

Journal of Law & Social Studies (JLSS)

Volume 4, Issue 1, pp 86-97

www.advancelrf.org

A Depiction of Indian Muslim Women's Plight in Culture and Literature Around the Mid-Eighteen Century

Dr Naila Maqsood

Assistant professor,

University of Engineering and Technology Taxila

naila.maqsood@uettaxila.edu.pk

Abstract

This paper locates the Muslim women's social conditions particularly in the Indo-Pak Subcontinent which largely arose out of two sources; a) evolution of Islam and development of several schools of jurisprudence; b) Muslim's contact with the Indian culture. Over several centuries, more particularly from the early 13th century onward (by this time, Muslim Turkish rule had been established in India), and the impact of Bhakti movement both on Hindus and Muslims and spread of teachings of Guru Nanak and Bhagat Kabir, Muslims came to adopt many of the Hindu notions and practices. This was in addition to attitudes that came with them by their conversion to Islam. The first part of the paper deals with the effects of Hindu culture regarding status of women on Muslims. The second part of the paper discusses the plight of Muslim women in literature i.e Punjab folk lore of Heer Ranjha. It tries to convey the thoughts on several social customs, particularly emphasizing the various aspects of women's life. The third part provides the ethnographic evidence which confirms that women, particularly in rural areas, have faced low status and problem connected with rapes, marriages, dowry, and divorces, etc. With solidification of customs, discrimination against a female endures through centuries. As a result, Muslim women were become socially backward, economically susceptible, and politically marginalized segment of society.

Keywords: Muslim Women, Aqwam, Caste, Heer Ranjha, Waris Shah, Hindu

Status of Women in Hindu Culture: Its Effect on Muslims

Several negative images about the role and status of women existed there in the Hindu religion. These images had traditionally been accepted by the local people before conversion to Islam. After conversion to Islam, these images and beliefs continued, even to the present-day Pakistan. Hindu religion always described a woman with disrespectful terms like 'fickle-minded, sensual, seducer of man; given to false-hood, trickery, folly, greed, impurity and thoughtless action; root of all evil;

inconsistent and cruel.' Even while talking of her rightful duties, Hindu religions mention a woman in subjective terms, i.e. a slave to her father in childhood, to her husband in youth, and to her son if her husband dies. The woman is never independent or enjoying liberty in such facets of her life. "The widow's expectation of immolation on the deceased husband's pyre was the extreme expression of the notion that a woman's worth is nil without her husband."

Among converts to Islam, such were the concepts and notions which remained the basis of pattern of life even after they had converted to Islam. These traditions of the Hindu majority in undivided India were carried with the change of faith even. Islam came to Subcontinent in the 8th century but ways of cultural living among converts tended to remain unchanged. During the extensive period of Muslim rule in India, a portion of Muslim women from aristocratic classes did have access to liberal ways of living but majority of the female side remained as it had been. Islamic injunctions with respect to the rights of women to education, property, choice of marital partner, and the likes were neither given a considered thought, nor were generally permitted.

"Certain other aspects of the religion – for example, the injunctions regarding veil – were largely accepted and practiced into the way of life, partly because they were in sync with the existing belief system. Historically, exclusion of women and their disapproval to work outside the home were important standards held by upper-caste Hindus. Various forms of purdah are still in practice by Hindu women in present-day India."

Though it would be misleading to say that the present-day status of Pakistani women is purely reflective of historical mindset, yet at the same time the force of tradition and custom must not be put aside in such deliberations. Papanek (1973) while discussing the difference in Hindu and Muslim forms of purdah, states: "in the case of South Asian Muslims, the interaction with Hindu society is a particularly crucial point to consider."

These views are supported by observation of British administrators who undertook to produce Gazetteers on the districts in various provinces under British India rule. In the 1902 Gazetteers of Multan District in the province of Punjab, it is observed:

"Among the Hindus the women enjoy much less freedom than among the Muhammadans: they do not walk abroad unveiled, or talk with men in public, and are not supposed to talk even indoors with their elder male relations. Their behaviour is much less open to comment than that of the Muhammadan women: any indiscretions which they may be guilty of are hushed up, and cases of abduction of Hindu women are exceedingly rare in the law courts."

Tribal/Clanish Caste System

Islamic teachings seem to have faced two important factors in the Indian environment, namely, the caste system and the geography. The caste system and its implications created hierarchies in social relations and worth of persons. The geography of people living in isolated village/hamlets – tended to create tribal cohesiveness as against other villages. Over time, such tribes came to be known by an Arabic term Qaum (plural Aqwam). In Arabic, the word means a group of living beings, whether humans or birds or anything of the same kind. Individuals in such groups tend to cohere. The famous English proverb:

“Birds of a feather flock together.”

The term qaum came to be extensively used during Muslim rule in India, particularly the Mughal rule wherein administrative reports listed all big or small groups of people claiming common ancestry and usually cohering among themselves on that basis.

British Administration in India brought Mughal tradition of administrative reports to perfection and were named Gazetteers. In such gazetteers, various aqwam and the number of people belonging to them have been thoroughly and carefully documented. The 1902 report on Multan district lists the following aqwam:

Table 3.1: List of Major Respected Muslim Aqwam

1	Syed	2	Qureshi	3	Pathan
---	------	---	---------	---	--------

Source: Edward D. Maclagan and Esquire C. S. *Gazetteer of the Multan District, 1901-02*. (Punjab Government Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1902) pp.150-66.

Table 3.2: List of Other Aqwam Mainly of Indian Origin Converted to Islam at One or Other Time.

1	Thahim	21	Metla	41	Dhudhi
2	Traggar	22	Mahota	42	Sandhal
3	Wains	23	Chhajra	43	Wasir
4	Bosan	24	Rans	44	Sargana
5	Khokhar	25	Kalrus	45	Hiraj
6	Marral	26	Hammars	46	Thiraj
7	Nun	27	Khaki	47	Sanpal
8	Drig	28	Jhakkar	48	Dauluana
9	Langha	29	Rid	49	Duana

10	Joya	30	Lang	50	Kamlana
11	Mitrus	31	Ruk	51	Panjuana
12	Khichi	32	Pannuhan	52	Sasran
13	Langrial	33	Shaira	53	Daultana
14	Sahu	34	Sial	54	Mirali
15	Khak	35	Jais	55	Panwar
16	Pahor	36	Channar	56	Bhutta
17	Daha	37	Gbballu	57	Kharral
18	Panada	38	Uthera	58	Harrals
19	Kherrra	39	Kanjun	59	Gill
20	Athangals	40	Kuliars		

Source: Edward D. Maclagan and Esquire C. S. Gazetteer of the Multan District, 1901-02. (Punjab Government Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press.1902) pp.134-141.

Table 3.3: List of Aqwam, often Muslims, Considered Kammins (Menials) Usually based on Low Occupation

1	Chuhras	4	Kumhar	7	Mochi
2	Dhobi	5	Lohar	8	Nai
3	Julahae	6	Machhi	9	Tark

Source: Edward D. Maclagan and Esquire C. S. Gazetteer of the Multan District, 1901-02. (Punjab Government Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1902) p.142.

Caste system extended to all sorts of occupations and people began to be classified based on respected and least respected occupations. The latter type of occupation was termed as 'kammin', an occupation which did not bring dignity; on the other hand, such occupations pushed people beneath and to be looked down upon for having no status in the society. Inter-clannish strifes have continued into present day Pakistan and one of the reasons of a conflict may be a girl from one tribe suspected to have relations with a male from another tribe.

One aspect of family life creating problem with respect to status of women was polygamy among Muslims. A British administrator notes about Multan that there was not much practice of polygamy in the district, but it was a more common norm in Multan than in the Punjab proper. The Hindus went for second marriage only when the first was barren; but among Muhammadans, the phenomenon of second wife was common. It was quite common as far as richer classes were concerned. There were several instances of very poor men having more than one wife. Going for second marriage while the first wife was in the house, was not rare in Multan, whereas, in the centre and East Punjab, this was considered a difficult thing. The bigger men, when they married two or more wives, often provided them with separate establishments on separate wells or separate villages, to prevent the discord which was apt to ensue when they were in too proximity to each other. It is said, however, that co-wives lived together in greater amity in Multan than is usual elsewhere. The Marriage of widows was common enough among Muhammadans, though discouraged among the Makhdums and prominent Syed families. Among Hindus it was rare. The marriage with a deceased husband's brother was very uncommon in the Multan district.

The Muslim females of the district normally enjoyed a liberal status about shaking hands with men from close relations, greeting them, and interacting with men. However, this was not extended to the females from Sheikhs and Syeds females. Marriage, too, was attended with few restrictions. The Syeds would not give their daughters to other tribes, and very few tribes would give their daughter to very lowest castes, such as Chuhras. Marriage, as a rule, did not take place till the parties were grown up, and the woman in many cases had a distinct say in the matter. There was a proverb: "Ghot kwar razi ke karesi Mullan Kazi" (if the bride and bridegroom want to be married what can the clergyman do but marry them?)

Where women were married un-happily, or married against their will, there was a good deal of immorality, and there was always a large crop of abduction cases before the courts. Under the family life in the district in the nineteenth century, the young men could meet most of their near relations and cousins, and the marriages between cousins, especially among the higher classes (where the preservation of the property in the family was a consideration), was highly common. The marriage of men of position with women of the lowest repute castes, such as the Kanjris(hussy), was also a phenomenon; such unions did not escape a certain stigma which attached to the offspring also.

The woman in the household, among both rich and poor, had extensive authority. It was she whose consent was sought and valued on all occasions, may it be money matters or matrimonial decisions. She administered the house as regards kitchen affairs and purchases were concerned. Doing household jobs like grinding the corn or cooking did not challenge the authority of the woman, in

a rich or poor family. Such duties were rather taken as to consolidate her position. After marriage, a few young men would separate from their parents and live in a separate house quite often at the behest their wives.

Depiction of Muslim Women's Plight in Popular Literature

Conditions of women in other regions constituting Pakistan were not satisfactory and there was need for reform. One reformer appeared in the form of Waris Shah (1722-1798). He was a Sufi, not carefully studied and still an unheeded social thinker of the mid-18th century. He re-wrote an existing Punjab folk lore of Heer Ranjha to convey his thoughts on several social customs, particularly emphasizing the various aspects of women's life. He used a host of characters of the story to bid his calling. One commentator has summed his achievements:

“These characters were living and acting in real lives all around him. They were Maoju raising a large family, love spoiled Dhido, ever toiling and jealous brothers, crafty sisters-in-law, stubborn but bribable Mullas of mosques, carefree citizens, world-wise Ludden - the boat-businessman, beautiful Heer and her loyal girl-friends, head of the Sial clan - Chuchak, ever suspicious trouble stirring Kaido - aloof, afflicted with and addicted to drugs, Qazi Shams, Mithhi Nain, cows and cow herds, honour-conscious Sultan - brother of Heer, street-wise yogis, conspiring and impatient disciples, probing ayali/herder, arrogant Sehti, Saida Khera and his father Aju Khera, Raja Adli and his religious advisor - another self-righteous qazi, natural world with all its abundance, shades of superstitions, world of calamities, angelic five peers/guides, etc. All these characters were from the masses and masses could relate to them rather easily. All were afflicted with instinctive self-centred dark passions of humanity such as ignorance, greed, envy, deceit, jealousy, hate, arrogance, cruelty, etc., and at the same time also carried noble human qualities like love, sympathy, patience, understanding, wisdom, bravery, etc. Imbalance between good and evil was always present and all too real.”

The result of Waris Shah's work was that many verses from Heer have become proverbial words of wisdom. Ordinary people use lines from Heer in their daily life even today.

The story depicts the social conditions of the area which now constitutes most of Pakistan and the people that inhabit the area. Among the major social themes, the one that comes first into the story relates to conflicts on property among brothers when one/some of them happen to be greedy and such conflict is fatally inflamed by wives of such brothers. Waris Shah brings in here the popular views coming from times immemorial regarding negative conceptions about women. The aggrieved Ranjha, youngest of several sons of a local chief now dead, distrusts the wives of his brothers who disposed of his due share in the family lands. Ranjha knows that these women have no respect for him, but they do make a show that they love him as the youngest of the brothers in the family. When angry, he would try to invoke from the Holy Qur'an saying like the one that women have been called cheats. He would tell them that the whole world knew that they were the most quarrelsome women in the village. He would taunt: “And as for your beauty it is such that your husband need not fear that any man will want to run away with you.”

In an encounter, Heer and Ranjha develop liking for each other. Heer talks of love, but Ranjha repeats his views of womenfolk that the Creator Himself said: “Verily your deceit was great. Satan

is Lord of evil spirits and women. Women falsify the truth and feel no shame. The word of women, boys, hemp smokers and bhang smokers cannot be trusted.”

This time Ranjha gets a fitting repartee from Heer who shows the knowledge of prevalent views seeming to have basis in religious beliefs and popular history. She says:

“Do not upbraid women. None can be so persistent or steadfast as a woman. For the love of Joseph Zulaikha renounced her kingdom. For the love of Mahiwal Sohni was drowned in the river. Is not the love of Laila known throughout the world and does not the grass grow green on her tomb to this day? Sassi died a martyr in the burning sands and Shirin died too for the sake of her lover, Farhad. Had not prophets and saints’ mothers that bore them? Was not Eve Adam’s equal? Men cannot be as bold as women.”

A not dissimilar aspect of woman’s character is revealed in the strategy which Heer’s father adopts to bring back Ranjha who had been earlier dismissed by him. He concludes that no other person can ably tend his buffalo herd than Ranjha and he wants him back by “hook or crook.” He asks his wife: “Go you and pacify him”. And Heer’s mother adopted her own strategy to make Ranjha come back:

“Do not fret over much about the quarrel you had with Chuchak. Parents and children often fall out in such small matters. Come back and milk our buffaloes and spread Heer’s couch. Since you have gone, she has been much displeased with us. Only you can pacify her. Our cattle, our wealth, the Sials and Heer are all yours.”

People were prone to anger in the matter connected with outgoing behaviour on the part of young women. Not only father, mother and brothers could be excited. Also, other persons belonging to the same village would come up with poisonous allegations regarding Heer’s intimacies with their herd man, Ranjha. Heer’s mother taunts Heer, saying:

“The taunts of the village-folk have consumed us utterly. Would that no daughter Heer had been born to me? If you cease not from wickedness your father Chuchak and your brother Sultan will cut, you in pieces.”

At the same time, she invokes feelings of parental respects:

“This then is the reward your father and I receive for the love we have bestowed on our daughter. We thought we had planted a rose in our garden, but it is a prickly thorn. You visit Ranjha daily in the forest and take him food, cake, and pastry. You heed not what your parents say. Daughters who are disobedient to their parents are not daughters but prostitutes.”

Kaidu, a village do-gooder taunted Heer’s mother:

“For God’s sake get your daughter married. The Qazi always says; marry a naughty girl as soon as you can. Or else break her head and cut her into small pieces, as she is a disgrace to the village. Why do you not plaster up her mouth, as you plaster up your corn bins?”

Mithi, the village barber’s wife scolded Heer in the presence of her mother:

“You bad girl, you should be drowned in the deep stream for causing such a scandal. Grown up daughters who venture outside their father’s house should be thrown down the wells. You are so fond of your lover, Heer, that we shall have to find a husband for you. If your brother comes to hear of your goings on, he will hurry on your betrothal or he will hack you in pieces with his sword. Why have you cut off the nose of the family and covered us with disgrace?”

Another major theme relates to institutions of the mullah/qazi, the preacher/administrator of Islamic teachings/laws in the society. Waris Shah makes some of his characters describe the mullah as a person who “behaves like a devil” sitting in the mosque with the Qur’an in front, yet his mind was bent upon inequality, leading village women astray, being a bull among cows.

“Mullahs run after women in mosques. They are like curses clinging to the house of God. They are blind men, lepers, and cripples, always waiting greedily for a death in the house so that they may take the dead man’s raiment. They arise at midnight; their fat bellies are smitten with hunger, and they cry for something to eat. Under the shelter of Holy Writ, they curse the living and when poor wayfarers and strangers come to beg for succour they cry, begone, begone!”

Waris Shah vehemently exposes the practice of women’s marriage against their will. Dialogues between Heer and the qazi bring out the spirit of Islamic marriage laws and practices carried out by those charged with the administration of such laws. The qazi read out the preliminaries of Heer’s marriage solemnization to a person whom she refuses to marry, angrily asking the qazi:

“Why bother your head to pick a quarrel? I do not intend to turn my face away from Ranjha. What have Qazis and the ‘Shara’ got to do with True Religion? There is a big well in Hell into which Qazis will be thrown by God.”

Qazi conspired with Heer’s father and advised:

“You can only gain your object by deceit. The powerful and mighty have a way of their own. It is only Peers, Fakirs and Saints who are afraid of using violence. Tell the bride’s attorney that consent to the marriage must be wrung from Heer, even against her will. Let us gag her and read the marriage service.”

So, the qazi, by guile, against Heer’s will, solemnized the marriage. Heer said to qazi:

“May the curse of God fall on you and all such rogues and liars. If you are so anxious to give a bride to the Kheras, why not give your own daughter to them? God’s curse on all Qazis and bribe takers.”

Ethnographic Evidence of Muslim Women’s Plight

The popular views contained in the story of Heer Ranjha are confirmed by ethnographic research. Such research confirms that women, particularly in rural areas, have faced low status and problem connected with rapes, marriages, dowry, and divorces, etc. With solidification of customs, discrimination against a female comes to start right from birth. The family is not congratulated at the birth of a female child. The female child means the burden of extra vigilance as she is to be protected and taken care of. The wives giving birth only to female children are considered nahis

(cursed, having no blessings) and are very often beaten, divorced, or a second marriage is arranged for the husband. Only the woman is usually considered responsible for the birth of a daughter. Villagers express their sympathies, in case of several daughters, with expression like 'basketful of daughters', and 'black-faced witches.'

Contrary to this, sweets are offered, and the family is congratulated at the birth of a son. A proverb says, 'milk and sons are the blessings of God'. Sons are considered the source of power, strength (in case of fights) and wealth (as earning power in the future) therefore seen as a source of increasing izzat (honour). They are regarded as the carriers of the family name. They would bring wives and with them dowry thus adding to the assets.

Marriage, which is the only sanctioned form of sexual relationship, is arranged by the family. Usually, the head of the family, the father, considers it his absolute right to decide who his offspring should marry. Young men and women working and living together in the village sometimes fall in love with each other, but since they could not influence the decisions about their marriages, they are left with the only option of fleeing the village.

There are usually two types of expressions used for such a running away of young couples: (elopement) and (kidnapping or abduction). The first stresses the free will of the accompanying woman whereas the second emphasizes the dominant role of the man in the running away. The first expression is used by the family of the man and other families sympathizing with them. The family of the woman uses the second.

For the girl, it is an absolute decision as her family would lose their honour totally. The girl who run away, if recovered, has no chance of marriage except in family with a much lower status then hers; also she could get a husband who otherwise would not get married or has a bad character, except when the elopement or illicit relationship did not become public. It is not only the girl who is affected by the elopement; if she has sisters, they too will get part of the 'pollution' and would face difficulties in their marriage. Even after marriage they would be ridiculed by the in-laws with taunts like: "we know the tradition of your family, which would probably be mentioned in every quarrel between the women. There were even cases in which after the older sister ran away, the others adopted similar strategies."

Different reasons could be given for elopement in the village. The parents of the girl find no 'suitable' match (same biradari, equal economic and social status, etc.); the parents not pay the dowry; the girl had the feeling of becoming old, or being ignored; there may be many sisters and the older ones may still not be married. Another reason may be that the girls are engaged to be married to men they do not like and of course that they may fall in love. Elopement, and love affairs are much discouraged, and the sympathies of villagers are usually with the girl's family. The family may, of course, also criticized for not having taken enough care of the girl. One reason for such general dislike, among other reasons, may be that it serves an example for the girls and boys of other families.

Elopement and abductions are taken equally seriously by all biradaries, more so by the so-called 'traditionally honourable' families of the farmers. The more respectable a person is taken to be was, the more seriously such events are taken. The women of the richer traditional families more confined to their houses and household jobs than those of the kammi, who must do jobs outside

the house. But this situation changes, when the kammi families become rich through the power-looms or other business and their women also start staying at home. It is an interesting phenomenon that the so-called kammi biradaries are changing their profession, becoming rich and no longer feeling affiliated with their biradaries assuming to belong to a higher status biradari for example, Malik (which carries greater status). The use of the term kammi in such cases is reduced to the poor kammi families working for others.

Based on data and observation which were carried out by different researchers it could be said:

“That most of the elopements take place between biradaries, for example, the girl is the Mochee biradari and the boy of the Jats, the girl is of the Jat biradari and the boy of the Rajputs, the girl of the Jats and the boy of the Maliks, the girl of the Teelies and the boy of the Jats.”

Conflicts arose on and through the selection of marriage partners. Such marriage conflicts were mostly within the extended family (Uncles and aunts from the mother’s and father’s side) on the question of who marries whom.

Betrothals during infancy between children were very common. They took place, mostly among very close relatives. Such pledges leading to later marriages were made at the time of birth, and in some cases even before the birth of a child; sometimes differences in age between the future husband and wife were not considered and one might be older by as much as twenty years. This created trouble later if both or one of them should want to marry someone closer their age.

Childhood engagement, if broken later, were important for disputes; even the selection of one girl or boy was taken as the rejection of another which leads to serious differences between the brothers and sisters or other close kin. Generally, such disputes were not violent but might lead to it. Whether the first preference were the children of the mother’s side or cousins from the father’s side was decided based on which of the two had more influence and authority in family affairs, or over the children. The economic positions of the respective bride or groom, beauty, education, etc, have come to play a role too. It is the fathers, usually, who has more authority and power in the family, whereas the mothers have more influence on the children. Thus, mothers may turn out to have more say in the marriage of their children. This is especially true when the children have grown up and there are differences of opinion between their parents that start causing the children to take sides. Very often this can lead to the breakup of childhood betrothals with the father’s relatives leading to strife.

Watta Satta (exchange) marriages, i.e., giving one bride and receiving one, as brother and sister marrying another set of brother and sister, is still common in rural areas, especially if the parents have problems in finding the partner for one of them. The reasons may vary from lack of sufficient beauty; advanced age; the financial position of the boy; and many other things considered at the time of selection. In such situations, the continuation of one marriage is dependent upon the other. The phenomenon of exchange marriage leads to situation “where a woman ends up being a mere object of revenge in the instance that her brother mistreats or physically abuses his wife.”

Exchange marriages often can lead to problems like separation, divorce, fights, etc. between the husbands and wives only because the other couple had such problems, too. It is very seldom the case that if one of the marriages was dissolved, the other remained intact.

Many such marriages are solemnized against the will of the girls and boys which, also led to problems. Cousin marriages are preferred on the grounds that if the daughter-in-law was 'apna khoon' (own blood) she would assist and look after the parents especially in their old age, while it was taken for granted that the 'paraee' (outsider) daughter-in-law may not had those feelings. For a woman, the first few years after the marriage are generally the most difficult of her life. There are conflicts with her mother-in-law, sisters-in-law (more so if they are still living in their parents' house), brothers-in-law, very often would lead to causing discord between husband and wife. The mother-in-law (saas) and daughter in law (bahu) relationship was one of the worst. The best news a mother can give her daughter before marriage would be that she is marrying into a family where there is no mother-in-law. Most of the conflicts between husband and wife in the early years of their marriage are usually the result of the confrontations between the man's mother and wife which can often even lead to divorce. There are quarrels with the sisters of the husband who sooner or later get married and go away. Such are the miserable conditions in which the social relations in general and women have endured through centuries.

Conclusion

Islam came to Subcontinent in the 8th century but ways of cultural living among converts tended to remain unchanged. Muslim interaction with Hindus in India became a crucial point to consider.

over several centuries, a variety of Muslim laws and customary notions and practices were developed within Muslims of India. It was a general belief that the Muslim family was highly influenced by Muslim law or Shari'ah. Closer scrutiny, however, did not bear out this assumption. In the Subcontinent, diminution of the status of women happened more and more, partly because of laxity on the part of religious administrators of justice. The situation there deteriorated greatly by eighteen centuries.

The popular folk level was the "Heer Ranjha" which highlights the social conditions of Muslim women of eighteen century. The popular views contained in the story of Heer Ranjha are confirmed by ethnographic research. Such research confirms that women, particularly in rural areas, have faced low status and problem connected with rapes, marriages, dowry, and divorces, etc. With solidification of customs, discrimination against a female endures through centuries till date. As a result, Muslim women were become socially backward, economically susceptible, and politically marginalized segment of society.

References

- Charles Frederick. Osborne, (tr.), *The Adventures of Hir and Ranjha/[by] Waris Shah*. (London: Owen, 1976) p.1. Now available online: www.casas.org.uk/papers/pdfpapers/hir.pdf
- Dushka H. Saiyid, "Sir Syed, Hali, and Nazir Ahmed on the New Role of Women." *South Asian Studies*, 12(1), January 1995. pp.77-88.
- Dushka H. Saiyid, *Muslim Women of the British Punjab: From Seclusion to Politics*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998)
- Edward D. Maclagan and Esquire C. S, *Gazetteer of the Multan District, 1901-02*. Punjab Government Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1902)

- Government of India, "Towards Equality: Report of the Committee on Status of Women." (New Delhi: Ministry of Education and Welfare,1974)
- Hanna Papanek, (1973), "Purdah, Separate Worlds and Symbolic Shelter." Comparative Studies in Society and History, 15(3), p.309-323
- Heinz Gunther Klien and Renate Nestvogel, *Women in Pakistan (General Conditions, Approaches and Project Proposal for the Development of Vocational Qualification of Women in the Province of Punjab)*. (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd,1992)
- Muhammad Afzal Shahid, *Waris Shah and his Heer*. Retrieved on 20 August 2016 from <http://apnaorg.com/research-papers/afzal-shahid/>.
- M Azam. Choudhary, *Justice in Practice Legal Ethnography of a Pakistani Punjabi Village*. (Karachi: Oxford University Press,1999)
- Mushtaq Soofi, (2014, May 16), "They Elope, We Kill", *Dawn (Daily)*, Retrieved 26 the June 2015 from www.dawn.com/news/1106701.
- Nasra M.Shah, (ed.), *Pakistani Women: A Socioeconomic & Demographic Profile*. (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics,1986)
- Unaiza Niaz, "Women's Mental Health in Pakistan." World Psychiatry, 3(1), (2004), pp.60–62.