

## **A Sociological Study of Women's Position in "Mayardary" (i.e., sanctuary giving) Tradition as to Ethnical Disputes among Baluch People, Zahedan City**

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### **Abstract**

The present research aims at determining sociological stand of women in mayardary tradition (MT) as to ethnical disputes among Baluch people of Zahedan city in 2016. Using a descriptive-inferential approach, its statistical population includes 100 Baluch families with experience in MT, of which 79 were sampled out using Cochran formula. In collecting data, a researcher devised questionnaire was used at two descriptive and inferential levels of analysis. At descriptive level, frequency, percentage and at inferential level, Pierson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were applied. The former suggests that most of the respondents are men aged, 40-50, while the latter pinpoints that there is a negative significant relationship between women position and the extent of murder provoked disputes. Similarly, as in the second hypothesis, women position is negatively and significantly related to the extent of injury provoked disputes.

**Keywords:** Baluch, women, mayardary (provision of sanctuary), dispute

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### **Introduction:**

The matter of woman and her position in family and society is among those cultural-social ones, the representations of which are vividly reflected in the mirror of national traditions and values. So, raising conscientiousness of cultural attitudes and religious tenets among different ethnic communities is a prerequisite to capturing a view-point of how women and their position are accounted for in societies. Baluch is one of those ethnicities, where women enjoy remarkable societal position. Known for hardworking and perseverance, Baluch women go along with men, shoulder to shoulder, in endowing means of support for family livelihood, making them distinctive in comparison with those of other Iranian

ethnic communities . It is said that brave women of Baluchestan, in absence of their have, times and again, protected their families and defended homeland against invaders. Since old times, farming, stockbreeding and manufacturing unique handicrafts, home making and children rearing are among their most important duties. Baluch women, grown up so brave under aegis of their fervent and zealous fathers and brothers, maintain tranquility in home and family (Irena, 2015). Outstanding in magnanimity, hospitality, chastity, brevity, ardor and combativeness, baluch people influenced by specifically rigid living condition, characterized by minimum living amenities, are enduring vis-à-vis quandaries. While being steadfast and reliable in acquaintance, they're stubborn and vehemently rancorous when facing opponents. However, they are bound to a specific social convention, when revenge and feud get going. An example of such rituals is MT. Mayar\* and Bahut mean seeking some body's sanctuary and mayar jali is referred to as acceptance of such request. When a sinful or oppressed person leaves his place of residence due to fear from a certain group or tribe and seeks asylum in the home of a more potent clan, whose elder chieftain may assent the appeal. After looking into the matter, at first, the asylum giver tries to mediate and solve the problem. If the arbitration failed to be effective, the asylum giver will red-bloodedly care for his asylum seeker against the intimidating tribe. In addition to the Baluch, in spite of all social and cultural developments, other Iranian ethnic communities still grapple with the bitter sufferings of a phenomenon called collective disputes and ethnical clashes in the corners of our country (Pourafkari, 2004 as quoted in Rezaie Kelvari& Bahreini2009), often provoked by economic, social, cultural and political incentives, inflicting life and property losses (Rezaian 2010). Rengam & Veilson's studies (233:2004) suggest that individual& shared interests concerning social value and ambition, protecting ethnical solidarity; economic and personal pressure; family structures; the extent of poverty are among factors underpinning those communal disputes, where men are often more conspicuously engaged in such disputes (Shariati, Mohajer, Maleki 2012).

In a study carried out in 1988, Vigil recognized threatened community security as one of the causes of collective clashes and violence. He quotes a young man as saying "we are fully having our small tribe-the staff of our proud - under control; we're all brothers and no one dares infringe on our tribe, and if anyone intends to mess with us or to threaten us, it would be get even with bloody clash". Given what was said, the present research attempts to investigate woman position in MT as to the extent of ethnical disputes among people of Zahedan city based on the two following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1) there is a significant relationship between intermediation of women in MT and the extent of murder provoked disputes.

Hypothesis 2) there is a significant relationship between women intermediation in MT and the extent of injury provoked disputes.

We will define the variables and then investigate the hypotheses

### **Theoretical principles**

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\* In certain parts of Sistan & Baluchestan province, mayar means discredited reputation and dignity and also it connotes appeal for blood money, but it is meant forgiveness and generosity in the paper at hand.

**Tribe:** tribe is defined as association of an ethnical community with shared race, language, culture and history. In the contemporary, it may willingly inhabit a certain territory within a country or it may have compulsorily migrated and scattered along a variety of districts (Khanji 2007). In other words, a tribe is a human-ethnic group with a particular language, culture, life style and collective interests within a larger community (Altaei, 2003 as quoted in Gholizade 2011). Baluch tribe too is like other Iranian tribes an integrated part of Iranian identity and nationality.

Though Baluchistan has remained unknown due to being far remote from the capital, this in itself has retained cultural components of Baluch tribe intact contributing to distinctiveness of its elements, characterizing part of deep structure of Iranian identity (Soltani 2004). Speaking of Baluch tribe, we can say that these people belong to Iranian ancestor inhabited in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Baluch people speak Baluchi dialect which has originated from vernaculars of northwest Iran. The majority of Baluch people are Sunni Muslims. Some of the sources have estimated the population of Baluch approximately 60 millions, some 18 millions of whom in Pakistan, 5 millions in Iran, 500000 in Afghanistan, 3 millions in Oman, 1 million in the UAE and the rest live in India, Tjikestan, Zangabar and other countries. Other sources have estimated Baluch population as 50 million (Wikipedia 2016). Mayardary tradition: asylum seeking and asylum giving has been common among Baluch people and applicable as a characteristic ritual of the people. Mayars (i.e., sanctuary seeker) usually turn out in two ways. Either they seek asylum in a tribe stronger than that of the plaintiff, or they go directly to the plaintiff, earnestly expressing regret and entreating forgiveness. Sometimes it happens that the unjustly accused or the inadvertent perpetrator, repentant over the unfortunate incident, due to sense of being weaker, has no other alternative than resorting to another person or tribe's protection so as to vindicate his right and convince the other side of unintentional occurrence of the offense. The one who becomes another's mayar is in fact so remorseful that even if he has committed notorious wrongdoings such as murder or raping, the respective complainant may refuse to punish and revenge him due to the tradition as to remorse or appeal for forgiveness (Rigi<sup>†</sup> as quoted in Ghanbari 2009).

**Ethnical dispute:** ethnical dispute is considered as a social pathology and refers to incidents, which with negative repercussion in social system, is recognized by any community, in any given time, as irrational, dishonest and disruptive of social disciplines. In terms of its definition, ethnical or communal dispute is a conflict among at least three people (Serosyani, 11:2006). Communal dispute is affected by lifestyle, place of living (village or city), social class, the extent to which rule is governed and the rate of public reliance in judicial mechanisms as to resolving the issue; the role and personality defined for the individual, family, tribe and the extent to which people depend on the social and traditional structure, social authority structure, culture and historical identity, virtues and beliefs...

## **Research method**

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<sup>†</sup> . the first woman Prefect In Balochistan

Using a descriptive-inferential approach, the statistical population of this research includes 100 Baluch families with experience in mayardery tradition in ethnical disputes, 79 of which were sampled out by using Cochran formula. Tools of collecting data: a researcher devised 20 item questionnaire was administered to determine sociological position of women as to MT and alleviated ethnical disputes among Baluch people in Zahedan city. Statements were organized based on a 5 degree Likert Scale (completely disagree, disagree, I have no idea, I agree, completely agree) and a reversed scoring method was applied to the questionnaire i.e., “completely disagree” and “completely agree” are scored 5 and 10, respectively. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire were pretested with one tenth of the sample; then low causative items were deleted. Alpha Chronbach test was used in assessing its reliability. After reliability of the questionnaire was also confirmed, it was applied to the main test. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis. In the former, frequency and percentage while in the latter, Pierson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used in compliance with both hypotheses.

### **Findings:**

A) Descriptive data: age, frequency and respondent percentage on the basis of gender are shown in table 1.

**Table1: frequency and respondent percentage on the basis of gender & age**

| variable |             | frequency | percentage |
|----------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender   | Male        | 54        | 55.1       |
|          | female      | 25        | 44.9       |
| Age      | 21-30       | 6         | .08        |
|          | 31-40       | 18        | .14        |
|          | 41-50       | 35        | .63        |
|          | More than50 | 20        | .15        |
| Total    |             | 79        | 100        |

Table 1) suggests that men are of the maximal frequency and percentage (55.1), and the maximal frequency and percentage belong to those aged at 40-50 (44.9).

B) inferential analysis: Inter-regression analysis was used in analysis of the research hypothesis;

Hypothesis 1): there is a significant relationship between women mediation in MT and murder provoked disputes.

An Inter-regression was used to analyze the first hypothesis.

**Table2: results of correlation matrix concerning the relationship between the mediating role of the women and the rate of disputes provoked by murder, in the MT.**

| Variable                 | Women stance |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Murder provoked disputes | -0.26        |

$P < 0.05$

According to the above table, there is a meaningful and negative relationship between the extent of Murder provoked disputes and women position ( $r = -0.26$ ).

**Table3: results of Inter regression concerning the relationship between Murder provoked disputes and women position.**

|           | Women stance             | Correlation | R squared | Adjusted R squared | Beta  | t     | Variance & degree of freedom |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|-------|-------|------------------------------|
| mayardary | Murder Provoked Disputes | -0.26       | 0.07      | 0.05               | -0.26 | -2.27 | 5.17<br>(67.1)               |

$(P < 0.05)$

Results of Inter regression as predictor of women position show that the variable assigned to the extent of Murder provoked disputes

0.05, anticipates the women position in MT. Therefore, there is a reverse and meaningful relationship between the extent of murder provoked disputes ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $\beta = -0.26$ ) and women position in MT. this relationship predicts the highly respected position of women in MT custom.

Standard coefficients of Beta suggest that women position in mayardery custom will increase to 0/26 as standard deviation experience one scale decrease in the extent of murder provoked disputes.

**Hypothesis2):** there is a significant relationship between women mediation in MT custom and the rate of injury provoked disputes.

Inter-Regression was used to analyze the second hypothesis.

**Table4: results of correlation hypothesis concerning the relationship between the mediation of women in MT custom and rate of injury provoked disputes.**

| Variable                 | Women stance |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Injury provoked disputed | -0.37        |

$P < 0.05$

According to the table, there is a meaningful reverse relationship between the rate of injury provoked disputes, and women position ( $r = -0.37$ )

**Table 5: Inter-regression results concerning the relationship between the rates of disputes provoked by injury and women position**

|           | Women stance             | Correlation | R squared | Adjusted R squared | Beta  | t     | Variance & degree of freedom |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|-------|-------|------------------------------|
| mayardary | Injury Provoked Disputes | -0.37       | 0.09      | 0.08               | -0.37 | -2.69 | 5.41<br>(67.82)              |

$P < 0.05$

Results of inter-regression as a predictor of women position show that the variable assigned to the extent of disputes resulted from murder 0,05, anticipates the women's position in MT custom.

Therefore, there is a negative meaningful relationship between the rate of disputes caused by injury ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $\beta = -0.37$ ) and women position in MT custom and this relationship is a predictor of the highly regarded position of women in MT custom. Standard coefficient of Beta suggests that women position in the custom will increase by 0.37 as standard deviation of the scale decreases the extent of dispute provoked by injury.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This research is conducted to determine the relationship between the sociological position of women in mayardery custom and decreased rate of ethnical disputes among Baluch people in Zahedan city in 2015. To do so, a questionnaire was used to collect data; results from inferential analysis of data in the first hypothesis suggest that there is a meaningful relationship between women position in MT custom and the rate of murder provoked disputes. These results confirm the first hypothesis of our research. As far as the related literature is concerned, no similar research has previously been conducted. Results of the second hypothesis indicated that there is a reverse meaningful relationship between women position in the custom and the rate of injury provoked disputes; thus the second hypothesis of our research is also confirmed. In interpreting these results, given the highly venerated position of women among different Baluch ethnicities, one can say that the accused will be exempted from punishment owing to intermediation of a woman, and the inflicted ethnical dispute will boil down by virtue of venerated woman chador. In characterizing the quality of this custom and women position, it's said that even if a person who has inadvertently committed the most horrible crime of murder, penitently resorts to a woman chador (typically a black body covering veil); the murderer would be let off and secured from any harm as long as he is regarded as mayar\* of the woman who has accepted his appeal.

## **Propositions:**

Though from perspective of developing institutions and regarding the modern society's traits, there seems to be disadvantages with mayardery in today's world, it still enjoys remarkably high recovering and reproductive advantages.

As an instance, MT and its revival will preclude numerous and blind revenges while disseminating the culture of forgiveness. Thus, regarding reviving this culture among the youth, it's worthwhile that heads of the tribe pass on the fine and positive customs such as mayardery which propagates forgiveness and concession through arranging meetings.

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