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EXPLORING GENDER OPPRESSION AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN MUKHTAR MAI'S *IN THE NAME OF HONOR*, AZHAR ABIDI'S *THE HOUSE OF BILQIS* AND URMILA PAWAR'S *THE WEAVE OF MY LIFE*

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Abstract:

Gender oppression is a pervasive and complex issue that has been the subject of intense research and investigation in the literature. This abstract delves into the exploration of gender oppression in three distinct literary works: Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor*, Azhar Abidi's *The House of Bilqis*, and Urmila Pawar's *The Weave of My Life*. These works provide deep insight into the multifaceted nature of gender oppression and shed light on the social, cultural and institutional mechanisms that maintain the subjugation of women in various contexts.

Mukhtar Mai's memoir *In the Name of Honor* recounts her harrowing experience of surviving a gang rape in rural Pakistan. Through Mai's narrative, the reader is exposed to the brutal reality faced by women in patriarchal societies where honor and shame play a central role in perpetuating violence against women. Azhar Abidi's novel *The House of Bilqis* provides a fictional but compelling picture of gender dynamics in a wealthy Pakistani family. Abidi's narrative skillfully uncovers the layers of societal pressures that contribute to Bilqis's struggles, offering a subtle critique of gender roles and expectations in South Asian societies. Urmila Pawar's autobiography, *The Weave of My Life*, is a compelling account of her journey as a Dalit woman in India, dealing with intersecting forms of oppression based on caste, class and gender. Pawar's narrative challenges mainstream narratives of empowerment and liberation and highlights the unique challenges marginalized women face in their pursuit of autonomy and dignity. Her narrative voice disrupts dominant discourses and foregrounds the

experiences of Dalit women, often marginalized within feminist discourses. Together, these works highlight the interconnectedness of gender oppression with other forms of social injustice, such as classism, casteism, and colonial legacies. Through a variety of narrative styles and perspectives, the authors interrogate the power structures and social norms that perpetuate inequality and violence against women. Their stories not only reveal the harsh reality women face, but also inspire resilience, resistance and solidarity in the face of oppression.

Keywords: Gender Oppression, Domestic Violence, Agency, Memoir

Introduction

Gender norms and hierarchy within society are often linked to oppression, with Western nations' contemporary gender standards based on binary concepts of masculinity and femininity. Femininity is defined as emotionality, dependency, passivity, and nurturing, while men are expected to possess rationality, autonomy, activity, aggression, and competitiveness. Sociology and biology, two rapidly developing fields, became ingrained with these normalized conceptions of gender, but they were also predicated on heterosexuality, middle-class status, and European ethnic background.

Domestic violence, particularly against women, is a form of abuse or coercion against intimate relationships. This article discusses health issues and risk factors among female victims of domestic violence, particularly in Mauritius. The goal is to propose preventative methods to end domestic violence against women in society. NGOs are beneficial in enhancing women's quality of life and reducing injuries caused by violence when combined with legal measures. The health sector is equally crucial in multi-sector initiatives for the early diagnosis and prevention of domestic abuse situations.

What a literary work implies is explained by literary criticism. It plays a significant part in both the advancement of literature and human existence. This indicates that the development of knowledge and comprehension of values other than literary, such as those related to religion, economics, philosophy, culture, morality, and so on, depends on literary criticism. Understanding the message that a literary work seeks to convey is the goal of analysis. Additionally, studying literary criticism enables us to comprehend how ideas and emotions are expressed in the works via reading and thought (Endaswaram 10). This study uses Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* as its focal point, depicting the oppressed women's lives in the Pakistani village of Meerwala. The autobiography shares the author's personal story of growing up in a hamlet where women are

subjected to patriarchy-driven violence in both public and private spheres. Literature and art are imitations or reflections of reality, and this book can serve as a lens through which to view and comprehend many patriarchal phenomena that harm women and their communities. Mukhtaran Bibi, fights for emancipation against the conformist patriarchal system by teaching uneducated women in the suffocating atmosphere. "Although there is no school for girls in our village, I am twenty-eight years old and may not know how to read or write. However, I have learned the Koran by heart, and ever since my divorce, I have taught its verses to our local children as a charitable act" (Mai 7). She believes that education based on the Koran will shield women from this kind of subjugation.

"I may not be able to read or write at the age of twenty-eight." Since our village does not have a girl's school" (Mai 7). It becomes clear how women are denied access to education. This study explores the dominance of males in a patriarchal culture by focusing on three different memoirs. Patriarchy is "a system of social structures, and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women." (Walby 20). Feminism is used as an ideology to build a society for women beyond mere social equality and as a philosophy of equal rights for women. The patriarchal system, where males hold greater power and economic advantages, exposes women to discrimination and treats them as lesser and submissive. The memoir claims that in the Muslim culture, "my fatherland uncle told me very little, and women are rarely informed about the decisions of man." I was ignorant of the law, just like many other illiterates (Mai 27).

Using a radical feminist viewpoint and patriarchy theory, the researcher examines the research issues in Mukhtar Mai's *In the Name of Honor* to understand patriarchy. Walby's theory defines patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. The researcher outlines six models: the patriarchal state, male aggression, the patriarchal relation in sexuality, the patriarchal production relation in the home, and the patriarchal ties within paid work.

Patriarchy is "a system of social structures, and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women." This definition is used by the researcher. She outlines the patriarchal structures of six models: the patriarchal state, male aggression, the patriarchal relation in sexuality, the patriarchal production relation in the home, and the patriarchal ties within paid work (Walby 20). Several scholars have examined patriarchy in the book, including Angela Astrid Stelladiba Cyndi Ayu, Sayekti Putri Kinanti, and Iva Riyadhus Sholichah. Research Karkera published its fourth study under the title *The Gang-Rape of Mukhtar Mai and Pakistan's Opportunity to Regain Its Lost Honor*, which focuses on women's struggles and patriarchy.

The House of Bilqis, written by Azhar Abidi, is a novel that explores domestic abuse and gender discrimination in the Middle East. The story highlights the covert and overt forms of oppression female characters endure, shedding light on the difficulties women have in defying deeply embedded social standards. The home itself becomes a symbolic stage for the drama of domestic life, revealing the dark corners where violence and power disparities brew.

Urmila Pawar, a prominent activist in the feminist and Dalit movements in Maharashtra, has

written an autobiography called *Aaydan*, translated as *The Weave of My Life*, which is a significant milestone in Marathi Dalit literature history. The autobiography avoids traditional format and omits personal information, focusing on the organic relationship between Urmila's writing and her mother's weaving acts. Both weaves depict pain, sorrow, and agony experienced in both public and private lives.

The dual nature of public and private life has been used in almost all reprimands, with Hannah Arendt viewing it as one between freedom and need. According to Klein (1995), there existed a social, discursive, and cultural sphere of growth as well as an associated public realm. For the residents of the eighteenth century, "public" meant social rather than lonely. In this context, being sociable refers to interacting with others in a variety of settings and configurations. This type of publicity required two things in particular. Among them was perceptibility. "Private issues were typically imperceptible or kept away from others' perceptions," but "public issues were those that were revealed to certain others' perceptions or to individuals in general." Thus, the contrast between transparency and secrecy, honesty and opaqueness, was linked to the terms "public" and "private." The accessibility criterion was one of the other conditions for this type of exposure. On the one hand, "private matters were limited or closed in certain respects," while "public matters" were those that may include others or persons in general.

The Weave of My Life: A Dalit Woman's Memoir is a significant work of literature because it discusses caste, community, ethnicity, language and regional diversity on their terms. Urmila Pawar argues that a "Dalit" is someone who has been neglected and marginalized by the caste system, but a rationalist and humanist worldview has emerged to oppose this system. She refutes the idea that caste is a societal structure set in stone, affirms the agency and intellectual contributions of Dalit women and unites the "private" and "public" lives of these women over three generations.

Urvashi Butalia in an article talks about Mukhtar Mai's memoir is a powerful account of the oppression of women in Pakistan, focusing on the journey of a victim of gang rape committed for clan honour. The story of Mukhtar Mai's transformation from a half-naked, bruised, and bleeding woman to a self-assured woman who runs a village school for girls and advocates for women's rights. The legend of Mukhtar Mai is now well known worldwide, effectively conveying how women are ensnared in the often repressive and vice-like ties of family, patriarchy, clan, and tradition.

Mukhtar's brother Shakur was rumoured to have committed a "crime" with 20-year-old Salma from

the Mastoi clan, and her body is used as a weapon of the clan jirga, demanding atonement, retaliation, and the restoration of "honour" in a traditional that repeats men's ancient war and combat laws. The book does a priceless job of telling Mukhtar's narrative, and although it may seem out of place when compared to someone who isn't a writer, it does a priceless job of doing so.

Hima Trisha in an article talks about, *The Weave of My Life* by Urmila Pawar challenges the reader's perception of the boundaries between the private and public spheres by embracing the catchphrase "the personal is political," which became extremely popular during the second wave of feminism. The representational element is another important one brought forward by the book's emphasis on the message's enormity. The memoir presents a complex picture of the socio-political difficulties that Dalit women bear—economic vulnerability, caste prejudice, and patriarchal beliefs. It challenges the reader's perception of the boundaries between the private and public spheres by embracing the catchphrase "the personal is political."

Urmila Pawar, a Dalit woman, shares her life of poverty and the struggles she faced as a child. She grew up in a time when literacy was highly valued, and her mother's unwavering efforts to support her family and provide education were often overlooked. The author's parents placed a high value on education, which contributed to her lack of interest in it. This disdain for education has led to a regressive social structure where Dalit women are positioned at the bottom. Pawar's interest in education was fueled by exposure to scholarly and literary events around Dalit rights and Ambedkar ideas, as well as firsthand descriptions of the harsh working conditions faced by impoverished manual scavengers. She was deeply involved in the Dalit literary movement, which began in the 1960s, and her writing challenged the widely accepted Hindu narrative.

The contrast between men using public venues and women's roles being confined to the home is a pernicious outcome of patriarchal ideologies that dominate our culture. Through her dedication to college, participation in literary and cultural events hosted by Dalit rights organizations, and grassroots engagement, Pawar defies this contradiction. She grows up surrounded by hardworking women in her community, who face hunger, domestic violence, and famine. The confinement of a woman within the house was intended to check her autonomy and ensure her identity remained relative to the man's. This dichotomy served as the focal point of the second wave of feminism, which inspired her. Urmila Pawar became a key player in the

de-gendering of spaces and the fight against patriarchal ideas about what it means to be a woman. Her personal life suffered as a result of her politics, as her husband did not receive well her liberation. Women's participation in the public sphere often results in their victimization and an increase in domestic violence and harassment.

The Weave of My Life is a powerful book that focuses on the struggle for Dalit women's empowerment, drawing inspiration from Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Phule. It offers a fresh perspective on the issue, inspiring readers to become more aware of caste and strive harder to eradicate caste. A Book Review on *The House of Bilqis* by Luan Gaines is a story about an elderly woman, Bilqis Ara Begum, who is deeply ingrained in the culture of the upper class. Her life is marked by her son Samad's marriage to an Australian and the degeneration of her nation during the 1980s due to militarism and Islamic extremists. Bilqis's life is marked by a decline in vitality and a matriarchal environment, with her son dealing with personal issues.

The book transcends politics and explores the shifting face of Pakistan in the mid-1980s. Bilqis has to accept the country's turmoil and her internal conflict as she grows increasingly irrelevant to her family and community. The ancient customs that Bilqis had depended on disintegrating when Samad leaves Pakistan to live abroad, rendering her hopes for old life pointless.

In the Name of Honor is a memoir by Mukhtar Mai that highlights the repressive masculinist system in Pakistan that devalues women's roles. Muslim women are expected to take care of the home, support the family, and raise the next generation, leaving them out of public issues such as decision-making, politics, education, and work. The memoir highlights the lack of access to education for girls, who are taught "household acts" rather than education. The memoir states that, "A girl's father does not want to send her to school since she must help with household chores" (Mai 76). It implies that girls are for family chores rather than education. Instead of learning to read, girls pick up life skills from their mothers, such as "making chapatis, cooking rice and lentils, washing clothes and hanging them up to dry on palm trunks, cutting grass for animals, harvesting wheat and sugarcane, making tea, putting the youngest children to bed, and fetching water from the pump" (Mai 76). The statement implies that young women are confined to their home's four walls.

The memoir also illustrates the possibility of liberation from these layers of subordination and

strategic resistance. The main heroine, Mukhtaran Bibi, fights for emancipation against the conformist patriarchal system by teaching uneducated women in a suffocating atmosphere. She believes that education based on the Koran will shield women from this kind of subjugation. Mukhtaran Bibi is portrayed as a rebel who stands up against casteism, tradition, and the conformist Muslim faith. She fights for women's equality and access to education, asking God to help her choose between suicide or retaliation. After being raped by a Mastoi gang, she intends to confront the Mastoi clan by taking her own life or any other viable form of retaliation. the conformist patriarchal system by teaching uneducated women in the suffocating atmosphere.

Mukhtaran works to empower independent, educated women to oppose patriarchy by starting a school for women and providing them with free education. She also engages in exterior affairs and opposes their dominance. When the high court decided to free Mukhtaran's attackers, three thousand women participated in a sizable protest against their ludicrous decision. Mukhtar Mai hopes to raise awareness of the rights of illiterate women by combining acts of violence and resistance. She hopes to break the long-standing female dominance with her memoir. "All this strengthens determination to keep going, to keep seeking justice and truth, in spite of police pressure and a "tradition" that wants women to suffer in silence while men do as they please" (Mai 45), strengthening her will to fight for what she believes is right. In this context, Frantz Fanon states, "Women must struggle against patriarchal attitudes that are both local and colonial" (Fanon 81). This indicates that society needs opposition. In the memoir, Mukhtaran fights for women's equality and access to education. "I ask God to help me choose between suicide and retaliation by any means possible," the woman states (Mai 21). After being raped by a Mastoi gang, she intends to confront the Mastoi clan by taking her own life or by any other viable form of retaliation. She continues, saying, "My existence was limited to a few basic hobbies and the routine household chores. The kids learn the Koran by ear, just as I did, therefore I allowed them free instruction in it. In addition, I taught ladies my specialty—embroidery—in order to help support our family financially (Mai 13).

The House of Bilqis by Azhar Abidi explores the challenges faced by female characters in Pakistan, focusing on issues related to gender inequality. It highlights the limited access to higher education and professional progress for women, as they prioritize their roles as spouses and mothers over their own goals and intellectual development. The book also portrays the pervasiveness of domestic violence, emphasizing

the power dynamics in partnerships and the susceptibility of women to abuse. The book also examines gender discrimination from the perspective of cultural norms and societal expectations, which restrict women's independence and agency while upholding conventional gender norms. Prejudice against women in marriage is another example, as they are expected to live up to societal standards of being docile and subservient to their husbands. Women often lack agency in their lives due to having their thoughts and wants ignored. The book also discusses the pressure women face to meet societal standards of beauty, such as body shaming and objectification. Financial independence is another issue, as women's financial dependence on their husbands or other male family members restricts their autonomy and makes it difficult for them to make decisions for themselves. The gender pay gap, where women are paid less than men for doing the same work, also impedes women's job advancement and economic empowerment.

The Weave of My Life by Urmila Pawar highlights the prevalence of gender inequality and the challenges faced by women in Pakistani culture. Pawar's book provides an opportunity for women to express their anguish, suffering, humiliation, and resistance within an oppressive patriarchal framework. Patriarchy is defined by various scholars, with some arguing that it is the "central problem" of women's history and one of the greatest general problems of all time. V. Geetha notes that the term "patriarchy" is widely used in everyday speech, referring to "male dominance," "male prejudice (against women)," or "male power.". The definition of the phrase is "the father's or the eldest male member's absolute rule over his family" (Geetha 4). Women are torn between being free and being slaves in a patriarchal social structure. Urmila Pawar, a renowned Dalit feminist author, recounts her experiences as a Mahar woman in Maharashtra's Konkan area. The memoir, published in 2003 by Maya Pandit, uses weaving as a metaphor to explore the lives and hardships of Dalit women while criticizing patriarchy. The narrative follows Pawar's life from childhood to adulthood, describing her experiences with poverty, patriarchal dominance, and caste prejudice. Pawar describes instances of sexual harassment faced by Dalit girls, including threats from stepbrothers, maternal uncles, and neighbours. She also discusses the discrimination and low expectations faced by Dalit women, as well as physical abuse and punishment when deviating from social norms. According to Pawar, "Writing this book and my mother weaving Aaydan were both endeavors that included the production of ideas and the pragmatic realities of existence. I discover that there is an inherent

connection between her weaving and my writing. Comparable is *The Weave*. What ties us together is the web of anguish, sorrow, and grief" (WML 1).

The story also highlights gender-based disparities in food intake, with male family members giving more importance to food than female ones. Women often had to go without eating due to a lack of food, and they would dine at *kata* when men went out, while women and girls stayed at home. Dalit women also face violence from male society members, who openly beat their spouses on the road without hesitation. Pawar describes several instances of sexual harassment Dalit girls endured at the hands of their families' male members. "My stepbrother sits on my sister's stomach and has threatened to do the same thing to me if I tell anyone," A friend informed her. "My maternal uncle plays dolls with me and pretends to be my husband, drags me into an alcove and presses hard," a second companion said. "Their neighbor comes to play with her daughter and pinches the young children's particular parts of her anatomy," said another mother (WML 125). However, there are allusions to female characters who show signs of independence, taking charge of their own lives and going against patriarchal standards. Pawar's mother took over the family's obligations after her father's death and continued her cane basket weaving business to support her family. Pawar's sister-in-law Parvati Vahini is independent in her own right, and her elder sister Manjula Tai chooses to live alone with her husband because she cannot stand the abuse and harassment from her in-laws. After her husband Harishchandra passed away, Pawar still lives on her own, rejecting any restrictions placed on her by patriarchal male family members.

The Mukhtaran Mai case is a significant event in Pakistani history, where a tribal lady confronted strong criminals and the legal system for the first time in her tribe's history. Mai defied the oppression of lower caste tribes by going public with her case, rejecting victimhood on her own and fighting against tribal power structures that used caste systems to dictate their dominance and victimization of other tribes.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan published an annual report in 2002, which Amnesty International cites as an analysis of the situation of Pakistani women and gender-specific physical violence. The report found that women in Pakistan are seen as inferior to men not only due to their gender but also because of Islamic law, which regards women as inferior to men in all situations, regardless of social level or rank. According to the Quran, males are responsible for women because Allah created them to outperform one another and because they use their assets (for women's support). (Surat al-Qur'an. 4.34)

In the context of Pakistani tribes, women are seen as the primary symbols of "honor" and "shame" for men and their status in society, despite their marginalized independent status. Anthropologist Shahla Haeri identifies the fundamental elements that make rape the most effective historical instrument of retaliation in patriarchal societies, as a woman's "honor" is viewed as male property since it is associated with his "honor."

Mukhtaran Mai and her family were humiliated in front of hundreds of people and made a show of by members of the upper-class Mastoi clan as payback for their lost "honor." Despite the injustices committed against them or the type of sexual abuse committed against their women, Mai's family was not viewed as socially equal to the offenders, as they belonged to the lesser Gujar tribe. Despite the final legal verdict in the case via the state apparatus, the so-called "honor" of the offenders was restored within their tribe and enhanced socially and culturally within the framework of tribal politics. The concept of honor is explained by sociologist H.Q. Shah in the context of Pakistani tribes: A woman's physical attributes are used by men to determine what honor is. While riches may be a source of dignity, the body is where honor is expressed and expressed. Shame is a feminine state and honor is a masculine state that exist in parallel. Women have shame, just as males have honor (Shah 4- 5).

This kind of gender inequality is seen everywhere, from the educated metropolitan bourgeoisie to the tribal villages. Anthropologist Shahla Haeri identifies the fundamental elements that make rape the most effective historical instrument of retaliation in patriarchal societies by looking at a number of case studies where rape has been used as a weapon for victimization and retaliation in Pakistan across different class divisions. According to her research, a woman's "honor" is viewed as male property since it is associated with his "honor," and sexual victimization of women is perceived as a long-term score-settling between rival groups (Haeri 169).

The House of Bilqis by Azhar Abidi is a novel that explores the challenges faced by women in a patriarchal society, particularly domestic abuse. The protagonist, Bilqis, experiences physical, emotional, and psychic violence from her husband, which has severe consequences on her life. The book also highlights the systemic marginalization and discrimination based solely on gender, known as gender oppression, which includes restricted opportunities, uneven compensation, and cultural norms that limit women's autonomy.

The novel also addresses the psychological effects of domestic violence, emphasizing the deep mental wounds left behind by such events. It also highlights the limitations on women's independence and autonomy due to cultural expectations, which often force them to conform to traditional gender roles. This restricts their autonomy, perpetuating gender discrimination and hindering their full potential.

Urmila Pawar, a well-known writer of Dalit literature, is centered around the Mahar people in Maharashtra and their struggles after Mahatma Phule and Ambedkar. Her mother, Urmila, was a weaver of bamboo baskets, which symbolized their financial destitution and low caste. Pawar believes that the Mahar Dalits have always had a propensity to retreat within themselves and move slowly, much like a tortoise. Pawar's writing reflects her experiences growing up in a conflict-ridden environment, witnessing the Mahar Dalits living in the centre of their hamlet, ready to be called upon for their labour linked to cleanliness.

Growing up in a conflict-ridden environment, her neighbourhood was always on guard, anticipating attacks from both sides. She believes that the Mahar people have always had a propensity to retreat within themselves and move slowly, much like a tortoise. In her writing, Pawar discusses her school days and experiences sharing lunch boxes with upper-class children, highlighting the constraints of being a lower caste and the importance of understanding the caste and poverty they were born into. She also notes the food made by upper-class children and her family's financial situation but never would have thought to discuss it at home.

Urmila Pawar's book highlights the exploitation of women in communal life, particularly in the way women prepare food at home. Her father was patriarchal towards his daughters, who were often taken advantage of. Pawar's sister Sushi passed away after her marriage, and her father never provided enough care for her. Her book, "My maternal uncle plays dolls with me and pretends to be my husband drags me into an alcove and presses me hard," makes reference to these events of sexual exploitation as well as the recounting of them (Ibid 125).

Urmila Pawar also discusses the oppression and exploitation of girl children and women. Pawar describes in this following quotation both the insult and hunger of the girl child. Whenever they get a good dish or complete food, it is difficult for them to control. She describes what happened, "I once traveled with two of my nieces to my sister-in-law's house to attend her wedding. But when the three of us young girls

sat down to dine and started requesting rice over and over again, the chef became irate and said, "Whose children are these anyway? He erupted "They are devouring food like beasts," someone retorted. "They are our Sushi's family!" Arjun master's daughters! "Hearing this, the presenter stood up. "Oh!" Do they? Okay, okay, let them consume as much food as they like! Make sure you serve them well! We graciously rejected when the cook reappeared with extra rice since it was difficult to accept being dubbed a monster (Ibid 117).

The hardest impacted group is women, as seen in her school days when she was forbidden from touching anything. Activities in the community were off limits to Dalits. The upper castes never touch the food that the Dalits consume, and they never even use the same water source that the Dalits utilize. The hardest impacted group is women. Pawar remembers the days in school. While her parents were abroad, her schoolmates made the decision one day to prepare a lunch at Tarlatan Savant's house. They had spoken about what to bring—rice, lentils, and other foods, for example. Pawar recalls asking himself, "What should I bring? They said nothing, but you have to bring some cash (Ibid 107).

Little Urmila had an extremely traumatic experience since she was forbidden from touching anything. She remembers this episode as follows: "They forbade me from touching anything." But we all had dinner together. The supper was enjoyable for me. I was shocked to learn the next day that the hottest talk was all about how much I was eating. In groups, the girls were muttering about "how much I had eaten" (Ibid 110). This demonstrates how caste is deeply ingrained in the psyche of upper-class society's school-age youngsters. Urmila's first pay after marriage was a source of happiness, but she also knew that she had to give it to her husband Harishchandra. As Urmila puts it, "It took me a while to realize that all that money was mine to spend anyway, I pleased when I received my first pay check. I started giving my spouse my pay check instead of my mother, who I used to give it to before I got married. What else is it, if not the purposeful offering of one's head for the butcher's knife?" (Ibid 208).

As a working woman, she struggled to use her rights, as her husband strongly objected to her admittance to the M.A. program. As a traditional wife, she should have focused on domestic duties, but her husband rejected her due to his archaic patriarchal rule. Marriage also contributed to family strife, with property rights issues involving her daughter. Her mother reprimanded her daughters for not expecting anything from their brother, implying that married daughters have no inherent right to receive financial benefits from their parents. Overall, Urmila Pawar's book highlights the challenges faced by women in

communal life and the exploitation of women.

CONCLUSION

In the Name of Honor, Mukhtar Mai's memoir exposes the deeply entrenched patriarchal norms in Pakistani society, where women's lives are dictated by male authority. Mai's courage and resilience challenge societal expectations, shedding light on the brutality faced by women in the name of preserving family honour. Azhar Abidi's novel, *The House of Bilqis*, follows a victim of domestic abuse, Bilqis, as she struggles to live up to social standards and expectations. Urmila Pawar's autobiography, *The Weave of My Life*, provides a distinctive viewpoint on gender discrimination in India's Dalit population, highlighting the convergence of gender discrimination and caste oppression. These pieces highlight the ubiquitous nature of domestic abuse and gender inequality, cutting across national and cultural divides. They encourage empathy and compassion by forcing readers to face the unpleasant reality that many women face. They stress the importance of breaking down barriers to equality and justice for women and women's empowerment.

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