

Women : Marginalise section in Pakistan

Outline:

(1) Introduction

- (a) Bacha Khan Quote
- (b) Historical evidences
- (c) thesis statement

(2) Historical overview

(3) Women have deprived from their social rights

- (a) Health
 - (i) Reproductive right
- (b) Education

(4) Women have disenfranchised from their political rights

- (a) unequal representation

(5) Women have faced Judicial disparities

- (a) Right to ease

(6) Women have deprived from their economic rights

- (a) Labour force
- (b) Unequal pay

(7) Challenges have faced by them to keep away from their rights.

- (a) patriarchal structure of society
- (b) Honor killing
- (c) Retrogressive and outdated cultural norms and values

(8) Steps have taken by Government

- (i) 1973 Constitution / Bhatta Government
- (ii) Muslim family law ordinance
- (iii) Sindh Government 2017 child marriage act.

~~(9) Conclusion~~

(11)

(9) Government and social institution can mitigate it if they adopt same action and laws.

(i) legislation over patriarchy and encouragement of women social institution

(ii) State has to bring / prioritize women education.

(iii) Equal representation in Political Platforms

(iv) State should provide equal opportunities in both public and private sector

(10) Conclusion.

Prominent political thinker
Bacha Khan says, "both
man and woman are same
wheels of cart's tango,
if one effect another cannot
work properly." in Pakistan,
both men and women have
equal population. Historically,
women are deprived from their
basic fundamental rights. There
we have evidences, in first
Constituent assembly, there was
two women - Shaista and
Jahanara Shah Nawaz - both
were representative of 50%
population. Similarly, religious
clergies were not ready to
sit with them in assembly.
"Women have still deprived from
their basic and fundamental
rights, certain challenges. make
hurdles to get their rights,
meanwhile government has
taken less effective
measures to tackle these
issues." Furthermore, the
government and other institution
(political, social, economic) may
find out the solution, if
they adopt and make
certain pragmatic laws
and actions.

(14)

Historically, women's faced hurdles and challenges in Pakistan. During Colonial era, women's equally participated in liberation movement. While press condemned and termed "shameless women." After partition, they deprived from their political rights - mulim league given them 2 member in constituent assembly. Due to gender discrimination, Religious clerics could not want to sit with them in assembly.

Furthermore, they were given only 3% quota seats in assembly.

All Pakistan Women Association (APWA) was formed for women encouragement but it was working under their rules and regulation of patriarchal government. Undoubtedly, women were more suffered in Zai. Era, who seized power illegal. To get legitimacy and popularity among people, he orchestrated and adopted policy of Islamization. This policy suffered women because there were: Hudood ordinance,

Zina ordinance and family law ordinance. Women recorded massive agitations against Zai regime. Moreover, during global war on terror (GWOT) women's were more suffered/deprived from their rights due to conservative policies

(5)

Despite of historical atrocities, women are still depriving from their social rights. They have no excess to cultural activities, sports participation, technological and tourism participation. According to pakhtunkwa cultural departments, previous year, a Jirga was held by locals where they decided to ban ~~on~~ on vacationing during eid. Additionally, women of rural areas are more suppressed than that of cities in Pakistan.

Adding to this, women have no availability to suitable health. According to international Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), 9000 new cases diagnosed each year and 40000 deaths per year. Furthermore, according to World Health Organisation, Pakistan is having the lowest life expectancy rate in Asia in terms of women. Additionally, health issues are ~~for~~ drastic impacts over women life.

Moreover, women have no excess to reproductive rights.

According to World Health Organisation, 830 women die a day in child birth. Recent data from United Nation population fund (UNFPA)

(6)

, less than 1 woman in 3 has
take decision her reproductive
and sexual health, in every 50
minute woman died in
pregnancy complication.

instead of health, women
have no access to quality
education. Recent data from Pakistan
Education Statistic, 12 millions

girls are out of schools. Gender
disparities exist in our schools,
colleges and universities. Additionally,
there are some hurdles that
keep away girls from education
such as early marriages, puberty,
safety and distance from
educational institutions. in
rural areas, girls are limited to
home by the name of honour,
culture and tradition.

moreover, women deprive
from their political rights such as
freedom of expression, freedom of
thought and participation in political
activities. Undoubtedly, in the first
constitution 3% reserved seats were
given to women while they
were demanding 10% reserved
seats. Additionally, state allotted
some of their political rights but
patriarch and misogynist of the
society depriving them from

(7)

their right. Furthermore, Political Parties do not allot enough/unequal seats for provincial and national assemblies.

Adding to this, women have unequal representation in assemblies. Only 33% reserved seats were allotted to them. It is impossible that 33% reserved women will bring their political rights. According to 1973

Constitution of Pakistan, in election, 10% women should vote at least in her respective constituency, otherwise election shall be declared "Null or Void."

It is mandatory that has to increase from 10 to 50%.

Additionally, in Dir, 2013 election, the election was reconducted due to less participation of women.

Moreover, women have unequal representation and gender discrimination in judicial department. Recent data from

Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, 126 total judges in upper tier only 7 are women, 12 Supreme Court Judges two are women.

Women have only 19% representation in judiciary. Fakhur-Niso Khokar,

Senior Judge, was not appointed as a Judge in Lahore High Court despite of her seniority. It was just about gender discrimination

(8)

Furthermore, the bridled society kept away them from their right to case. According to United Nation recent survey, 137 women killed by her partner and former husband in a year because of judicial affairs. Meanwhile in rural areas women are unaware of their judicial rights; thus they are having force marriages and child marriages.

Besides of judicial disparities, women are disenfranchised from their economic rights. They have less participation in labour force; they also have less own businesses. According to state bank of Pakistan, women have 2% representation in Pakistan economic system and contributing 1% of the total GDP. However, state did not any strategic and pragmatic step to encourage women in the field of business. Additionally, home industries suffer day by day due to state inattention.

Also, women have less representation in economic sector, meanwhile have

(9)

issues of unequal pay. As per recent data of state Bank of PAKISTAN, women received only 22% of labour force. Which is two time less than that of men. Furthermore, they are facing verbal abuse in multiple economic zones.

However, there are many challenges, hurdles and obstacles faced by women such as gender-base violence,

patriarchal structure, regressive norms and outdated values, honour

killing and harassment at work place. Women trap in vicious circle of domestic violence

and cultural practices. According to Rubina Saifal research article on feminism, Right wing religious political parties, in 1953, termed normless words such as "prostitutes"

for those women who were demanding for their fundamental rights.

In addition to this, gender base and domestic violence are more common practice in our society. Mostly, they are victims of verbal and physical abuse. Recent research by Demographic and Health, 30% married women endure

(10)

domestic violence. According to UNFPA domestic violence is common in Pakistan in terms of physical abuse, shouting is most prevalent 76%, slapping at 52%, pushing 47% and 40% kicking.

Furthermore, patriarchal structure of society makes more hurdles for women. After partition religious clerics and local dominant leaders shaped the society, where power and function granted to men and subordinated women. They are ~~not~~ always consider "2nd gender" according to UNDP report, 83.5% wives mobile check by their husbands. In rural areas, majority of women decisions take by patriarch of the family such as elder brother, husband and father.

Instead of patriarchal structure, honor killing is the most prominent and hard hurdle for women. According to the media monitor of the Human Right Commission in Pakistan in the year 2023 till June, 145 women were killed, mostly incidents of honor killing are being reported in Shaikhupura, former FATA and Chitrawala.

(ii)

Similarly, retrogressive and outdated norms and values of culture contributing hurdles to women. There are some norms and rules such as women should not participate in sports activities, tourism activities, 'Strick Pardoh' and no excess to job. These practices and rules are often exercising in rural areas is compare to others. In rural areas, women not able to take decision of her marriage and divorce. They compelled to endure persecution for the cause to unite families.

Besides these challenges, state has taken some important step to tackle these issues and bring women into mainstream of both public and private sector. However, these steps and programs are not much effective. Both national and provincial government should make pragmatic and meaningful laws to tackle these burning issues.

In addition to this, in 1973 constitution, Bhutto's government has given some rights such as every citizen is equal before

(12)

law, no discrimination on gender,
no discrimination on sex, no discrimination
religion and state will protect
women marriages, family and
childrens. These rights are
very effective, women can
challenge in court, if some
one try to deprive them from
these rights.

instead of 1973 constitution,
Muslim Family Law Ordinance of
1961, which gave women
a few rights with regard to
marriage, the custody of
children, divorce and
registration of marriages and
divorces. It was first
pragmatic legislation from government,
where protected women
social interests and rights.

Additionally, this act restrict
child marriages. Contrary to this
religious clerics protested
against this act while demanding
to review the Muslim Family
Law Ordinance.

Despite of this, Sindh
Government has made a law in
2017, named Act on Child
Marriage, 18 or above entitled
to marry while prohibited
under 18 marriages. This act

(13)

became fruitful in "Dua Zehra" case. A 16 year girl was forced for marriage, her father challenged that marriage in court; while court decided in favour of, Dua Zehra's father, according to this act.

instead of these burning issues, state and society have to play a role to counter and alleviate these issues.

it's mandatory on state to make such legislation to break patriarchal structure of society and provide equal opportunities for men and women in political, social and economic sector. Furthermore, society also play a role to make social institution to bring awareness regarding sex and gender equality.

Moreover, state has to encourage social institution and educational institution, and add women disparities in syllabi. Encourage women toward higher education to address their grievances in higher platform. Additionally, state should encourage social institution such as NGOs and local organisation

(11)

To bring equality among women
education. Government must

prioritize women education,
through this act you can
bring women's legal rights.

Entrepreneurs, both governmental
institution (parliament) and non
governmental institution (political parties)

should prioritize women's
political rights. Government must
increase their reserved seat from
33% to 50% while political
institution should give them
high position and bring
political women in women.

Additionally political institutions
should make women's issues
part of their ideology

Besides this the government should
provide women's equal
opportunities in both public and
private sector. It must
ensure equal pay, must encourage

for labour force. Home
industries must innovate and
encourage their owners. The
government must expand employment
opportunities for women. They
should provide transport and
hostels.

In short, historically
women have

Kept away from their social, political, judicial and economic rights. The obstacles have made by both government and prominent patriarchy of the society. Yet, government has not taken any serious and pragmatic measures to resolve women issues. It can mitigate if government provided them equal opportunities in every sphere and department of state.