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Gender Based violence against the women of Pakistan.
Remedies to eliminate this menace.

1. Introduction:

In the Global Gender Index, 2021, Pakistan ranks 145 out of 146 countries. This is an alarming situation for any country: Gender based violence (GBV) against the women in Pakistan is a concerning issue with roots in social, culture, economic and legal factors. Besides, it has various forms such as domestic violence, honor killing, acid attacks, forced marriages, sexual harassment, and discrimination in both public and private sectors. In order to understand the forms of GBV and suggesting potential and practical remedies, it is very important to foster a safer environment for women in Pakistan.

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2. Forms of Gender - Based Violence against Pakistani Women:

i) Pakistani women have been going through certain forms of violence since long time. Gender Based violence forms are as under:

i) Domestic Violence:

Domestic violence is one of the most common forms of GBV in Pakistan. Women^{are} often subjected to physical, emotional, and psychological abuse by their husbands or in-laws. Social norms and lack of legal protections often enables perpetrator to act without fear of punishment. Thus, it increases day by day in Pakistan.

ii) Honor Killings:

Another form of GBV is Honor Killings where family members kill a woman who is believed to have

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"dishonour" her family. It is a severe form of violence. Reasons of this may include marrying by choice, rejecting a suitor, or even interacting with men in public. Despite legal frameworks, social acceptance of honour killing persists in many rural areas as well as urban and tribal communities. According to the Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO), a total of 17,527 cases were reported in 2023, a stark increase from 14,753 in 2022.

In Punjab, 10,201 cases of violence were recorded against PPC 354 and PPC 505.

iii) Acid attacks:

Acid attacks are the worst form of violence that permanently disfigure victims and cause lifelong physical and psychological trauma. Women are often targeted for rejecting marriage proposals or spurning advances.

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from men. This humiliates the existence and worth of women.

iv) Forced and Early Marriages:

Forced marriages is also one of the forms of violence that include, child marriages, remain prevalent in many regions. These marriages deprive women and girls of autonomy and education, limiting their personal growth and subjecting them to potential lifelong abuse. This violence usually takes place in rural areas as well as tribal areas where they lack quality education.

v) Sexual Harassment at work place:

Many women in Pakistan face harassment in public spaces, work places, and even at educational institutions. Despite some legal protections enforcement remains

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inconsistent, and social stigma often prevents women from reporting incidents.

v) Trafficking and Forced Prostitution:

Apart from that, women and girls are sometimes trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation within Pakistan and beyond. Socio-economic vulnerability and limited law enforcement make them easy targets.

Although, trafficking is a crime that violates the fundamental human rights. According to ^{the} Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report 2023-24, women constitute 70.6% of all trafficked individuals in Pakistan. Thus, it is a heinous crime with serious International dimensions.

vi) Economic and Psychological Violence:

Economic violence, including denial

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of inheritance rights, financial control, and workforce, and workplace discrimination; it limits the freedom of women.

Additionally, women face psychological abuse and social restrictions contribute to mental health issues.

3. Remedies to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence in Pakistan:

In order to cope with Gender Based violence in Pakistan, there are some practical remedies that are discussed as follows:

i) Strengthening Legal Frameworks:

To address gender-based violence in Pakistan, existing laws need to be stronger with practicality. If the legal framework is strengthened, women will be safe and sound from various forms of violence against them. Besides, judiciary

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has to play its active role so that it can speed up justice delivery.

The laws such as The Anti-women Practices Act of 2011 which targets harmful cultural practices like forced marriages and the so-called honour killings. And The Domestic Violence Act which gives protection to women.

These types of laws should be enforced in order to eliminate this violence in Pakistan.

ii) Education and Awareness Programs:

Education and Awareness programs can make a big difference. Education is the only tool that has huge impact over the minds and lives of the people. When the people are given more but quality education, they do not only realize the freedom of woman but also they give them equal opportunities and chances at multiple place. Public awareness also

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play a vital role in eliminating gender based violence. Awareness campaigns that educate both men and women about gender equality, human rights and opportunities. This also leads women to report abuse.

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iii) Economic Empowerment:

Empowering women economically always paves the way for their independence and social standing. Women should be given vocational training, micro-business opportunities, and equal employment rights to ensure independence.

iv) Community Engagement:

It is time to mobilize communities to reject harmful practices such as child marriages and honor killings from their societies. This will only be possible when the communities inclusively take it as a serious matter.

v) Support Services for Survivors

In order to have support services for survivors, there is a dire need to expand shelters, legal aid, and counseling services for gender based

violence survivors. Besides, it is time to strengthen helplines and crisis intervention centres to provide an immediate assistance.

Conclusion

Having said that, gender-based violence is a profound human rights violation that hinders the progress of women and society at large in Pakistan. However, the government is also trying its best to address this issue. It further needs comprehensive reforms and collective action. In order to eradicate GBV, there has to be a multifaceted approach which involves legal enforcement, social transformation, and empowerment of women. Pakistan, by fostering a culture of respect and equality, can move closer to ensuring a safe and more inclusive future for its women.