

**Shattering the Public Private Divide:**

**The Role of Mohajir Women in the Karachi Conflict**

**By**

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**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the  
University of Manitoba**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of MASTER  
OF ARTS**

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Winnipeg.**

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## Acknowledgments

John Donne once remarked that “no man is an island.” Just as an island cannot exist without being surrounded by water on all sides, this thesis could not have existed without being surrounded by the affection, love and support of many individuals.

My committee members Dr. Anna Snyder, Dr. Jessica Senehi and Dr. Zana Lutifiyya’s comments and suggestions throughout the process provided me with much needed guidance to navigate through the turbulent waters of research. Thank you with all my heart.

My non-biological family, Heba, Katharina, Kris and Ran, amongst many others, ensured that this thesis would ultimately be penned down by providing me not only with support in every sense of the word, but also the encouragement to trudge along this path. To them I owe a debt of gratitude which can never be paid.

My advisor and mentor, Sean’s patience with my writing and his edits and suggestions throughout the process ensured that this thesis would be completed. Moreover, Sean’s insights and help on the matters of life in general were instrumental in enabling me to continue to work on this thesis and ultimately completing it. To him, this thesis owes its existence.

My son, Adnan Jason Tucker Khan, snapped me out of my “academic angst of existence” by just being his cute self. Son, even at 7 months, you calm your father down and make him go on. I know it should be the other way round.

My family’s patience with my “intellectual nomadic” ways for the past many years has been the key for not only this thesis to finally be completed but also for every other achievement in my life. Their love, affection and support for their youngest, not only touches me every day

but shall continue to do so for the rest of my life. Ammi, Abbu, Sadaf and Adnan, do know that neither this thesis nor I myself could ever exist without you guys.

## Acronyms

AIML: The All India Muslim League

AL: Awami League

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

GII: Gender Inequality Index

GDI: Gender Development Index

GEM: Gender Empowerment Index

MQM: The Mohajir Qaumi Movement, The Muttahida Qaumi Movement

SUF: Sindh United Front

UN: United Nations

### **Cases Cited**

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## Table of Contents

<b>S. No</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b><u>Pages</u></b>
1.	Dedications	2-3
2.	Acronyms	4
3.	Cases Cited	5
4.	Abstract	10
5.	Is Biology Destiny? a- Introduction b- Overview of the Study c- Conclusion	10-15 10-13 13-15 15
6.	The Historical Context- A Tale of Two Migrations a- Introduction b- The Sun Never Sets on the British Empire c- Partition Revisited d- “Divided we Fall” e- Changing Fortunes for the Mohajirs f- The “Great Awakening” g- The “Reign of Terror” h- Conclusions	16-30 16 16-19 20-21 21-23 23-24 25-26 26-30 30
7.	Literature Review a- Introduction	31-52 31

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b- Identity</li> <li>c- Social Cubism</li> <li>d- Gender and Conflict</li> <li>e- Gender and Empowerment</li> <li>f- Gender and the Public/Private Divide</li> <li>g- Structural Violence</li> <li>h- Basic Human Needs</li> <li>i- Conclusion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>32-35</li> <li>35-36</li> <li>36-39</li> <li>39-44</li> <li>44-48</li> <li>48-50</li> <li>51</li> <li>52</li> </ul>
8.	<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a- Introduction</li> <li>b- Research Location</li> <li>c- The Participants</li> <li>d- Data Gathering Techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Interviews</li> <li>ii. Semi-Structured Interviews</li> </ul> </li> <li>e- Data Analysis</li> <li>f- Conclusions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>53-62</li> <li>53</li> <li>53-54</li> <li>54-55</li> <li>56-60</li> <li>56</li> <li>57-60</li> <li>60-61</li> <li>61-62</li> </ul>
9.	<p>Identity and Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a- Introduction</li> <li>b- The “Indian Connection”</li> <li>c- Mohajir Identity</li> <li>d- Security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>63-83</li> <li>63-64</li> <li>64-65</li> <li>65-70</li> <li>70-74</li> </ul>

	e- Key Findings	74-81
	f- Conclusions	81-83
10.	Gender, Empowerment & Patriarchy	83-100
	a- Introduction	83-84
	b- The “Charge of the Honor Brigade”	84-86
	c- Economic Empowerment, Female Emancipation and Sustainable Peace	86-90
	d- The “Doxa” of Patriarchy	90-93
	e- Key Findings	93-100
	f- Conclusions	100
11.	Beyond Patriarchy: Envisioning True Emancipation and Sustainable Peace for Mohajir Women	101-111
	a- Introduction	101
	b- The Mohajir Identity	101-103
	c- The Job Quota System	103-104
	d- Holistic Female Empowerment	104-108
	i. Amendments to the Qanoon-e-Shahadat Order 1984	105
	ii. Battle for Minds and Hearts	106-108
	e- Future Research	109-110
	f- Final Remarks	110-111
12.	Works Cited	112-122
13.	Annexure A- Interview Guide	123-124

## **Abstract**

Economic emancipation is considered to be a critical pre-requisite to female empowerment. Using data collected through semi-structured interviews with six (6) women from the Mohajir community in the port city of Karachi, Pakistan, the present study examines whether in the wake of economic emancipation, Mohajir women were able to achieve holistic female empowerment. The findings indicate that while Mohajir women did achieve economic emancipation, it did not result in holistic female empowerment as decisionmaking power ultimately rested with the patriarch because of religious, social, cultural and psychological reasons. The findings also reveal that the study participants believed that ideally a man is ultimately responsible for providing for his family since he is naturally endowed to be the breadwinner. Moreover, the findings further indicate that the need for security of life was considered to be the most crucial and basic of all needs and human needs followed a hierarchical pattern. In light of the findings, it is suggested that changes within the security, legal, academic and religious spheres be initiated so that Mohajir and Pakistani women are able to achieve holistic empowerment.

## **Chapter I- Is Biology Destiny?**

### **Introduction**

They were destined to be daughters, mothers, sisters and wives yet during and after the Karachi conflict (1992-1997), did Mohajir women achieve empowerment and did this empowerment actually lead to an alteration in the public/private divide and a change in patriarchal dynamics within Mohajir families?

The Karachi conflict (1992-1997) itself refers to both successive military operations conducted by the Pakistani State against the principal political representative party of the Mohajir people, the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM). While the operations were allegedly aimed at curtailing the MQM's militant clout, Mohajir men who were not affiliated with the MQM were abducted and arrested by law enforcement agencies.<sup>1</sup> It was during this period, according to popular belief, that Mohajir women pierced the veil of privacy by adopting economic and social roles that were traditionally performed by male members of their families.

Even a cursory glance at the literature on women and conflict reveals that their roles in violent and most post-peace accord situations have been examined widely. For instance, the role women can play in conflict prevention, peacemaking and peacebuilding has been elaborated upon by the United Nations (UN) through resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960. Moreover, the role of women in contemporary asymmetric warfare has also been examined. For example, as Fink, Barakat and Shatret argue, women may not only be instrumental in preventing and preempting terrorism, they can also play a critical role in abetting terrorism by acting as accessories, accomplices and combatants.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, even the classical male-female divide which often considers women to be docile actors has been crossed as it has been argued that the dynamics that convince men to become terrorists are the same that lead women to become an integral part of terrorist operations and these include socio-economic inequalities, political disempowerment and religious fanaticism.<sup>3</sup> However, the role of Mohajir women in Pakistan is not examined and hence this study aims to fill in a gap prevalent in the existing Peace and

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<sup>1</sup> Vazira-Fazila Yacoobali. (1996). "The Battlefields of Karachi: Ethnicity, Violence and the State." MLibrary Digital Collections. Retrieved at March 19, 2012, from the website temoa : Open Educational Resources (OER) Portal at <http://www.temoa.info/node/108622>

<sup>2</sup> Naureen Chaudhry Fink, Rafia Barakat and Liat Shetret. "The Roles of Women in Terrorism, Conflict and Violent Extremism: Lessons for the United Nations and International Actors." Centre on Global Counterterrorism Cooperation, *Policy Brief*, April 2015, p.2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p.3.

Conflict Studies (PACS) and Social Science literature on the Karachi conflict and Mohajirs, specifically Mohajir women.

Studies exist that have examined the conflict from different perspectives, which are usually male-centric and identity oriented. For example, Oskar Verkaik argues that young Mohajir men who engaged in the Karachi conflict found a sense of adventure and excitement in carrying weapons.<sup>4</sup> Nicola Khan in her phenomenal work also examines the conflict from the lens of masculinity and identity and posits that for assassins from the Mohajir community, the conflict was instrumental in constructing not only their Mohajir identity but also their classical masculine identity.<sup>5</sup> Other studies have examined how Mohajir women perceived their identity and nationhood during the conflict<sup>6</sup> and how Mohajir women reconstituted themselves after the conflict<sup>7</sup>, yet the literature is bereft of research about how the conflict affected existing patriarchal relations within Mohajir households. Moreover, literature in general has often focused on women as victims in protracted ethnic conflict but not about whether violent conflict can actually transform and empower resilient women.<sup>8</sup>

To comprehend how Mohajir women broke the public/private divide in order to achieve economic emancipation and whether such emancipation led to a shift in patriarchal dynamics

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<sup>4</sup> Oskar Verkaik. (2004). *Migrants and Militants: Fun and Urban Violence in Pakistan*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press).

<sup>5</sup> Nichola Ann Khan. (2010). *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan: Violence Transformation in the Karachi Conflict*. (London: Routledge Contemporary South Asia Studies).

<sup>6</sup> Rubina Saigol. (2002). "The Partition of Self Mohajir Women's Sense of Identity and Nation Hood." Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Working Paper Series:77

<sup>7</sup> Lubna Nazir Chaudhry. (2004). "Reconstituting Selves in the Karachi Conflict: Mohajir Women Survivors and Structural Violence." Sustainable Policy Development Institute, Working Paper Series.

<sup>8</sup> Anna Snyder. (2009). "Gender Relations and Conflict Transformation Among Refugee Women." In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, New York: Routledge, edited by Sandole, Dennis J.D, Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste and Jessica Senehi, eds., p.45.

within Mohajirs households, this thesis is divided into six distinct yet interrelated and interdependent chapters.

## **Overview of the Study**

Chapter One traces the historical of the Mohajir nation from 1947 until the Karachi conflict and commences with a broad overview of how the British colonial policy of divide and rule led to the massacre of millions from the sands of the Middle East to the shores of Colombo. The chapter also explores how Mohajir influence arose and waned after the partition of the Indian sub-continent and the underlying dynamics which gave rise to ethnopolitical hostility within Karachi. The chapter further examines the changing roles of Mohajir women within a historical context.

Chapter Two reviews some relevant literature on issues related to the present study. In particular seven different theoretical streams are examined in order to frame this present study that include:

- a- Identity, which examines the construction and intersectionality of identities in violent conflict;
- b- b- Social Cubism, which looks at the complexity and underlying dynamics of protracted social conflicts;
- c- Gender and Conflict, which investigates the role of women in dealing with violent conflict;
- d- Gender and the Public/Private Divide, which deconstructs the public/private divide at the level of the home, the state and the international order;

- e- Gender and Empowerment, which argues that economic emancipation does not necessarily lead to female empowerment;
- f- Structural Violence, which posits that unjust structures are inherently violent and lead to violent conflict, and;
- g- Basic Human Needs, which argues that if basic needs remain unsatisfied, violent conflict is inevitable.

Chapter Three is a discussion of the methods adopted to conduct the field research. The chapter elaborates on the utility of using semi-structured interviews to conduct research with women. The chapter also looks at the use of snowball sampling, the primary tool used to identify research subjects for this study. Finally, the chapter discusses how the data was transcribed, coded and analyzed for this study, as well as issues pertaining to the security of the subjects.

Chapter Four is a discussion about the role of identity in the Karachi conflict. The findings explored and discussed the Mohajirs' lack of connection to India, the Mohajir identity, the security of person, attachment to Islam, cynicism about the future, an intricate relationship between history, ethnicity and politics and idealization of the Western model of governance.

Chapter Five examines whether Mohajir women's economic emancipation was able to alter the dynamics of patriarchy within their families. Moreover, the chapter also examines the views that male members of Mohajir families had about women going out of their homes to earn a living and support their families, and also highlights the bravery and resilience shown by Mohajir women in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds.

Chapter Six concludes the thesis and offers certain recommendations to policymakers in Pakistan, which if adopted could lead to a betterment in relations between Mohajirs and other

ethnicities and moreover could result in women gaining holistic and true empowerment in the wake of their economic emancipation.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter presents the research question as well as noting the role of women in conflict as well as the impact of conflict on Mohajirs and Mohajir women. To have a better understanding of how Mohajir women perceive themselves as women and Mohajirs during and after the Karachi conflict, it is imperative to trace the history and evolution of the Mohajir nation from the British partition of the Indian sub-continent until the outbreak of the Karachi conflict in 1992. Moreover, it is also critical to examine the role of Mohajir women before and during the Karachi conflict as only in the light of such an analysis can the role of Mohajir women be truly appreciated. The context chapter that follows offers such an examination.

## Chapter II- A Tale of Two Migrations

### Introduction

It is imperative to understand the legacy of British colonialism and imperialism and the impact it had all over the globe in terms of intergroup relations since the British policy of “divide and rule,” resulted in the outbreak of internecine conflict within newly formed independent states.<sup>9</sup> To have a fuller understanding of the British policy of pitting ethnic groups against each other, it is instructive to examine some ethnopolitical conflicts in former British colonies.

### The Sun Never Sets on the British Empire

The legacy of British colonialism is evident even today, from the peaks of the Himalayas to the shores of Colombo. While some such as the former Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh have argued that colonialism had a positive impact on the Indian sub-continent,<sup>10</sup> the legacy of British colonialism is soaked in the blood of the “wretched of the earth” since the British policy of divide and rule on the basis of ethnicity and religion continues to haunt the world even today as “divide and rule became divide and depart.”<sup>11</sup> The literature is replete with the potent power of ethnicity to unite and divide people. For example, Thomas Hylland Eriksen argues that ethnicity is based on religion, language and a common way of life that evolves into a social identity once any of these factors are perceived to be threatened.<sup>12</sup> In contrast, Glazer and Moynihan elaborate upon the critical role that the state can play to make

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<sup>9</sup> For excellent analyses of the legacy of colonialism and imperialism please see Sumantra Bose. (2010). *Contested Lands: Israel-Palestine, Kashmir, Bosnia, Cyprus and Sri Lanka*. (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press) and *Regional and Conflict Perspectives from the Frontline*. (2009). Judy Carter, George Irani and Vamik Volkan (eds). (New York: Prentice Hall).

<sup>10</sup> India Times Staff. (2005). “The Mind of Manmohan Singh.” India Times (15 July).

<sup>11</sup> Paul Arthur. (2009). “Reconciliation and Memory: Conflict and Peace in Northern Ireland.” Arthur V. Mauro Centre for Peace and Justice, October 8.

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Hylland Eriksen. (2002). *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*. (London: Pluto Books), p. 68.

ethnic identity a core political identity.<sup>13</sup> The British used the ethnic card to drive a wedge between groups across the globe by giving these communities a political identity which led to ethnopolitical hostilities. For Nirvikar Singh, the British facilitated and supported the creation of an ethnic Sikh identity by inducting the tall, dark and handsome Sikhs into the British Indian Army as sepoy,<sup>14</sup> and later on the blood bath that ensued during the partition of the sub-continent revealed the gory aftermath of the policy of preferring one group over another on the basis of physical appearance. In contrast, Cordell and Wolff adopt a holistic approach when explaining ethnic conflicts and posit that while fears and hatred are significant factors in fuelling ethnic conflicts, economic grievances and motivation ignite the sparks of ethnopolitical hostilities into all consuming raging flames.<sup>15</sup> History is replete with examples of how favoring one group economically led to ethnopolitical hostilities and ultimately to mass killings. To illustrate the disastrous results of the divide and rule policy of the British colonizers, it is instructive to look at some examples of the impact of British colonialism on intergroup relations.

The British occupation and brutal actions against the indigenous people from 1179 onwards in the island of Ireland, meddling in Cyprus and Yemen and colonial mastery of the peoples of Kenya, Sudan Egypt and Nigeria are well documented. For example, before the arrival of the British to the Indian sub-continent, the Tamils and the Sinhalese on the island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) intermarried even at the level of the monarchy.<sup>16</sup> However, the British favored the Sinhalese over the Tamils and the parting gift left to the “tear of the sub-continent” was in the form of a constitution based on the Western democratic ideal of majority rule which

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<sup>13</sup> Steve Fenton. (2003). *Ethnicity*. (Cambridge: Polity Press), p.99.

<sup>14</sup> Nirvikar Singh. (1998). “Cultural Conflict in India: Punjab and Kashmir.” In Beverly Crawford and Ronnie D. Lipschutz (eds). *The Myth of Ethnic Conflict: Politics, Economics and “Cultural Violence.”* (California: International Area Studies), p.323.

<sup>15</sup> Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff. *Ethnic Conflict: Cause-Consequences-Responses*. (Cambridge: Polity Press), p.35.

<sup>16</sup> Sumantra Bose. (2007). *Contested Lands*, p.14

gave the Sinhalese an upper hand in running the affairs of the newly formed state.<sup>17</sup> Such a constitution sowed the seeds of ethnic rivalry between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils as the former legislated laws and created quotas on the number of Tamil students allowed to enter into elite universities.<sup>18</sup> The Tamils were slowly stripped of their basic human rights and rose up against Colombo under the leadership of Prabhakaran as Sri Lanka slowly descended into over two decades of violent protracted ethnic conflict which only ended with the death of Prabhakaran in 2008 and in the defeat of the Tamil Tigers on the battlefield in a war that resulted in the massacre of an estimated 80,000-100,000 people.<sup>19</sup>

The impact of British colonialism can also be seen in the context of the Middle East. After the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1917 and the abolishment of the Ottoman Empire in 1924, arbitrary lines were drawn across the Middle East without any consideration for ethnic and tribal dynamics and monarchies loyal to the British and French Empires were handed over the reins of power. Almost a century later, we can see the horrific results of this “regional re-engineering” as the Middle East which once gave birth to glorious civilizations has now given birth to a monster which is commonly referred to as ISIS who threatens regional and global security at an unprecedented level.

The conflict in the Kashmir valley is also another example of the everlasting impacts of the legacy of the British Empire in the Far East. Within undivided India were areas known as princely states which were ruled by “indigenous” Kings who were loyal to their British masters.<sup>20</sup> As the British departed, the princely states were given the option of either merging

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.15

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>19</sup> S. Murari. (2012). *The Prabhakaran Saga: The Rise and Fall of Eelam Warrior*. (New Delhi: Sage Publications).

<sup>20</sup> Sumantra Bose. (2007). *Contested Lands* p. 164.

with India or Pakistan or declaring independence; a large majority opted to join India because of demographic, geographical and religious dynamics.<sup>21</sup> However, Kashmir which had a sizeable Muslim majority and was ruled by a non-Muslim, Maharajah Hari Singh, proved to be the proverbial throne because the leading political party in the valley was headed by a family that had close ties to the Indian National Congress, the ruling party of the newly formed secular Indian State.<sup>22</sup> With Hari Singh wavering on the issue of accession, tribesmen from the Northern Areas of Pakistan invaded Kashmir and forcibly annexed parts of it to Pakistan.<sup>23</sup> The conflict resulted in three wars fought between both countries as Pakistan has formed and supported militant organizations to infiltrate into Indian administered Kashmir. While Cyril Radcliffe may have been the architect of dividing the subcontinent, he perhaps never imagined that the arbitrary lines he was drawing were lines etched in blood and death, the goriest and most brutal form of which would be seen in the mass-migrations that occurred between 1947-1948 from India to Pakistan and vice versa. Finally, as Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd argue that while conceptual distinctions exist between religion and ethnicity, religion has often provided a basis to define and redefine ethnicity and ethnic conflict in varying degrees; religion can be a weak mobilizing factor as in the case of the former Yugoslavia, or form the core identity itself.<sup>24</sup> Consequently, while religion was the divisive factor fuelling conflict between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs giving them an ethnic identity in the pre-partition Indian sub-continent, it was unsuccessful in keeping the peace in the newly formed Islamic Republic of Pakistan since religion was unsuccessful in forging a single national identity amongst uniquely different ethnic groups.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.166.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p.167.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>24</sup> Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd. (2011). "Ethnicity and Religion." In Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff (eds). *Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict*. (London: Routledge), pp. 69-70.

## Partition Revisited

The Partition of the Sub-Continent was the greatest blunder in the history of mankind...it was not the division of land but a division of blood.”<sup>25</sup> (Altaf Hussain, founder of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement-MQM)

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 resulted in the birth of Pakistan and is one of the biggest, most rapid and bloodiest of mass migrations of people in human history.<sup>26</sup> It is estimated that there were “total migratory inflows of 14.5 million people and outflows of 17.9 million people, implying that 3.4 million are missing” people.<sup>27</sup> While secession and partition logically entail an outbreak of violence amongst different ethnic groups, as Penderel Moon argues, it was the absolute barbarism of the partition of the sub-continent which scarred and affected everyone ranging from protected groups such as the elderly, women and children to armed militants.<sup>28</sup> For example, parents were dismembered and mutilated in front of their children, women were savagely raped and later on their body parts were severed by aggressors and collective punishment was imposed on village after village by marauding groups.<sup>29</sup> It was within this bloody context in the space of a mere 90 days, some 8 million refugees had crossed over from one country to another<sup>30</sup> with one in every 10 people becoming a refugee in Pakistan.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Times of India Staff. (2001). “A Mohajir’s Prayer.” Times of India (July 22).

<sup>26</sup> Prashant Bharadwaj, Asim Khawaja and Atif Mian. (2008) “The Big March: Migratory Flows After the Partition of India.” Economic and Political Weekly (August 30, 2008).

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Penderel Moon. (1998). *Divide and Quit: An Eyewitness Account of the Partition of India*. (Delhi: Oxford University Press), pp. 62-63.

<sup>29</sup> Yasmin Khan. (2007). *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. (New Delhi: Penguin Books), Pp.129-135.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.136

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

The majority of those who migrated to Pakistan were people from the province of the Indian Punjab who settled in the Pakistani Punjab province and assimilated quickly due to their common culture.<sup>32</sup> Migration not *only* occurred in the Punjab province as an estimated 1.6 to 2 million “refugees” found a home in Karachi, a port city in the southern province of Sindh out of which 20 percent of immigrants arrived from the Northern Indian areas of Delhi, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Ajmer.<sup>33</sup> These refugees/immigrants who would later adopt the label “Mohajir”<sup>34</sup> were culturally diverse yet spoke a common language, Urdu. As shall be seen later, language would soon fracture the newly formed country on the basis of ethnicity.

### **“Divided we Fall’**

The All India Muslim League (AIML) was at the forefront of advocating the case for creating a new Pakistan State and came into power once partition occurred. AIML consisted primarily of people from Northern India, including the founder of Pakistan, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Since leaders makes decisions which are occasionally not in the interests of all people, in 1948, Jinnah established Urdu as the national language of Pakistan, a language spoken by the minority Muslim group who had just arrived in the country.<sup>35</sup> This step and the establishment of 20 percent job quotas for Mohajirs in the public sphere who were more literate than their indigenous Sindhi counterparts<sup>36</sup> was perceived as economic genocide and sowed the seeds of

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<sup>32</sup> Nichola Ann Khan. *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*. p.30.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>The word is derived from the Arabic word *hijra* which marks the year when the Prophet Mohammad immigrated from Mecca to Medina to escape persecution. The word Mohajir can then be seen as having a religious connotation.

<sup>35</sup> Musarrat Jabeen, Amir Ali Chandio and Zarina Qasim. (2010). “Language Controversy: Impacts on National Politics and Secession of East Pakistan.” *South Asian Studies: A Research Journal of South Asian Studies* 25(.1): 99-124.

<sup>36</sup> The Mohajirs had a 70 percent literacy rate as compared to the 10 percent enjoyed by their Sindhi counterparts. For more information please see, Richard S. Wheeler. (1970). *The Politics of Pakistan*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), p.47.

hostility that would later result in the country, and especially the city of Karachi descending into ultimate chaos. In 1947, Karachi had a population of 450,000 which burgeoned to 1.137 million by 1951, with the population of the Mohajirs increasing from a mere 6.3 percent to 50 percent while that of the indigenous Sindhis decreasing from 61.2 percent to 8.6 percent.<sup>37</sup> The initial rise of the Mohajirs within the newly formed republic can also be gauged from the fact that from 1947-1958, the Mohajirs along with the dominant ethnic Punjabis held 14 out of 27 top political and military positions in the country.<sup>38</sup>

Apart from the Mohajirs, people from the Northern Areas of Pakistan known as Pashtuns moved to Sindh and Karachi and soon found blue-collar jobs, including positions in the transport industry.<sup>39</sup> The Pashtuns also opened up roadside tea kiosks, found manual blue collar jobs and started their own businesses. However, the divisive factor for the Mohajirs vis-à-vis the Pashtuns was that large number of Pashtuns found employment in the military and police services, thereby substantiating the Mohajir claim that the British preference for the so-called “martial races” continued even after the departure of the colonial masters.<sup>40</sup> British sociologist Nichola Khan argues that ethnic diversity did not lead to unity as people of different ethnicities started to ghettoize themselves by settling in particular enclaves in Karachi.<sup>41</sup> For scholars such as Younus Samad, ethnic unity in the province and in Karachi in particular was not achieved due to the high handed and arrogant approach of the Mohajirs towards their Sindhi and Pashtun counterparts.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, Adeel Khan, a researcher on ethnic issues in Pakistan argues that religion which was

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<sup>37</sup> Nichola Ann Khan. (2009). *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.30.

<sup>38</sup> Theodore P. Wright Jr. (1974). “Indian Muslim Refugees in the Politics of Pakistan.” *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, p.196.

<sup>39</sup> Nichola Ann Khan, *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.30.

<sup>40</sup> Iftikhar H. Malik. (1997). *State and Civil Society in Pakistan*. (London: Macmillan), p.201.

<sup>41</sup> Nichola Ann Khan, *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.31.

<sup>42</sup> Yunus Samad.(2002). “In and Out of Power but not Down and Out: Mohajir Identity Politics. In *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, edited by Christophe Jaffrelot. (London: Zed Books Ltd), p.67.

supposed to be the unifying factor was unsuccessful since the “Mohajirs’ ritual, rationalized, modernized and ideological Islam was in sharp contrast with the folk-influenced, syncretic Islam of the Sindhis.”<sup>43</sup> Finally, by making Karachi the federal capital, Sindhis felt that the Mohajir administration had taken away what was rightly theirs.

### **Changing Fortunes for the Mohajirs**

However, the fortunes of the Mohajirs began to change. Ayub Khan, an ethnic Pashtun who usurped power in 1958 via a military coup d’état decided to move the federal capital to a newly built city in the heart of the Punjab province, Islamabad. The Mohajirs alleged that Ayub’s decision was a “deliberate attempt to marginalize the Mohajirs.”<sup>44</sup> In 1965, when Ayub Khan contested elections to legitimize his illegal rule, Mohajirs put their support behind Fatimah Jinnah, a Mohajir woman and sister of the father of the nation. This resulted in Ayub’s defeat in Karachi and the first ever instance of serious ethnic violence between Mohajirs and Pashtuns.<sup>45</sup>

The secession of Bangladesh which would later change Pakistan’s course of history stemmed from the policies adopted by the “new masters” i.e. the ethnically populous Punjabis in the newly formed Islamic Republic. Post-partition Pakistan had two wings; i.e. the west wing or modern day Pakistan which is territorially homogenous and the east wing or modern day Bangladesh which was separated from mainland Pakistan by 1000 miles of hostile Indian territory. Apprehensive of the legislative dominance of the Bengalis and trying to provide coherence to an ethnically fragmented West Pakistan, the “One Unit Scheme” was introduced in 1954 which merged the four provinces of West Pakistan into a single province, thus pitting West

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<sup>43</sup> Adeel Khan. (2005). *Politics of Identity: Ethnic Nationalism and the State in Pakistan*. (London: Sage Publications), p.170.

<sup>44</sup> Farhat Haq. (1995). “Rise of the MQM in Pakistan: The Politics of Ethnic Mobilization.” *Asian Survey* 35(11): 990-1004, p.991.

<sup>45</sup> Nichola Ann Khan, *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.32.

Pakistan against East Pakistan. Moreover, by continuously denying civil, political and economic rights, failing to recognize the victory of the principal political party of East Pakistan, the Awami League (AL) and brutally suppressing protests, resulted in the secession of East Pakistan on 16 December 1971, after military intervention by India.<sup>46</sup> It was in the aftermath of the secession of Bangladesh in 1971, that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto an ethnic Sindhi was elected as Prime Minister.

Bhutto created quotas for Sindhis in government jobs and universities and also introduced the Sindhi language as an official provincial language which implied that Mohajir children would have to learn it in schools.<sup>47</sup> Even before the election of Bhutto, language was a key issue for the indigenous Sindhis due to the establishment of Urdu as the national language and the influx of Mohajirs into the public sector so that the Sindhis felt that their culture and heritage was being destroyed by the new colonizers. For example, in 1967 students belonging to the Sindh United Front (SUF) were massacred by the local police during a demonstration in support of implementing the Sindhi language as the official language of the state.<sup>48</sup> The Mohajirs were aware of the historical baggage that the language issue carried, yet they felt that a cultural genocide was being committed against them, which is best exemplified in a poem by the Mohajir intellectual Raees Amrohvi entitled “It is the Funeral of Urdu, Let it Proceed with Pride.”<sup>49</sup> The language bill passed by Bhutto resulted in the outbreak of massive ethnopolitical violence in Karachi and was an indication that ethnic strife would be the new normal for Karachi.

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<sup>46</sup> For an excellent account, please see Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose. (1990). *Was and Secession: Pakistan, India and the Creation of Bangladesh*. (New Delhi: Vistaar Publications).

<sup>47</sup> J. Rehman. (1994). “Self-Determination, State Building and the Mohajirs: An International Legal Perspective of the Role of Indian Muslim Refugees in the Constitutional Development of Pakistan.” *Contemporary South Asia* 3 (2): 111-129.

<sup>48</sup> Farhat Haq. “Rise of the MQM in Pakistan.” p.993.

<sup>49</sup> Dawn Staff. 2012. “A Leaf from History: Language Frenzy in Sindh.” *Dawn* (October 6).

## The “Great Awakening”

In 1978, four students from Karachi University led by Altaf Hussain founded the All Pakistan Mohajir Student Organization (APMSO) to safeguard the rights of Mohajir students.<sup>50</sup> In 1984, this organization evolved into the Mohajir Qaumi Movement or (MQM) that endeavored to provide a collective political identity for the Mohajirs. This political identity was unique in the sense that it did not find its roots in any particular geographical area since the Mohajirs came from diverse places in India such as Aligarh in the North and Jaipur in the South, nor did it use religion to provide a core and central identity for the group. In fact, this new political identity was based on the mass-migration of a diverse group of people to a new country and an alleged denial of rights within their newly claimed home.

As a testament to the power of this new political identity, the MQM held its first ever public meeting in Nishtar Park, Karachi on August 8, 1986. The rally was attended by thousands of people and was meant to be a message to the political and military elite in Pakistan by the MQM and the Mohajir community that Karachi was their abode and would remain that way.<sup>51</sup> Exuberated by the historical turnout, Hussain the founder of the MQM sent a strong message to the Pakistani elite that “Karachi is no more mini-Pakistan. We will accept help no matter where it comes from, from east or west, north or south.”<sup>52</sup> The message was clear; the “immigrants” were no longer interested in integration. Moreover, with the central government’s creation of unplanned neighborhoods that soon morphed into ethnicized ghettos, Karachi was to witness

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<sup>50</sup> Oskar Verkaik. (2004). *Migrants and Militants: Fun and Urban Violence in Pakistan*. New Jersey: Princeton University press, p.61.

<sup>51</sup> For instance, a Sindhi nationalist leader G M. Syed remarked in 1972 “You have already left India. The only other place of refuge for you may be the Arabian Sea.” Available at <http://gmsyed.org/nation/book5-chap4.html>

<sup>52</sup> Daily Jang Staff. (1986). “Altaf addresses huge rally at Nishtar Park.”

violence on an unprecedented scale in the city and the country's history that would affect the lives of millions of people.

### **The Reign of Terror**

The Sindhis were not the only ethnic group that the MQM detested and simultaneously feared. The Pashtuns, who migrated to Karachi from the Northern Areas of Pakistan, found the Soviet Union's Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev's decision to invade Afghanistan as a Christmas gift<sup>53</sup> since drugs and arms from the "graveyard of empires" flooded into Karachi, thereby strengthening the Pashtuns' position economically and militarily.<sup>54</sup> As Shaheed argues, this flood of arms into the region ensured that the Pashtuns who were already in the transport business, started to consolidate their hold on the streets of Karachi.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, as Karachi scholar Laurent Gayer has pointed out the Mohajirs considered Pashtun bus drivers to be uncouth, callous and ruthless which added to existing ethnic hostilities within the city of Karachi.<sup>56</sup> The Mohajirs perceived the 'uncouth' Pashtuns to be a lethal threat to their livelihood and existence and with the MQM yearning to flex its muscle, Karachi's initial spiral into ultimate chaos occurred on April 15, 1985.

A young Mohajir woman, Bushra Zaidi, was walking towards her college in the early hours of the morning when an over speeding bus driven by a Pashtun driver crushed her to death

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<sup>53</sup> Soviet forces moved into Afghanistan on 12-25-1979.

<sup>54</sup> While many Mujahideen who were used as proxies by the CIA and the ISI were non-Pashtuns, a majority of them were from the Northern Areas of Pakistan and therefore they had open and easy access to arms and drugs coming in from Afghanistan.

<sup>55</sup> Fareeda Shaheed. (1990). "The Pakhtun-Mohajir Conflicts 1985-6: A National Perspective." In *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors* edited by V. Das. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, p. 206.

<sup>56</sup> Laurent Gayer. (2007). 'Guns, Slums and "Yellow Devils:" A Genealogy of Urban Conflicts in Karachi, Pakistan.' *Modern Asian Studies* 41: 515-544, p. 525.

near Asia's largest slum called *Orangi*<sup>57</sup> which had a mixed population of Pashtuns and Mohajirs. Angry Mohajir youth supported by the MQM took to the streets and were brutally suppressed by the local police<sup>58</sup> that set the stage for violent reprisals. Finally, in October 1986 after an insignificant railway accident, violence reached horrific proportions with 50 people killed on 15 December, 1986.<sup>59</sup> In the violence that ensued, 162 people were killed in the space of 72 hours<sup>60</sup> with some commentators terming the violence as reminiscent of the massacres that took place during the partition of the Indian sub-continent.<sup>61</sup>

In the midst of all this violence, the popularity of the MQM within the Mohajir community was clearly depicted in the general elections of 1988 wherein the MQM rose to the national political level by winning 13 seats in the national legislature and becoming the third largest political party in Pakistan in terms of legislative representation.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, in the provincial legislature the MQM was able to garner 63 percent of Karachi's total votes<sup>63</sup> which ensured that it would be a part of any coalition government and for the first time the Mohajirs were recognized as a *de facto* as well as a *de jure* power in the politics of Pakistan.

However, the rise of the MQM as a political power resulted in what Gayer has labeled "strategic dualism"<sup>64</sup> as the MQM indulged in a rampant abuse of its power. A former worker explained to me that this abuse of power was accomplished by issuing weapon licenses to party

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<sup>57</sup> Nichola Ann Khan. *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.40.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Daily Jang Staff. (1986). "Bloodbath in Orangi: 50 People Killed. Army Takes Control till Further Orders." Daily Jang (December 15).

<sup>60</sup> Daily Jang Staff. (1986). "In 3 Days 162 people killed in Karachi." Daily Jang (December 18).

<sup>61</sup> Akmal Hussain.(1990). "The Karachi Riots of December 1986." In *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors* edited by V. Das. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press), p.105.

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.siasat.pk/forum/showthread.php?107830-Election-results-from-1988-to-2008-Majority-of-Pakistan-Citizens-Never-Elected-quot-SO-CALLED-quot-Democratic-Governments>

<sup>63</sup> Laurent Gayer. (2007). 'Guns, Slums and "Yellow Devils," p.103.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p.96.

workers, who were subsequently seen brandishing their weapons openly to terrorize the general populace. Moreover, MQM workers fortified ethnic enclaves<sup>65</sup> in which they were strong, dug trenches, built iron gates and set up checkpoints around these areas.<sup>66</sup>

With protracted ethnic conflict at an all time high<sup>67</sup> and with the urban cities of Sindh especially Karachi under the firm control of the MQM who acted more like a paramilitary organization rather than a political entity, the Pakistan army launched an “operation clean-up” to restore law and order in the province of Sindh and in the city of Karachi in 1992.<sup>68</sup> The military launched a massive propaganda campaign suggesting that the MQM was sponsored by the intelligence agencies of India and Israel<sup>69</sup> and was tasked with disintegrating the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In the violence that ensued, gunfights took place on the streets of Karachi in which many innocent passersby were killed<sup>70</sup> and unarmed individuals were more often than not willing hostages within their own homes because of the fear that they may be killed by insurgents.

It was during this violent turmoil with Mohajir men generally afraid to leave the house that Mohajir woman who had previously been the wretched of the household assumed new responsibilities of becoming breadwinners, responsibilities that were considered to be masculine within Mohajir culture and in Pakistan in general. Prior to this period, Mohajir women were usually restricted to their homes and performed the functions of homemakers, albeit unlike other

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<sup>65</sup> I vividly remember that every family in the neighbourhood had to pay a sum of money to the MQM so that the interests of the Mohajirs could be safeguarded.

<sup>66</sup> Laurent Gayer. (2007). 'Guns, Slums and "Yellow Devils:"', p.107.

<sup>67</sup> On 30 September 1988, 250 Mohajirs were killed by law enforcement agencies in the city of Hyderabad, which led to the outbreak of violence in Karachi. Dawn Staff. (2007). "Hyderabad: MQM's Pucca Qila." Daily Dawn (21 December).

<sup>68</sup> <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jii/4750978.0004.108/--battlefields-of-karachi-ethnicity-violence-and-the-state?rgn=main;view=fulltext>

<sup>69</sup> Oskar Verkaik. (2004). Migrant and Militants, p. 85.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. p.86.

conservative ethnicities within the country, they were not forced to wear Islamic headwear nor were their movements jealously controlled by male members of their families. Post-migration, Mohajir women did attend universities yet the “private” nature of women in general and Mohajir women in particular can be gauged from the fact that even female students were rarely involved in student activism and female participation in student politics in Karachi disappeared completely during the late 1970s.<sup>71</sup>

However, with the onset of ethnopolitical violence, Mohajir women assumed economic responsibilities as well as social responsibilities. They were also seen leading funeral prayers for slain MQM activists and Mohajir men, a role that is typically male-centered. Finally, apart from adopting economic and religious responsibilities, Mohajir women also had to deal with the trauma of the loss of loved ones during the 1990s. While the MQM included a women’s wing, numerically and in terms of power, it didn’t match the male wing,<sup>72</sup> and played little or no role in empowering Mohajir women to emancipate themselves in the wake of violence against their families. Moreover, Anis Haroon a leading human rights activist based in Karachi argued that members of the MQM used women, even their own family members to act as human shields and forced them to be a part of running torture cells within the house.<sup>73</sup> Even those Mohajir women, who are part of this study whose husbands were neither abducted nor killed by law enforcement agencies and who could not work because of the security situation, took it upon themselves to provide for their families in the face of much opposition by their own family members.

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<sup>71</sup> Laurent Gayer.(2013).*Karachi: Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City*. London: Hurst & Company, p.61.

<sup>72</sup> Lubna Nazir Chaudhry. (2004). “Reconstituting Selves in the Karachi Conflict: Mohajir Women Survivors and Structural Violence.” SDPI Working Paper Series N.4, Islamabad: SDPI, p.9.

<sup>73</sup> Anis Haroon. (2001). “They Use Us and Others Abuse Us: Women in the MQM Conflict.” In *Women, War and Peace in South Asia* edited by Rita Manchanda. (New Delhi: Sage Publications).

As will be seen in chapter four, for Mohajir women being a Mohajir and being employed was not merely an issue of identity or economic empowerment; it was deeply entrenched in a pre-existing belief in the “natural” order of things. Intricately related to both these issues was the historical dynamic of patriarchy which framed and reframed what Mohajir women considered their optimal roles to be within and outside of the home.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter commenced by tracing the history of the Mohajir nation from the partition of the Indian sub-continent to the outbreak of the Karachi conflict from 1992-1997. The chapter also posited that the British policy of “divide and rule,” wreaked havoc on inter-ethnic relations from Kashmir to Belfast for decades and in some instances still continues to do so. In the context of India and Pakistan, the British drove a wedge between Hindus and Muslims in pre-partition India and the legacy of selecting “tall, dark and handsome” ethnicities to serve in the army, ultimately led to the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 as Bengalis were seen as less than equals in the newly formed Pakistan. Moreover, the Mohajirs established themselves at the helm of political affairs at the expense of the indigenous Sindhis and later with an indigenous Sindhi Prime Minister violating the rights of the Mohajirs, the stage was set for the outbreak of serious ethnopolitical violence. It was during this spat of violence that Mohajir women broke the public/private divide to assume responsibilities which were normally performed by male members of their families. From ethnic identity to female emancipation, what are the dynamics that fuel ethnopolitical conflicts? This is explored in detail by examining some of the relevant literature in the next chapter.

## Chapter II- Literature Review

### Introduction

This study aims to explore why Mohajir women adopted the role of breadwinners and whether these new roles had any impact on existing patriarchal dynamics within Mohajir households. To grasp the underlying nuances of ethnopolitical conflicts, economic emancipation and patriarchal relations, seven theoretical ideas are reviewed and linkages are created between the following streams:

- 1- Identity, examines the construction and intersectionality of identities in violent conflict;
- 2- Social Cubism, explores the complexity and underlying causes of protracted social conflicts;
- 3- Gender and Conflict, investigates the role of women in dealing with violent conflict;
- 4- Gender and the Public/Private Divide, deconstructs the public/private divide at the level of the home, the state and the international order;
- 5- Gender and Empowerment, explores the conjecture that economic emancipation does not necessarily lead to female empowerment;
- 6- Structural Violence, posits that unjust structures are inherently violent and lead to violent conflict; and
- 7- Basic Human Needs, argues that if basic needs remain unsatisfied, violent conflict is likely to ensue.

## Identity

Society, like an organism, possesses a memory that is usually labeled as its history.<sup>74</sup> This memory empowers a society to reflect on its yesterdays, in order for it to comprehend its todays and improve its tomorrows. In societies torn apart by violent ethnopolitical conflict, the fabric of the past is drenched with the blood of victims. The terror of demagoguery is deeply etched into the collective minds of the victims, their heirs and their oppressors.<sup>75</sup> Michel Foucault has pointed out that “collective memory is a very important factor in struggle. If one controls people’s memory, one controls their dynamism...it is vital to have possession of this memory, to control it, administer it, tell it what it must contain.”<sup>76</sup> It is the possession of memory then, which constructs individual and group identities. As Vamik Volkan has pointed out ethnic group identity does not always imply that people need to be engaged in violent conflict;<sup>77</sup> rather group identity can lead to a sense of positive cohesiveness amongst people. However, Harry Anastasiou contends that group identity, specifically nationalist group identity, is in its very essence destructive and has always legitimized violence and ethnic cleansing.<sup>78</sup> In this sense then, group identity can also be the precursor to violent ethnopolitical conflict once a group feels that its core identity is being threatened. In such a situation people start to ruminate upon what Volkan has

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<sup>74</sup> Karl Popper. (1999). *Poverty of Historicism*. (London: Routledge), p.9.

<sup>75</sup> Vamik Volkan’s (1998) phenomenal work *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Bloodlines to Ethnic Terrorism*. New York: Basic Books, illustrates the intensity of how chosen traumas and chosen glories are transmitted from one generation to another through demonizing the “other” using narratives and destructive narratives.

<sup>76</sup> Michel Foucault. (1975). “Film and Popular Memory.” *Radical Philosophy* XI; 24-25.

<sup>77</sup> Vamik Volkan. (2004). *Blind Trust: Large Groups and Their Leaders in Times of Crisis*. (Virginia: Pitch Stone Publishing), pp.90-91

<sup>78</sup> Harry Anastasiou. (2009). “Encountering Nationalism: The Contribution of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution.” In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, edited by Sandole, Dennis J.D, Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste and Jessica Senehi. (New York: Routledge), p.45.

termed “chosen glories”<sup>79</sup> and “chosen traumas”<sup>80</sup> to come together as one strong cohesive group.

“Chosen glories” are stories of the past that inculcate into a group a sense of pride and wistfulness. These past glories are usually embellished and mythologized<sup>81</sup> as they are passed on from generation to generation through “destructive storytelling.”<sup>82</sup> While chosen glories imbue into a group a sense of pride about their identity, “chosen traumas” instill a sense of victimhood and are usually a precursor to violence. These traumas which are a “collective memory of calamity that once befell a group’s ancestors”<sup>83</sup> are passed on to future generations using what Jessica Senehi has described as “destructive storytelling”<sup>84</sup> and through a process of what Vamik Volkan calls the “transgenerational transmission of trauma.”<sup>85</sup> This sense of trauma combined with an embellished glorified past results in the creation of a single group as well as a single ethno-political group identity that the group and its leaders deem critical for their survival. Or in the words of Pascal Bruckner:

Erected into an instrument of politics, memory is always threatened by resentment. As in the former Yugoslavia, when Serbian nationalists referred to past sacrifices to justify their exactions, we are awakening the dead, the tortured, throwing them in the faces of the living and shouting: you don’t have the right to remain calm...Given that logic, there are only rats and saints.<sup>86</sup>

Amongst the Mohajirs one finds chosen glories in the form of a mythical past whereby in India Mohajirs had owned huge mansions and an army of domestic help. Chosen traumas

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p.37.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Vamik Volkan. *Blind Trust.*, p.47.

<sup>82</sup> Jessica Senehi. (2009). “Building Peace: Storytelling to Transform Conflicts Constructively.” In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, Dennis J. D. Sandole, Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste and Jessica Senehi (eds), (New York: Routledge), pp. 201-214.

<sup>83</sup> Vamik Volkan. *Bloodlines*, p.48.

<sup>84</sup> Jessica Senehi. (2002). “Constructive Storytelling: A Peace Process.” *Peace and Conflict Studies* 9(2):41–63.

<sup>85</sup> Vamik Volkan, *Bloodlines*, Pp.43-44

<sup>86</sup> Pascal Bruckner. (2010). *The Tyranny of Guilt*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), p. 159.

amongst the Mohajirs include the stories of partition, living in refugee camps upon arrival in Karachi, and the alleged injustices meted out to Mohajirs by successive Pakistani governments.<sup>87</sup>

Chosen glories and chosen traumas can also give a unified collective ethnic identity to a group of people belonging to different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This newly formed ethnic identity, which is a social construct and which leads to the formation of a political identity runs counter to the classical anthropological concept of primordial ethnicity.<sup>88</sup> However, this new group identity can be more potent than a nationalist identity as the new group perceives issues in binaries with the nation state as the new oppressor and the group as the oppressed. Ethnopolitical identity takes a much stronger form when a group shares a strong cultural identity such as language and the group can be easily mobilized into action by elites if it feels that its identity is being threatened.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, there is also the intersection of gender, class, ethnicity, religion caste and sexual orientation that create diversity between the so-called “homogenized” ethnic groups.

Ethnic conflicts may also be treated as intractable conflicts since they satisfy all the definitional requirements i.e. the conflict is protracted, neutral observers regard it as being destructive and finally intermediaries are unsuccessful in transforming it.<sup>90</sup> The Karachi conflict can then be perceived as an intractable ethnopolitical conflict since it has lasted for over 60

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<sup>87</sup> For an excellent account please see Mushtaq Ahmed Yousfee (1988). *Aab-e-Gum (Lost Waters)*. Lahore: Daniyal Publishers.

<sup>88</sup> Stuart Hall. (1992). “New Ethnicity.” In *Race Culture and Difference*, edited by James Donald and Ali Rattansi. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>89</sup> Celia Cook-Hoffman. (2011). “The Role of Identity in Conflict.” In *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, edited by Sandole, Dennis J.D, Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste and Jessica Senehi. New York: Routledge, p.24.

<sup>90</sup> Louis Kriesberg (2000). “Nature Dynamics and Phases of Intractability.” In *Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict*, edited by Crocker, Chester A., Fen Olser Hampson and Pamela Aall. Washington D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press, p.66.

years, impartial observers described it as violent during the 1990s and state sponsored violence in Karachi ended only when martial law was imposed on the country in 1999.<sup>91</sup>

Finally as Erik Erikson posits, the concepts of identity and of the self are social constructs that are centered around ethnicity.<sup>92</sup> Extending Erikson's assertion to members of a group, it can be argued that while ethnicity is at the very core of a large group identity, identity is also codified in power as well as inter and intra ethnic relations. Hence, social, economic and political factors as well as historical, religious and cultural ones also fuel ethno-political conflicts in what is described as the Social Cubism analytical model.

### **Social Cubism**

While each conflict has its own unique dynamics, ethno-political conflicts have certain common underlying factors. In their comparative analysis of the Northern Irish and Québec conflicts, Byrne, Carter and Senehi identified 6 common and interconnected factors<sup>93</sup> underlying ethnoterritorial conflicts which include economic, religious, political, psychocultural, historical and demographic factors that combine together to fuel and escalate ethnic conflict.<sup>94</sup> Such a holistic and analytical approach can be successful in analyzing the Karachi conflict since all 6 factors have affected the conflict to varying degrees. For example, the establishment of quotas by the Mohajirs and then the Sindhis was inimical to the economic progress of both communities. Unjust economic conditions fueled by job quotas led to the establishment of a singular Mohajir political identity, which found its roots in a somewhat embellished history of a glorious past.

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<sup>91</sup> Nadeem F. Paracha. (2012). "Born to Run: The Rise and Leveling of the APMSO." Dawn (August 23).

<sup>92</sup> Nichola Khan. *Mohajir Militancy in Pakistan*, p.12.

<sup>93</sup> Sean Byrne, Neil Carter and Jessica Senehi. (2003). "Social Cubism and Social Conflict: Analysis and Resolution." *Journal of International and Comparative Law*, 8(3): 725-740.

<sup>94</sup> Sean Byrne and Neil Carter. (2002). "The Dynamics of Social Cubism: A View From Northern Ireland and Quebec." In *Reconcilable Differences: Turning Points in Ethno-political Differences*, edited by Sean Byrne and Cynthia L. Irvin. (Connecticut: Kumarian Press), Pp. 41-62.

Finally, once a core ethnic identity was established, the Mohajirs as well as other ethnicities ghettoized themselves in ethnic enclaves which ultimately led to the escalation of antagonistic attitudes towards each other.

The authors further posit that the voices of women are generally silenced in ethnopolitical conflicts.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, because of existing patriarchal relations, the narratives and experiences of women are usually relegated to the footnotes of historical accounts.<sup>96</sup> However, the authors do argue that during ethnopolitical conflicts, women can use their “lower” status to conduct productive acts to help the cause of their community.<sup>97</sup> As will be seen chapter four, Mohajir women who were shrouded behind the veil of patriarchy, broke traditional gender norms and became breadwinners for their families.

Violent conflict affects women to varying degrees, both in the so called public realm and also in the private realm. While violent conflict has negative effects on women, it may also have a positive impact in empowering and emancipating resilient women, a concept that will be examined and deconstructed subsequently.

## **Gender and Conflict**

The ways in which women are negatively affected by armed conflict is discussed widely in the scholarly literature. For example, it has been argued that during armed conflict, the construction of a militant male masculinity leads to gender oppression, which continues post

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<sup>95</sup> Sean Byrne and Amos Nadan. 2011. “The Social Cube Analytical Model and Protracted Ethnoterritorial Conflicts.” In *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies: Theory, Practice and Pedagogy*, edited by Thomas Matyok, Jessica Senehi and Sean Byrne. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, p.63.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., p.64

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

violent conflict thereby making women vulnerable to hostilities.<sup>98</sup> It is also claimed that women are not only victims in conflict; they can also act as perpetrators of violence.<sup>99</sup> Hence, it is imperative that a holistic agency approach be adopted that looks at women from the perspective of victim and offender<sup>100</sup> and not merely from the point of view of being docile casualties.<sup>101</sup> While theorists such as Michael Lapsley have claimed that post peace accord women tend to describe themselves as survivors and not victims,<sup>102</sup> it is equally true that the literature on women in conflict has usually treated them as victims not only during the conflict but also in post peace accord societies claiming that victimization continues.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, the role that women play in peacebuilding and their contribution to peace has not been widely examined.<sup>104</sup> While it cannot be denied that women are massively traumatized and victimized in these conflicts, perpetuating the victimhood narrative can be perceived as an extension of the liberal feminist view espoused by Carol Gilligan that women are sensitive beings<sup>105</sup> and consequently are more prone towards the control of patriarchy. This view has been countered with the argument that during conflict

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<sup>98</sup> Linda Etchart and Rawwida Baksh. (2005). "Applying a Gender Lens to Armed Conflict, Violence and Conflict Transformation." In *Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict Transformation: Building Sustainable Peace*, edited by Rawwida Baksh, Linda Etchart, Elsie Onubogu and Tina Johnson. London: The Commonwealth Secretariat, p.17.

<sup>99</sup> Dyan Mazurana, Angela Raven-Roberts and Jane Parpart eds. (2005). *Gender, Conflict and Peacekeeping*. (London: Rowman and Littlefield), p.2.

<sup>100</sup> Laura Sjoberg and Caron E. Gentry. (2007). *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics*. (New York: Zed Books).

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p.175.

<sup>102</sup> Michael Lapsley. (1998). "Confronting the Past and Creating the Future: The Redemptive Value of Truth Telling." *Social Research*, 65(4): 741-758, p.744.

<sup>103</sup> Elizabeth Porter. (2007). *Peacebuilding: Women in International Perspective*. (London: Routledge), p.120.

<sup>104</sup> Anna Snyder. (2011). "Developing Refugee Peacebuilding Capacity: Women in Exile on the Thai-Burmese Border." In *Critical Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies: Theory, Practice and Pedagogy*, edited by Thomas Matyok, Jessica Senehi and Sean Byrne. Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, p.177.

<sup>105</sup> Carol Gilligan. (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), Pp.26-28.

women do adopt traditional male roles such as waiting in line for bread or taking on combat roles that changes the perceptions society has about them in a positive way.<sup>106</sup>

Ho- Won Jeong posits that in the liberal peacebuilding tradition that commences with Disarmament, Demobilization and Rehabilitation (DDR) and ends with the elusive goal of reconciliation,<sup>107</sup> the economic impacts of conflict are addressed as highly important. In this context then, scant literature exists which examines women's post violent conflict economic situation using empirical evidence.<sup>108</sup> While some literature exists about how a post peace accord society provides new avenues for the employment of women,<sup>109</sup> there is a dearth of literature about *whether* post peace accord employment can empower women to change and eventually demolish patriarchal structures within the family. Finally, while it is been claimed that quantitative studies show that war and conflict will always have negative consequences for women, employed or otherwise,<sup>110</sup> the *positive* aspects of conflict in terms of female empowerment need to be examined, specifically at the individual level.

In this context then, there is little literature which examines Mohajir women from an empowerment perspective, and whether empowerment during and after the violent Karachi conflict has led to a change in the patriarchal order. Moreover, no literature exists which examines the public/private divide in Mohajir households, and whether and how Mohajir women

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<sup>106</sup> Beverly Allen. (1996). *Rape Warfare: The Hidden Genocide in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p.26.

<sup>107</sup> Ho Won Jeong. (2005). *Peacebuilding in Post Conflict Societies: Strategy & Process*. (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc).

<sup>108</sup> Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantel de Jonge Oudraat and Helga Hernes eds. (2011). *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. (Washington D.C: United States Institute for Peace), p.86.

<sup>109</sup> K. Kumar. (2011). "Aftermath: Women and Women's Organizations in Postconflict Societies: The Role of International Assistance." USAID Program and Operations Assistance Report No.28.

<sup>110</sup> Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantel de Jonge Oudraat and Helga Hernes. *Women and War*, p.109.

affected this divide. As will be seen in chapter four, the findings revealed through this study are quite surprising.

## **Gender and Empowerment**

The concept of female empowerment is a relatively new one and owes its existence, as do human rights in general to the atrocities committed in World War II. Commencing in the 1970s, with the passage of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the concept of empowerment found a more nuanced and coherent approach in the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action in 1995, whereby gender gaps were pointed out at the global level that needed to be addressed in order to guarantee the rights of women.<sup>111</sup> It is therefore not surprising that international donor agencies such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the United States Agency for International Aid (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), among others, are major donors towards projects that focus on female empowerment.

A fundamental question that needs to be answered at this stage is: what is empowerment? The concept of empowerment is inextricably linked to power and without understanding the concept of power, empowerment cannot be deconstructed. Various philosophers and social scientists have defined power in different ways. For Robert Bierstedt, defining power is essentially problematic because “in the entire lexicon of social concepts none is more troublesome than the concept of power. We may say about it in general only what St. Augustine said about time, that we all know perfectly well what it is-until someone asks us.”<sup>112</sup> For the British mathematician and philosopher, Bertrand Russell, power is not a monolithic entity but

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<sup>111</sup> Daisy Bue Chang Kulvatee Kantachotee, Asmah Mallick, Rachel Posters, Kelsey Roets. (2013). *Indicators of Women's Empowerment in Developing Nations*. Wisconsin: La Follette School of Public Affairs, p.1.

<sup>112</sup> Jack H. Nagel (1975). *The Descriptive Analysis of Power*. Massachusetts: Yale University Press, p.3.

can be broken down into different *sub-powers* or what he labeled as “the forms of power” which include naked and economic power, the power of (and over) opinion and revolutionary versus traditional power.<sup>113</sup> For peace theorist Kenneth Boulding, power in its widest connotation implies a potential for change.<sup>114</sup> He contends that power can be destructive, integrative and productive<sup>115</sup> and can be exercised through political cum military, social and economic means.<sup>116</sup> Productive power would imply a birth of new ideas, in constructing new entities and in general anything which has a positive outcome. Social power according to Boulding “is the capacity to make people identify with some organization to which they give loyalty.”<sup>117</sup> While many organizations can fall under this category, the most powerful and the one which garners most loyalty is arguably the patriarchal, nuclear family. Economic power is the disparity in income and property between “the haves and the have nots” and is a defining characteristic of institutions such as the household,<sup>118</sup> amongst others. In the patriarchal, nuclear household, the traditional assumption is that because the patriarch provides for the family, therefore, he should have the final say in the decisionmaking process. For Peggy Chinn, power is exercised differently in the public and private realms with cooperation between different actors expected as an imperative for people within the so called private realm.<sup>119</sup> Seen in this light, “cooperation” may imply a woman’s subservience to the patriarch in terms of decisionmaking within the household. Moreover, Edward Schwerin sees empowerment as a holistic concept that consists of different elements which include: self-esteem, self-efficacy, knowledge and skills, political

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<sup>113</sup> Bertrand Russell. (1938). *Power: A New Social Analysis*. (London: George Allen and Unwin Limited).

<sup>114</sup> Kenneth Boulding. (1989). *The Three Faces of Power*. (Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications), P.15.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-25

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.30-33.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* P.31

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p.30

<sup>119</sup> Peggy L. Chinn and Adeline Falk-Rafael. (2015). “Peace and Power: A Theory of Emancipatory Group Process.” *Journal of Nursing Scholarship* 47(1): 62:69.

awareness, social participation, political participation, political rights and responsibilities, and access to resources.<sup>120</sup>

Consequently, at least one factor can be extracted from the preceding paragraphs: that in order to discuss empowerment and in order to discern the processes through which an individual or a particular social group<sup>121</sup> has been deprived of the ability to make a choice, the dynamics of disempowerment and what it entails in terms of its relations with power and empowerment, need to be examined.<sup>122</sup>

Empowerment can be examined from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective. Quantitative indicators of empowerment are those that are used to measure quantifiable results such as enrolment in schools and the number of women in the judiciary, amongst others<sup>123</sup>. Quantitative indicators in the context of female empowerment can be used to conduct a comparative analysis such as the ratio of boys and girls who are enrolled in schools and disparity in income amongst males and females in a given society.<sup>124</sup> Some popular quantitative indicators which are used widely include the Gender Development Index (GDI) that comprises indicators such as disparity in income and school-enrolment<sup>125</sup> and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEM) which looks at women's empowerment through the prisms of political representation,

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<sup>120</sup> Edward Schwerin. (1995). *Mediation, Citizen Empowerment and Transformational Politics*. (Connecticut: Praeger).

<sup>121</sup> A social group can be defined as one whose members share immutable characteristic, which cannot be changed or which they are not willing to change. Under international law, gender, specifically the female gender, is widely accepted to be a particular social group. For further elaboration please see Guy S. Goodwill-Gill and Jane McAdam. (2007). *The Refugee in International Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

<sup>122</sup> Naila Kabeer. (1999). "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. *Development and Change*, 30:435-464. p.437.

<sup>123</sup> Chang, et. al., 2.

<sup>124</sup> Quantitative indicators for Pakistan, including for example, poverty and education etc., can be seen in the Gender Inequality Index (GII). In 2014, Pakistan had a GII value of 0.563, and ranked 124<sup>th</sup> out of 148 countries. Available at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/PAK.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/PAK.pdf) . Last accessed 05-20-2015.

<sup>125</sup> Stephan Klaser and Dana Schuler. (2011). "Reforming the Gender-Related Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Measure: Implementing Some Specific Proposals." *Feminist Economics* 17(1): 1-30, p.4.

representation in senior decisionmaking positions in the economic sector and control over economic resources.<sup>126</sup> An inherent shortcoming of quantitative indicators in measuring female empowerment is that they do not provide a holistic picture of gender related changes that may have occurred.<sup>127</sup> In contrast, “qualitative indicators permit a more in-depth examination of social processes, social relations, power dynamics, and gender equity”<sup>128</sup> because they provide the researcher with a deeper insight into the perceptions of the interview subjects by listening to their lived experiences.

Moreover, unlike quantitative indicators, qualitative indicators give a voice to the oppressed and ensure that the lived experiences of women are not converted to mere statistics. Some commonly used qualitative indicators to measure female empowerment include a decrease in domestic violence, an increase in decisionmaking, socialization and awareness of rights.<sup>129</sup>

At this stage it is imperative to delve deeper into the concept of disempowerment as it relates to the indices of empowerment. Empowerment is not a simple concept; it is complex and highly contentious consisting of a multitude of factors, both qualitative and quantitative both of which are contextual. While for the purpose of this study, decisionmaking is adopted as the key variable in identifying empowerment or otherwise since the ability to make decision indicates the ability to change destiny, decisionmaking itself is a very intricate concept and needs to be further examined.

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8

<sup>127</sup> Chang et.al. p.2.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p.31.

For example, Naila Kabeer points out that the ability to make decisions i.e. exercise choice includes three dimensions: resources, agency and achievements.<sup>130</sup> Resources include material and social resources while agency implies the capacity of individuals to define their lives as well as those of others and achievement is the ability to achieve individual goals.<sup>131</sup>

The common presumption is that if women are afforded the opportunity to earn a living and if they contribute economically to their families, this not only increases their standing within the household it also gives them a say in the decisionmaking process.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, it has also been traditionally assumed that economic empowerment for women not only leads to their increased roles in the social and political spheres, it also increases their power within the family which leads to a shift in the traditional patriarchal dynamic within households.<sup>133</sup> It is also widely believed that if women are given access to material resources, their dependence on men both in the social sphere as well as the economic sphere decreases.<sup>134</sup> Further, a financially emancipated woman who contributes to the household ensures that she becomes a part of the decisionmaking process.<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, it is also presumed that fiscally empowered women can lead towards a shift in patriarchal dynamics both at the micro as well as the macro levels.<sup>136</sup>

However, some scholars have observed that even when women have achieved economic emancipation they have not been able to change traditional patriarchal roles within the household and in society at large. For instance, in a study conducted by Rahman in 1999 on the effects of

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<sup>130</sup> Naila Kabeer. (1999). "Resources, Agency, Achievements," p. 437.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., Pp. 437-438

<sup>132</sup> Margaret McLaren. (2008). "Gender Equality and the Economic Empowerment of Women." *Forum on Public Policy*, Spring 2008, p.9.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p.12.

<sup>134</sup> Amin, Becker and Bayes, 1998, Pp. 221-222.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Aradhana Parmar. (2011). "Micro-Credit, Empowerment and Agency: Re-Evaluating the Discourse. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue canadienne d'études du développement*, 24:3, 461-476, p. 462.

micro-financing on patriarchal dynamics within the household, he discovered that instead of changing patriarchal dynamics, micro financing led to an increase in intrahousehold exploitation as women were coerced by their husbands to apply for loans. Any form of objection by women led to verbal and physical abuse at the hands of their husbands.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, a study conducted by Raouf asserted that even through the provision of micro loans, the Grameen Bank had failed in one very important respect; post loan decisionmaking amongst men and women was unilateral instead of consultative.<sup>138</sup>

Thus while empowerment is *prima facie* unproblematic and simple, a closer look reveals that there are a multitude of different dynamics involved towards one achieving one's own empowerment. Moreover, in terms of female empowerment as it stands in relation to economic emancipation and patriarchy, this present study indicates that patriarchy is not only the name for an oppressive structure, it is also deeply embedded in the mindsets of both men and women so that even financial emancipation cannot have the desired result of empowering women, a theme that is further examined on in chapter four.

### **Gender and the Public/Private Divide in Traditional Liberalism**

In the classical liberal tradition, human activity is placed into two distinct categories namely the public sphere and the private sphere. The public sphere is that area of human activity that the government may legitimately regulate.<sup>139</sup> On the contrary the private sphere is that area of human activity that lies presumptively outside the legitimate bounds of governmental

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<sup>137</sup> Abdur Rehman. (1999). "Micro-Credit Initiatives for Equitable Sustainable Development: Who Pays?" *World Development* 27 (1), 67-82.

<sup>138</sup> Kazi Abdur Raof. (2012). "A Feminist Interpretation of Grameen Bank's Sixteen Decisions Campaign." *Humanomics* 28(4): 285-296.

<sup>139</sup> Donald R.C Pongrace. (2007). "Stereotypification of The Fourth Amendment's Public/Private Distinction: An Opportunity For Clarity. 34 Am. U. L. Rev., Pp. 1191-1194.

regulation or coercion.<sup>140</sup> “Privacy- freedom from the intrusions of politics, business, and law...cloaks a domestic sphere revolving around marriage and family.”<sup>141</sup> In this dichotomous liberal worldview then, the private sphere that comprises *inter alia* of family and home is considered to be immune from governmental interference and intrusion. As Susan Moller Okin points out in the public/private dichotomy “the state is (paradigmatically) public and the family, domestic and intimate life are (again paradigmatically) private.”<sup>142</sup> Other scholars have illustrated that because of the “private” nature of violence against women, it is imperative to look beyond the public/private divide and examine the role of the gendered state in perpetuating violence against women within the private sphere,<sup>143</sup> the home.

While a detailed deconstruction of the dichotomous liberal world view is beyond the scope of this thesis, however some of its analytical flaws do need to be revealed. A public/private dichotomy rests on the premise that the private sphere is (to be) untouched by state interference. It is a unique, quaint position/realm that the state plays no role in affecting either by *a priori* or *post priori* actions. At first glance the idea seems to be attractive; yet a deeper examination exposes the myth of the private realm.

To presuppose a neutral, private realm (in the context of the ‘home’) is to imagine that in a patriarchal world women have had an equal impact in structuring the boundaries and the fabric of the private realm. In other words, to say that the dynamics of gender power have had no impact on the structuring of the private realm is to presume that women have had influence in constructing the private sphere. Feminists have pointed out the ways in which privacy has

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Suzanne A. Kim. (2006). “Reconstructing Family Privacy.” 57 *Hastings L.J.*, 557- 568.

<sup>142</sup> Susan Moller Okin. (1998). “Gender, the Public, and the Private.” In *Feminism and Politics*, edited by Anne Philips. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.117.

<sup>143</sup> Sean Byrne and Jessica Senehi. (2012). *Violence: Analysis, Intervention and Prevention*. Ohio: Ohio University Press, p.82.

reinforced the power of powerful members of families i.e. husbands and fathers over less powerful women and children, by ratifying openly hierarchical social roles within the family in the guise of nonintervention and freedom.<sup>144</sup> A passage from Sir Matthew Hale's *History of the Crown* exemplifies the aforementioned point:

But...the husband cannot be guilty of rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband, which she cannot retract.<sup>145</sup>

Moreover, Elizabeth Schneider's observation that no realm of the personal and family life exists totally separate from the reach of the state is quite correct as the gendered state defines both the family, the so-called private sphere, the market, the so-called public sphere and the "private" and "public" thus exist on a continuum.<sup>146</sup> Finally, Katherine MacKinnon's insightful words demolish the myth of the private sphere:

To consider the home *private* is to privatize women's oppression and to render women's status as a derivative of the public sphere, rather than setting the family within a totality characterized by a sexual division of power that divides both home and market place.<sup>147</sup>

Even at an international level, the construction of politics in any given country can only be fully understood if its gender dynamics are deconstructed.<sup>148</sup> For example, as J. Ann Tickner points out that in the realist tradition the impact of masculinity on international relations is a self-evident truth,<sup>149</sup> even liberalism with its "rational economic man" fails to take into account the pre-existing gender differentials in the public/private divide and therefore liberal economic

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<sup>144</sup> Suzanne A. Kim. "Reconstructing Family Privacy," p. 571.

<sup>145</sup> Sir Matthew Hale. (1971). *History of the Pleas of the Crown*. London: Professional Books.

<sup>146</sup> Suzanne A. Kim. "Reconstructing Family Privacy," Pp. 87-88.

<sup>147</sup> Catherine A. MacKinnon. (1989). *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, p.35.

<sup>148</sup> Christine Sylvester. (2002). *Feminist International Relations: An Unfinished Journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Pp.182-206.

<sup>149</sup> J. Ann Tickner. (1992). *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security*. New York: Columbia University Press, p.37.

policies benefit men much more than they benefit women.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, since the dynamics of international relations are complex and deeply embedded in gendered nuances, women are in a much better position to analyze the same since feminists have over decades revealed the analytical flaws of the public/private binary,<sup>151</sup> both at the level of the house and at the level of the state. Feminist scholars such as Janie Leatherman have also pointed out the connections between “masculine hegemony”<sup>152</sup> and the neo-liberal global political economy and how power constructs are implemented at the local and global levels using a masculine gendered order.<sup>153</sup> Or as peace scholar Roger MacGinty aptly points out, the idea that a rational economic being exists who can through sheer perseverance and hard work succeed in the neo-liberal capitalist world is deeply flawed since in the neo-liberal economic order pre-existing structures are already controlled, defined and redefined by those who control global as well as local economies.<sup>154</sup>

A further illustration of this point would be Frank Easterbrook’s conception of a neutral and free marketplace of ideas in *Hudnut v/s American Booksellers Association*.<sup>155</sup> The illusory and mythical free marketplace of ideas propagated by Judge Easterbrook is analogous to the private realm and is susceptible to the same critique. The problem with such a seductive market place of ideas is that it only sees social power as being exercised by the formal government. It doesn’t understand the realist lesson that power may be exercised in the private sphere by one actor over another. When the government is left out from the exercise of power, the same is left

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<sup>150</sup> J. Ann Tickner. (2001). *Gendering World Politics Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era*. New York: Columbia University Press, Pp.120-122.

<sup>151</sup> Cynthia Enloe. (1989). *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, p.197.

<sup>152</sup> Janie L. Leatherman. (2011). *Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict*. (Cambridge: Polity Press), p.132

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Roger Macginty and Andrew Williams. (2009). *Conflict and Development*. (London: Routledge), pp. 24-46.

<sup>155</sup> *Hudnut v. American Booksellers Association*, 771 F.2d 323 (7<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1985), *aff’d mem.*, 475 U.S. 1001 (1986). In this case an anti-pornography statute drafted by Katherine Mackinnon and Andrea Dworkin and passed by the Indiana State Legislature was assailed before the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit as being in violation of the U.S. Constitution’s 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment guarantee of free speech; the Statute was invalidated by the court.

to a different kind of social power, the force of gender ideology. There is no pure starting point to bring in the market place of ideas here. Starting with one or another such as opposing or liking pornography, is a zero sum game since ideas become crystallized as social practices over time and they pre-exist us as individual and such pre-existing images govern us. The feminist movement made the insight that the personal is political. For example, the idea for porn to enter the free speech market place results in an exertion of male constructed gender power over people. It is not individuals simply exercising a right to choose since even historical accounts are pervaded by the overarching power of patriarchy. As Arlette Fargem, Michelle Perot and Genevieve Fraisse point out history is usually presented from a patriarchal perspective and thus it is distorted to serve male interests.<sup>156</sup>

Thus for women affected by conflicts, shattering the illusory public/private divide is an essential prerequisite not only for economic empowerment but for a change in and/or destruction of the existing repressive patriarchal order which denies them their rights. Specifically, in the context of the Karachi conflict, it was imperative to discover whether Mohajir women were able to alter and/or dismantle the powerful public/private divide within the Mohajir households in order to be empowered and whether this impacted patriarchal dynamics within Mohajir families.

### **Structural Violence, Negative and Positive Peace**

The theory of “structural violence and cultural violence”<sup>157</sup> holds that discriminatory practices and laws embedded and hidden in societal institutions and practices create a power imbalance in society that leads to exploitation and ethno-political hostility. For example, the Rwandan genocide testifies that legal and social discrimination are an indirect form of violence

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<sup>156</sup> Toril Moi ed. (1987). *French Feminist Thought: A Reader*. (New Jersey: Blackwell Publications), p.7.

<sup>157</sup> Johan Galtung. (1969). “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research.” *Journal of Peace Research* 6(3): 167-191.

and will ultimately result in mass atrocities. Related to structural violence is the concept of “negative” and “positive” peace, with the former being a mere absence of direct violent conflict while the latter implies a more holistic and sustainable peace through the abolishment of unjust economic and political structures i.e. social justice.

Structural violence as opposed to direct violence also implies that oppressive conditions exist within societies that result in a low quality of life and lack of decisionmaking, power and autonomy.<sup>158</sup> The theory of structural violence also holds that the ruling elite impose discriminatory laws to consolidate power and marginalize the vulnerable. This unjust structure does not provide opportunities to the oppressed to empower themselves and become an active part of society.<sup>159</sup> Indirect violence is a forerunner to direct violence as the “wretched of the earth” rise up, violently oppose and eventually demolish unjust structures.<sup>160</sup>

Johan Galtung also differentiates between actor conflict and structural conflict. In actor conflict, the individual recognizes that discriminatory and unjust structures exist in society and the actor is willing to bring about a change using different means.<sup>161</sup> In the context of patriarchy, if women consider that existing dynamics within the household are unjust and they endeavor to change such dynamics, it can be termed as an actor conflict. Moreover, in a structure based approach “no clear subject-object<sup>162</sup> relationship” is required and instead reliance is placed on a “diffuse subject-object relationship,”<sup>163</sup> with the former implying a direct act of violence by an

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<sup>158</sup> Ho- Won Jeong. (2000). *Peace and Conflict Studies: An Introduction*. (Vermont: Ashgate), p.20.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p.21.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, p.22.

<sup>161</sup> Johan Galtung. (1996). *Peace through Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. (London: Sage Publications), pp. 74-75

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

individual/state against an individual/group and the latter implying systematic economic and political oppression through the law and socio-economic institutions and policies.

Moreover, structural violence can be observed in terms of male/female relations within the gendered household as well as in society. For example, Franke Wilmer argues that the creation of a male/female binary earlier on in one's development<sup>164</sup> ensures that a hierarchy in the form of patriarchy is created within households and society, which eventually leads to direct violence against women-in the form of rape<sup>165</sup> and domestic abuse. In a sense then, the structure based approach to conflict does not see conflict through a binary victim/offender approach but rather views conflicts by examining unjust institutions and social practices that nudge people towards eventual violence.<sup>166</sup>

Finally, quotas in employment and educational institutes can be considered as a form of structural and indirect violence since one group is given preference over other groups. Even if past discrimination against a preferred group exists, the underlying fallacy in quota establishment is that there is no yardstick to measure when past discrimination ends. As was seen in the historical context section, the establishment of quotas by Mohajirs was perceived by the Sindhis as indirect violence and later on this indirect violence devolved into direct violence and chaos. While a deconstruction of affirmative action and quotas is beyond the scope of this thesis, the words of Chief Justice John Roberts come to mind "the only way to stop discriminating on the basis of race is to stop discrimination on the basis of race."<sup>167</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Franke Wilmer. (2002). *The Social Construction of Man, the State and War: Identity, Conflict and Violence in the Former Yugoslavia*. (London: Routledge), p.68.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.p.74

<sup>166</sup> Jolle Demmers. (2012). *Theories of Violent Conflict: An Introduction*. (London: Routledge) p.63.

<sup>167</sup> *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, 551 U.S. 701.

## Basic Human Needs

For Edward Azar and John Burton, as opposed to the American needs theorist Abraham Maslow,<sup>168</sup> the primary source of conflict lies in the non-satisfaction of basic human needs such as power, autonomy, respect, identity and security.<sup>169</sup> Burton further argues that these needs are not negotiable and the needs of all groups in a given society can and must be satisfied at the same time.<sup>170</sup> Conflicts arise when basic needs are left unattended, which results in resentment, frustration and finally violence towards the oppressor. Moreover, Burton's holistic approach asserts that "poverty, economic inequity and social injustice need to be reduced to overcome obstacles to basic needs."<sup>171</sup> This approach transcends the divide between civil and political rights, and economic and social rights as it addresses not only legal discrimination but also socio-economic injustices.

However, an underlying deficiency in Burton's Basic Human Needs Theory is that it provides a theory of needs, which is deeply embedded in patriarchal nuances. As Cordelia Reiman has pointed out unless gender is inserted as an analytical category in Burton's theory, the theory will always consider needs to be gendered and male constructs.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> Abraham Maslow in "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–96, argued that human needs follow a hierarchical pattern with the need for food, security and shelter at the bottom of the needs pyramid and the need for self-actualization at the top of the needs pyramid. John Burton (1990). *Conflict Resolution and Prevention*. (New York: St. Martin's Press) adopts a different approach and argues against the hierarchical nature of needs as claimed by Maslow.

<sup>169</sup> Ho-Won Jeong. (1995). *Peace and Conflict Studies*, p.70.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p.71.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>172</sup> Cordelia Reiman. (2002). "All You Need is Love" ...And What About Gender: Engendering Burton's Human Needs Theory." Working Paper No.10, University of Bradford: Department of Peace Studies.

## Conclusions

This chapter outlined how identity, especially ethno-political identity influences the way human beings perceive themselves and others. The problem becomes even more marked when ethno-political identity is combined with gender constructs. Such a multi-faceted identity ensures that some women may think of themselves as superior in relation to other ethnicities while thinking of themselves as lesser beings in terms of the household. Moreover, while violent conflict has negative consequences for women, it can also change the traditional patriarchal order as women empower themselves by adopting new economic and social responsibilities. Furthermore, empowerment is a concept which is deeply intricate and multi-faceted and it has been argued that while women may be economically emancipated, empowerment within the patriarchal household may not occur as patriarchy is deeply entrenched and is reflected in the perceptions of women that patriarchy is the naturally correct order. Also, the impact of the illusory public/private divide is felt not only within the household in the form of violence, but also at the international level whereby masculinity is projected on the international order and international institutions. Finally, unjust legal and economic structures ensure that the sparks of ethno-political hostility ultimately engulf different ethnicities in the flames of violence and destruction.

The role identity played for Mohajir women during the Karachi conflict and whether economic emancipation resulted in Mohajir women achieving empowerment and whether such empowerment led them to alter the dynamics of patriarchy within Mohajir households is examined in chapters four and five by listening to the voices of Mohajir women. The next chapter elaborates on the methods used in this study to collect, code and analyze data for the purposes of the present research.

## **Chapter III- Methodology**

### **Introduction**

To achieve a better understanding of whether Mohajir women shattered the public/private divide during the Karachi conflict in the 1990s as they strove to emancipate themselves, a qualitative research approach was used to examine and understand the perceptions, aspirations, experiences, dreams and apprehensions of Mohajir women in relation to the Karachi conflict during the 1990s. Specifically, I used semi-structured interviews to interview the subjects in this study. The greatest challenge faced in conducting this research was to decide upon the research location i.e. whether I should interview the subjects at their homes, my house or at a neutral place. Interviewing the subjects at their homes would have tainted the research since male members of their families would have been nearby and the responses elicited would not have been freely given. Interviewing the subjects at a neutral location would not have been possible since in Pakistan for a woman to be in public with a man is generally frowned upon. Finally, the only possible location left to interview the research subjects was at my own home.

### **Research Location**

Home to around 20 million people, Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan both in terms of population and area as well as being the country's financial hub. Ever since the creation of Pakistan, Karachi has been plagued with various conflicts, specifically ethnopolitical in nature that have at times decreased in intensity but in more recent years the violence has increased

pitching the Mohajir community against new enemies such as the Baloch people<sup>173</sup> as well as the Taliban.<sup>174</sup>

Keeping in mind the deteriorating law and order situation in the city as well as the fact that as a man, I could not conduct the interviews at the participants' homes because male members of the family would be present nearby which would dilute the responses of the subjects. Thus, all the interviews took place at my house. To ameliorate any insecurity that the participants might feel from being interviewed by a male researcher in his home, all the interviews took place in an open lawn and my study participants were asked whether they wanted any female friends or relatives to be present, an offer that they all declined and therefore, the need for female relatives to present did not arise.

### **The Participants**

The study had a total of 6 participants. Five of the participants were married at the time of the Karachi conflict while one was a teenage single girl. This study sought to examine the perceptions and experiences of those Mohajir women who had found employment during the Karachi conflict while the male members of their families were unable to work due to fears of violent reprisals by the members of Pakistani law enforcement agencies. These women were selected so as to understand the fears, perceptions, experiences, hopes, dreams and aspirations of Mohajir women from Karachi during this period of strife and conflict.

All of the six participants found employment during the Karachi conflict and during its post-violent phase, five out of six participants continued to work. While all the participants had undergone similar circumstances during the conflict i.e. in terms of breaking the public/private

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<sup>173</sup> Laurent Gayer. (2014). *Karachi*, Pp. 126-168.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 173-201.

divide and finding employment, their experiences also varied in terms of educational backgrounds. For example, one participant had an undergraduate degree from the University of Karachi while another had no formal education. Moreover, what made this study interesting and rich in diversity was the fact that the husbands of the subjects had very different professional backgrounds. For instance, the husband of one participant was actually employed by the Pakistan army before the conflict and was later on laid off allegedly because he was a Mohajir. The six research participants were given the pseudonyms Nasreen, Farzana, Saima, Parveen, Imrana and Riffat in order to protect their identities. The real names of the participants remain confidential and are neither mentioned in the transcripts nor in the thesis so as to preserve confidentiality. The subjects were also asked whether they would be interested in receiving a transcript of their interviews but none of the six interviewees were interested, possibly because of the potential fear of repercussions at home or if it fell into the hands of the government or the MQM.

Finally, until the thesis was written and the research completed, all of the transcripts were securely kept in a filing cabinet at my house to which only I have access. Once the research was complete, all of the physical transcripts were destroyed using a shredder while the tape recordings were deleted.

## Data Gathering Techniques

### Interviews

In qualitative research, semi-structured interviews can be used for the empirical application of theory.<sup>175</sup> Semi-structured interviews are also a form of storytelling where the interviewee's narratives provide the interviewer with a deep insight into the participants' perceptions, experiences, hopes and fears in relation to the research question examined in the study.<sup>176</sup> Semi-structured interviews, allow participants to narrate their stories, in comprehensive and full manner.

Interviews are an extremely useful tool while conducting research on women, especially for those who have been affected by war. The researcher can share the lived experiences of the subjects through interviews which is a critical part of feminist research methodology<sup>177</sup> since by sharing narratives women can purge their stories and lived experiences of classical gender constructs. These lived and shared experiences can also empower the researcher to attain a fuller comprehension of the hopes, dreams and aspirations of the female study subjects. Moreover, as Jessica Senehi points out in a very Foucaultian manner "when only those in power have access to producing knowledge, authoritative discourses may serve the interests of power rather than the truth."<sup>178</sup> Hence, when interviewing women, it is imperative that voice be given to their stories,

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<sup>175</sup> Christel Hopf. (2000). "Qualitative Interviews: An Overview." In *A Companion to Qualitative Research*, edited by Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardorf and Ines Steinke. (London: Sage Publications Limited), p.203.

<sup>176</sup> Daniel Druckman. (2005). *Doing Research: Method of Inquiry for Conflict Analysis*. (London: Sage Publications).

<sup>177</sup> Christine Sylvester. (2013). *War as Peace: Contributions from International Relations and Feminist Analysis*. (New York: Routledge), p.50.

<sup>178</sup> Jessica Senehi. (2009). Building Peace: Storytelling to Transform Conflicts Constructively. In Dennis Sandole, Sean Byrne, Ingrid Sandole-Staroste, & Jessica Senehi (Eds.), *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*. (London: Routledge), pp. 203-204.

and that those stories are told to the world so that their experiences can be shared and learned from.

### **Semi Structured Interviews**

In qualitative research interviews are used either as the instrument through which data is collected or they may be used to buttress other research strategies such as document analysis, participant observation and/or narrative analysis, amongst others.<sup>179</sup> Bogdan and Biklin contend that when interviews are the predominant strategy in research, the subject is usually a stranger and a fundamental part of the process is to put the subject at ease.<sup>180</sup> Moreover, feminist researchers such as DeVault,<sup>181</sup> Stacey,<sup>182</sup> Lather<sup>183</sup> and Finch<sup>184</sup> amongst others have pointed out that if the researcher is a woman, women participants become at ease without much difficulty,<sup>185</sup> and therefore male researchers need to ensure that they indulge in casual conversation before delving into the “deeper” part of the interview.

I conducted 6 semi-structured interviews in the native Mohajir language of Urdu. Since my mother tongue is Urdu, I conducted all the interviews myself. Interviewees were initially selected using a key informant who was a local community leader within the Mohajir community and later on my subjects were identified through a snowball effect which implies “getting referrals from subjects to other people that might be included in the study”<sup>186</sup> as Mohajir women

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<sup>179</sup> Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklin. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theories and Methods*. (New York: Pearson and AB), p.102.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> M. Deavault. (1991). *Feeding the Family*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

<sup>182</sup> J. Stacey. (1988). “Can there be a Feminist Ethnography.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 11: 21-27.

<sup>183</sup> P. Lather. (1988). “Feminist Perspectives on Empowering Research Methodologies.” *Women’s Studies International Forum* 1(6): 569-581.

<sup>184</sup> J. Finch. (1984). “It’s great to have someone to talk to: The Ethics and Politics of Taking to Women.” In C. Bell and H. Roberts (eds). *Social Researching*. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), pp. 70-87.

<sup>185</sup> Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklin. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education*, p.103.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p. 275.

who were directly affected by the conflict connected me to other Mohajir women with similar experiences. The sample for this study was a convenience sample since I had contacts within the community and the participants were connected to each other. In order to ensure diversity in the research, I interviewed women who were married and unmarried during the conflict. I also ensured that the participants knew that the research will be published as a thesis and that their identity will remain anonymous. Moreover, I need to clarify that this is not a representative sample of Mohajir or Pakistani women.

Before, during and after the interview process, certain ethical considerations were addressed that included informed consent, the right to privacy and protection from harm.<sup>187</sup> I ensured consent on the part of the subjects and further ensured the complete privacy of the research subjects' identities so that no possible harm comes to them. Also, considering that the research could be perceived as a continuation of politics by other means by the local authorities, once the data was transcribed, I uploaded it to an online storage facility and all the voice recording files were deleted in order to guarantee the protection of the participants. I also sought and attained the approval of the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board before I conducted any interviews or field research.

After receiving the written and informed consent of each interviewee, an approximately one-hour-long interview took place at my home in the port city of Karachi. During the interviews, as is the tradition in Pakistani culture, tea was offered to the interviewees before the interview commenced to ensure that each subject felt free, respected and comfortable. The comfort of each subject was of primary importance and to further ensure the same, I indulged in

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<sup>187</sup> Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey. (2003). "The Interview: From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text." In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Edited by Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln. (Sage Publications: London), p.89.

a casual conversation with each interviewee before the more formal part of the interview began. Moreover, throughout the interviews I ensured that female relatives were nearby so that if at any point the subjects felt uneasy I could ask my relatives to come to the interview location.

I also sought permission from the subjects about voice recording the interviews and every participant provided their written and oral consent to do so. The subjects were also informed that they could terminate the interview at any time if they choose to continue later or if they choose to opt out of it completely. None of the subjects chose either of the two options.

The interviews were semi-structured with open ended questions to get as much rich data as possible. (See Appendix I). Moreover, semi-structured interviews further minimized the risk that I as a male view the subjects through a gendered lens since interviewing is deeply embedded in masculine culture.<sup>188</sup> To ensure that the interview remained as un-gendered as possible, I relied to a certain extent on a self-created interview guide with pre-determined questions that were not framed in a masculine-hegemonic discourse, which is appended to and marked as Appendix I. In addition, with the use of probes and probing questions, I also ensured that the subjects were free to narrate as much as they felt was pertinent to the discussion area without being pressured into saying something that they did not feel was significant, in order to give “the subjects a chance to shape the content of the interview.”<sup>189</sup>

Finally, during each interview I carefully observed non-verbal communication cues throughout the process. There are four basic modes of non-verbal communication:

Proxemic communication is the use of interpersonal space to communicate attitudes, chronemics communication is the use of pacing speech and length of

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<sup>188</sup> A. Oakley. (1981). “Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms.” In *Doing Feminist Research*. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), pp 30-61.

<sup>189</sup> Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklin. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education*, p.104.

silence in conversation, kinesic communication includes any body movements or postures, and paralinguistic communication includes all the variations in volume, pitch and quality of voice.<sup>190</sup>

Therefore, to extract as much richness as possible from each interview, I endeavored to note and even record the nonverbal modes of communications of the subjects in my field notes. I found this process to be highly critical, because when the subjects alluded to some of the violence they had seen in the past, I observed how their bodies would tighten and how their fists would clench and after such an observation I would gently direct the conversation to a less traumatic experience. Since none of the research participants broke down and therefore the need did not arise to provide them with psychological counseling at the Institute of Clinical Psychology at the University of Karachi. Had the need arose for psychological counseling I had made arrangements for *pro bono* counseling at the University of Karachi. However, I also observed that my participants had a matter-of-fact and neutral tone in their non-verbal communication while discussing the decisionmaking process within the household. While there was some collaboration in the decisionmaking process, their husbands had the final say when major decisions were made such as choosing a suitor for a daughter, for example.

## **Data Analysis**

After the completion of the fieldwork, all of the interviews were translated and transcribed by me using Microsoft Word 2007. I personally translated the data since there are many words in the Urdu language, which do not have an English equivalent. For example, the word *Ishq* in the Urdu language which implies an absolute and complete submission to one's beloved or even to God, has no equivalent in English. The closest equivalent is the word love, which fails to fully comprehend and express the intensity of *Ishq*. Further, I translated the

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<sup>190</sup>R L. Gordon. (1980). *Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques and Tactics*. (Illinois: Dorsey Publications), p.335.

interviews in as literal a manner where possible and used my own judgment in translating where a literal translation did not make sense.

I also developed coding categories using the grounded theory approach while collecting data. Grounded theory is “a procedure where the researcher collects data and does analysis at the same time.”<sup>191</sup> Themes and patterns which emerged from the data analysis inductively were relied upon to construct coding categories.<sup>192</sup> The interchange between knowledge gained during the research and pre-existing theoretical assumptions commenced as soon as the data collection was initiated<sup>193</sup> and I endeavored to alter my own pre-existing theoretical biases in view of the subjects’ responses so that the results would be as unbiased as possible.

## **Conclusions**

While this was my first experience using semi-structured interviews as a research tool, as an individual who was trained as a lawyer, I have heard people narrate their stories to me many times and over the years I have come to realize that people need to tell their stories, especially women who have been silenced by the monarchs who wield the sceptre of patriarchy. Not only do these stories serve to empower the individuals who are narrating them but these personal narratives can also greatly empower us in deconstructing the meta-narrative of patriarchy; one story at a time. Even though I collected rich data, the greatest limitation and shortcoming of this research was the sample of 6 Mohajir women which was not representative of the whole Mohajir female population, even in terms of the diversity of women. Further studies on the subject should include a larger and diversified sample size.

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<sup>191</sup> Robert C. Bogdan and Sari Knopp Biklin. (2007). *Qualitative Research for Education*, p.272.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Christine Schmidt. (2004). “The Analysis of Semi-structured Interviews.” In *A Companion to Qualitative Research*, edited by Uwe Flick, Ernst von Kardorf and Ines Steinke. (London: Sage Publications Limited), p.253.

As a man who has conducted research with female participants, it is my hope that through this thesis the deafening silence surrounding the experiences of Mohajir women during the Karachi conflict is shattered and that this study can be used to empower Mohajir women specifically, and Pakistani women in general. The stories that were narrated to me by these six Mohajir women and the themes and patterns that emerged from these stories are examined in detail in the next two chapters.

## **Chapter IV (a) - Identity and Conflict**

### **Introduction**

The findings that emerged from the interviews were surprising, depressing and humbling at the same time. My own pre-existing biases strongly grounded in the ideals of theory were humbled at the altar of reality after I had transcribed, coded and analyzed the data. The themes that emerged in the data highlighted the fact that even after the economic emancipation of women, patriarchy and patriarchal dynamics are still the dominant factors within Mohajir households. Among other things, the interviews also indicated that the desire for security of life and person outweighed every other desire. In other words, the need for security was deemed by the respondents to be the most basic of all their basic human needs. One possible explanation for this view is that when one considers women as a collective whole, one tends to forget that the “security” needs of women in the global south are quite different from the security needs of women in the global north.”<sup>194</sup> Hence, while security for some “western” women may be reflected in Burton’s Human Needs approach, security for women in the global south, especially those interviewed in this study may be hierarchical in nature.

This chapter discusses three of the seven major themes that emerged from the data analysis and the corresponding conclusions that stemmed from those themes. The themes that can be broadly subsumed under the heading of Identity and Conflict include:

- 1- Minimal attachment to India.
- 2- The Mohajir Identity
- 3- Security of life and person

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<sup>194</sup> Heidi Hudson. (2005). “Gender and the Politics of Human Security.” *Security Dialogue*36(2):155-174, p.157.

The themes are critical in terms of this thesis because if a pre-existing bias against Mohajirs did not exist in terms of their alleged love/attachment to India, the Mohajir identity at least in terms of its political nature wouldn't have arisen and consequently the Karachi conflict would never have taken place.

### **“The Indian Connection”**

All of the respondents except for one who had participated in the interview process were born in Karachi and when asked whether they desired to visit India someday, the responses were mixed. For instance, when Nasreen who was born in Karachi was asked whether she had visited the birthplace of her ancestors, she laughed wryly and said:

NASREEN: No I have not. My financial situation does not allow that. Before marriage I thought I would go since my distant family is there, but conditions weren't suitable for that and my father used to say that once you get married ask your husband to take you there. But I didn't get married to a landlord or a rich person, so my desire to go remained just that; a mere desire.

For Saima, who was born before the partition of the Indian sub-continent, India did not have any special meaning and she indicated no desire to visit India at her current age. In fact for Saima, any connection to India was not about land or an attachment to soil, it had more to do with bloodlines and relationships:

SAIMA: I never visited India as both the financial and political situations did not permit me to do so. Now at my age there is no use to go back even for a visit since all the elders have died and I have no one to visit anymore.

These sentiments were echoed by Parveen whose parents were born in India while she herself was born in Karachi. This is what she had to say on the issue:

PARVEEN: I never visited India. My father was the sole bread earner and then both my mother and my father died and we never had a chance to do so. Even now with my husband having an occasional job we live in a rented house and it's just Allah who makes things work for us. I used to think a lot about going to India, desired it a lot when my mother was alive, but since she has died there is no point to go there since it is so expensive.

For some respondents while the birthplace of their ancestors did hold some charm, there were other places that seemed more important to visit if life gave them a chance to do so. For example, Riffat, a Karachi born woman whose parents migrated from India to Pakistan had this to say on the issue:

RIFFAT: If I have the resources I may visit India but more than that I would rather perform the Hajj (Islamic pilgrimage). That's my greatest desire that may Allah give me the opportunity to do that. I do not desire expensive clothes or gourmet cuisine but my only desire is to perform the pilgrimage. If I can do that I would feel as if my life's purpose has been fulfilled.

From the responses of the interviewees, it is evident that India does not hold the mythical and fabled position for *Mohajirs* as is the common perception amongst other ethnic groups in Pakistan who label Mohajirs as *Hindustanis*.<sup>195</sup> For the respondents, their fidelities and their priorities are to the land which they inhabit, namely The Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

### **Mohajir Identity and Islamic Identity**

All of the participants in this study either had parents who immigrated from India or who themselves had been born in India. Hence, technically while an overwhelming majority of the respondents were not "Mohajirs" i.e. those who had immigrated to Pakistan, they still identified

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<sup>195</sup> The word while literally meaning "from Hindustan (India)," is used as pejoratively against Mohajirs to allege that their fidelities lie with India and not Pakistan.

themselves with the label “Mohajir” because they felt that they needed their own ethnopolitical identity in order to survive in Pakistan.

However, the Mohajir identity for the majority of the respondents resulted in discrimination directed against them by the state of Pakistan because they still identified themselves as Mohajirs, while the alleged abuse of the Mohajir identity by the MQM was a source of chagrin. For example Nasreen, who was held at gunpoint by the members of the representative party of the Mohajirs, perceived that Mohajirs must act in a civilized manner:

NASREEN: Identity is a good thing but use it positively, don't rob people. Look at your place it is so nice (referring to the interview location). Now if I want that my house should be the same I should work hard and struggle for instead of stealing and mugging people. As Allah says that if you work hard I will reward you and Allah does reward those who work hard. While being a Mohajir is not a sin, we should make sure that we are good human beings.

Farzana, whose parents migrated from India to Lahore was born in Lahore and after her marriage moved to Karachi. While describing herself as a Mohajir, Farzana was skeptical of the Mohajir identity:

FARZANA: Well you know my parents and their ancestors were from India so I am a Mohajir not a Punjabi. I am what they call *Hindustani* or Urdu speaking. And honestly it isn't a big deal. Sure I am a Mohajir, I live in Karachi and there is this concept about Karachi where everyone thinks it's the city of lights and so amazing. But honestly, it is about the perceptions of people. Now because of all the violence that is occurring in this city, it is coming to the fore what the true value of a Mohajir or a Punjabi is. But I mean come to think of it we are all Pakistanis this really shouldn't make a difference. We shouldn't discriminate on the basis of ethnicity.

Some respondents in this study felt that being a Mohajir had only resulted in discrimination and the violation of their civil, political, economic and social rights. For Saima

the eldest participant in this study, being a Mohajir was a guarantee that injustice would be meted out to her and her ethnic group. In her words:

SAIMA: We (Mohajirs) have never been given any of our rights. Every ethnic group has its own province and their demands are met and just look at us and the conditions Mohajirs are in. In this city we don't even have enough resources to eat properly, of course our children do not have jobs and we remain worried all the time partly because we don't have our own houses. Of course our rights weren't granted to us. People from the outside (other ethnicities) they take advantage of this city and we, we are still where we started from-nowhere; we were never welcome in Pakistan.

Saima further added that she had always felt that Mohajirs were treated as the last amongst equals:

SAIMA: In this country no one understands Mohajirs and their dreams. While I have always thought this way, my apprehensions have increased a lot over the years especially with the onset of increased inter-ethnic violence since 2007.

For Saima then, destiny did not promise much for the Mohajirs and unless there was divine intervention, the Mohajir nation was doomed:

SAIMA: I am scared of everyone, everyone....because we have never been rewarded for anything...I am only hopeful that maybe Allah can help us out...but apart from that I have no hope, none at all.

For other participants, the Mohajir identity was not even an issue. A myriad of problems in everyday life diminished the importance of the Mohajir identity to them. This was evident from the views of Parveen who said the following in her story:

PARVEEN: I am stuck in so many problems of my own that I really don't care about these (identity) issues. I also tell my children to stay away from such political things.

Skepticism about the Mohajir identity and hopelessness about her own future and the Mohajirs in particular was alluded to by Parveen when she was asked what her greatest hopes for the future of the Mohajirs were in Pakistan:

PARVEEN: For Mohajirs yes I see a good future as I should ideally see it. But it doesn't get me anything does it? I have exhausted myself by working all the time but I don't have a home, I don't have a piece of land, nothing. So this isn't a worthwhile life. I am alive right now and I am working. Tomorrow if I die, who is going to take care of my children? What is the use of this Mohajir identity then? That's my opinion. As far as I know it makes no difference, Mohajir or otherwise. What did the MQM do for us? Nothing! What's the use; it's just a title this Mohajir, no one helps anyone out. How many sons and husbands were killed in the name of this Mohajir identity? They (the MQM) protest for 3-4 days then forget about this Mohajir identity and those who were killed in its name.

Some respondents however, felt very strongly about their Mohajir identity. The strong responses elicited on the identity question were in part because of the injustices these respondents perceived were meted out against Mohajirs. Riffat, for example, a middle aged Mohajir woman had this to say when she was asked about her thoughts about being a Mohajir:

RIFFAT: Well as Mohajirs we have no respect in the eyes of others. Nobody thinks we are something and they treat us as if we are dirt. Look, when Pakistan was being made, the Mohajirs were not only at the forefront but they were also the ones who faced the most horrible of circumstances.<sup>196</sup> Yet even after that, in Pakistan Mohajirs have no respect. I mean it is our country but we don't feel as if we belong here. And the rights of Mohajirs are violated in all spheres; in public transport and in employment and through the quota system. All ethnicities get their rights except for us. I mean for all of us as Muslims our strongest bond should be that of Islam. Yet people have divided each other into different ethnic groups and that's why I identify myself as a Muslim first.

For Riffat, the cynicism and anger that was evident in her story was rooted in extremely personal grievances:

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<sup>196</sup> A possible reference to the bloodbath during the partition of the Indian sub-continent.

RIFFAT: It is because of this Mohajir identity that my husband lost his job. He was a signals operator in the Pakistan army. But because he spoke Urdu and was from Karachi, he was fired. He was told that you are a Mohajir and we don't trust Mohajirs serving in the army.

Riffat also talked about the horrific violence during the military operation directed against the MQM in 1992 and claimed that those who were murdered were killed solely because they identified themselves as Mohajirs:

RIFFAT: Mohajirs were slaughtered like animals with corpses strewn on the streets. The army didn't let anyone collect those corpses and those corpses would rot. It was horrible. They were mostly common young men whose only fault was being a Mohajir. There were some who were a part of the MQM but the majority consisted of innocent Mohajirs. I mean think just think; there was no food, there was no water and the situation was so tense all the time. Just imagine how we survived that period. My son was 5 years old then, he was petrified and he never even tried to venture out of the house, he would always say "Ammi, the bullets will get me" because bullets literally did fly over our heads. I even saw how corpses were transported. They were thrown like slaughtered animals into trucks; blood dripping from the vehicles, bodies piled one upon another. That is what I saw, that is what I remember and what I shall never forget.

Finally, like other respondents Riffat also felt a deep cynicism and sense of foreboding about being Mohajir and about any future hopes that Mohajirs could have about their participation in the state:

RIFFAT: No one respects us. Because of this identity our children and their futures are ruined. They don't get jobs, they don't find employment. Because we speak Urdu and because our parents were from India we are still vilified even though we ourselves were born here. All ethnicities have a voice, we are voiceless. It is because of this identity and the label of being a Mohajir. What is the use of this identity? None at all... I don't have any hope for Mohajirs. Ever since I was born I have only seen bad things happen to us. I don't think Mohajirs will ever have a better future in this country.

While my study participants identified as being Mohajirs (except for one respondent) none were technically Mohajirs since five out of the six respondents were born in Karachi and did not immigrate from India to Pakistan. They felt as if the identity itself was a source of a problem since it was abused by the MQM and because other ethnicities and the Pakistan state itself did not respect the Mohajir identity and in fact violated their rights in its name. Moreover, and tragically so, the respondents generally saw no future for themselves or the Mohajirs in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

### **Security**

Amongst the many theories of human needs, two are widely cited namely: Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and John Burton's basic human needs theory. For Maslow, human needs are hierarchical in nature with food, security and shelter being paramount while for John Burton all needs can and must be satisfied at the same time. Hence, while Maslow believes that security and subsistence need to be satisfied before the need for self-actualization, John Burton argued that the need for security must be satisfied at the same time with the need for autonomy and identity.

Every respondent in this study felt that without the security of person, a decent life could not be lived. For example, Nasreen wanted to strongly leave Pakistan because she did not feel safe in the country, especially in Karachi:

NASREEN: My plan is to leave the country because we are not compensated for our work. We are not even safe within our homes and there is no security here. In 1992, I was coming back from a wedding and all my jewelry was stolen from me. These MQM goons took everything. If I had it today it would have been really valuable and my life would have been better.

Nasreen was also apprehensive about the prevailing security situation in the city. She felt as if the security situation was the primary reason for having a negative effect on life:

NASREEN: All I can say is that the law and order situation in this country should improve, that's the main thing. I don't care if we get enough to eat. A person can be hungry but happy if there is peace. But a deteriorating law and order situation really drives one insane. I mean the strike for four days earlier last month it caused so many problems because in the house sometimes you have groceries sometimes you do not because the house is not a grocery store. When these things happen (violent shutdowns) and you know how these MQM people are-one call from them and the city shuts down almost instantaneously! Now you know I am old and mature as is my family, but what about those households with children? They want food right? I just want peace, that's my only desire and wish.

Finally, when I asked Nasreen whether she had a message for people in other countries such as Canada, her response was surprising yet depressing, for in a sense it was a cry for help:

NASREEN: What can I tell them? Is there anything good in this country to tell them about? The only thing I wish is peace, that's the only wish I have and I hope there is a ruler who can improve things for us. A person can stay in a dilapidated house, but it is her own paradise. I mean my in-laws have a house which has everything and I can go there and live, but I love my own house, dilapidated as it is. So how can we love another country more than we love ours? My first words to you were I want to leave this country, I mean why do you think that is? It is because there are so many problems here; even clean drinking water is scarce. When there are so many problems how can we live our lives? There is no security, not even security of life. I mean you can keep your belongings in your house and they are stolen. You withdraw your salary and they mug you. Thank Allah this hasn't happened to me but this happens and it has happened to my friends you know. When I leave my house I pray to Allah to keep me safe and thus far he has. Allah always keeps us safe I will say because he does everything for us.

The hopes of the respondents were based upon the security situation in the city and because the security situation was less than optimal, a deep cynicism was reflected in their replies. For Farzana, a university educated woman, the need for security, food and clothing were paramount:

FARZANA: People need food, clothing and shelter but what's happening today? Bullets, strikes and hunger-that's all we get.<sup>197</sup> Bullets...people are hanging in between life and death especially in Karachi. They leave their homes in the morning and no one's sure whether they will return back alive. So in that context, Karachi while being the strongest city in Pakistan is the most insecure. So if Karachi is this way, the rest of the country really doesn't have much hope.

Parveen, echoed the sentiments of other respondents when she was asked what her greatest apprehensions for Mohajir women were:

PARVEEN: My greatest fear is that when the security situation deteriorates which it does on almost a daily basis, my children and my husband stay safe during the bad law and order situation. In the batting of an eyelash anything can happen. This is the greatest fear, this insecurity. I want my children to always stay inside the house. My eldest son is 15 and I feel really scared for him and till he comes back home I stay awake petrified.

For some respondents, everything was based on security and without security nothing mattered. For Imrana, everyday was a struggle and full of apprehensions because of the security situation. A visibly shaken Imrana narrated the following when she was asked what she felt was the greatest of her needs, she had this to offer:

IMRANA: This security situation is so bad. My children go out and I feel so scared. My son who is 6 and who goes to the mosque five times a day was gone for the evening prayers a bit back. I was so worried for him until he came back home safely. This security situation really worries me all the time and I pray that everyone in my family arrives back home safely. I mean security is to me I guess the biggest of all issues; life is so tangled, but somehow it trudges along even with all of this happening in this city. I just pray to Allah that everyone remains safe. I am scared that something bad may happen because of this security situation. The other day my relatives were sitting outside the house and all of a sudden there was so much firing on our street out of the blue. That's how bad it is now. I hope

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<sup>197</sup> A possible sarcasm towards Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (the Sindh Prime Minister who introduced quotas for Sindhis) as he came up with the popular slogan *roti, kapra aur makan* or food, clothing and shelter.

Allah keeps us safe and secure. No one listens to us where should we go to? I mean when I drop my children off to school I look at the street to make sure it is secure before I take them out of the house. You know we went to school too, but it was different then. It was much better, much secure and our parents weren't worried about us when we left the house for school.

When Imrana was asked what her greatest hopes for the future are, she replied somewhat wistfully:

IMRANA: A good future would be that if we live in a peaceful city our lives will improve so that our children can have a better future. I mean look at other countries and cities like London. School buses collect children, their parents don't worry about them the way we do here. The security situations here in this city is intolerable, you never know the moment a bullet may get you. The killings are so savage here. As for the future, I just hope my children have a good future, as should all of us. Let's live peacefully and give our children a better future. I am in the last stages of my life and all I want is for the young ones to have a good, safe and secure future.

Finally, and this may surprise some people as the common perception is that all Pakistanis are xenophobic bigots who desire the demise of 'decadent Western values.' Imrana, who was only partially educated, considered the "Western" model as an ideal system and in her view if it were implemented in Pakistan, things could change for the better for everyone:

IMRANA: In the West the people are good, society is good, law and order is good. I pray for them to be safe and secure even though their security is so much better and it is all because of the tough laws in that part of the world. The laws should always be tough and should be strictly implemented. Maybe it is their governments or the rulers who make the system work. Whatever it is, their system works and it benefits the people. They are so secure, their educational system is so good and their children have an excellent future. In this country, the educational system by virtue of its duality is shot to pieces. The schools in the private sector are unaffordable and the quality of education provided in public schools is pathetic. It's my desire that we can have the kind of lives that people do in western countries. Our country is backward because there are no avenues for success. Our children get an education here and the good ones leave and settle

abroad because they have so many opportunities there because the environment is much better. People leave this country because they don't have opportunities and are scared for their lives. This country can be improved I think and I am hopeful.

The views of the respondents as discussed clearly indicate that because of their experiences during the Karachi conflict and due to the prevalent security situation in the city, security was of paramount importance. They also believed that unless security was provided to them by the state, life in essence would be very difficult and they would always be apprehensive about the security of their lives as well as their children.

### **Key Findings**

There were sixteen significant findings which stemmed from the views of the respondents in this chapter. First, as per the interviews conducted with Mohajir women from different Karachi neighborhoods, it was evident that they had little or no desire to visit the mythical birthplace of their ancestors, India, because of a lack of resources as well as the non-existence of any kinship ties in that country. Moreover, as a Mohajir myself who has always desired to visit India to trace my roots, I was surprised that the respondents had no interest in India, either because they could not afford to visit it, or because their everyday struggles within the metropolis did not allow them to delve into "imaginary" nostalgia about India and whether their ancestors had sacrificed everything for the cause of Pakistan. Moreover, the perceptions of other ethnic groups within Pakistan and especially within Karachi that Mohajirs are *Hindustanis* who were never loyal to Pakistan and never will be loyal to their homeland, stood defeated by the truth that these interview subjects revealed as the respondents showed no significant interest in visiting India and they felt slighted and offended if they were labelled as *Hindustanis* by people from other ethnic communities in Karachi.

A second significant finding to emerge from the interviews was the issue of identity and the participants' perceptions of their Mohajir identity. As I mentioned earlier, while conducting this research I had my own pre-existing bias that while the interview subjects may allege that they have been discriminated against because of their Mohajir identity, they would feel strongly about being a Mohajir and the meaning it carried because it pulled them together as a group and strengthened their identity. However, much to my surprise, the respondents in general had no strong attachment to the label and the identity Mohajir and they generally perceived it to be a source of trouble for them because they felt that the Mohajir identity was used and abused by the MQM so that innocent people had died as a result. Moreover, the Mohajir identity they felt had also resulted in the alienation of the Mohajirs from other ethnicities in the city and country because different ethnic communities identified themselves on the basis of ethnicity rather than national identity. Consequently, Pakistan was quite badly fragmented. Considering the fact, that generally the literature in anthropology and peace studies views identity to be at the core of an individual's ethnogroup identity and that identity is a source of pride and belonging, the anti Mohajir identity views of my research subjects were quite surprising to me both as a researcher and as a Mohajir. I have been proud of the fact that I was born to parents who immigrated to Pakistan and successfully provided a good life and an exceptional education for their children. The respondents also had a feeling of deep alienation as they narrated that their Mohajir identity had not provided them with even the basics of life and in fact it was a useless one to own.

Third and related to the issue of identity amongst the respondents is the value they attached to Islam and the identity Islam gives them. My respondents generally felt that the primary identity one should adhere to is being a Muslim, which trumps national and even ethnopolitical identity. This is due to the fact that in traditional Islam the concept of the

“ummah” knows no racial, religious and ethnic boundaries and the foremost identity that a Muslim should identify with is that of Islam.

Four, and this stems from the connection to Islam is the fact that all the respondents felt that the only way for the socioeconomic and political situation to improve for them and for the Mohajir nation was if there was some kind of divine intervention. When the soul of a human being is broken and tortured because of her/his everyday struggles, the only hope for a better future and a better life is the belief that divine intervention will forge a better existence for that person. While for many philosophers such as Bertrand Russell the belief defies all boundaries of rationality,<sup>198</sup> Bertrand Russell and many other “free thinkers” did not go through the struggles that my respondents went through; religion was an opiate for them as it provided them with some much needed solace during difficult times.

Five, and an integral part of the of the identity issue is the point that that while the respondents considered the Mohajir identity to be subservient to an Islamic identity, they generally felt that while they were Muslims they were also Pakistanis and that national identity was also important to them. While this may sound confusing to some it must be borne in mind that the basis for the foundation of Pakistan was a religio-national identity through which religion was the basis for the foundation of a new nation state and the conundrum even 64 years down the road with the emergence of Islamic extremism at an all time high in Pakistan continues to plague the nation i.e. whether nationalism and the nation state should be superior to religion and vice versa.

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<sup>198</sup> Bertrand Russell. (1967). *Why I am not a Christian and Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects*. (New York: Touchstone).

Six, and related to the identity issue, my research subjects were disillusioned and cynical about their futures as well as the future of the Mohajir nation because of the problems that were rooted in the Mohajir identity. They generally felt that the Mohajir identity was betrayed by the MQM because the rights of the Mohajirs were violated by the state and the MQM had failed to safeguard them, hence they believed the future held little or no hope for them or their children.

Seven, and related to the perception that the MQM had betrayed the Mohajir nation, the respondents had deep-rooted resentment against the largest representative political party of the Mohajirs not only because the MQM had failed to safeguard their interests but also because they felt afraid that the MQM still has the power to shut down the city and hold 20 million people hostage in a matter of mere moments. This is not a surprising finding as revolutionary parties end up devouring the ones whose cause became a source of their success. Among many other examples of this point the *Mujahideen e Khalq's* fate at the hands of Ayatullah Khomeini in Iran and the *Sendero Luminoso* in Peru come to mind.

Eight, the respondents felt as if the Mohajir identity was in essence a source of their miseries and that the MQM had caused more harm than benefit to the Mohajir nation. They displayed a deep rooted cynicism towards politics and political issues and generally felt that politics was a luxury that only the “haves” could indulge in since everyday struggles in the metropolis left the respondents with little or no energy to show an interest in any political issues.

Nine, and related to Vamik Volkan's “transgenerational transmission of trauma,” the respondents generally felt that their ancestors had given up everything to migrate to Pakistan only to be treated like pariahs in the country. While historically at least during the initial three decades of Pakistan's existence such a view maybe incorrect, over the years I have heard many

individuals recount the trials and tribulations they faced during and after the partition of the Indian sub-continent. I am specifically reminded of an event narrated by a leading Pakistani satirist Mushtaq Ahmed Yousfee in which he recounts the ruminations of an individual who gave up a well established business in India and migrated to Karachi only to live in a refugee camp for two years and how he would show everyone a picture of his mansion in India and wistfully say “this is what I left behind, this is what I left behind.”<sup>199</sup>

Ten, even though the Mohajir identity was perceived as a negative one for some interviewees resulting in the denial of rights to the Mohajirs, they narrated that the only way in which they could ever feel a part of Pakistan was if a new unit which included the urban areas of the province of Sindh was carved out. While the constitution of Pakistan is based on the federal model and ideally powers have to be devolved to smaller administrative units, the notion that a Mohajir province may ever become a reality is quite far-fetched as it would result in a serious outbreak of inter-ethnic violence. The respondents perhaps felt the need for a separate Mohajir province because the four existing provinces in Pakistan are not only based upon ethnic identity but are also named after four ethnicities.<sup>200</sup> In a similar vein the respondents perceive that the creation of a Mohajir province would solidify and justify the Mohajir nation.

Eleven, the respondents’ stories revealed an intricate and an interdependent relationship between history, ethnicity and politics, in the sense that all of these factors combined can fuel and support ethnopolitical conflict. For example, had the quota system not existed in the country and had the Mohajirs been given their due rights, the Karachi conflict itself would not have

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<sup>199</sup> Mushtaq Ahmed Yousfee. *Aab-e-Gum*, p.46.

<sup>200</sup> The four provinces include: Balochistan, which is named after the Baloch people; Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa, which is named after the Pakhtuns/Pasthun; Punjabi, which is named after the Punjabis; and Sindh, which is named after the Sindhis.

erupted as the MQM in all probability would never have existed and Mohajirs would have integrated with other people as they did in the central province of Punjab in Pakistan.

Twelve, another key finding to emerge from the data was the views held by my research subjects about the “West.” Contrary to my expectations, the respondents idealized the Western model of governance and education and quite firmly believed that if the Western model was adopted there would be a marked improvement in their individual lives as well as in the collective lives of the people. Why did the respondents think that? A possible explanation is that when individuals are unsure about the security of their lives and when they are not rewarded for their work they ruefully look towards societies where the socioeconomic and political state of affairs and life is better and they wish that they could lead the kind of lives that people in other safe and secure societies lead.

Thirteen, some respondents pointed out that because of the situation in Karachi and because of the promises that the West has to offer felt that the system in the Western world was an ideal one to emulate. Moreover, they opined that the best brains in the country leave never to return which hampers any chance of progress that Pakistan may have. While it is true that the best brains in the country leave for the Western world to find a secure and respectful life, it is also true that many such young immigrants are underemployed, specifically in Canada. In the words of the then Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Joe Volpe, who sarcastically remarked:

“We probably have the best educated taxi and limo trade in the world.”<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Michael J. Triebelcock and Ninette Kelly. (2009.) *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), p. 456.

Fourteen, for some basic needs theorists, principal amongst them being John Burton, human needs do not follow a hierarchical pattern and hence need to be identified and satisfied at the same time. Such a view, however, has been rejected by some PACS scholars such as Mahmoud Sahnoun<sup>202</sup> and Kevin Clements<sup>203</sup> who argue that the basic root of conflicts is insecurity and it needs to be addressed if sustainable peace is to be achieved. The participants in this research, each and every one of them, rejected John Burton's multi-faceted and holistic approach and emphasized that their need for security of person was of paramount importance and without the same life was in essence nasty, brutish and short. Perhaps such a view is contextual in the sense that when individuals are survivors of a violent conflict and when violence continues to rear its ugly head every now and then, the need for political empowerment takes a back seat to the need to breathe and feel secure. For example, some of the respondents alluded that during the Karachi conflict and even today, they are petrified for the security and safety of themselves and their families. Coming to grips with the possibility that one's child will leave the house only to arrive back later in the day in a body-bag strips life of all joy and meaning. Unless and until the state is able to secure the lives of its citizens and unless the state ensures that above everything else the sanctity of human life is paramount, citizens cannot even begin to enjoy "the right to life." For instance, as it is argued by a leading human rights scholar James Nickel, the argument that all rights are equal is intrinsically flawed since some rights such as the right to vote would not even exist without the right to life.<sup>204</sup> That is, only if an individual is alive can she vote; without security of life, political autonomy is at best a moot point. Fifteen, and related to the

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<sup>202</sup> Mohamed Sahnoun. (1996). "Managing Conflicts in the Post-Cold War Era," in *Managing Conflict in the Post-Cold War World: The Role of Intervention*. Report of the Aspen Institute Conference, August 2-6, 1995, (Aspen, Colorado: Aspen Institute, 1996) pp. 89-96.

<sup>203</sup> Kevin Clements. (1990). "Towards a Sociology of Security." *Conflict Research Consortium*, University of Colorado, *Working Paper* 90-4.

<sup>204</sup> James W. Nickel. (2008). Rethinking Indivisibility, Towards A Theory of Supporting Relation between Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly* 30: 984, 990.

security of life issue was the finding that the respondents felt that their lives would have been better had the security situation improved because they could have then endeavoured to earn a better living. The finding is logical because an improved security situation can lead to more international investment which in turn results in more employment opportunities.

Finally, the respondents' greatest fear related to the security situation was the safety of their children. Each and every respondent alluded to the fact that they felt a deep apprehension whenever their children left the home even for school and until their children arrived safely back home, the respondents would pray to Allah for their safe return. This situation has taken an even more serious turn now that schools are being openly attacked in Pakistan and perhaps a new study needs to be conducted that can examine whether Pakistani parents from across the ethnic divide are considering pulling their children out of school.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter presented sixteen key findings which emerged around the theme of identity and security which include the Indian connection, the Mohajir identity, and security of the person. The respondents felt little or no attachment to India while their Mohajir identity affected them in a negative way so that they felt that without security of the person their other needs could not be satisfied. Moreover, my respondents felt little or no hope for a good future to exist either for themselves or for the Mohajir community, and they also idealized the Western model of governance. Moreover, while the respondents felt a deep connection to an Islamic identity, they also felt the need of having a national identity was critical and that the creation of a Mohajir province was necessary. What is evident is that policymakers and communal leaders of ethnic communities and political parties should ensure that the Mohajirs should not be referred to as

Hindustanis. All institutional biases which exist towards Mohajirs should be purged and a better, holistic and secure framework for establishing law and order in a city of 20 million people should be ensured.

This chapter examined the views of my research subjects on the issues of identity and security and it was seen that because of the Mohajir identity the Karachi conflict erupted so that these women who were shrouded in the veil of privacy pierced the same to find external employment to support their families even during the most horrible of times, in terms of security of the person. Whether such economic emancipation led to a change in patriarchal dynamics within Mohajir households is examined in the next chapter.

## Chapter V (B) - Gender, Empowerment and Patriarchy

### Introduction

Amongst the different themes that emerged from this study, the most are discussed now in this chapter. These themes include male relatives who are uneasy about female members of their households leaving the home to find work, female economic emancipation, female empowerment and sustainable peace, and how women perceived the relationship between their husbands and themselves in the aftermath of their economic emancipation. The views of the respondents were highly surprising and somewhat disillusioning as even in the wake of economic emancipation, Mohajir women were not only unable to change patriarchal dynamics within their household, they also believed in the natural hierarchy of the patriarchal nuclear family where the man is naturally endowed to be the primary breadwinner and the principal decisionmaker. Hence, among other things, these interviews depicted that economic emancipation does not necessarily lead to holistic female empowerment and the deconstruction of patriarchy. Moreover, while decisionmaking within these Mohajir households was somewhat collaborative so that the opinions and ideas of women were taken into consideration by their husbands, the final decision on all major family issues belonged with the husband. While some studies of women's decisionmaking power in Pakistan suggest that women do participate in decisions, others have shown that economics play little or no role in the decisionmaking process.<sup>205</sup> For example, in a study conducted by Nausheen Mehmood, she discovered that employment and earnings "did not appear to enhance women's decision making" both in rural

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<sup>205</sup> Xiaouhi Hou. (2011). "Women's Decisionmaking Power and Human Development: Evidence from Pakistan." *Policy Research Working Paper 5830*. (The World Bank, South Asia Region, Human Development Social Protection Unit.

and urban areas in Pakistan.<sup>206</sup> Therefore, the findings of this present study of 6 Mohajir women also tend to substantiate these aforementioned studies of women's decisionmaking power conducted within Pakistan.

### **The Charge of the “Honor” Brigade**

Perhaps the only expected theme that emerged from all of the interviews was that even when the male members of their families were unemployed, women still faced severe objections from patriarchs and other relatives when it came to seeking employment outside of the home. The underlying common theme in all of these objections was an archaic code of honor loosely based on a traditional religious interpretation, which would be deemed to be violated if a woman left the privacy of her house to work.

For example, Saima's male relatives were quite uneasy about her working in the textile industry even though the family needed the money:

SAIMA: The attitude of my in-laws was problematic but somehow I made it work and convinced them. You know they said that women who work in the textile industry are immoral. But I explained to them that not everyone is the same and it is up to an individual to guard her virtue and honor. So they kind of were convinced after that and do you know the irony? It was my unemployed husband who raised the greatest of objections!

Perhaps it was the perceived challenge to masculinity in a conservative patriarchal society<sup>207</sup> which resulted in unemployed and/or semi-employed husbands having issues when their wives wanted to lend a helping hand to make ends meet. For Parveen, it wasn't her in-laws who raised objections to her going to work, it was her semi-employed husband:

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<sup>206</sup> Nausheen Mehmood. (2002). “Women's Role in Domestic Decision-making in Pakistan: Implications for Reproductive Behaviour.” *The Pakistan Development Review* 41(2): 121-148, pp. 132-133.

<sup>207</sup> As Coughlin and Wade have pointed out the lead breadwinner's role is uniquely attributed to men in the institutionalized framework of patriarchy in general. See Patrick Coughlin and Jay C. Wade (2012). “Masculinity Ideology, Income Disparity and Romantic Relationship Quality Among Men with Higher Earning Female Partners.” *Sex Roles* 67:311-322.

PARVEEN: Initially my husband objected when I left the house and told me that we should live with what he brings home. I waited for a month but that really made it impossible to pay the rent, utilities and tuition of our children. I mean he used to find work 3-4 days a week then be unemployed for a long time. This led to fights and arguments and lots of worries, so then I told him that both of us should work to make ends meet. Initially he was angry and said that women shouldn't work, they should stay inside the house because it is dishonorable when a woman works. I told him that when things get tough we should be resilient and then he allowed me. I also told him that you should trust your wife. Since then I am working and till Allah gives me life I will continue to fight the good fight.

Imrana was unmarried at the time of the 1995 military operations in Karachi. Her father who was a bus driver used to get paid on an hourly basis. Hence, when the security situation deteriorated her father was unable to perform his duties and was not paid. When Imrana and her three sisters tried to convince the male members of their family to allow them to leave the private domain of the home so that they could alleviate the family's economic problems, the male members did not grant them the permission to do so. This is what she had to say on the issue:

IMRANA: Well my brothers were against us working because they had this apprehension about honor. If someone's sister is taunted or harassed it may lead to violent confrontation between male members. Also, relatives taunt male members if their females work outside the house, that's why they are forced to stay inside. I mean we (sisters) could have got a good job outside of the house, but our father used to say that Allah has given us enough, no need for you to work outside the house. And it has also to do with religion. We are all Muslims so we shall of course follow our religion. That is why it is said that go to your own homes (i.e. get married) with honor, it will be a relief for our parents. I hope you are okay with what I am saying.

For Riffat the case was quite different. Her husband, who was fired from the Pakistani army allegedly because he was Mohajir, did not have any objections to her finding employment outside of the home so that she could provide for the family. Perhaps it was due to the fact that

Riffat was the only respondent whose marriage had come about because of her own volition and was not an arranged marriage. When she was asked whether any objections were raised about her finding employment outside of the private realm of the home, she had the following to offer:

RIFFAT: My husband didn't have any objections because of course we needed the money to survive. The rest (relatives) they taunted and teased me that I was doing a dishonorable thing. I told them that if you feel it's dishonorable, why don't you help us out then? Give us money. My husband doesn't have a job. What do you expect us to do, die from hunger? Of course I will work to provide for my children and my husband.

In essence, the views of my research subjects indicated that the classical/traditional sense of masculinity is so deeply etched into the mindsets of Pakistani men that even when they are in the throes of despair, they raised strong objections to their wives finding work outside of the four walls of the house. Whether this sense of masculinity affected the thought process of even those women who became the principal breadwinners for their families is observed later on in the chapter.

### **Economic Emancipation, Female Empowerment and Sustainable Peace**

The most surprising theme to emerge from the interviews was that while all of my research subjects had found employment and were providers for their families, neither did the attitudes of their husbands change nor did the women in general feel that the patriarchal structure was inherently unjust and needed to be changed. In essence, it transpired that within these Mohajir households, the patriarchy was so deeply rooted and that the “natural” order of things as Allah intended was firmly believed in by my interviewees: employment and economic empowerment did not lead to change in patriarchal thinking and dynamics within the households, let alone in society. While scholars such as Sikata Bannerjee argue that because of middle and lower middle class women entering the workforce, patriarchal norms of decisionmaking have

broken down in India,<sup>208</sup> the same cannot be said of Pakistan in the context of Mohajir households that were examined in this study, and the peace found within these households was at best “negative.” (The absence of direct/physical violence)

Empowerment can be perceived from both a qualitative and quantitative perspective with the former including a decrease in domestic violence, an increase in women’s decisionmaking and socialization and awareness of rights that includes the Gender Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Index (GEM). However, since this study is based on qualitative research, a qualitative approach towards analyzing the data through the lens of empowerment was adopted. Empowerment is a complex and highly contentious concept consisting of a multitude of factors, both qualitative and quantitative and which are both contextual. While for the purpose of this study decisionmaking was adopted as the key variable in identifying empowerment, decisionmaking itself is also a very intricate concept.

For the purposes of this study Kabeer’s<sup>209</sup> interrelated schema of choice was adopted since Kabeer adopts a holistic view and starts from the assumption that in order for women’s empowerment to be achieved their possession of material resources is imperative. In the context of the present study, having resources means possession of material resources i.e. income and it was presumed that such income would subsequently imbibe Mohajir women with agency which in turn would lead to their achievement of goals that include but are not restricted to only having decisionmaking power within the household.

However, the data that emerged from the interviews illustrate that while material resources were available to Mohajir women they did not result in empowering them with agency

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<sup>208</sup> Sikata Bannerjee. (2005). *Masculinity, Hinduism and Nationalism in India*. (New York: SUNY Press), p.11.

<sup>209</sup> Naila Kabeer. (1999). “Resources, Agency, Achievements,” p.437.

or decisionmaking power, and therefore did not result in their attainment of empowerment within Mohajir households. For example, when I asked Nasreen who made the final decision in the household even after she found employment, she replied in the following way:

NASREEN: My husband has the final say in all the major decisions in our house. I mean I do give input don't get me wrong and if my decision seems right to my husband he'll accept it whole-heartedly.

As if it was an afterthought she added to her story:

NASREEN: If I find his decision to be the right one I have no problem in accepting the same. I mean we aren't opposites right? We live in the same house so instead of having an acrimonious and adversarial relationship it's better to live in a cooperative and harmonious manner.

For Farzana, a confident and educated Mohajir woman, decisions in the household are collaborative yet the final decision still rests with her husband:

FARZANA: Decisionmaking within our house is more of a collaborative exercise. And now that our children are growing up, we include them in the process too since from the beginning we made it a point to include our children, to make them feel like they are our friends. We try to include them in the decisionmaking process as much as possible but ultimately the final decision is with my husband. However, our views are heard by him nonetheless.

Farzana further explained why the final decision should belong with her husband or the patriarch within the household and whether the woman should work outside of the home:

FARZANA: Providing for the family is primarily the husband's responsibility but if the woman is educated and even if she is not for there are women like that, even they work to support the household. But if the woman is educated and she wants to work and the in-laws have no problem, I do not think it is an issue if she wants to share the burden with her husband. Our prophet's first wife had her own business. I mean when such people set an example, who are we to question them?

For Saima, who had immigrated to Pakistan in 1947, decisionmaking was delegated to her after the demise of her husband. When she was asked about decisionmaking within the household while her husband was alive, she had the following to say:

SAIMA: Until (while) he was alive my husband had the final say. You know I tried to convince him if I thought his decisions were wrong. If he agreed he would change his opinion, if he did not his original decision would be paramount. Sometimes he did make wrong decisions and there would be some disgruntlement on my part and we wouldn't talk for a couple of days. But you know since he was my husband, eventually I had to talk to him and make things work. We would try to avoid fights and because of our children I had to change my opinion to keep the peace within the house.

Imrana was unmarried at the time of the Karachi operations. During the conflict her mother started to work as did Imrana and her sisters. When I asked Imrana about the dynamics of decisionmaking within the household at the time when her father was partially employed she replied as follows:

IMRANA: My mother and my father used to collaborate with each other while making decisions, but in the event of major decisions i.e. approving a suitor for the daughters, after some investigations about the prospective groom, my father would have the final say. But overall and usually they collaborated in the process. The final decision was always my father's and he would take the decision yes or no because he was more experienced and it was expected that he would make a better decision because he was a man. My father used to implement rules about almost everything. We used to ensure that the house was clean, that dinner was ready before he came back home from work. He needed food as soon as he came home because he was exhausted after a long day's work. So it depended on my father, i.e. what should be then and what should not be done. He had the final say in every decision of the house.

Riffat was the only respondent who had any decisionmaking power within the household. Perhaps it was due to the fact that even after the Karachi conflict, her husband was by and large unemployed and had lost faith in himself to be the principal provider for the family:

RIFFAT: I am the one who makes the decisions for our family. I mean he (husband) lost his job shortly after our marriage and he was court-martialed. My in-laws blamed me for all of that, I just shrugged it off. Within my house I make the decisions since my husband refuses to take any responsibility on his shoulders. He doesn't have it in him anymore. I am also the one who finds suitable matches for my children.

The views of my respondents clearly indicate that even though they broke the traditional public/private divide to leave the privacy of their homes in order to provide for their families, the power to make decisions which is a key indicator of empowerment still remained with their husbands and patriarchs. What could be the possible reasons for economically disempowered men to retain decisionmaking power over economically emancipated women is discussed later on in this chapter.

### **The “Doxa of Patriarchy”**

In his seminal work, “An Outline of a Theory of Practice,” French philosopher Pierre Bourdieu developed the concept of Doxa. While Doxa was developed by Bourdieu after he observed Kabyle society, and while Doxa primarily relates to hierarchical economic structures, it can be applied to social structures that are deemed to be natural by human beings and arguably, the most powerful of such structures is patriarchy.

Bourdieu argues that hierarchical structures in a given society are closely knit together by a set of common beliefs that not only internalize these structures but also naturalizes them in an ordered manner.<sup>210</sup> This leads to linkages between the objective order and subjective principles which consequently make individuals believe that the world and its structures are natural and normal.<sup>211</sup> In this sense then, patriarchy is internalized and subsequently naturalized over the millennia as it is commonly thought that the patriarchal-nuclear family is the way “nature” intended for people to behave. Or as Patricia Hill Collins argues that for sustainable change to be brought about, a holistic approach which transcends specific group dynamics and creates

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<sup>210</sup> Pierre Bourdieu. (1972). *An Outline of a Theory of Practice*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.163.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, p.164.

intersectionality between gender, class and religions needs to be adopted.<sup>212</sup> Seen in this way, to defeat patriarchy all structures that support it such as religion and culture need to be considered and abolished for it to lose its overarching power.

Another way to look at the overarching power of patriarchy is Michel Foucault's analysis of Jeremy Bentham's *panopticon*. The *panopticon* which was a model prison designed by the utilitarian philosopher consists of:

A tower central to a circular building that is divided into cells, each cell extending the entire thickness of the building to allow inner and outer windows. The occupants of the cells are thus backlit, isolated from one another by walls and subject to scrutiny both collectively and individually by an observer in the tower who remains unseen. Toward this end, Bentham envisioned not only venetian blinds on the tower observation ports but also maze-like connections among tower rooms to avoid glints of light or noise that might betray the presence of an observer.<sup>213</sup>

For Michel Foucault, modern society and its structures are akin to a *panopticon* where over a period of time human beings become so conditioned to obey social institutions, structures and their rules that they do not question them. These structures are so powerful that no chains, handcuffs or torture is needed to make individuals obey pre-existing rules within these otherwise arbitrary structures.<sup>214</sup> Feminists have extended Foucault's elaboration of the *panopticon* to argue that when women objectify themselves by using cosmetics and when they worry about *what* they should look like, it is a self-policed obedience to patriarchy.<sup>215</sup> A further extension of the *panopticon*, apart from its physical objectification could be that the *panopticon* of patriarchy is

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<sup>212</sup> Patricia Hill Collins. (2000). *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. (New York: Routledge).

<sup>213</sup> Ben F. Barton and S. Marthalee. (1993). "Modes of Power in Technical and Professional Visuals." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* 7(1): 138-162, p. 139.

<sup>214</sup> Michel Foucault. (1995). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. (London: Vintage Books), Pp. 195-210.

<sup>215</sup> Sandra Bartky. (1990). *Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression*. (New York: Routledge).

so powerful that even women who are economically emancipated consider the patriarch to be the principal provider for the family because nature and religion intended it that way.

Such a view was unanimous amongst all of the respondents in this study. While they provided for their families, every single respondent felt that in the natural order of things a man was responsible for being the principal provider for the family. When Saima was asked who in an ideal family who should head the household, she responded as follows:

SAIMA: A man of course! Because a man is the head of the house, the father of the children hence a man has the right to have an upper hand. When a husband dies, the mother becomes the head and then she has all the rights and is responsible for taking care of the children and the household. So I personally think that a husband in principle should have the upper hand.

Parveen, who has worked for the past two decades claimed that albeit she believed that it was the husband's responsibility to provide for the family, she added a caveat:

PARVEEN: For me it (providing for the family) is the responsibility of the husband, but if the husband is unable to, both spouses need to work together to raise their children, provide for them and tackle obstacles. I tell my husband that both husband and wife are wheels of the same car and need to work in tandem if the car is to reach its destination.

Imrana, who was the youngest of my respondents, had a different insight about the relationship between men and women within the private realm of the home:

IMRANA: it should be equal; a woman walks shoulder to shoulder with her man. The era of ignorance is gone when women used to be abused in the house, men and women should be equal.

However and perhaps not surprisingly Imrana like my other respondents believed in a pre-determined and natural hierarchy in the home:

IMRANA: But in the natural scheme of things as Allah intended a man is a notch above a woman and therefore the wife should ensure that no disrespected comes to her husband and that her actions do not harm his honor and dignity.

The views of my respondents clearly indicate that even though they work and provide for their families, they continue to believe that within the natural scheme of things men are the primary providers and because of the virtue of their masculinity they are naturally endowed with the capacity to be the principal decisionmakers within patriarchal households. Some of the reasons for this belief in male dominance even amongst economically empowered women are discussed below.

### **Key Findings**

Significant findings emerged from the data that point out the existence of a sense of honor amongst male members of the household in terms of female employment, the lack of female empowerment even when women achieve economic emancipation and the perception amongst Mohajir women that in the natural scheme of things, men should be the ultimate decisionmakers and heads of the households.

First, except for the case of Riffat whose husband was by and large still unemployed, every single respondent had to face objections from their husbands as well as family members when she tried to find employment outside of the home so that the family could make ends meet. The taunts were embedded in the traditional notion that women are destined to be home makers and those women who leave the privacy of their homes to find work are “immoral.” Such a finding was not surprising since honor is inextricably linked to femininity in Pakistan, or rather

the patriarchal construct of traditional femininity wherein if a woman leaves the four walls of the private domain, her “purity” is affected and the male members are considered to be less than masculine. Perhaps this can be best understood if one considers that in traditional societies like Pakistan it is conceived that women who want to earn will eventually depend less on their male members of the household for survival. Male members of the family fear that if a woman comes into contact with other men at the workplace she may indulge in an illicit relationship with them a woman’s sexuality is jealously guarded. A horrific outcome of this hegemonic, patriarchal sense of honour is honour killings, which in Pakistan and some areas of the Middle East stem from the traditional masculine belief that a woman is a man’s chattel and property and any form of romantic and sexual liberty by her is a direct affront to his “honour” which should be avenged by males in the form of her murder.<sup>216</sup> While these are not in vogue in Karachi they are still practiced in the northern parts of the province of Sindh. As Justice Willy Brennan aptly remarked once:

There can be no doubt that our Nation has had a long and unfortunate history of sex discrimination. Traditionally, such discrimination was rationalized by an attitude of "romantic paternalism" which, in practical effect, put women, not on a pedestal, but in a cage.<sup>217</sup>

Second, another key finding to emerge and perhaps the most disillusioning one of all was the fact that even when women started to earn a living and provided for their families they had little or no say in the decisionmaking process within Mohajir households, which of course also implied no decisionmaking power in society, by and large. This finding was surprising to me because I had presumed before I had initiated this project that after witnessing horrible violence

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<sup>216</sup> For an excellent analysis please see Recep Dogan. (2014). “the Dynamic of Honour Killings and the Perpetrators’ Experiences.” *Homicide Studies* 1-27. Also please refer to Susan Deller Ross. (2007). *International and Comparative Law on Women’s Human Rights*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).

<sup>217</sup> *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677 (1973)

and being directly and indirectly affected by it, women who had “gathered themselves up” to breakup traditional roles to become breadwinners would eventually shatter the shackles of patriarchy within the household. This finding further surprised me because even if women were not in a position to break away from patriarchal norms, I had presumed that their views about patriarchy would change and they would at least find it objectionable that the man is presumed to be naturally endowed to be the final decisionmaker within the household. Perhaps this was due to the fact that a positivist literalist interpretation of the Quran by Pakistani scholars holds that men are superior to women in every sense.<sup>218</sup> Or perhaps this stemmed from the fact that the way the curriculum is designed in Pakistan, taught men and women that the former are superior and naturally endowed with more skills than the latter. Another explanation for this view is that the state and its institutions were historically structured to give credence to the view that a woman’s place is within the home while it falls on the man to provide for his family. A further explanation for these economically emancipated women to hold the view that men are superior to them and therefore should be the decisionmakers is the “Stockholm Syndrome.” The phrase was coined in the aftermath of a hostage taking situation in 1973 after which the hostages defended their abductors is now applied to a variety of cases and argues that an imbalance of power creates false emotional bonds and since victims see no means to escape they respond positively to the slightest act of kindness.<sup>219</sup> Seen in this way, perhaps the respondents were indebted to the “kindness” shown by their husbands and patriarchs when they were given a small say in the decisionmaking and thus presumed that while they did have a say, the natural order of things was

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<sup>218</sup> For instance many Islamic scholars, principal amongst them being Syed Abu Ala Mawdoodi have adopted an extremely strict interpretation of verse 4:43 of the Quran which states “and men are guardians (sovereign) over women as Allah has made some of them excel others and because they spend their wealth,” please see Abul Ala Mawdoodi. (2009). *Tafheem ul Quran*. (Lahore: Islamic Publications).

<sup>219</sup> Michael Adorjan, Tony Christensen, Benjamin Kelley and Dorothy Pawluch. (2012). “Stockholm Syndrome as Vernacular Resource.” *The Sociological Quarterly* 53: 454-474.

for the patriarch to have the final word in the decisionmaking process. Or perhaps these economically emancipated women were so embedded in a pre-existing patriarchal mindset that they felt uneasy being left out of the comfort zone of the privacy of their homes.

A third related finding that is interlinked with the preceding one was that even after their economic emancipation Mohajir women perceived the man to be the leader of the household. I had presumed that my research participants who had endured taunts from their relatives when they started to earn an income for the family and who had braved horrific violence, would realize that it does not matter whether one is male or female; perseverance and hard work makes us all equal. Unfortunately my research indicated otherwise. My presumption is that this is due to religious, psychological and traditional reasons as Mohajir women feel that even though they are earning an income, they are naturally endowed to be “homemakers” and that at the end of the day it is the man who is the principal provider and the final decisionmaker whether they are employed or otherwise. Religious reasons for women’s lower role include a traditional interpretation of Islam which claims that women are inferior to men and are naturally geared to homemakers. Moreover, psychological factors are directly related to religious ones and include the brainwashing from cradle to coffin that Islam is a religion based on nature that has predefined roles for men and women. In addition, traditional reasons for women’s disempowered position include both religious and psychological factors and a transgenerational transmission of the view that religiously and psychologically men are the breadwinners, the superior ones, while women are meant to reproduce and take care of the house.

Four, and this finding seems somewhat contradictory in the sense that while these economically emancipated Mohajir women felt that in the natural order of things a man was destined to be the principal bread-winner as well as the leading decisionmaker, they also felt that

if women were able to work they should work since the wife of the Prophet Mohammad set the example that men and women can be equal in terms of providing for their families. Perhaps this finding is illustrative of the cognitive dissonance that exists amongst Mohajir women that on the one hand they are firm believers in a predestined structure of the patriarchal household which is embedded in traditional interpretations of the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet while on the other hand they cite examples from the life of the Prophet which reflects that men and women are equal.

Five, and related to decisionmaking and patriarchy is an antiquated sense of honor which is correlated to a man controlling and jealously guarding the movement of his wife and daughters. The respondents pointed out that their relatives presumed that if they worked in the textile industry it would be dishonorable for their husbands. Perhaps the presumption in the minds of these individuals was that women who leave the privacy of the home to work, somehow become sexually liberated which taints the honor of their men. This assumption is at best ludicrous since even in the distorted sense of “Pakistani honor,” there are many women who work diligently, provide for their families and their “honor” remains intact.

Six and linked to the “honor” issue, Mohajir husbands who were unable to provide for their families during the Karachi conflict and whose wives and daughters took it upon themselves to support the household during the most trying of times, not only felt humiliated that the women within their homes had decided to provide for the family they also had little or no respect for the autonomy demonstrated by these women. I observed this theme throughout the interviews as women narrated that even while they became principal bread earners within their households, their husbands and patriarchs had little or no respect for their autonomy which was

evident from the fact that decisionmaking within these Mohajir households remained within the domain of the patriarchs.

Seven, and this relates to the powerful and all encompassing image of “masculinity,” i.e. that a man is and should be the principal provider for the family. Their loss of power and resulting shame lies in stark contrast to the semi-empowerment of women who work to provide for their families. Riffat, whose husband had lost his job and even to this day is by and large unemployed, was the only man who had no objections towards the employment of his wife. Perhaps, because he had delegated all decisionmaking powers to his wife, he felt as if he had lost all agency and felt chagrined that he could not provide for his family anymore. This is indicative of the fascinating power of the classical male/female dichotomy in terms of personal, economic and social roles.

Eight, and related to the decisionmaking issue as well was the fact that these Mohajir women can also be seen as peacemakers. For example, they provided for their families and they ensured that infighting over scarce resources did not break out in the household. They also abided by the decisions of the patriarch to guarantee that negative peace remained within the house. While this may not amount to positive peacebuilding it is a point that should be reflected upon instead of being outrightly dismissed as being clothed in the garb of a masculine-hegemonic discourse. Scholars and feminists in the West may have a different sense of what amounts to peacemaking/peacebuilding but by letting the patriarch make the decisions within the households these women guaranteed that generally there would be no arguments within the house and that their children would grow up in a civil atmosphere instead of a hostile and violent one. This behavior may not fall within the classic definition of women as peacemakers which presumes that women who have autonomy and agency demolish an unjust patriarchal structure to

achieve empowerment, in the context of Pakistan and Mohajir households in general this behavior should be considered as peacemaking.

Nine, and related to the issue of decisionmaking and economic emancipation is the finding that my interview subjects even though they had adopted the roles of breadwinners and had broken the traditional public/private divide, in a sense were disempowered for many reasons stemming from religion, honor and tradition that let their husbands be the primary decisionmakers. This finding supports the literature on empowerment that suggests that mere economic emancipation alone cannot lead to holistic and true female empowerment. For actual female empowerment to emerge, cultural, religious, social, legal and political issues need also to be addressed.

Ten, and on a positive and respectful note, even though these economically emancipated women did not achieve holistic gender empowerment, their stories revealed the absolute valor and bravery they showed in the face of tremendous odds. Running the gauntlet of taunts by their relatives as well as horrific intergroup violence, these remarkable and resilient women adopted roles they never imagined they would ever have to and were successful in providing for their families in times of utmost need. Such bravery and resilience is deserving of respect in every possible meaning of the word. I see these women as both the ultimate peacemakers and peacebuilders at the same time. The question that may be posited at this point is that why did these women, who had otherwise been shrouded in the veil of patriarchy and who had never presumed that they would have to provide for their families, break the traditional public/private divide in the face of such horrific ethnopolitical violence? *Prima facie*, extremely tough circumstances brings out the resilience in people and when the survival of one's family is at stake, individuals defy all odds to ensure that their families are provided for. The brave women

who were interviewed in this study defied the barriers of culture and tradition and contested the enemy of patriarchy to provide for their families, one day at a time.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter discussed how the male relatives of Mohajir women were uneasy about female members of their households leaving the home to work as well as the economic emancipation of women and female empowerment and their own images of the relationship between their husbands and themselves in the aftermath of their economic emancipation. Moreover, the interviews also revealed that culture, religion and tradition formed an unholy trinity which resulted in these otherwise economically emancipated women believing in a natural scheme of things wherein the patriarch was the head and principal provider for the family. In addition, while these economically emancipated women did not make final decisions within the house, they can be perceived as peacemakers who broke the public/private divide in the face of horrific ethnopolitical violence to provide for their families yet who also sought to maintain peace within the home by letting their husbands make the final call.

The findings indicate that for the socioeconomic, political and gender situation to change within Mohajir households and in the society at large, perceptions about what is natural and what is otherwise needed to change to end structural violence and to achieve a sustainable and holistic peace for all women in Pakistan. There must be total male recognition and acceptance of the agency of women to work outside of the home and moreover, women themselves need to purge their minds of the baggage of patriarchy. What are some of the ways to achieve these goals? This is the subject of the next chapter.

## **Chapter VI- Beyond Patriarchy: Envisioning True Emancipation for Mohajir Women**

### **Introduction**

Mohajir women in this study did break the traditional public/private divide in the face of intergroup violence in the city and taunts and ridicule by their relatives as they sought work outside of the home. While this did lead to their possession of material resources, their economic emancipation did not lead to their female empowerment and a change in traditional patriarchal dynamics within Mohajir households. From the findings which have emerged from this research, it is clear that Mohajir women faced and continue to face multiple issues in the spheres of identity, security, human needs, empowerment and patriarchy. While all of these issues are somewhat interrelated, they also have their own unique dynamics that need to be addressed in order for Mohajir women to achieve a lasting and sustainable peace. Also, in order to integrate the Mohajir community fully in Karachi with other ethnicities, a multi-faceted peacemaking intervention process addressing the issue of Mohajir identity needs to be adopted. Moreover, the views of the respondents make it clear that unless the traditional mindset that men are superior to women is addressed, women emancipated or otherwise will continue to believe in a natural pre-existing order. Some of the key overall findings of the research are now discussed below.

### **The Mohajir Identity**

I am from a family with a Mohajir background so my assumption was that Mohajir women would feel quite strongly about their Mohajir identity, their pride associated with it and how attached they feel to it. As a son of immigrants and a current immigrant to Canada myself, I had presumed that the pride which comes with one's ethnic identity was a part and parcel of each immigrant's psyche.

However, as we observed in chapter four, the Mohajir identity did not matter to an overwhelming majority of the respondents and the identity itself was in fact a source of their troubles. Directly associated with the Mohajir identity is the label of *Hindustani*, a pejorative term used by people of other ethnicities in Pakistan to refer to Mohajirs and to allude to the misconception that ultimately the fidelities of the Mohajir people are with the homeland of their parents in India. However, none of my respondents indicated a desire to visit India, nor did India hold any relevance to their current or future lives. I have lived in Pakistan and was born into a Mohajir family, so I have personal experience about how commonly used this label is, not only by people in general but also in the legal system. For example, when a police complaint is filed against an individual, there is a section in the complaint form titled “caste.”<sup>220</sup>

I was part of the Pakistani legal system and I have seen for myself that if an individual from the Mohajir community is charged with an offense, her/his “caste” is filled in as *Hindustani*. This act substantiates the “treason bias” directed by mainstream society against the Mohajir people. Pakistan prides itself on not having a caste system compared to its archenemy and nemesis India. However, it contradicts itself by continuing to use the terminology of caste in its legal system, a gift given by the British Raj to the Indian sub-continent. In this context then, it is imperative to purge the legal system of structural violence and discrimination. The Government of Pakistan needs to amend the Criminal Procedure Code to erase the discriminatory section of “caste” used in the judicial system. This would ensure that that the alleged deep-rooted anti-Pakistan and Pro-India bias loses its legal power. By changing the superstructure it can be hoped that the bias found against the Mohajir people in the substructure

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<sup>220</sup> Section 154, Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 (Pakistan).

is eventually erased. Moreover, a holistic and sustainable peace can be envisioned by changing the laws and policies as they relate to gender discrimination and violence.

### **The Job “Quota” System**

It can be argued that the establishment of job quotas for Mohajirs in the public sector in 1947 was a government policy of overt discrimination against the indigenous Sindhi people that resulted in social injustice. Moreover, it can also be argued that the establishment of employment quotas for the indigenous Sindhi people by a Sindhi Prime Minister was indirect and direct and structural violence was directed against the Mohajirs. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to completely deconstruct the advantages or otherwise of social and political reengineering projects, it may be said that while historical injustices have existed against the Sindhi people, two wrongs do not create a right and there is no benchmark to know when the effects of past injustices have been ended. In this context then, as a first step the Government of Pakistan needs to end quotas in education and public employment for the Sindhi people. This ideally should be done gradually and not immediately as any immediate termination of quotas would result in inter-ethnic and anti-government violence. As per the 23<sup>rd</sup> amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan,<sup>221</sup> quotas have been extended for the next 20 years, which will only ensure further alienation amongst Sindhis and Mohajirs. The optimal mechanism through which this structural issue can be addressed is to amend the Constitution and end job quotas at the very latest by 2020 which will ensure that the indigenous Sindhis can be on board throughout the process. The change in the legal system will guarantee that the risk of ethnic conflict escalating and breaking out in the province and in the city of Karachi is reduced.

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<sup>221</sup> The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, Amendment XXIII (2011).

Adopting a gradual approach to bring about a change in the quota system is critical as Pakistan is currently facing threats at multiple levels, the greatest of which is the threat posed by militant Islamic groups who recently launched an attack on a school in the city of Peshawar that resulted in the deaths of over 130 school-children.<sup>222</sup> Moreover, Ahmed Rashid<sup>223</sup>, Amir Mir<sup>224</sup> and the slain journalist Syed Saleem Shehzad<sup>225</sup> point out that the state of Pakistan created *frankenstinian* monsters in the shape of radical Islamist militants who are now deeply entrenched in not only the mindsets of Pakistanis but also within the security establishment. Further, as former CIA analyst and President Barak Obama's former policy advisor on Af-Pak, Bruce Reidel argues Pakistan is currently going through a highly critical stage and any serious change within the Pakistani polity could result in a conservative Islamist military government in the country that could lead to serious domestic and international problems.<sup>226</sup> Therefore, to avoid a breakout of ethnic conflict when the state of Pakistan is haunted with the specter of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, a pragmatic and gradual approach to abolishing quotas in public sector jobs is extremely critical.

### **Holistic Female Empowerment**

We observed in Chapter Five that while all six of my respondents found employment and therefore can be described as economically emancipated, their economic emancipation did not result in either a shift in patriarchal dynamics within the Mohajir household, i.e., in terms of

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<sup>222</sup> Daily Telegraph Staff. (2015). "Peshawar School Attacked by Taliban in Pictures." Daily Telegraph, 23 January 2015.

<sup>223</sup> Ahmed Rashid. (2009). *Descent into Chaos: The US and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia*. (London: Penguin Books).

<sup>224</sup> Amir Mir. (2009). *The Talibanization of Pakistan: From 9/11 to 26/11*. (Washington DC: Pentagon Press).

<sup>225</sup> Syed Saleem Shehzad. (2011). *Inside Al-Qaeda and the Taliban: Beyond Bin Laden and 9/11*. (London: Pluto Press).

<sup>226</sup> Bruce Reidel. (2012). *Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America and the Future of the Global Jihad*. (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press).

decisionmaking nor did it affect the way that Mohajir women perceived themselves to be lesser mortals when compared to their male counterparts. In this light then, holistic socioeconomic, legal and political changes are needed which alter the “super-structure”<sup>227</sup> specifically including the law as well as the school curriculum in force, both of which serve to depict women as the last amongst equals.

### **Amendments to the “Qanoon-e-Shahadat” 1984**

The Qanoon-e-Shahadat Order of 1984 is the operative law of evidence in Pakistan. The law which was originally implemented by the British in 1872 was amended in 1984 to give it an Islamic leaning. While problematic in many ways, the Qanoon-e-Shahadat is in essence misogynistic, especially when it comes to the competence of women to testify in court. For example, Article 17 (2) (a) of the law, is titled “competence and number of witnesses,” provides:

In matters pertaining to financial or future obligations, if reduced to writing, the instrument shall be attested by two men or one man and two women, so that one may remind the other, if necessary, and evidence shall be led accordingly.<sup>228</sup>

While this law is based on an injunction of the Quran<sup>229</sup> and the Hadith,<sup>230</sup> both of which are considered to be primary sources of Islamic law, contemporary scholars such as Javed Ahmed Ghamidi have argued that in the modern day and age where women are educated this

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<sup>227</sup> French neo-Marxist Louis Althusser posits that society has a sub-structure which included modes and resources of production. On this sub-structure is built a super-structure which consists of among other things, literature, law and the arts. Whoever controls the sub-structure defines the form and content of the super-structure.

<sup>228</sup> Article 17 (2) (a), The Qanoon e Shahadat Order, 1984.

<sup>229</sup> For instance, verse 2:282 provides “And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not found then a man and two women.”

<sup>230</sup> In the most revered book on the sayings of the Prophet Mohammad, the Prophet was reported as saying “[Muhammad] said, 'Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?' They replied in the affirmative. He said, 'This is the deficiency in her intelligence.'" *Sahih Bukhari*, 6:301.

injunction is relative at best.<sup>231</sup> The reason for suggesting that the law of evidence should be amended to purge its sexist terminology is the point that the law shapes the mind of society and its individuals. A law which is discriminatory is not only a violation of international human rights since it is based on structural violence it also forms and informs the perceptions of men and women alike in any given society about the position of women.<sup>232</sup> For example, as has been pointed out by feminist legal theorists since the law has been classically a male construct it is geared towards the suppression of women.<sup>233</sup> Consequently, the laws need to be amended using a modern day interpretation of Islam to change the mindset of individuals about women, since there is a fear of a severe backlash if there is a bid to “secularize” the laws.

### **Battle of Minds and Hearts**

The role that school curriculum plays in shaping the minds of a population<sup>234</sup> is a subject that has long received the attention of critical and transformational educationists and about which much has been written about. For example, Goodson, Cookson and Persell<sup>235</sup> argue that knowledge imparted through a state curriculum is not neutral but rather it is based on the divisions stemming from power differentials in any given society.<sup>236</sup> The authors further argue that a curriculum is universal and not individualistic, the ultimate aim of which is to achieve the

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<sup>231</sup> Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. (2009). *Burhan*. (Lahore: Al-Muwarrid Publications), Pp. 25-34.

<sup>232</sup> Sally Engle Merry. (2006). *Human Rights and Gender Violence: Translation International Law into Social Justice*. (Illinois: University of Chicago Press.)

<sup>233</sup> For more information please refer to Nancy E. Dowd and Michelle S. Jacobs (eds.) (2003). *Feminist Legal Theory: An Anti-Essentialist Reader*. (New York: New York University Press) and Nancy Levit and Robert M. Verchick. (2006). *Feminist Legal Theory: A Primer*. (New York: New York University Press).

<sup>234</sup> How curriculum and “culture” can affect and disenfranchise young people has been brilliantly portrayed in Jay Mcleod (2009). *Ain't no Makin' it: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighbourhood*. (Colorado: Westview Press).

<sup>235</sup> Ivor Goodson, Peter Cookson Jr., and Caroline Persell. (1997). “Distinction and Destiny: The Importance of Curriculum Form in Elite Private American Schools. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 18:2, 173-183.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, p.184.

state's ideological ends.<sup>237</sup> In addition, John Abbot contends a school curriculum is a reflection of societal values,<sup>238</sup> while Cairns, Gardner and Lawton suggest that what shape the content of any curriculum takes ultimately depends on a society's values and culture.<sup>239</sup> Other scholars such as William Pinar have pointed out that curriculum content and structure while being dependent on cultural context, is also deeply embedded in gendered nuances.<sup>240</sup>

In this context then, it is not surprising that the responses elicited by my respondents who were schooled in Pakistan, were entrenched in classical patriarchal notions of a dichotomous world where men and women have different responsibilities and men are superior to women. For instance, in a scathing report on the state of the educational curriculum in Pakistan, Nayyar pointed out that because Pakistan's school curriculum is based on bigotry<sup>241</sup> and historical inaccuracies are based on a mythical glorious past and persecution,<sup>242</sup> children who are educated using this curriculum have become religiously intolerant and possess a myopic worldview. The report also points out the extreme gendered form of school curriculum in Pakistan. For example, quoting from a Grade 7 English text, Mattu and Hussain state:

Other than being full of grammatical errors – in itself reprehensible in a language text, this story reinforces gender roles based on the binary division of male as the active/rational and female as passive/irrational. Thus we find that the father takes the decision to go on a family holiday, the mother makes tea. The brother flies kites and the sister whines, complains and makes silly requests.<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> John Abbot. (2000). *Overschooled but Undereducated*. (London: Continuum), p. 193.

<sup>239</sup> Jo Cairns, Roy Gardner and Dennis Layton, eds. (2000). *Values and the Curriculum*. (London: Routledge).

<sup>240</sup> William F. Pinar, William F. Reynolds, Patrick Slattery and Peter M. Taubman. (2004). *Understanding Curriculum*. (New York: Peter Lang)

<sup>241</sup> A H. Nayyar. (2004). "Insensitivity to the Religious Diversity of the Nation." In *A Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan*, edited by A H. Nayyar and Ahmed Salim. (Sustainable Development Policy Institute: Islamabad), Pp. 9-62.

<sup>242</sup> Ahmed Salim. (2004). "Historical Falsehoods and Inaccuracies." In *A Subtle Subversion*, edited by A H. Nayyar and Ahmed Salim, Pp. 63-72.

<sup>243</sup> Aamna Mattu and Neelam Hussain. (2004). "Class and Gender in School Texts." p.96. In *A Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan*, edited by A H. Nayyar and Ahmed Salim. (Sustainable Development Policy Institute: Islamabad),

In a scathing critique of the gendered roles ascribed to women in Pakistani textbooks with reference to literature taught to children in grade 8, Mattu and Hussain hold:

A gender based division of roles is woven into almost all the exercises and stories in these books, thus we have constant references to men performing active and/or heroic roles and women engaged in passive, often pointless activities e.g. ‘Pakistani soldiers are among the bravest in the world’, ‘My brothers work in a factory ..’ on the one hand and ‘... their sisters wash clothes,’ ‘Imrana made some tea’ and ‘She was combing her hair’, on the other.<sup>244</sup>

These are just two of the many examples that can be cited from Pakistani school textbooks in the context of prescribed traditional gender roles for women that children are socialized with. It should therefore come as no surprise that the respondents in my study even though they broke the public/private divide and were employed, still considered the patriarch as not only the principal provider for the family but also as biologically and naturally, culturally and legally superior to women.

Therefore, it is highly critical that school textbooks, especially at the primary<sup>245</sup> and secondary<sup>246</sup> levels be purged of such misogynistic texts. Moreover, these texts should be replaced with the stories of the first wife of the Prophet Mohammad, who was a highly successful businesswoman herself and under whose tutelage the Prophet learned best business practices himself. Stories such as this one are critical in reshaping the minds of the coming generations, since they are stories that have an Islamic legacy to them and thus will not be seen as having a “Western, imperialistic hegemony.” Finally, to ensure a holistic change, teachers should be provided with gender sensitivity training so that the new curriculum can be taught in a “pure” way.

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>245</sup> Grades 1-5 in Pakistan.

<sup>246</sup> Grades 6-10 in Pakistan

## **Future Research**

While I endeavored to interview Mohajir women from different backgrounds in terms of education, class and age, the sample size of this study was too narrow and restrictive both in terms of numbers and factors and does not reflect the lived experiences of all Mohajir women. For example, the sample of six Mohajir women is not representative of the whole Mohajir female population in terms of the diversity of backgrounds and experiences. Therefore, any future research should focus on a broader sample size, which cuts across the dynamics of class, age, ethnicity and the level of education amongst others. Moreover, future research should also endeavor to gauge whether the classical notion of gender roles between men and women in the family unit also exists amongst working women from upper class Mohajir families. This would provide future researchers with a more nuanced, balanced and comprehensive views of Mohajir women from across the socio-economic divide in Karachi.

Moreover, scholars should also determine the reasons why working women in India have been relatively successful in changing patriarchal dynamics within their families, while Mohajir women even in the wake of their economic emancipation have been unable to do so in Pakistan. Further, this comparative analysis should not be restricted only to working Mohajir women, but should also include a sample of women from all ethnic groups in Pakistan. Such a holistic cross-community analysis, I believe, would not only greatly add to our understanding of why women from two countries with a shared history have fared differently in terms of altering patriarchal relations, it would also empower policymakers to adopt legal and political changes to ensure the true holistic emancipation of not only Mohajir women, but all Pakistani women in general.

In the context of the Mohajir identity, further research is required to determine the current relationship between the indigenous Sindhis and the Mohajirs, as well as other ethnicities who now call Karachi home. Moreover, it also needs to be determined whether the Mohajir identity has taken a backseat to the current Taliban threat and whether the Mohajirs and their principal political representative, the MQM are willing to join forces with their former (current?) nemesis from different ethnic groups to establish a united front against the Taliban who have taken over large swathes of Pakistan's largest metropolis and business hub. While Laurent Gayer's magnum opus<sup>247</sup> sheds light on many of these issues, further work on the same would add to our existing knowledge of inter-ethnic relationships in Karachi.

Finally, scholars should also endeavor to determine the reasons why Pakistani women in general, even though they have a pre-fixed number of seats in the national and provincial legislatures continue to be disempowered. The first female Prime Minister in the Muslim world Benazir Bhutto was from Pakistan and was later assassinated. However, women in this study continue to believe in the "natural-rational order of things" which I find surprising and the issue needs to be further researched. This would provide scholars and policymakers with a deeper insight into societal dynamics in the context of gender relations and may enable the powers that be to instigate change within the socio-cultural, legal and political order in Pakistan.

### **Final Remarks**

This qualitative study sought to examine the ways in which Mohajir women broke the public/private divide and whether and if this led to their socioeconomic and political - emancipation, and how it impacted patriarchal relations within Mohajir households in Karachi. I

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<sup>247</sup> Laurent Gayer. (2014). *Ordered Disorder*.

also sought to examine the perceptions and experiences of Mohajir women in relation to their Mohajir identity, their socioeconomic empowerment and what they thought were the ideal roles for them within the Mohajir household. Moreover, this study also aimed to deconstruct the underlying nuances of ethno-political conflicts, women's economic emancipation and patriarchal relations by relying upon a diversified number of theoretical ideas. It is my hope that results of this study will empower academicians, politicians, social workers and policymakers to examine gender relations in a more holistic manner. I also hope that this study may provide a voice to those voiceless women who have undergone great personal sacrifices and traumas through much of their adult lives.

Contrary to common perceptions in Pakistan, the Mohajir women in this study did not feel any special attachment to India and considered Pakistan, with all its conflictual issues, to be their home. Moreover, the women interviewed in this project revealed that male members of their families reacted in a traditional masculine possessive way when they sought to find employment outside of the home. Finally, the study participants also revealed that even though they were employed and contributing to the household, final decisionmaking on all major issues remained with the patriarchs. These otherwise emancipated women considered it to be natural that a man should be the primary breadwinner and decisionmaker. Since economic emancipation at least in the context of this study did not lead to holistic women's empowerment, it is my hope that the voices of my interview subjects can be of assistance to future researchers so that the silence of women can be heard at some point in the future so that a better, secure, equal and peaceful world may be established for all people, both women and men, and their children in Pakistan and around the world.

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## **Appendix A- Interview Guide**

### **Question. 1**

Where were you born?

### **Question. 2**

What are your memories of India? (if born in India)

### **Question. 3**

What are your feelings about being a Mohajir? Are you married and if so how did your marriage come about?

### **Question. 4**

Were male members of your family employed during the military operations of the 1990s in Karachi? If so, what impact did the 1990s military operations in Karachi have on their employment?

### **Question. 5**

Were you employed prior to the military operations and what are your perceptions about the relationship of men and women in your family during this time?

### **Question. 6**

Did the 1990 military operations in Karachi adversely affect the employment of male members in your family? Did you seek employment outside of the home? What kind of employment did you seek?

**Question. 7**

As a woman how did providing for your family make you feel and how did the conflict affect you?

**Question. 8**

Did you continue to work after the Karachi conflict ended? If not, why not?

**Question. 9**

How do male members of your family feel about you working outside of the home now that the Karachi conflict has ended and they are employed?

**Question. 10**

How do you feel about having worked outside of the home after the Karachi conflict has ended? Do you think having a job has empowered you within your household and in society in general?

**Question. 11**

What are your greatest fears, hopes and what are your worst fears and worries and aspirations for Mohajirs, Mohajir women and yourself for the future?