

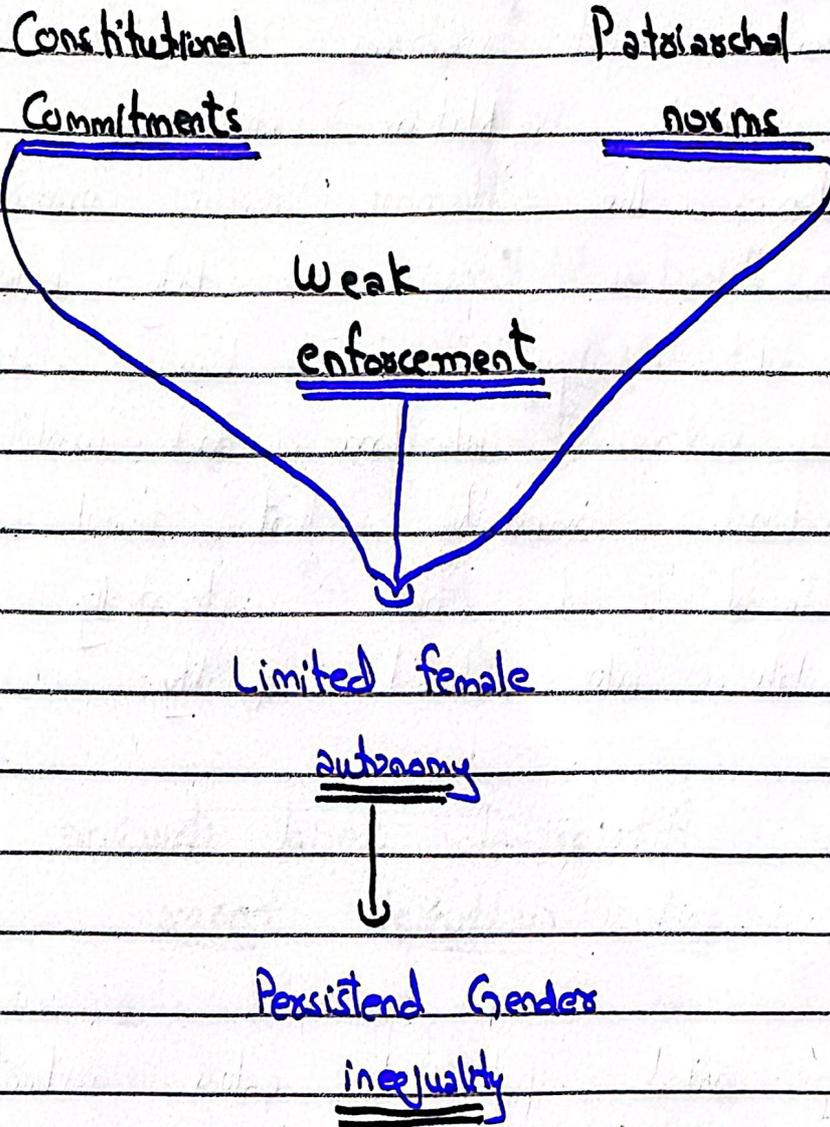
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Analyze the main factors responsible for Pakistan being ranked among the worst countries for gender inequality despite constitutional and international commitments. Discuss the impact of globalization on Pakistani women, including labor participation, reproductive roles, and socio-economic challenges.

① Introduction: Persistent Gender Inequality Despite Formal Commitments.

Pakistan remains ranked among the worst countries for gender inequality despite constitutional guarantees of equality and commitments to international conventions. Structural patriarchy, weak institutional enforcement, economic exclusion, and socio-cultural barriers undermine formal protections. Globalization has further reshaped gender relations, affecting women's labor participation, reproductive responsibilities, and socio-economic positioning in complex

and often contradictory ways.



② Structural factors behind persistent gender inequality in Pakistan

1, Gap between constitutional guarantees and implementation &

Pakistan's constitution guarantees equality before law, yet enforcement remains inconsistent. Legal reforms often fail due to weak institutions and social resistance. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Reports repeatedly highlight implementation gaps in laws related to violence, inheritance, and workplace protection, demonstrating that formal commitments do not automatically translate into lived equality.

2.2 Patriarchal social structure and cultural norms c.

Deep-rooted patriarchal values restrict women's mobility, decision-making power, and public participation. Gender roles are socially constructed and normalized within institutions. In The Social Construction of Gender, Judith Lorber explains how institutions reproduce

inequality through everyday practices. In Pakistan, these norms limit educational attainment and employment opportunities for women.

2.3 Low female education and economic dependency &

Female literacy and school retention remain uneven across provinces. Limited education restricts economic independence and reinforces dependency within households.

In *Women of Pakistan's Two Steps Forward, One Step Back*, Mumtaz and Shaheed argue that education is central to transforming women's socio-economic status, yet structural barriers continue to constrain access.

2.4 Early marriage and demographic pressures &

Child marriage and high fertility rates intensify women's domestic burdens and limit public participation.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Reports document continued prevalence of early marriages in rural districts, linking them to maternal health risks and reduced educational attainment. Demographic pressures reinforce gendered cycles of poverty and exclusion.

③ Economic and institutional dimensions of Gender inequality

3.1, Limited labor force participation

Female labor force participation in Pakistan remains significantly lower than regional averages. Social stigma, unpaid care responsibilities, and lack of

safe transportation deter employment. Feminist scholars in The State of Women Studies in Pakistan argue that structural economic planning has historically marginalized women's productive role.

3.2, Informalization and wage disparities ←

Even when women enter the workforce, they are concentrated in informal, low-paid sectors with limited protection. Wage gaps persist across industries. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Reports emphasize the vulnerability of home-based workers lacking contracts and social security, reflecting systemic economic marginalization.

3.3, Political Underrepresentation ←

Although reserve seats exist, substantive

political influence remains limited. Women legislators often face structural barriers within party hierarchies. Democratic participation without structural empowerment limits transformative change and reinforces symbols rather than substantive inclusion.

Patriarchal norms
+ Weak institutions

Limited education
and employment

Economic
dependency

High gender
inequality ranking

④ Impact of Globalization on
Pakistani Women

4.1 Expansion of ~~labor~~ female labor in Global markets

Globalization has created economic opportunities in textiles, garments, and service sectors. However, these jobs are often low-paid and insecure. Women participate in export-oriented industries under precarious conditions, reflecting integration without empowerment. Market inclusion does not necessarily dismantle patriarchal labor hierarchies.

4.2 Home-based and subcontracted work

Global supply chains rely on home-based ~~labor~~ female labor for stitching and handicrafts. These workers lack formal contracts and social protections. Economic ~~shift~~ risk shifts from corporations to

households, intensifying vulnerability. Such informalization increases women's workload while maintaining invisibility in official economic statistics.

4.3, Double burden of Productive and reproductive roles ↵

Globalization has expanded women's paid work without reducing domestic responsibilities. Women continue to perform unpaid care labor alongside income generation. As Bowles and ~~Lein~~ Klein note in Theories of Women Studies, capitalism depends on undervalued reproductive labor, reinforcing gendered inequality within households.

4.4, Consumer culture and changing gender norms ↵

Exposure to global media has

altered aspirations and gender perceptions. Urban women increasingly pursue education and careers. However, changing norms coexist with conservative backlash, creating tension between modernity and tradition. This contradiction produces uneven empowerment across class and regional lines.

4.5, Migration and remittances Economies

Male labor migration reshapes household structures, sometimes increasing women's decision-making roles. However, economic dependence on remittances may also reinforce patriarchal control. Women often manage households without formal ownership rights, limiting structural empowerment despite increased responsibility.

Global Market
Integration

Female employment
expansion

Precarious work
+ Double burden

Conditional and
uneven empowerment

⑤ Socio Economic challenges in a Globalized Context

S.i., Persistent poverty and
Gendered vulnerability

Global economic pressures disproportionately
affect women in low-income households
inflation and reduced public spending

intensify care burdens. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan Reports frequently link economic crises with increased domestic stress and gender-based violence, demonstrating the gendered impact of macroeconomic instability.

5.2, Technology, education, and digital gaps

Digital globalization offers opportunities in online work and education, yet access remains unequal. Rural women face technological barriers and limited connectivity. Without targeted digital inclusion policies, globalization risks widening gender disparities rather than reducing them.

⑥ Conclusion

Pakistan's poor gender inequality

ranking reflects structural patriarchy, weak institutional enforcement, and economic marginalization despite constitutional commitments. Globalization has created both opportunities and vulnerabilities, expanding labor participation while reinforcing informalization and reproductive burdens. Sustainable progress requires institutional accountability, gender-sensitive economic planning, and structural reform that can transform, rather than merely accommodate, unequal power relations.

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