**Feminism in Pakistan**

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Blinded by the ravages of cultural radicalism, it seemed as though that, forsaking the rights of women in Pakistan became additionally widespread as a discrepancy between the two genders was formed. Since the formation of the country, a sense of societal normality has led to women being forced into a secondary position within homes, men obtaining more privileges and women being dominated by men. The situation for women in our country is far from the equality that we set out to achieve with the formation of Pakistan and currently in the status-quo women face a myriad of issues that have led them to become repressed and unable to fight against these injustices on a person-to-person basis.

Since independence in 1947, there has been a dire need for legislation and awareness regarding the condition of women in Pakistan. According to the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey, a staggering 32 percent of women have experienced physical violence in Pakistan and 40 percent of ever-married women have suffered from spousal abuse at some point in their life. The nation has suffered from one of the highest overall hourly average (mean) gender pay gap, at 34 percent, according to the ILO’s Global Wage Report 2018-19; this is more than double the global average. Pakistani women account for almost 90 percent of the bottom one percent of wage earners. The importance of education for women has been constantly overlooked and disregarded. Thirty-two percent of primary school age girls are out of school in Pakistan, compared to 21 percent of boys. By grade six, 59 percent of girls are out of school, versus 49 percent of boys.

[15 more hotels sealed in Murree for overcharging as crackdown continues](https://nation.com.pk/12-Jan-2022/15-more-hotels-sealed-in-murree-for-overcharging-as-crackdown-continues)

The mentality of most Pakistani men represents the words “toxic masculinity” and “misogyny”. It refers to a way of thinking that men are superior to women and that women are their accessories, and they can do what they want with them. This way of thinking has not only led to social inequalities but also a culture of systematic discrimination and in the extreme rape culture. When men think like this, they are bound to make insensitive jokes that trivialise assault, molestation, catcalling and harassment. This mindset is often rooted from young boys not being taught how to respect and behave with women and due to this these same boys make dirty jokes with their friends and sexualise women.

The mind of a child is often like a sponge—the involuntary absorption of information takes place, and a child often imitates the practices of whom he sees as a role model. This psychology can perhaps best be seen through another example of when a young boy sees his father treat his mother coldly, ignoring her and referring to her as property. This way of thinking is passed on from generation to generation and is instilled in boys from a young age, but due to the ever-increasing wave of social enlightenment the situation can be looked upon optimistically.

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In recent years, a wave of feminism has sprung up within Pakistan and the movement acts as a joint effort to support women in the country to overcome such obstacles and to organise to fight for the rights of women politically, socially, and economically. Feminism means equality and sameness and treatment that is exclusive of gender. It fights for women to not be killed in the name of honour, to not be treated like objects, to not be harassed, to not be exploited, to not be looked down on, to be treated fairly, the abolishment of gender roles that stereotype people, equal pay, same rights and other things that encompass an end to social injustices. The movement as of now has made waves by organising mass movements like the Aurat March and by carrying out educational activities for the population of Pakistan. The feminist movement has become a banner for unity and organisation for demanding a change in the way of thinking of the masses.

As of now, the feminist movement within Pakistan has done a lot of good, and it continues to enlighten women about their rights and enlighten men on how to act as allies. It acts as a support system for women under oppression and as a voice for women. The movement has also inspired the emergence of several Non-Governmental Organisations which work towards the aim of gender equality within Pakistan. The rise of feminism has also paved the way for passing of legislation such as the Punjab Bill of 2016 and the Prevention Act of 2020. Both these acts set out imprisonment and fines of up to PKR 50,000. Furthermore, the definition of gender-based violence which extends to emotions has also been established. Let us hope that this movement continues to live on and flourish and all of us should play our part in helping humanity grow.

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