

## Essay

Pakistani Women have same chances as men

### Outline

#### Introduction

I. Are Pakistani women have same chances as men

A. Gender gap index of Pakistan

II. Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights and chances but the reality is different

A. Low economic chances available to women as compared to men

B. Less socio-political 'opportunities' available to Pakistani women.

C. Stark difference between literacy rate of men and women

D. Abysmal condition of Health opportunities for women.

E. Less legal rights available for women

1. Honour killing

2. Women in compensation (to resolve disputes by compensation of women)

III. Pakistani society is patriarchal society that favours men as compared to women.

IV. Gender based violence (women are more affected as compared to men.

A. Domestic violence

B. Sexual violence and harassment at work place.

V. Less women in leadership positions as compared to men

VI. Difference in the salary of men and women in media

VII. Less participation of women in Judiciary

VIII. Poor law and order situation hampers free mobility and safety of women

IX. The greater turnout of women as compared to men gives hope about bright future of women in Pakistan.

X. In election 2024, many women are directly elected when given opportunity, a good sign for Pakistani society.

Conclusion

In Past, there was less participation of women in electoral process and there were less women candidates for direct election. However, in the election of 2024, Pakistani women had voted in great numbers. When given the opportunity by political parties, many women are succeeded even in the marginalized areas of Khabar KP. The constitution of Pakistan has ensured equal rights for men and women however, the implementation of true essence of constitution is far from reality. In Past, women were not granted equal chances but however there is a significant improvement in this regard but still there is a long way to go. Pakistani women lag behind man in almost every sphere of life as Pakistani society is primarily a patriarchal society. Despite comprising of half of population, Pakistani women are not integrated well into economic sphere. On socio-economic front women lag behind men. There is

less political participation in past. There are less women in leadership positions in Pakistan. In judiciary there is minimal participation of women. Health and education are fundamental rights. These rights are inaccessible to many women. The most important indicator where the women in Pakistan suffers the most is gender based violence. Rural and urban women residents are equally vulnerable. Sexual violence and harassment at workplace is also seen. Women in Pakistan have to face discrimination in media with huge salary gaps. Women are <sup>more</sup> affected by cyber bullying as compared to men. In past, women did not have same chances as men. However the atmosphere is changing and Pakistan is moving towards more inclusive society.

In past, and at present, Pakistani women are not granted equal chances as men but the things are going in the right direction. There is still a huge

scope of improvement. The gender gap index of Pakistan shows that Pakistan ranks 121/141 countries according to the report by UNDP. This report also stated that it took 150 years for Pakistan to bridge this gap. The other indicator shows that Pakistan is <sup>ranked</sup> fourth from the last, as the fourth most vulnerable country for women. This shows that a lot of work is to be done in this regard.

### Constitution of Pakistan

guarantees equal rights for both men and women. It <sup>does</sup> not differentiate between men and women and ensures fundamental rights such as health, education, life, protection, political participation for all. The founder of Pakistan Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah also said that, "No nation can make progress if their women are not side by side as men." This

shows the commitment of Pakistani society towards rights of women. Moreover, the legal system of Pakistan gives protection to women but it is not practiced as per standard. Economic inclusiveness of women is also less compared to men despite constitutional and legal rights.

Economy is backbone of any country. Pakistan is currently facing severe economic crisis. The reason of this crisis is that the women which comprises half of population (49.5%) are not included in economy directly. Women are not integrated in documented economy. There is an example of Bangladesh, how they elevated status of women by economically integrating them into mainstream. Moreover, there is a huge pay gap between men and women workers. This attitude discourages women from participating in economic activities of a country.

Women in Pakistan lag behind men in socio-political sphere as compare to men. There are less women electables as compared to men. There is the attitude in the society that politics is job of men. There are less women political leaders in history. In social sphere of life, the participation of women is less as compared to men. There are more women on roads, in markets, traders, transporters, religious scholars etc. Women are not integrated equally in socio-political avenue.

Literacy rate shows the overall health of any country. Pakistan is one of the most under performing country in this regard with the literacy rate of 64%, according to the census of Pakistan, 2023. The literacy rate of women is even lesser as compared to men especially in provinces like Balochistan, some areas of KP. In southern



Balochistan the literacy rate of Pakistan is as low as 17%. Even in the provinces like Punjab there is a difference between male and female literacy rate.

Health is the fundamental right and it is not fully available to both men and women. However, the condition health of women is abysmal. Pakistan is the country which has one of the highest mortality rates of mother. Moreover, there is no proper framework for the betterment of reproductive health of women. Additionally, women are one of the most affected by climate change induced migrations that caused period poverty and other harmful implications for women.

Pakistan has good legal system but unfortunately it is not performing efficiently for

both men and women. Moreover, women are the ones who are more affected by loopholes in legal system. There are some common practices of honour killing, acid attacks, karokari and women given in compensation in many areas of Pakistan. Sheema Ohaid Chennoy highlighted this issue of acid attacks in her documentary and it won Oscar award.

Pakistani society in general is a patriarchal society that favours men as compared to women. The progress of women is hampered in many ways. They are unable to choose the career of their own choice. There is the essence of honour of family attached to women but not men. Women feel and face harassment and discrimination on all fronts. Certain jobs are tabooed.

for women. People do not allow women to participate in them. However, the things are changing in positive direction some parents are supporting their daughters and helping them in achieving their dreams. The father of Dua Zahra, Mehdi Hasan is example that how he stood by her daughter irrespect of the backlash he faced from some people.

Gender based violence is severe crime that is done against women. Men too are affected by this but women are much more affected. Domestic violence is very common in Pakistan. It is equally present in rural and urban societies. This case is much less reported. Men believe that they got the right to have violence as they are physically strong. Women due to less awareness do not report it, as the significant improvement in this regard is that government of Pakistan

has made laws to protect women. Domestic violence protection act is remarkable in this regard.

Sexual violence is another common problem that women of Pakistan face. Sexual violence is of many forms Rape, marital rape, harassment at workplace etc. This is also less reported as <sup>family</sup> honour is attached to women and their families prefer to remain silent. Noor Muqadam case in which the father remain steadfast and the culprit is sentenced. Moreover, first conviction for marital rape took place in Karachi Pakistan

There is less participation of women in leadership roles. Pakistan has seen only one Female Prime Minister in the history. Moreover, there are less women heads of companies. All the political parties are leaded

by males. There are less women as speaker of House. Moreover, due to patriarch nature of society there is a long way to go for a women of this country.

Media is important department of any country. There is a huge salary gap of male and female in media. Moreover, the females are vulnerable there. They face harassment from staff, viewers, there is that vulnerability for them about their job security as they fire females, in respect of granting them leaves during pregnancy and other health emergencies.

Judiciary is an important pillar for the successful working of any democracy. Pakistan is a democratic country, with population of women nearly equals

to men, there are only two women judges of Supreme Court of Pakistan, Ayesha Jalal and Musarat Hilali. This shows the minimum participation of women in judicial sphere.

The Law and order index of Pakistan is not good. The poor security situation of Pakistan hampers progress of women. Increase street crimes makes safety of women vulnerable. Women do not feel safe at any place. Motorway case highlights that how a woman is insecure in Pakistan. Women can not move freely with protection of family.

The above discussion shows the abysmal condition of women, however, women of Pakistan are resilient and strong. In the elections

of 2024, the turnout of women is greater as compared to men. This shows the women trust on democracy and this country and their willingness to participate in the betterment of this country.

Due to the political conditions pre-elections, many women are granted tickets and they too are elected. This shows that there is no difference between men and women if both are given equal chances. The only thing required is to give opportunities to women and change the patriarchal attitude of society.

In a nutshell, the women of Pakistan was not given equal chances in past but due to the excessibility of education, more and more women are able to know their rights. Women have shown aptitude to change the norms of society. They are

willing to contribute for better progressive Pakistan. Government of Pakistan, ought to legislate in the favour of women and ensures their inclusiveness of in economic activity of the country. This is the solution to many core issues of Pakistan especially economy related issues. Women should be granted security and make them able to participate in socio-political sphere of Pakistan. Religious clergy should also contribute towards the inclusiveness of women. Constitutional rights should be granted to both men and women in this way a tolerant and progressive country can be formed.