

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES FOR LADY COUNCILOR IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AT LOCAL LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF MULTAN DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: To determine social and political challenges for lady councilor's political participation at local level of governance in Multan District of South Punjab, Pakistan.

Study Design: Observational Study

Place and Duration of Study: Multan District, South Punjab from 2016-2019.

Methodology: Quantitative Research Approach used. Simple Random Table Sampling used to target 415 lady councilors who Elected in 2016 election of local governance of Multan District of South Punjab frequency distribution analysis performed to measure social and political factors influence lady councilor's political participation in Local Governance of South Punjab.

Results: Final findings represented that Education Attainment, limited social and political concerns of lady councilors, preferences of committees for lady councilors, ignorance of lady councilor's social and political issues, Lack of mechanisms for protection of lady councilors in political activities, socially ascribed roles of feminist and masculinity, dependency on males, ticket allocation for lady councilors in a party, male members imposed behavior for political party schedules of meetings and campaigns, party decisions and division of power threats to male's dignity have substantial adverse effect on lady councilors political participation in local level of governance. The research suggests that lady councilors in politics is itself a complicate social and political based challenge. There is a need to educate and aware woman for their social and political right.

Keywords: Social and Political Challenges, lady councilors Political Participation, Local Level Governance

INTRODUCTION

Lady councilors in the world comprise more than 50% of the total population. Globally, lady councilor's political participation is less than that of males (Naz, 2024). Lady councilors have historically been excluded from democratic structures and process resulting from various structural, functional, and individual factors that differ in various social contexts across nations (mushtaq, 2022,). The development of any society rests on active political involvement of lady councilors (Braham, 2018). Gender gap exists in political participation (Ali, 2023) and this gap is more pronounced in South Asian countries, particularly Pakistan. Lady councilor's equal participation is a fundamental pillar for success in all spheres of life (Ur-Rehman, 2023).

Lady councilors have always faced political disparities and lady councilors cannot be empowered unless they are politically

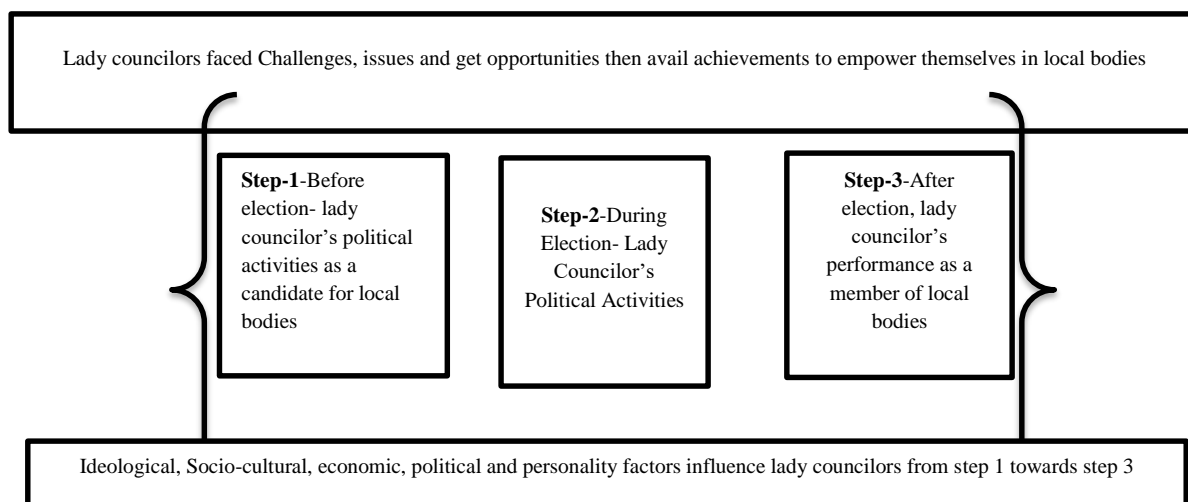
empowered (Ali, 20). Sustainable Development Goals (2015) recognizes lady councilor's political participation at all levels as a central right of lady councilors across the globe. The present research is an endeavor to analyze lady councilor's political participation at local governance level against the backdrop of gendered political structural setting in Southern Punjab, Pakistan.

Local political structural context is deemed to be important in understanding fundamental consequences of lady councilor's political participation at local governance level. Pakistan is struggling to endorse attention to lady councilor's political rights on equality basis (Matloob, 2021). In the legal framework order of 2002, General Parvaiz Musharaf declared a 33 percent reserved quota for lady councilor's seats (Llahi, 2023). The interest of lady councilors in

political participation gradually increased in different political tiers (Ilahi, 2023). An increase in reserved seats for lady councilors aimed to bring more lady councilors in governance to give space to lady councilor’s voice for their problems (Bhattacharya, 2014). However, the condition of lady councilor’s political participation was not up

to the mark, except KPK, in the general election of 2008 and onward (Ur-Rehman, 2023). In addition to quota for reserved seats, lady councilors are weighed down politically, economically, psychologically, and physically in political decision-making process compared to those of males (Khan, Shah, and Ullah, 2019).

Figure No. 01 Lady Councilor’s Political Participation Circle¹



- i. The main objective is;
 To determine social and political challenges for lady councilors political participation in local level of governance in South Punjab.

2.4 Data Analysis Method

Through Simple frequency distribution analysis, results evaluated.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Universe of the Study

The study conducted in Multan District and lady councilors of Multan District targeted for evaluating results of challenges which lady councilors faced in participating in politics.

2.2 Sample Frame

Simple Random Sampling used to target the selected sample size. Simple random table used to acquire sample size. Because the data list of lady councilors provided by election commission of Pakistan.

2.3 Research Tool

Structured questionnaire with Likert scale format tool formulated to collect the data from respondents.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Current Political Features

The current political characteristics are comprised of the distribution of party affiliation, distribution of casting vote in the last election, distribution of choice of casting vote, distribution of contesting for a local body’s election, distribution of family background, distribution of previous occupation, distribution of previous experience, distribution of time spent on work as a counselor, and distribution of population size area a respondent served.

In the table 1, Indicators of lady councilor’s political engagements are interpreted as among the total sample size (415) from Multan Division, 346 (83.4%) of lady councilors had a political party affiliation while 64 (16.6%) out of 415 had no political affiliation. From 346 party affiliated

¹ Researcher’s self-created Frame

respondents, 68 (16.4%) respondents affiliated with PTI, 79 (19%) respondents affiliated with League, 53 respondents affiliated with Non-League and 86 (20.7%) respondents affiliated with other minor parties.

Out of the total sample size, 389 (93.7%) respondents cast votes in the last election, while 26 (6.3%) respondents didn't cast their votes in the last election. Therefore, 248(59.8%) respondents cast votes for local bodies, 103(24.8%) cast their votes for the general election of the national assembly, and 64 (15.4%) cast their votes for the general election of the provisional assembly. The majority (172 (41.14%) of respondents voted for their husband's choice in the last elections, while 98 voted for their father's choice, 63 voted for their brother's choice, 47 voted for their son's choice, and 35 voted for others (uncle, cousins, friends). Before being elected as lady councilor, 249 (60.0%) respondents were from the working class, while 166 (40.0%) respondents were housewives. 166 (40.0%) respondents had no political experience, while 139 (33.5%) respondents had performed their duties as a social worker, 68 (16.4%) respondents had contributed their services as a volunteer in politics, and 42 (10.1%) respondents had already performed their duties as a lady councilor.

Moreover, the individual behavior of joining and sustaining their political role in local governance depend upon their political experience and their volunteer role in social welfare (Samo, 2019). Majority 163 out of 415 respondents spent 11 to 15 hours per week performing their duties in their councils, while 115 respondents spent 6 to 10 hours, 79 respondents spent less than or equal to 5 hours, and 58 respondents spent more than 15 hours on their duties. 234 (56.4) respondents out of 415 sample size occasionally attended meetings; 72 (17.3%) respondents didn't attend any meetings;

PPP, 129 (31.1%) respondents affiliated with Q

109(26.3%) respondents attended meetings on a regular basis. 199 (48%) respondents had opinions that 11 to 15 committees were working in their councils under the supervision of the Local Governance of Multan Division, while 38 respondents didn't even know about any committees. The exceeding ratio of 212 respondents held less than or equal to 5 meetings per year, while 21 respondents held more than 15 meetings per year.

A total of 241 respondents attended fewer than or equal to 5 meetings per year, while 17 attended more than 15 meetings per year. Meanwhile, 212 respondents had an opinion of conducting workshop /training /seminars on lady councilor's rights in their respondent's council less than or equal to 5 meetings annually, while 11 respondents conducted more than 15 meetings annually. 228 (54.9%) were members of committees working under the supervision of the Local Governance of Multan Division, while 228 respondents had no membership in any committee. Similarly, 29.6 % of the respondents were members of the Housing Committee, 28.9% were members of the Mislah-Anjuman committee, 16.6% were members of the Good Governance Committee, and 7.5%, 5.8%, 5.3%, 3.4%, and 2.9% were members of the town planning committee, WASA/DA/Waste Material Committee, human rights, public account committee, and others respectively. Therefore the results of current study in which interest of Lady councilor's for conducting, attending, availing membership of political based committees, time spending in performing their political duties in local governance and preference of joining politics were simultaneous with study conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Shah, 2015), Baluchistan (Parvez, 2011) and Interior Sindh (Samo, 2019) of Pakistan.

Table 1
Frequency Analysis regarding Current Political Characteristics

Lady Councilor's Political Engagements				
Party Affiliation				
Yes	346	83.4%	83.4	83.4
No	64	16.6%	16.6	100.0
Political Party Name				
PTI	68	16.4%	16.4	16.4
PPP	79	19.0%	19.0	35.4
League Q	129	31.1%	31.1	66.5
League N	53	12.8%	12.8	79.3
Others	86	20.7%	20.7	100.0
Respondent Casted Vote In last Election				
Yes	389	93.7%	93.7	93.7
No	26	6.3%	6.3	100.0
Nature of election in which respondent casted vote				
For general election of national assembly	103	24.8%	24.8	24.8
For general election of provisional assembly	64	15.4%	15.4	40.2
For Local bodies	248	59.8%	59.8	100.0
Respondent's choice in vote casting				
Father's choice	98	23.6%	23.6	23.6
Brother's choice	63	15.2%	15.2	38.8
Husband' choice	172	41.4%	41.4	80.2
Son's choice	47	11.3%	11.3	91.6
Others	35	8.4%	8.4	100.0
Respondent Contest Election as a candidate				
Yes	159	38.3%	38.3	38.3
No	256	61.7%	61.7	100.0
Name of Election Respondent contest				
General Election of National Assembly	187	45.1%	45.1	45.1
General Election of Provisional Assembly	72	17.3%	17.3	62.4
Local Bodies Election	156	37.6%	37.6	100.0
Previous Occupation				
House wife	166	40.0%	40.0	40.0
Working class	249	60.0%	60.0	100.0
Previous Experience				
Councilor	42	10.1%	10.1	10.1
Political worker	68	16.4%	16.4	26.5
Social worker	139	33.5%	33.5	60.0
No experience	166	40.0%	40.0	100.0
10. Average No. of Hour per week spend in local governance's duties and responsibilities				
Less than and an equal to 5 hours	79	19.0%	19.0	19.0
6 hours - 10 hours	115	27.7%	27.7	46.7
11 hours - 15 hours	163	39.3%	39.3	86.0
More than 15 hours	58	14.0%	14.0	100.0
No. of Attendance in Council Meeting				
Regularly	109	26.3%	26.3	26.3
Occasionally	234	56.4%	56.4	82.7
Not at all	72	17.3%	17.3	100.0
No. of Committees working in Your Council				

Less than and equal to 5	20	4.8%	4.8	4.8
6 to 10	55	13.3%	13.3	18.1
11 to 15	199	48.0%	48.0	66.0
More than 15	103	84.8%	84.8	90.8
Don't know	38	9.2%	9.2	100.0
No. of meetings conducted Annually in your council				
Less than and equal to 5	212	51.1%	51.1	51.1
6 to 10	84	20.2%	20.2	71.3
11 to 15	98	23.6%	23.6	94.9
More than 15	21	5.1%	5.1	100.0
No. of meetings you attended Annually				
Less than and equal to 5	241	58.1%	58.1	58.1
6 to 10	98	23.6%	23.6	81.7
11 to 15	59	14.2%	14.2	95.9
More than 15	17	4.1%	4.1	100.0
No. of workshop/training/seminars conducted on lady councilors rights in respondent's council				
Less than and equal to 5	105	25.3%	25.3	25.3
6 to 10	212	51.1%	51.1	76.4
11 to 15	87	21.0%	21.0	97.3
More than 15	11	2.7%	2.7	100.0
Membership of any council committee				
Yes	187	45.1%	45.1	45.1
No	228	54.9%	54.9	100.0
No. of committees respondent's membership				
Less than and equal to 5	114	27.5%	27.5	27.5
6 to 10	53	12.8%	12.8	40.2
11 to 15	127	30.6%	30.6	70.8
More than 15	121	29.2%	29.2	100.0
Name of committees respondent membership				
Housing committee	123	29.6%	29.6	29.6
Town planning committee	31	7.5%	7.5	37.1
WASA/DA/Waste material committee	24	5.8%	5.8	42.9
Human rights	22	5.3%	5.3	48.2
Public account committee	14	3.4%	3.4	51.6
Misaleh-anjuman committee	120	28.9%	28.9	80.5
Good governance committee	69	16.6%	16.6	97.1
Others	12	2.9%	2.9	100.0

3.2 Factors Effecting the Lady Councilor's Political Activities in Local Bodies

Socio-cultural factors, economic factors, political factors, challengeable factors, opportunity-providing factors, achievement-leading factors, and resources-providing factors which influence the lady councilor's performance in politics at local body level in Multan Division. The details of the factors with their frequency, percentage, cumulative percentage, and valid

percentage are as follows:

In the table 2, Socio-cultural factors which created hurdles at the time of lady councilors' joining in local bodies and during their participation in politics are as follows: of the total lady councilors (415), 67.0% agreed that their participation in politics is considered a socially undesirable act. Among the total sample size, 39.5% agreed that their political participation is a threat to traditions (Ghairat (Valor)/Panchait

(Informal Power Structure). These results matched with the study conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Shah, 2015) in which Lady councilor's political participation is considered as an undesirable act. Lady councilors are considered as element of man's prestige and dignity. Veil is used as compulsory in a dress pattern of female and considered as an important religious formal pattern to be followed by lady councilors.

Most of the participants replied that their social mobility creates a hurdle for lady councilors in performing their political activities. A majority of respondents (40.7%) agreed that a lack of moral support from family discourages lady councilors from entering politics. In terms of total sample size, most of the respondents' opinions are not considered more valuable than a man's. 34.2% out of 415 lady councilors' family lives are affected by their political role in local bodies. 34% out of 415 strongly agreed that diversities in traditions and cultures promote male dominancy in politics. 123 respondents strongly agreed on the misunderstanding and perception of leadership among lady councilors, which discourages lady councilors from standing up for their rights among men.

Majority 41.7% out of 415 respondents agreed that due to the patriarchal social system, lady councilors do not have a free choice to take part in politics. 48% out of 100 % (415) agreed that societal settings affect the decision-power of lady councilors in the political arena. A majority of respondents (158, 38.1%) agreed that child nurture (rearing) binds lady councilors to participate in the local bodies. 36.4% of lady councilors are not able to manage household tasks and political engagement. 191 (46%) respondents agreed that the Baradari System restricts lady councilor's participation in politics. 45.1% of lady councilors neither agree nor disagree that the care of senior/elder/sick family members fends off lady councilors from participating in political activities.

The majority of respondents 217 (52.3%) strongly disagree that lady councilors are bound to participate in family functions for the stability of family relations. 169 (40.7%) respondents from 415 agreed that participation in informal and formal jobs precludes lady councilors from taking part in politics. 141 (34%) respondents out of 415 agreed that Veil purdah restricts lady councilors from playing a part in their local council's activities. 178 (42.9%) respondents agreed that lady councilors don't get suitable matches for marriage due to their political participation. 148 (35.7%) respondents agreed that the role of proliferation (reproduction-biological factor) obstructs lady councilor's participation in politics. 164 (39.5%) neither agree nor disagree that lady councilors have a lack of culturally permissible equal opportunity in election campaigns and activities. 206 (49.6%) respondents agree or disagree that political engagement creates hurdles in maintaining relationships with close relatives.

The current findings correlate with studies conducted in Interior Sindh, Province of Pakistan (Samo, 2019) in which role of lady councilors is limited in domestic work and for role of proliferation. People thought that more socialized lady councilors are not suitable for marriage especially who perform their duties in the politics. The concept of more empowered lady councilors is not acceptable in that region too. The patriarchal system is rooted in the South Punjab family system (Ahmed, 2013). In the process of nourishing children's socialization, they experience different behaviors to treat male or female roles in a society. (Bari, 2005). Different social mechanisms for the development of gender roles mean lady councilors and men are treated differently in different social situations (Huges, 2007). Men and lady councilors are stigmatized with different social roles, with men being associated with income-generating roles and lady councilors with housework (BARI, 2005, 2005).

Table 3
Frequency Analysis of Socio-Cultural Factors influence lady councilors Political Participation

1. Lady councilors political participation considered as a Socially undesirable act				
Strongly Agree	44	10.6%	10.6	10.6
Agree	278	67.0%	67.0	77.6
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	21	5.1%	5.1	82.7
Disagree	21	5.1%	5.1	82.7
Strongly disagree	51	12.3%	12.3	100.0
Lady councilor's participation is a threat to traditions (Ghairat (valor)/Pachait (informal power structure)).				
Strongly Agree	79	19.0%	19.0	19.0
Agree	164	39.5%	39.5	58.6
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	38	9.2%	9.2	67.7
Disagree	73	17.6%	17.6	85.3
Strongly disagree	61	14.7%	14.7	100.0
3. Social mobility creates hurdle for lady councilors in political activities.				
Strongly Agree	93	22.4%	22.4	22.4
Agree	108	26.0%	26.0	48.4
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	171	41.2%	41.2	89.6
Disagree	32	7.7%	7.7	97.3
Strongly disagree	11	2.7%	2.7	100.0
4. Lack of Family's moral support demoralizes lady councilors to become the part of governance				
Strongly Agree	132	31.8%	31.8	31.8
Agree	196	40.7%	40.7	72.5
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	88	21.2%	21.2	93.7
Disagree	21	5.1%	5.1	98.8
Strongly disagree	5	1.2%	1.2	100.0
5. Lady councilor's opinion in important household matter is not considered more valuable than man's opinion				
Strongly Agree	96	23.1%	23.1	23.1
Agree	187	45.1%	45.1	68.2
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	63	15.2%	15.2	83.4
Disagree	44	10.6%	10.6	94.0
Strongly disagree	25	6.0%	6.0	100.0
6. Lady councilor's responsibility as a councilor effects family life				
Strongly Agree	119	28.7%	28.7	28.7
Agree	142	34.2%	34.2	62.9
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	73	17.6%	17.6	80.5
Disagree	66	15.9%	15.9	96.4
Strongly disagree	15	3.6%	3.6	100.0
7. Diversities in traditions and cultures promote male dominancy in politics				
Strongly Agree	141	34.0%	34.0	34.0
Agree	105	25.3%	25.3	59.3
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	79	19.0%	19.0	78.3
Disagree	68	16.4%	16.4	94.7
Strongly disagree	22	5.3%	5.3	100.0
Miss conception and miss perception of leadership about lady councilors among males discourage lady councilors to take stand for their rights				
Strongly Agree	102	24.6%	24.6	24.6

Agree	123	29.6%	29.6	54.2
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	89	21.4%	21.4	75.7
Disagree	60	14.5%	14.5	90.1
Strongly disagree	41	9.9%	9.9	100.0
9. Due to Patriarchal social system, lady councilors have not free choice to take part in politics				
Strongly Agree	101	24.3%	24.3	24.3
Agree	173	41.7%	41.7	66.0
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	67	16.1%	16.1	82.2
Disagree	45	10.8%	10.8	93.0
Strongly disagree	29	7.0%	7.0	100.0
10. Societal settings effect decision power of lady councilors in political arena				
Strongly Agree	199	48.0%	48.0	48.0
Agree	96	23.1%	23.1	71.1
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	71	17.1%	17.1	88.2
Disagree	34	8.2%	8.2	96.4
Strongly disagree	15	3.6%	3.6	100.0
11. Child nurture (rearing) bounds lady councilors to participate in the local bodies.				
Strongly Agree	103	24.8%	24.8	24.8
Agree	158	38.1%	38.1	62.9
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	85	20.5%	20.5	83.4
Disagree	39	9.4%	9.4	92.8
Strongly disagree	30	7.2%	7.2	100.0
12. Lady councilors are unable to manage household tasks and political engagement				
Strongly Agree	109	26.3%	26.3	26.3
Agree	151	36.4%	36.4	62.7
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	75	18.1%	18.1	80.7
Disagree	58	14.0%	14.0	94.7
Strongly disagree	22	5.3%	5.3	100.0
13. Baradari System restricts lady councilors to participate in politics				
Strongly Agree	104	25.1%	25.1	25.1
Agree	191	46.0%	46.0	71.1
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	58	14.0%	14.0	85.1
Disagree	39	9.4%	9.4	94.5
Strongly disagree	23	5.5%	5.5	100.0
For the care of senior/elder/sick family members, lady councilors fend off to participate in political activities				
Strongly Agree	75	18.1%	18.1	18.1
Agree	96	23.1%	23.1	41.2
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	187	45.1%	45.1	86.3
Disagree	34	8.2%	8.2	94.5
Strongly disagree	23	5.1%	5.1	100.0
15. Lady councilors are bound to participate in family functions for stability of family relations				
Strongly Agree	26	6.3%	6.3	6.3
Agree	21	5.1%	5.1	11.3
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	53	12.8%	12.8	24.1
Disagree	98	23.6%	23.6	47.7
Strongly disagree	217	52.3%	52.3	100.0
16. Participation in informal and formal job(agricultural activities, sewing, stitching and entrepreneurship) precludes lady councilors to take part in politics				
Strongly Agree	108	26.0%	26.0	26.0

Agree	169	40.7%	40.7	66.7
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	76	18.3%	18.3	85.1
Disagree	45	10.8%	10.8	95.9
Strongly disagree	17	4.1%	4.1	100.0
17. Veil purdah restricts lady councilors to play a part in local council's activities				
Strongly Agree	105	25.3%	25.3	25.3
Agree	141	34.0%	34.0	59.3
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	79	19.0%	19.0	78.3
Disagree	66	15.9%	15.9	94.2
Strongly disagree	24	5.8%	5.8	100.0
18. Lady councilors don't get suitable match for marriage due to their political participation				
Strongly Agree	85	20.5%	20.5	20.5
Agree	178	42.9%	42.9	63.4
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	62	14.9%	14.9	78.3
Disagree	55	13.3%	13.3	91.6
Strongly disagree	35	8.4%	8.4	100.0
Role of proliferation (reproduction-biological factor) obstructs for lady councilors to participate in politics				
Strongly Agree	95	22.9%	22.9	22.9
Agree	148	35.7%	35.7	58.6
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	71	17.1%	17.1	75.7
Disagree	66	15.9%	15.9	91.6
Strongly disagree	35	8.4%	8.4	100.0
19. Lady councilors have lack of culturally permissible equal opportunity in election campaigns and activities				
Strongly Agree	63	15.2%	15.2	15.2
Agree	91	21.9%	21.9	37.1
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	164	39.5%	39.5	76.6
Disagree	57	13.7%	13.7	90.4
Strongly disagree	40	9.6%	9.6	100.0
21. Political engagements create hurdles in maintaining relationship with close relatives				
Strongly Agree	64	15.4%	15.4	15.4
Agree	77	18.6%	18.6	34.0
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	206	49.6%	49.6	83.6
Disagree	45	10.8%	10.8	94.5
Strongly disagree	23	5.5%	5.5	100.0

In the table 3, Economic factors influence Lady Councilors' financial assets evaluated as 192 (46.3%) respondents out of 415 agreed that lady councilors don't get their inherited property easily from their families. The majority of respondents (197 (47.5%)) out of the total sample size admitted that lady councilors have less skill at investing their assets' profit with men. Most of the lady councilors (206, 49.6%) agreed that lady councilor's opinions are not valuable in budgetary sessions in local bodies. Most respondents (189, 45.5%) agreed that lady councilors were discouraged from participating

in the council's meeting about funds and their distribution. 134 (32.3%) respondents showed their neutral response (neither agree nor disagree) about the reason behind the effect of lack of property ownership on lady councilor's political participation. A majority of respondents (167, or 40.2%) out of 415 strongly agreed that lady councilors are unable to bear the cost of participation in politics.

Out of 415, a majority of 183 (44.1%) agreed that male members don't support female councilors financially. Most of the respondents (178, 42.9%) agreed that lady councilors are

generally less skilled at generating income resources to sustain their political activities. 138 respondents, or 38% of the total sample size, agreed that lady councilor's families don't encourage them in their entrepreneurial activities. A majority of 162 (39.6%) respondents agreed that lady councilors are unable to support themselves financially in the election process. Most of the respondents (220, 53.0%) agreed that specific budget is not allocated for lady councilor's development projects. Out of 415 respondents, 156 (37.6%) strongly agreed that lady councilors are discouraged from participating in budget allocation planning or community welfare.

The findings matched with studies conducted by Rubab (2020) in Interior Sindh, Pakistan. She indicated that social gaps need to be filled gradually because people of Sindh especially male community have less temper for bearing lady councilor's role in politics. Therefore, role of lady councilors is analyzed by the ideological perspective of the patriarchal social system in Pakistan (Ahmad, 2013). Lady councilors are dependent on men in family and public life. Their dependency on men is never denied, even in leadership and family decisions (Naz, 2012). In Pakistan, it is a very difficult task for lady councilors to gain access to financial resources, even their property ownership. Boundaries created by access to economic resources are major hurdles to participating in election campaigns and the process. Without financial stability, gender equality in the political process is not possible (Khan, 2019). Financial support is the gateway linking lady councilor's political participation and the decision-making process (Umar, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there is a need to encourage women to participate in political activities and supportive social behavior of family members as well as male council fellows towards them for taking decisions not only for themselves as lady councilors but for lay women's right promotion too. Furthermore, the study discovered that the male decision power is actually dependent on the political structural setting and gender-based social stratification

performing role. Women's active political participation is rarely acceptable in a society. They face more problems in backward areas, in which the patriarchal social system is stronger than in developed areas of a society.

The main unit of society, 'family' in the peer group, played a very important role in weakening women's position in politics at local government level. The support of a peer group is actually substantial for women's social mobility in performing their political duties. Women's social, economic, and political dependence on male family members, as well as male council members, discourages them from participating in political activities.

Active political participation is associated with women's social, political, and economic empowerment. The role of local political dynamics in women's political participation and women's empowerment is very extensive because social, political, and economic determinants are associated with the challenges and issues to enhancing the role of lady councilors for women's empowerment, minimizing the risks of influence of gendered political structures (gender gap) and improving their role in local governance. Socio-cultural factors have a more significant association with socio-cultural, political, education, and personal empowerment as achievements than political factors and economic factors. Lady councilors' issues and challenges are inextricably linked to their political participation and political empowerment. Meanwhile, socio-cultural factors have a significantly greater association with socio-cultural, political, education, and personal empowerment than political and economic factors.

5. SUGGESTIONS

- The relationship of lady councilors and community lay lady councilors should also be studied in a qualitative research design based study in which not only the challenges and issues of lady councilors but the lay lady councilor's problems would also be highlighted and evaluated, as well as the problems of connectivity between empowered and non-empowered lady councilors.

- The peer group of lady councilors, especially family members and male members in union councils, oppressed them to not take active participation in politics. There is a need to

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