

Political Empowerment of Women in Balochistan:

By

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Abstract:

Women's political empowerment, demonstration in decision making and women's political involvement and participation had continued insignificant regardless that women institute more population as compared to men in world today. With the liberalization of society world is moving towards the gender balanced society while pointing the problems concerned with women status, and by encouraging satisfactory involvement of women in decision making and establishing the policies in general and political participate in particular. The women political participation has discrepancies around the globe. This study illustrated the role of women in the political arena of Balochistan and the effect of women political participation on women political empowerment. As Balochistan is a less developed province of Pakistan and traditional Women have been disregarded from the configurations of state that carry out and regulate political activities and legislative primacies. The study focused on five different elements that may have strong effect on women empowerment and women political participation. This paper carried out to analyze the effect of women political participation, women political efficacy, women political trainings, mobilization of media and level of civic participation on women empowerment. Eight political parties were considered in Quetta division that has women political activists of respective parties. The total sample size was 400 women political activists; 420 questionnaires were distributed. The results found that all five independent variable i-e women political participation, women political efficacy, women political trainings, mobilization of media and level of civic participation were positively correlated with women political

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empowerment. So we accepted null hypothesis and rejected alternative hypothesis.

Keywords: Women political participation, women political efficacy, women political trainings, mobilization of media and level of civic participation, women political empowerment.

Introduction:

Women cover almost half of the population of Pakistan but they are suffering in different kinds of issues. According to the 1998 provincial population survey the total population of the country is 130.6 million, of which Punjab has 55.6%, Sindh 23%, KPK 13.4%, Balochistan 5%, FATA 2.4% and Islamabad has 0.6%. Among these 67.5% of the Pakistan's population is rural and 32.5% is urban. About 2/3 of adult population even cannot read and write. It was also recorded that basic social services like safe drinking water and health facilities are not in the approach of nearly half the population. (Government of Pakistan, 2001). Pakistan society contains different cultures and languages due to which different kinds of inequalities such as gender, economic, political and cultural differences are the part of our society.

Different kinds of situation such as war, internal sectarian problems and military laws brings ups and downs in the country that affect the political situation, hurdles in the development of human rights and people's confidence on government. These issues have their effects on national level as well as provincial and regional level. More over the social, economic and cultural issues have direct and in direct effect on the rights and moralities of women at every step of life due to which women are suffering more and getting less in every field of life. The literacy rate of females in urban area is 52.2% whereas the literacy rate of male is 74.3%, likewise the literacy rate of females in rural areas is 19.1% whereas literacy rate of male is 48.6%. (Government of Pakistan, 1999-2000. Constitution of Pakistan provides equal political rights to both men and women for voting and opposing all elective offices. The Basic Rights in the Constitution provide equality to all citizens and prohibit the judgment on the basis of genders, but in the situation of women, State provides space for positive action. This action is taken to provide the chance to the women to participate fully in all scopes of national life. Pakistan has a parliamentary system consist of Senate (Upper House) and National Assembly (Lower House). All citizens having over age of 18 years have right to vote and contest election of National as well as Provincial Assemblies.

Empowerment is the term literally means that you are in control of yourself, in broader sense it is the changes in the abilities to work out with choices. There are 3 inter-relating dimensions which establish the choice, (i) resources: structured the circumstances which provide the ground for choice to be made (ii) agency: its role is pivotal in the process where choices are made (iii) achievements: are the outcomes of choices which are called empowerment (Kabeer, 2001). Women political empowerment means the role of women in the making of strategies and assessment of a country. In developing countries such as Pakistan women are not socially and economically stronger as compared to developed countries as the percentage of women in taking part in politics is very less. The rights should be given to the women to vote for their choice so they can bring change with their participation. The women participation in political activities will ensure the security of their rights. It is necessary to empower women to reduce their dependency, and exploitation. So government so bring some strategies for the women empowerment. Women constitute 50% of the total population of Pakistan. Being a democratic state it would be a complete failure of the system to left out half of the population of the country. Women empowerments play an essential role in the country's social and economic development. Women's empowerment actually means that a woman should have the equal opportunities in social, political and legal setup of the country. The empowerment of women politically, socially and legally could ensure the removal of all types of discriminations in opposition to women (Bari, 2005). This study suggested that the participation of women in policy making is limited but the increase in the quota of women brought change in the participation of women in politics. Moreover, there is great chance of women leaders of organizations to win elections under the single community system and thus it has greater influence on policy making. (Tinker, 2004)

The report showed that the reserved seats for female were 2-25% that has been increased to 30% in Union, Tehsil and District assemblies. Further more numerous women have been sent to different countries as representatives. These steps have been taken to increase the participation of women in politics of Pakistan. Women parliamentarians are also taking meaningful step to create awareness among females to understand the women's problems and issues in Pakistan (Shami, 2003)

Pakistan has remained the domain of religious and cultural hub; because of these cultural and religious barriers the contribution of women in the formation of social and economic policies is almost nil. The rejection of women from decision making power has deprived women

from the opportunity of raising their voice about different issues and concerns. The role of women remains insignificant in politics, though it is their fundamental right to empower their self through participation in politics. Constitution of Pakistan is mostly Islamized by nature but still it is not restricting women from any type of political activity. The role and participation of women in all political organizations and institutions at local, provincial and national level is pivotal for the democratic run (Bano, 2009).

Empowerment of women through politics would bring them to the position of decision making, which can automatically lead to the economic, educational and health empowerment of the society. Economically and socially developed countries of the world are providing an ample role to the women in politics. The electoral laws in those countries are effectively working with agendas of women participation and role in politics. In all these developed countries women are entertaining greater positions. The politically empowered women can also help the government in resolving the emerging issues facing by many developing countries, i.e. security threats, unemployment, human rights, women harassment and many other social, legal, political and socio-economic problems (Markham, 2013).

The study explored that whenever group of women take part in politics it always brings improvement in the civil society in Pakistan. It was observed that the group of women particularly plays an important role in increasing political and social roles in disputing the actions and inactions of the government. The effort of developing the National Plan of Action in Pakistan in reaction to the Beijing Platform for Action that the group of women plays important way to participate, explained and progressively dispersed state planning process that also boost the work of NGO and local. (Weiss & Anita, 2007)

The present study was designed to determine the role of women in the politics of Balochistan and its effects on their empowerment, a study of women origin in the present political scenario of Baluchistan.

Hypothesis of the Study:

- Income, age, class and education are coupled with role of women in politics.
- Political worth is associated with political role.
- Political role is associated with decision making.

Materials and Methods:

The study was Quantitative based and about 450 questioners were distributed among the different people of Balochistan to check their viewpoints about the Women political activists of Quetta Balochistan. The aim to this study was to determine the factors of favor and constraints for the Role of women in the politics of Balochistan and its effect on their empowerment. (A study of present scenario of feminine political activists in Baluchistan). Being a capital city and official hub of the province this research activity was conducted in the Quetta division of Baluchistan. The data in available source shows that there are hundred and six thousand and ten (106010) women political activists are present in all the political parties. The sample size was 400 at significance level of 5% as shown in the table. The sample of study was 400 respondents. The amount of respondents Sample was derived by using Taro Yamani formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2}$$

Once genuine data is collected the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) was the source to analyze the data extracts the understandable results. The Hypothesis was tested via Statistical tests. Further to analysis the involvement of independent variables in explaining the dependent variable the Multivariate Analysis was carry out.

Results and Discussion:

1. There were 400 respondents (women political activists) in this study.
2. The most of respondent were aged 35 years and 41% were in group of 30-39 years.
3. In study 264 out 400 women activists were married with the percentage of 66%.
4. More than two third (70%) subjects involved in study were belonged to joint families. Whereas 23% were living in nuclear and 6.8% were living in extend family system.
5. The most of family members of respondents were 10-14 members having the highest range of 58.3%.
6. In study there were 32.5% female respondents were graduated while 31% of female activists were post- graduated and the remaining were intermediated passed and below.
7. More than one and half respondent's family in the study were affiliated with PMAP (Pakhtunkhwa MilliAwami Party).

8. 43% of female activists involved in study were affiliated with Pakhtunkhwa MilliAwami Party (PMAP).
9. The significant majority of women activists i-e (92.5%) did not had any position in political party or political portfolio.
10. Reasonable majority of respondents 71.8% had casted votes more than two times.
11. More than two third (77.5%) female activists were not allowed to participate in political activists.
12. Significant number of women activists was not supported by their families in political activists.
13. The great majority women activists 67.5% had casted votes with greater extent for their supported party.
14. While majority of respondents with percentage of 75 did not attend political meetings of the party.
15. Major group of activists did not participate in political rallies whereas 42% were there that attend political rallies to some extent. Just 16.8% did attend rallies with great extent.
16. During political discussion 45.5% women activist do participate in political talks.
17. Nearly half of respondents (47.3%) was agree that they understand political issues excessively.
18. Half of respondents 52.8% agreed with statement that political parties provide political awareness.
19. Major portion of women activists agreed with the statement that political participation increase political knowledge.
20. More than half were responded (53.5%) agree with the statement that civic society's activities is the source of motivation to participate in political activities.
21. Majority of respondents in study 55% agree with the statement that NGO's contribute to provide political environment for women.
22. 40% of women activists agreed that media is great cause of political knowledge for women.

Table 1. Level of Education of Women Activists of Political Parties

		Frequency	Percent	C. Percent
Valid	illiterate	40	10.0	10.0
	Primary	13	3.3	13.3
	Matric	18	4.5	17.8
	intermediate	75	18.8	36.5
	Graduation	130	32.5	69.0
	Post-Graduation	124	31.0	100.0
	Total	400	100.0	

Table 2: Political participation increase political knowledge

	Political participation increase political knowledge.	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	108	27.0
	Agree	232	58.0
	No Opinion	16	4.0
	Disagree	32	8.0
	Strongly Disagree	12	3.0
	Total	400	100.0

Conclusion:

As the study was based on women's role in politics in Balochistan and women political participation effects on women empowerment, Pakistan is under developing country and Balochistan is a very less developed province of Pakistan in terms of education, research and development. The literacy rate is quite low in Balochistan and people are narrow-minded. And as compared to men, women had little political status. The participation of women results from their low socioeconomic status restricting from social norms of a male dominated society confining women to the household. Their unsatisfactory and unequal status in society gives them unequal access to the educational, economic and other opportunities offered by the state and society. All these factors reinforce each other to keep women's political participation low. But women's adequate political participation is a precondition for bringing women in the mainstream of development process and thus empowers them.

The aim of study was to find out the insight of women regarding the effects of political participation on women empowerment. For its finding the framework was designed while considering the background

variable. The independent variable was women political participation, women political efficacy, women political training, the mobilization of media for women, and civic participation. The study found that for the improvement of women political participation and women political empowerment to women political activists are due to various socio-economic variables. The data was collected from 420 women political activists in Quetta division of Balochistan. There were eight different political parties involved in study i-e

1. Pakistan Muslim League (N)
2. Awami National Party (ANP)
3. Pakistan Tehrik-e -Insaf (PTI)
4. Balochistan National Party (BNP)
5. Pakhtunkhwa (MAP)
6. National Party (NP)
7. Hazara Democratic party (HDP)
8. Pakistan people's party (PPP)

The results showed that women political participation have the significant effect on women political empowerment. The women civic participation and political efficacy were the significant variable in defining the women political empowerment. Whereas other three variables i-e political participation, women political training and mobilization of media are also having quite significant effect on increasing the women political empowerment in Balochistan.

No hesitation, by women empowerment and support, the designated seats reserved for females is the source to help increase participation and women involvement in decision-making process statistically, nevertheless not practically much confirmed. By the spiritual and socio-political restriction/bindings and, selected women by election cannot perform their role and consequently objectives, anticipation and expectation of people to them were not encountered. And deprived of women's access and significant participation in decision-making process that will result them to be involved in decisions can suggest favorable amendments for the women society. For the women empowerment the significant participation of selected women politicians by election is essential, the study provides following key step and policies for the consideration:

1. The responsibilities to women elected must be visibly well-defined in local government. Work should be properly divided to male members and female members in efficient manner so women selected member can expressively contribute required occupations and responsibilities.

2. To provide political education to women about their low-slung status in society for improvement, for women education, health care and employment in Balochistan must be hurled by motivational programs and growing opportunities.
3. NGO's should play an effective role for the women political empowerment. And provide awareness regarding political participation. That will allow women towards political decision making process concerned with local bodies and public while using allocated resources.
4. Mass media is an effective and efficient tool to educate and mobilize women both educated and uneducated in their home by public perceptions and objectives in a way that will be beneficial for men and women for the development of Pakistan in general and Balochistan in particular.
5. Women rights and their social status must be on top of priority list.
6. Women should be given leading role and trainings, training in political campaigns

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