

Women Empowerment by the Local Representation: A Case Study of District Mustang

By

¹Lalarukh ²Dr. Noor Ahmed

Abstract:

The political issues for women in Pakistan is emerging which needs the immediate action to ensure the empowerment of women especially in the local government. The article demonstrates the role and gap of women in the local government of Mastung. The political status of women in the Mastung is not ample appreciable, therefore, it needs concrete steps to gives the rights to women in the local governmental bodies. The results demonstrate that women empowerment in the local government in Mustang needs extraordinary consideration of provisional and federal assemblies. The upright of political status of women in the Mustang practically depend on the ascending the women quota and organizing women lobby in the local government. The 10-close ended questionnaire had been disseminated for conducting quantitative research design. This leads towards the probing deeply regarding the insight of participates associated with local government about the empowerment of women in the specific institution.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Local, Representation, Mastung etc.

Introduction:

Through gender-specific policies, the mainstreaming of women is an acknowledged the condition for targeting magnificent progress in any developing country including Pakistan (Begum & Awan, 2013). In the context of policy reforms, the Labor Watch Pakistan Report (2016) declares, this issue has recently addressed in both administrative and local government arenas. In the grassroots democratic institutions, the quota for women has led to enhance their empowerment generally in overall Pakistan and specifically in the Quetta City (LWP, 2016). The concern of women has surfaced intermittently in the lieu of local government in the Mastung district of Balochistan particularly which has highlighted in the reformation of the government's agenda as evident in the last Local Government Reform 1997 (Notification, 2017). The participation of women is indispensable and requires special focus for their empowerment

¹M.Phil. scholar (Economics) in Pakistan Study Centre University of Balochistan Quetta Pakistan

²Supervisor and Associate Professor Pakistan Study Centre University of Balochistan Quetta Pakistan

in governmental concern bodies in order to preserve the rights of women across the country.

According to the study conducted by Ameen (2011), the maximum utilization of citizens both men and women decide the velocity of overall development of a country. According to the 6th Population and Housing Census 2017, the 48.76% women are the citizens of Pakistan, which cannot be ignored while taking any major step for progress and glory of the country. Unfortunately, according to the Women, Peace and Security Index unveiled that Pakistan is the fourth worst country for women according to a ranking released in the year 2017 (Duflo, 2012). It also identifies that women share of seats in parliament stands at only 20%. According to the Article published in DAWN, (2016), if one narrowing down the issue to one district then it is observed that status of women is much lower than that of men in every sphere of life. Women and men are majorly identified with domestic and politics respectively, so the overall society is demonstrated as masculine in nature (Aamir, 2015).

With the passage of time, the quote of Muhammad Ali Jinnah has now been recognized that no struggle could ever succeed without women participating side by side with men. In this reference, the Balochistan political representative bodies also identified the pivotal role of women in politics for achieving targeted objectives by indiscriminate approaches. Shah, Lodhi & Ahmed (2016) divulge in a study that the participation of women particularly in the Mastung district not only demanded by a democratic move or simple justice but also due to the mandatory condition of women's interest to be taken into account.

Problem Formulation:

On the one hand where female representatives play a major role in the women empowerment in local government associated with Mastung District. While on another hand, same as other regions of Pakistan, female local representatives of Mastung do not receive their rights properly. Therefore, being a representative female cannot take any concrete step for women emancipation in the district. Nevertheless, Act of local government Balochistan 2010, unveiled the 33% of female quota in local government, the 2013 local government election is an evidence that many communities in Mastung opposed to cast votes to female candidates. According to the study done by Paterson (2008), the worth of female representatives in local government is dependent on the male's support and females are failed to advocate any individual decision in the local government for the betterment of social status of female in Mastung.

Objective of the Study:

- To investigate the role of women in political sphere specifically in Mastung District of Kalat, Balochistan.
- To identify the women emancipation in decision making and execution within the local government of Mastung District.

- To demonstrate the socio-political status of women in remote and backward areas, particularly in Mastung district.

Limitation of Study:

The entire research embedded and discussed the role and status of female in local government, neither in provincial nor in the national assembly. However, the depressed situation of females in local governments starts from the very top level of national assembly and provincial assembly. So the study lacks in data formulation of national and provincial assemblies.

The Significance of Study:

The study drives the women of Mastung especially associated with local government institution for identifying their roles as a representative. Through this study, female representatives do not only aware about the legal framework of Balochistan in favor of their rights but also provide the authentic data about perceptions of male and female representatives regarding the emancipation of women in the Mastung District of Kalat. It unveils the status of women local representatives and challenges that they are facing in the way of empowerment. The study explores the latest problem of specific locality that is Mastung which opens the gates of opportunities for other researchers. The study also investigates the ideas and perceptions of local residents and local government staffs in Mastung for divulging authentic information.

Literature Review:

Begum and Awan (2013) identify those women issues in the Balochistan and particular in the Mastung District need to become more politically active so they can gain the consummate status in politics for addressing those issues. The report of DAWN (2016) demonstrated that Quetta based women rights activist Rani Wahidi urged, why the empowerment of women is still hanging on fire in the assemblies and local government structures? It is transparent that so far, female members of the provincial assembly and local government have failed to advocate women issues in the political scenario (Shafiq, Azhar & Rafiq, 2014).

Only two women-centred resolutions by female members in the provincial assembly have been submitted, that is worthless entirely. The dependency of women according to the Aamir (2015) in provincial and local government by male domination refrains them to take concrete steps for women empowerment in the province generally and in district particularly. In the local government structure, the male ascendancy is the cause of major barrier in raising voice for women's empowerment (Shah, Lodhi & Ahmed, 2016). The all political parties in Balochistan have been dominated by a male so women in local government are still hesitant in making their presence felt. Zahidi (2015) investigated women's notions they would not be supported by their male leadership if they are raising a voice in favour of women's rights and emancipation in political and social life.

Legislation Perspective for Women Emancipation:

Under the supervision of constitution, the section 12 (C) of Elections Act 2017, Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) exerted restless efforts for mobilizing women voters and political representatives (Notification, 2017). The measures that mainstream women in political life in Mastung are also the chain of the same section of the constitution. Under the legislation, the constitution of Pakistan, according to Center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI), asserts the protection of women's rights (Notification, 2016). Furthermore, Article 25 also unveiled the fundamental rights of citizens and highlighted the principles of women's equality. The Article 32 and 34 in the Chapter on Principles of Policy ensures the full participation of women in political life. Furthermore, the Balochistan Local Government Act 2010 also retained quota of women seats in local government to 33%, which was the positive sign for the social and political development of women in Mastung District of Kalat, Balochistan (DAWN, 2016).

Challenges for Women in Local Government:

The report of Labour Watch Pakistan (2016) declared that women have been facing numerous challenges not only at the time of induction in local government but for executing their plans and taking decisions. The women in the local government of Mastung are far away from the indiscriminate behaviour of male dominant society where sometimes women representatives are forced to advocate their individual decisions and policies.

The study of Paterson (2008), unveiled that women in the local government have failed yet to design any consummate lobby or uniform consent to deal their problems in the male dominant institution. Therefore, the decisions and innovative ideas/plans of women are not as worthy without the proper backing of male leadership. Some also believe that pursuance of a female in political decisions is not the rational approach as the 33% of quota is just to demonstrate the respect of women in the sight of national and international communities (Zia, 2015).

Critically, the women representatives in local government of Mastung are failed to address the social and political issues of women. Due to which they lost confidence and level of trust by females in the district. Therefore, lots of women in the district do not cast their votes for female rather male candidates, even observed in the year 2013. Michael (2007) analysed that this deficiency of expectations not only refrain the women representative to mitigate the problems of women in the Mastung district but also activate a treacherous threat for a female in an upcoming local government election.

The environment of the district does not allow the women legislative or representative whether of provincial or local government to take stance on the field (Michael, 2007). This prevents women associated with local

government to take bold steps on the rootlevel and incites them to face challenges with the pace of hesitation rather motivation.

Decision-making in Local Government and Women's Prestige:

The local government body of Balochistan is working on the same directions which have been pursued by other provinces in Pakistan. But due to the high interference of masculine domination, the rights of women are being compromised regularly on various platforms. This is also predefined that active participation of women and their incorporation in the decision-making process in the local government paves the way for development, peace, tranquillity and progress in the district (Notification, 2016). The democratic institution of Balochistan has been augmented by systematic integration of women, the efficiency and the quality of performance of local government in the Mastung District. The equal quota with equal rights of women in all level and in all fields of decision-making is the only path that ensures the coverage of wide range responsibilities of local government in the specific district i.e. Mastung.

According to the study of Begum and Awan, (2013), for the movement of women emancipation, the role of decision-making is pivotal and serves as the major mechanism to evaluate the power of women in local government. It must be noted that rights of women in Mastung are safeguarded by Balochistan Provincial and Federal Assemblies with ranges of legislative moves. However, it will not be transparently executed (Naqvi, Shahnaz & Arif, 2002). Michael (2007) says that it is dire need to blueprint a strategy of affirmative actions for offering a structural framework for women's participation in political decision making and being women to the centre of local development and organize new grass-roots leadership by provided opportunities.

Methodology:

In this research the desk approach and quantitative research design were used. The primary and secondary both sources of data had been used in the research (Choy, 2014). The observation, case-study and survey served as primary while magazines, journals, books and internet used as secondary sources of data gathering. The study is inductive and exploratory in nature (Gummesson, 2014). The researcher personally observed the status of women in local government and women empowerment by a local representative (Humphries, 2017). The Likert scale had been used by the researcher to evaluate the results and general numerical data.

The 10 close-ended questionnaires had been disseminated amongst the concern staff members associated with local government in various departments. The sample size is 100, out of 300 participators and categorized by gender rather than age group or profession. Both the males and females were the participators with the ratio of 1:1, however, the random sample technique was used to sort out the data for analysis.

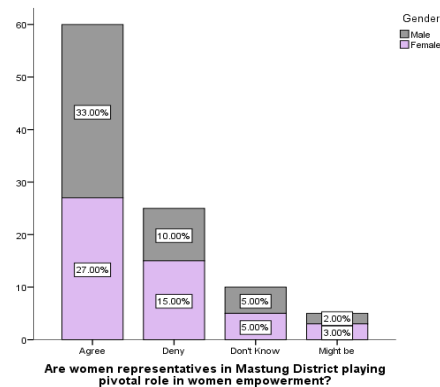
Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) had been used as a stimulated tool to analyse the numerical data gathered by the support of participators. The spread-sheet of SPSS is also attached to the research for better understanding the results. Furthermore, the simple calculation and analysis had been taken out for the better understanding of readers on a specific topic.

Results and Discussion:

Mentioned below table provides the frequency information about the participators in research survey process. The equal number of male and female, 50% both had been taken from random sampling method.

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male		50	50.0	50.0	50.0
Female		50	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

The result shows that 33% of males and 27% of females were agreed that women representatives in the Mastung District playing a pivotal role in women emancipation. However, 10% males and 15% females showed negative response and denied the results. 5% of males and females don't know and 2% of males and 3% of females were not sure about the results.

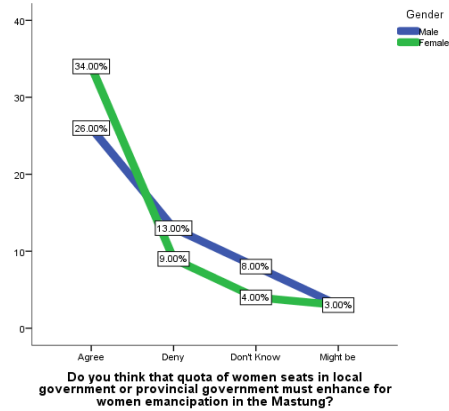


Are women representatives in Mastung District playing a pivotal role in women empowerment?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
Deny	25	25.0	25.0	85.0
Valid Don't Know	10	10.0	10.0	95.0
Might be	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The aforementioned table demonstrated that overall 60% respondents were given a positive response, while 25% denied the fact, 10% did not know about the question and 5% were confused about the response.

26% of males and 34% of females agreed that quota of women in the local government should be enhanced for their empowerment in governmental institutions. However, 13% of males and 9% of females denied the fact, while 8% of males and 4% of females did not know the answer. Both males and females who did not sure about results were stand at 3%.

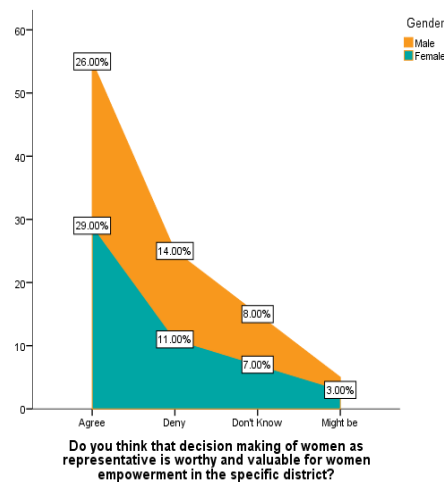


Do you think that quota of women seats in local government or provincial government must enhance for women emancipation in the Mastung?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
Valid Deny	22	22.0	22.0	82.0
Valid Don't Know	12	12.0	12.0	94.0
Valid Might be	6	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The aforementioned table demonstrated that overall 66% respondents were given a positive response, while 22% denied the fact, 12% did not know about the question and 6% were confused about the response.

According to 26% of male respondents and 29% of female respondents were agreed on decision making the power of women enhance their empowerment. However, 14% of males and 11% of females denied while 8% of males and 7% of females did not know the answer. The 3% respondents stood in confusion. So the overall result shows that women empowerment has a direct relationship with the decision making power in the governmental and social affairs.

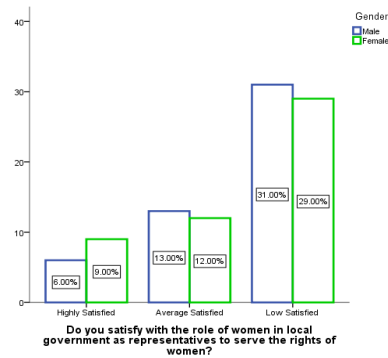


Do you think that decision making of women as a representative is worthy and valuable for women empowerment in the specific district?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	55	55.0	55.0	55.0
Deny	25	25.0	25.0	80.0
Don't Know	15	15.0	15.0	95.0
Might be	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The aforementioned table demonstrated that overall 55% respondents were given a positive response, while 25% denied the fact, 15% did not know about the question and 5% were confused about the response.

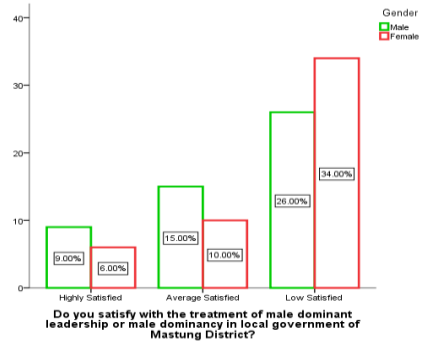
The overall results were not satisfactory when the researcher asked respondents regarding the role of women representatives in serving the rights of women. 31% males and 29% of females were showed lower satisfaction while 13% of males and 12% of females were averagely satisfied; however, 6% males and 9% females were highly satisfied. The overall result divulges that women are failed to preserve the rights of women as a representative.



Do you satisfy the role of women in local government as representatives to serve the rights of women?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Highly Satisfied	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Average Satisfied	25	25.0	25.0	40.0
Low Satisfied	60	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The aforementioned table demonstrated that overall 15% respondents were highly-satisfied, while 25% were average satisfied, 60% were lowered satisfied, so the overall result was negative.



Females and males with 26% and 34% respectively were low satisfied, while 15% of males and 10% of females were averagely satisfied, however, 9% of males and 6% of females were highly-satisfied with the treatment of male dominant leadership in the local government of Mastung District. The overall result was negative and respondents show lack of satisfaction from the treatment of male in men dominant society.

Do you satisfy with the treatment of male dominant leadership or male dominance in local government of Mastung District?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Highly Satisfied	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Average Satisfied	25	25.0	25.0	40.0
Low Satisfied	60	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The aforementioned table demonstrated that overall 15% respondents were

highly-satisfied, while 25% were average satisfied, 60% were lowered satisfied, so the overall result was negative.

Recommendations:

The study suggested that woman emancipation prerequisite the uniformity of women in local government. So the women should realize their status in male dominant society and political infrastructure (Anjum, Khan, Raza & Fatima, 2012). At least, the vote of women should be cast for women candidates to give them priority and let them work for the betterment of women's status in Mastung District. The federal cabinet and representatives especially women should pay their special attention to the women empowerment by representatives of local government in Mastung District.

According to the Dawn (2016) report on Women empowerment, the women need to formulate the pressure group within the institutions in order to influence the planning and decision-making process. However, this will help women to avail their rights sometimes, by forcing or legally with easement.

According to the study done by Mohyuddin and Ambreen (2012), if women have equal rights to participate in politics, and theoretical framework of regulations also defined the indiscriminate approach of gender in politics. It is also proved that no nation can be glorified without the active participation of women side by side with men. So why not the quota of women in local government should be raised to 50% instead of 33%? It is recommended to all higher authorities and legislative bodies to ascend the quota of female seats in provincial and local government on the basis of population or equally (Aamir, 2015). Otherwise, the anarchy and catastrophe will always adhere to the destiny of female's empowerment.

Conclusion:

According to the Duflo (2012), for acquiring the marginalized position in the political institution the women have already got the legitimate space, though they are still in a minority due to lack of percentage allowed in the parliaments and local government bodies. Therefore, women empowerment has been compromised especially in the Mastung District. Women's presentation in the political sphere is an important step in changing the male-dominated political agenda (Paterson, 2008). Women local representatives in the Mastung District have the opportunity at least to attend the political meetings and discussions. Across the social hierarchy, women's availability in the political important discussions ensures their mobility.

The 33% quota for women in the Balochistan's local government is a significant impetus to women's empowerment in the Mastung District. The goal of women empowerment is still hanging on fire and will not be secured by the increment of political quota alone. In order to advance the process of women's empowerment, the additional strategies must be

employed which promote the self-reliance of women (economically and socially), it will help to remove the structural obstacles and build women's capacities (Naqvi, Shahnaz & Arif, 2002). In the Mastung District, the participation of women is the useful process that ensures the empowerment of women in the entire district. The epitome divulges that inclusion of direct elected women members initiated a new avenue to have played a significant role in the decision-making process in the democratic institution at the grass-roots level.

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Appendices:

Exhibit #1
Various Setups of Local Government in Mastung:

