HONOR KILLING AND THE ROLE OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Honor killing is a deep rooted, brutal and burning human rights issue in Pakistan and other countries. Women particularly are the victims of this gross violation. Every year hundreds of women are killed in Pakistan in the name of honor, many cases go unreported, and perpetrators of honor killing are not punished. It is claimed that the criminal justice system is the most legitimate institution to confine this practice in the country, but it also seems unable to combat it. Numerous forces contribute to the continuity of honor killing practice in Pakistan. These forces are giving momentum and boosting these brutal practices, and also impacts the criminal justice system to make it ineffective to address the issue of honor killing.

This thesis examines three aspects related to honor killing and the role of the criminal justice system in Pakistan. Firstly, it investigates the background of honor killing, and the structure and mandates of the criminal justice system to analyze its legitimacy to deal with the honor killing. Secondly, it investigates the positive changes which have taken place to root out honor killing in Pakistan. Thirdly, it investigates the challenges to the criminal justice system which render it incapable of limiting or eradicating the honor killing practice. These challenges include national discriminatory laws, Pakistan's response to international law related to women's human rights, approaches in the judicial process of judges, police performance, and the perpetuation of the jirga system. Due to these challenges, the criminal justice system is unable to control the practice of honor killing, and it is still practiced in the society of Pakistan.

KEY WORDS: HONOR KILLING/ CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM/ PAKISTAN/ JIRGA SYSTEM/WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

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