

Is Gender Equality a Myth?

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History of Gender Equality

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III Gender Equality is a Fact

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iii) Article 25(2) of Constitution of
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iv) Gender Equality is still nothing
more than a Dream

i) Women are better off - but still
still far from being equal with
men

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in Politics

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but not in Practice

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Nelson Mandela said, "Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all kinds of oppression." Since ancient times, women have been sidelined in society. They are considered as inferior creatures. Women have faced oppression in different forms throughout human history. To break the chains of oppression, women have struggled hard. Even in modern times, women are unable to stand equal to men in every field of life. Many factors are preventing gender equality to be fully achieved. Lack of efforts on Government side and financial dependence of women are obstacles to gender equality. Failure of Government's policies and less investment in women empowerment are widening gender gap. Gender gap is also increasing owing to less women representation in decision making bodies. Those who believe that gender equality is a fact

cite the women empowerment in west
and increasing women representation
in Politics. The reality is ^{gender} ~~women~~
equality is still a myth. Today
women are in better condition, but
still far from competing with men.

In Politics, women are far behind
than men. Hence, it is obvious that
Gender Equality is still a
myth.

Financial dependence of women
is a big challenge to gender
equality. Women make more than
half of world's population. Gender
equality cannot be achieved without
women participation. In Pakistan
majority of women do not work
out of home. Most of them are
financially dependent on male
members of family. According to
data released by UN women, women
and girls aged 10+ spend 18.8%
of their time on unpaid domestic

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work, compared to 1.8% spend by men. This proves that gender equality is a myth.

Limited opportunities for women in work force results in gender inequality. Women participation is crucial for gender equality.

In Pakistan, there are less opportunities for women as well as they are not encouraged to find work outside.

Gender gap is widening in every sphere of life. According to Economic participation 2020 report, women's participation in the labor force stands at 24.9% compared to 75.1% for men. This data proves that gender equality is still a myth.

Domestic violence is an obstacle in the way of gender equality.

Presence of domestic violence indicates vulnerability of women. Most of the women are unable to report

Such cases due to family pressure. Domestic violence is prevalent in society in the form of early marriages, honor killing and physical assault. According to Human Rights Watch, approximately 1000 women are killed every year in the name of honor in Pakistan. Hence it can be said that gender equality is a myth.

Another cause of gender inequality is failure of government's policies. Government of Pakistan is unable to implement devised policies effectively. There is negligence on the part of decision making bodies. Gender Gap Index 2021 shows Pakistan ranked 153 out of 156 countries, women are far behind men in social, economic and political circle. Women's share of total income is 18.3% compared to 81.7% for men.

This data reveals that Government of Pakistan policies are un-effective to achieve gender equality. It shows that gender equality is still a myth.

Another hindrance to achieve gender equality is less investment in women empowerment. Without empowering women, gender equality will remain a dream. The Government of Pakistan has launched several initiative to empower women, including the National Policy of Development and Empowerment in 2002. The aim of this initiative was to empower women socially, economically and politically. Despite these efforts, the country still ranks low in term of women empowerment.

There is a lack of investment from Government. Hence, it can be said that gender equality is a myth.

Low enrollment in girls' educational institute is another obstacle to achieve gender equality. Women in Pakistan face many problems in term of education. These problems include lack of infrastructure, unsafe routes, distant educational institutes as well as many cultural barriers. Women with ~~(Most of w)~~ restricted access to education are unable to compete with men. Girl's enrollment in primary education is 74.4% compared to 75.1% for men. It proves, gender equality is still non-existent.

Women are less represented in decision making bodies. Women have very little say in the Government. They are far behind in politics than men. Owing to this, most of women are voiceless even in modern society. More than half of world's population

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is women. These women are governed by men. "Out of 193 countries, only 15 countries' head of state are women." Hence, it can be said that gender equality is a myth.

Gender disparity in Technology is another reason of gender inequality. Most of the women in these world countries do not have access to android mobiles. Women are away from modern technology, so they are unable to learn new skills. Global market is changing with each passing day. These un-skilled women are unable to find any job. In Amazon, women account for 27% of managers worldwide. Hence, it can be said that gender equality is a myth.

Patriarchal Society leads to gender inequality.

Patriarchy is a deep rooted disease in modern society. This prevents progress of women. Modern societies have inherited patriarchal trends from the ancient forefathers. As

Aristotle said, The relation of male to female is by nature a relation of superior to inferior and ruler to ruled. These patriarchal thoughts prove gender equality as a myth.

Wrong cultural practices are also obstacle to gender equality. Many wrong norms are prevalent in our society including son preference, gender discrimination, restricted women's mobility and restrictions on the choice of clothing, marriage and education.

Owing to these norms, women face many problems. Those who challenge these norms are often stigmatized. They have to face social exclusion and violence. A

2020 report by the Asia Foundation noted that 70% of

Women reported facing restrictions on their choice of clothing, marriage and education due to cultural norms. Hence it can be said that gender equality is a myth.

Gender inequality is also the result of wrong interpretation of religion. Wrong interpretation of religion is used by oppressors to harm others. Religion is used as a cover to hide the wrong doings of perpetrators. Women in our society are easy victims to such cruel behaviors. A 2019 study by the National Commission on the status of women found that religious interpretations are used to justify restrictions on women's mobility, education and employment. It proves that gender equality is a myth.

On the contrary, those who believe that gender equality is a fact suggest women empowerment in the west. The west has made significant efforts in empowering women. Women in west were granted right to vote in early 20th century. They are able to participate in political process. Women in west were granted right to education, health, workplace equality, legal protections, reproductive rights and right to divorce. Laws and policies are designed to empower women. This indicates that gender equality is a fact.

The second argument cited in favour of gender equality is women representation in politics. Women representation in decision making bodies is increasing. Women leaders are promoting the slogan of gender equality. Women are able to get higher positions.

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at executive and other senior-level. Political leaders like Angela Merkel, Kamala Harris and Jacinda Ardern, Business leaders like Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors and Sheryl Sandberg, CEO of Facebook demonstrate women empowerment.

Article 25(2) of the Pakistan Constitution ensures gender equality. This article provides equal rights to women in all aspects of life. Article 25(2) ensures women's protection from all kind of exploitation including domestic violence, sexual harassment, trafficking and protection from discrimination.

The state is required to take effective measures to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

It aims to enable women to participate fully in social, economic and political spheres.

Although effective measures are taken to empower women and gender equality, but gender equality in true sense is still a dream. Women are in better condition in most today.

They are far from being equal with men. Women still earn less than men and face discrimination as well as harassment at work place.

In the EU, women earn 14.1% less than men on average (Eurostat, 2022).

Western societies are still biased about women. In the US, 63% of women have experienced gender bias at work. This proves that gender equality is a myth.

Gender equality is a myth is also proved by underrepresentation of women in politics. Women are far behind in politics than men. Most of the senior positions are occupied by men. Owing to underrepresentation

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women's voice is less heard. In the US, women hold 27% of seats in Congress (Center for American Women and Politics, 2024). Most of the men are biased about women leadership.

A 2021 survey by the Pew research center found that 55% of Pakistani men believe that men are better political leader than women. This shows the fancy of gender equality.

Although article

25(2) ensures equal right to women but it lacks in practical implementation.

The government of Pakistan is failed to take effective steps in this regard. Women are still

sidelined in Pakistani society. There are many stereotypes associated with women. They are far behind in

social, political and economic sphere. Gender based violence, discrimination against women, economic disparities, cultural and religious misconceptions

have widened gap between both genders

To sum up, it can be concluded that gender equality is a myth. Although, those who believe in the existence of gender equality suggest the empowered women of west as a case study. They are of view that increasing women representation and article 25(2) of the constitution of Pakistan are sign of women empowerment. In reality this is not true. As a matter of fact, women are still unequal to men in developed societies. They are lagging behind in politics, with few women as a head of state out of 193 countries. The Government of Pakistan also failed to implement article 25(2) in true sense. Gender equality still remains a myth owing to underrepresentation of women. Patriarchal trends and

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wrong cultural norms are preventing women from achieving gender equality.

In Pakistani society wrong interpretation of religion also hinders progress of women. All these factors prove

gender equality to be a myth.

To achieve gender equality is a challenge for modern societies. By

implementing policies effectively this dream can be fulfilled.

Well attempted

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