historically, institution of marriage has remained the evolutionary epicenter of the human civilization. Marriage brings two rational beings together in a harmonious lifelong relationship. Yet in asserting their equality, feminist theorists have claimed it to be an institution where gender inequality and patriarchy prevails. For instance, Smith (1987) states that although apparently marriage appears as a neutral ruling apparatus but it acts as a male dominated relationship whereby females are excluded from the practice of power. As a consequence, female's identity remains subservient to men by being restricted to the dependent role of a housewife. Such a wife is expected to find happiness and recognition in life by fulfilling her housekeeping and child rearing responsibilities. Inopportunately, these restrictive roles are set by males for females which lead to their domestic and marital oppression (Hartmann, 1981). Jessie Barnard in her book *The Future of Marriage* (1982) points out these differential experiences of a husband and a wife in their marital relationship by proposing that in reality in every marriage there are two marriages: his marriage and her marriage. This she proves by explaining that men's self-esteem tends to increase in marriage while for females it generates 'learned helplessness' in them. The lack of control in marriages leaves a wife depressed and alienated as earlier suggested by Beauvoir in *Second Sex*. So does Walby (1990) believe when she argues that marriage is a form of private patriarchy rendering the wife as an 'other' whose voice is silenced.

In order to raise their voices, feminists have used both theory and fiction as a medium of resistance. Besides feminist theorists like Simone de Beauvoir, Patricia Hills Collins, Sidonie Smith, Jessie Barnard, Sylvia Walby to name few, women novelists have also taken up the issue of female exploitation in marital relationships in their writings. For the purpose of this paper, the two novels *The House of Clay and Water* (2017) written by Faiqa Mansab and *Nobody Killed Her* (2017) by Sabyn Javeri are considered which are centered round this theme of married women's oppression and their efforts to raise their voice against the injustice they face while being in this relationship of inequality.

These two novels are analyzed through the feminist standpoint perspective. Standpoint feminists asserts that knowledge stem from one's social position. Feminists in standpoint are interested to observe the inequality between male and female and power production. Sandra Harding pinpoints that it is easy at the top of social hierarchy to lose sight of human relations and social reality. While people at the bottom of the hierarchy has unique standpoint as they have objective knowledge, as "each of these groups of women lives is a good place to start in order to explain certain aspects of the social order so the theory does not recommend any single or ideal woman's life to start with" (Harding, 1993, p-130).

Females have been treated differently all over the world. Feminist research acknowledges that all most all females experience some sort of oppression and exploitation. . It advocates for the multiplicity and diversity of women experience. Feminist standpoint theory asserts 'multiple subjectivities and plurality' and argues for comparative and competing views as a strategy for knowledge production (Hawkesworth, 2006). In Pakistan society, power dynamics implicated in marriage necessitates the consideration of the different standpoints of married women protagonists in the selected texts, to evaluate different standpoints of married females in contrast to distorted reality perceived by males and to analyze how power dynamics in marriage prevalent in the Pakistani society are resisted by married women of variant age and social class. So, it is

pertinent to look at the view point of marginalized and oppressed wives to gain reality of the marriage in a patriarchal society like Pakistan. .

2. Feminist Theorization of Marriage as a Patriarchal Institution

Feminist theorists argue that patriarchy flourishes both with family and marriage (Chisale 2016a). In the childhood nurturing of patriarchy begins when girls are socialized how to address males in marriage. Similarly, patriarchy is inculcated in boys where they are supposed to be intelligent, macho and stronger than girls. Feminists like Pateman (1988) scrutinize marriage where it is defined in relation to the role of sex, reproduction and gendered roles of spouse. Marriage as an institution are a site of patriarchy and grant very little independence to females (De Beauvoir, 1997) and act as a “fertile ground for gender-based violence, particularly wife abuse” (Chisale 2016).

Feminists assert that in marriage husband executes power on his wife as master exercise on his slaves. For this purpose, cultural, political and religious ideologies are exploited as a tool to suppress a wife’s voice. In particular, religion is used as a tool to indoctrinate the wife to treat her husband as a supreme lord. According to feminist theologians, the power factor in marriage is emphasized as God-given or ancestor-given with fixed unchanging roles that are socially constructed (Dreyer 2011). For this, Siwila (2012) points out biblical reference are given to legitimize oppression of the married women. Whereas, Marxist feminists pinpoint the treatment of females as being regarded as male’s private property. For them just as capitalism suppresses proletariat and enhances inequality, patriarchy restricts females and oppresses them (McLaren, 2002). Marriage thus entails not only psychological, sexual but also economic exploitation.

Patriarchy influences political, religious and social structure of the world and restricts females’ freedom. It legitimizes female subjugation as it is an invisible source of authority. According to Walby (1990) patriarchy operates at two levels: public and private. Private patriarchy refers to the restriction imposed upon females by limiting them to household and unpaid labor. In private patriarchy, oppression and subordination of females is beneficial for husbands and fathers (Rabe 2014, p-163). Public patriarchy is referred to the societal constructions subordinated by males. The safety of marriage requires wife complete submission to cultural and religious notion.

Women are stigmatized by the society and family if they oppose patriarchy (Siwila, 2012). Education plays a pivotal role to resist patriarchy. Poetry, songs and literature are used by females to resist patriarchy in their own way. They use body politics but in empowering way. They show how silence can be a tool of resistance and struggle against patriarchy. A woman uses different type of silence to mask anger. Hostile silence plays an important role in relationship because it contains threats that are powerful in magnitude. It portrays the presence of something physically present but emotionally absent. Beside it there are political silences, resisting silences. Highly educated females go through inner conflict due to conflicting words they are exposed through. On one hand, they are authoritative in their career while on the other hand they are expected to conform to the notions based on patriarchy. Hence, married females use these forms of silencing to resist and survive in patriarchy.

3. Methodological Orientation of Feminist Standpoint Theory

Feminist standpoint theory is a broad categorization that includes somewhat diverse theories ranging from Hartsock’s (1983) Feminist Historical Materialism perspective, Donna Haraway’s

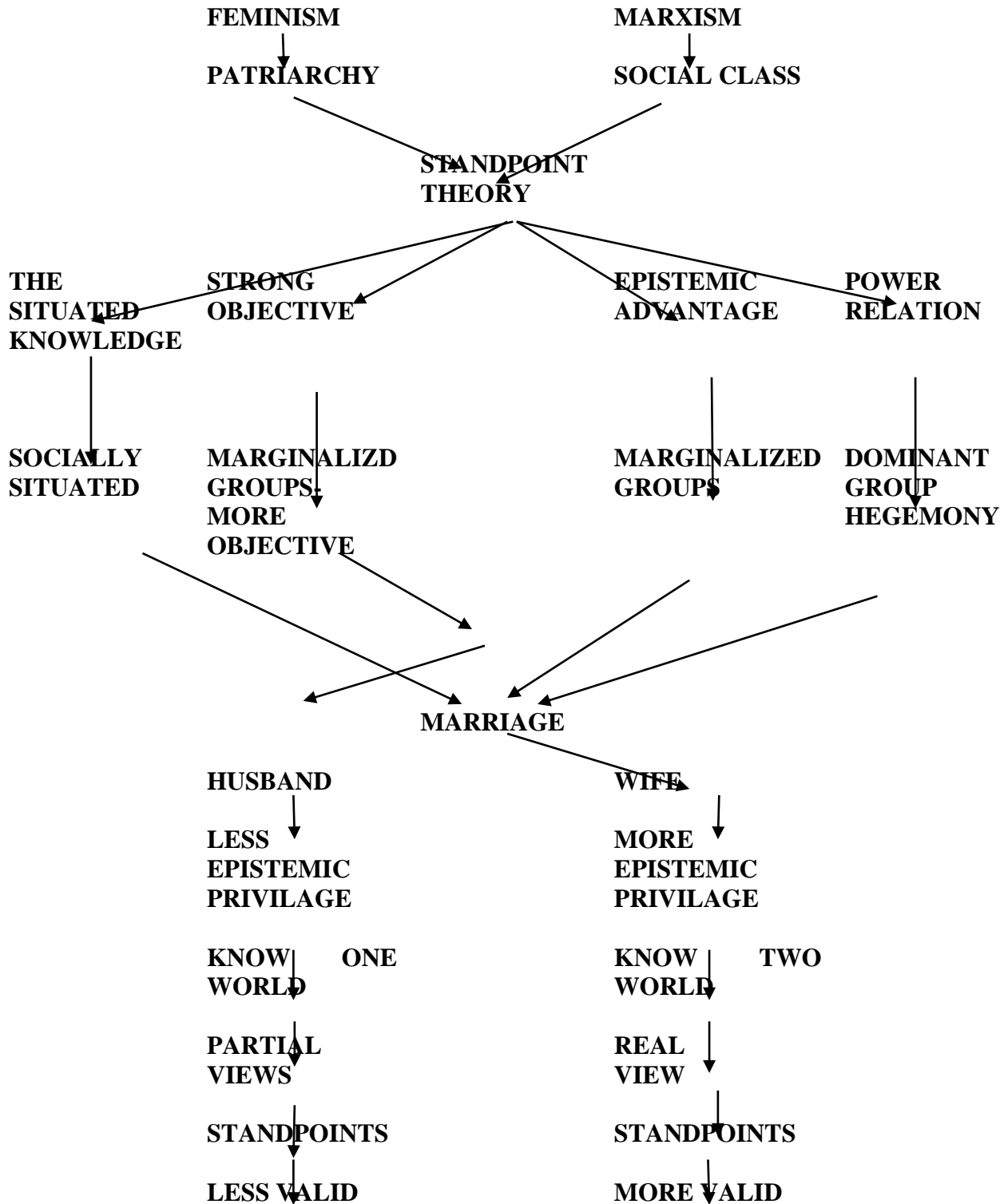
(2003) analysis of Situated Knowledge, Patricia Hill Collin's (1990) Black Feminist Thought, and Smith's (1987) Everyday World Sociology For Women"(Gurung, 2020). In contemporary times, standpoint theory is recognized as "it is a relational standpoint, rather than arising inevitably from the experience of women" (Andermahr et al., 1997). Standpoint feminism places women at the centre of the research. Females position in the sexual division of labor leads to the evolution of standpoint theory.

Standpoint theory and Marxist theory shares the same background of evolution-exploitation. Nancy Harstock asserts in her book Money, Sex and Power that "the attempt to develop, on the methodological base provided by Marxian theory, an important epistemological tool for understanding and opposing all forms of domination - a feminist standpoint"(Harstock, 1983, p-38). Harstock encapsulated that the theory of class struggle given by Karl Marx can be applicable to the gender relation in which bourgeoisie is the male while proletariat as females. She emphasizes that Marx theory is important despite of the fact that he does not talk about gender relation in his theory. She asserts "his/Marx distinction between appearance and essence, circulation and production, abstract and concrete are equally valid to the feminist standpoint" (Harstock, 1983, p-45).

According to Harding (1993) the transition from objectivity to strong objectivity is possible from the sense of standpoint epistemologies. It provides a passage to contemplate about the gap that existed between how individual want world to be and how it is an individual's position in society does not generate his essentialist standpoint, but in fact there are multiple adjacent standpoints that operate with one another. In a society where multiple identities are constructed through class, race and gender, individual's position influences the knowledge one possess. The standpoint theory gives unconventional knowledge construction with tenets like strong objectivity, situated knowledge, power knowledge and epistemic advantage.

Harstock asserts that males and females create their world according to their experience. Reality is perceived differently as the material situation differs. Dominant group label their perspective 'real' and rejects other view altogether. Same goes in marriage, where male labels his perspective real and correct; and pays no heeds to female standpoint. But, In fact it is the dominant male who perspective is partial as he is blind to the oppression because of his privileged position in the society. She asserts that historical materialism "might enable us to lay bear the laws of tendency which constitute the structures of patriarchy overtime (Harstock, 1983, p-283). Females' lives provide a vintage point to see how patriarchy influences the lives of females. The vision that is available to the oppressed is achieved through the struggle one has done. She further states that the discourse of ruling is ideological but the ruled like females' reflect concrete reality of their lives.

The following model has been adopted for the research to illustrate how females resist patriarchy in marriages by asserting their unique standpoints.



4. Discussion: Approaching The House of Clay and Water and Nobody Killed Her from Feminist Standpoint Perspective

The protagonist Nida of text *The House of Clay and Water* is born in a wealthy house and only daughter in the family. Her marriage is arranged by her family to a sound politician Saqib who is brought up in stanch patriarchal settings. Nida is given the responsibility of house hold which she does happily until the death of her daughter, Fatima who suffers from the Down syndrome. She is forced to abort her second baby by being accused unfit to bear the child. As a result of which she loses interest in daily chores and starts going to dargahs where she meets a bhanggi. She starts living with him and adopts a new standpoint about the world. When Saqib finds out about her, she is forced back into the house of her husband.

This force according to feminist stand point, males hold powerful position and endeavor to preserve status quo. They do not bother to consider other perspectives or marginalized people opinion. In the case of marriages, it is the husband who tries to preserve status quo while remaining indifferent to wife's standpoint. Here, Saqib is forcing his will being the master in the patriarchal system prevalent in the marriages upon Nida to live with him irrespective of whether she is happy or not: "if a women was unhappy in her marriage, it was her fault. If her husband did not think she was worth the effort, why would anyone else? If a woman could not even manage her husband, she was a dullard and a failure. Exhibit a: Me" (Mansab, 2017, p-23). In patriarchal system prevalent in marriage, it is always the wife who is blamed for the failure in the marriage. It is her duty to fulfill her social role of house holding. If her husband is cheating on then again she is to be blamed for not being capable enough. Nida resists patriarchy by speaking against and raise her voice and portrays her standpoint in the marriage.

Nancy Hartsock considers master-slave relationship given by Hegel as the foundation for establishing gender relations especially in marriages. Changfoot (2004) considers that females are oppressed and marginalized by the man as only man can be the master. Saqib forces Nida not to go dargahs as the world outside is not safe for her. He asks her that "Women are weak and men are..." to which Nida interrupted "Weaker"? She said and laughed" (Mansab, 2017, p-14). In Pakistani society females are considered weaker than males. It is inculcated in them that they need same male to accompany them as the outer world is unsafe for her. They might become prey to the predators. This shows how male being the master constructs reality and ideologies regarding oppressed females.

Here, Nida challenges this belief and deconstructs the hegemonic masculine notion that males are stronger by asserting that males are weaker if females are weak. Here, Nida resists patriarchy by laughter. Humor and laughter are one of the ways to resist patriarchy in private domains especially in marriages. By implementing the strategy of laughter in her speech, Nida challenges the beliefs of Saqib by forcing him to contemplate about what she has said. Hence, presenting to him 'objective reality' according to Harding, which the dominant in this case is Saqib is failed to perceive.

Standpoint theory also illustrates how power relation helps in the production of knowledge. By considering the standpoints of the less powerful the way power works can be understood. Harding (2004) argues that by taking into account less powerful, we can gain insight into the operation of power and to highlight difference between what is actually experience by people and what is claimed to be true. Nida says, "I had to reaffirms his beliefs that he was the superior being in my life"(Mansab, 2017,p-115). Nida shows that she accepted the 'reality' given by Saqib to her that he is the most necessary and sublime person in her life. Nida standpoint helps to understand how power works in domestic life especially in marriage. Saqib

being male and master wants complete submission from Nida. He is quite unaware of the concrete world Nida is living as being oppressed and marginalized member in the marriage. Nida again resist patriarchy in marriage or absolute authority of Saqib by using humor as a tool for resistance. Humor undermines the rigidity of the status quo which husband tries to preserve. When Nida pokes fun at her patriarch husband, he thinks about an alternate way of behaving. His authority is challenged when Nida totally dismantles his views regarding his supremacy in marriage.

Nida possesses epistemic advantages as she has “an automatic epistemic privilege in virtue of being oppressed” (Intemann, 2010). When Nida confronts her husband about lack of her free will and freedom. She says “It’s a contradiction in terms. Given. Freedom. Freedom is not given. It just is. If it had to be given, it’s not freedom” (Mansab, 2017, p-203). Nida believes that freedom is something that is present in its essence. It is not something people or society gives you and if it is the case then the true meaning of freedom and its essence is lost. It shows how privileged people like Saqib possess distorted view of the reality because of his inability for downward mobility. He thinks that he does a great favor on Nida by bestowing upon her freedom which is quite ironic. He does not realize that freedom is not given, but instead it is always there. He presents “his view” of world and the way he perceive reality.

By asserting that he is the one who gives Nida freedom, he is asserting what Hartsock says about dialectic materialism that in marriages husband acts as a master who gives freedom to his slave, in case of gender relation, it is the wife. As Nida has endured struggle and pain, she possess diverse knowledge on the account of her lower social strata as compared to her husband who occupied relatively less epistemic advantage by being a member of the privileged groups. Saqib has more restricted perspective regarding freedom because of his lack of downward mobility where he can experience life and freedom. Being member of privilege strata he posses biased knowledge or narratives that are being inculcated in him. Nida on the other hand, deconstructs these biased narratives by putting forward her standpoint in marriage.

Nida being a member of marginalized group is socially situation into a position where she is aware of things and asks questions. Instead of accepting patriarchy in private life she resists it by asking question, generating her own standpoint. She says, “To find self-expression, must a woman choose the role of wife, mistress, or even a mother, daughter, and sister? Why she could not a woman just be, regardless of body and love? I was frantically fanning the spark of identity that I hope remained in the ambers of my ashes” (Mansab, 2017, p-171). In patriarchal society, females are assigned the roles to take care of family to be accepted in the society. Their individuality is nowhere to be found. In marriage she has lost her identity under the influence of patriarchal husband. Her true self is lost in marriage where her sole purpose to make her husband happy. Here, she challenges the biased views disguised as neutral. Her character provides scrutiny for creating systematic distortions of reality where the individual being of females are discarded and role are assign to designate her position in the society. She dismantles the widely held notions to restrict females and assign label and duties to make their views creditable. She asserts that in fulfilling the role imposed upon her she has lost her true self. To find her true self she starts going against his husband permission to Draghas. Her act is a kind of resistance she adopted. She portrays her standpoint that in order to have view and opinion regarding anything on does not need to fulfill the role of wife.

Nida also faces bifurcated consciousness in which there is a split between the worlds she actually experience and the dominant view of her husband which she must adopt. She says:

I was a divided self; even more than before because now I was a woman who was Saqib's wife and sasha's friend, a women belonging to a certain class and echelon- a sad, warring selfhood. My other self, however, I had found wandering the streets and shrines of Lahore. She was at peace. She didn't feel the pressures of dogmas and people's morality (Mansab, 2017, p-170)

Nida being part of subordinate group is conditioned to view the world from the perspective of her husband: the dominant group. Since it is the male whose perspective is embedded in the institutions and practices of the world, Nida is forced to play the role of the obedient housewife whose decisions are made by her husband. She is forced to abort baby because she is consider sick to conceive a child. She also lost her baby daughter: Fatima who suffers from the Down syndrome because her husband does not want her. As a result, an emptiness and sense of alienation overwhelmed her. While Saqib on the other hand, enjoys the privilege of reaming oblivious to the alienation Nida faces. Here, Harding strong objectivity comes into play where she asserts that a female poses the real experience as they are the sufferer in the patriarchal society. He expects Nida to accommodate to his perspective and to 'his view' of marriage. So, Nida faces two modes of knowing, experiencing and acting- one located in "dominant, masculine world" (Smith, 2005) of her husband in which she belongs to the world of 'begham" of upper strata of society. While on the other hand, is the "concrete world" (Smith, 2005) of shrines; where she finds peace of mind and calmness to her agonizing soul.

Women start accommodating themselves to the dominant group to gain reorganization in the world that is not theirs. So these females become alienated from their 'true' selves as well as reinforce patriarchy. Being Saqib wife and the role assigned as his wife brings her to resist the marriage in which she has to obey the demands of her husband. When Saqib asks Nida to stay away from Sasha as her character is bringing shame on his family names to which Nida asserts that " Using and abusing religion for control had become a habit for men" (Mansab, 2017, p-212). Here Nida challenges the authority Saqib is forcing upon her by asserting that men misuse religion for their purpose. They use religion to restrict women even if same act is performed by man than it is acceptable. She criticized the double standard prevalent in the world and in marriages where it is okay for man to cheat on his wife and not vice versa. She illustrates her standpoint and what Hartsock asserts that discourse of ruling is ideological. She resists the patriarchy imposed from her husband. Her husband tries to dictate her to whom she should continue her friendship. She resists the authority her husband tries to establish on her by putting forward her standpoint. In short, Nida asserts her standpoint in marriage where she dismantles the patriarchal notions imposed on her by her husband. She tries to resists his authority by the technique of laughter. Being member of upper class, she still faces oppression in the marriage and tries to resist it by rejecting the dialectical materialism prevalent in the marital settings.

Another married women, Sasha hails from middle class family who is forcefully married to the man. She is in outwardly successful marriage and has two daughters. She is bold, daring and intrepid lady who is willing to live her dreams and is not afraid to face consequences. She is beautiful and quiet aware of what world wants from her. She uses her charm to her full advantage and becomes escort. They in turn pay for her designer brands and luxuries. She continues to live a carefree world until a tragedy turns her life upside down. Her daughter

becomes victim of rape and become pregnant at age of fourteen. She turns apologetic for her previous action and negligence.

According to feminist stand point, males hold powerful position and endeavor to preserve status quo. They do not bother to not consider other perspectives or marginalized people opinion. Faheem being member of dominant group lacks strong objectivity regarding truth. He holds biased views prevalent in the society and Sasha being member of epistemic advantage group dismantles it. "Men were different, after all. They had the strangest codes. Faheem would sleep with anyone from Khyber to Karachi.....the double lives too well maintained" (Mansab, 2017, p;-67). She challenges the male notions and ideologies. She questions the double standards prevalent where it is normal for male to cheat on his wife but not the other way round. Hartsock historical materialism concept emerges where male as head and bread winner is exculpated from all matters and is not accountable for anything. While on the other hand, if same act is performed by wife in marriage she has to face the consequence. Belonging to the middle class, Sasha is quite assertive about her viewpoints or standpoints. She further asserts "Then you'll come back like Odysseus, expecting a devoted and faithful wife waiting for you" (Mansab, 2017, p-87). She criticizes the double relation where females as a wife has to be devoted and loyal, but husband who might be cheating outside is always welcomed with open arms. She pinpoints what Nancy Hartsock says that gender relations are like master slave relation where male is the master while slave can only be females. In marriage, husband acts as a master who wants complete devotion and submission from wife. Even he cheats his wife; he still wants complete submission from his wife, but not the other way round.

Standpoint theory illustrates how power relation helps in the production of knowledge. By considering the standpoint of the less powerful the way power works can be understood. Harding (2004) argues that by taking into account less powerful, we can gain insight into the operation of power and to highlight difference between what is actually experience by people and what is claimed to be true. Here, Sasha dismantles the hegemonic beliefs present in the contemporary Pakistani society where woman reputation defines her. She mocks Faheem when he asserts his situated knowledge that it is morally correct for males to escort while it's a forbidden sin for females. Faheem failure to interrogate his advantaged social situation leaves him scientifically and epistemology at disadvantage position for generating knowledge: "A women reputation is all she's got. This is not something you'd want your daughter to do, would you?Yes, Faheem, you are right. I think I'm in the wrong room. Someone called for an escort but I'm sure it wasn't you. You're so morally correct"(Munsab, 2017, p-20).Faheem criticizes Sasha and assert his opinion on her. He argues that women just has reputation; hence converting all her identity to a single trait which must be in the women but not in males. In marriages, females are restricted to perform social role and one of the role of wife is also to make their daughter an obedient. In response to it, Sasha points to his morality that is it is made only for males to restrict them. Males especially husband are free from any of this restriction. Here, Sasha is asserting what Hartsock that the discourse of the ruling is ideological. Faheem is talking about ideological discourse which dominated male members accepted as it is always in favor of them.

Sasha's husband, Luqman, demand complete submission from his wife. He is the provider of the family and in turn demands complete gratitude. Standpoint emerges from the roots of Marxism which illustrates that men are the bourgeois while females are the proletariat. Males isolate females in marriage through patriarchal control because females do not contribute

to economic empowerment of the family (Isran & Isran, 2012). Luqman wants Sasha to acknowledge he is the provider of the family and she should be grateful of him. "All right, it is you then be more grateful" (Mansab, 2017, p- 67). Sasha is told by her husband that he is the one who fulfills all her need. He provides her with clothes and all luxuries. But, in return he wants Sasha to be grateful of him for providing all these things. Smith asserts that it is the every day practices of oppression of females at the level of individuals that ultimately leads to the experience and reaffirmation of collective hierarchical pattern of social structure. Every day oppression and marginalization of females at the level of individuals give rise to collective marginalized experience females faced. Sasha faces patriarchy in her marriage. But unlike Nida who resist it by using laughter as a weapon. Sasha directly confronts her husband and society and challenges the male oriented ideologies forces upon wives. She questions the patriarchal notion that if cheating is okay for husband then why not for wife. She refused to submit to master-slave relations in the marriage but instead execute her influence on her husband.

Seerat is the wife of Luqman and a mother of two children. She obeys the order of her husband unconditionally. She believes in ancient saying that husbands are like god, so she must worship him. She fulfills the criteria of a good wife who keeps in check either his husband is safe or not. Her duty is with children, home and his mother. Seerat is expected to play her social role. Her character provides scrutiny for creating systematic distortions of reality where the individual being of females are discarded and role are assign to designate her position in the society. "He did not have to worry about anything regarding his children's upbringing. After all, what else did she have to do?" (Mansab, 2017, p-156). Faheem living in his own illusion believes that it is the only duty of her wife is to look after his children. Seerat is supposed to find fulfillment and happiness through her marriage, household and child nurturing. Apparently she does fulfill the roles assigned by patriarch male Faheem to her. Faheem set this 'natural' role for his wife. Being member of privilege strata he posses biased knowledge or narratives that are being inculcated in him. As Seerat is economically depends on him, she is ultimately force to play the role of proletariat in bourgeois world. Seerat has to perform the unpaid labor in her marriage. According to many feminist, silence is also a kind of resistance. In response to the role and duty assigned, Seerat uses her silence as tool resistance.

Fikree and Pasha (2004) assert that a good wife is happy when her husband is happy and boys are taught to control women in the family. "She believed in all the ancient adage that a husband was godlike for the wife" (Mansab, 2017, p-95). Seerat is an epitome of the wife who fulfils the commands of her patriarchal husband and fully submits her opinions. Faheem controls Seerat because he possesses privilege position and does productive labor. Domestic slavery is all he demands from her. If she demands for money, he tells her that he will cut down his expenses to accommodate her. In another instance, Faheem describes how his wife feels when she demands money from her husband. "It made her feel so guilty, she wouldn't ask for money for months on end (Mansab, 2017,p-54)". In Pakistani society, wives especially house wives depends on their husband for economic needs. Here, the power relation of master-slave works. Allen (1989) refers power as the ability of person to constrain the choices available to other person. Here Faheem exerts power on Seerat to constrain her choices to spend money.

According to feminist stand point, males hold powerful position and endeavor to preserve status quo. They do not bother to not consider other perspectives or marginalized people opinion. Faheem possess restricted perspective regarding feminism. He says "All these propaganda about

women being equal was bullshit. Women were not as intelligent as men, and that was the fact” (Mansab, 2017, p-67). Faheem says these lines to his wife. He is asserting his biased and distorted views on his wife. His avoidance to downward mobility and invisibility of the work performed by his wife leads to biased view. Seerat possess epistemic advantage “in virtue of being oppressed” as she belongs to unprivileged and marginalized member of the society. (Intemann,2010). She endures struggle and pain and knows the ideologies to which she is subjected. Seerat belongs to the middle class family. She accepts her role and fulfils her duty as a wife. She does not challenge the authority of his patriarch husband anywhere. Her medium of resistance is silence. The power his husband exerts on her she resists it by reaming being silent. Hence, fulfilling the notions prevalent that females in Pakistani society accepts oppression and do not challenge patriarchy.

Another character, Rani Shah who is an educated lady and returns to her native country after her father has been executed by the ruling military. She jumps into politics but remain consciousness of male dominated society who is unwilling to surrender to a female leader. She is well-aware of socio-political disapproval. She falls in love with feudal lord: Balgodhi and get married. The novel illustrates the tiny details of her life in male-oriented family. She undergoes through tough condition living even though she is independent. She has to face her patriarchal minded husband.

Balogodhi wife gives birth to female child and his hatred for female child is evident when the baby girl is diagnosed as deaf and dump. He does not affect by hearing this but remains indifferent. He asserts “She is just a girl. In fact, it may even be a good thing- woman who does not answer back”. The true patriarchal description of marriage that if first born child is girl than she might bring shame to the family .Nancy views Hegel’s concept of master- slave relation as the base for gender relations. Master can only be a man so woman is inherently oppressive. Here Rani Shah’s husband propounds his power of being a master in the house. Because of his narrow approach and biased views, he possesses distorted knowledge and implement in the house by illustrating his ideologies.

Rani is constantly reminded by her husband that she needs him to survive in this cruel world of men and generals. “Without a husband, the General’s men will chew you up. My dear girl, you need me (Javeri, 2017, p-30). Thought, Rani have independent existence, she is the victim of cruel system where husband plays an important role to subjugated wives in the marriage. Her dependence on her husband makes her vulnerable and powerless though she is the prime minister of the country. She times and again remembers “Papa! You said I was as good as a son”(Javeri, 2017, p-31), but her husband reminds her that she is dependent on him. She has to bear the social pressure because the rules are generated by the privileged and those in the position of power.

Sandra Harding asserts that strong objectivity can be found by taking into account marginalized females perspectives. The point of view of marginalized provides accurate and less biased view of the world. Males possess and hold powerful position and try to preserve status quo. They are least interest in considering the perspective marginalized peers like females faced. Rani is an educated girl belongs to upper strata but still she has to accept the ideologies forced upon her by her husband. “I wish I could show you the fear that grips me all the time. I pretend to be brave, but inside. I’m shacking (Javeri, 2017, p-41). This shows how rules made by master husband forces wives to feel alienation and fear.

Women have epistemic advantage as they are more prone to be oppressed. Females hold more epistemic advantage as compared to the theories and knowledge made by males. Rani protests against the gender discrimination where a man is exculpated from all punishment. She says “Forty lashes. The penalty for a wife found intoxicated. But none for a man” (Javeri, 2017,p-40). She condemns the seemingly neutral “ruling apparatus” that hide male context. She witness the violence unleashed by males, but lacks power to exercise on them. She asserts “I’m powerless. I could not help but laugh”(Javeri, 2017, p-267). She asserts that she faces powerlessness in front of her husband. She witness suffocation in marriage and society for females but lacks any source to dwindle it by turning it upside down. Rani Shah is an educated lady and belongs to upper class. She married to the patriarchal husband who asserts his power on her. Though, she herself possesses powerful position in the society. She is unable to exert power and become victim of male domination.

5. Conclusion

Patriarchy entails oppression in marriage for a wife in a typical Pakistan society. The problem comes through entrapment of women in gendered, economic, cultural and political snares. The study of selected texts reveals their extensive focus on the marital experience of Pakistani women in traditional Pakistani social settings. The standpoint of married females’ characters in the text highlights the intricate power dynamics which are prevalent in the traditional marriage. Ruling relations and patriarchy empowers male while weaken women in all walks of life. In the select texts four character: Nida, Sasha, Seerat and Rani Shah present their unique standpoints about marriage. Nida and Rani Shah both are educated and belong to the upper class; however, they both resist patriarchy in marriage differently. Nida uses laughter, humor and silence as a strategy while Rani Shah resists patriarchy by becoming aloof towards it. While Sasha and Seerat both belong to middle class. Sasha uses forceful assertive voice to resist patriarchy. Pointing out the resistance of Pakistani women in multiple and complex ways, this paper contributes to the ongoing feminist theoretical discussions of marriage as a gendered experience for married women, their subjectivities and resistance mechanism from the standpoints of Pakistani women.

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