

Malala Yousafzai: An icon for society

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Abstract

The present research paper has been attempted to explore the inhuman restrictions which was put on ignored gender in the past due to some economic and social causes. Quantity matters, but what females do if in spite of a major portion of the society, they didn't get even the basic rights like right to education and to raise their voice against oppression. Malala Yousafzai who promoted education of girls was shot by Taliban. She raised her voice against injustice. She suffered a lot, but she didn't accept those inhuman restrictions that their surroundings put on her. Malala Yousafzai becomes an icon not only for females, but the whole society by getting Nobel Prize for peace at the age of 17. On one hand, Malala quote in her autobiography *I am Malala*.

Today we all know education is our basic right. Not just in the West; Islam too has given us this right. Islam says every girl and everybody should go to school. In the Quran it is written, God wants us to have knowledge. (Malala 263)

The present paper makes an attempt to throw light on the harsh condition of society towards females and extraordinary valour of women to survive and to promote education.

Keywords: shot, swat, quran, education

Introduction

In a land where people show sympathy when a girl is born, Ziauddin, a Sunni Muslim, a poet, and one who runs a chain of public schools, fought for his own education was the exception. Ziauddin, named his daughter Malala, which means 'grief stricken' after a famous female Pashun poet and warrior from Afghanistan. He was the father of that girl to whom a gunman once asked in a school bus, "Who is Malala?" and a year later, there is no one in the world who does not know Malala.

By the end of 2008, the Taliban had destroyed 400 schools. On 14 January 2009, all the girls' schools were permanently closed. Eleven days earlier, Malala had begun blogging for the BBC. She came to public attention by writing for BBC Urdu about life under the Taliban. Taliban stated that if girls are ready to wear Burkhass, in that case they can receive primary education. But, a climate of fear prevailed and Malala and her father began to receive death threats for their outspoken views. Nobody believed the Taliban would kill a child. Her father once considered moving Malala outside of Swat valley to a boarding school, but she denies after saying that everybody knows they will die one day. (188) When her father suggested they stop their campaigns for human rights, Malala replied:

People were asking me to speak at events. How could I refuse saying there was a security problem? We couldn't do that, especially not as proud Pashtuns. My father always said that heroism is in the Pashtun DNA. (180)

This is the enthusiastic spirit of brave girl who is going to write her name with golden words in the history through her extraordinary courage. It is true that if we want to do something great, we have to take risk in our life. Expression of thought is the first required thing to express our views. She reflects at the age of 14, "Sometimes I think it's easier to be a Twilight vampire than a girl in Swat." Then came her would-be assassin.

On Tuesday 9 October 2012, she almost paid the ultimate price. Her criticism of the Taliban caused Taliban leaders to meet, and in 2012, they voted to kill her. Yousafzai, who had campaigned passionately since the age of 11 for the right of girls to have an education, was shot in the head. A masked gunman entered her school bus and asked about Malala. Malala was identified and she was shot with a single bullet which went through her head, neck and shoulder.

Malala was in a critical condition, her critical organs were failing and she developed an infection. In a coma, she was moved to a hospital in Rawalpindi and later to Birmingham in the United Kingdom for further treatment at a specialist hospital for treating military injuries. A couple of days later, she came out of a coma and responded well to treatment. She was discharged on January 3, 2013 and moved with her family to a temporary home in the West Midlands. Writing in her book *I am Malala* she writes, "It was a miracle I was alive" (237). She also writes about her lack of bitterness or desire for revenge:

My only regret was that I hadn't had a chance to speak to them before they shot me. Now they'd never hear what I had to say. I didn't even think a single bad thought about the man who shot me – I had no thoughts of revenge – I just wanted to go back to Swat. I wanted to go home. (237)

Her assassination received worldwide condemnation and protests across Pakistan.

Over 2 million people signed the Right to Education campaign. The petition helped the ratification of Pakistan's first right to education bill in Pakistan.

Ehsanullah Ehsan chief spokesman for the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the attack, saying Yousafzai had been brainwashed by her father: "We warned him several times to stop his daughter from using dirty language against us, but he didn't listen and forced us to take this extreme step". (Declan Walsh. "Taliban Reiterate

Vow to Kill Pakistani Girl". The New York Times. 12 October 2012. Web 26 Nov. 2017)

The Taliban also justified its attack as part of religious scripture, stating that the Quran says that "people propagating against Islam and Islamic forces would be killed", going on to say that "Sharia says that even a child can be killed if he is propagating against Islam". ("Malala Yousafzai deserved to die, say Taliban". The Guardian (London). 16 October 2012. Web 26 Nov. 2017)

On 12 October 2012, a group of 50 Islamic clerics in Pakistan issued a fatwa – a ruling of Islamic law – against the Taliban gunmen who tried to kill Yousafzai. On 12 July 2013, Yousafzai's 16th birthday, she spoke at the UN to call for worldwide access to education. The UN dubbed the event Malala Day: ("Shot Pakistan schoolgirl Malala Yousafzai addresses UN". BBC News. 12 July 2013. Web 28 Nov. 2017)

Malala day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights.

"UN Global Education First Initiative – United Nations Secretary General's Global Initiative on Education – Youth Advocacy Group". Web. 1 Dec. 2017.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malala_Yousafzai>

I am not against anyone, neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorist group. I'm here to speak up for the right of education for every child. I want education for the sons and daughters of the Taliban and all terrorists and extremists." (BBC Link of Speech)

"One year after being shot by the Taliban, Malala Yousafzai is a mighty machine". Globe and Mail (Toronto). Web. 1 Dec. 2017.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malala_Yousafzai>

I Am Malala is a tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, and of Malala's parents' love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons. In October, 2014, the Nobel committee awarded Malala the Nobel Peace Prize, the said:

Despite her youth, Malala Yousafzai has already fought for several years for the right of girls to education, and has shown by example that children and young people, too, can contribute to improving their own situations. This she has done under the most dangerous circumstances. Through her heroic struggle she has become a leading spokesperson for girls' rights to education.

The All Pakistan Private Schools Federation announced that the book would be banned. Adeeb Javedani, president of the All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association, said his organisation had banned Malala's book from the libraries of its 40,000 affiliated schools and called on the government to bar it from school curriculum.

According to Kashif Mirza, the chairman of the All Pakistan Private Schools Federation also criticise this book by saying that the book did not show enough respect for Islam. He also said it spoke favourably of the author Salman Rushdie, who angered many Muslims with his book *The Satanic Verses*, and Ahmadis, members of a minority sect who have been declared non-Muslims under Pakistani law.

Malala mentions in the book that Pakistan's population of 180 million people includes more than 2 million Ahmadis who say they are Muslim though our government says they are not. Sadly those minority communities are often attacked referring also to Pakistan's 2 million Christians. This book should be read not only for its drama, but also for its message of education which Malala wants to give, as Marie Claire states:

"Remarkable...a must-read, first-person account of her journey through global terrorism, her brave, encouraging parents, and her own fight for girls' education."

She has received numerous peace awards, and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 along with Kailash Satyarthi, an Indian children's rights activist.

My purpose to take this personality is to show that we all have that kind of spark, but we afraid to take risk in our life. If a teenager like Malala took the bold steps in an oppressive atmosphere and show extra ordinary courage, so why we all can not raise our voice for various social evils inspite of all the facilities. We should not only uplift our life, but we brought up our upcoming generation in such a way that they will flourish with that type of calibre that they must be able to write their autobiography at the age of 16. As the youngest Nobel Prize winner for peace Malala Yousafzai spoke these words in UN Speech on July 12, 2013, "One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first."

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