

Gender Politics in Pakistan: A Feminist Perspective

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Received: 30-01-2026

Revised: 14-02-2026

Accepted: 01-03-2026

Published: 16-03-2026

ABSTRACT

This work presents the role of women participation in the politics of Pakistan. The role of women parliamentarians in the politics of Pakistan has gained significant importance in recent decades, particularly after the introduction of reserved seats and democratic reforms. Women legislators have contributed to strengthening democratic institutions, promoting gender equality, and raising awareness about social issues such as education, health, domestic violence, and women's rights. Despite operating in a male-dominated political environment, women parliamentarians have played an active role in policymaking, legislative debates, and advocacy for marginalized groups. Their participation has also challenged traditional socio-cultural barriers and encouraged greater political awareness among women across the country. However, challenges such as patriarchal norms, limited political autonomy, party control, and lack of equal opportunities continue to restrict their effectiveness in mainstream politics. This study examines the contributions, challenges, and impact of women parliamentarians in Pakistan's political system and evaluates how their representation influences democratic governance and social development. The study highlights that increasing meaningful participation of women in parliament is essential for inclusive democracy, sustainable development, and political stability in Pakistan.

Keywords: Women Parliamentarians, Political Participation, Gender Equality, Democratic Governance, Women's Rights

INTRODUCTION:

Parliament and Role of Women Parliamentarians:

Men as well as women are a significant portion of any society but in patriarchal societies women are the less privileged and sidelined group of a society. If men and women had been born equal, the process of political powers enjoyed by women depicts that in initial period they were weak and situation was deteriorated, but on later stages they have been motivated to grasp some power in their hands for the development of the family or the society and above all for themselves. The phenomenon of women empowerment is usually witnessed as compare to men is low. The position of men in our society is the best medium to show the world that how much they are empowered and how much power women have in their hands. On this contrary, the women empowerment is also labeled as a threat to the male domination but it requires to make it sure that process of empowering women does not mean to disempower men rather they can both enjoy power together. This empowerment is consisted of not only confined to the physical or material aspects of life but it also portrays their intellectual and emotional enhancement and this relationship is mutual in nature. For example, any woman is economically self-reliant and socially active, her self-respect and confidence need to be increased first, then she needs to be briefed to her status in the society

and its implications for herself and those around her; only then she can stand and attain the physical empowerment to an extent.

Gender, Power and Politics

Injustice on the basis of gender has proved to be the predominant characteristic of our system in Pakistan. “Women’s image is as that of mother and wife - the private and not the public one”¹. These clear roles exclude women from enjoying power in society. These roles develop a thought in them that only external factors would facilitate them with the power and opportunity to be empowered but this is not the case as empowerment “is not a commodity that can be handed over to women”².

Society is divided not on the grounds of the capabilities of individuals rather on their gender when such kind of an unfair practice appears in any society. When someone will compare this situation with Pakistan will find a share exploitation of women in Pakistani society. Whereas men are enjoying rights and are the part of power politics in Pakistani dynamics i.e. they are in strong position as compare to women, “issues of sexuality are at the heart of the whole workings of power in modern society”³.

Politics is also one of the areas where the idea of power is tested. For example, research on the matters of 'gender and power' in the political perspective of Bangladesh depicts that women are less politically empower as compare to men⁴. It is not denying the fact that women are labeled as subordinate to men in perspective of their social role by many philosophers including Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Rousseau, who “used diverse opinions to reach at the shared conclusion that politics is fundamentally a male privilege and women are not physically or mentally appropriate to contribute in politics on equal terms with men”⁵.

The process of empowering women is imperfect and ineffective short of giving political powers to women giving them equal opportunities in the process to run the nation. According to a report 50 percent of our population comprised of female in Pakistan, among them only 5 to 10 percent women took part in the field of politics. This is the reason, therefore, it has become very difficult for them to acquire the highest political positions and status in our society⁶. As a matter of fact, “Political empowerment is the form of participation in decision making process at various levels of political activity”⁷ Women issues can be dealt, only when

¹Burn, Shawn Meghan, *Women Across Cultures - A Global Perspective*. (Mayfield: Mountain View, 1999), 197.

²Mittal, Rakhi, “Women’s Equality: Still a Dream,” in *Women Empowerment Today’s Vision for Tomorrow’s Mission*, ed. Meenu Agarwal, (New Delhi: Mahamaya Publishing House, 2007), 173.

³Weeks, Jeffery, “Power and the State,” in *an Introduction to Women’s Studies*, ed. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan, (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002), 187.

⁴Chowdhury, Najma, “Bangladesh: Gender Issues and Politics in a Patriarchy,” in *Women and Politics Worldwide*, ed. Barbara Nelson and Najma Chowdhury, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), 92-113.

⁵Bari, Farzana, *Role and Performance Assessment of Pakistani Women Parliamentarians 2002-07*, (Islamabad: Pattan, 2009), 2.

⁶Burn, Shawn Meghan, *Women Across Cultures - A Global Perspective*. (Mayfield: Mountain View, 1999), 217.

⁷Mittal, Rakhi, “Women’s Equality: Still a Dream,” in *Women Empowerment Today’s Vision for Tomorrow’s Mission*, ed. Meenu Agarwal, (New Delhi: Mahamaya Publishing House, 2007), 181.

Singh, Anupama, *Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development*, (New Delhi: Kanishka publisher, 2008).

the representative will be an active part of the decision bodies locally, nationally and internationally.⁸ If we analyze this situation in the context of India, the political experience of Indian women is like ‘puppets’ in male hands initially as they were not acknowledged equal by the male ‘Panchayat’ members; no one even tenuously expected the level of commitment showed by the women, who took part in politics resultantly 33% reservation at ‘Panchayat’ and municipal levels. The appearance of these women challenged the belief that women are not ‘available’ for politics.⁹ Thus, women in the field of politics are not on the dominating and highest level of leadership. That is why, there are very few women got opportunities to become heads of state; and gender is active “in the election, appointment and retention of female leaders”.¹⁰

Political Rights of Women in Pakistan

Since its inception Pakistani women were given suffrage in 1947 under the Pakistan Ordinance¹¹; and their right to vote was reaffirmed in national elections in 1956 under the interim constitution¹². In Pakistani context, the gap between theory and practice is fairly extensive. In fact, “the constitution of Pakistan guarantees to ensure women empowerment in the society, but Pakistan being a patriarchal society, finds it difficult in implementing such constitutional provisions”¹³, therefore, the female voting turn-out in Pakistan has always been very low. If we go through the history of more advanced and developed countries of the world, usually female voting turns out is quite high, but in developing or third world countries like Pakistan, female do not enjoy any privilege and are not permissible to use their vote in various constituencies. Even today, Pakistan currently has 32.2 million female registered voters against the 38.8 million registered male voters, female voters encounter tough hurdles in using their right of casting votes and acquiring themselves to the success in ranks of the power corridor¹⁴. The motives of this less vote turn out are entrenched in the culture. A research of National Commission on the status of women claims, “In March 2001 during the local government elections, many thousands of women in over 13 out of the 56 Union Councils of Swabi were not allowed to cast their vote and enjoy their right”¹⁵.

As far as the authority being a members of legislative bodies is concerned, the facility of fixed seats for women in the Parliament can be perceived throughout the constitutional history of Pakistan from 1956 to

⁸Ibid.,

⁹ Ibid.,

¹⁰Burn, Shawn Meghan, *Women Across Cultures - A Global Perspective*. (Mayfield: Mountain View, 1999), 197.

¹¹Lewis, Jone Johnson. “International Woman Suffrage Timeline-Winning the Vote for Women Around the World”. Accessed on September 12, 2014 on http://womenshistory.about.com/od/suffrage/a/intl_timeline.htm

¹²A history of woman suffrage around the world”. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. Accessed on September 9, 2014 on <http://search.eb.com/women/article-9077370>

¹³Kamal, Mustafa. “Women and Voting in Pakistan”. (2012) Accessed on September 10, 2014 on lubpak.com/archives/229403

¹⁴Kamal, Mustafa. “Women and Voting in Pakistan”. (2012) Accessed on September 10, 2014 on lubpak.com/archives/229403

¹⁵National Commission on the Status of Women, Islamabad. Institutional Strengthening of NCSW Support to Implementation of GRAPs- Gender Review of Political Framework for Women Political Participation. (2001) Accessed on September 12, 2014 on http://www.ncsw.gov.pk/prod_images/pub/StudyonWomenPoliticalParticipation.pdf

1973¹⁶. An effort to peep through the pages of history of taking part of Pakistani female in politics depicts that in 1956, condition of women was very pathetic and only a meagre portion of seat was reserved for women i-e, 3, which was later on increased to 5% in 1973 in the national as well as provincial assemblies. However, such an alarming conditions changed a bit when women participation was enhanced from 5 to in 1984 but only for the National Assembly that facilitated only twenty women and they got seats through indirect elections. In 1985, the condition of women was not much better only twenty-two women were the part of NA while from 1988-1990, only four women got an opportunity to contest for general seats against the twenty reserved seats. Benazir Bhutto, the first Muslim female Prime Minister, contested and won elections in the same era. In 1988, the reserved seats for women were remained vacant and resultantly there were only two or three women in the national and the provincial assemblies respectively. There was one additional seat reserved for minorities. However, there were four women each in the national and provincial assemblies in 1995.¹⁷ In the present period, women are holding 21% of the total seats in the National Assembly and 18% in the Senate. Moreover, the first Pakistani woman PM Benazir Bhutto and other influential women politicians had rendered their services and participated in various high-level positions in the central and provincial governments.¹⁸

Role of Women Parliamentarian In Pakistan

The parliamentary elections took place on 18 February, 2008 for national and provincial level become to be a decisive moment for a larger, more updated and active role of women parliamentarians in Pakistan. Owing to the rise in the quota for women representatives, almost 77 female politicians were turned to be the part of legislature and 17 reached and occupied the seats of Senate.¹⁹ This increased ratio of females in the parliaments was dubbed as an historic moment, with the enhancement of the number of women MPs stating the establishment of the ideals of the country, as explained by the Founder of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam (great leader) Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He was of the view that any nation of the world could not be strong and developed until and unless it's both gender male and female doing their together and sharing their responsibilities together for fulfilling their life targets. He further concluded that during the struggle of freedom of the Muslims of the subcontinent not only male but also female Muslims played a key and finally got a reward from Allah Almighty in the form Pakistan in 1947.

However, it was not the end rather Muhammad Ali Jinnah stimulated women to come forward and play their role for the betterment of newly born country. He also encouraged them to take part in development of mainstream politics of a nascent country. Resultantly a number of women held strong positions in the politics of all India Muslim League (AIML), which struggled for a acquiring a new independent state for the Muslim-majority areas where they could live their life according to their religion. They got independence from the tyrant rule of the British. The struggle of Quid-I-Azam bore fruit and people witnessed the effective role of women parliamentarians in Pakistan. Although the ratio is not high but they played their role and rendered their services for the betterment of this country among the leading figures Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Muhammad Ali Jinnah played her role by leading a well-organized opposition

¹⁶Ibid.,

¹⁷://www.google.com.pk/?gws_rd=cr&ei=CbmEWNXYMOv76AT0oLTQAw#q=gender+politics+falsifying+reality+by+asma+aftab

¹⁸Ibid.,

¹⁹For example, Begum Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar who was appointed to the Central Working Committee of the All India Muslim League) and Begum JahanaraShahnawaz who represented Indian women at the Second Roundtable Conference in London in 1932. See for example the Pakistan parliament publication Syed, D. *AnIntroduction to Womens Parliamentary Caucus*. Parliament of Pakistan. Islamabad: Pakistan.<http://www.wpcp.org.pk/UserFiles/PRPFiles/94.pdf>

movement against the military dictatorship in Pakistan when first Martial law was being imposed in the newly formed state by the military leader General Ayub Khan. Syed writes in his book,

“The constant presence of Fatima Jinnah, the Quaid’s sister, was not accidental, but a message by this visionary leader that women should be equal partners in politics and that they should not be confined to the traditional home-bound role of a wife and a mother.”²⁰

However, as an outcome of the political chaos that followed over following decades and which looked Pakistan swipe from administrations of the political right to left, a shift from peoples rule that was democracy to rule of a single individual (dictatorship), Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s dream of a wide-ranging state with full representation of women was unfulfilled. The notion of Brahman culture further hindered women from playing their active role for the betterment and prosperity of this country. The so called norms and traditions in society sidelined women from playing active for its betterment, irrespective of class, color or religion, which had remained part and parcel of the Indo-Pak subcontinent.

Efficient & Prominent Women Parliamentarians

Traditionally, under-represented women in public life have been addressed through the use of certain ‘assenting actions’ counting through the seats kept for them in the national and provincial assemblies. As a result of local political pressures, three per cent seats were reserved for women under the Government of India Act 1935, to be voted by only female members of the electorate. It was considered to be a diffident quota given the fact that demand was for a 10% seat reservation. Any net gains or benefits accrued from women’s representation were somewhat offset by certain other sections of the Act that imposed new prohibitions or ban on the women employment in the Imperial civil service in addition to this foreign as well as penitentiary services.²¹ Until changes made in election law sin 2002, women constituted only 2.3% of Parliament, and Pakistan’s standing among countries of the world for female representation was 105th.⁴ However, there came a significant change came with an increase in number of seats reserved for women, and in general elections of 2008 in which the country’s fractious political parties actively participated by putting aside boycott and spoiler strategies.

With an increase in number of reserved seats, 225 women MPs were subsequently elected to national and state legislatures. This strongly uplifted Pakistan’s standing in the Inter Parliamentary Union’s table of female representation, placing the country on number 46 worldwide with 22.5 per cent of women MPs. In comparison to the neighboring countries such as India where just 10.7% of MPs were women and in Sri Lanka, only 5.8 per cent of MPs were women, ranked at 100th and 122th respectively. Although taking a great leap forward, Pakistan still lagged behind some other countries facing problems of poverty and problematic legacies of conflict and division such as South Africa and Rwanda, leading the list impressively with 44% and 56% of parliamentarians being female.²²

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Mohapatra, P. and Mohanty, B. (2002). *Elite Women of India*. S.B.Nangia. New Delhi: India.

²²Inter-Parliamentary Union website information and IPU reports: *Is Parliament Open to Women? An Appraisal*. 28-29 Sept., 2009, and *Equality in Politics: A Survey of Women and Men in Parliaments*. 2008. <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmn09-e.pdf>

COUNTRY	YEAR 2008	YEAR 1999
Rwanda	56.3% (No 1 in ranking)	17.1% (31st in ranking)
South Africa	44.5% (No 3 in ranking)	30% (8th in ranking)
Nepal	33.2% (No 17 th in ranking)	5.9% (84th in ranking)
Afghanistan	27.7% (No 30 th ranking)	NIL
Pakistan	22.5% (46th in ranking)	2.3% (105th in ranking)
Bangladesh	18.6% (No 62nd in ranking)	9.1% (64th in ranking)
India	10.7 % (No 100th in ranking)	8.4% (65th in ranking)
Sri Lanka	5.8% (122nd in ranking)	4.9% (92nd in ranking)

Table 1: Women’s Representation in Selected Parliaments of Developing Countries
 (Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union website information)

With an increase in women representation in Pakistan’s Parliament, it has been made possible for them to attain prominent positions in the legislature and government, in turn providing them new vistas and opportunities and a platform to invoke positive changes. In March 2008, Dr. Fehmida Mirza, a woman parliamentarian, made history when she was elected, with an over two-third majority vote, the first ever woman speaker of a democratically elected National Assembly of Pakistan, but in the entire Muslim world. With regards to the specific role of the women parliamentarians, nine significant committees in the national parliament and state legislatures are chaired by women MPs, besides holding the portfolios of two most important ministries in the federal cabinet:²³ Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Information. Moreover, the Benazir Income Support Program, which is believed to be an important mechanism of poverty alleviation and fulfilling needs of the poorest women and their families is also being headed by a woman member of the Parliament. Besides it, the current Pakistan’s ambassador to the US also served as a member of the thirteenth National Assembly.

National parliaments not only provide a critical forum for the country’s leadership, but also plays a vital role in safeguarding the rule of law and human rights. The legislative and oversight roles being performed by women MPs offer them an important platform to strike social change and make significant contributions by participating in debates related to peace, security and development⁵ However, their capacity to carry out

²³Karim Kundy, F. (2011) (2011) Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, A New Beginning. *The Parliamentarian*. Issue 1, pp. 48-52.

such roles more effectively hinges upon access to sound knowledge and accurate information supported by extensive and objective research base.²⁴ Only with this kind of facility would women MPs be in a position to collect facts, seek solutions and make decisions keeping in view factual analysis. There is dire need of a credible research and analysis base or support to members of Parliament in a developing parliamentary democracy like that of Pakistan. Strengthening and consolidating parliamentary capacity is gravely important given the context of three repeated military stints (the last ending in 2008) and Pakistan being a front line state in the global fight against terrorism. People's expectations pinned in the democratically elected Parliament of 2008 were high.²⁵ The two most important questions were: firstly, could the legislators of Pakistan's Parliament achieve the independence vision of pluralistic parliamentary governance which is an embodiment of the rule of law and justice for all, and secondly would they be in a position to act as conflict managers and thus transform the political space for the attainment of peaceful outcomes.

“Parliaments often manage disputes in the political space, thus avoiding violent conflict [...] Parliamentary debate, agreements and dialogue between political parties and parliamentarians, and interaction between parliament and constituents, all contribute to keeping the peace.”²⁶

Owing to a checkered democratic history of Pakistan, marred by long stints of dictatorships, its Parliament could not develop an institutionalized system whereby certain research and analysis processes could have been undertaken to support legislators.²⁷ The Speakers Conference of the National Parliament and provincial (state) assemblies held in 2004 raised the issue and expressed the need to set up an exclusive and indigenous parliamentary institution or think tank in order to fulfill the needs of the research and capacity building of Members of Parliament. This subsequently led to the creation of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, PIPS, in December 2008:

“An exclusive and independent, first of its kind research and capacity building facility for the parliamentarians...the Parliament in Pakistan had remained deprived of the power of knowledge that comes from timely, accurate and credible information and objective nonpartisan analysis on the most sensitive of national matters till the establishment of PIPS”.²⁸

Speaker Fehmida Mirza greatly encouraged the creation or establishment and development of the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) and she presided over the Parliamentary Board, which included Honorable Speakers of the four provincial legislatures, four Senators and eight MNAs, to carry out their work in unison and draft, debate and give approval to some comprehensive sets of financial and recruitment rules for the PIPS which was in its early stages of formation. This remarkable work has laid the foundation for a center of excellence fully upholding professionalism and merit and duly taking care of integrity and accountability in its working or functioning.⁹ PIPS researchers follow key principles of conducting legislative research while working and delivering effectively on the requests of the members of the parliament.

²⁴ Ibid., 53.

²⁵ Ibid.55.

²⁶ *Parliaments, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Guidelines for International Community*, UNDP, 2007. p. 4.

²⁷ Pakistan has witnessed military coups and government under Gen Ayub Khan and General Yahya Khan from 1958-71, General Zia ul Haq from 1977-87 and General Pervez Musharaf from 1999-2008.

²⁸ Karim Kundy, F. (2011) (2011) Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, A New Beginning. *The Parliamentarian*. Issue 1, pp. 48-52.

Women from 2008 to 2012

General elections were taken place in 2008. But, there was no profitable back to the impetus shaped by the previous National Assembly. Aurat Foundation, UNIFEM and Ministry of Women's Development (MoWD - now decentralized to provinces after the 18th Amendment) operated jointly to develop a consensus on DVB as four separate drafts were mixing - one that had been nominated by Ms. Sherry Rahman and Ms. Mehnaz Rafi in the previous National Assembly and had been bludgeoned together by the MoWD; second which was made by the Aurat Foundation with the assistance of Justice (Retd.) Nasira Javed Iqbal; third designed by the UNIFEM; and the fourth which was listed in the 13th National Assembly by Ms. Yasmeen Rahman (MNA PPP) as a private members bill in latter half of 2008.

Aurat Foundation and UNIFEM prospered in merger their types into one draft through an advice-giving process. This draft was more discussed and shared with different stake- holders by a team of Aurat Foundation controlled by Ms. Maliha Zia and; finally presented it over to the MoWD. Since, by that time the fourth DVB had been tabled in the National Assembly, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Women's Development under its Chairperson Ms. Bushra Gohar (MNA ANP) completed the task of further discussion through a sub- committee led by Dr. Attiya Inayatullah (MNA PML-Q). This committee recognized the final version. The National Assembly completed history on 4 August 2009 by momentary the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill 2009 of Ms. Yasmeen Rehman.²⁹ Unfortunately, this bill becomes failed in the Senate and nothing could be done to save it because of changes in the legislative process after the 18th Constitutional Amendment. A recent step taken by the NCSW has shaped new confidences of the passage of a new changed version of the DVB. In the meanwhile, women legislators in partnership with the NCSW and Aurat Foundation are making efforts to introduce inclusive legislation on local violence in provincial legislatures which hopefully will bring result soon. In 2010, derived two laws to limit sexual harassment against women as official bills. The first one is Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2010, which brands amendment in section 509 of the PPC relating to sexual harassment of women at workplace. This is a decent piece of legislation. The Act defines the sin of sexual harassment and says that the crime "shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three years or with fine up to five hundred thousand rupees or with both". The other, more complete law titled "The Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace, Act, 2010". This is the key and complete law to talk the issue of sexual harassment of women at workplace.³⁰

AASHA, a civil society coalition must be accredited and respected for its devotion and enactment to take the bill to its final stages and get it passed. Ms. Sherry Rahman, who was having the portfolio of Information Minister at that time completed special labors to grip two broad-based advice-giving meetings of numerous sponsors to have input and response on the bill. Aurat Foundation was part of these session meetings and the proposal of setting up the institution of Federal Ombudswoman under the Act originated from one of its representative. This bill was approved by the National Assembly on 22 January 2010. It converted law after the endorsement of the Senate and the agreement of the President. The law will defend women belonging to several segments like brick kiln workers, farmers (Peasants), domestic workers, and women in the market and public places.³¹

²⁹Muhammad Rashid Mafzool Zaka, *Advanced Legislative Research Module*, Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services, Parliament of Pakistan, July 2010. p. 3.

³⁰Ibid.,4

³¹Mirza, N. and Wagha, W. (2009) *Performance of Women Parliamentarians in the 12th National Assembly: a Five Year Report*. Aurat Foundation. Islamabad: Pakistan.

CONCLUSION:

In the history of sub-continent we have always found that our men have always dominated the politics of our region. The society is facing some serious hurdles while creating the balance between men and women, over the years the successive governments and regimes have intentionally put our women away from the mainstream. In the era of Zia-ul-Haq, we have observed that through different laws and bills the women were pushed very far from the affairs of the state, but with the inclusion of Benazir Bhutto in politics, we have witnessed a change in the society and Benazir Bhutto went onto lead the country, which can be called as a unique experience that our country has ever observed. As the time has passed on, the advancement of Social media, the independence of print and electronic media, the women of our country came out from the homes and they have raised their voices against the pre-existence nature of the society, they have demanded and raised their voices against the injustices which were used against them by the feudal mindset, patriarchal system, by the existence norms, values and cultures.

Since 2008, we have observed some positive changes in our country the increment in quota system, resultantly more women have entered in the national assembly and provisional assemblies, more active role of women in assemblies, policy makings and decision makings. Now a days we are observing that our women is participatory and more vocal as compare to past, their social and political lives are more vibrant and independent and now they are very much visible even at major gatherings and decision making level, according to one report our women parliamentarians are more active and contributing a lot in assemblies as compare to men. Now we have witnessed that so many bills have been passed in assemblies which favors women rights and independence, the presence of women parliamentarians in the assemblies are very encouraging sign for those women who are unable to reach at assemblies, now the women parliamentarians are more energetic due to the advent of social media and they are raising the issues which our women are facing at home very effectively.

Our women parliamentarian has acquired some high positions in PPP laid Government and in current Government, now they are very visible in almost every corner, women are few as compare to their population but still their voices cannot be ignored at any corner. There are so many women parliamentarian selected on reserve seats and they are also working very well as per their capacities. The women parliamentarians have contributed a lot in the progress and prosperity of our country, and they all have successfully raised the women voices at every junctive, now our women parliamentarians are part of so many think tanks, organizations, member of committees on national and international issues and all look very active and outspoken during the decision makings of our country, the fear factor is no more there in the Realistically speaking, yes we have observed and witnesses same very positive and most needed changes regarding to our women in our country and now our women are more visible and participatory at many levels but during my research I have observed very closely that women or feminist awareness which we claim a lot is limited to very small group of the society, very few women are entertained in our society, in general our women is very much behind the actual change or empowerment which actually they deserve it. Majority of our women are still lagging behind the true change or what the actually women rights are, some of the urban and educated women are enjoying the privileges and facilities but the women of middle class family and rural women still unknown about the fact that the women are integral part of the society and they have got equal status to men in the society.

The patriotically nature of the society, man dominant mind set feudalism and many other issues are creating great hurdle in the life of a common man. The norms, values, cultures and the mindset which exist in our society since our inception make our women less aware in every field of the life. Realistically speaking in the rural areas of our country we count as sin if our women go outside forgetting education, their political participation is alien to our women, we have restricted our women at our homes and her freedom is a dream in our society. Their political participation in many out of areas is a dream, which I believe the mindset

which we possess can never be achieved. We did not learn the lessons from our history and we are for behind, the actual situation is pushing us on away that our women still need, so many years to come out and do politics.

The question of empowering women has remained a great challenge to our leaders, we have observed that most our women are unknown about the term empowerment. Our successive Governments have failed to motivate our women, and we lack proper institutions, education system and grooming which actually our women need. Our leaders, policy makers, think tank are unknown about the fact that the women are also the important part of society, with this mindset, where we have observed that our women are facing so many problems and hurdles, how they can represent themselves at the biggest platforms our country. Our institutions are running under the supremacies of men, and our woman is still knocking the doors for equal status in the society.

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