

Can women be equal to men in Pakistan?

Thesis Statement: After observing religious and social dogmas in Pakistan; governing system and government priorities of Pakistan, it seems hard for women to be equal to men in Pakistan. However, certain measures adopted by Government of Pakistan can result in equality among men and women in upcoming years.

(a) Introduction

(b) Women can not be equal to men in Pakistan

i:- Wrong interpretation of religion can not allow women to be equal to men.

"Chapter Baqrah Verse 228"

ii:- Societal preference of chaddar chaar deewari tradition can not allow women to be equal to men in Pakistan.

iii:- The patriarchal governing system of Pakistan can not allow women to be equal to men in Pakistan.

"Women Parliament Performance"

iv:- Prevaling health issues of women can not allow women to become equal to men in Pakistan.

"NI Report 2024"

v:- With current Gender Parity Index women cannot be equal to men in Pakistan.

"Gender Gap Report 2024"

vi:- Women can not be equal to men in Pakistan unless Gender pay Gap is not minimized.

"ILO Global Wage report"

(c) Women empowerment in Pakistan by government of Pakistan and with some other measures government can make women equal to men.

i:- Government empowering women in Education sector can make women equal to men in Pakistan. "Rawanda example"

ii:- Government empowering women in political sector can make women equal to men in Pakistan.

"New Zealand report"

iii:- Government ensuring proper health facilities can upbringing women and ultimately equal to men.

iv:- Secularization of Pakistan can also result in Gender equality in Pakistan.

"Secular values Economic development and Gender Equality in Global context" report by Peyman Hekmatpour.

(d) Conclusion

According to Gender Equality Index report 2024 issued by World Economic Forum "Pakistan stands second last-above Afghanistan- in gender equality." Gender Equality

in most cases refers to equality among men and women. After analysing the above ^{mentioned} report any body can observe that women are not equal to men in Pakistan. The real question here arises that "Can women be equal to men in Pakistan?" Answer to this question is very simple and it is that with current ongoing trends which include wrong interpretation of specific Quranic Ayats or verses, ~~the~~ backward societal dogmas women have no chance to become equal to men in present and future as well. Moreover, Patriarchal governing system, prevailing women health issues and Gender Parity Gap are also other factors that are not allowing women to become equal to men in Pakistan. However, if Pakistan's government take some certain measures as like empowerment of women in Education, Political and Health sector then these are

chances that women can become equal to men in Pakistan in upcoming years. Secularization can also reduce Gender Inequality. After observing religious and social dogmas in Pakistan; governing system and government priorities of Pakistan, it seems hard for women to be equal to men in Pakistan. However, certain measures adopted by government of Pakistan can result in equality among men and women in upcoming years.

The foremost reason that women can not be equal to men in Pakistan is the wrong interpretation of religion. Pakistan is a religious country with several religious sects. Even though the Islamic religion demands equal rights for men and women but certain specific Ayats are misinterpreted with their context for keeping women inferior to

men. The Quranic verse that is quoted by all sects for proving inferiority of women is from Surat Baqarah. "The men are superior to women. Ayat 228" A religious country follows its religious paradigms. Such paradigms do not allow the equality of women and men. Therefore, women cannot be equal to men in Pakistan.

Moreover, the society of Pakistan prefers the tradition of "chaddar chax deewari" for their daughters. The concept of chaddar chax deewari means women are meant to live under the veil and spend their all life in home. Such prevailing concepts undermines the basic human rights of women like freedom of movement. Without such rights women cannot be equal to men as without such rights because they cannot compete and work at places

outside their home

Furthermore, the patriarchal governing system of Pakistan can not allow women to be equal to men in Pakistan. The governing system of Pakistan is highly patriarchal and it undermines the needs of women; sometimes sabotage their rights too. The patriarchal governing system of Pakistan works very little for women empowerment. Women less representation in governing system ~~resulting~~ in is evidence that women are not equal to men. According to Women Parliamentarian performance 2019-2020 there were total 729 provincial ~~assemblies~~ members. Out of which only 75 were women. The number include both general and reserved seats. With the patriarchal governing system of Pakistan women can not be equal to men.

In addition to this, the prevailing health issues of women

are also another factor that can not allow women to be equal to men. How can women be equal to men if they are not physically, biologically and mentally equal to men or fit? How can they compete men in education sector if their health is demining? According to report by Nutritional International presented to National Ministry of health; 41 percent of women in Pakistan suffer from Anemia, 14.4 percent are underweight and 24 percent are overweight. With such prevailing condition of women in Pakistan, women cannot be equal to men.

Similarly, with current Gender Parity Index women cannot be equal to men in Pakistan. According to UNESCO, Gender Parity Index is a socioeconomic index to measure the relative access of education to both women and men. ^{The education} According

availability to women in Pakistan is a major factor. Women are forced to early marriages instead of educating them. How can women be equal to men if the literacy gap in country is much high? According to Gender Gap Report 2024, Literacy Gap among genders in Pakistan is 67.1%. There is no chance of women becoming equal to men with this much literacy gap.

On top of that, how can women be equal to men unless Gender Pay Gap is not minimized in Pakistan. ~~Firstly~~ ^{on} the one hand literacy gap is so much high of Pakistan, on the other hand, pay gap for women who are educated and are working is also high. For the equality of men and women in Pakistan gender pay gap must reduce to zero. According to ~~Gender Pay~~ ^{International} Labour Organization Global

wage report 2018/2019 women in Pakistan earn 34% less than men. With such gender gaps and trends Pakistani women cannot be equal to men.

No state that has gender equality today had it from the start. All states took some measures in order to reduce gender inequality and make men and women equal in all most all spheres. Pakistan can learn from these states so that women can become equal to men in Pakistan. Some of these measures are listed below.

Firstly, women empowerment in education sector by government can make women equal to men in Pakistan. Education is necessary. It makes people equal in knowledge. Educated women can perform well in all sectors and can also compete men. Government empowering

women can also increase gender equality. According to UNESCO Rwanda has made a progress in Gender equality by particularly ensuring equal access to education. According to Gender Gap report 2024 Rwanda places in top 10 position in Gender equality index.

Therefore, women can become equal to men if Pakistan government empowers them in education sector.

Similarly Government empowering women in political sphere can also reduce Gender inequality, ultimately results in women and men equality.

By empowering women in political sphere more issues of women will get highlighted in politics of Pakistan and more work would be done to ensure the equality among men and women. For example, New Zealand has 48% women in Parliament and according to Gender Gap report 2024, ^{New Zealand} Rwanda places

at top ~~2~~ 2nd position in Global Gender Equality index report by World Economic Forum. Pakistan can also attain equality between men and women by empowering women in Political sectors.

In the same manner, ensuring proper health facilities to women can uphold women and ultimately equal to men.

The equality among women and men cannot be achieved until health of women is not appropriate. Healthy women of ^{Pakistan} are necessary for making women equal to men. The ICELAND has reduced its gender inequality by major focusing on women health. Pakistan can also ensure equality among men and women by promoting health of women.

Apart from these, the secularization of Pakistan can make women equal to

men. It has been observed through several studies that women's rights are mostly undermined in congested and religious societies and countries. Whereas secular states provide equal opportunities and rights to women which ultimately result in the equality among women and men. "Secular values Economic Development and Gender Equality in Global Context" report by Peyman Heikmatpours found that secular states have higher women labour, higher number of women with completed secondary education and high gender equality ratio. By secularizing the Pakistan, women can become equal to men.

In order to conclude, ^{with} the current ongoing trends of Pakistan, women can not be equal to men in Pakistan. This is mainly due to the Gender Parity ^{Gap} (Index) which resulting

in uneducated women that cannot compete with men.

Moreover, health conditions of women that include chronic Anemia and less political participation due to patriarchal governing system women cannot be equal to men in Pakistan. However, empowering women in education and political (involvement) sphere can make them equal to men in upcoming years as women will uplift the women thus more women will become educated and politically active. Ultimately resulting in equality among men and women in Pakistan. Another option that can make women equal to men in Pakistan is secularization of Pakistan. Obviously, it will get backlash from ^{religious} clerics and feudals but secularization will ensure equal rights opportunities to women and men. Thus

resulting in equality among
men and women.