

Q) What are the reasons responsible for ranking Pakistan as the second-worst country in the world for gender inequality despite Pakistan's commitment to many international conventions & strong commitment to gender equality in 1973 Constitution?

1) Introduction:

Pakistan has ranked 148th out of 149 countries in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index Report in 2018. This shows the dismal condition of the country when it comes to giving men & women equal opportunities in education, politics, economics & health.

As Kofi Annan has said:

"Gender equality is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development & building good governance" (Kofi Annan).

This law making can be attributed to many factors that hinder women's representation in various aspects of society.

2) WEF Report - Pakistan ranking second worst country in world for Gender Inequality:

The report published by the World Economic Forum ranked each country based on four factors to indicate the Gender Gap in that country.

The WEF, in its Global Gender Gap Report 2018, placed Pakistan at the second worst position. out of the 149 countries featured in the report, Pakistan only bettered Yemen to be ranked at 148th place. Pakistan was placed among the bottom bracket of nations, including Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

3) Factors Evaluated & Pakistan's Position in the given factors:

The Report based its findings upon 4 factors:

3.1) Education:

When it comes to education, Pakistan ranked 139 out of 149 countries. Picture of educational condition is grim in Pakistan. More than 40% of girls never enroll in school. The situation is especially alarming in rural areas due to social & cultural obstacle. More specifically in KPK & Baluchistan women are severely bonded to cultural constraints & prejudices that do not allow them to attain education. Those girls who do go to schools, their attendance rates in primary, secondary, & post-secondary schools are lower than boys.

3.2) Health:

Under the Health section Pakistan ranked 145 out of 149. This shows how women & men do not have equal health opportunities in Pakistan. We are losing three women per hour b/c of pregnancy associated complications. More than 30,000 young women die every year in Pakistan, 375,000 women suffer every year from pregnancy related complications.

As Harjit Gill said:

"The health of a mother & child is more telling measure of a nation's state than economic indicators" (Harjit Gill (CEO ASEAN & Pacific, Royal Philips))

3.3) Economic opportunity:

When it comes to Economic opportunities, Pakistan ranked 146 out of 149 countries depicting rampant lack of equal opportunities. In Pakistan, the participation of women in labor force has rise but the difference b/c men & women participating in labor force remains very high. The Employment-

to-population Ratio (EPR) is 20% for female workers & 64% for male workers. The EPR represents the share of unutilized labor in an economy. Pakistan's current labor underutilization rate for women workers is 80%.

3.4) Political Empowerment:

Political Empowerment measures the involvement of women in politics by looking at the number of women in political system of the country. Pakistan ranked 97 out of 149 countries in this regard. This can be ascribed to the low level of political participation of women as both voters & candidates.

4) Reasons for Pakistan's low ranking:

4.1) Failure to implement principles of International Conventions - CEDAW:

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stipulates measures to be taken by state parties to bring about gender equality. Pakistan, as a signatory, has not been able to meet most of these benchmarks. Draconian laws such as the Hudood Ordinances of 1979 & the hold of rigid traditions have been the major roadblocks in the way of emancipation of Pakistani women. The government needs to undertake far-reaching structural reforms, & on a parallel track, concerted efforts have to be made to overcome a mindset that reduces women to an inferior status.

4.2) Low Political Participation of Women

a) Patriarchal Mindset hindering participation of women:
 Women are expected to remain within the confines of the private aspect of life. The public sphere is dominated by men & politics comes under the public sphere.

b) Nepotism & Elitist Structures:

The manner in which reserved seats for women in the legislature are filled is highly concerning. The indirect method of election on reserved seats with no appropriate criteria for the eligibility has led to practices of nepotism & the capture of seats for women by the elite. Blood relations, wives & relatives of politicians are nominated on these seats to fulfill political agendas. Most of these women have little or no background either in politics or of working in women's rights movements.

c) Maligned nature of politics:

The political system of Pakistan is characterized by politicians using unfair techniques like character assassination to get votes & bringing down their opponents. Women are victims in this type of politics & find it difficult to survive in such an environment.

d) Vote Registration Issues:

Women in Tribal & Rural areas of the country are not allowed to register for votes by their male heads of the family which hinders their participation in the political system of the country.

4.3) Lack of Economic opportunities for women

a) Gender Pay Bias:

A UN Women study highlights that the hourly gender wage gap is estimated to be at 26% indicating that women's wages are ~~not~~ only 74% of men's wages. Of the regularly paid women workers, 55% received less than the applicable minimum wage (Rs 12,000) in 2014-15.

b) Domestic Restrictions placed upon women:

In a patriarchal society such as that of Pakistan, women usually have to take permission from the patriarch of the family in order to work for a living. A father or husband may withhold permission fearing societal pressures of a woman venturing out of home to earn a living. Also it is not appreciated in most cases if a woman earns more than a man b/c it challenges the tradition norm of a man being the sole breadwinner.

c) Harassment at workplace:

Most of the women in Pakistan come out of their house to earn money only at the time when it becomes inevitable. Colleagues & higher management exploit this vulnerability by harassing & passing inappropriate remarks or making fun of them or in extreme cases harassing them sexually. Lack of proper implementation of anti-harassment policies makes this attitude go unnoticed & unaddressed.

d) Transport issues:

One major factor that explains why there is such a low participation of women in workforce is the lack of proper transport facility that would ensure a safe commute to & from workplace.

Travelling in public transport increases risk of harassment for women & prevents them from venturing out of their homes.

4.4) Improper Provision of Health services to women

a) Out of order BHU & RHU:

More than eighty percent women are delivered at home in the presence of unskilled birth attendants. Majority of our Basic Health Units (BHUs) & Rural Health Units (RHUs) are not functional.

b) Lack of Transparency for loans received from International donors for improving women's health:

In health sector, the government is receiving a huge amount of grant, loan & help from donor agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP, USAID, DFD, ADBP) & many others to improve the women health care in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the government has failed in proper healthcare system in Pakistan.

c) Pregnancy Related issues:

Pakistan ranks third largest in the world with the number of maternal deaths. There are many factors responsible for such problems. However, the most important is the lack of resources even for those who wish to seek treatment. Many children lose their mothers to frequent pregnancies & complications. Reproductive health is among the most serious problem that women face in Pakistan.

They have no right to take any decision regarding their health which affects the development of the children.

4.5) Disproportionate Education Facilities for women:

a) Social & Cultural Constraints:

Local land lords oppose girl's education out of fear of losing power. They oppose the measures taken by the government & non-governmental organization, apparently out of fear that people who become literate will cease to follow them with blind path. Also, in our society co-education is not accepted even in primary schools, family & parents don't allow their girls to study in co-education schools due to several reasons.

b) Precarious Law & order situation:

In Pakistan, particularly in KPK militant group have blasted thousands of schools, especially girls schools. For example in Swat & Diamer. Thousands of children have lost their lives while studying. Extremists groups are against girls & women education & they have given threats & threatening letters to several government & private girl schools demanding an end to girls education.

c) Lack of Schools:

There's also the problem of less schools in the vicinity & lack of willingness of parents to send their daughters to schools that are far off.

d) Child marriages:

The concept & practice of child marriages is very common in rural areas of Pakistan. Due to this, girls are taken out of schools to get married & rarely any of them pursue education after getting married.

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5) Conclusion:

The low ranking of Pakistan on The Gender Gap Index can be attributed to many reasons that are hindering its progress in the four indicators under study. Pakistan's government will have to bring in reform at both national & provincial level to deal with this problem.

Q) The process of globalization has connected nations worldwide & has made the world a global village, yet it has also increased inequalities across nations. Discuss the gendered inequalities created & promoted by the process of globalization in contemporary societies.

1) Introduction:

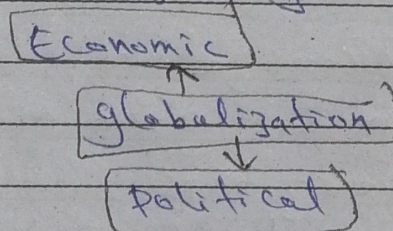
"Arguing against globalization is like arguing against the laws of gravity."

(Kofi Annan)

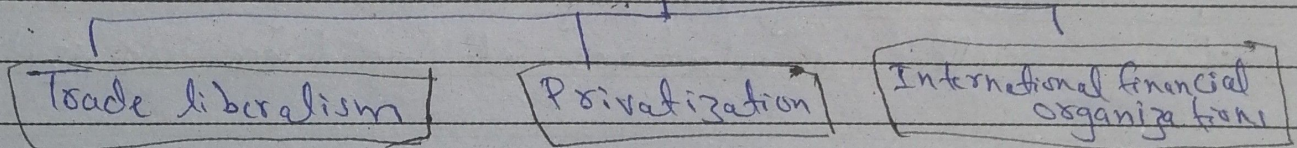
Globalization led to interconnectedness b/w states that questioned the westphalian conception of state sovereignty. This is b/c under globalization, a state could not formulate its policies in isolation. It had to take into account the international political & economic atmosphere. This integration of states led to an increased level of gender inequality.

2) Types of Globalization.

There are two main types of globalization that impacted gender inequality.



2.1) Economic Globalization.



a) Trade Liberalism:

Under globalization, free market economy is encouraged in which the forces of Demand & Supply

control the market, free trade treaties were signed b/w many nations such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) to increase volumes of international trade.

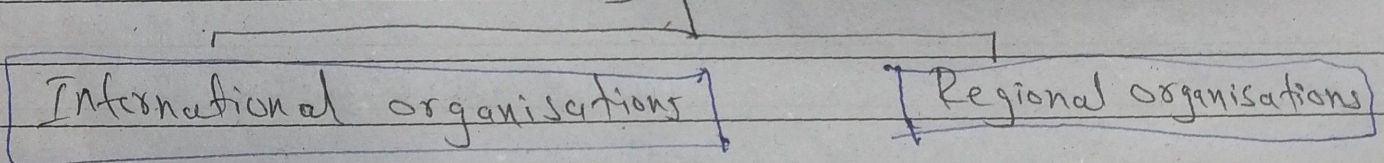
b) Privatization:

Another facet of globalization is privatization, under which state owned businesses & assets are sold off to private investors in a bid to increase efficiency and expand markets.

c) International financial organizations:

International financial organizations were also formed as a result of globalization to monitor & facilitate international trade. These include world Trade organization, International Monetary Fund & World Bank.

2.2) Political Globalization.



a) International organisations:

Globalization has given great importance to international organisations such as United Nations, International Court of Justice etc. Due to this, a state's policy making is greatly impacted by the rules & regulations set by these organisations.

b) Regional organisations:

They have also become increasingly relevant in the globalization discourse. The increased integration of states is manifested in various regional

organizations such as European Union (EU), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) etc.

3) Impact of Globalization on Gender Inequality:
 Globalization has left many impacts on gender inequality b/c the advantages of globalization have not been enjoyed proportionately by all the parties involved. Women, it is observed, have been the disadvantaged strata of population when it comes to impacts of globalization.

3.1) Impact on Labor Market:

The changes in Labor Market varied in developing & developed countries. In developing countries there was exploitation of cheap labor by developed countries. This cheap labor mainly consisted of women. On the other hand, in developed countries there was a move of demand from low skilled labor to high skilled labor. Here again women ~~suffered~~ suffered b/c they formed the majority of low skilled workforce.

3.2) Globalization's Impact on poverty Eradication Programs:

Globalization limited a state's ability to provide social welfare to its poor population. Since the majority of poor population is made up of women, gender inequality worsened with the onset of globalization. It hindered poverty eradication programs & so women suffered greatly because of this.

3.3) Increased Migration leading to problems for women:
Globalization spurred worldwide migration as people moved to different countries in search of jobs & better living conditions. However, increased migration also created problems as the chances for women trafficking was increased. Lack of proper regulation led to women being trafficked for sexual exploitation.

3.4) Lack of Education limiting access to employment opportunities:

Women had already been deprived of quality education or did not enjoy the standard of education that men enjoyed. Due to this, when globalization brought with it better employment opportunities, women could not avail these opportunities.

3.5) Feminization of poverty:

Globally 70% of the poor are women. This phenomenon is called feminization of poverty, i.e., the process through which women are disproportionately more likely to become & stay poor. Globalization aided this process through the policies put in place by loan giving organizations like IMF or world bank. These policies demand less spending on social welfare programs which ~~were~~ were mostly aimed at improving the conditions of the poor.

3.6) Lack of Access to Internet:

Internet played a huge role in the process of globalization by making it global communication

easier. Nevertheless, it must be recognized that millions of the world's poorest women & men still do not have access to these facilities. Gender inequality was thus reinforced due to disproportionate infiltration of technology.

4) Critical Analysis:

Although globalization increased gender inequality in a number of ways, it also liberated women in some ways. Women became empowered by employment opportunities in non-traditional sectors which enabled them to earn & control income. Women turned income earners may be able to leverage their new position to change gender roles in their households by influencing the allocation of time & resources among household members, shifting relative power within the households, & more broadly exercising stronger agency. Also, globalization is generating an unprecedented understanding that economic & social rights are part of the international human rights discourse. Similarly, the growing force of international women's movement & their influence over the intergovernmental processes are empowering women & creating space for women's organizations at the national & local levels to grow. Thus globalization is in a way helping to eradicate gender inequality.

5) Conclusion:

Globalization led to an unprecedented integration of nations due to increased economic activity.