

LACK AND INSUFFICIENT POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN GILGIT-BALTISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Women politicians in Pakistan are still a rare sight even though Pakistan had a female PM in the 1990s, at a time when most other states had none yet. The rare sight of women in politics in Pakistan is because of segregation of public and private sphere for men and women which has restricted women participation in public sphere in Pakistan. This study shed light on the factors hindering political participation in Gilgit- Baltistan. Further it examines the impacts of social capital on access to political positions in Gilgit- Baltistan. The study shows that women politicians do not observe active participation in politics in GB because of restraining political environment, lack of direct social interaction in constituency of women, patriarchal hurdles to women in politics, non-incumbency of female politicians, female politician's low social capital and non-inclusive political system of Gilgit Baltistan.

Keywords: Women's Political Participation, Gilgit-Baltistan, Political Challenges, Gender Equality, Party Nomination

INTRODUCTION

Women politicians in Pakistan are still a rare sight even though Pakistan had a female PM in the 1990s, at a time when most other states had none yet. The rare sight of women in politics in Pakistan is because of segregation of public and private sphere for men and women which has restricted women participation in public sphere in Pakistan (Waqar 2018). Progressively people's perception has been changing about women due to different movements: the human rights movement, the women's rights movements and the feminist movements emerged generally in the world and in particular Pakistan (Han 2018; Ali Tazeen S, Gunilla Krantz, Nargis Asad, Evvaa Johansson and Ingrid Morgen 2011).

Pakistan is one of the countries, in which political milieu for women representation is rigid and hard-hitting in terms of active political participation from male dominant culture. Musharraf introduced 33% quota for women in the local government and increased women quota in parliament of Pakistan in 2000 by devolution plan (Shafqat Munir, Hassan Shezad, and Aoun Sahi 2014). Women quota increased from 3% to 33% in Pakistan through reforms by President Musharraf, but few women contested direct general election. Hardly women dared to contest direct election in history of Pakistan. The trend of low ratio of election contest by women changed to more women contesting for general seats in national elections in Pakistan. Like eight women politicians won general seats out of 342

National Assembly seats in general elections of 2018 in Pakistan (Naeem 2018). Such a low number of women contesting for general seats is an alarming condition when compared to the ratio of male participation in politics but encouraging when compared to the past experiences of low women political participation in the history of Pakistan (Pakistan Today 2018). Media reports that 21 female candidates contested on general seats in 2018 general election more than those females who contested in 2013 election and three times higher than in the 2002 elections (Lodhi 2018). Women politicians in GB politics are few in their strength and passive in their participation even in the 21st century. Though women's engagement and contribution in politics is inadequate as compared to men in the entire world yet, it is very low in Pakistan. Gilgit Baltistan, being a neglected region, is suffering from constitutional status crisis. Therefore, GB political position is lagging behind in comparison to other regions of Pakistan in this perspective of women active engagement in politics because there were only two women politicians who contested in the GB elections of 2009 and 2015 and no woman politician was elected to the GB Legislative Assembly in 2009 and 2015 (Nafisah Wali September 1, 2019). Women's active involvement in policy formulation and decision making in legislative assembly of Gilgit Baltistan is essential to address issues related to women, because a woman can better understand and observe issues of women.

Women political participation in Gilgit Baltistan is in a very initial and basic stage, Northern Area Legal Framework Order 1994 reserved 5 seats based on quota for women in GBLA, in 1994, 24 elected members selected them. In 2009 PPP government increased one seat in women quota through introducing GB Empowerment and Self Governance Order 2009, and 6 seats were reserved for women out of 24 GBLA seats only one female candidate Amina Ansari contested direct election in 2015 in Gilgit (Ali 2015). In

2009 general election, she failed to win her seat but again contested election in 2015. This is a big victory for women politicians of Gilgit Baltistan though she did not win the seat, but she is the one female politician in GB politics who was able to contest the seat against her male political counterpart. In the past men even hesitated to elect women on reserved seats (Shireen, Nafisah Wali, and August 1, 2019). Therefore, the core subject of this study is "Lack of and insufficient political participation of Women in Gilgit Baltistan and the challenges women face in party ticket nomination and electing on general seats". The study approaches the problem of 'low political participation of women politicians in the region Gilgit Baltistan (GB).' The study is unearthing dominant factors that positively and negatively impact active participation of women in politics of GB. Mainly, Gilgit Baltistan generally faces political alienation due to its constitutional crisis. This political alienation of GB in National Assembly of Pakistan leads to low political representation of both men as well as women in GB. However, male politicians deploy their political hegemony in the political arena. The current political practices are more amicable to men as compared to women because men are observing their political practices more as compared to women. Apart from a host of factors, the political dominant position of men is an important aspect that impedes the active political participation of women. This inquiry is based on the political experience of women politicians of Gilgit Baltistan that were collected through in-depth interviews.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To assess the factors hindering women's political participation in Gilgit Baltistan.
- To examine the impact of social capital and incumbency on women's access to political positions in GB.

- To explore the role of family background and education in women's political representation in the region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researchers have used qualitative methods of research. Different techniques are used to collect data in qualitative methods: case studies and interview etc. Researchers have conducted interviews to collect data; the technique was more feasible than other techniques to find out their understanding about politics in GB. The conduct of interview with women participants is an appropriate mean to unearth the political experiences of women politicians of Gilgit Baltistan. In qualitative research, two-way communication of interviewee with participants is amendable to get more appropriate in- findings, and depth opinions of the participants. The population of the study is the politicians of Gilgit Baltistan, and the sample of the study is a group of women politicians of GB. The researchers have selected twelve female politicians of Gilgit Baltistan. Researchers conducted semi-structured interview of four females from each of the three divisions (Astore, Gilgit and Baltistan) of Gilgit Baltistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Early work on women's empowerment in terms of women's active participation in politics involve in investigating the challenges and issues which impede free equal participation in politics as female politicians (Umar 2016), (Aurat Foundation July 2012) and (Latif 2015). Some articles have unearthed the aftermath challenges that a woman politician face while accessing to the position of decision making, law making and policy making within political parties, party organizations and in parliament. (Yazdani 2009)

Pakistan is one of the countries, in which political environment for women representation is not satisfactory. Introduction

of 33% quota for women in the local government and also increased women quota in parliament of Pakistan under regime of President Musharaff a right decided roadmap to enhance political participation of women in Pakistan (Shafqat Munir, Hassan Shezad, and Aoun Sahi 2014). Though women quota amplified to 33% from very below line of 3% in Pakistan yet few women contested direct general election.

According to one of Media reports, 21 women politicians participated in election of 2018 as more strength of women in 2018 election than women participation 2013 election and it was three times higher than election of 2002 (Lodhi 2018).

The Study "Socio Cultural Obstacles to Women in Politics in Rural Areas of Baluchistan, Pakistan" (2016) is about in equal political participation of women in Baluchistan because of the customs and traditions of Baluchistan. The study reveal male dominant culture is firmer in Baluchistan due to tribal culture in the region Baluchistan. Government's injustice policies towards the suffered region Baluchistan further enhanced the phenomenon of lack of women empowerment in Baluchistan, which allows tribal lords to firmly hold the male dominant culture in Baluchistan, Pakistan. (Umar 2016).

Gilgit Baltistan like Balochistan is an ignored region of Pakistan. The study of Baluchistan (2016) about women participation in politics is more relevant to study of Participation of Women in Politics of Gilgit Baltistan because both regions are comparatively underdeveloped, politically and economically exploited. Many studies examine Women participation in politics in Pakistan from historical dynamics determining the structure of Politics for women in context of Pakistan. The author focuses on ruling period General Zia, who introduced many misogynistic reforms in Pakistan. General Zia's misogynist reforms hudood ordinance cut down role of

women in public sphere, in consequence the existing gender biased behavior of people of Pakistan consolidated in Pakistan (Awan July 2018) (Weiss May 2012). There was no law in Pakistan about women quota in Political Parties till 2017. The absence of law about women quota within political parties boosted the party gatekeepers to recruit men in party election ticket, in turn women were deprived of political capital of incumbency. Pakistan introduced women quota within parties through Election Act 2017 in 2017 (The Government of Pakistan 2017).

One of the reasons behind lack of women participation in politics is lack of interest of women in politics due to poor and corrupt political system. The religious orientation or affiliation came up as a very strong determinant in restricting the women from politics. There is a general consensus that women political participation is considered anti-Islamic. People who are more religious tend to restrict and oppose women participation in politics. Likewise, religious practices are used as powerful instrument of stereotype against women political aspirants in Pakistan (Khan 2010) (Hakim and Aziz 1999). Gender inequality is a prevailing dilemma in Pakistan. Due to male dominating society women cannot participate in politics the other reasons are lack of awareness and less financial resources (Khan 2016). In addition, it is the general impression among male of society that women are more appropriate to contribute in field of education and health. In the context of Pakistan, there is a traditional belief that women are made to take care of children and do kitchen work than participating outside home activities. The general perception of people is that women should only play the role of house wife.

Findings of the studies show despite gradual increase in women's participation in politics, that political participation of woman is not at satisfactory level to pace the contemporary world, because ratio of direct elected women

politician is quite dismaying. "Facts and Figures: Leadership and Political Participation" (2019) shows that only 24.3 percent serves in all national parliamentarians of the world. The increase in ratio of women in all national parliaments is not satisfactory. In the entire world, only eleven women are serving as head of states and twelve women are serving as head of the governments, according to United Nations Women (United Nations 2019). In Pakistan, total twenty-seven women elected in general seats in national assembly and legislative assemblies in general election 2008. Out of these twenty-seven elected women on general seats, sixteen women elected on general seats of National Assembly in 2008 election (Aurat Foundation July 2012).

The under discussed topic is heated subject, but unfortunately rarely scholars, think tanks and authors have discussed the issue related to the region Gilgit Baltistan from perspectives of Gilgit Baltistan Constitutional Issue, Reforms implemented by Pakistan and its impact on Kashmir Dispute from prospects of UN resolution and status of Women in GB from perspective of Education, sports and economic independence but not a single study pondered the aspect of low and passive political participation of women in politics. In my point of view active participation of Women in politics is main determinant of women empowerment. This study will fill the gap of the subject of low political participation of women through investigate "Political Participation of women: The case Study of Gilgit Baltistan". This study solely concentrated on pragmatic political participation of women in GB politics. This research study is not unearthing barriers which women of GB encounter during their entrance in politics but focusing on uncovering

challenges GB women face after entering in politics.

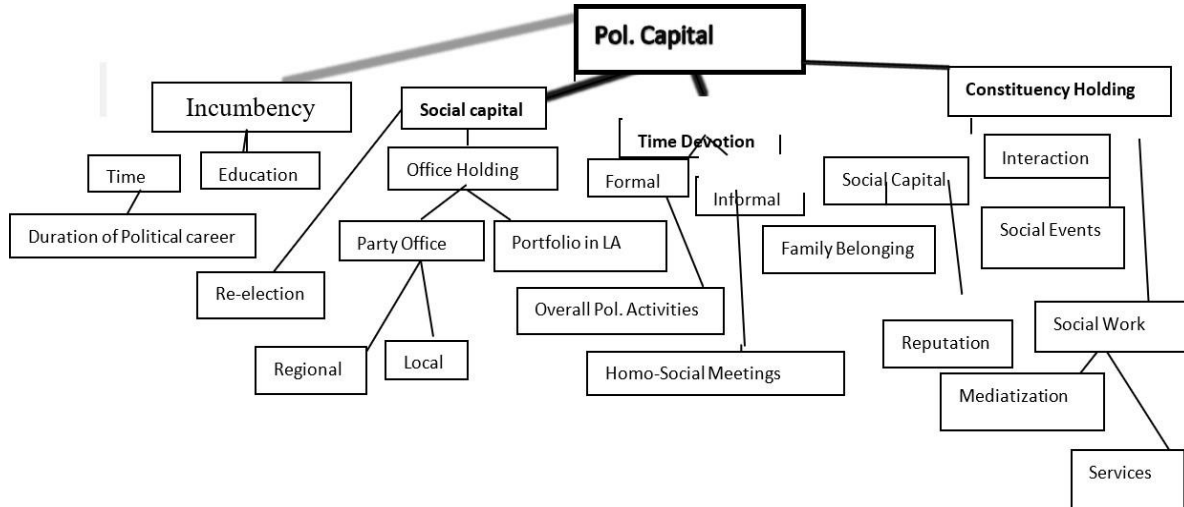
Women Politicians (the interviews)

The first interview we conducted with Nasreen Bano. She belongs to tehsil Astore, Diamer division. Astore was feasible to access as my birthplace. Nasreen Bano facilitated me for access with three other women politicians of

Figure 1: Themes that emerged from the interview analysis

INCUMBENCY

The most important theme was incumbency generally, which means having party office,



PML-N GB. Then male relative of one of the politicians facilitated me with contact of other parties' women network through using his own social interaction via snowball technique, as the fact he has remained actively involved throughout interview of his wife.

We conducted interviews with 12 women from July 28, 2019 to September 3, 2019 and 2 follow-up interviews between October 23 and 28, 2019. we conducted these interviews in the respondents' residencies, GB tourism spots and in GB house Islamabad as per choice of the participants. A male family member accompanied me in GB. Because it was necessary to satisfy my family elders as well as to give image of safety for the interviewees that we are not from any NGO (it is common opinion of people of Astore and Chilas that NGO women accompany their professional colleague or they (NGO women) bold enough to visit solitarily). For the interviews conducted in GB house Islamabad, a classmate accompanied me.

public office and re-election is helpful to candidate to get a party ticket and to win elections. Reuven Y. Hazaan and Gideon Rahat (2010) in "Democracy within Parties; Candidate Selection Methods and their Political Consequences" defined the term incumbent as any candidate who was holding party office, re-election and nominated to the prior governing body (Rahat, Reuven Y. Hazaan and Gideon 2010). In this study, we found that most of interviewees were suffering from political inequality either having no incumbency or having very low incumbency as compare to men that impede them to get party ticket in election.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital affects politicians to get party ticket, win election and to get any party office as well public office. Mainly, Social capital is interaction, relationship, communication chain,

networks, family support, trust and values that facilitates individuals and groups to cooperate as well as to achieve determined position (Commission Report, Commonwealth Australia 2003). Social Capital is distinguished from economic and human capital as reported, "Economic capital is in people's bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships.

To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is these others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage" (Commission Report, Commonwealth Australia, 2003, 7). In this study, men are more beneficial in possessing social capital; they have vast exposure to public sphere as compare to women. Women have less exposure to public sphere in Gilgit Baltistan. Having low social capital women in Gilgit Baltistan are facing hurdles in getting party ticket, party office, and public office and win election.

The third theme in study is political experience of politicians. Political experience is defined as time period means how long politicians are pursuing political career and what qualification they are obtaining and what expertise they have like economist, educationist and so on. Having any prominent expertise that politician get more attention and focus of party gatekeepers in granting party ticket and people cast vote in his or her favor with outlook of a future minister with best expertise of policy making in economy, foreign and interior affairs. However, we will discuss under here in analysis section in detail how far this theme influenced their political career.

CONSTITUENCY HOLDING

In this study, constituency holding appears the second prevailing factor that appears to constraint political participation of women in GB politics. One of the participants even revealed that they used to distribute money among people to join possession and rallies

because it is prerequisite for a female politician to be socially active and maintain direct contact with audiences to gain political influence in constituency (Nafisah Wali July 19, 2019).

Constituency holding means the personal recognition and influence of politicians in constituency. Recognition and fame are achieved through dominant political background, involvement of the candidate in constituency in terms of progressive labor, social issues and serving voters to sort out common problems of Thana & Kacheri. Bearing bulging fame as political candidate because of h/her family and work contribution is called constituency holding. In terms of this study constituency holding comprises three indicators: family belonging, social interaction, and social services. These are the indicators through which constituency holding of a politician is measured

.It has scrutinized how far these indicators are helpful or constraining for women to get party ticket. Interconnection of politicians with constituency is considered a requirement to develop political influence of the politician. A constituency is conceived as a group of people, a community, community dignitaries, and political entities. While sharing experience One participant stated, while endorsing such philosophy party favors men in nomination and argues that public prefer men because they know men have capacity to resolve their daily dealings and uprising local problems in court and Kacheri. Furthermore, argue that men have more interconnection with bureaucrats and administrative officers so they are more in position to appoint their voters in jobs through their influence in administration and homo-social interaction with bureaucrats as compare to men" (Nafisah Wali August 1, 2019).

WOMEN POLITICIANS SIDELINED IN WOMEN WING, ON RESERVED OR TECHNOCRAT SEATS

An earlier study entitled “Women and Legislative Representation; Electoral System Political Parties and Sex Quota” by Menon Tremblay (2008) conducted in Central and Eastern European countries shows that political parties put an institutional barrier towards active participation of women in politics. When political parties tend to enhance women proportion in election, they do this by fielding women on unwinnable seats. Because low proportion of women in politics determines their low strength in incumbent and parties prefer incumbents. This way incumbency plays central role in maintaining the vicious circle of minimum strength of women in election and less chances of re-election by fielding women in unwinnable seats. Nevertheless, the case of Gilgit Baltistan is very complex because GB political parties are not even ready to nominate women on un-winnable seats, and they denote their political blessings on women by adjusting them on reserved seats. Election 2017 law is not applicable to Gilgit Baltistan. Political parties of Gilgit Baltistan are not bound to award five percent party seats to women political workers. For that reason, the political parties of Gilgit Baltistan used to adjust women in reserved seats instead of awarding party ticket to women candidate. The least strength of party ticket awarding to women in history of Gilgit Baltistan affirms the assertion that women have no free access to general seats irrespective of winnable and non-winnable. They prefer to adjust men candidate in general seats either winnable or non-winnable. The study exposes to an appealing proposition by participants that constraint woman to be incumbent is Women Wing. Women are sidelined with women wing. A participant states “rarely women hold any prominent party office; mostly women are side lined by Women Wing” (Shabana, Nafisah Wali, July 15, 2019).

In last election 2015 more than eight female candidates applied for PTI party ticket. The local nomination committee approved five women, and the central nomination committee dropped them to one (and “that one was me”¹⁵) because of seat adjustment for those electable who have joined PTI after leaving their previous party as said by an interviewee (Ansari, Nafisah Wali, September 1, 2019). These electable were timeservers and recognized influential and traditional politicians of their constituency. Unfortunately, women politicians, who are accommodated in reserved seats on position of minister, parliamentary secretary, special assistant to PM or CM or any other portfolio, applaud party gatekeepers for considering them able to the position even on reserved seats, Ansari lamented (Ansari, Nafisah Wali, Sep 1, 2019). Some women who are being adjusted on reserved seats neither criticize party gatekeepers nor assist other women politicians in party ticket awarding. This shows that women have lack of cooperation among themselves that also creates bottlenecks in road to their political representation. The adjustment on reserved seat is not less than a signified embarrassment by their male political counterparts.

OPPORTUNISTIC ELECTABLE CANDIDATES

Kira Sanbomatsu (2002) in her study “Political Parties and Recruitment of women to State Legislature” highlights incumbency as one of the important institutional factors, which impedes the engagement of women in politics, their aspiration for contesting election, and pursue membership in Parliament. Fernando M. Aragon (2014) in the study, “Why Do Parties Use Primaries: Political Selection vs. Candidate Incentive” highlights the candidate selection process within party. The author has taken Latin American Presidential Election as case study. The author evaluates the candidate

selection process of Latin America by two mechanisms: selection effect and incentive effect. Selection effect means selection based on quality and quality means the candidate's pre-poll election campaign efforts for intra-party election. Incentive efforts means candidates' vote share in intra party election by campaign efforts and candidate's public office holding. Author argues that political parties are opined to win seat at any cost and they are confident, "all incumbents who contest for second or third time have won" is guarantee of their future success in election. The author does not discuss challenges that women face during nomination process. He focuses on principles of selection effect and incentive effect, therefore the study is relevant to my study as effective domains (selection effect and incentive effect) influence on candidate nomination process, which creates challenges to women of GB in GB politics.

The results derived from the above evidences about political participation of women in GB are that the region is still engaged in digging political grave of GB. female alienation in GB politics through accommodating them in reserved seats, disbaring them from real representation by nullify ticket for general election, sidelining with only Women Wing to minimize their role from party and no access to the party office. Local party leaders gain ground by persuading main leaders that GB is not frankly society for women to win election as the fact a wide gap among man party leaders and party workers. This non-incumbency (no party office, no portfolio in legislative assembly, no member of legislative assembly) let them to put in reserved seats by their party gatekeepers, so their political engagement, their high-profile education, and experience flow out of window. Party gatekeeper put them out of game, so they not ever able to serve in Legislative Assembly as elected member that deprive them for re-election as well as portfolio of legislative assembly.

SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH PUBLIC VIA SOCIAL EVENTS

Another important factor that determines successful political participation is interaction with the public through social events. According to a respondent when she entered in politics, she was enthusiastic to do practical politics by serving people, work for social uplift of the community but then she became disillusioned because she had to attend a large number of Khatam, Fathia, funeral, marriage, and other social ceremonies which she did not consider as important in past. This shows that attending in ceremonies is not so prevailing influence on constituency building because GB culture is not friendly for women, people are not willing to ready accept the equally engagement of women in constituency as men (Shaheen, Wali, July 11, 2019) Rani Atiqa said men remain more interconnected with political leaders, with public and other social and business group, in this they know more than women about politics do; the social structure and cultural values do not hinder them to consume more time in their career (Atiqa, Nafisah Wali July 19, 2019).

Therefore, the party nomination committee argues that they cannot afford to grant a party ticket to a non-winnable candidate, a candidate who is not famous and well known among public. She concluded her remarks though GB is a male dominant society, and women politicians are invisible as compare to men. Men have been observing privilege in public sphere for decades. Though women endeavored to access equal status in public sphere, yet gender equality is a myth. Still, there is an absence of societal acceptability of women working in public sphere.

In her case, Rani Sahiba believed that she due to dual responsibilities (at home being women

andat political sphere being politician) not able to actively interact with public, serve public that also cause for her less recognition among public so public turned her down in previous election contest. The study shows that women are well acknowledged of the importance of constituency holding though several occasions they admit failing in gaining party ticket due to many other factors besides having constituency holding in terms of social interaction with public.

SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH POWER BROKERS

The third factor that emerged from the interview as important to hold a constituency is social interaction with power brokers. Interaction with power broker, such as Shia Sarkar's, Sunni Qazi, village Lambardar, is rigid than public interaction. Farzana Bari in her study shows that "Pakistan is a diverse nation, multi-ethnic and pluralist society with highly uneven socio-economic development" (Bari 2015, 14). She scrutinizes the concept of barriers to constituency building as women come across. The reasons that impede women from constituency building are low social capital due to uneven family power in a male dominant society, lack of social exposure, voter's existing perception that women are not for constituency surgeries, and so on. Because of the above-mentioned reasons, women cannot build constituencies. In case of GB, these community power brokers are village Headmen and religious clerics. According respondent's village and district headmen influence the Astore Division mostly and Gilgit Division the politics is power game of Shiite and Sunni religious dignitaries and Royal families such as Mir's and Wazirs. Baltistan division is highly dominated with Shiite sect's religious cleric. For an instance Ms. Saadiya asserts that even their own party oppose nomination of women by arguing that women are incapable of door-to-door campaign because this is not acceptable

in a conservative society where voter's decision are in hand of religious clericals and lambardar (village headmen)

In Astore, politics core archetypal personalities were Outh Malik, Sadat Jestoro, Thekadar Hajji Mirzai, and Wazir Aflatoon and currently their offspring are influencing politics and come to a decision to which vote must cast. In same way in Gilgit, division Shia and Sunni sectarian politics are on elevation so Ghaznavi Sunni family is jugular vein of politics. Community leaders, Ms. Praveen added, is an interest group who influence party recruiters more than the political leaders. In case of GBLA II, she reveals, Sunni Qazi Mr. Nisar Sahab the dignitary of Sunni sect, Prince Karim Agha IV Sahab the imam of Ismailis sect, and Syed Rahat Hussainul Husaini Sahab cleric of Shiite sect are true political power brokers in Gilgit division. The point to note is that Sunni dignitary Qazi is the dominant political power broker in Gilgit city not only because of Sunni majority but also because of many other factors. Mr. Hafiz Hafeez Ur Rahman was Qazi Nisar's political nominee, in 2015 election. Qazi Sahab diligently turned the political environment in Hafiz' favor. Hafiz Sahab had no political experience but after his elder brother Saifur Rehman's assassination. Qazi Nisar and PML-N pushed Mr. Hafizur Rehman in politics, because PML-N GB was beholden to Saifur Rehman Shaheed. Indeed "I had no such accessibility to Qazi Sahab or Husaini Sahab, even I tried my best to access Qazi Sahab, but every time avoided even for a formal meeting" she revealed. In previous election 2009, Deedar Ali from GBLA II and Sarkar Riazuddin Rizvi from GBLA 1 was winner, at that time they had full support of Rizvi and Hussaini the Sarkar of Shiite sect" (Pari, Nafisah Wali, August 1, 2019).

Game of political power always remains in hands of Sunni Qazi or Shia Sarkar one by one in Gilgit Division. They play the game according the federal government, shia Sarkar

succeeded in 2009 GB elections when PPP in federal came in power and Sunni Qazi successfully play his game when any other party, except PPP, hold in federal level as Parveen Ghazi said. Parveen Ghazi further states, candidates other than nominees of Qazi and Sarkar, knew about their ultimate defeat before contesting election (Parveen, Nafisah Wali, and August 1, 2019)

This political power game between Sarkar and Qazi still prevails in Gilgit division, others two divisions Diamer and Baltistan are more influenced and affected by dynastic politics of Mir, Wazir, Lones, and Malik as well as local power brokers such as Outh, Jestoro and lambardars also play their role in tehsil levels. In this way that network of power brokers function in GB that determinesthe future of a political candidate, she said. She closed her discussion with comment that Political parties in GB are like membership organization. To sum up, the discussion indicates the wider the politicians have social interaction with political power broker, the broader they maintain constituency holding. The broader they have constituency holding, the wider they have opportunity of getting party ticket. The women politicians have limited opportunity of interacting with powerbroker that is why social interaction with power broker plays as a constraining factor in getting party ticket

SOCIAL WORK IN CONSTITUENCY

Social work in constituency has emerged another important sub-theme under constituency holding. In general, social work (social work with association of non-governmental organizations and social welfare institutions like Human Rights Commission of Pakistan) in constituency is considered as a strong indicator of social interaction and visibility cum fame. However, in case of Gilgit Baltistan, men politicians are seemed not involve in social works and social work of women is not taken as a positive sign especially

those women without political background. In Astore and Baltistan divisions, association of women with NGO is a bad omen as secular feminism and cause of character demeaning. To conclude that women social interaction via social work also cause of bottleneck in political career in GB because of pre-existing mindset and culture.

FAMILY BELONGING

Nine out of twelve interviewees revealed that their pursuance in politics is because of their family political background. Two participants with family political background exposed that their family showed some resistance when they desired to pursue their political career, while one politician revealed that she faces trouble from family in political involvement when her sons engaged in politics.

Interestingly some participants admitted that they have no personal political aspiration, they are in politics merely because of her family members who want them to recruit on reserved or technocrat seats. Women with no family political background face hurdles in public visibility, constituency building, and interaction with community dignitaries and face issue of character demeaning. Some participants with family background also face issue of public acceptance and public recognition because of their dual job (domestic chores and political engagement). One of the important facts is that party gatekeepers prefer women with family background among women and men with political background among overall party candidates. In simple words, when there are no men with political background then party prefer women with political background.

While expressing her views about holding party office, one respondent states that rarely women hold any prominent party office; mostly women are side lined by Women Wing. She mentions that Amina Ansari being a dominant political worker and belongs to an influential political family succeeded in holding PTI party office of

secretary general in GB. She got this office partially because of her long-term political contribution, her bold decision to contest general election two times and partially because of her family belonging (Shabana, Nafisah Wali, and July 15, 2019).

The experience of interviewees affirmed this existing fact. As one participant said, in the last term of election 2009, her party gave her party ticket because they know their position in that specific constituency as they were losing; no male candidate with political background is willing to contest election on that unwinnable seat. However, in the general election 2015 they did not consider her, unfortunately granted ticket to an influential and dynastic politician of that constituency because now party position had changed into winning in overall GB including that constituency. The point to consider is that the person was a ticket server not an ideological server, the person also lost his election, and it was good enough if they give ticket to her, who was an ideological server and a face of party at least. As affirmed by her, party argued that they would accommodate her in reserved seat when they came in government, but in case of the man politicians it's not possible and the chance of winning is also more in his case as compare to her.

Some participants believed that female politician particularly with family political background is not more than a political puppet in hands of their family politicians. According to them, the female politician's tweets, directed by their male family members and mostly male family politician direct statements in newspaper. They direct women how to speak and how to respond in an interview, conference, and talk shows. This reveals the fact that some of these women politicians plotted by their men to meet their political ends. Experience of Mrs. Wakeel shows that she was not a true political aspirant, but it was her husband's wish. As stated by her, her husband is of the view in the way at least he would succeed in compelling party to appoint her on reserved or technocrat

seat. Moreover, she showed us a detailed transcript her husband handed over to her before he left home. The transcript was dealing our entire interview question as per demand we had given a copy of interviews questions to him. She claimed that she decided to speak her heart instead of written transcript.

Family belonging is an indicator of Constituency holding at a time this factor is enabling and constraining the inclusive participation of women in politics. Rani Sahiba reveals that she confronts political challenges after entrance of her sons in politics, she asserted that that they want to confine her to the nominal status of Rani, no longer involve in political activities because that would bring in defame to the status of Rani. There is no denying that unequal treatment meted out to women politicians by political parties and even community. In case of Nasreen Bano, family lambardar calls meeting to decide whether contest election or accommodate in reserved seats.

EDUCATION

Education¹⁶ and some expertise in economic, foreign affairs, etc. are interlinked with political experience. In this, study all interviewees agreeable that education as political experience plays no role in influencing party gatekeepers to nominate educated and candidate with different expertise in policies making. Mrs. Wazir acclaimed that she has high profile education from institutions like LUMS and London school of Law. However, party dropped her out of competition in favor of someone who was electable and he had political background to compete with traditional politician need a traditional politician as argued by party. Mrs. Saleem argued that Education has no role in getting party ticket.¹⁶ Education in this study is defined as education degrees from formal and state recognized educational institutions.

TIME DEVOTION

The theme of time devotion in politics is somewhat unique and different I pursued while discussion with participants. It was unprecedented for me because while asking questions from participants I had different context of time devotion. During studying existing literature, I mostly found time devotion in terms of devoting time in formal political activities but not in in-formal political activities. However, the time devotion that here I am referring is not only consumption of time in overall political activities like in party meetings, seminars, rallies, sessions, and so on. The time devotion that I am referring to is time devotion to political tycoons' especially party gatekeepers. As empirical evidences ratify the fact that there is no single woman in party gatekeepers of all GB political parties, only few women hold main party offices, not a single woman represent in GBLA on election base, all women GBLA members are on reserved seats. Under proponents of constituency holding, political experiences and interaction have well discussed engagement in overall political activities, its impediments to women and its constraints to political recruitment of women in ticket nomination. For that cause under this theme, I will scrutinize the determinant of time devotion with party gatekeepers by referring relevant statements from interviews.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that women politicians do not observe active participation in politics in GB because of restraining political environment, lack of direct social interaction in constituency of women, patriarchal hurdles to women in politics, non-incumbency of female politicians, female politician's low social capital and non-inclusive political system of Gilgit Baltistan. Their views, actions, and participation are, to larger extent, controlled by males within their family or their political family. The study unearthed a chain of political constraints,

which women faced during their party-political career. This chain of constraints evolved through political parties' nomination process. Party gatekeepers and Political power brokers play pivotal but constraining role in nominating women politicians of GB for party ticket in many ways. Firstly, the party gatekeepers play constraining role because of the criteria they frame for candidate nomination for party office and party ticket. This criterion of nomination is not women friendly. Secondly, Women could not appoint to party office because of women unfriendly political party's culture, as we found most of party gatekeepers are men. Thirdly, some men gatekeepers favor men as compare to women because of their homosexual tendency. In consequence, women face challenges in interconnecting with party gatekeepers because of their biased homosexual behavior

In result, they did not appear in election and not able to win election. Consequently, they failed to obtain incumbent status. Hence, they are less competent as compare to men for party ticket because they are not incumbent. In simple words, party do not grant party ticket because society does not favor women in politics, and they are unable to actively participate in politics because party does not give them party ticket and party office because people do not ready to vote them. People are not ready to vote them because they are not familiar with them.

The study shows that the case of GB women politicians are faced with unique set of struggle and challenges. No pro-gender political reforms are introduced here because of its disputed political status. Like 2017 Election Act is enforced in all regions of Pakistan except Gilgit Baltistan. The 2017 election Act bounds political parties to grant party ticket to at least five percent of women on general seats. The absence of GB female politicians on general seat of GBLA in all GB elections indicates the restricting political environment of GB which needs further investigation. This day and age,

GB is the only region of Pakistan that there are no women in GB legislative assembly elected on general seats in 2020? Only three women contested direct election. (Ali 2015) and (Shafqat Munir, Hassan Shezad, Aoun Sahi 2014).

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