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Between Extreme Culture and Moderate Culture Girls' Education in Malala Yousafzai's I am Malala

A B S T R U C T

I Am Malala is a wonderful book that sheds light on the plight and suffering of women in general in a society that embraces somewhat strict ideologies and cultures. Pakistan is a highly tribal country, so these extremist groups have exploited these strict cultures to empower their hegemonic extremist ideology. Extremist groups used these ideologies to impose their control over society, restrict women's freedom and deprive them of their legitimate rights, especially their right to education. These extremist ideologies have been framed with a religious framework in order to obtain sufficient legitimacy and sanctity to kill and torture those who oppose them, which has made women between the hammer of strict cultures and the anvil of extremist ideas. The present study discusses these cultures from a social and religious framework. The study uses an objective approach by adapting Adorno's theory of "authoritarian personality" to analyze those cultures and the oppressive practices that accompany them. The present study focuses on discussing the arbitrary practices committed against women by trying to impose extreme ideologies. The study concluded that despite the claim of these extremist groups that they adopt Islamic religious ideologies, the issue of depriving females of their right to education has nothing to do with the Islamic religion. Rather, this issue stems from the desire of these extremist groups to spread ignorance among females in order to facilitate their subjugation, control over them and silence the voice of moderation.

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بين الثقافة المتطرفة والثقافة المعتدلة تعليم الفتيات في رواية مالالا يوسفزي أنا ملالا

م.د. حسنين علي كريم /الكلية التربوية المفتوحة/ مركز بابل

الخلاصة:

انا ملالا هو كتاب رائع يلقي الضوء على محنة ومعاناة النساء بشكل عام في مجتمع يحتضن أيديولوجيات وثقافات صارمة إلى حد ما. باكستان بلد قبلي للغاية ، لذلك استغلت هذه الجماعات المتطرفة هذه الثقافات الصارمة لتقوية أيديولوجيتها المتطرفة المهيمنة. استخدمت الجماعات المتطرفة هذه الأيديولوجيات لفرض

وقائع المؤتمر العلمي السابع تحت شعار (العلوم الانسانية بين التحديات الراهنة والافاق المستقبلية) الذي اقامته كلية الآداب في جامعة واسط بتاريخ 2023/7/1

سيطرتها على المجتمع ، وتقييد حرية المرأة وحرمانها من حقوقها المشروعة ، وخاصة حقها في التعليم. تم تأطير هذه الأيديولوجيات المتطرفة في إطار ديني من أجل الحصول على الشرعية والقداسة الكافية لقتل وتعذيب من يعارضها ، مما جعل المرأة بين مطرقة ثقافات صارمة وسندان الأفكار المتطرفة. تناقش الدراسة الحالية هذه الثقافات من إطار اجتماعي وديني. تستخدم الدراسة مقارنة موضوعية من خلال تكيف نظرية أدورنو عن "الشخصية السلطوية" لتحليل تلك الثقافات والممارسات القمعية التي تصاحبها. تركز الدراسة الحالية على مناقشة الممارسات التعسفية التي ترتكب ضد المرأة من خلال محاولة فرض أيديولوجيات متطرفة. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أنه على الرغم من ادعاء هذه الجماعات المتطرفة أنها تتبنى أيديولوجيات دينية إسلامية ، فإن قضية حرمان المرأة من حقها في التعليم لا علاقة لها بالدين الإسلامي. بل تتبع هذه القضية من رغبة هذه الجماعات المتطرفة في نشر الجهل بين الإناث لتسهيل إخضاعهن والسيطرة عليهن وإسكات صوت الاعتدال.

الكلمات الافتتاحية: الشخصية السلطوية، المجاميع المتطرفة، الثقافة المتطرفة، حقوق النساء، تعليم الفتيات

Introduction

Malala and I am Malala

Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani human rights activist, is the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in appreciation of her continuous efforts from a young age to support female education in Pakistan and denounce the Taliban's crimes against females. Malala was born in the Swat Valley in Pakistan, to the majority of Pashtuns, in 1997, and she received her education in Pakistani schools, despite the dangers and threats that females receive from extremist religious groups. Her name was associated with the campaign that she led with her father, Diao El-Din Yousafzai, an educator and poet, for the right to education for girls. At the age of eleven, she began writing down the daily difficulties and fears that accompany girls while they go to school for the BBC. Her increasing popularity and her frequent attendance at conferences and meetings denouncing the Taliban and the extremist approach they follow, and her use of harsh and frank criticism of the violations committed by the Taliban, including bombing girls' schools and issuing fatwas rejecting girls' education, are among the most important reasons that led to her being subjected to an assassination attempt, from which she miraculously escaped in 2012.

Her book *I Am Malala*, co-written with a British journalist Christina Lamb, represents the era that Pakistan went through before, during and after the Taliban rule from a historical, cultural, social, religious as well as a political point of view. This book monitors the positive aspects of Pakistani culture in addition to the negative aspects that extremist religious groups have tried to impose on people. The book also refers to the brutal and inhumane practices that were followed by these extremist groups during their attempt to impose their hegemony and ideologies on others, including terrorizing girls and bombing schools.

Cultural background

Although Pashtun society considers the issue of women's work or their right to education a very sensitive issue and is closely related to the status and honor of the tribe, we can find that there are schools for girls, despite their small number. The issue of honor is considered the backbone of the Pashtun culture, where a certain misunderstanding can lead to dire consequences, sometimes ending in killing. Boesen refers to honor's issue, he writes: "The Pashtuns' system of social norms based on their code of honour and shame is reinforced by Islam in their view of women as social minors and dependants - in fact a Pashtun proverb goes to the effect that 'women are but half-worth human beings'" (231). Therefore, the Pashtuns prefer their women to be at home and to take care of the affairs of the house instead of going out for education or work that may lead them to mix with boys or men. Of course, the intensity of this culture and the issue of adherence to it by the Pashtun tribes varies from one region to another and between the countryside and the city as well. Despite the aforementioned strictness of the Pashtun culture and its keenness to eliminate women from the social arena and limit their tasks to the home, we do not find in the Pashtun culture anything that incites the assault on girls who were allowed to learn and attend schools.

The problem of the study

Extremist groups try to extract the legitimate rights of moderate individuals, especially girls' right of education, by imposing their extremist culture on them, either by manipulating their ideas or by threatening and killing those who oppose them.

the significance of the study

The significance of the present study lies in presenting the suffering and injustice of the moderate and educated group of Pakistani society at the hands of extremist groups through of the insistence of these extremist groups to confiscate the rights of individuals, including the right of women to work and the right of girls to learn.

Purpose of the study

The real purpose of the present study is to analyze and discuss the rational reasons that lie behind the extremist groups' insistence on confiscating individuals' legitimate rights such as women right to work and girls' right to learn.

The study discusses the following set of questions:

Why do extremist groups insist on imposing their culture by confiscating the legitimate rights of others?

What are the means used by extremist groups to impose their cultures?

methodology

The present study is a qualitative and analytical study aimed at discussing the persecution and violence that girls are exposed to due to the efforts of extremist and strict groups to impose their hegemony by confiscating the rights of groups that refuse to obey and submit to that culture. Document analysis approach will be used in the current study to collect data. The data collected will be analysed, which includes the methods used by extremist groups and individuals towards moderate-minded groups, and the reasons for the tendency of these groups to subjugate others and take away their rights, according to Adorno's "The authoritarian personality" theory.

Discussion

1.1. Dressing up extremist ideas and cultures with religious dress

Although Pakistan, especially the Pashtun-majority areas, is characterized by cultural strictness, but before the emergence of religious extremist groups, it was characterized by religious moderation, which gave women a small part of their rights, which is their right to

education like Malala, the Pashtu girl, and her colleagues. These religious extremist groups resorted to manipulating people's thoughts by distorting religious rulings and interpreting them in a way that guarantees the distortion of the previous culture and spreads their extremist culture. Adorno points out about this aspect, he writes "High scorers, more often than low scorers, seem to make use of religious ideas in order to gain some immediate practical advantage or to aid in the manipulation of other people"(733). Manipulation was one of the main means of substituting extremist ideas and making the general public adhere to them. The leaders of extremist groups, who received education in religious schools, took advantage of people's lack of knowledge of the Arabic language and began to reinterpret the Qur'an in a way that was consistent with their takfiri ideas.

About the educational and cultural level of the leader of that extremist group, Malala's father reply to those who called that leader as "a great scholar" and he says, "He's actually a high-school dropout whose real name isn't even Fazlullah', it's ridiculous' that this so-called scholar is spreading ignorance."(93-94). About the educational level of Taliban leaders, Kim writes "The Taliban emerged from a select group of Mujaheddin — a number of them mullahs (leaders of prayers at mosques) who ran madrassas (religious schools)" (139). On their manipulation of the interpretation of the Qur'an, Malala writes, "Mullahs often misinterpret the Quran and Hadith when they teach them in our country as few people understand the original Arabic. Fazlullah exploited this ignorance."(92). The purpose of focusing on the religious aspect was to justify extremist ideas and cultures. Those justifications, which were always reinforced by verses from the Quran, came as sufficient proof for most people abandon moderate thought and adhere to extremist culture. The rapid adoption of these extremist ideas by most people enabled extremist groups to recognize individuals who reject them and seek to get rid of them.

This tampering with the interpretation of the hadiths of the Prophet and the interpretation of the Qur'an by the Taliban led to mobilizing people towards rejecting the prevailing culture, which is characterized by a kind of moderation, and adopting extremist cultures that tend to confiscate women's rights such as girls' right to education. With regard to stripping religion of its sacred content and turning it into a tool for combating opposing cultures and ideas, Adorno writes:

While religion has been deprived of the intrinsic claim of truth, it has been gradually transformed into "social cement." The more this cement is needed for the maintenance of the status quo and the more dubious its inherent truth becomes, the more obstinately is its authority upheld and the more its hostile, destructive and negative features come to the fore. (730)

Little by little, the Taliban began to impose their cultures on society through the use of twisted religious ideas, the purpose of which was to ban everything that would oppose or weaken their ideology. The Taliban focused most of their attention on fighting girls' education because they believe that the educated individual tends to be intellectually moderate and does not favor any kind of extremism, and this is what could constitute a threat to their culture and extremist ideology. Concerning the ban of girls' education within the Taliban ideology, Malala writes "One day Sufi Mohammad proclaimed from jail that there should be no education for women even at girls' madrasas. 'If someone can show any example in history where Islam allows a female madrasa, they can come and piss on my beard.'"(97). Because of the ignorance of a large number of people in the Arabic language and the interpretation of the Qur'an, a large number of them drifted towards this extremist approach and began to stop sending their girls to schools.

Preventing women from working and their right to education was clearly intended to create an ignorant, uneducated generation that cannot distinguish between right and wrong, and also facilitates the process of their submission to the directives and orders of the Taliban. Adorno refers to that kind of subjection and control; he writes, "The man is likely to be described as the master, while the woman is weak and dependent. This division of masculine and feminine roles is often sharply made, no overlapping of roles being allowed" (512) Taliban leaders took advantage of religious texts to reinforce this disparity between men and women to the extent that women became confined to homes. Even natural phenomena have been linked to religion and attributed to the excessive emancipation of women, according to their claim, in order to obtain greater support from the people. Concerning Taliban's ideology about natural phenomena, Malala writes:

Mullahs from the TNSM preached that the earthquake was a warning from God. They said it was caused by women's freed an obscenity. If we did not

mend our ways and introduce sharia or islamic law, they shouted in their thundering voices, more severe punishment would come. (88)

As noted from the aforementioned, the Taliban used all means to convince everyone of the need to restrict women's freedom and prevent them from appearing in public, even if it was for the reason of work or education. The Taliban leaders also tried to link every event and decision to religion so that it would be surrounded by the sanctity and would not be refuted or denied by the opponents.

1.2.Fabricating negative traits about outgroups who reject extremist culture and ideology

One of the means that was also used to subjugate opposing groups was to fabricate negative traits and attach them to those groups to justify their persecution. Everyone who does not follow the Taliban's orders has been accused of blasphemy and atheism, including Malala's father. Regarding those fabricated charges, what Mufti did with the owner of the building to close down the girls' school conducted by Malala's father, Mufti tells the owner:

Ziauddin is running a haram school in your building and bringing shame on the mohalla [neighbour-hood]. These girls should be in purdah ' He told her. "Take building back from him and I will rent it for my madrasa If you do this you will get paid now and also receive a reward in the next world. (74)

The mufti's use of the word "haram" indicates that the school is practicing activities that are contrary to the Islamic religion, which does not actually exist. All the school girls wear Islamic dress and study religious rulings, but the Mufti wanted a pretext to close the school, so he began to stick fabricated charges against it.

On another occasion, when the Mufti failed to close the school, a Taliban delegation was formed to persuade Malala's father to close it. Mullah Ghula, a representative of the Ulema and Tablighian and Taliban, told Malala's father, he said "I am representing good Muslims and we all think your girls ' school is haram and a blasphemy. You should close it. Girls should not be going to school" (77). One of them also adds, he said "I'd heard you were an infidel, but there are Qurans in your room" (78). Once again, the use of the word "haram" by the Taliban

delegation, as well as the words “blasphemy” and “infidel,” are nothing but adjectives fabricated against the girls’ school and Malala’s father. The purpose is to show the opponents of the Taliban that they are against Pakistani culture and against the Islamic religion, and they should be excluded.

Adorno explains why dominant groups tend to attach negative accusations and attributes to outgroups, and writes:

Negative stereotypes-perceptions or accusations of inferiority and nonconformity-are simply a manifestation of the tendency to discriminate, and consequently have usually combined items indicating negative stereotypes with items indicating a tendency to discriminate to form a prejudice scale. Actually, there is evidence that in open conflict accusations of inferiority and non-conformity often are fabricated to hurt others. (105)

When the members of the dominant group feel that they are about to lose the competition with the outgroups, they usually find the means and pretexts to limit the role of those groups and seize their preference and exclude them from the competition. With regard to the tendencies of the dominant group to incite the ingroup members against outgroups under any pretext, Robert L. Hamblin writes:

People who actually lose in competition with members of the minority group-for such items as jobs, houses, schools, and recreation facilities-perceive the members as a potential or actual threat, as agents of frustration. Consequently, members of the majority are instigated to discriminate against the minority group as a defense. (106)

Not only did the Taliban leaders fabricate evil traits against their opponents, but they went further by takfir those who reject their extremist culture and began threatening them with death. Regarding those threats that were issued by the Taliban, Malala writes:

Mullah FM made jokes about the army. Fazlullah denounced Pakistani government officials as 'infidels' and said they were opposed to bringing in sharia law. He said that if they did not implement it, his men would 'enforce it and tear them to piece' (94).

After these strict fatwas by the Taliban against anyone who opposes their ideology, violence began to escalate little by little as a means to deter the violators and force them to accept this extremist culture. Concerning the use of violence and merciless methods in dealing with civilian outgroups Ignacio S. Cuenca and Luis d. Calle write, "Selective violence in general, whether terrorist or not, is based on the mechanism of fear: Violence is a means to generate compliance" (33). The word "haram" used by the Taliban against girls' schools led to a campaign of bombing and closing schools, and forced most parents to stop sending their daughters to school for fear of the Taliban.

On the one hand, the Taliban forces women to stay at home and engage in household duties only, and forbids them to go to work or learn. On the other hand, we find that the Taliban expanded the strict religious schools for women. Some women began to join the Taliban in patrolling the streets under the pretext of applying religious law. Regarding the contradiction in the Taliban's ideology and culture regarding women going out to work or learn, Malala writes:

Around the same time as our Taliban were emerging in Swat, the girls of the Red Mosque madrasa began terrorising the streets of Islamabad . They raided houses they claimed were being used as massage centres, they kidnapped women they said were prostitutes and closed down DVD shops, again making bonfires of CDs and DVDs. When it suits the Taliban , women can be vocal and visible. (105)

The Taliban's duplicity in dealing with women exposes their opportunistic and exploitative ideology. It forbids and prevents moderate education for girls because it will produce an educated generation that could pose a direct threat to their ideology, unlike the strict religious education of girls in their religious schools, which contributes to strengthening their position and supporting their ideology. Concerning this duality and the dominant group's view of outgroups'

intensions, Adorno writes "While the outgroup is accused of selfishness and materialism, the only virtues of the ingroup are the honesty and efficiency of its methods; there is no reference to its ends." (47). According to Adorno's opinion, the Taliban considers the education of girls outside its control and administration as forbidden and corrupt, while the education of girls in the Taliban's strict religious schools is sacred and legitimate, and this is the root of the conflict.

1.3. Violence instead of persuasion in imposing extremist cultures

Most of the emerging groups looking for power tend to attract the largest number of supporters who can be used to implement their ideology and culture. When all soft and smooth methods fail to impose that culture, these groups tend to use violence to impose that culture and remove opponents. This is what the Taliban did in Pakistan. When the Taliban failed to convince the parents of the need to stop sending their daughters to schools, they began attacking and destroying schools. Regarding the girls' determination to defy Taliban culture and continue their education, Malala writes:

I wore pink to the gala and talked publicly about how we had defied the Taliban edict and carried on going to school secretly. 'I know the importance of education because my pens and books were taken from me by force, I said. ' But the girls of Swat are not afraid of anyone. We have continued with our education. (179)

This insistence of girls to learn was translated by the Taliban as a challenge to them and not to submit to their culture and thought. Therefore, in order to maintain their power and control, the Taliban followed the method of intimidation, threats, and violence against the girls and their families. Although what the girls do does not contradict Sharia and religion, it does contradict the culture and ideology of the Taliban. Regarding the Taliban's approach to attacking and harassing those who oppose them, Adorno writes, "The evil, since it is unchangeable, must be attacked, stamped out, or segregated wherever it is found, lest it contaminate the good" (148).

If we bear in mind and agree with Adorno that every group that opposes the dominant group, whether intellectually, religiously or culturally, is considered an outgroup and must be eliminated or subjugated, then we will understand the reason for attacking schools and educators

working in this field. The Taliban began to implement its threats and moved towards bombing schools, Malala writes "Fazlullah kept broadcasting that girls should stay at home and his men had started blowing up schools , usually during night-time curfew when the children were not there." (114) Since girls education is considered contrary to the orders of the Taliban, the dominant group, so girls in schools and those working in this sector were classified within the outgroup, and their targeting became legitimate.

The Taliban's insistence on obtaining power made them strip religion of its sacred content into a means of eliminating opponents and urging supporters to wage "jihad". The Mujahideen were persuaded by misinterpreting fatwas and Quranic verses that were in line with the personal desires of the leaders. Adorno analyzes the reason for this violent behavior of the Taliban, writes "This is indicative of relationships among abstract belief in power, rejection of the more concrete and personal aspects of religion, particularly the idea of an eternal life, and thinly veiled impulses toward violence."(738). About the use of religion for the personal interests of the Taliban and stripping it of its human content, Malala write "They are abusing our religion", " How will you accept Islam if I put a gun to your head and say Islam is the true religion? If they want every person in the world to be Muslim why don't t show themselves to be good Muslims first? (124).

The Taliban's violence was not limited to bombing schools in response to the girls' challenge and insistence on going to school, but they also seemed to kill teachers. Concerning the killing of teachers by the Taliban, Malala writes "A teacher in Matta was killed when he refused to pull his shower above the ankle the way the Taliban wore theirs. He told them that nowhere in Islam is this required. They killed him and his father"(124). The teacher was killed by the Taliban, apparently because he did not adhere to the "Islamic uniform", according to their claim, but his killing carried a message to all teachers to stop teaching girls and follow the orders of the Taliban. In another incident about the killing of teachers and educational workers, Malala writes "My father's friend Dr Mohammad Farooq, the vice chancellor of Swat University , had been killed by two gunmen who burst to his office"(169). The killing of this man and the failed attempt to kill Malala and her classmates upon their return from school illustrate the brutality of the Taliban and its insistence on imposing an extremist and foreign culture on Pakistani society

that contradicts the Islamic religion as well. Regarding the culture and ideology of the Taliban, which is contrary to Islam, Sangeeta Tomar writes: Even though the Taliban claimed that it was acting in the best interests of women, the truth is that the Taliban regime cruelly reduced women and girls to poverty, poor health, and illiteracy conditions. This was not in conformity with the treatment of women in the Muslim world or with the tenets of Islam. (153)

Conclusion

The study finds that the Taliban used many methods to impose its extremist culture on Pakistani society. One of these methods is to dress their rulings and orders with sacred religious dressing, so that opponents of their orders can be eliminated under the pretext of religious non-compliance, as happened with the killing of one of the teachers because of not wearing the religious uniform. As well as to manipulate people's ideas and gain their sympathy and support for that alien culture. As is the case with any group seeking power, the Taliban also followed the method of fabricating lies and negative attributes about individuals and groups that refuse to obey their orders and refuse to accept their extremist culture. This is what we find in describing girls' schools as places of spreading immorality and describing teachers as infidels. The Taliban did not come directly to target teachers for being teachers, nor schools for being an educational institution, but they used religious pretexts to get rid of them. As for the use of violence against those who oppose them and refuse to obey their orders, the Taliban did not differ from any other group competing for authority. Killing and intimidation were one of the means available to the Taliban to impose its extremist culture after it failed to silence the voice of truth and dislodge the moderate culture. Seeking to create a generation of ignorant, uneducated girls and supporting extremist education instead of moderate education is one of the Taliban's goals to facilitate the process of subjugating that generation and obeying orders easily. All in all, the Taliban dealt with the issue of girls' education in a duplicitous manner. On the one hand, it prevented girls from learning, pursued teachers, and blew up public schools with general education. On the other hand, it allowed girls to join its strict religious schools and allowed them to run patrols to enforce Sharia orders.

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