



**Fast National University of Computer & Emerging Sciences**

**Pakistan Studies**

**Final Project**

**Feudalism: Case Study of Women Rights**

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## Abstract

Pakistan's feudal system primarily based on historic inheritance and continued energy after colonialism maintains to have top notch influence no matter global development closer to liberalization and gender equality Feudal lords keep huge political and economic strength, and do not give tries to overthrow their authority. However, the proposed solutions encompass land reform, educational gadget and economic reforms to weaken feudal rule. Women in feudal societies face systematic oppression, however display resilience within the face of opposition. The transition from feudalism to a centralized monarchy traditionally empowered lady aristocrats, extended their participation, and gave them legal rights. In postcolonial Islamic contexts, ladies's rights interact with complex social and cultural forces, hard conventional patriarchal systems.

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## 1. Introduction

Pakistan's feudalism has a long history that dates back to the Mughal era and even before to several tribal systems. Nonetheless, it became well-known during British colonial administration and continued to exist beyond Pakistan's 1947 independence. The zamindari system, which was imposed by the British colonial government, gave huge landholdings to a select group of wealthy landlords, frequently at the expense of peasant farmers who were compelled to engage in sharecropping or tenancy. Pakistan's agrarian society developed a feudal structure as a result of this concentration of landownership and power. The feudal system persisted in ruling rural portions of Pakistan after independence, and it was passed down to the newly established government of that country. Landlords controlled local politics and power structures in addition to land, giving them enormous political sway. This authority encompassed all facets of rural living, including social, legal, and economic issues. Pakistan has suffered significant socioeconomic effects as a result of feudalism. It has made landless peasants' pervasive poverty worse, increased inequality, and hampered attempts at modernization and rural development. Furthermore, there has been much evidence linking the feudal power structure to political manipulation, exploitation, and corruption. Political obstacles and well-established special interests have made attempts to abolish feudalism and redistribute land irregular and generally unsuccessful. Pakistan's agrarian environment and socio-political dynamics are still shaped by the core of the feudal system, which is largely intact despite significant land reforms implemented in the 1950s and 1970s. Furthermore, the feudal power structure frequently upholds gender roles and traditions that are harmful to society and can lead to the occurrence of honor killings, child marriage, and domestic abuse. Within this system, women from marginalised communities—such as lower-caste or minority groups—may experience interlocking kinds of oppression and discrimination. Notwithstanding these obstacles, women in feudal environments have proven resilient and autonomous in a variety of ways, questioning established gender roles and standing up for their rights.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. What are the major factors behind the strengthen of these fudeals in today's society where on one hand we can have liberal social organization for the rights of women but still women are suffering under the eyes of international community?

The main reason behind the strength of these feudals strength dates to post-colonial rules where the British empire created these fuedals for themselves but as the passage of the time after the creation of Pakistan. These fuedals became the country ruling elites and they got their way in the governmental bodies resulting in their more power and allowing them exploit humans more. The first feudal of Pakistan is sir shah Nawaz Bhutto. He was government official of the British government. Later, the system of feudalism was created in Pakistan and eventually these fuedals got great grip on Pakistan's politics and got their ways to assemblies and make the laws appropriate for them not for the masses (Frank, 2019). Today we live in a time where the world becomes liberal and secular, and the humans raised the slogan that the world is global village but why they can't tackle these fuedals. Now the question why the liberal world is not successful in demolishing this system due many factors (Liu, 2019).

1. The land reforms were introduced in 1959 and the lands were distributed among the fuedals in large numbers and the fuedals got acres of lands.
2. Fuedals have gained power through the governmental bureaucracy armed forces and politics. They control the country's major vote bank making it difficult for educated people to rise in the politics.
3. The fuedals has built the state inside the states in which they control their people without any fear and retaliation. The two prime factors in the politics of Pakistan military and clergy are closely linked to fuedals lords for the sake of their own interest.

So, these are the major factors and hurdles for the liberal organization to demolish or we can say they can't able even to weak these fuedals in Pakisan despite of their efforts and all these factors are challenging for them.

**2.2. As with the passage of time the world has become a global village. People are moving forward for the betterment of society so what steps Pakistan can take in this situation to stop an end or at least decrease the impact of the feudal approach in our country?**

As we all know, the world is moving toward the betterment of society whether in technology AI businesses industries education way of livings to provide more ease to humans. But still Pakistan is stuck in feudal system. The main reason Pakistan is still suffering from the this are due to following factors.

1. Theres should be land reforms that could be helpful in distribution of lands more equitably. These reforms aimed to lowering the land ownership of large of acres of land to feudal. The government should provide limits for land ownership and there should be strict laws for that. through social media platforms, seminars and by any means (Wickham, 2021).
2. But the as we all know that most governmental bodies are controlled by these feudal so we should focus on educating our youth through these foreign organizations and aimed to provide awareness among youth through social media platforms, seminars and by any mean. Increasing access to education particularly in rural areas can empower more individuals to break this curse of dependency on feudal lords (Rupkheti, 2016).

3. Promoting economic development and diversification can promote the people to get the opportunities of other means of incomes beside from land agricultures. This could evolve promoting industries and large corporations etc (Tudor, 2021).
4. Encouraging and supporting the educated visionary mindsets in the society as a challenge against the feudal lords and promoting awareness among the masses through media platforms, newspaper, organizations and by other means as well (Clad, 2020).
5. Ensuring that our police bureaucrats and religious leaders should represent the interests of common people rather than feudal lords (Spruyt, 2020).

So, these steps can impact the feudal lords, even if it does not break their cycle of ruling at least it can raise awareness among people about the oppression crimes exploitation done by these feudal lords in our society. At least it can weak them in our society and can be helpful in decreasing their power.

### **2.3. What forms of resistance did woman employ to challenge the patriarchal structures of feudal society?**

Whenever we talk about woman rights in the society of feudal, They always neglected their rights, They don't provide them educational traditional, Political and even the right of marriage by their wish. Now there is two categories of woman one who belong by the feudal family and the second one who are living in the surveillance of feudal's.

First, we discuss those woman's who were living with the feudal family. There are many cases, in which few cases we will discuss here:

For a decade, the people of Sindh have been celebrating the Sindhi Cultural Day in the month of December every year. In 2019, the cultural day was celebrated on December 1 in Sindh and the world over wherever Sindhis are living. Although celebrating the cultural day is good to maintain a bond with someone's cultural identity, but at the same time, we must not forget that the Indus Civilisation, through excavations of Mohenjo-daro, reveals how the women of Indus lived their lives independently (Michaud, 2016). One example in this regard is the statuette of a dancing girl, which was discovered by the British archeologist, Ernest Mackay, in Mohenjo-daro in 1926. Although the statuette of a dancing girl is exhibited at the National Museum of New Delhi, India, it is very clear that as it was discovered from Mohenjo-daro, the statuette represents the civilisation of the people of Sindh. The discovery of jewellery and other ornaments from Mohenjo-daro depicts that the status of women five thousand years ago was better than it is in today's age (Abbas, 2019).

This is the same Sindh where despite proudly celebrating cultural events by associating with the five thousand-year-old civilisation of Indus, Sindhi women are still unsafe. According to the Human Rights Watch, 1,000 incidents of honour killing occur every year in Pakistan. Unfortunately, Sindh ranks second after Punjab in these killings in the name of so-called honour. Apart from cases of honour killing, Sindhi women also face many other issues; hundreds of Sindhi Hindu girls have been abducted and then forcibly converted to Islam. It is true that Hindu girls and women face more repression as compared to Muslim females, but Muslim women also face many issues at the hands of men, ranging from domestic violence to abduction and killings (Walonen, 2020).

Tania Khaskheli was a Muslim Sindhi girl who was shot dead in front of her family members by a landlord for refusing to marry him. The 'crime' of the girl simply was that she did not surrender to the landlord, Khan Noohani, who was continuously harassing her. Even when the alleged murderer entered Tania's home along with his accomplices, she resisted and tried to escape but was shot by Khan (Lahiri-Dutt, 2016).

This story tell us that still woman's have no right of marriage by their on wish in Pakistan.



In Punjab city Multan, There are few villages in which still the concept of Gadiinasheen and Badsah Begum. Gadiinasheen is the one person who takes all the decisions related to that village. No one can give him objection on this.

#### **2.4. How did the decline of feudalism and the rise of centralized monarchies impact the rights and roles of noblewomen?**

The decline of feudalism and the upward push of centralized monarchies in South Asia had a profound effect on the rights and roles of elite girls. Historically, feudal societies were hierarchical systems wherein noblewomen had few rights and had been regularly difficult to male domination however the transition to a centralized monarchy dramatically changed the reputation and function of noblewomen (Ali, 2022).

##### **Impact of the Decline of Feudalism and Rise of Centralized Monarchies on Noblewomen**

**Increased Influence and Participation:** In the middle monarchy, women royals have been given extra opportunities to persuade and take part in politics and existence than inside the feudal system and could carry out extra courtroom duties, international relations and governance.

**Legal Rights:** With the established order of the significant monarchy, the prison rights and protections of elite girls were elevated. They can gather belongings, take part in prison transactions, and feature greater autonomy in choice-making techniques (Furui, 2019).

**Educational and cultural opportunities:** Middle dynasties tended to sell schooling and lifestyle, presenting educational and artistic pastimes for rich girls This brought about a extensive variety of sports beyond traditional domestic duties (Vajpeyi, 2020).

##### **Case Study - Impact on Noblewomen in South Asia**

One of the crucial examples, have an impact on of centralized imperialism on elite ladies in South Asia is the Mughal Empire. The decline of feudal structures in India at some point of the Mughal duration and the upward thrust of a centralized monarchy under rulers like Akbar the Great caused a remarkable development inside the rights and roles of elite women (Nasta, 2017).

### Case Example - Mughal Empire

**Increased participation:** Prominent girls of the Mughal courtroom along with Akbar's wife, Queen Nur Jahan, played an active role in political, administrative, and cultural affairs. Because Queen Nur Jahan is understood for her political savvy and have an impact on therefore, he have become involved in selection-making and governance (Stuart-Fox, 2021).

**Legal Rights:** The rule under the Mughals brought about criminal reforms that progressed the status of elite ladies. They had more prison safety, assets, and approach to be seeking for justice (Jafree, 2020).

**Cultural patronage:** The elite ladies of the Mughal courtroom had been buyers of artwork, literature and structure. They patronized artists and intellectuals within the wealthy tradition of the empire (Raghuram, 2020).

## 2.5. Muslim Women's Rights in a Post-Colonial Context

After colonialism, Muslim women find themselves at the intersection of religion, culture and the ethnicity, their rights are influenced by complex forces that determine social conditions and often limit their actions. This article explores those contradictions, limitations, possibilities for greater gender equality in post-colonial Muslim contexts. The role of women in nation discourse Nationalist doctrine often portrays the nation as a weak woman in need of protection. But this symbol goes hand in hand with a strict analysis of female sexuality (Kunstadter, 2017). Deniz Kandiyoti's analysis demonstrates this flaw. While women are seen as actors of the state (mothers, teachers, workers, and even soldiers), they are also expected to conform to traditional feminine norms.

- **Pakistan's Hudood Ordinance exemplifies this tension:**

Despite women's important role in the nation labor market, their rights are still limited. Debates on the boundaries and Advocacy for women rights in the Muslim context faces serious challenges. They often have to cross the narrow line of discourse by choosing between two paths (Gibson, 2017).

- **Rejection of Personal Torture:**

Some claims that the Islamic practice is not torture of women. They said violence was against the true spirit of Islam. But this approach can minimize the real problems women face. They challenge patriarchal interpretation of religious texts. However, this approach operates within a tight boundary that limits the path to effective feedback (Stephens, 2018).

- **Fear of alienation and political exclusion:**

Mary Hurley Lucas describes the fear of alienation from society and politics. Islamists see women and intellectuals as potential allies of external enemies. Therefore, women activists find themselves limited in responding to Islamist views in Pakistan. The fear of being labeled a traitor to the culture or country has a powerful effect, restricting women's voice and work within rigid boundaries (Daylay, 2018).

- **Sharia Family Law and Private Sphere:**

Islamists focus their efforts on privacy, and Sharia family law encourages women's obedience and dependence (Findlay, 2018).

- **Radical approach proposed by Abdullahi Annaim:**

Reinterpreting Sharia law within its historical context and in line with international human rights law. By working within culture and participating in cultural dialogue, Annaim provides necessary models for integrating human rights into society (Tappe, 2016).

- **The intersection of gender with other social structures:**

The intersection of gender with class, race and religion complicates the fight for women's rights. Muslim women's experiences are not monolithic; They change depending on the intersection of these characters. These nuances must be taken into account in any discussion of the rules (Jha, 2018).

- **Global Feminism and Indigenous Movements:**

Global feminist movements have faced criticism for imposing Western values on non-Western cultures. Indigenous feminists are important; They respect and engage with local traditions and values. As the world becomes more interconnected, international actors need to support local efforts without compromising their own agendas (Pati, 2018).

- **The challenge of equality:**

The journey towards gender equality in the post-colonial Muslim context is full of obstacles and struggles. But brave men and women continue to fight for a future where all people have equal rights and opportunities, regardless of gender or religion. As we join this conservation, let us recognize the complexities, respect local organizations, and work for a just and equal world (Lewis, 2016).

### **3. Methodology**

The topic of feudal oppression on rights of women is not something new in Pakistan. The feudal lords that are powerful people in the society of Pakistan has influence over politics , bureaucracy, police force agricultural lands to industries. These feudal lords are the powerful people that rules the rural areas of Pakistan specially in Baluchistan , Sindh and some areas of Punjab where their hold is very strong they carry out oppression on womens in differnt form. Subjugating their rights to education livelihood marriage and bound them to the walls of houses. These feudal lords carry out honor killings and even in some areas of Sindh womens are married to holy quran known as Haq Bakhshish this is trick of feudal lords to deny women of their rights of inheritance. In area where I belong feudal lord also involved in many oppression like killing raping and subjudting their rights of education freedom livelihood. These feudal lord created states within states where every feudal lords have their own rules.

### **4. Discussion**

Feudalism had a lasting impact on women's life in Pakistan, significantly influencing their rights

and prospects. Due to their great influence and authority, feudal lords frequently set social norms and regulations, limiting the liberties of women and assigning them to subservient duties. Because of the established system in place, women continue to face impediments to education, employment, and decision-making opportunities. As a result, a lot of women are unable to reach their full potential or make a positive impact on their communities because they are caught in cycles of oppression and poverty.

Despite these obstacles, Pakistani women are standing up to feudal rule and fighting for their rights with incredible tenacity and agency. They are speaking out against injustices they see, coordinating grassroots campaigns, and taking part in civil society projects. Together, they are putting pressure on policymakers to enact changes that deal with the underlying issues of gender inequality and topple the long-standing hierarchies of power that uphold feudalism. But because conservative groups and established interests continue to oppose women, progress is frequently gradual and incremental.

In order to bring about long-lasting improvements and enhance the quality of life for women in Pakistan, substantial reforms addressing the complex issues raised by feudalism must be pursued. This includes programs to increase women's access to economic and educational opportunities, pass and uphold laws protecting their rights, and encourage cultural changes that subvert conventional gender roles and conventions. Furthermore, encouraging more female leadership and political involvement can assist guarantee that women's opinions are heard during decision-making processes. Pakistan may take strides toward attaining gender equality and justice for all of its residents by tackling the structural obstacles that feudalism left behind.

## **5. Recommendation**

Based on our study, we made a few pointers on it in order that feudalism can be eliminated and the following technology can put off all the matters we're currently facing.

1. Land reform and land redistribution: Comprehensive land reforms have been carried out with the goal of equitable redistribution of land to the agricultural population. Limit land ownership to save you the continuation of strength in the palms of feudal lords.
2. Education and Awareness: To empower people to undertaking feudal domination and patriarchal systems and boom get right of entry to schooling mainly in rural areas. Use social media platforms, seminars and other tools to raise consciousness approximately women's rights and the poor effects of feudalism.
3. Economic Growth To beautify monetary increase and diversification with the aid of generating new non-agricultural resources of profits. Support initiatives that inspire entrepreneurship and employment, in particular for marginalized communities.
4. Supporting girls's rights activists: Provide support and protection to girls's rights activists challenging patriarchal structures and feudal domination. Promote an enabling surroundings for civil society companies to endorse for gender equality and social justice.
5. Legal reform: Amend legal guidelines to offer more prison protections for ladies's rights, which includes laws in opposition to honor killings, baby marriage and home abuse. Ensure that current laws are implemented and that victims of gender-primarily based violence are provided legal redress options.
6. Political Reforms - Political reforms that encourage the inclusion and illustration of marginalized organizations, which includes girls, in selection-making processes are endorsed. Encourage political participation and management amongst ladies to venture feudal domination in politics.
7. Cultural Change: Promote cultural alternate through challenging conventional gender roles and selling gender equality through education, media, and community engagement. Promote tremendous pics of ladies's independence and empowerment in cultural expression.

## **6. Conclusion**

Zia's Policy of Islamization in Pakistan led to a period of increased restrictions, especially on women's rights. When the struggle began in the 1970's, the Zia government gave women the right to advocate, which led to the establishment of groups such as the Women's Action Forum (WAF). The compound for this was a case under the Hudood Act in which a 15-year-old girl faced marriage against her parents wishes. In 1983, hundreds of people protested against the evidence and were confronted by violent police. Although there are symbolic difficulties such as limiting the law to financial issues, the state's practices show that it does not care about women's rights, personal rights. This ideal choice aims to address the traditional practices of the community but limit their criticism of religious injustice. Opponents deliberately do not support patriarchy and often focus on the virtues of victims when addressing human rights violations. But such collaborations remain rare, leaving potential for change. Even under leaders such as Benazir Bhutto, promises to eliminate apartheid remained unfulfilled, indicating deep rivalries. Intertwined with political dynamics. Human rights debates are gaining momentum, but powerful agendas prevent change. Religious practices are often used by elites to suppress conflict and cause gender inequality. While it makes sense to apply Islamic principles, there is a growing need to reopen secular doctrine. States and NGOs should defend democratic standards, challenge authorization regimes, and promote dialogue. Some organizations, such as the Committee for Women's Equality., present their arguments in the Islamic role, whose interpretations are difficult to follow. But there is still a call for a global forum that acknowledges different perspectives in society. The advancement of gender equality can only be achieved through unity within and outside the Islamic framework.

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**Project Questions From Group 3** Inbox ☆




**23I-6120 Saad Abdullah** Mar 17  
1.What were the primary legal and societal restrictions placed on women




**Maimoona Rasool** Mar 17  
Change first 2 questions




**23I-6120 Saad Abdullah** Mar 17  
1. How did the status and rights of noblewomen vary across different




**Maimoona Rasool** Mar 17  
Not convincing




**23I-6120 Saad Abdullah** Mar 17  
1.As by the passage of time the world has become a global village. People are




**Maimoona Rasool** Mar 17  
Change 2nd question or compare it with the colonial and pre colonial times.



**23I-6120 Saad Abdullah** Mar 17  
The other two questions (1,3) are acceptable?



**Maimoona Rasool** Mar 17  
Yes



**23I-6120 Saad Abd...** Mar 17  
to Maimoona ↩ ⋮

So these will be the questions for our Project:

1. As by the passage of time the world has become a global village. People are moving forward for the betterment of society so what steps Pakistan can take in this situation to stop an end or at least decrease the impact of the feudal approach in our country ?

2.What are the rights of Muslim women in post colonial context?

3. What forms of resistance did woman employ to challenge the patriarchal structures of feudal society?

4. How did the decline of feudalism and the rise of centralized monarchies impact the rights and roles of noblewomen?

5. What are the major factors behind the strengthen of these fudeals in today's society where on one hand we can have liberal social organization for the rights of women but still women are suffering under the eyes of international community?