

**EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN DURING REGIMES OF  
GENERAL PERVAIZ MUSHARAF AND PPP, 1999 TO 2013;**

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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## **INTRODUCTION:**

Rights are legal guarantees protecting individuals and groups against actions and omissions that interfere with fundamental freedom, entitlements and human dignity<sup>1</sup>. The principle of equality of women is not only recognized by UN but also by the Constitution 1973 of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In Pakistan women's feel deprived in all fields whether socially, economically or politically. The work for empowerment of women was done by Gen Pervez Musharraf when he made it compulsory for elections to fill up the seats on proportional basis, especially for women. However female population was still of this point of view that their goal for attaining real rights and full empowerment was not received. During 5 years rule of Muslim League Q women had shown sense of responsibility to get more for themselves. Every regime has its own policy regarding women's rights so legislation regarding it varies from one regime to another.

It is natural that if regime is liberal in its policies it will go for liberalism as well as women's participation in every walk of life. Hence PML Q under auspices of Gen Pervez Musharraf tried to make legislation on women rights to give support to its policy to make all citizens enlightened and allowed a number of National and International NGOs to work for prosperity, betterment and empowerment of Women in Pakistan..The NGOs done a lot for participation of women in every walk of life which was realized and recognized to great extent. However there is still need of the steps to be taken to ensure human rights.

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<sup>1</sup> Fundamental rights are universally accepted and categorized into different forms. It is primary duty of state to secure and safe guard the fundamental rights.

After General election in PML Q became ruling party which was being supervised and supervised by then President Gen Pervez Musharraf. As per manifesto of the party protection of rights and their empowerment along with restoration of their honor and prestige was part and parcel of party's policy. So many steps were taken and legislation was made for enhancement of rights of women in Pakistan which were appreciated not only at National but also at International level.

In 2008 PPPP made govt with coalition of some parties. The work for legislation was also done in this regime as well. In Dec 2011 three important bills were passed by the Senate which provided a sigh of relief for all those who were trying to play role for positive legislation for women. Prevention of anti women practices 2011, Bill, Acid control and Acid crime prevention 2011 and Women Distress and Detention Fund (Amendment) Bill were passed by the Senate.

Prior to it law on honour killing in 2004 & 2006 was a key step for rights of women by PML Q.

An amendment in Hudood Ordinance in 2009 was also sound footing for rights of women.

After overthrow of Nawaz Sharif govt ,Gen Musharraf took over control and there was no Parliament between 1999 and 2002. 12<sup>th</sup> National assembly came into existence in 2002. In 2002 an amendment in family courts Act was made giving right of KHULA to women within specified period.

During 1999-2002 a major step was enhancement of reserved seats for women in National and Provincial assemblies. 17 percent seats were reserved for women while 33percent were reserved for women in local governments.

The protection and empowerment Bill 2003, Bill on honour killing 2004 were moved. Beside it many bills were introduced out of which some were lapsed. The members of assembly, NGOS, electronic

and print media took part in discussion session which enabled the general women to know about rights and legislation made for their rights<sup>2</sup>.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Both the parties claim that they did a lot for protection and empowerment of women .The international as well as National NGOS are still not satisfied with empowerment level of women in Pakistan. The researcher will try to cover the claims and objections from both sides. The claims will be analyzed keeping in view the manifesto of both the parties regarding women empowerment level. The study will be an attempt to clarify all points in academic way; as there is no such study available in existing literature.

## **WORK ALREADY DONE ON SIMILAR TOPIC:**

An article is published “women being the most neglected agent of the society” in the journal “Pakistani journal of life and social sciences”<sup>3</sup> The writer has elaborated seven roles of women in society but it’s too short to highlight all issues regarding women rights in Pakistan. Another important book “women in Islam” by Muhammad Mazherudin Siddique.<sup>4</sup>This has elaborated the status and respect given to women in Islam.Moreover it has been explained that in Islam has given due respect which no other religion can give .

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<sup>2</sup> Naeem Mirza, (2011). “Seven pro-women laws in seven years”, *Aurat publication and information service foundation*. 2-5

<sup>3</sup> R.K. Mussawar Shah, (2006). “Wpmen being the most neglected agent of the societies”, *Pakistan Journal of life and social sciences*. 81-85.

<sup>4</sup> M.S. Mohammad, (1952). *Women in Islam*, Lahore: Sedraj Munir. 39-45.

The author is of this point of view that due to physical makeup Islam has imposed different restrictions on both male and female. The Aurat Foundation presented a report with the title of “seven pro women laws in seven years”<sup>5</sup>. They explained some of discriminatory effect on women. Moreover it was elaborated that due to efforts for rights of women positive results has been achieved. The human rights organization covered overall situation of human rights in Pakistan by presenting their report in 2008<sup>6</sup>. In this report much discrimination has been discussed covering domestic violence, harassment and irresponsible act from Police. Moreover in this report security threats are discussed which NGOS were facing due to their working for women rights in Pakistan. The Human rights Commission reported that NGOs had militant threats. The Government institutions had taken necessary actions on this report which had its influence and attracted government machinery. However report was unsatisfactory regarding all human rights especially women rights in Pakistan. A special report by Anita M. Wiess on the topic “ Moving forward with legal empowerment of women in Pakistan” also a valuable contribution to the topic. On national as well as international level women empowerment has been explained with different aspects by different studies like Malhotra etal,Chudhry,Chaudhry and nosheen etc.a study published in Pakistan journal of Social sciences on the topic “Women empowerment with special reference to Islamic view point: An Empirical Study” is a valuable contribution related to topic of researcher. The author has explained in detail the Islamic concept regarding women empowerment. in this study author has given references from saying of holy prophet.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> US Department of state, (2009). “2008 Human rights report: Pakistan”, *United state publication*.

**SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:**

The scope of present study is in time frame from 1999 to 2013. In 2002 PML Q which was newly introduced party won the elections and with alliance of other parties made its government in centre as well as in Punjab province. During the Gen Pervez Musharraf rule liberalism was promoted at all levels. The steps regarding empowerment of women were taken so to make sure their representation in every walk of life. During PMLQ regime so many resolutions in favor of women rights were passed as well resolutions were also passed during the regime of PPPP from 2008 to 2013. Both claim that they have made maximum efforts for legislation for rights and empowerment of women in Pakistan. The present study will enlighten different aspects of approaches regarding women empowerment and legislation. The researcher will analyze that how much expectations were fulfilled by the two regimes regarding women empowerment during 1999 to 2013. The researcher will also look in to the hurdles faced to both governments. Moreover the researcher will measure the success and failure ratio of both the governments regarding women empowerment.

**OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:**

1. To explore the status of rights and empowerment of women in Pakistan.
2. To explain the legislation made for rights of women during PMLQ rule as well as steps taken by Gen Pervez Musharraf to empower the women from 1999 to 2002 when there was no parliament in the country.
3. To elaborate the legislation made and the steps taken for women empowerment by PPP government from 2008 to 2013.
4. To compare the PMLQ ,Gen Musharaf and PPP stances regarding women rights.
5. To analyze the point of view of members of National Assembly and NGOS regarding legislation made and steps taken for women empowerment during 2002 to 2013.
6. To critically analyze the reasons behind the poor condition of women rights in Pakistan.



**RESEARCH QUESTIONS:**

1. Whether women feel satisfaction on efforts to give rights to them and What is the current situation of women empowerment in Pakistan?
2. What was legislation made and steps taken for women empowerment by PMLQ and Gen Pervez Musharraf?
3. What steps were taken by PPP regime for empowerment of women from 2008 to 2013.
4. What was impact of legislation for women empowerment on society?
5. What was response of women rights organizations and members of National Assembly regarding legislation for women rights made during PML Q and PPP regimes according to their manifesto and slogans raised for women rights?
6. Comparison of legislation made and steps taken by PMLQ and PPP for women rights in their respective periods from ideological background of both parties.

**THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK:**

All legislation for the two governments for women empowerment will be consulted. Not only Acts passed but also resolutions moved by parliamentarians will be assessed in this research. News papers and articles published in Journals will also be assessed. The reports of NGOS working for women rights in Pakistan will also be included.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

The literature regarding legislation is available in the Parliament. The main focus of researcher will about legislation about women rights and steps taken for empowerment during 1999 to 2013. Honour killing, domestic violence and discrimination by male members are too common in Pakistan. These are the reasons that women in Pakistan always feel deprived of their rights. To give rights to depressed women of Pakistan legislation was made by PMLQ as well as steps were taken by PPP for the same purpose. The researcher will look into all work done by both regimes to empower women.

PMLQ regime introduced Criminal Law Amendment Act-1 of 2005 in which various sections of Pakistan Penal Code 1860 were amended. The protection was provided to women who were victims of honor killing. Amendment was made in Section 299,305,302,310,311&324. then Criminal Law amendment (protection of women) Act 2006 was introduced by the same regime. Some new sections were added in PPC. This further provided relief to all women who were struggling for women rights.

PPP government introduced Criminal Amendment Act 2011 which added a new chapter titled offences against women. Moreover National Commission on the status of women Act 2012 provided a proper forum to ensure that issues faced to women may be addressed by the systematic manner.

A research published by Civil Service Academy Lahore on the topic of “Gender equality and women empowerment in Pakistan” has provided basic information. Although it covers lot of research area of the researcher but it lacks in proper analysis and comparison<sup>7</sup>.

Rashida Patel has discussed the women empowerment as well as political changes which were introduced to improve the condition of women in Pakistan. That book provides analysis of misinterpretation of the principles of Islam and discussed the amended laws and their effect on women lives, including Criminal Procedure Code 1898, the Pakistan Penal Code 1860, and introduction of death penalty for gang rape.

The UNDP report has analyzed the women status in Pakistan regarding 2002 elections. In this report more turnout of female was appreciated and pointed out the more influence of female in political parties. Besides this, report condemns the less representation from 33% which was demanded by female group.

The World Bank report with the title “violence against women and impediments in access to justice” has elaborated that due to dominance of males in society proper rights are not given to women, even F.I.R of domestic violence is not registered by Police in Pakistan.

In 2006 some amendments were made in Huddood<sup>8</sup> Laws which provided some sort of relief to women in Pakistan. Pakistan has also signed Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. The last periodic regarding it was submitted in 2011. The report contains about obligation to eliminate the discrimination, implementation of Convention through all

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<sup>7</sup> Dharon Bhawani, “*Gender equality and women empowerment in Pakistan*”, (thesis, Civil Service Academy Lahore, 2013), 40

<sup>8</sup> Huddood Laws were enacted in 1979

available resources, the status of women in education, employment and health. The status of rural women and Islamic ideology is discussed<sup>9</sup>.

Hina Jilani a women rights supporter and lawyer has shown dissatisfaction with proceeding of legislation regarding women empowerment. She expressed that there is insecurity for women in Pakistan and reported sexual cases all over Pakistan<sup>10</sup>. the National Commission on the status of women in its report “gender review of political framework for women political participation” has explains political participation of women, reservation of seats ,procedure of polling and vote count to determine whether the policies were gender sensitive and role of women in political parties<sup>11</sup>. Moreover it was declared that while allocating key positions all political parties ignored their women workers. The report ends with recommendations that a lot to be done for giving rights to women in Pakistan.Wusatullah Khan is a popular Journalist who has written many columns in Newspapers regarding women rights in Pakistan. According to his point of view whenever any bill comes in the Parliament regarding Women rights the first attack comes from Male members of Parliament and they leave no stone unturned in creating hurdles in the Way of Women empowerment in Pakistan. He has quoted many examples in favor of his assumption.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> CEDAW, (2011). “Fourth periodic reports of state parties”, *United Nation Publication*.

<sup>10</sup> Hina Jilani, Pakistani Human rights lawyer, *Interviewed by International crises group*, Islamabad, 15 April 2015.

<sup>11</sup> M.R. Naz, “Gender review of gender political framework for women political participation”, Islamabad: *National commission on the status of women*.

<sup>12</sup> Wusatulah khan”Dil ki Baat,”*daily express*,May10,2016.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

Descriptive, analytical and critical approach will be applied in this study. Primary as well as Secondary sources will be used. More importance will be given to primary sources .Most important source of information will be acts, resolutions passed by the Parliament during 2002 to 2013.The steps taken by both the regimes will be part of research.

Moreover response of Parliamentarians will also be important source of information for the research. All related books, thesis, Newspapers and periodicals of different societies and their review will be general format of research. To accomplish the study online sources will also be consulted.

A Systematic chronological sequence to all legislation as well as to primary and secondary sources will be given through Descriptive approach. the efforts made by both regimes will be elaborated. This would facilitate the researcher in developing a framework fabricated with complementary approaches to evaluate the nature of legislation made by PMLQ and PPP to do justification for comparison about women rights with reference to their manifesto. This framework will also highlight faulty areas of legislation regarding women rights.

**DELIMITATIONS:**

As the research has limited resources, the present study will be delimited to following areas. The researcher will look into the steps taken from Gen Pervez Musharaf for bringing women in main stream so to play their role in development of Pakistan. Under his auspices PMLQ had done a lot for

the same purpose and made legislation from 2002 to 2007. PPP regime started in 2008 and remained in power up to 2013 and claims that lots of efforts were done for the same purpose. So the researcher will focus on the women empowerment and the legislation made for this purpose during this period only.

## **CHAPTER BREAKDOWN:**

### **CHAPTER NO.1:**

In this chapter history as well as current position of women empowerment will be discussed in detail. Definition of empowerment of women will be elaborated. Keeping in view the historical background the current development will also be explained. It will also be explained that in which condition women felt deprived in the past.

### **CHAPTER NO.2:**

In this chapter vision of Gen Pervez Musharraf as well as steps taken by him to empower women in Pakistan will be discussed in detail. Moreover legislation made by the PMLQ regime will be looked into. All Acts and resolutions passed by the regime will be elaborated in detail.

**CHAPTER NO.3:**

In this chapter contribution of PPP will be elaborated along with legal cover given by that regime to Women to make them more empowered. All legislation will be looked into for this purpose.

**CHAPTER NO.4:**

The impact of legislation for women empowerment on society will be discussed here. It will be looked into that whether it had positive impact on society or else. The response of women on this legislation and will also be kept in view in this chapter.

**CHAPTER NO.5:**

The point of views of NGOs and members of Parliament will be noted on efforts and legislation made by both regimes regarding women rights in Pakistan. The manifesto of PMLQ and PPP regarding women rights will be looked into. It will be analyzed that whether both regimes fulfilled their commitments made in their manifestos or otherwise.

**CHAPTER NO.6:**

In this chapter comparison of efforts and legislation made for women empowerment will be presented in detail. The ideological background of both the PMLQ and PPP will also be elaborated. After comparison some recommendations will also be given regarding future of rights of women in Pakistan and their empowerment.

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