

Review of: "[Commentary] Commentary on Sociocultural Beliefs and Systems Restricting Women's Access to their Marital Property Rights in Pakistan"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

[Paragraph 2, sentence 2: "Positive awareness and attitude in the community do not translate into action as women were reported to be deprived of their marital property rights."] - **reported by whom?**

[Paragraph 2, sentences 4 and 5] **I disagree with the argument that a paradoxical state of cognitive dissonance and cognitive consonance prevails in the Pakistani setting. Such contradictions can indeed prevail for many generations, but in my view, they amount to weaknesses, sometimes critical ones, in the fabric of society. It is not that people are both comfortable and uncomfortable at the same time; rather, they attempt to deny or mask their discomfort, which can lead to personal mental health issues and/or social instability.**

[Paragraph 3] - **This paragraph makes some important points, but does so in a very detached and dry manner. Takeaway: *although Pakistani and Islamic law supports women's ownership and control of property, women themselves are not encouraged to follow legal channels. Rather, they learn by observation and participation in traditional social settings, in which female control of property is deemphasized. Such customary practices are perceived to be safer and more appropriate. Again, we are witnessing the result of longstanding denial of the risks, responsibilities, and rewards that accrue when people take charge of their own lives and livelihoods.***

[Paragraph 4] "Automatic learning of axiomatic knowledge instils a sense of religious knowledge within individuals (heuristic processing), and promotes the culture of ritualistic reading of the Quran as opposed to learning through translation in native languages (systematic processing). Over the passage of time, this has resulted in a high degree of incongruence between perceived knowledge and actual knowledge vis-à-vis perceived knowledge and behaviour." - **This is a very important point. Religious practice without knowledge can misguide more than it guides.**

[Paragraphs 5 and 6] - **Selective use of religious and cultural traditions to benefit men is a global phenomenon. The author correctly argues that female leadership is necessary in order to teach young men empathy and young women the importance of autonomy in their own property and health management. However, it is far from clear how to achieve a society in which women take such an active leadership role.**