

Essay

Day: Wednesday

Date: 11/1/2023

Climate Change Affects Everyone, but its Impacts on Men and Women are Different and Disproportionate

Outline

I. Introduction

II. cursory glance at climate change

III. Effects of climate change

A. Appreciating food insecurity

B. Increasing urbanization

IV. Different and disproportionate impacts of climate change on men and women

A. Travelling for longer distances

in search of food and water

B. Losing jobs in rural areas

C. Increasing domestic violence

D. Non-provisioning of proper health care system

E. Increasing waterborne or vectorborne diseases

F. Lacking proper sanitation system

G. Increasing school dropouts

H. Encouraging malnutrition

V. Challenges to curb the impacts

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of climate change

- A. Lacking global consensus
- B. Poor governance

VI. Structural recommendations to decrease the impacts of climate change on men and women

- A. Legislating proactive disaster management policy
- B. Enhancing institutional capacity

VII. Conclusion

Essay :

Not a day goes by that does not bring the news of impacts of climate change on conventional and non-conventional media alike.

Climate change is impacting every creature on the earth. Climate change causes hinderance in the development of a state. There are numerous effects of climate change on human beings which include food insecurity, increasing urbanization etc. The impacts

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of climate change are different and unequal on men and women like, women have to travel for longer distances for food and water, loss of jobs particularly in rural areas, increasing gender based violence, improper healthcare system affects women in different way, etc. States are trying to curb these impacts of climate change but are facing challenges.

As climate change is a global phenomenon, thus collective efforts are needed by all states. Many states do not adhere to the terms and conditions required to curb climate change. Secondly, poor governance is another challenge to curb the impacts of climate change. As every problem breeds its own solutions, proactive policies for disaster management are needed at national stage. There is also a need to enhance institutional capacity as well. Before going into the details, it is pertinent to have a look at what climate change is.

Climate change is the change in climate of a region or the whole world. The emission of greenhouse gases causes global warming which results in climate change. Majority of greenhouse gas emissions are from industries. Although, there are many other factors as well which contribute to global greenhouse gases. Climate change impacts everyone on the earth in different and disproportionate ways.

To begin with the effects of climate change, the first effect is increasing food insecurity. Climate change causes disasters like floods, droughts, famine, etc. These disasters impact the agriculture sector of a state. The floods in Pakistan damaged all cash crops which resulted in food insecurity. According to a report, almost 15 to 16 percent of Pakistanis are facing food shortage. This shortage has resulted in unprecedented inflation. Hence, food insecurity is an effect of climate change.

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Along with this, the second effect of climate change is increased urbanization. The disasters which result from climate change badly damage the infrastructure in rural areas ultimately, increasing the internally displaced persons.

As the internally displaced persons increases, they move towards the urban areas for employment opportunities and shelter. For example, the internally displaced persons due to floods in Pakistan moved to Karachi in large numbers. This movement resulted in increase in crimes, urban pollution, urban unemployment, among others. Thus, urbanization is a prominent effect of climate change.

To begin with, the different and unequal impacts of climate change on men and women. The first impact is travelling long distances in search of necessities. Women in rural areas move from one place to another in search of food and water. The climate change has further increased

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the distance. The women in African countries travel kilometers of distance to fetch water for household. Whereas, this donot affect men as much. In developing areas manging household is women duty, although men just contribute through earning. Travelling longer distance badly impacts the health of women. Thus, impact of climate change is unequal.

Another impact is loss of jobs in rural areas. Women in rural areas also contribute in agricultural activities. The disasters imposed by climate change reduces the crop production or damages the crop which ultimately leads to unemployment. This factor affects women much as compared to men. As men can go to urban areas in search of employment, women cannot go. In Pakistan, agriculture contributes almost 19.2 percent to the GDP. This includes 38.5 percent of the labour force. Women have significant contribution in this 38.5 percent. When the agriculture

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of a country suffers, women suffer as well. Thus, the impact of climate change is disproportionate.

In addition to loss of jobs, another impact of climate change is increase in domestic violence. The disasters due to the climate change hampers human's life. This results in the increase in domestic violence. Men exert force on women due to issues such as economic, social, etc. According to a report published by eleven entities of United Nations, shows that in disasters, crisis, conflict, etc, the gender based violence increase many folds. In COVID-19 the gender based violence increased by forty five percent. This increase result in suicides, depression, etc. Thus, this impact of climate change is different for both genders.

Improper healthcare system is also an impact of climate change. Climate induced disasters destroy the

health care system of an area. Women in rural areas face many issues due to non-provisioning of proper health care. During floods in Pakistan, many women were pregnant due to which they lost their lives because of poor health care facilities.

The inavailability of proper health care resulted in increasing depression, anxiety, etc. On the other hand, men were not affected to that extent. Thus, it is an evident impact of climate change.

Climate change has also impacted men and women through different diseases. The disasters resulted in the increase of diseases. Due to inavailability of shelter in rural areas, majority of the population was infected by these waterborne or vector borne diseases. The floods in India resulted in the increased cases of malaria and dengue. According to a report, majority of them were women. This resulted in increased mortality rate, further deteriorating the disaster. Hence, climate

change impacts human beings in different ways which are disproportionate.

Lacking proper sanitation system in rural areas is another impact of climate change. When the disasters occur due to poor sanitation, it further deteriorate the situation. During floods in Pakistan due to poor sanitation facilities in rural areas women faced difficulties in many ways. The inadequate sanitation system resulted in health issues. According to a report many diseases in flood areas resulted due to women not have proper sanitary facility like they could not properly cater their menstrual cycle. This further increased the intensity of impact. Whereas, men can use combined washrooms even if they are at a distance. Thus, it clearly depicts the unequal impacts of climate change.

Climate change impacts the drop out ratio as well. The consequences of climate change

Like floods, storms, etc., damage the infrastructure which ultimately, push people towards public schools, etc.

In Sindh, at the time of flood, majority of the population, affected by the disaster, was given shelter in government schools. This increased the drop outs of women, more than men.

On the other hand, men travelled to other cities for studies. Hence, the climate change impacts increases dropouts of women from institutions.

Finally, encouraging malnutrition is another impact due to the climate change. The climate change badly impact the agriculture sector, which ultimately results in food insecurity. Africa is facing malnutrition due to food insecurity. The disasters has impacted them in different ways. Women has to feed their children. It is only possible if she is properly nutritioned. A balanced diet is needed to ensure a good life. Hence, malnutrition

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due to climate change poses threat to women and men.

States are trying to curb the impacts of climate change but are facing challenges. The first and foremost challenge is lacking global consensus. Climate change is not an issue of one state. It is a collective issue which needs to be countered collectively. The global north is not interested in curbing climate change impacts.

Protocols like Kyoto Protocol is the prime example. Major countries like United States of America withdrew from it. Similarly, in Paris agreement of 2015, big contributors of greenhouse gases left. Thus, global consensus to curb climate change is huge challenge for states.

Secondly, poor governance at national level is also a prime challenge to curb climate change.

Poor governance includes, reactive policies instead of proactive policies,

Encroachments, improper drainage, poor adaptation framework, lack of robust disaster management plan, etc. Poor governance exacerbate the impacts of climate change. The recent floods in Pakistan is prime example. The poor governance complemented the impacts of disaster. Poorly cleaned canals, ill-maintained structures further increased the destruction. Thus, poor governance is an equally important challenge like others.

As every problem breeds its own solutions, proactive legislation regarding disaster management policy is needed in order to reduce the impacts of climate change. A robust disaster management must have well planned mitigation, response, recovery and rehabilitation policy. Everything must be planned before the disaster. The best example is of Holland. Holland is five to six feet below the sea level but they have made a robust

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management policy. Whenever a flood or hurricane occurs, they channelize the water in a way that it does not harm neither the infrastructure nor cause urban flooding. A good disaster management can help adapt to the climate change. Hence, proper disaster management policy is the need of the hour.

Finally, institutional capacity must be enhanced in order to curb impacts of climate change. The institutions like local governments, law enforcement agencies, health care, rescue department, etc. Proper training regarding tackling of climate induced disasters must be organized. Incentives must be provided to these people. The use of technology, machinery, etc, must be encouraged. Hence, to counter the impacts of climate change institutional capacity must be enhanced.

In a nut shell, the impacts posed by climate change are numerous.

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The impacts are disproportionate for genders like diseases impact the genders differently, proper sanitation system, increasing drop outs which are mostly women and lastly the malnutrition. There are many challenges which are faced by states to counter impacts of climate change. Lastly, measures should be taken to reduce the impacts of climate change to ensure equality and development. The World is working for it but still there are efforts needed. As Robert Frost say,

The woods are lovely, dark and deep

But I have promises to keep

And miles to go before I sleep

And miles to go before I sleep