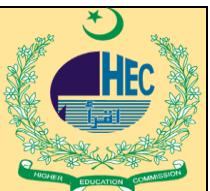




ADVANCE SOCIAL SCIENCE ARCHIVE JOURNAL

Available Online: <https://assajournal.com>

Vol. 05 No. 01. Jan-March 2026. Page# 353-362

Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)

Women at the Margins: A Feminist Critique of Patriarchal Domination in Sabyn Javeri's,

*Nobody Killed Her***Arhamna Azam**

PhD Scholar, The University of Faisalabad

arhamnaazam213@gmail.com**Asma Khalid**

Lecturer, Department of English Language and Literature, University of Chitral

aasmakhalid@uoch.edu.pk**Dr. Muhammad Nawaz**

Associate Professor, English Department Northern University, Nowshera

Nawaz@northern.edu.pk**ABSTRACT**

*"Patriarchy is a societal system that prioritizes male dominance over females, profoundly impacting women's lives by silencing and rendering them voiceless" (Qasim et al., 2024, p. 171). This paper provides a feminist analysis of patriarchal domination in the novel *Nobody Killed Her* by Sabyn Javeri. Using the feminist theory, the paper assesses how the novel illustrates the marginalization of women in the highly institutionalized gender politics and how patriarchy oppresses female voices, controls female bodies, and justifies gendered violence in the name of social morality. The novel reveals how the institutions like family, law, and the community work together in perpetuating male power making women susceptible to symbolic as well as physical erasure. Through foregrounding the lived conditions of women which they experience as oppressed and disposable, the novel questions the cultural norms and traditions that rationalize female oppression and absolve the systems of patriarchy. A close reading of the novel reveals that *Nobody Killed Her* does not only criticize acts of violence on a personal level perpetrated against women but also questions and challenges the structural circumstances that allow this violence to thrive. Finally, the novel by Javeri emphasizes its role in influencing the discussion of gender, power, and social justice.*

Keywords: Feminism, Patriarchy, Gender-based Violence, Women's Marginalization, Domestic Abuse, Silence and Voice.

Introduction

Literature is a key component of exposing societal problems as it is not only a product of the community, but also a medium to reflect, critique, and participate in the realities of people's lives. Patriarchy as a system of male dominance penetrating the social, cultural, and economic relationships is one of the most popular social phenomena discussed in the literary discourse. "Patriarchal system has significantly influenced the societal status of women. It is inherently male-centric, being man-made, and it relegates women to the status of the 'second sex,' subaltern, and even slaves" (Qasim et al., 2024, p. 172). The values upheld by patriarchy deny women their autonomy and freedom, ease access to education and independence in the economy, and subordinate women in the family and in society at large. Patriarchy cannot be just a personal view, it is a systemic ideology supported by cultural habits, legal practices and social structures, which offices gender inequality and maintains power imbalances between men and women. By mirroring the actual life experiences of women to be marginalized,

resistant and negotiating in patriarchal structures, literature is an effective weapon in dispensing with the hegemonic gender discourses and creating critical consciousness about the necessity of social change. Patriarchy has significantly influenced the position of the woman in the society; being a man-made system of control that is more male dominated, it dehumanizes woman and portrays her as a subaltern or a subordinate being and imposes discriminative rules that lead to cultural domination. Patriarchy has been perpetuating gender identities that propagates ideologies and cultural values which determine the social beliefs and behavior, as often an unspoken but highly interwoven scheme of social organization.

Sabyn Javeri is a modern Pakistani writer and teacher of fiction. Her works are critical discussions of gender, power, morality and social injustice within the South Asian society. She is keenly interested in depicting experiences of women dealing with patriarchal forms of control on female bodies, sexuality and agency through cultural reforms and institutional control. In *Nobody Killed Her* Javeri uses a realist narrative approach to reveal the hypocrisy of moral policing and institutional violence of the seemingly respectable social structures, especially family, class, and social respectability. "Sabyn Javeri, an emergent English fiction writer, in her debut novel attempts to substantiate women's suffering that cut across generations and crosses the walls of caste and class" (Ashraf et al., 2020, p. 1001). Her critique of mainstream patriarchal discourse through characterization and socially conscious storytelling and an orientation toward marginalized female voices also place her work squarely in the new feminist and socially conscious literary line.

Nobody Killed Her deals with patriarchy places woman under a constant control which subjects their bodies and lives to constant control and the moral judgement in the name of judgement and moral censure, making them the location of control and judgement instead of the subject of control and judgement. The novel reveals the gendered violence that female characters must deal with in several modes, both physical and symbolic. Female voices, credibility, and agency are systematically denied, and their sufferings are often downplayed or denied in a patriarchal society. The lives of women become insignificant within mainstream patriarchal discourses. Instead of portraying patriarchy as a collection of individual instances of male inhumanity, Javeri (2017) portrays patriarchy as a highly institutionalized and self-perpetuating system of power that thrives on institutional collusion, such as family authority, legal systems and ingrained social conventions to legitimize violence against women and safeguard the male privilege. With this portrayal, the novel demonstrates how such institutions all serve to legitimize the suffering of women and absolve the perpetrators of responsibility to strengthen the structural and pervasive character of the oppression of women. In turn, women in the text are placed in periphery positions in social order, and plotlines as their narratives are silenced, twisted, or subdued by the strong male voice which determines what is right or wrong and preserves patriarchal social order.

This paper uses feminist criticism to analyze how *Nobody Killed Her* criticizes the dominance of patriarchy using its subtle expression of gendered violence, the silencing of women, and structural inequality, focusing on how marginalization becomes the fate of women. The paper suggests that Javeri's (2017) novel is an important contribution to feminist discourse of the contemporary era, as it forces the reader to deal with cultural normalization of female oppression, and everyday activity which perpetuates gendered injustice. The novel has made it evident that patriarchal power is not just achieved through the open expressions of violence but also by silence, apathy, and institutional disregard, consequently revealing the unnoticeable but ubiquitous ways of power that render female suffering unseen. In this way, *Nobody Killed Her* also reaffirms the criticality of literature as a place of resistance challenging

oppressive systems, creating a voice of marginality and locating feminist literary criticism as a powerful weapon in the battle against gender inequality.

Literature Review

Patriarchy is a system of established male dominance; it is a system of social relations between men and women, shaped by material conditions and organized within a hierarchical structure. Such relations create forms of independence and unity between men which in its turn enables them to dominate women (Jagger and Rosenberg, 1984). Mitchell (1971) uses the word patriarchy "to refer to kinship systems in which men exchange women" (p. 24). Walby (1990) defines patriarchy as "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women" (p. 20). She emphasizes the term 'system' to challenge biological determinism that identifies that men and women have an inherent biological difference that pre-determines them to fulfill various roles. Walby (1990) also eliminates the notion that men are in dominant and women in a subordinate position by theorizing that patriarchy is a social construct and not a biological necessity. The patriarchal system as a highly established social, cultural, and political system has conventionally positioned men as the distributor of power and women as the marginalized and subordinate, operating on the premises of social norms, institutional organization, and cultural discourse defining the perception of gender, power, and agency.

"Patriarchy refers to the male domination both in public and private spheres" (Sultana, 2010, p. 1). The male is given the priority in the patriarchal society and to a certain extent patriarchy suppresses the human rights of women as well. It is an obstacle to women progress and growth. These androcentric models continue to be applied in modern societies in a systematic way that limits access of woman to basic rights. These systems do not treat women as individuals, but as objects, other people, subaltern subjects or reproduction means and women always feel discriminated and oppressed socially, politically, emotionally, sexually and physically (Walby, 1990). "There is no upliftment of women in a patriarchal and male-dominant structure, as this structure has created hurdles through the so-called social codes and customs" (Bhat & Riyaz, 2022, p. 297).

Mahajan (2016) locates feminism as an essential part of modern literature, positioning it as a socio-political, economic, and cultural movement that challenges "the exploitation of women by the patriarchal system of society" (p. 738). "Feminists use the term 'patriarchy' to describe the power relationship between men and women as well as to find out the root cause of women's subordination" (Sultana, 2011, p. 1). Feminism, according to Zubair et al. (2020), is aimed at condemning and dismantling the conservative patriarchal systems that discriminate and subordinate women. Feminist writing and criticism have been critical in the English literary traditions to challenge and dismantle these patriarchal ideologies. The studies of male dominance that is rooted in historical, social, and cultural power imbalances in various literary periods point to the fact that patriarchy is an old, and complex issue in the literary discourse.

Nobody Killed Her by Javeri is a compelling political thriller, which combines suspense with the deepest insights into gender, power, and betrayal and demonstrates how deep-rooted patriarchy is in the life of women and their political battles. The novel is a powerful depiction of the intricacies of female ambition and solidarity in the face of systemic oppression, and the novel has been debated as resonant with real political figures, yet with controversial results on whether fiction is more closely related to real world analogies. On the whole, the novel is remarkable due to its radical approach to patriarchal order and the complex characterizations it makes, which defy the established gender conventions (Hasan, 2017). *Nobody Killed Her* is a novel that combines literary ambition and critical analysis of class, gender and identity based

on the cross-cultural experience and academic background of the author. Javeri (2017) makes the book not only a political thriller but a story that is interested in a good storytelling and thematic richness, especially that of patriarchal restriction and feminine agency, which adds to the meaning of the reader of its feminist applicability (British Council Pakistan). The elements of the political thriller and the unstopping investigation of gender, classes, and power are mixed in *Nobody Killed Her* by Javeri, who considers how the patriarchal norms influence the lives of women even in the highest layers of society. Although the novel's plot twists and courtroom melodrama make readers eager to read, critics observe that its appeal to real-life political figures can confuse the boundary between fiction and biographical analogies, which brings up the question of how literary imagination and lived history relate. Overall, the analysis of female ambition and systemic subordination in the novel contributes to the modern South Asian feminist fiction (Haidar, 2017).

Although the Pakistani literature has feminist criticism on patriarchy, *Nobody Killed Her* by Sabyn Javeri is under-researched. The literature provides thematic summaries but seldom discusses the way the novel reveals systemic patriarchy, gendered violence, and marginalization of women. This paper fills this gap by using the feminist theory to discuss how Javeri challenges structural oppression and gives a voice to marginalized women in modern Pakistani society.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework.

The paper uses a qualitative, interpretive methodology based on feminist literary criticism to examine *Nobody Killed Her* by Sabyn Javeri. It explores the novel in terms of its portrayal of patriarchy, gendered violence, silencing of women, and structural oppression through close textual analysis. The main passages, character relationships, and plot techniques are examined to find out how the marginalization and disposability of women are created and sustained. The paper places the text in the contemporary Pakistani social and cultural contexts and the role of literature in criticizing patriarchal systems and giving a voice to the marginalized females thus enhancing feminist discourse.

Feminism was a movement that was meant to bring out the position of women in the family and champion their political rights such as the right to vote. Contemporary feminist ideology, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, focused on reproductive rights and economic independence. Different schools of feminism theory provide different methods of dealing with social injustice. An example is liberal feminism that prefigures individual rights and personal autonomy, promotes equal opportunities, fair sharing of power and social institution change (Britannica Editors, 2026). Feminism, more generally, is a protest against established male dominated systems that define and limit the experiences of women, and against the systemic marginalization of women in social, political, economic and educational spheres. Its overall goal is to achieve full realization of the rights and equality of women in all spheres of life to make the processes of gender-based oppression null. Feminism, in this respect, is a political movement that is focused on bringing social change by eliminating systemic gender inequalities (Mohajan, 2022). Feminist academics also observe the interaction of language and gender as one core of feminist inquiry, and social practices and institutions that reproduce, construct, and reproduce gender divisions in the society. Patriarchy is a concept employed by feminist sociologists to refer to the mechanisms that perpetuate unequal gender relationships by being analytically political, based on socialization in families, and supported by institutional, legislative, economic exploitation, and violence, which ensure that the subordinate position of women is systemic and widespread (Bhandari, 2024).

Patriarchy places women under heavy limitations of their independence and autonomy. Beauvoir (1949) asserts that the only authentic liberation of women is through economic and social equality. Her argument is that women in the past have obtained their rights and freedoms as far as men were ready to bestow them and not through self-assertion of self-determination. The key to the feminist theoretical research is the question: "What is a woman?". Beauvoir (1949) addresses this question by observing that women have been narrowly defined in relation to their reproductive capacities, encapsulated in the phrase *tota mulier in utero*, "woman is a womb" (p. 1). She also mentions that at puberty, girls tend to think of their bodies "horror and shame" (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 333), as a result of socialization that makes them sexual objects. She also points out that the attitude of men toward women is often influenced by the insecurities in men: "No one is more arrogant towards women, more aggressive or scornful, than the man who is anxious about his virility" (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 25). Men tend to uphold enduring myths of womanhood, clinging to "the myth of women, the other," a construct that persists for multiple social reasons (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 25). According to her, patriarchy maintains a hierarchic separation between men and women, with women "the lowest tier of society" (Beauvoir, 1949, p. 390) and it supports the imbalance of power structures in all spheres of life. Such inequality is not natural or accidental but it is created and reproduced as a result of historical, cultural, and ideological process favoring men. Women in this framework are created as the other- they are defined in terms of their identity, experiences and agency in terms of men who are considered in the default position of subjectivity. This type of construction is central to the patriarchal ideology, which turns women into less subjective and justifies social, political, and cultural disparities and makes them institutionalized and routine. Beauvoir (1949) also argues that these circumstances reduce women to "mutilated and frozen life" (p. 390), denying them their freedom of actions, self-expression and involvement in social and personal lives. It is not only the material but also psychological and existential mutilated life because the potential of women is bound in the spheres of social norms and the internalization of their expectations. The practices in institutions, cultural norms and the internalized social pressures all constrain the ability of women to experience independent subjectivity. In her case, Beauvoir (1949) believed that true liberation requires "complete economic and social equality, which will bring about an inner metamorphosis" (p. 686). The transformation of structure should go hand in hand with radical changes in perception and self. True equality means changing ingrained cultural mindsets where the women will no longer be the so-called other, but they will gain the freedom to shape their own identities, ambitions and ways of living.

In a nutshell, based on the provided-theoretical frame, this paper analyzes *Nobody Killed Her* deals the patriarchal control, silencing of woman and their marginalization. The analysis is informed by the framework developed by Beauvoir, who claims that women are the other and systematically subordinate. The novel shows the oppression of women and how they strive to claim control and break the social rules.

Textual Analysis

In a patriarchal society, "women are often relegated to traditional roles as caregivers, homemakers, and subordinate members of the family, while men are expected to be the primary breadwinners and decision-makers" (Hiwarkhedka & Sharma, 2024, p. 1228). Sabyn Javeri uses narrative techniques, characterization, and theme constructions in *Nobody Killed Her* to predetermine the systematic oppression of women in the patriarchal society, thus presenting women as always under surveillance, moral police and victims of physical and symbolic violence. The major characters show different reaction to oppression- resisting,

negotiating or complying, and this is one of the ways in which women choose to maneuver social, family, and institutional hierarchies. The realist narrative approach of Javeri (2017) focuses on the social reality of gendered violence and reveals the implication of the institutions and systems, such as family, legal system, and norms, that condone male dominance and perpetuate structural inequalities. The novel highlights the inapplicability of women, and the muting of their voices in repetitive motifs including the concept of surveillance, moral judgment and marginalization, making their oppression not an eventual occurrence but a result of systemic power of patriarchy. Javeri (2017) challenges the gendered hierarchies and exposes the voices of marginalized female voices through feminist theoretical frameworks, explaining the ability of literature to question social inequities. The novel is therefore a critical space of resistance and calls the readers to take action against the cultural, legal, and moral systems that keep oppressing women and reinstates the power of literature in creating feminist awareness and promoting social change.

Rani Shah, the main character of the novel, is a strong female political leader, but the patriarchal order is so strong that her status is always under threat. According to Javeri (2017) "Women like us are tolerated as long as we don't threaten the system. The moment we try to claim our rightful place, we become dangerous," (p. 112). This statement from the novel highlights the oppression of women as part of a system of male-dominated structures of power, in a feminist viewpoint. Though Rani is able to find her way into the socio-political elite, she is nonetheless disposable in a system that aims to maintain male dominance, and it goes to show how patriarchal dominance is really done not only by explicit power but also by insidious methods of scrutiny, ethical policing, and institutional collusion. Rani is an American graduate, and this has been made possible with the help of her father who was executed by the army general in power. She is expected back to her country to take the political legacy of her father, and she ventures into politics following the murder of her father. Nevertheless, she is at the same time painfully conscious of the socio-political environment that is male dominated and those authorities that do not want to give way to female leadership. Her friends and counselors constantly remind her of her weak position due to gender. Her friend and secretary, Yasmeen, says, "You're still a woman to them, a worthless afterthought created from a spare rib. ... there's a whole host of men out there who hates you and your family" (Javeri, 2017, p. 37). Rani herself admits before Nazo that she feels fear: "I'm scared. I'm very scared. I wish I could show you the fear that grips me all the time. [Though] I pretend to be brave, [yet] inside . . . I'm shaking" (Javeri, 2017, p. 41).

The novelist throws light on how Rani continues to fight in the society of patriarchy as she is never allowed to exercise complete control even as the Prime Minister. Rani later gets married to Balgodhi, a feudal lord. She has financial independence as compared to Nazneen but her personal and political life is limited by the authority of her husband. Her pregnancy of a daughter is another indicator of the gender biases in this system, as seen in her meeting with Nazneen: "You shouldn't be drinking in your state. It's bad for the baby" (Javeri, 2017, p. 227). The fact that Balgodhi does not care about the birth of his daughter who is diagnosed with deafness and muteness, is also a good example of the patriarchal approach to male descendants: "She is just a girl. In fact, it may even be a good thing – a woman who does not answer back" (Javeri, 2017, p. 390). Rani observes, "He wants an heir" (Javeri, 2017, p. 227), while Nazneen challenges this ideology. Addressing Rani, Nazneen utters out: "A girl can be an heir, look at you. Your father chose you to carry his name, not his son" (Javeri, 2017, p. 227). The experiences of Rani demonstrate that even people who hold the official power are still exposed to various types of subordination. Her husband reminds Rani repeatedly that "Without

a husband, the General's men will chew you up... you need me" (Javeri, 2017, p. 30). This indicates that Rani is not free in her independence because this system is patriarchal. However, despite her high education and political status, Rani "pretend[s] to be brave, but inside... [she is] shaking" (Javeri, 2017, p. 41). She also criticizes the gendered use of religious and legal norms: "Forty lashes. The penalty for a woman found intoxicated..." (Javeri, 2017, p. 40). Despite the fact that Rani is exposed to systemic oppression, she is limited in her ability to change anything. She is far away from freedom and emancipation. In moments of vulnerability, she admits, "I'm powerless" (Javeri, 2017, p. 267), and that is the irony of the female power in a patriarchal society.

In addition, Javeri (2017) illustrates the issues of power and subordination within the female population itself. Although Rani is a victim of the systematic oppression, she, occasionally marginalizes Nazneen, referring to her as "just a nuisance. A zero in my scheme of things" (p. 368). Rani, at times tries to show that she is better than Nazneen and disparages her attempts to achieve status: "You keep forgetting, Nazo, you are a nobody. No family background, no vision, no brains, just a stupid tagalong" (Javeri, 2017, p. 399). This description stresses that patriarchal societies have not only a vertical subordination where men dominate over women but also a horizontal one where the women find their ways to their positional restrictions amid the social and political hierarchies. The persona of Nazneen Khan is a perfect example of a subaltern who is marginalized not only by men but also by women in the novel. In the beginning, she almost loses her life as her family is killed by a military general who is in power and she manages to survive. Then she relocates to New York and takes up menial roles as a servant, housekeeper, babysitter, and personal secretary to Rani Shah. Even though she is lovingly referred to as Nazo, which means the one that is most loved in Urdu, her position is that of invisibility and vulnerability. Even the name of the novel, *Nobody Killed Her*, underlines how the subaltern is essentially worth nothing in the society that does not care about her life; being a nobody, her life, and death, become nothing.

Nazneen is also resilient and agency, she cannot submit to the limits placed on her by a patriarchal society. She suffers deeply without any complaints led by the philosophy that her life and development will rely on patience and endurance. She is made to bear a child that was conceived through rape and, in her first response, she does not bond emotionally with the child as long as he lives and she lets Rani Shah adopt him after she miscarries. The loss of her child, though, is a turning point in her life, as it enables her to express her grief and regain a certain degree of control over it, her belongings, and the image of her son. Nazneen is also an active mentor and supporter of other women who are going through the same patriarchal pitfalls like a young girl that her father would not allow to continue her studies because he was afraid of being ostracized by society: "They said girls were a waste of a degree as they just got married after college" (Javeri, 2017, p. 282). Nazneen understands that she has faced similar challenges and she encourages the girl to reject social norms and seek education as an agentic tool: "Just study hard and show them that a woman can do something useful besides breeding. Don't let me down" (Javeri, 2017, p. 283). According to Javeri (2017), "A woman who knows how to play the game is far more dangerous than a man who was born to win" (p. 89), which explains the ubiquity of the double standards women in power face. Sadia, and Nazneen Khan, in the film version, are depicted as a true friend and a betrayer, as the postmodern idea of feminism of the floating identities. It is portrayed that she is a femme fatale a woman whose intelligence, ambition, and assertiveness was not regarded as an asset but as a threat. This representation is consistent with postmodern feminist critique of gender essentialism, in which the power of an assertive woman is often denied by being turned into a duplicitous figure, with no agency,

complexity, or legitimacy. By means of Sadia, Javeri (2017) shows how societal expectations and patriarchal narration make female ambition dangerous, thus upholding cultural fears of women who break the conventional gender norms.

Javeri (2017) makes a sharp criticism of the marriage as a control mechanism, "Marriage was not a union; it was a cage" (p. 156). This view is consistent with feminist views that argues that the institution of marriage institutionalizes the subordination of women. The novel also shows how marriage restricts women as it imprisons them into the domestic arena and deprives them the right to stand and act in the society. The relation between Rani and her husband shows that the strongest women have to find their ways in the gendered family. The novel confounds the relationship between marriage as a partnership, and in the process of doing so, it exposes the accumulating aspects of the marriage institution as a system of imposition of patriarchal control and limitation of female liberty.

"In patriarchal cultures, male dominance is often defined as a fundamental aspect of manhood, and women are conditioned from a young age to accept and normalize their subordinate roles" (Qasim et al. 2024, p. 171). In patriarchy, individuals who are deemed fit to become bearers of power are males particularly in the sphere of leadership and their possession of power is not only accepted but also through the consent of the dominate and the dominated. Women in *Nobody Killed Her* are effectively silenced in a systematic manner, the voices are erased or even delegitimized by social and institutional patriarchal machineries. Javeri (2017) states, "The louder she spoke, the harder they worked to drown her voice" (p. 201). All through the novel, women who do not succumb to oppression are punished, either by being attacked as a character, or even literally, by being put into prison. Patriarchal violence is instilled not only physically but institutionally, which is implemented through such mechanisms as antidepressants, media control, legal injustices, and social stigma. Females that declare their agency are often demonized or hysterical. Javeri (2017) observes, "Sisters in struggle, but strangers in survival" (p. 244), which reflects both the conflicts of the feminist movements and the intricacies of the female solidarity in patriarchal cultures. The novel glorifies sisterhood between female characters, the possibility of supporting each other and being strong together, but it also condemns how strong patriarchal structures force women to fight among themselves instead of uniting their strength. Intersectional factors in the oppression and experiences of women include their class, sexuality and social position, implying that not all women are oppressed equally. In the novel, the sexual outsiders such as Rani and Nazneen, who are both in male dominated society, illustrate how their social status, their goals and their weaknesses shape the unique struggles they encounter. The depiction of these subtleties gives the novel an advanced perspective on feminism as a place where intersectional liberation can occur but at the same time shows the systemic constraints, structural imbalances and internalized pressures that are in the way of its transformative force.

In a nutshell the novel throws light on the gendered violence that female characters must deal with in several modes, both physical and symbolic. Female voices, credibility, and emancipation are denied, and their sufferings and pain are often downplayed in a patriarchal society. Instead of portraying patriarchy as a collection of individual instances of male inhumanity, Javeri (2017) portrays patriarchy as a highly institutionalized and self-perpetuating system of power that thrives on institutional collusion, such as family authority, legal systems and ingrained social conventions to legitimize violence against women and safeguard the male privilege. With this portrayal, the novel demonstrates how such institutions all serve to legitimize the suffering of women and absolve the perpetrators of responsibility to strengthen the structural and pervasive character of the oppression of women. Women are placed in periphery positions in

social order. Their narratives are silenced and subdued by the strong male voice which determines what is right or wrong and preserves patriarchal social order.

Conclusion

Nobody Killed Her is an eloquent literary response intervention that reveals and criticizes the structures of patriarchal domination, encompassing the Pakistani society today. The novel is a graphic depiction of how women are institutionally disenfranchised, silenced and made to be disposable using both overt and subtle systems of control. Through the description of the gendered violence, moral policing, and institutional complicity, Javeri (2017) shows that the system of patriarchy is not only a system of isolating male aggression but also an extremely well-organized social system that supports the power of men and limits the agency of women. With her delicate characterization and realistic narrative approach, the novel pre-empts the real-life experiences of women and their efforts to resist social judgment, familial control, and legal indifference; in doing so, it brings into view the structural inequalities that are often accepted and left unnoticed. Javeri (2017) not only critiques act of violence committed against women at the personal level but also interrogates and challenges the structural conditions that enable such violence to persist.

References

Ahmad, R., Ullah, K., & Nawab, H. U. (2024). Cultural reflections: Exploring themes of grief and resilience in the selected Khawar folk poetry. *International Journal of Social Science Archives (IJSSA)*, 7(3).

Ashraf, A., Farooq, S. A., & Parvez, N. (2020). The Subaltern Cannot Speak: A Social, Political and Cultural Critique of Javeri's *Nobody Killed Her*. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 4(1), 1001-1013.

Beauvoir, S. de. (1982). *The second sex* (H. M. Parshley, Trans. & Ed.). Harmondsworth: Penguin. (Original work published 1949)

Bhandari, M. P. (2024). *Feminisms in social sciences*. In *Women and Society*. IntechOpen. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.111652>

Bhat, M. U., & Riyaz, A. (2022). Patriarchy and subjugation: A study of Bapsi Sidwa's *The Pakistani Bride*. *The Criterion: An International Journal in English*, 13(2), 297-303.

Britannica Editors. (2026, January 6). *Feminism*. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism>

British Council Pakistan. (2017). *Interview with author Sabyn Javeri*. British Council Pakistan Library Blog. <https://www.britishcouncil.pk/library/blog/spotlight/interview-with-author-sabyn-javeri>

Haidar, H. (2017, May 27). *The strangeness of truth*. *The Hindu*. Retrieved from <https://www.thehindu.com/books/books-reviews/the-strangeness-of-truth/article18583442.ece>

Hasan, L. R. (2017, July 1). *Review: Nobody Killed Her by Sabyn Javeri*. *Hindustan Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/books/review-nobody-killed-her-by-sabyn-javeri/story-gIKebZNOLvZV2c6bDjfJ2K.htm>

Hiwarkhedka, S. M., & Sharma, A. (2024). Patriarchal dominance in English literature. *International Research Journal on Advanced Engineering and Management*, 2(4), 1228-1231.

Irshad, M. S. B., Ullah, K., & Nawab, H. U. (2025). Economic Exploitation and Resistance: A Marxist Reading Of Toni Morrison's Beloved And Harriet Jacobs' Incidents In The Life Of A Slave Girl. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 8(3), 180-189.

Javeri, S. (2017). *Nobody killed her*. HarperCollins India: Noida, India.

Khan, K., Ullah, K., & Nawab, H. U. (2025). Unpacking Cultural Values through Kalasha Proverbs: A Sociolinguistic Study of the Kalash Valleys, Pakistan. *Dialogue Social Science Review (DSSR)*, 3(6), 1-20.

Mahajan, A. (2016). Bapsi Sidhwa's Novel, 'Ice Candy-Man': Highlights feminist concern about women issues, particularly their experience of victimization and suppression within patriarchal societies. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature (RJELAL) A Peer Reviewed (Refereed) International Journal*, 4, 736-742.

Mitchell, J. (1971). *Women's estate*. Penguin.

Mohajan, H. K. (2022). *An overview on the feminism and its categories* (MPRA Paper No. 114625). *Research and Advances in Education*, 1(3), 11-26. https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/114625/1/MPRA_paper_114625

Qasim, Z., Afzal, M., & Ali, F. (2024). Patriarchal subjugation of women in Sabyn Javeri's *Hijabistan*: A feminist perspective. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 7(4), 171-184.

Sultana, A. (2010). Patriarchy and women's subordination: A theoretical analysis. *Arts Faculty Journal*, 4, 1-18.

Waheed, U., Ullah, K., Farooq, M. (2022). TALKING SUBALTERNS: AN INTERPLAY OF SUBALTERNITY AND MAGICAL REALISM IN SING, UNBURIED, SING. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 4(1), 616-620.

Walby, S. (1990). *Theorizing patriarchy*. Blackwell.

Zubair, H. B., Khan, M. Y., & Taj, S. (2020). Analysing escalating feminist voices against patriarchy in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*. *Academic Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(3), 600-611.