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From ratification to realization: Evaluating Pakistan's commitment to UDHR and CEDAW principles

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Abstract

The UDHR and CEDAW are the two conventions that have been implemented in Pakistan; it in itself is a crucial point where international human rights provisions meet with local norms of law, society, and culture. In spite of the fact that Pakistan ratified CEDAW in 1996 and signed UDHR in 1948, the power of the country to combine these structures with the legal framework and every routine of life is still limited by a mix of cultural, political, and economic issues. The paper reflects on the coverage of the new principles in UDHR and CEDAW in the Pakistan legal framework and outlines significant barriers and prospects of its amendment. In a study into relevant literature, legal documents, and historical background, the study assesses the level to which Pakistan has adhered to international human rights standards and offers any suggestions on how to improve the situation. Finally, in this paper, I will provide a detailed evaluation of the interaction of Pakistan with UDHR and CEDAW and suggest the means of a more positive involvement.

Keywords: gender equality, human rights, legal framework, legal reform, women's rights

Introduction

Pakistan marked the widespread affirmation of human rights back in 1948 i.e. UDHR, and afterward, in 1996, it moreover approved CEDAW. On paper, these were enormous steps (Faraz et al., 2024). By marking them, Pakistan essentially concurred to treat individuals similarly and secure women's rights (Deeba et al., 2022). But the reality is a part more complicated (Ahmad et al., 2025). Even in spite of the fact that the structure says everybody rises, that's not continuously what happens in genuine life, particularly for women and particularly in rustic regions (Faisal et al., 2024). A part of social conventions and ancient ways of considering still

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play a considerable part, and they frequently go against what these universal assertions are gathered to ensure (Tabassum, 2024).

There are laws, like the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 almost badgering at work from 2010, and they're implied to offer assistance (Tazeem, 2015). But the truth is, these laws aren't continuously taken after (Aslam et al., 2024). In some cases, they're overlooked, some of the time individuals don't take them honestly, and some of the time, the framework fair isn't solid sufficient to make doubt their work (Aslam et al., 2024).

There are, moreover, more profound issues, like political insecurity and powerless teach, that make it difficult for human rights to be secured the way they ought to be. This paper is attempting to get what's going off-base. It looks at how Pakistan is doing when it comes to really taking after through on these guarantees and what's getting in the way, not fair lawfully, but socially and socially as well. And ideally, it can point to a few ways things may be progressed.

We have chosen to work on this subject since, indeed, in spite of the fact that Pakistan has marked huge worldwide understandings like the UDHR and CEDAW, things on the ground are still exceptionally distinctive. The nation has made guarantees to ensure human rights and advance uniformity, but in reality, a part of those guarantees isn't taken after appropriately. There are laws that back women's rights, but they frequently don't work because of social conventions, destitute law authorization, and political issues. What's composed on paper doesn't coordinate what really happens in people's lives.

This investigation is critical since it tries to determine why that hole exists. By looking at both the laws and the social side of things, we trust to get what's halting these human rights from being entirely regarded in Pakistan. We, too, trust the discoveries can offer assistance to others — like individuals working in approach, human rights, or universal organizations — to see what needs to be altered. Possibly, this work can offer assistance in beginning discussions around how to make both the lawful framework and society more reasonable and break even, particularly for women.

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Methodology

This study employed a systematic review methodology, with research objectives established accordingly. A comprehensive literature review was conducted (Komba & Lwoga, 2020). Research findings were categorized based on their content (Hiver et al., 2021; Petticrew & Roberts, 2006), and classified information was incorporated into the study by organizing it into headings (Gan et al., 2021; Pawson et al., 2005). The evaluation of classified information and titles formed the basis of the study (Page, 2021; Rahi, 2017), ensuring the integrity of the research subject and its contents (Egger et al., 2022; Victor, 2008). The criteria for selection are enlisted.

Relevance: Researches that directly addressed the questions posed by this study are included.

Quality: Studies that meet a certain quality threshold (e.g., methodological rigor, bias risk) are included. Most of the research is from Scopus-indexed and Clarivate Analytics journals and reputed publishers.

Recency: Consideration of the publication date to ensure that the review reflects the most current evidence. Most of the studies are from the last three years.

Language: Only studies published in English are included.

Data Completeness: Previous studies must provide sufficient data on outcomes of interest for practical synthesis; it is also ensured in this research.

This study did not use primary data from human participants; therefore, no ethics clearance letter from the ethics committee was required.

Review of the Literature

The utilization of the UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan has been a subject of shrewd examination, with investigators centering on the lawful and socio-cultural boundaries that pulverize the realization of human rights (Aslam et al., 2024). Nader (2023) unmistakable highlights both accomplishments and chosen challenges in changing Pakistan's hones with these comprehensive systems. Ali (2012) looks at Pakistan's confirmation of broad human rights traditions, counting UDHR and

CEDAW, battling that in spite of the fact that the nation has formalized its commitment to these traditions, burrowed in patriarchal conventions expect compelling prerequisite.

Tabassum (2024) underscores that in appearing abhor toward lively laws, such as the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013, organization inefficiencies and political resistance debilitate their complete execution. Hassan et al. (2024) highlight social resistance to gender presentation correspondence and the requirement of open mindfulness as fundamental obstacles. Ali (2006) critically analyzes the pullback between legitimate changes and social reality in Pakistan. The rural-urban disconnected in the application of these laws, with country women going up against more unmistakable boundaries in getting to lawful security (Butt et al., 2023).

Khan (2022) recognizes common preventions, such as political insecurity and requires of organization capacity, and stresses that the application of these comprehensive systems is essentially weaved with societal measures. Pakistan's bona fide changes appear to abhor the truth that fundamentals are insulant as they do not adequately address the social boundaries to representation. All comprehensive NGOs and organizations have played a vital parcel in supporting women's rights, but these outside weights go up against basic resistance inside the nation (Fatima, 2024).

Pakistan's political scene has affected the utilization of human rights traditions (Faraz et al., 2022). Political elites continually drop level to prioritize human rights, particularly when they fight with standard or actual values. The political environment, or conceivably the genuine blue system, is a key figure in the clashing application of human rights securities (Ahmad & Bhatti, 2023). The consideration endorses that the gap between law and hone is set up in societal resistance and a requirement of basic authorization defiant. Political and social components proceed to weaken the successful realization of human rights in Pakistan (Faisal et al., 2024). On the whole, the composing dependably recognizes a crevice between Pakistan's around-the-world commitments and the commonsense realization of human rights. Whereas honest-to-goodness changes around the world weight have driven developments, burrowed in patriarchal rules, incapable organization, and political

challenges proceed to hinder the full utilization of CEDAW and the UDHR (Hassan et al., 2024). Additionally, the rural-urban apportioned decays confusion, especially for women. These considerations highlight the requirement for more grounded bona fide prerequisites, social alter, and reinforced political commitment to wrap up the course of activity with broad human rights benchmarks.

Historical Context of Pakistan's Engagement with UDHR and CEDAW

Pakistan's chronicled engagement with human rights can be followed back to its early days of autonomy in 1947. The nation, established on the standards of correspondence and equity, at first grasped universal human rights benchmarks, including the widespread announcement of Human Rights (UDHR), which was supported by Pakistan in 1948 (Khan, 2022). This support was a typical commitment to the standards of widespread human rights and respect for all. Be that as it may, in spite of this underwriting, Pakistan confronted noteworthy challenges in coordinating these worldwide guidelines into its lawful and social systems (Ahmad et al., 2025).

In the early a long time of its arrangement, Pakistan's political flimsiness and advancing administration structures prevented the steady authorization of human rights (Nunez, 2025). The Constitution of Pakistan in 1973 laid the establishment for legitimate securities by ensuring crucial rights, counting correspondence sometime recently the law, and flexibility from segregation (Tabassum, 2024). In any case, these sacred arrangements were frequently undermined by political precariousness, military administrations, and a need for legal autonomy, which ruined the full realization of human rights (Faraz et al., 2024).

The approval of CEDAW in 1996 stamped a noteworthy breakthrough in Pakistan's commitment to tending to segregation against women. Be that as it may, in spite of its legitimate commitment, the nation confronted societal resistance and social standards that sustained gender imbalance. Over a long time, different lawful changes were presented, such as the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 but execution remained powerless due to a combination of political, social, and regulation obstructions. The crevice between law and hone remains a critical challenge in Pakistan's human rights scene, with women and marginalized bunches

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regularly confronting unequal treatment (Nader, 2023). Pakistan's authentic setting of human rights reflects the broader challenges faced by numerous creating nations in complete coordination with worldwide human rights benchmarks while exploring neighborhood social, political, and societal imperatives (Deeba et al., 2022).

Theoretical Context of UDHR and CEDAW

The speculative underpinnings of both the UDHR and CEDAW are set up in the guidelines of far-reaching human respectability, adjustment, and non-discrimination. These frameworks point to constructing a set of benchmarks and benchmarks that rise over national boundaries, ensuring the security of human rights regardless of geographic, social, or political contexts.

- **Human Rights Speculations and UDHR**

The UDHR is based on the present that all individuals are entitled to the same fundamental rights and adaptabilities. This Universalist approach to human rights emphasizes consistency and non-discrimination, pronouncing that all people should have got to do the same genuine securities and openings. The UDHR was made after the aversions of World War II, with the point of foreseeing shock and ensuring that no individual is denied principal rights due to their race, sex, or religion.

In the setting of Pakistan, the UDHR's guidelines are reflected in the Structure of Pakistan, which guarantees rise to rights for all citizens. Be that as it may, the speculative benchmarks of the UDHR routinely clash with Pakistan's socio-cultural substances, where significantly saturated patriarchal values, ethnic and ardent divisions, and political uncertainty complicate the authorization of these broad rights. The UDHR's speculation acknowledges a level of consistency in law and sharpening that is troublesome to finish in a varying and complex society like Pakistan, where adjacent conventions and traditions regularly invalidate the convictions of non-discrimination.

- **CEDAW and Women's Dissident Legal Theory**

CEDAW, on the other hand, is grounded in women's extremist genuine speculation, which fights that gender-based isolation is both a social and legal create that can, as it were, be murdered through systemic changes in laws, courses of action, and social

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measures. Women's extremist speculation emphasizes the requirement to challenge patriarchal structures and control disproportionate characteristics that proliferate status awkwardness. CEDAW gives a specific legal framework for tending to gender-based isolation, requiring signatory states to take proactive measures to progress gender.

In Pakistan, the speculative framework of CEDAW alters with women's extremist legal theory in pushing for systemic changes to address division against women. In any case, the execution of CEDAW is complicated by burrowed-in gender measures, where social and dedication sharpens habitually limit women's office. In show disdain toward legal changes, the patriarchal structures that regulate much of Pakistani society remain secure to change, making it troublesome to actualize the courses of action of CEDAW totally.

Pakistan's Commitment to UDHR and CEDAW

Pakistan's commitment to human rights is exemplified by its approval of key universal traditions, including the Widespread Announcement of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 and the Tradition on the Disposal of All Shapes of Segregation Against women (CEDAW) in 1996. These commitments speak to the country's formal acknowledgment of all-inclusive human rights standards. Be that as it may, the interpretation of these standards in household law and approach has remained conflicting (Shah, 2022).

❖ UDHR in Pakistan

The UDHR, which advocates for essential opportunities and correspondence for all people, counting women and minorities, adjusts to Pakistan's sacred standards. The Structure of Pakistan (1973) incorporates critical rights such as correspondence, sometimes recently the law, and the right to life and freedom, reflecting the UDHR's central values. Be that as it may, there has been a noteworthy crevice between these sacred ensures and the substances of human rights securities. For illustration, in spite of protected ensures, women and devout minorities proceed to confront segregation and viciousness, which is regularly exacerbated by frail law requirements and social resistance (Sudduth, 2009).

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- **CEDAW in Pakistan**

CEDAW is a comprehensive universal settlement aimed at annihilating all shapes of segregation against women. By approving CEDAW in 1996, Pakistan committed to take all fitting measures to kill segregation against women in all circles of life. It incorporates legitimate changes, approach changes, and the creation of teaching outlined to advance gender equality. Despite confirming CEDAW, Pakistan faces critical challenges in its usage. The National Commission on the Status of women (NCSW) was built up to advance women's rights in line with CEDAW's orders, but its viability has been constrained by deficient financing, the need for political will, and societal resistance. Lawful changes such as the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 have been presented. Still, the nation proceeds to battle with tall rates of gender-based viciousness, honor killings, and other shapes of separation against women.

Key Challenges in the Implementation of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan

The utilization of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan has been annihilated by a few components, counting the requirement of successful need components, far off coming to patriarchal demeanors, political trickiness, and a requirement of mindfulness around these traditions among the standard open. In different zones, especially rustic regions, gender-based savagery remains overpowering, and social and social benchmarks routinely undermine women's rights. Besides, genuine blue changes are, as regularly as conceivable, not completely kept up due to systemic debasement and insulant capacity inside the proper blue framework.

Opportunities for UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan

In spite of the challenges, there are critical openings for progressing the usage of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan. These openings can be found in both the advancing legitimate scene and changing socio-political dynamics.

- **Political Will and Legitimate Reform**

One of the most critical openings for progressing UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan is through the fortifying of political will. The Pakistani government has appeared intrigued in actualizing changes, especially in reaction to worldwide weight and

household promotion by human rights organizations. The expanding interest of women in legislative issues, such as the rise of female lawmakers, offers an opportunity to thrust for more grounded lawful assurances for women's rights and more noteworthy arrangements with worldwide human rights standards.

- **Part of Respectful Society and NGOs**

Pakistan has a dynamic, gracious society, with various NGOs and grassroots organizations working to raise mindfulness approximately gender-based segregation and human rights infringement. These organizations play a significant part in supporting the complete execution of CEDAW and the UDHR. By working in collaboration with worldwide human rights bodies, neighborhood organizations can hold the government responsible and thrust for more viable law enforcement.

- **Worldwide Back and Pressure**

International organizations such as the Joined Together Countries and Pardon Universal proceeded to apply weight on Pakistan to meet its human rights commitments beneath CEDAW and the UDHR. The expanding worldwide center on women's rights uniformity gives an opportunity for Pakistan to progress its human rights record and fulfill its worldwide commitments. By leveraging worldwide back and adjusting to worldwide standards, Pakistan can work toward moving forward the status of women and marginalized communities.

- **Changing Socio-Cultural Norms**

There is also a rising move in Pakistani society towards more dynamic sees on women's rights. Urbanization, instruction, and worldwide networks are cultivating a more gender-conscious populace, especially among more youthful eras. The developing number of women entering the workforce and instruction segments gives a stage for challenging conventional non-discrimination. These openings highlight the potential for noteworthy advances in adjusting Pakistan's legitimate and social frameworks with the standards of UDHR and CEDAW, in spite of the diligent challenges. Through a combination of legitimate changes, universal weight, and moving societal demeanors, Pakistan has the chance to improve its human rights hones and make a more evenhanded environment for all citizens.

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Discussion

The utilization of the UDHR and CEDAW and in Pakistan presents both fundamental challenges and promising openings. While the country has legally committed to these all-inclusive human rights frameworks, the cleft between legal changes and their compelling authorization remains a significant concern. Social resistance significantly sets up patriarchal values and societal guidelines as often as possible, debilitating genuine security, especially for women. In show disdain toward having affirmed CEDAW and guaranteeing the UDHR, Pakistan's authentic system faces systemic issues, checking clashing prerequisites, deficiently political will, and a requirement of resources for human rights teachers.

The CEDAW, which centers on arranging division against women, alters Pakistan's sacrosanct guarantees of correspondence. Actual blue changes such as the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 talk to endeavors to address women's rights, but their influence is routinely debilitated by missing authorization rebellious and societal hesitance to challenge customary gender norms.

Furthermore, the UDHR's guidelines of correspondence and non-discrimination go up against fundamental impediments in Pakistan, where women, minorities, and marginalized communities are as regularly as conceivable association partition. The political uncertainty and effect of the military in Pakistan's organization also contribute to clashing human rights. There are openings for upgrades. Growing political will, a more critical affiliation of aware society organizations, and creating widespread weight grant pathways to update the utilization of these frameworks. By tending to social resistance and invigorating legal authorization, Pakistan can move closer to fulfilling its around-the-world human rights commitments and making a more unbiased society.

Conclusion

Pakistan's commitment to the CEDAW and the UDHR follows its formal affirmation of wide human rights rules. In any case, the reasonable execution of these frameworks has stood up to different challenges, tallying burrowed in social measures, political uncertainty, and clashing veritable requirements. While vital

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bona fide changes have appeared, such as the Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act, 2006, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 the hole between law and sharpening remains essential, particularly in nation zones and among marginalized communities.

Nevertheless, openings for advance exist. Bracing political will, creating the allocation of kind society, and leveraging around the world back can help address these boundaries. By changing legal frameworks with societal modification and ensuring standard requirements, Pakistan can make essential developments toward fulfilling its human rights commitments. In the long run, the realization of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan turns on both legal alter and the alter of socio-cultural demeanors to make a more fair-minded society.

Recommendations

Reinforcing Legal Authorization: Pakistan should move forward with the authorization of existing laws that alter with CEDAW and the UDHR, ensuring that they are suitably executed at both the government and common levels. These cements building up more grounded checking components and commitment structures.

Open Mindfulness Campaigns: Lively readiness over the nation campaigns to teach the open around UDHR and CEDAW, centering on their centrality for gender consistency, non-discrimination, and human rights. Growing mindfulness will help to move societal demeanors and decrease resistance to these norms.

Capacity Building for Law Authorization Working situations: Orchestrating for police, bona fide officers, and other law authorization workforce on the benchmarks of human rights, particularly women's rights underneath CEDAW, is critical. It will develop their capacity to handle cases related to gender-based brutality, restriction, and human rights violations.

Expanded Political Commitment: Political pioneers should format a more grounded commitment to human rights by prioritizing conclusive changes, ensuring that UDHR and CEDAW are totally energized into national approaches. Political will is significant to overcoming heading resistance.

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Bracing Women's Rights Instruct: Progress the common sense of instruction like the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) by giving more resources, subsidizing, and opportunities to invigorate women's rights initiatives.

Lawful Offer assistance and Support Organizations: Make get to genuine offer assistance and fortify organizations for women, minorities, and marginalized bunches, engaging them to look at the legitimate-to-goodness system and see for regard underneath UDHR and CEDAW protections.

Locks in Excited and Social Pioneers: Jar in sincere and social pioneers in trade around human rights and gender consistency. Their back can offer help to change societal measures and reduce resistance to the execution of UDHR and CEDAW.

Stimulating Liberal Society Organizations: Back the work of NGOs and grassroots organizations that advocate for human rights and women's bracing. These organizations play a key allocate in watching government compliance and pushing for essential reforms.

Observing and Specifying Components: Set up free national human rights bodies to screen the headway of UDHR and CEDAW utilization and ensure facilitate declaring to the around the world community.

Limitations and Implications

This investigation is subject to a few confinements that may affect its scope and profundity. To begin with, the ponder essentially depends on auxiliary information, counting scholarly articles, reports, and lawful records, which may not capture the later advancements or grassroots points of view on the usage of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan. Besides, the investigation centers on lawful and regulation systems, but it does not broadly investigate the lived encounters of marginalized bunches, especially women in country or conflict-prone regions, where social obstructions to human rights execution are most extreme. Moreover, the political and social climate in Pakistan is constantly advancing, and this investigation may not completely account for the effect of political shifts, administrative changes, or developing worldwide weights on human rights hones. At long last, due to time and asset imperatives, the consider cannot join essential field investigations or interviews with

key partners, which would have given more nuanced experiences into the down-to-earth challenges and openings for change.

This ask-around holds a few basic proposals for both courses of action and sharpening in Pakistan. To start with, it highlights the essential gaps between legal commitments and genuine utilization of UDHR and CEDAW courses of action, which can enlighten future approach choices pointed at strengthening human rights affirmations. By recognizing key obstacles such as political instability, social resistance, and frail authorization, the thinking around proposes ranges centered on changes, tallying moved forward law authorization, capacity building for teaching, and updated open mindfulness. The ask approximately additionally underscores the requirement for a more comprehensive and socially sensitive approach to human rights, one that locks in both genuine frameworks and societal demeanors. In addition, the revelations can be utilized by conscious society organizations, human rights advocates, and world bodies to weigh the government for more grounded adherence to all-inclusive conventions. By an expansive, this ask-around contributes to a more significant understanding of the challenges Pakistan faces in altering with around the world human rights measures and gives a preface for future advancement and alter endeavors.

Future Research Directions

Future examination of the execution of UDHR and CEDAW in Pakistan should center on a more comprehensive examination of the lived experiences of marginalized bunches, particularly women in standard and blocked-off ranges, where the influence of legal frameworks may be limited due to societal resistance. Investigators appear to conduct field considers or interviews with women, human rights shields, and adjacent communities to prevalent get how these laws are seen and experienced on the ground. Another zone for future examination is the portion of dedicated and social teaching in shaping the explanation and application of around-the-world human rights rules. Besides, comparative considers between Pakistan and other South Asian countries that have endorsed CEDAW might offer encounters into best sharpens and challenges up against in the district. Finally, examine might study the influence of all-inclusive weight and further offer assistance on the necessity of human rights laws in Pakistan, giving a clearer understanding of exterior impacts on the private approach.

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