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## Storms of Inequality: The Impact of Climate Change on Gender-Based Violence

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### Abstract

Due to climate change, socio-cultural factors and reduced support, there has been an increase in GBV toward women in Pakistan and France. This study aims to explore how these vulnerabilities affect women and the reactions to GBV that take place during climate-related disasters in both nations. This research relies on case studies, reports and existing materials to uncover the ties between climate change and GBV, as well as the social and legal reasons behind women's vulnerability. According to the findings, the combination of weak laws, cultural attitudes and economic factors together with frequent climate disasters increases the risks women confront in Pakistan. In France, although there are strong laws, low-income, immigrant and rural women still face more risk of GBV when there are climate-induced disasters. It was found that Pakistan lacks gender-friendly policies on climate and has poor enforcement of its laws, while France must provide better access to GBV services for those most at risk. The study suggests that gender-focused climate strategies are necessary and encourages building sturdier legal structures, better support for dealing with emergencies and more help for women who experience GBV in climate-related disasters.

**Keywords:** Women. Gender based violence, Culture, Vulnerability, Socio-economic factors, Climate disaster, Legal enforcement

## Introduction

Climate change (CC) is frequently characterized as an environmental issue that causes political debates and concerns, but it is also seen as a social and human issue (Clayton 2019; Dias et al. 2020). These changes frequently result in deaths, injuries, and the damage of homes, hospitals, schools, and other infrastructure (*CARE International, 2018*). Moreover, gender, social status, and other factors contribute to vulnerability and resilience to climate hazards, particularly for socially and geographically disadvantaged individuals. These individuals face discrimination based on age, race, class, caste, indigeneity, and disability, highlighting the non-gender-neutral impacts of climate change (Caridade et al., 2022).

In addition to being a worldwide environmental issue, these climatic changes directly increase the likelihood of many types of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV). Many women and girls become more vulnerable as a result of resource constraint and displacement driven by climatic changes, particularly in conflicted areas (Desai & Mandal, 2022). In climatic disasters, GBV operates on an individual level within intimate partner couples and families, and at a systemic level where disaster-affected communities, institutions, and the media monitor and reinforce gender roles (Parkinson, 2022). According to the estimates published by WHO, about 1 in 3 (30%) of women worldwide have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. This situation becomes worsen by climate change-related emergencies (*World Health Organization, 2021*).

In 2024, Pakistan ranked 158 out of 177 on the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Index and 161 out of 162 on the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index, reflecting its poor performance in addressing gender-based violence and inequality (Concern Worldwide, 2024). According to Rizvi et al. (2019), nearly 60% of women in Pakistan have experienced some form of violence, while study by Ali (2016) report prevalence ranging from 21% to 50% (Rizvi et al., 2019; Ali, 2016). Moreover, in the region of Pakistan like Punjab, over 10,000 cases were reported with a 14.5% rise in 2023 (*Dawn, 2023*). Pakistan being consistently ranked higher among the most dangerous countries for women is due to the lack of legal protections, societal stigma, and fear of dishonor that discourage women from seeking justice.

On the other hand, women in European countries like France, particularly those in vulnerable communities, also experience increased risks of GBV due to climate change-related events such as floods, heatwaves, and displacement. According to the data collected in 2021, women in France comprise 85 % of intimate partner violence victims and 78 % of domestic violence victims recorded by police (*European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025*). According to the National Observatory of Violence against Women, 102 women were killed by their partner or ex-partner in France in 2020, which is equivalent to a femicide every three days (Ministère de l'Intérieur, n.d.).

However, in both the countries, climatic changes have increased the vulnerability of women and girls to sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse, specifically those living in marginalized communities. While Pakistan faces structural and cultural barriers to gender protection, France is developing stronger legal frameworks and continues its efforts to overcome climate-induced GBV, particularly among immigrant and low-income populations. Therefore, by performing a comparative thematic analysis, this review aims to identify that how specific conditions shape vulnerabilities and responses to GBV during climate disasters. By identifying patterns, differences, and challenges, this review will contribute to the development of gender-sensitive climate policies, resilience strategies, and community-based

interventions that protect at-risk populations in both the countries. To achieve this aim, this review is based on the following objectives:

1. To conduct a comparative review of existing literature and case studies on climate change and GBV in Pakistan and France.
2. To analyze secondary data to identify socio-economic and legal factors influencing vulnerability to GBV during climate disasters.
3. To facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building between Pakistani and French research teams.
4. To develop policy recommendations for gender-sensitive climate resilience strategies to address GBV in both countries.

This review is divided into the following subsection. Section 2 comprises of Literature review representing the analysis of the risk factors and rate of GBV in both the countries to identify the research gap. Section 3: Results represent comparative thematic analysis to develop recommendations for gender-sensitive climate resilience strategies, GBV prevention, and enhanced institutional and community responses. Section 4: Discussion critically analyses the findings from the thematic analysis while the last section Conclusion provide the summary of the findings of this review along with future recommendations for policy makers and stakeholders.

## **Literature Review**

### **Climate change and Gender based violence**

Climate change is the most challenging threat the world faces today. It is characterized by weather irregularity and rising sea levels, causing widespread vulnerabilities (Hossen et al., 2021). The potential link between climate change and conflict has been the topic of increasing discussion in academia. A large body of previous research has indicated that climate change may increase the risk of violent conflict (Khan et al., 2023). Climate change also presents a serious risk to human health, with far-reaching effects including heat illnesses, elevated incidence of respiratory and vector-borne diseases, and compromised food and water security through extreme weather conditions like droughts and floods (Howard, Rose, & Rivers, 2018). These physical effects of climate change are worsened by underemphasized mental health issues. Women, in particular, are impacted by cascading effects due to existing gender disparities, such as poverty, restricted access to education and assets, and social constraints. Under such susceptible circumstances, the stressors imposed by climate-related catastrophes such as displacement, resource competition, and erosion of social support systems enhances the threat of gender-based violence (Stone, Blinn, & Spencer, 2022). As women are more resilient for survival, this situation enhances domestic violence, exploitation and other types of violence due to lack of protective structure and legal institutions for support (Parkinson, 2022).

### **Literature Analysis**

According to the literature analysis, several studies have identified the effects of climate change that are worsening the pre-existing societal injustices, such as GBV. In the wake of natural catastrophes, GBV cases have sharply risen, according to UN Women (2019). For instance,

domestic violence rates increased by 25% in the impacted areas of Sri Lanka and India during the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami (Rao, 2020). In a similar context, reports following the 2010 Haitian earthquake revealed a fifty percent rise in sexual assault in camps housing displaced people (Amnesty International, 2011). Despite these results, the majority of international research has concentrated on the immediate aftermath of disasters, ignoring the long-term effects of climate change on gender-based violence as well as how these effects vary depending on the socioeconomic setting (Thurston and Ranganathan, 2021).

Research conducted in France has examined the relationship between socioeconomic vulnerabilities such as GBV and climate change. Despite of a developed nation, France is still facing the social consequences of environmental changes, especially GBV. According to research published by the French National Institute of Demographic Studies (INED), low-income areas, women, and the elderly have been disproportionately impacted by extreme weather events including heatwaves and floods (Alonso & Renard, 2020). In some of the most afflicted areas, reports of domestic violence increased by 15% during the 2019 heatwave (Anderberg, Rainer, & Siuda, 2020). There is, however, a lack of information in France about the specific effects on women living in rural or peri-urban settings, with the majority of studies there concentrating on urban resilience and adaptation techniques.

Although environmental pressures like heatwaves, rising housing costs, and displacement are common, they put women in marginalized areas at greater risk. According to the analysis of European Institute for Gender Equality, rates of intimate partner and domestic partner violence in France have continued to remain consistently high with 85% of those affected by intimate partner and 78% of domestic violence victims being women (EIGE, 2023). Moreover, in 2022, 118 women were killed by intimate partners, and in 2021, over 19,000 cases of rape involving women were reported, with 93% of all rape victims being female (EIGE, 2023). While France has stronger legal frameworks and social services, significant gaps remain in the actual implementation and monitoring of GBV protections, especially in the context of climate change (European Institute for Gender Equality, n.d.).

On the other hand, Pakistan ranked 5th most vulnerable country to climate change (Press Information Department, 2024). The nation frequently experiences heatwaves, droughts, and floods brought on by the climate. Studies reveal that these occurrences, which result in uprooting, loss of means of subsistence, and heightened reliance on male family members, disproportionately impact women residing in rural regions (Memon, 2020). The climatic changes further worsen GBV in Pakistan and disproportionately affect women and girls. Climate problems make women more vulnerable and promote domestic violence, sexual intimidation, human trafficking, and rape (Osman-Elasha, n.d.). In Pakistan, over 600,000 people (Radio France, 2022), largely women and girls, continue to live in emergency camps where sexual violence, particularly rape, is increased. Furthermore, women whose homes have been devastated by the floods and are forced to stay behind frequently dwell in unclean open spaces, without any protection or security, and are constantly threatened by gender-based sexual abuse.

However, the current climate problem in Pakistan has a direct impact on the increasing number of forced marriages. According to UNICEF, 70% of Pakistani females marry before the legal marriage age (International Center for Research on Women, n.d.), which is 16 for girls and 18 for boys (Global Development, 2020). It is important to note that this age disparity is not only detrimental, but also represents the gender disparities that exist in Pakistani culture. Extreme weather disruptions caused by climate change increase the likelihood of families separating from one or more of their daughters because they are unable to provide their basic needs. Although illegal, forced marriage of young girls to reconcile

family and clan issues continues in horrifying proportions - over 30% of girls in the country are married (International Center for Research on Women, 2012) - in all Pakistani regions (Carranca, 2013). Some girls are pledged to a guy far older than them at a young age, sometimes before they are even born. This tendency is exacerbated by the frequency and severity of climate disasters hitting Pakistan and its people.

### **Existing Gaps in the Literature**

Despite of extensive research on the relationship between climate change and GBV, some crucial gaps remain unfilled in the existing literature. Firstly, there is a lack of comparative studies looking at how various socio-economic, cultural, and policy contexts in developed (like France) and developing (like Pakistan) nations affect the relationship between climate change and GBV is a substantial gap in the literature. Without making relevant comparisons that could highlight particular vulnerabilities and resilience elements in each setting, the majority of research concentrates on either developed or developing nations separately (Dankelman, 2010). Understanding how local contexts such as governance systems, legal frameworks, and socio-cultural norms affect the prevalence and form of GBV in the face of climate change requires comparative research of this kind.

Secondly, for example, while having stronger legislation about gender equality and social safety nets, developing nations such as France still have significant gaps in the data collecting and policy implementation on GBV caused by climate change (Mandal, 2023). On the other hand, developing nations such as Pakistan can experience more severe consequences because of their lack of resources and institutional frameworks; furthermore, there is a dearth of comprehensive research linking these wider socio-economic issues to GBV caused by climate change (Saifand Raza, 2022).

Moreover, the need for gender-sensitive climate policies is becoming more widely acknowledged, but little is known about how effective these policies are in developed versus developing nations. This knowledge gap includes how less established frameworks in developing nations (like Pakistan) and well-developed nations (like France's gender equality legislation) attenuate GBV due to climate change (Rao, 2021). Furthermore, little information is available regarding the actual community implementation of these policies and the obstacles that stand in the way of their success.

### **Contribution of the Current Review**

This review explores how climate change increases the risk of GBV in Pakistan and France. By the comparative analysis, this review highlights that how social, economic, and cultural factors shape women's experiences during climate disasters. The review also highlights how issues like poverty, weak laws, and displacement make women more vulnerable, especially in developing countries. As previous studies focused only on short-term effects, this review focuses on the long-term impacts of climate-related GBV. It also suggests ways to improve gender-sensitive climate policies and encourages shared learning between countries for the protection of vulnerable communities.



## Methodology

### Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to examine the intersection of climate change and GBV in developed and developing country: France and Pakistan. The research involved the review and analysis of previously published academic articles, case studies, and policy reports that addressed events occur due to climatic changes, their social impacts, and outcomes in context of GBV. To analyse this, a thematic analysis, as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to identify and interpret recurring patterns, key issues, and policy responses across both the countries. This method enabled the classification of data into themes such as causes of GBV during climate change, gaps in legal frameworks, and national-level prevention and response strategies. A comparative framework is used to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of policies and practices of each nation in response to climate related GBV. The analysis aims to determine the gap between existing strategies and to develop policy recommendations that can strengthen gender-responsive climate adaptation in both nations.

### Data Collection and Synthesis Procedures

- a) Literature Review: A thorough analysis of previous studies on the connection between GBV and climate change, with a particular emphasis on data from France and Pakistan. This covers scholarly works, reports from global agencies (such as the UN and WHO), and official sources.
- b) Secondary Data Analysis: To elucidate trends, statistical data from previous climatic disasters, such as socioeconomic effect assessments, demography reports, and GBV-related crime records, will be examined.
- c) Case Synthesis: This section will analyze comparative case studies from both nations, emphasizing how women's vulnerabilities particularly those of those living in marginalized communities have been made worse by climate change.

### Comparative Framework and Themes development

The comparative approach of this review considers how climate change has increased GBV in Pakistan and France. By using the Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework, the data from France and Pakistan was systematically compared and themes were constructed through coding. These themes emerged from patterns related to GBV caused by climate and were framed within the dimensions identified previously. This approach is based on five fundamental dimensions: climate-induced vulnerabilities, types and incidence of GBV, socio-economic and cultural determinants, policy interventions, and mechanisms of institutional support. In Pakistan, climate disasters such as floods and heatwaves have increased the risk of GBV because of poverty, displacement, inadequate legal frameworks, social norms like child marriage and honor-based violence. Conversely, despite of an efficient framework in France, change continues to increase GBV, especially among poor, immigrant, and rural women. This structure identifies that both countries experience increased vulnerabilities but varying governance, resource levels, and social attitudes shape their responses.

## 1. Results and Discussion

### Climate-Induced Vulnerabilities

Pakistan is ranked as the 5th most vulnerable country to climate change according to the Global Climate Risk Index. This indicates that the country experiences increasingly severe extreme weather events. Vulnerabilities in Pakistan are shaped by social domination and marginalization, resulting in inequities in resource distribution and access. These vulnerabilities are 'clustered' and are influenced by multiple deficiencies, including tangible insufficiencies like lack of money, credit, inadequately built houses, degraded natural resources, illiteracy, and lack of access to information. These vulnerabilities and capacities differ based on factors such as gender, location, time, resources, social positions, and geophysical locations. Climate-induced vulnerabilities affect both genders, mainly due to socially constructed roles and responsibilities. Women often face harsher implications due to these vulnerabilities.

Climate change has caused economic difficulties that led to an increase in early and forced marriages as families consider to ease the financial pressures by the marriage of young daughters. In 2024, a village of Pakistan named Khan Mohammad Mallah reported 45 underage marriages, highlighting the severity of the issue (Le Monde, 2024). Furthermore, climate-induced resource scarcity, such as water shortages, disproportionately burdens women, who are traditionally responsible for water collection. Displacement resulting from climate disasters, such as floods and droughts, often leads to the breakdown of community structures and protective networks, leaving women and girls more susceptible to various forms of GBV, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking (Ullah et al., 2024). The scarcity of essential resources, like clean water and food, exacerbates household tensions, which can manifest as increased domestic violence (Dawn, 2023). Moreover, economic hardships force the families for negative actions, such as marrying off young daughters to alleviate financial burdens, thereby increasing instances of child and forced marriages (Le Monde, 2024). The lack of gender-sensitive policies and inadequate legal frameworks further hinder the protection of women and girls during climate-induced crises, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address the intersection of climate change and GBV in Pakistan (CRSS, 2024).

Consequently, France is also increasingly exposed to various climate-related risks, such as heatwaves, flooding, coastal erosion, and droughts, which are expected to increase in frequency and intensity through global climate change (Mavromatidi et al, 2018). The World Bank Climate Knowledge Portal indicates that the country has faced a high increase in extreme temperature, especially heatwaves that disproportionately affect urban areas and elder population. Coastal and riverine flooding is increasingly occurring, threatening infrastructure, homes, and agricultural yields particularly in areas like Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Occitanie (World Bank Group, 2021). These shifts not only burden the public services and health systems but also increase socio-economic inequalities, particularly for marginalized groups that are already vulnerable. Vulnerable populations such as low-income families, migrants, and women are exposed to higher risks due to underlying inequalities in resource access, information, and adaptive capacity (Ministère de la Transition écologique, 2020).

These vulnerabilities are also associated with a rise in GBV, especially during the displacement and socio-economic challenges induced by climate change. As the Berkeley Climate Displacement Project and the French delegation to the UN at Rome highlighted that

women tend to experience increased risks from natural disasters because they bear most of the caregiving responsibilities, are economically weaker, and have fewer seats in decision-making tables (Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations in Rome, 2021). During severe climate events such as floods or heat-related displacement, women and girls will more likely face domestic violence, exploitation, and abuse, both at the household level and in emergency shelters. The disintegration of social safety networks during climate-induced displacements exacerbates psychological stress and resource scarcity, conditions that significantly correlate with increased chances of intimate partner violence and sexual exploitation. These vulnerabilities in France demands a strong policy for climate change adaptation that incorporates gender-sensitive strategies for resilience, protection, and social justice.

### **Forms and Prevalence of GBV**

In Pakistan, 28% of women aged 15–49 have experienced physical violence, and 6% have faced sexual violence. Among ever-married women, 34% have suffered spousal physical, sexual, or emotional violence, with 5% experiencing spousal sexual violence (UNFPA Pakistan, 2025). The analysis of the research revealed that floods, droughts and heatwaves caused by climate change tend to increase the vulnerabilities and even make GBV more common. There is evidence that domestic violence, sexual abuse and forced marriages are more frequent among people from rural and marginalized areas. The floods in Pakistan last year had a major influence on women in displaced groups, resulting in higher rates of physical and sexual abuse. According to a study conducted in Sindh indicated that 30% of women in flood-affected areas were victims of domestic violence due to economic hardships and resource scarcity caused by the disaster (Ullah et al., 2024; Memon, 2020). In addition, heatwaves and droughts have a greater impact on women, as their assigned duties at home often increase their risk of GBV, according to Sawas, Anwar and Anjum (2020). Besides, social order dropping and challenges in getting to legal services in such zones leave women even less protected, making them more exposed to all types of abuse (Desai & Mandal, 2021; Vithanage, 2021). These results highlighted an urgent need of disaster management and related laws that can respond to GBV risks related to climate change.

Consequently, flooding, heatwaves and erosion along France's coastlines caused by climate have been associated with several cases of GBV, like intimate partner violence, sexual abuse or harassment in refugee camps and mental abuse. The EU-GBV survey found that 30 % of every female partner (current or former) in France has gone through psychological, physical (including threats) or sexual violence committed by a partner, with 19 % going through physical or sexual violence at the hands of a domestic abuser as adults. This study also found that 5 % of women between 15 and 49 years of age had experienced IPV in the previous 12 months. However, as limited quantitative data is available, the qualitative analysis shows that evacuation centers and environmental shelters, set up after the floods become crowded with less privacy. In these conditions, women and girls can become more vulnerable to sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse from people who take advantage of the situation. The stress, confusion, and breakdown of normal community protections can make it harder to stay safe or speak out against mistreatment.



## Socio-Cultural and Economic Drivers

### Pakistan

In Pakistan, socio-cultural and economic barriers leading to GBV are deeply rooted in the country's traditional and patriarchal structures affecting the majority of women. The dominance of cultural factors such as emphasis on family honor has increased the rate of violence against women which restrict their role and confined them to domestic purposes. These cultural norms continue the cycle of violence, as women resist to report abuse due to fear of social stigma and dishonor (Zafar et al, 2023). The prevalence of domestic violence, particularly in provinces like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Punjab, which have recorded the highest number of GBV registered cases i.e. 26,753 (Sustainable Social Development Organization, 2025). Moreover, the lack of legal protections and justice mechanism such as the Jirga system has further increased the vulnerability of women (Khan et al., 2013; Qureshi, 2012).

However, there are various economic vulnerabilities, which have further increased the condition that are leading women to experience, violence. The most important factor is the economic dependency and limited access to primary resources make the women more susceptible to physical, psychological, and emotional abuse (Khan, 2016). These vulnerabilities lead women to leave their homes in the search of refuge or shelter home like Dar-ul-Aman. Moreover, in rural areas, cultural practices like forced marriages, bride-exchange systems, and child marriages are the primary factors for GBV. These factors force women to sacrifice their personal choices and forced to long term psychological and emotional harm for familial interests

However, these socio cultural and economic drivers vary across different cultures and regions of Pakistan. In Karachi which is the biggest city in the country, studies found that Pashtun women are more likely to experience domestic violence than women from Punjab (27.3%), Sindh (9.6%) and Muhajir (23.3%) (Saeed, 2012). This factor indicates that the existence and acceptance is influenced by ethnic differences. Furthermore, traditional practices such as Ghagh, a kind of bride-exchange marriage, found in tribal places further weaken women (Qaisrani et al, 2016). The combination of this factor with the holding power of man in the society further leaved the women to seek justice through the law. Although the law has been updated such as the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016, women in Punjab are still prevented by old beliefs and inadequate law enforcement from getting justice (Ehsan & Khan, 2024). Therefore, these cultural barriers highlight a significant need of policy changes that can address the rate of GBV and support the empowerment of women in both urban and rural settings.

### France

In France, in 2014, 118 women died at the hands of their partner or former partner (Allwood, 2016). The culture and social norms in France are strongly affecting women. Although laws are improving, widespread patriarchal views and gender stereotypes are still causing violence against women. Traditional views often normalize male dominance and female subordination, fostering environments where violence is either ignored, tolerated, or justified. This cultural acceptance is evident in various societal spheres, including the workplace, media, and even within families, where violence is sometimes seen as a private matter rather than a societal issue. These factors increase the rate of GBV and hinder the efforts or prevent it (Expertise France, 2022).

There are economic differences for women in France, making them more at risk from GBV. Even now, women's pay is, on average, lower than men's for equal types of work. As many women work in temporary or low-paid jobs, they find it harder to escape abuse. Relying on a male partner financially can make women more vulnerable to domestic abuse because abusers use this to their advantage. Moreover, women often face a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic and caregiving responsibilities, further limiting their economic opportunities and reinforcing traditional gender roles that can perpetuate GBV.

## Policy and Institutional Responses

### Pakistan

Despite of a signatory to Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Pakistan is facing multiple challenges to address the issue of GBV. Despite of making significant efforts in the legislation of women's right, Pakistan is still ranked bottom in the World Economic Forum's Gender Parity Index before Afghanistan (Zaidi & Hafeez, 2024). The existing legal frameworks in Pakistan are not able address the multifaceted nature of GBV particular in climatic disasters. For instance, the Punjab Protection of Women against Violence Act 2016 offered an efficient explanation of GBV, including domestic violence, sexual violence, psychological abuse, and economic abuse. This act has made these concepts as the significant part of legislation in the province (Siddiqui, 2016). However, despite of its broader scope, the law in Pakistan faces challenges in enforcement due to societal resistance, insufficient resources, and weak institutional support. Therefore, the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) was established for the fulfillment of the international commitment of Pakistan in gender equality. However, this implementation has limited impact due to political and institutional barriers (Zaidi & Hafeez, 2024). Additionally, according to the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act 2020 (ZARRA), the protection of young girls from abduction and sexual violence is a positive step but its long-term success depends on an efficient enforcement mechanism (Waheed, 2021).

Despite of these judicial advancements, there is a signiant gap in addressing the GBV specifically at the time of climate change. According to Climatic expert Ghulam Nabi, there is an urgent need for an intersectional understanding of GBV that considers local community perspectives and climate vulnerabilities. The current laws are not able to address the challenges faced by the women of marginalized communities as the enforcement of these laws is hindered by resource constraints, power, inadequate training for law enforcement agencies, and a lack of proper coordination between institutions (Khan, 2018). According to Hira Amjed, the existing legislation does not consider the economic and environmental conditions that help create GBV. The National Climate Change Policy of 2021 and other climate policies are criticized for not considering the concerns of women who are particularly affected by climate change. This approach makes women more vulnerable to being harmed during climate-related disasters (Zaidi & Hafeez, 2024).

Furthermore, the lack of legal actions in high profile GBV cases, such as the murder of Noor Muqaddam, highlights the deficiencies in Pakistan's judicial system. According to Sannum Habibullah, delayed justice in such cases represents a negative implication particularly in rural areas where traditional and weak legal framework enable the increased rate of GBV (Nizamani, 2024). This issue highlights the pattern of systematic failure in the approach of GBV in Pakistan where legal frameworks and protection laws are available but their implementation if affected by patriarchal structures of our community. To effectively address GBV, Pakistan requires efficient legal and institutional frameworks to be integrated with

gender-sensitive policies into climate change strategies, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms in all levels and communities.

### **France**

France, being the member of Istanbul Convention has made significant efforts on addressing GBV through legislation. This legislation was implemented along with the Law for Equality Between Women and Men (Loi n° 2014-873), which was passed to align with the requirements of Istanbul Convention. According to this law, the forced marriages are considered as a criminal act and emphasis the general quality as a primary component to address GBV (Forest, 2024). Additionally, the integration of gender perspectives in policy was reflected in the establishment of specialized services for victims of GBV, such as shelters and legal assistance, which have improved the accessibility of support across various levels and communities (Van Eeckhout, 2022). Despite of these advancements, these laws face challenges from political parties, diluting the term gender which reduces the potential impact of such laws.

However, France faces difficulties in setting its anti-GBV policies into action. Although victim support was strengthened by the National Action Plan to fight violence against women, it did not reach its full potential because of budget and enclosure issues. Despite efforts from legal and institutional bodies, GBV is still present due to strong social norms and unequal treatment of men and women (Van Eeckhout, 2022). It shows how society as a whole resist reforms aimed at gender, with the efforts to solve GBV being treated without focusing on the special difficulties faced by women.

Although regulations have improved, GBV continues to affect a large number of women, as 213,000 experienced domestic violence in 2020, proving that its occurrence has not dropped considerably due to policy adjustments (Van Eeckhout, 2022). Under the Istanbul Convention, GBV requires gender equality to be part of all policies, but French approaches still find it difficult to fully combine these approaches. Initiatives launched locally in Paris and Bordeaux have demonstrated success in raising service levels and access for victims of crime, though these steps suggest more progress can be made with updated guidelines and greater investment.

### **Barriers and Gaps in Protection and Support**

The comparative analysis of GBV, increased by climate change in Pakistan and France reveals various challenges faced by each country in addressing the issue. While France's advanced infrastructure and legal framework provide a stronger foundation, both countries still struggle to mitigate the impact of climate change on GBV. The primary difference is the availability of resources, the enforcement of laws, and institutional capacities to address GBV within the climate context.

Pakistan, as a developing nation, faces significant barriers in addressing GBV. These barriers are primarily due to the lack of gender-sensitive climate policies and weak legal enforcement. The patriarchal norms rooted in the culture inhibits the access to justice and protection to women, particularly in marginalized communities. Moreover, the pressure of cultural and socio-economic factors such as forced and child marriages has worsened the impacts of climate related disasters, leaving women and girls vulnerable to GBV. The lack of management policies for GBC in climatic disasters highlighted a significant gap for women. Consequently, despite its of developed legal and institutional systems in France, it still faces challenges in addressing GBV worsened driven climate change. Vulnerable populations, including low-income women, immigrants, and those in rural areas, are disproportionately

affected during climate events like heatwaves and floods. While France has made strides with laws to protect women from GBV, these policies fail to reach marginalized groups in some cases, and implementation remains inconsistent, especially in rural communities.

Therefore, in future, both countries should focus on the integration of gender-sensitive policies into climate change response frameworks. Pakistan must prioritize enforcing existing laws and creating new legal structures that specifically address GBV during climate-related crises. Strengthening institutional support systems, particularly in rural areas, and developing disaster response mechanisms that cater to the needs of women and girls are essential. Gender-sensitive measures should be embedded into Pakistan's broader climate change policies, ensuring that women are not left unprotected in times of disaster. France should focus on expanding the accessibility of GBV support services, particularly for marginalized communities. Increasing investment in rural and immigrant-focused programs and ensuring that climate resilience policies account for gendered impacts are key steps. Additionally, addressing societal resistance to gender equality in these communities is crucial to reducing GBV during climate-related events.

### **Conclusion**

The research highlights how women are often more deeply affected by climate change, especially when it comes to GBV occurring in Pakistan and France. Even though US and Canada differ a lot economically and, in their laws, GBV worsened by climate risks is a problem faced by both nations. Pakistan, as a nation with a low income and limited development, has trouble enforcing its laws and no women-friendly climate policies which makes women especially at-risk during climate-related crises. On the other hand, France is a well-developed country with more legal protection, but it still has large gaps in applying and collecting data related to low-income, rural and immigrant women.

This study shows that both populations are more vulnerable to adversities because of gender issues in social and economic life, yet they deal with these problems differently through their laws and institutions. While France has worked hard on the laws and support systems against GBV, efforts are frequently prevented by opposing views toward gender equality and barriers in helping different groups of vulnerable people. Because there are not enough institutions and many patriarchal beliefs are often followed, women in Pakistan are more exposed to GBV, especially when there are climate-related problems. In Pakistan, the lack of institutional capacity, combined with deeply ingrained patriarchal norms, exacerbates women's exposure to GBV, particularly during times of displacement or resource scarcity caused by climate change.

This research contributes to the growing body of literature by emphasizing the need for integrated gender-sensitive climate policies and enhancing institutional frameworks to effectively address GBV in the face of climate change. The analysis reveals the urgency of building more resilient legal and social systems that can provide comprehensive protection for women, particularly in times of climate-induced crises.

### **Policy Recommendations**

To address the challenges identified in this study, it is imperative for both Pakistan and France to adopt gender-sensitive climate policies that protect women from GBV during climate-related disasters. Despite of significant laws in Pakistan, there is an urgent need to strengthen the enforcement of existing laws. This factor can ensure that the protection is extended to rural and marginalized communities. Additionally, the development of legal framework that can addressing the prevalence of GBV and develop strategies for climate related disasters. Moreover, resources must be allocated to build institutional capacity to

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support victims of GBV, especially in rural areas where women are most vulnerable. Moreover, resources must be allocated to build institutional capacity to support victims of GBV, especially in rural areas where women are most vulnerable.

Despite of a stronger legal framework in France, the country should focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of GBV services from marginalized communities in low-income areas, communities and immigrant groups. Additionally, climate resilience strategies should be developed that pay attention to women's needs, ensuring that they are better protected during disasters. Moreover, societal resistance to gender equality through public awareness campaigns and educational programs should be conducted that ensures access of support services to women GBV can be recognized as a systemic issue that requires collective action. However, both countries should prioritize the collection of comprehensive data on the intersection of GBV and climate change, particularly in marginalized communities, to inform future policies. By promoting research, improving data collection, and building gender-responsive frameworks, both Pakistan and France can create more inclusive and resilient systems that ensure the protection and empowerment of women in the face of climate change.

### Limitations and Future Directions

Despite of valuable analysis, the study has several limitations. Firstly, the study primarily focused on secondary data, which may not fully capture the real-life experiences in both the countries. Secondly, the data was collected from case studies and literature reviews which can increase the risk of bias and overlook the aspects of GBV in marginalized communities. Lastly, the scope of this study is limited to comparative analysis between France and Pakistan, which can not directly apply to other countries, particularly those with different socio-cultural and economic factors. Therefore, future research should focus on ethnographic studies, interviews, or surveys to gain deeper insights into women's experiences of climate-induced GBV and expand to include other countries.

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