

What are the root-causes that led to gender-based violence? How these factors intersect and perpetuate...

Introduction:

Gender-based violence is a complex issue deeply rooted in social, cultural, economic, legal, political and psychological factors. Normalization of violence, harmful traditions that reinforce patriarchy, limited access to job opportunities, weak enforcement of gender-based law, unequal representation in political sphere and toxic masculinity are the root-causes of gender-based violence. These factors intersect as they are inter-linked with each other and perpetuate violence against women in Pakistan.

Root-causes of gender-based violence:

Root-causes of gender-based violence lies in social, cultural, economic, legal, political and psychological factors:

Social Factor

Normalization of violence

Victim blaming

Cultural Factors

Traditional gender roles

Harmful Traditions

Economic Factors

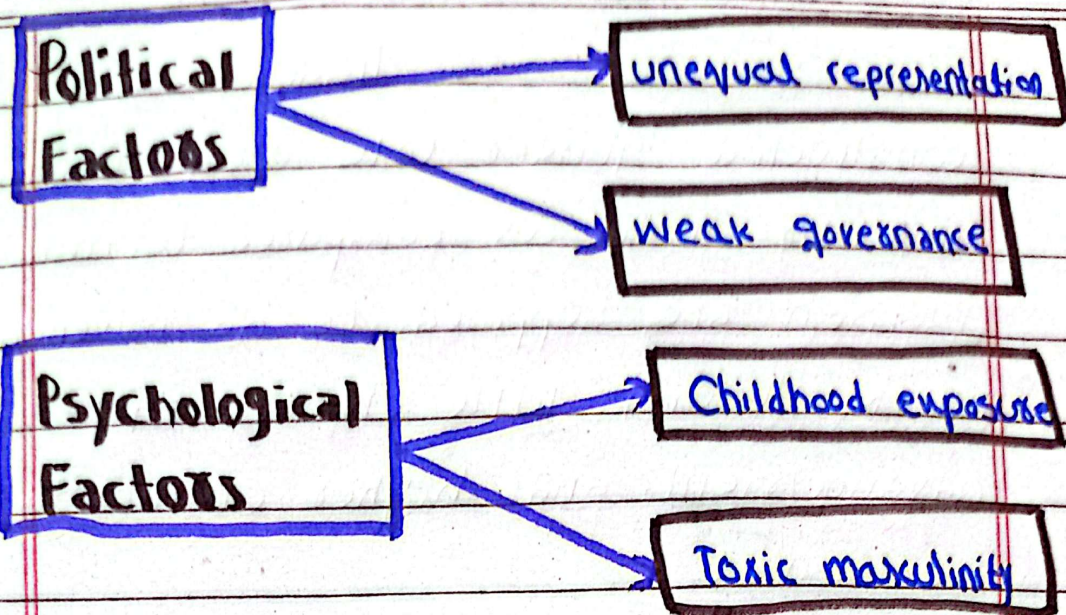
unequal job opportunities

Property rights denial

Legal Factors

Lack of enforcement

Cultural bias in Justice



i) Social causes of gender-based violence:

- **Normalization of violence:** In patriarchal society, violence is normalized by the society by normalizing that men are aggressive in nature.
- **Victim blaming:** Victim blaming is very common. Society often blames women for their dressing sense or boldness and portrays this as the main cause of abuse.

ii) Cultural causes of gender-based violence:

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- **Traditional gender roles:** Traditionally constructed gender role assign women inferior role as compared to man. Women are supposed to do household work, leaving little chances of advancement, and higher chances to be abused.

- **Harmful tradition:** Harmful practices like early marriages, honor killings, dowry-related abuse are deeply rooted in patriarchal societies.

iii) **Economic causes of gender-based violence:**

- **unequal job opportunities:** Due to the unequal access to education, there exist unequal job opportunities for women, leaving them vulnerable to violence.
- **Property rights denial:** In many countries, women have no property rights, making them dependent

on men for their survival. This open way for man to abuse women due to higher positions.

iv) Legal factors responsible for gender-based violence:

- **Lack of enforcement of laws:** Although there exist laws against gender-based violence, but due to poor enforcement of these laws abusers feel free to exert violence without fear of being punished.
- **Cultural biasness in justice system:** As the justice system is mainly dominated by man. So, they pay little attention to gender-based violence case and dismiss it by saying it personal matter.

v) Political factors leading towards gender-based violence:

- **Unequal political representation:** Due to

unequal political representation women have little role in decision-making so, less attention is paid to resolve the issue of violence against women.

- **Weak Governance:** Due to inefficiency of governance, proper measures are not adopted to address the issue of gender-based violence.

vii) Psychological factors of gender-based violence:

- **Childhood exposure:** The children who are socialized in environment where violence is normalized tend to adopt the violence in adulthood.
- **Toxic masculinity:** Sigmund Freud in his psychoanalytical theory assert that men have inherent need to subordinate women. Further, society forced man to show dominant and aggressive behavior.

How these factors intersect and perpetuate violence against women in Pakistan:

i) **Patriarchy and cultural norms justifying violence:**

In Pakistan, honor-shame paradigm dictate that man's dignity depends on controlling women sexuality and behaviors. In this way, this perpetuate violence against women.

ii) **Economic dependence and Weak legal system trapped victims:**

Women of Pakistan with no income cannot leave abusive marriage due to fear of homelessness or losing children. This provide an edge to man to abuse women.

iii) **Misogynist interpretations of**

Religion and institutional failures results into systematic oppression:

Some clerics in Pakistan promote the idea that husband can "discipline" his wife, discouraging legal action. This allows the husband to abuse his wife physically or mentally.

iv) Normalization of violence and Lack of education perpetuate violence across generations:

Mothers who (abuse) endure abuse may teach their daughters to accept it as fate. Lack of education also perpetuate violence due to lack of awareness of their rights. For example literacy rate in Balochistan for women is low and gender-based violence is high.

v) Media and popular culture

reinforcing stereotypes:

The backlash against the Aurat March shows how media narratives paints women's rights activism as "Western" or "anti-Islamic".

Conclusion:

Hence, from the above discussion it is clear that root-cause of gender-based violence intersect with each other to perpetuate violence against women. Without resolving these root-causes the plight of women can never be improved in Pakistan.