

Portrayal of Feminism in Balochi Fiction: An Analysis of the first Balochi Novel, “Naazuk”

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Abstract:

Feminism means equal opportunities for both men and women, but unfortunately, the term feminism is mostly misinterpreted. This study will find the traces of feminism in Balochi fiction especially in the genre of novel. The study will explore feminism and its development in different periods of the Western world. The culture and social values of Baloch society concerning the empowerment of women will be focused on. The study will also focus on the contribution of Baloch female fiction writers in expressing their feelings in literature. In the end, an analysis of the Novel “Naazuk” is presented in the aspect of feminism in Baloch society.

Keywords:

Feminism, Baloch Society, Women Empowerment, Balochi Fiction, Novel, Naazuk

Introduction:

Contrary to popular belief, Baloch society is not as male-chauvinistic or unfriendly to women as is generally believed. At least from the perspective of literature, the role of women paints a different picture. Baloch women lost most of their privileges starting in the 20th century and onwards as the character of the tribalism society changed, even though they once enjoyed significant independence and held positions of responsibility and prestige (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012).

Comparatively, Baloch society exhibits a picture of a tolerant, gender cooperative, gender non-discriminatory, and human culture. They voluntarily adhere to and implement feminism into practice (Baloch & Ahmed, 2013).

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According to Annette Kolodny, a noted literary critic, Feminist literature, or Feminist criticism is often referred to, as any material written by a male, or female criticism of literary content produced by another woman (as cited in, Thompson, 2021). Feminist literature referred to fictional and non-fictional writings, plays, or poetry that represents the main objectives of feminism (achieving social, economic, and civic rights). It is often seen that women have been neglected in social status, privileges, and power.

Balochi novels are published on a wide range of subjects in Balochi literature, comprising rural, urban, philosophical, and social aspects. These categories all feature distinct portrayals of women's characters. (Baloch S. , 2021). In the first Balochi novel, "Naazuk", written by Sayyad Zahoor Shah Hashmi, the portrayal of feminism has been observed, which means that the first novel in the Balochi language is about women (Baloch S. , 2021).

Objectives of the Study:

1. Identify the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction.
2. Analyze the themes and patterns in Balochi fiction that portray feminism.
3. Understand the evolution of the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction over time.
4. Explore the cultural and societal factors that influence the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction.
5. Provide insights into how Balochi fiction can be used to promote feminist values and gender equality.

Research Question:

RQ.1: How has the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction evolved?

RQ.2: How Baloch woman is represented in Balochi fiction?

RQ.3: What are the cultural and societal factors that influence the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction?

Significance of the Study:

This study increases awareness and understanding of the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction and provides insights into the cultural and societal factors that influence the portrayal of feminism in Balochi fiction it can also encourage the use of Balochi fiction as a tool for promoting feminist values and gender equality. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the existing literature on feminism and gender studies and will provide a foundation for further research on the topic.

Methodology:

This study is qualitative. Secondary sources have been utilized to conduct this research. The findings are achieved through content analysis of secondary. The non-probability random sampling method has been adopted for the selection of the novels for this study.

Literature Review:

Feminism:

The equal rights movement for men and women, headed by women, is known as feminism. It pertains to a sequence of political initiatives to bring about changes in areas affecting women, including reproductive rights, domestic abuse, maternity leave, equal pay, atrocities committed against women, and sexual assault and harassment. This movement aimed to end the differences between men and women and make them socially, politically, economically, and intellectually equal.

The word Feminism comes from the Latin word *Famina* which means The Woman (Hilirova, 2016). Merriam-Webster defines feminism as “belief in and advocacy of the sexes expressed especially through organized activity on behalf of women’s rights and interests. The term Feminism is known as *Taanisiyat* (تانیسیٹ) in Urdu language. Dr. Aqeela Javaid (2021) describes it as;

Under the influence of feminism, in the patriarchal system, women’s economic exploitation, sexual oppression, unequal rights, social inequality, legal insecurity, moral values, deceitful behavior, terror and above all, the attitude of considering women as second-class citizens emerge. To examine it in the context of history, culture, social values, universality, humanity, and liberalism, and then to change this situation and provide a way forward to rescue the women. This may be an aspect of this word (Feminism).

Feminism in Literature:

Literature provides the social conventions and thought prevalent processes. They are a representation of the various parts of the life of an average individual (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012). Mr. Panah (2016) goes on to say that literature is essential for shaping a person's ideas, thoughts, and, most importantly, manner of life. Furthermore, it promotes tolerance as well as moderation in society.

The well-known literary critic, Annette Koldny defines feminist literature, or feminism critique as it is sometimes known, as any writing by a woman, any female criticism of any writing by a man, or any female criticism of literary content created by another woman (as cited in, Thompson, 2021).

“Feminist literature means fiction, non-fiction writings, drama or poetry that supports the feminist for achieving basic objectives (social, political, economic and civic rights). It often identifies women’s roles as unequal to those of men particularly regarding status, privilege, and power. These portray the negative consequences of discrimination” (Qasmi, 2021).

Modern feminism was established on Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), however, it is frequently forgotten how much the book was initially disregarded and its author demonized (Gamble, 1998). Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of women* can be regarded as the first distinct feminist book, and scholars still regard her as one of the founding mothers of British feminism (Hilirova, 2016).

During the last sixty-five years, the feminism movement has brought remarkable changes in western societies. France, America, British and Germany has passed laws to prevent the social, economic and political status of a woman living in these countries and all over Europe. The major contribution to make this happen was the role of women writers, journalists and activists. In France, Nathalia Lamel, Louise Michel, Elizabeth Demitieriff and Reneevivien, in America Sarah, Angelina Grimke, Lucy Stone and Susan Anthony, In UK Millicent Fawcet, Emmeline Pankhurst, Annie Kenny and Emily Widing Davison, and in Germany L. Koiuse otto Petters, Luise Bucher, Fammy Lewald and Theodor Von Hippol wrote many articles and books highlighting the women issues and suggested solutions for better lives for women in these societies (Tehseen, 2018).

Britain and France were among the first countries where women started fighting for their rights, education and above all respect. Simon de Beauvoir wrote that “the first time we see a woman take up her pen in defense of her sex was when Christine de Pizan wrote *Epitre au Dieu’ Amour* (Epistle to the God of Love) in the 15th century (GWANET, n.d.).

Many female writers and feminists argued that what they needed was recognition of what women need to fulfill their potential and natures and not only equality. Virginia Woolf, in probably the most notable pages of “*A Room of One’s Own*” argues how women’s talent has been wasted (Hilirova, 2016).

Sappho, Charlotte Bronte, Thomas Hardy, Virginia Woolf, Simon De Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter, Jane Austen, Kate Millet and Jeanette Winterson and Maya Angelou are famous literary writers who wrote novels and stories about women and their societal issues. Simon de Beauvoir's novel "the second sex" and Virginia Woolf's "A room of one's own" greatly inspired the women for raising voices for the equal rights movement (Oxford, 2020). *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Emma* (1815), *Jane Eyre* (1847), *Little Women* (1868), *Three Lives* (1909), *A Room of One's Own* (1929), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), *The Color Purple* (1982), *Kindred* (1979), *On Beauty* (2005) are some famous novels depicting the feminism in the stories (Oxfordsummercourses, n.d.).

Status of Woman in Baloch Society:

The largest province in Pakistan, Balochistan is roughly the size of France and makes up nearly 43% of the nation's total land area. With only 5% of the population living there and the other 80% dispersed in small communities, it is also the province with the lowest population. These communities have largely escaped the effects of modernization and have received little attention from the government (Naz S. , 2003). Historically Balochistan has been a multi-lingual and multi-ethnic region. Several ethnic groups like Baloch, Brahui, Pathans, Hazara, Jats, Dehwars, Hindus and Christians are settled there for centuries in various proportions. Similarly, around seven languages i.e., Balochi, Brahui, Pashtu, Hazara, Sindhi, Siraiki, and Persian are spoken there (Nazeer, 2003).

Balochistan is part of a rural region of Pakistan that is dominated by men, hence men make most decisions for the household and occasionally consult women (Sattar & Kazmi, 1997). Jan Muhammad Dashti (2020) writes about the Baloch society:

It is an open society where men and women work in unison. The Baloch give women privileges which to a great extent Iranian religious work Din Kard. The society is organized on patriarchal lines with the formal authority vested in the males, who are primarily the holders and inheritors of property and also play an important role in managing family affairs. Polygamy is practiced but divorce is rare.

Dr. Shah Muhammad Marri (2015) analyzes the Baloch society in these words;

I don't know why in the non-Baloch cultures of the plains; bravery is always attributed to only males and not females. In

Baloch society, bravery is an attribute of Baloch whether it is a woman or a man, a child or a youth.

In the Baloch patriarchal society, a woman did not enjoy that much power as it was exercised mainly by their menfolk. Her position nevertheless had been one of respect and love, sharing to great extent of man's burden in many ways (Dashti D. N., 2022). According to Dr. Naseer Dashti's (2022) account of the position of women in connection to their marital lives, it was a universally recognized practice for the virginity of something like the bride to be checked by showing her blood-stained garments to close family members as a proof of her virginity. If she could not show that she was a virgin, she suffered the consequences of being an adulteress. However, the woman's relative administered the punishment, not the husband.

Among the Baloch, women are considered respectable and are considered equal to men. The status of a woman is a part of Aryan culture because according to the Aryan traditions, the status of a woman and a man is the same (Dashti J. M., 2022). Further Jan Dashti (2022) state that:

Baloch women is respectable, honorable, gracious and magnanimous. She shares with men in the sorrows and joys of life. She is the mother of their son and daughter. Their status is in no way inferior to that of men. Insulting a woman is a crime in the Baloch codes. The one who commits it is not entitled to any forgiveness.

Sincerity, generosity, bravery, clearly stated speech, hospitality, encouragement of the oppressed classes, protectors of shelter, respect for women, and vengeance are at the core of the Baloch tribal way of life. The Baloch consider it their code of conduct and code of life. In other nations and regions of the world, most of the genres have different characteristics based on gender, but the Baloch code of conduct and the word Baloch have not even touched gender discrimination. Baloch men are Baloch and Baloch women are Baloch. Similarly, the code of conduct also belongs to the Baloch, whether male or female. In the annals of history, there is no division on the basis of Baloch gender discrimination (Baloch, 2019).

Mr. Abdul Rehman Brahvi (1982) in his book "*Brahvi Zaban aour Adab ki Mukhtasir Tareekh*" quoted the characteristics of Baloch society and some points of them are very helpful to understand the status of women in Baloch society:

To guard at all costs the modesty and sanctity of the sister, wife, and daughter. Second, never kill women or kids while attacking. Third, parties to a conflict will cease battling and refrain from bloodshed if a lady or a Sayyad intervenes, carries the holy Quran on their heads, or bears a bare sword and begs for peace.

The women whose husband died or was killed on the battlefield was allowed to re-marry. But the preference was given to the relatives of the husband (Dashti. N., 2022). The Baloch people have never separated the sexes and have lived a nomadic lifestyle without wearing veils. However, due to the respect accorded to women in Baloch society, if a woman intervenes in a tribal conflict between two rival clans, both sides will cease their hostilities (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012).

Dr. Wahid Buzdar (1998) draws a clearer picture of Baloch society. He writes;

There can be a war of up to 30 years for a woman Gohar, but she cannot be made helpless. Sheh Mureed can give up his love (Haani) and say goodbye to his beloved country, but it is not possible for him to give up Balochi traditions. Graanaz is not ready to accept Lallah as his better half because he has come to the battlefield with his back to the enemies. Meer Hammal can attack a tiger by risking his life in the dark of night, but for him to run away like thieves and save his life is against the Baloch dignity. A Baloch mother can see her young son Doda Gorgej sacrificed for the honor of a neighbor named Sammi, but cannot see the neighbor being helpless and forced (Buzdar, 1998).

Individual choice or freedom both at a social and a political level is quite limited in a Baloch tribal system, hence alliances are normally led by the tribal chiefs and are of permanent nature. Self-interests are subject to the tribal interests; individual freedom is perceived as deviation and political allegiances are made by the tribal heads or *sardars*. Traditionally the position of a *Sardar* is transferred on patrilineal principles from the deceased Sardar to the elder son (from the mother of a high cast) (Ugo, 1996).

Women's Empowerment in Baloch Society

Empowerment is the process of gaining confidence, strength, and the capacity for self-determination (Empowerment, n.d.). United Nations Development Fund defines the women empowerment as Gender equality is a

fundamental right and the foundation for a world that is stable, prosperous, and sustainable. The Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and other commitments made by Member States all seem to be fundamental towards how UNDP supports nations in implementing and achieving their objectives. The UNDP's human rights-based approach to development programming is fundamentally centered on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. This work includes advocating the human rights of women and girls, opposing discriminatory actions, and dispelling myths and prejudices that lead to injustice and exclusion (Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, 2022). Everyone has the right to take part in the government of their country, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The attainment of both transparent and responsible government and administration as well as sustainable development in all spheres of life depends on the empowerment and autonomy of women and the enhancement of women's social, economic, and political standing (FWCW, Beijing, 1995).

In either the tribal systems of the Baloch-Brahui or the Pashtun, women are never given any formal positions. However, *Godi*, the Sardar's wife, holds a major importance in the nomadic Baloch tribes. She is respected by the tribe's men and women, and in a few minor circumstances involving women, she is given the authority to make some choices (Bugti, 1995).

The birth of a baby boy is celebrated with more pomp and show in comparison to a baby girl. Women gather in the family and sing *sippat* and *nazanik* (songs of praise) for the child. *Sasigan* (choosing a name on the sixth day), *burruk* (circumcision), *padgaami* (child's first steps), and *shalwaar* (wearing of pants) are a few examples of infantile ceremonies. A youngster is customarily given the name of his or her ancestors. Additionally, terms for animals, plants, trees, colors, tastes, weekdays, and events are used in Baloch nomenclature. (Nazeer, 2003).

Particularly in the pastimes of hoeing, transplanting paddy, and cotton picking, rural women have relatively little possibilities for profession or normal jobs and frequently work for pay or as daily hired labourers. Because of their reliance on money, women had no power to make decisions on rural development (Meng, 1998). When interviewed, some working women admitted that they had issues with the behavior of their coworkers. They emphasized that because of their metropolitan backgrounds, their coworkers don't understand Balochi culture and conventions, which causes extra problems (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012). In rural Balochistan, the state of female education paints a bleak image. Although there are 80 percent of Pakistanis who lack literacy, the situation is even worse for rural

women in Balochistan. Less than two percent of Balochistan's rural female population is thought to be literate (Naz S. , 2003).

The status of women empowerment in Balochistan especially in Makkuran region. The female of the Balicha area (District Kech) took control in their hand. They helped establish many community girl's schools in the area by providing land for the school and also took the responsibility of monitoring the schools- to see whether the teacher is coming and/ or the children are attending schools. This gives them the sense of ownership, being in-charge of their affairs, and they carried out this responsibility with great commitment and devotion (Hussain & Mengal, 2014).

In Baloch civilization, women played an active role in violent clashes and over the years, headed the battalion of the tribal army. They were also involved in the political affairs of the Baloch rulers. Late in the 15th century, Bibi Baanari, the sister of Baloch tribesman Mir Chakar Khan, commanded a battalion of the tribal army in battle against Delhi, securing the throne for Humayun (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012). Baloch society comparatively presents a picture of tolerant, gender cooperative, gender non-discrimination and human society from other neighboring societies of the region. They follow and practice the principle of feminism spontaneously (Baloch & Ahmed, 2013). Further, the Mr. Pana Baloch & Ejaz Ahmed narrates that "Despite their backwardness, however, on one account i.e., their attitude towards their women folk, they are much ahead of the non-hill people.

Ms. Fahmida and Dr. Mumtaz Ali (2018) have narrated an opposite opinion regarding the empowerment of girls especially in the field of education and state that "The widen gender discrimination had paved the way for women social mature development. They are still not recognized as true part of our society. Due to gender discrimination and lack of facilities in rural areas people don't prefer girls to get education (Sattar & Ali, 2018). But in the next paras of this study, they are of the opinion that Female education in Balochistan from 2006 to 2008 brought obvious change in tribal society. Women were encouraged to come out from homes to educate themselves. In this period around 60 percent of girls aged six to nine enrolled in different public and private institutions. It was a notable improvement in women education (Sattar & Ali, 2018).

The role of women in child birth, funerals and fairs and festivals are an important part of rural life. In the Baloch society women are carrier of traditional information in the absence of written record. They are crucial actors in the preservation and dissemination of such knowledge. They are

not only competent food producers and house makers but are transmitters of rich local oral traditions. (*Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012*).

Dr. Shah Mohammad Marri (2014) writes about the status of women empowerment in Baloch Society that;

Balochi folk literature is the literature of immense love for the Land. Our literature has always been guiding us like a sword and shield against the aggressor, against the supplanter, and against the imposed from above without public support. There is a remarkable reverse evolution. When our society enters patriarchy, we see in our folk literature the neglect of the woman, a slight satire on her, and then finally a low local.

Panah Baloch (2013) is of the same opinion that due to the Baloch People's transition from nomadic to semi-nomadic to agro-pastoral livelihoods, the structure of society is altering. Changes brought on by modernization have varying impacts on men and women. In addition to having good effects on society, modernity and rapid change are also destroying positive norms, values, and traditions that have long existed in Baloch society and are negatively impacting women's respect, honor, and dignity.

Mr. Akber Notezai (2015), a prominent journalist states the current status of women issues in the Baloch society through his article published in "The Diplomat". He writes that "Women frequently experience discrimination, abuse, and murder in the typically patriarchal community of Balochistan, all in the name of "honor." In the spheres of politics, culture, economy, and society, they are hardly present. Maternal mortality, female illiteracy, unemployment, and gender inequities are all highest in Balochistan, Pakistan. Balochistan's rural women face much harsher circumstances. Consider female literacy, which is shockingly lower than the province's average of 26% in rural Balochistan".

Role of Baloch Female Writers:

Women's literature in Balochi begins with an article translated by Tahira Aliani from monthly Balochi Karachi. The second woman is Gohar Malik, who started her literary journey by translating N. M. Rashid's travelogue, which was published in monthly Balochi (Dad, 2014). Baanul Dashtiyari is another woman who appears in modern fictional literature. She also started publishing her writings in Fortnightly magazine "Zamana Karachi". In fortnightly Zamanaa, when the first

article of "*Ballo Kapoth*" was published, there was a stir in the literary world. It was a new sound but had a lot of energy (Dashtiyari, 1999).

Dr. Sabiha Baloch (2020) in her research book writes the role of women in Balochi literature:

A woman's freedom lies in her expression. Whether it is in the form of poetry or prose or idioms or riddles, these are the means of women's freedom of expression. In Baloch society, many women are restricted from participating in literary activities, but the voice of Baloch women can never be suppressed. Whether it is Mahnaaz or Banul Dashtiyari, Gohar Malik or Ain Ain Dashti, all of them are now living characters in the pages of history.

There are many Baloch women who have greatly contributed and expressed their feelings, emotions and dreams through literature. In the early period of Baloch history, Maahnaz, Saddo, Granaaz, Seemuk, and Haani are those figures whose poetry is an essential part of Balochi literature and history. These women have shown exemplary footsteps for the empowerment of Baloch women. While in the new era, Zainul Kulachi, Ain Ain Dashti, Zeenat Sana, Sabiha Kareem, Aamina Panah, Zahida Raisi, Rashida Baloch, Fozia Baloch, Sammi Parwaaz, Andleeb Gichki, Mehlab Naseer, Tahira Ehsaas Jatak, Saeeda Hassan, Kareema Baloch, Nasreen Baloch, Rakhshanda Taj, Shahina Shaheen and many more are considered modern literary figures in Balochi literature (Baloch P., 2016).

Portrayal of Feminism in Balochi Fiction:

Folktales are the ancient source of the Baloch culture, civilization and traditions. If one goes through these tales evidently one finds that they are focused either on bravery and courage or on romance. Even in the case of romance courage, bravery and marital feelings are the dominant factors (Bakht, 2009). Baloch women play a key part in advancing culture through folklore, literature, dress, art, handicrafts, traditional cuisine, and indigenous herbal remedies from early in a person's life till death in their entire lifetime (Baloch & Ahmed, 2013).

When it comes to standard fiction, Abdullah Jan Jamaldini writes that the first is Sher Muhammad Marri's "*Ganokh*", which describes the oppression of the *jirga* and highlights the social grade of women in Baloch social order (Baloch P, 2022). Historically in the Balochi literature, Mahnaaz is a popular feminist

character, whose poetry is a depiction of women in Baloch society. Dr. Wahid Buzdar (1998) writes about Mahnaaz that:

Mahnaaz's personality is a completely feminine character who, despite being a socially oppressed and helpless woman in a rigid society, has the courage to break social boundaries. Mahnaaz has shown the intensity of emotions and the boldness of perception in one of her poems "*Man Hama Enjeeraan Patan Takain*" and has defined herself with her feminine character by carving the image of a tree on the emotional level, this is unprecedented in the earlier Balochi poetry.

Role of Baloch women i.e. Mahnaaz, Seemuk, Rabia Khuzdari, Mehruk, Haani, Saddo, Bibi Khanun, Shireen, Bibi Gohar Malik, Taj Bano, Umtul-Wajid, Ain Ain Dashti, Banul Dashtiari, Tahira Ehsaas Jatak, Dr. Ambreen Mengal, Neelam Momal, Abida Dashti, Jahanara Tabasum, Amna Yousuf Maoj, Naela Qadri, Nousheen Qambarani, Sabeeha Karim, Saeeda Hassan, Fouzia Baloch, Mah Jabeen Baloch, Mehlab Naseer and Humera Sadaf in literature have never been ignored (Baloch & Qaisarani, 2012).

The love and romantic poetry of Haani and Sheh Mureed, Mahnaaz, Shireen, Granaaz, Mehruk, Sammo and Seemak have set such high examples of status of the women in Baloch society. Their undying love and affection created high qualities like sacrifice in Baloch society (Buzdar, 1998) .

Zahida Raisi (2019) who herself is a fiction writer, highlights some issues and barriers for Baloch female writers. She says;

In the past, the social importance of women in Baloch society was very high. Still, it has importance, but the biggest obstacle to their involvement in the field of literature is the society itself, which does not seem to be successful in the process of development due to mental ignorance. In the past, male writers have written a lot in literature under the pseudonyms of women, so there have been no problems for men, but now that women themselves have stepped into this field and are writing in different genres of literature with their original reach, people with low status and character do not even refrain from interfering in women's personal live.

The first Balochi Novel "*Naazuk*" has been written by Sayyad Zahoor Shah Hashmi (Sharif, Baloch, Sadiq, & Razzaq, 2016). In this novel the depiction

of feminism has been clearly portrayed, which means that the first novel of Balochi language is about women (Baloch S. , 2021).

Just as the Novel *Naazuk*, written on feminism, there is another novel *Mahikaan* in which the main character is a woman. Faqeer Muhammad Amber's novel *Nal e Tawar* is a social story in which women's issues are also considered. Another novel by Faqeer Muhammad Amber, *Ruzn e Shahar*, talks about women's rights of education in the society. *Mehr e Hoshaam* written by Ghani Parwaaz is a love story that highlights social issues as well as women's emotions and behaviors (Baloch S. , 2021).

Ghani Parwaaz is a famous literary figure who is also known as a feminist leader advocating for women rights. His literary writings are mostly about the women issues and their empowerment. Dr. Ali Dost (2013) writes about Parwaaz that; his published novels include *Meher-e-Hoshaam*, the importance of women's rights and women's education in the backdrop of Gwadar, and in the *Shap Jatain Raahi*, the importance of love and education in the backdrop of Awaran.

Munir Ahmed Badini is a famous name in Balochi fiction, his novels also reflect women's problems and their emotions. His novel "*Paryaani Parth*" highlights the psychological dimensions of women. Badini's another novel "*Shahkaden Shaari*" also discusses issues with a feministic approach (Baloch S. , 2021).

Novel *Beebal* has been written on the subject of the birth of girl child. Mr. Haleem Aalam (2013) in his review writes;

The theme of the novel "*Beebal*" exposes the weaknesses of our society where it is considered bad to be born as a girl and sending the daughters to cities for study is not an easy task. Such topics should be written. Although both these evils not found in Baloch society, but this novel must be read where they are found.

The Feministic approach in the novel, *Naazuk*:

Naazuk is the first novel written in the Balochi language. It was first published in 1976 and has been translated into Urdu and Persian. It depicts everyday life and experiences of the people living around the coastal area of Makkuran especially Gwadar and its surroundings (Baloch F. , 2020).

Naazuk has been written with historical and realistic techniques in addition to the narrative and rhetoric of fiction. There are many characters in this novel but the main character is *Naazuk*, a woman who marries three men after the

back-to-back death of her two husbands. *Naazuk* is a wealthy and respectable character whose husbands die during fishing in the sea. To save her third marriage, she stipulates that her future husband will not go to the sea for fishing (Parwaaz, 2019).

A.R Daad in his book “*Gap Rawaan Kanth*” writes about the Plot of *Naazuk*;

Naazuk is the story of a woman living in the coastal city of Gwadar, after the death of her father, she owns wealth and luxuries, but she is not enough fortunate to get a husband. The setting of the novel is the beach where Naazuk is Meerain’s wife. After his death, she marries Jaami and after the death of Jaami finally agrees to marry a man named Oomer after some conditions. There is also a person named Gazabek in the same village, who wants to marry Naazuk, but even after sending messages many times, he fails in his ambitions. Gazabek is superficially sympathetic to the poor but ignores women with evil eyes. Finally, one day, Oomer, who is also Naazuk's cousin, comes to the village. People provoke him to take back his share of property from Naazuk. He goes to the judge's court but there he has to face failure because Gazabek takes the side of Naazuk and the judge does not want to offend Gazabek. Omer gets unsatisfied and leaves the village. After some time, when he arrives, Naazuk agrees to marry him in such a way that he will not go to the sea to catch fish.

Dr. Abdul Saboor Baloch (2016) in his book about Balochi Fiction literature identifies the other aspect of the Novel *Naazuk* and says;

The name of this novel is *Naazuk*, so due to this name, the reader has to deal with the biography of *Naazuk*, but in it, the unity of impression, which is an essential part of any novel, is not seen in the *Naazuk*. Incomplete characters with incomplete stories around have been made part of this novel. This means that it is a small reflection of coastal life in which many incomplete stories are intertwined. In this novel, the main character (in the form of *Naazuk* and *Gazabek*) is present, but no theme seems to exist.

He further narrates that one of the qualities of this novel is that its main role has been given to a woman while keeping in mind the Baloch society, it is an

anti-tradition where most of the male characters are given importance (Baloch D. A., 2016).

Society changes its needs. All living characters in the society die someday, with the death of these characters, the society does not end, but new characters are born. One of the characters of this Baloch society is Syed Zahoor Shah Hashmi, who has expressed the circumstances and trends of his time with great boldness and wise manner. In his novel "*Naazuk*", the life of the woman *Naazuk* appears to be in trouble. Despite the difficulties and hardships and being treated with sarcastic things associated with the society on the beach, she is hopeful about her future life. Her husband "Meerain" going to the sea and not coming back makes her miserable, her eyes were waiting for her husband to be returned, but Meerain did not come back and her second husband "Jaami" was also swallowed by the sea. Finally, when she decided to marry Oomer her third life partner, she sent a message saying, "Tell Oomer not to take up fishing that she can't take credit for another blood on her account" (Nazar, 2021).

The Baloch believe in superstitions like bad and good omen and many more. They believe in every type of superstition and omens. Whenever a man goes out of home, calling upon him is considered a bad omen. A widow is considered as bad omen. They also believe in dreams. They have their own traditional and local food. Baloch coastal people described in this novel usually take these meals: *Halwa, Loby, Kajha, Rice and Malaye* (Dinakhel, 2021). *Naazuk* novel depicts these different aspects of the life of people living especially in the coastal area.

Findings & Analysis:

In the light of the above literature and evidence, it is very obvious that the roots of feminism as exist in the West, are different in the Baloch land. While comparing both societies and even traces from the subcontinent, Baloch people and their culture are different in many social, economic and political aspects of the society. The Baloch has a cultural heritage where all the cultural principles, traditions and values of life are born from the womb of this society. Here traditions and social values cannot be obeyed by any royal decree, order, bullying and coercion, but every person in this society is also the creator of tradition and values in terms of his character and action.

History bears witness to the unparalleled respect and dignity Baloch women hold in the society that no other civilization before the modern world could even grasp. Even before women rights had become a global reality, Baloch women held their dignity and distinctive value and status in the Baloch society where their honor, their socio-economic rights and their protection were always kept in priority (Sattar & Alizai, 2018).

The ancient Baloch society is a story of such an environment where the maintenance of the rules and regulations of life, traditions, values and customs is a debt, without which no male or female can imagine living in such a society. Because to live in this society, everyone must not only follow these traditions and values but also meet its standard. For this, it should also prove itself worthy of it on which the cultural and social building of this society is based. Otherwise, he has no right to live in this society (Buzdar, 1998).

As Jan Dashti (2020) says, In a Baloch society, everyone had equal standing and was considered noble. Superiority and inferiority are brought about by actions, not by birth. It is an inclusive society where men and women work in collaboration. To find the roots of feminism in Baloch society, we have to compare the different societies of the world, especially from the west where this theory originated and developed. According to the available evidence, it is clear that the known history of Baloch as a nation is known for some three thousand years. Some historians believe that the Baloch nation is as old as the civilization of Mehregadh. Historians think that it was 1200 BC, Baloch migration took place from the western Caspian Sea regions. While the traces of other nations like Egyptians, Romans, Greek and Hindus are approximately around 6000 to 8000 BC. The written evidence of their history, customs, traditions, religions and folk wisdom are available. But in the case of Baloch, there is a lack of evidences regarding their identity and culture.

Women have been subjected to different means of heinous torture and oppression throughout history in other societies and they are still under oppression in many parts of the backward regions of the world, but the ratio of violation of women's rights, the ratio of domestic violence and the ratio of honor killing or acid throwing are not comparatively much better in the Baloch society, but it is the lowest in the entire country of Pakistan (Sattar & Alizai, 2018).

Balochi literature begins dated around 700 years with the story of the famous conflict between the Rind and Lashar Baloch tribes. The dispute started with a woman named Gohar whose camel and other cattle were killed and field

damaged. This war-torn literature also reflects the financial and social status of woman in Baloch society.

If the character of a woman named Naazuk in the novel *Naazuk* is analyzed, then in this too, depicts the status of the woman in the society in the same manner, where Naazuk is a wealthy woman whose two husbands drown in the sea. Here it is pointed out that a woman is so empowered that she can marry a second person after the death of her husband which shows the openness of the Baloch society.

In addition, a character named Oomer, who wants to marry Naazuk to take possession of her property, but the values and laws of the society do not allow him to do this wrong, due to which he does not succeed in his ambitions. This indicates that the legal or social restrictions for women in Baloch society were completely different from the 20th-century laws of the West, where the feminist movement took its head.

In the above discussions, it is learned that the nature of feminism is different as found in western societies. In the Baloch culture, men and women both are treated the same, but in some cases, women are being suppressed in the field of education and employment perspective as in some districts of Balochistan, the majority of the girls are not allowed to leave their homes for achieving quality education.

It is also worthily mentioned that, in the Baloch society injustice, cruelty or bad treatment with women is considered very bad and there is punishment for these crimes. As the Baloch society is changing with the passage of time, the nature of the empowerment and feminism concepts are also changing. The structure of society includes institutions such as families, economic patterns and culture, whereas functions refer to activities that are performed in structures (MacMillan, 2000). Baloch society is also changing its dynamics from nomad life to urban settlement, there is a need to analyze, modify and formulate the laws with the current social and economic conditions. In the current situation, quality education plays a vital role in the development of any society. There is a need to make such systems and laws where every member of society should obtain quality education.

Recommendation:

Based on the above observations, below are some recommendations

- 1- The Quality of education especially girls' education should be standardized according to the needs of modern technology and content. Until, both male and female don't have access to quality education, equal rights or empowerment is not possible for Baloch women.
- 2- Literature is the best tool to express someone's feelings and ideas. Due to the less ratio of education among the girls, their participation in the field of literature particularly in fiction, is very less. Women and educated girls should write and advocate regarding their rights, feelings and ideas to the world and other communities.
- 3- Cultural organizations and Government institutions should design an integrative system as to support women in all culture-related fields.
- 4- The economy is a considerable factor in the empowerment process, the girls should be provided more opportunities for the employment to boost their economic role in society.
- 5- There are some customs that bound the girl's participation in society. Harassments, acid-throwing accidents and lack of social security in society are such practices that should be eliminated through the implementation of the laws and social protection steps by government agencies.
- 6- Cultural entities and institutions should print and publish women writer's books and content to promote the participation of women writers in the field of literature.
- 7- Unfortunately, Balochistan province is suffering from multi-dimensional problems. There is a pile of bad governance, difficulties in the field of education, basic health problems and economic and social problems in which the Baloch people are forced to live. There is a need to formulate a new social change towards a development approach. It is all possible in a new social agreement where all stakeholders of the society should participate and contribute to this developmental process.

Conclusion:

Women being part of society are the agent of change on all fronts of life. Without women, a society cannot complete the development process accordingly. Today, the entire West is developed adopting the behavior and laws of gender equality in social, political, economic and national and international concerns.

God created human beings and divided them into men and women, with some differences in body and mind. It was only civilization that brought this difference to such a level that the principles of feminism have been articulated. The term 'feminism' was first used concerning the issues of equality and Women's Rights Movement.

But women in Pakistan and more particularly Balochistan, are still being exploited educationally, socially and politically. The social and economic bearers for women are stronger as compared to men. Although Baloch women are trying hard to acquire more educational, economic and political prosperity. Hence, it is possible that the whole women of Balochistan will participate equally to change their fate on these concerns. This can happen when the state provides the quality educational institutions with opportunities to all men and women on equal basis.

In any society, literature not only leads to the spread of knowledge and ideas but also brings forth suggestions to eradicate the problems and complications of society. Women being an important equal beneficiary of the society, should not only express their personal feelings but the issues related to their family and community in the literary form but should also play a practical role so that they can help to solve the problems of the Baloch society.

This paper aimed to investigate the roots and nature of feminism in the Baloch society. In addition to this, through the analysis of Balochi literature, specifically in the field of fiction, *Naazuk* novel was examined in the perspective of women empowerment.

Analysis of the story, character and dialogue of the *Naazuk* novel reveals that the women's problems in Balochi fiction are interpreted to some extent by the male writers, but since there is a lack of women contributors in Balochi literature, the representation of women in this field itself is negligible.

It is important to clarify here that even male writers have tried to reflect the role of women in accordance with the ideologies and traditions found in the Baloch society and have tried to bring out their Problems and sufferings, but there is an urgent need for women themselves to come to this field so that they can present their problems in a better way, whether it is in the social field or creating literary material in the literature.

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