

Pakistani women have same chances as men.

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Women make up nearly half of the total population (48.8 percent) of Pakistan which clearly means that they are the real asset and strength of the country. Undoubtedly, Pakistan's sustainable socio-economic, political and cultural development wholly lies in the equality, empowerment, participation and representation of women in all walks of life. Therefore, realising the capabilities of women, Pakistan is rapidly moving towards gender equality. The advancement made by Pakistani women in their pursuit of equality have led to the sustainable progress resulting in comparable opportunities to men across multiple domains, underscoring the evolution towards gender parity within Pakistani society. Women in Pakistan enjoy equal social, economical, educational, cultural and political rights. They are excelling in every field including sports. There is no denying the fact that Pakistani women have faced severe crisis and they were subjected to discrimination, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and were victims of patriarchal society. The extent of these events have decreased and Pakistan is now moving towards gender parity. Embarking on a transformative journey, Pakistan is at the forefront of redefining gender dynamics, where women are not just recipients of opportunities, but architect of their own destinies. There was a time when women in Pakistan faced unmatched crisis, but now

They enjoy same opportunities as men.

To begin with, I would say that Pakistani women have easy access to all academic fields like men. They can join institutions of their wish and study where ever they want. The constitution of Pakistan gives right to education to both men and women. Women exercise their right and we see women participation in all major universities of Pakistan. Due to educational opportunities, Pakistani women are good authors. Pakistan has produced good authors such as Bano Qudsia, Aida Kaum and many more. Afa Kaum has made Pakistan proud in foreign institutes. Due to this, we can say that Pakistani women have same educational opportunities as men.

Besides education, women in Pakistan have same opportunities as men in economic affairs. They are free to choose their career paths. Pakistani society encourages women to participate in economic activity. Almost half of the SMEs are run by women entrepreneurs in Pakistan. The government has made Women banks to encourage women to participate in economic activities of the country. Easy loans and subsidies are accessible to women through these banks. The government of Pakistan has also fixed quota for women in government jobs. They are selected on their specified quota and can compete on general seats as well. This shows

2 encouragement of women in jobs. The initiatives such as Benazir Income Support Program, Waseela-e-Talim and unyab Dawar programs, all include women and encourage them to add their value and input in economic activity. Women in Pakistan can easily access all economic opportunities like men.

Furthermore, women in Pakistan have equal opportunities like men in political sphere. They enjoy political participation and representation. Constituting of almost half of the population of Pakistan, women have a big say in who runs the country. Women represent their people in both national and provincial assemblies. It is mandatory for parties to give tickets to women candidates. Due to this equality, Pakistan gave birth to 1st ever Muslim female head of government Benazir Bhutto. Many prominent female leaders are actively participating in political activities such as Maryam Nawaz, Farooq Rasheed, Sheeran Mirali, Arifa Bhutto and so on. The huge number of women in politics represent that Pakistani women have same opportunities as men.

Apart from political participation, women are part of legislation in Pakistan. In Pakistan, women can become judges and there is no embargo on women to hold any office. Women can become lawyers, judges and parliamentarians. The constitution of Pakistan also give same protection to women and men. Women can even feel

cases in Women Ombudsmen which is developed to address women cover all across Pakistan. Women in Pakistan have access to justice and they are legally empowered.

Moreover, women enjoy a respectable social status in Pakistan. It is common to see people (men) giving space to women in banks, ATMs and office and women have to hardly stand in a queue. Women are treated with respect in every field of life especially in public places. Socially women are more empowered in Pakistan than the rest of developing countries as it is the tradition to treat women with respect. Women have access to all the services which men have like bus, metro, parks etc. Due to this women are seen in all offices in Pakistan. This shows that women enjoy equal opportunities as men in Pakistan.

Due to their social status, women are seen in every office. Women representation in every office shows that they have equal opportunities like men. Be it military, judiciary, civil services, media or any other department, we see women representation in it. Pakistani women have served on top ranks in Pakistan Army. They also become Chief Justice of high courts. We've also discussed about women participation in politics which further substantiate the argument that women have same chances as

men in Pakistan.

Furthermore, Pakistani women represent their nation in sports as well. They can represent the country in national and international events. The hockey and cricket teams of Pakistan have won many accolades. Be it indoor or outdoor sport of single or team sports Pakistan women participation is there. Women are encouraged to play sports and they can choose physical activity of their own. That is why women represents Pakistan in every sport they want. It shows that Pakistani women have same opportunities like men.

Despite enjoying equal opportunities, women also face few challenges and hurdles. Some argue that women face discrimination on the basis of gender as they live in a patriarchal society. It is same how true but it is in no way an impediment to women's growth. Despite living in a patriarchal society, women can enjoy their rights as there are institutions to protect their rights. Women can take control of their life and no physical cultural barriers is placed in their way to stop them from gaining success.

Furthermore, many argue that women are the victim of gender based violence and discrimination. It is said without an iota of doubt that AUV and gender discrimination prevails in our society. Both male and

female are victims of it. So just limiting it with women would not be a valid argument. Therefore, women and men both are vulnerable to AUV and it is not specific to women.

Though women face challenges, the role of NGOs, INGOs and civil society can help in solving the challenges. For a better future we need an informed and active civil sector. NGOs and INGOs have to play an active role in augmenting gender parity. Through their role women empowerment will increase and it will further strengthen women participation. This will ensure that Pakistani women have same chances as men.

In addition to this, strict implementation of laws related to women ^{are the} needs of the hour. There are laws made by government in this regard and they are a step in the right direction but their swift implementation is necessary. Women related laws are necessary to ensure that they enjoy same opportunities as men. For this proper legislation is required and only through this women will have same chances as men in Pakistan.

To conclude this, I would say that it is proud that Pakistani women have same chances as men in every sphere of life. Women are the architect of their own future in Pakistan. Their representation in

every field ensure that their rights are protected. There are of course few challenges but they can be tackled by implementing women related laws in letter and spirit. Women are working shoulder to shoulder with men and they are adding value to the prosperity of Pakistan. No country can prosper without women participation and therefore Pakistan is progressing with women participating in every field.