

1. The extension of women's rights is the basic principle of all social progress...

Outline

A. Introduction

Thesis : Women make up 50% of the global population and hence are an essential contributor to social progress. Extension of political, social and economic rights of women not only contributes to progress of women as individuals but also to progress of society as a whole.

B. Progress of Societies is Directly Linked with Provision and Extension of Rights of Women

a) Women are equally capable as men and equally important in social progress

case in point : Mary Wollstonecraft's arguments in "Vindication of Rights of a Woman"

b) Women are key players in shaping the future generations

- A well-educated woman is more capable of ensuring success of her children.

~~once contributor~~ an economy

c) Extension of employment opportunities and security for women is a direct contributor in growth

- Workplace safety, accessible and safe public transport leads to increased female labour force participation.

- Increased FLFP results in 5-23% projected growth (WB, "Swimming in Sand" Report)

d) Extension of political rights of women in the form of participation and mobilisation opportunities results in more peaceful and harmonious societies

case in point: Contribution of Liberian women in peace talks with rebel groups.

e) Women in administrative spheres showcase transformative leadership with more inclusive policies and smoother governance.

- women are more aware and connected

- f) Increase in female Labour force Participation would assist in tackling the demographic challenges of Pakistan.
- less opportunities of free care work would result in slower population growth.
 - Gross Domestic Savings would increase
- g) Ensuring the provision of property rights of women would result in financial agency and independence
- financially secure and independent women excel in social and political spheres of life; contributing to overall stability in society.
- h) Providing social safety to women results in ~~fast~~ societal progress
- Public Sector Development Programs like BISP.
- i) Legal safety measures enhance confidence of women which results in their increased participation in public sphere and societal progress.
- Reforms in Hudood Ordinance 2006
 - Workplace safety Act 2010
 - Honor killing Act 2016

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g) Unfair or discriminatory treatment of women in a society leads to fragility and instability

- Countries that tend to be more misogynistic fall lower on the Fragile State Index (FSI) as per "Why nations that fail women fail," (The Economist)

C. Conclusion

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Women's rights as individuals and societal progress can not be treated as mutually exclusive phenomena. The leading argument in this case is that women comprise of around 50% of the global population and 48% of the population of Pakistan as per the National Statistics Bureau. It is impossible to confer that any society can progress by ignoring half of its population. The progress of societies is not only linked to the provision of rights to women in legal documents but also the materialisation of these rights by providing opportunities to women so that they can contribute in the development of society to their full potential. Women not only make up half of the society but also play a leading role in shaping and bringing up the other half of the population; therefore playing a vital role in shaping the society as a whole. Women are equally capable, if not more, than men to carry out all the activities that are of societal importance. Allowing women to showcase their full potential by giving them

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opportunities of education, work, political participation and social mobility would immensely contribute to the social progress. In addition to opportunities, it is imperative that they are also provided with legal and social security in addition to financial security. All these factors combined would not only help in ensuring protection of women as individuals but & also consequently result in social progress.

Social progress is not a thing that can be achieved in isolation. It can only be achieved if all members of society play an equal part in it. Women are often disregarded in this context despite being an integral part of the social progress. This is ~~often~~ due to the misguided notion that they are not capable enough of making big decisions. Mary Wollstonecraft reflects the idea that women are incapable of independent or abstract ~~though~~ thinking. She goes on to prove this point in her book titled "A

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Vindication of the rights of Women" in which she explains that women appearing less capable was not due to some intrinsic lacking but rather due to lack of education. In the 19th century, when this book was written there was little to no focus on women's education which resulted in the formation of this narrative. Therefore it is important that we treat women as key players in achieving social progress.

Women are not only responsible for their own lives and future but also lives of her off-springs as ~~the~~ they are the ones that are assigned with the role of taking care of their children and bringing them up. If women are provided with rights and opportunities they can play a more productive role in raising capable individuals. A well-educated woman is not only aware of the realities and opportunities for her children but she is also more capable of recognizing and polishing the potential of her children. Hence, extension of rights

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of women are not only restricted to them as individuals but also contribute greatly as a positive influence on other individual's lives and consequently the whole society.

extension of employment opportunities and workplace security of women is directly interlinked with growth of a society. A World Bank report titled "Swimming in the Sand" projects a 5-23% of growth as a result of increased female labour force participation. Factors such as safe and accessible transport and workplace safety incentivises more women to participate in the labour force which ~~has~~ results in a positive trend in the overall growth of the society.

Women with greater political rights and participation opportunities help in stabilizing and shaping the societies for the better. A prominent evidence in this case is that of Liberian women who drove their government towards peace talks with their rebels in

Ghana. Their continuous peaceful demonstrations resulted in a promise from the then president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, that he would sit on the negotiating table with the rebels. This incident is a stark example of how women can contribute to social progress and harmony.

Women also play a productive role in administrative spheres. They are more aware of the ground realities and the problems of ~~the~~ women who make up half the population. They are not only capable of making more gender-inclusive policies but also more efficient ones as ~~the~~ women tend to showcase transformative leadership style as per World Psychological Survey of Leadership, 2017. Hence, women not only make better policies but also address the issues ignored by men with more intricacy. This results in overall smoother governance and social progress.

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One of the most alarming issues in Pakistan is that of population. The population growth is alarming and only projected to worsen. Considering that we are short on resources and economic opportunities, it is important to address this issue. Giving women their due rights can also contribute in addressing this issue as increased female labour force participation restricts the opportunities for free care work. This would incentivise the people to engage in better family planning, helping in controlling population while increasing Gross Domestic Savings (GDS) as there would be more people bringing in money (husband and wife) and less people depending on the money (less children). This would ultimately result in social progress as it is tied with economic and environmental progress.

Financial opportunities and especially financial agency are pre-requisites of an independent and secure individuals who ~~do~~ not have to depend on other people that can

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Limit their potential. Property rights a major factor in this case. Women must be given their property rights that are legally given but evaded by various loopholes. Extension of property rights would not only result in more independent but also more secure individuals that can positively contribute to the societal goods.

Social safety and rights are also an essential element that escalate the role of women in contributing to the society. Public Sector Development Programs such as Benazir Income Support Program have proved that focusing on women development results in the development of their households and ultimately the society. As individuals with lesser opportunities in education and formal sector employment, it is important for government and non-governmental organisations to consider the development of women so that they can in return contribute in the development

of the society.

Legal safety measures are a pre-requisite of increasing women's confidence in the society and the governmental structure that incentivises them to increase their participation in the public sector and hence social progress. Some of the legal measures that have done so, are reforms in the Hudood ordinance in 2006 which criminalized the sexual violence crimes by moving them from religious to legal subjects. Workplace Harassment Act 2010 and Honor killing Act 2016 are other such examples. These legal measures make women feel more safe in the public sphere and their strict adherence must be ensured to increase the participation of women in the progress of society.

The Economist in their documentary "Why Nations that Fail Women Fail?", suggest that discriminatory treatment of women in societies leads to increased fragility and instability.

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They establish the fact by analyzing the trends of misogyny in different countries in comparison with their position on the Global Fragile State Index. The countries which have lowest possible misogyny rate such as Sweden are among rich democracies. However, the countries like Pakistan, Sudan, Yemen which have higher levels of misogyny are very fragile. For instance, Pakistan has a misogyny score of 15 and falls 27th on the Fragile State Index. Therefore, it is important ~~for~~ to realize that women are a major force in driving social change and achieving social progress and should be given their due rights.

The arguments presented sufficiently support the fact that women are key contributors in social progress. Therefore, the extension of women's rights is the basic principle of all social progress. The role of women can not be ignored because doing so is a recipe for disaster. The progress of societies can not be achieved

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in isolation, by ignoring a major chunk of their population. Women have proved to be equally capable and important in development as men. They are the guardians of not only the future generations but also the future of society. Therefore, they must be provided with all their due rights and equal opportunities so that they can exhibit their true potential and contribute to the progress and development of the society. The role of women in social, economic and political spheres and their contributions in the past around the world must motivate us to include them in the progress of our country. No nation has ever achieved success by ignoring their women and it is time that we learnt our lesson.