



Political and social empowerment of the women of District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan

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Abstract

The present research highlights the women's political participation and their empowerment in the District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan. The women's of Gilgit-Baltistan, especially of district Ghizer, are well-Enlightened or educated, comparatively less dependent on men in meeting their economic needs, own small scale business enterprises, say in household decision makings and support their families economically and emotionally, but their disengagement in the field of politics does questions the true sense of women empowerment in the area. in the political history of Gilgit-Baltistan, not even a single woman from the district Ghizer has got a chance to take part in the electoral process and serve the area and becoming the member of the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) through the direct contesting election process. Although, In the GBLA, there are only six (6) reserved seats for women, which are insufficient as compared to their population ratio. The theory of Social Capital, most applicable theory, stated that networking among women can enhance their political decision makings and their involvement in politics. The sample of the study was two hundred (200) female respondents belonged to the District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan. The data were collected through structured self-complexion closed-ended questionnaires. Clusters were pre-defined through the systematic sampling technique. Both descriptive (percentages and frequencies) and inferential (correlation, Chi-Square, and Regression) statistical data analysis techniques were applied through the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22.0. The findings of the study showed that direct political participation (contest elections) of women is very less or nil in the region. However, the majority of women are indirectly active in political activities. Moreover, women were active in election campaigns, party rallies, corner gatherings, and party meetings, etc. Furthermore, most of the respondents were agreed that they have a political association with the mainstream political parties of federal, do cast a vote for their favourite candidate and also consider politics as one of the viable career opportunities for them in the near future. There is no active political party in Gilgit-Baltistan level. All the political parties have belonged to the federal level. This showed that, politically, Gilgit-Baltistan is deprived and alienated from mainstream politics. So, that is why the direct political engagement of the women is not as much encouraging as in the other parts of the country. In addition, the inferential statistics, i.e. Chi-Square and linear Regression Test were applied, which showed that political participation empowered women in society. Hence it can be concluded that the more the women are politically engaged the much authority they have pertaining to female empowerment.

Keywords: Political Participation, Women Empowerment, Social Capital, Chi-Square, Regression Analysis, Gilgit-Baltistan, Ghizer

Introduction

The political milieu remains highly vulnerable in Gilgit-Baltistan, and its political dynamics are varied in nature than that of mainstream politics of Pakistan. The reason behind political depravedness is the undefined political status of Gilgit-Baltistan since 1947. After the partition of Pakistan and India called the sub-continent in 1947, the Kashmir issue was aroused between India and Pakistan, where the region of Gilgit-Baltistan was attached with the issue of Kashmir. The Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan were declared as a disputed region, according to the charter of the United Nations (UN)¹. The year 1973 witnessed a lot of changes in demography as well as politics in Pakistan during the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's era, who came up with

some democratic reforms for the region by abolishing the Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) permanently and imposed a new order to run the administration of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Gilgit-Baltistan, which was previously called Northern Areas, after the year 2010, through the Self-Governance Ordinance, as a result, the region was named Gilgit-Baltistan by the Government of Pakistan People's Party¹.

Moreover, the Gilgit-Baltistan, being a backward region, undefined political status, influenced by religious politics and male-dominated society, where women have isolated from the politics and political activities since 1947. So, that is the reason that the political participation of women is not worth having in Gilgit-Baltistan. Till to the present era, neither of a woman

became a member of the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) by the direct contested the election process. In history, only one woman has tried to contest the election process, but she has secured less than 5% of the total registered voters from her region. This shows the general or common refutational attitude of the masses and the classes of Gilgit-Baltistan in voting to the female fellow being. For several decades, the females in the Gilgit-Baltistan were trapped deprived and tried to have estranged them from political and social activities².

Furthermore, in Gilgit Baltistan, women are living in the dilemma of ancient customs and traditions, which barricade their political participation and involvement in social activities. In Gilgit-Baltistan women are considering second-class citizens, like many other societies across the world³. Moreover, the situation is more worsening in Gilgit-Baltistan regarding women's politics and civic engagements. Till to the Ex-President Mr Musharraf's era, women were far away from the political activities, but he encouraged female participation in politics through increasing their quota from 2% to 33% respectively in local council level⁴. He also brought some reforms in the sphere of women politics. During the Musharraf era, women reserved seat quota was enhanced from 2% to 20%. Women enjoy 33% participation at union and district level in the present times. But, in Gilgit-Baltistan women's representation is less than 33% in GBLA. In 2002, Mr Musharraf introduced the concept of reserve seats, which were only six (6) under the flag of technocrat ship for women in GBLA to maximize their political participation in mainstream politics⁵.

In addition, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) regime, in 2009 introduced some political reforms "the Self-Governance and Empowerment Ordinance 2009"⁶. This political and administrative type step-up granted the provincial type government of Gilgit-Baltistan, which increased women's involvement in politics and political activities. To further enhance women's political participation, the PPP's government has appointed a first-ever female Governor of Gilgit-Baltistan, Dr Shama Khalid, through the nomination system (without contesting election) on the reserved women's seat. Even, Dr Shama Khalid did not participate and contest the local elections of Gilgit-Baltistan.

Keep in mind the Article 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, all the countries have been directed to make sure some vivid and solid measures, which could disapprove of all the moves that could hinder women participation in politics. A proposal that welcomes and ensures the desired female inclusion of women in politics must be sketched by all Political parties. There was i. their right to vote and the eligibility in all elections and for all publicly elected bodies, ii. to take an active part in the making of government policies and play their superlative roles in public functions and finally, iii. to be the part and parcel of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and institutions related to the public and political domains⁷.

Similarly, Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan also concentrates on the principle of equality in politics and other social life and gives a guarantee of the equivalence of men in the eye of the law. There should be not any kind of discrimination in political parties, based on sex or gender. Moreover, Article 32 and 34 also ensured and guarantee the full participation of women in all domains of their life, i.e., politically, socially, and economically.

But, in Pakistan, there are experiences of extensive violence against social activists and women politicians. Ms Benazir Bhutto who got killed by unknown attackers in 2007 and women's rights activist and minister for Social Welfare Punjab, Ms Zille Huma was murdered, and Malala Yousafzai was targeted in 2012 owing to their political activities, focused on women's education, economic rights and awareness campaign about the women's right in Pakistan and Tribble regions, where still women are even not allowed to come out from the house. Due to such major constrain and hurdles, women's activities so far being apolitical and have fewer chances to take part in political and public life⁸. In Gilgit-Baltistan, only those women have access to politics and political activities, who have a family background in politics and administration.

After the political protest of Pakistan led by the Tehreek Insaf (PTI) in 2014, the women politics sees a high leap in the politics of Pakistan⁹. A report issued by the Counterpunch of American Political Magazine showed that 30% participation in the sit-in were females, particularly, young educated female. Similarly, a legion of women politicians was seen to have been participated in political activities and stand against the standing government's political corruption¹⁰.

In the general elections 2018, witnessed the increase of women's participation in politics both directly and indirectly¹¹. There were two main reasons; the first was the efforts of PTI encouraging female participation in the party and the second reason was the Election Act 2017. The Election Act 2017, focused on three measures i. less than 10% of women's turnover in any constituency is nullified ii. all political parties list at least 5% of women on their non-reserve quota at the provincial as well as at the national level and iii. it should be considered criminalized act to restrain women to take part in political activities, like casting of their vote, etc. Due to these factors, nearly 66% increased women's participation in election 2018, as compared to the elections 2013.

In 2018 elections, total registered nearly 106 million voters, out of the 59.2 million were males and 46 million were females in Pakistan. This also showed that, despite all the efforts, women's participation is less¹². A study conducted regarding women's political participation, which showed that 53% of general Pakistani opined that women lack required skills in collaborating their husband and father assumed their position. On the other hand, the political position is very important for female concerning their empowerment in the country¹¹.

Between 2013 and 2018, the role of female parliamentarian has been highly responsive in the law-making process. They have submitted¹² private bills in the National Assembly, which emphasized on the rule, human rights, democracy, and women's rights, and political developments¹². Women parliamentarians singly submitted 20 resolutions, out of which, 14 calls attention notices, 1383 questions, 22 motions under the rule 259, and raised 64 points of the order¹³.

Statement of the Problem: Women of District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan is highly educated (more than 90% literacy rate), owned business enterprises, empowered in household decision making, doing different jobs in government sectors, and development sectors. But their activities are so far being apolitical. So that is why from the very of history of Gilgit-Baltistan none of the women become the member of the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) through the direct contesting election process. On the Govt of Gilgit-Baltistan has allocated some six (6) seats for women, which are very less as compared to their population ratio and the national standard of 20% seats for women. Despite social empowerment and well education why women are aloof from political activities. What are the hurdles and barriers which abstain women to take part in the direct election process in Gilgit-Baltistan?

Objectives of the research: The research focused on the objectives stated below. i. To study the intensity of female participation in politics in Ghizer the land of martyrs. ii. To analyze the correlation between the political involvement of the females and their empowerment in Ghizer.

Review of Literature: Politics and political activities were man-oriented in western society for a long period. In Western societies, the majority of working women and those of feminist have rights to participate in political activities. Moreover, in western countries, the year between 1956 to 1960 and between 1968 and 1972, political participation was increased due to different women political and social movements. Moreover, from the year 1956 and 1972, the participation of men in political activities was increased by 22%, that of the female increased by only 7% respectively. In addition, the political participation trend was altered from the year 1970 to 1972 in western countries, where white color women's participation was 43% and professional women's participation was 8% respectively¹⁴.

Real democratic norms and values always signify the equal involvement of male and female in mainstream politics. Furthermore, women constituted almost half of the total population of the whole world¹⁵. Women are also active and contributing to socio-economic developmental and political activities. However, their involvement in a democracy is slightly less as they are active in other social activities. The larger number of women remains at home after marriage and only providing the primary level services to their family members and husband at home¹⁶.

In the past many decades, women were alienated from politics, because of their traditional socioeconomic and cultural status¹⁶. To overcome these hindrances, and stimulated women's contribution in politics, is through the introduction of gender quotas or the direct nomination system. It is regarded as an essential policy measure to increase women's access to the decision-making areas at the governmental level. The primary reason behind the nomination and quota system is to appoint women directly into politics, without contesting the election process. The quota and nomination systems are limit women's segregation in politics and civic activities. The quota system/nomination is applied as a temporary political measure to enrich the women's involvement in the political matters as well as their association in decision making bodies at the regional level and at the national level².

Moreover, democracies have traditionally better treat men than women and disregards women's political and civil rights¹⁷. As a political structure, which started from prehistoric Greece to the present era, it has constructed on the public-private dichotomy and has prevented women from political participation and social conscience rights. Similarly, few great and famous political thinkers, like Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, and John Lock have been against women's participation in the politics and the public dealings¹⁸.

The democratic system is still not developed and matured in developing countries, where women have been discouraged to participate in ordinary elections. A similar situation has existed in Pakistan, where women are discouraged to participate in politics, even to cast vote to their own choice candidates. The country needs to formulate such policies that enhance women's participation in politics¹⁹. Moreover, in Indonesia and Rwanda, where women are active in politics and political activities, however, they did not get any key and administrative positions²⁰. Women are unaware of the political guidance's and they needed support from their male counterparts. They were not able to face and deal with the male officials and public institutions and lack the self-confidence to take-over their public responsibility²¹. Most of these issues are confronted by working-class women. But the middle-class women have been given positions in politics due to support of their male family members who are already in politics²².

As mentioned, that females' participation and involvement in politics and the governmental bodies at the local level is certainly associated with their existing social position or status, which includes the nature of politics and the system of governance. Nevertheless, a few influential women have participated in government to some extent, but the women who belong to patriarchal family systems and got hectic domestic responsibilities, subordinate socioeconomic conditions, conservative social attitude, male-dominant politics, reveals women's negligible to participation in the local government and political activities. Additionally, their less participation in politics and government reinforces the women's comparatively meagre position in society⁹.

The western women enjoy more social and political rights and have maximum chances of participation in politics, as compared to the women in the South Asian countries²³. The active and empowered women in politics with some political knowledge and understanding will be able to play their due role in the decision-making process at the household level as well as at the governmental level. The role of many countries in developing policies pertaining to women's enough political participation through a quota system, nomination, and support women's political activities is very encouraging. Similarly, in India women had less political participation until 2000. But then the Indian government took some substantial steps to facilitate women by increasing their participation in the local government and politics through the 73rd amendment of the 1992 Act²⁴. The Indian government not only allocated one-third seats in their local bodies and assemblies for the women but also, in 2009, the Government of India (GoI) approved 50% reserved seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and many other states. The direct elected women members have established a new opportunity to participate in the decision-making process at the grassroots levels of state institutions²⁵.

Contrary to this, the Muslim majority countries are still lacking and missing women's due participation in the political and electoral process due to the strident religious influence and patriarchal family systems. They are still reluctant to see women gaining political empowerment and enrollment in local policymaking bodies. This strident religious politics should be replaced with democratic and rights-based politics, which push the equal-participatory democratic process irrespective of their gender, caste, creed, or colour²⁶. If democracy is 'government of the people, by the people, and for the people' then, women also must be given right to take part in the government affairs as well as in the politics and political activities. But, in the present status quo, democracy has a new meaning, "a government of the men, by the men, and for the men". The women in the area are deprived of their right to equality, justice, empowerment, and representation in a democratic system from the right to cast vote on their own choice. Keeping them away from politics and imperative state affairs and disallowing their political rights is like rejecting them from all the basic liberties that they are indispensable for a society to grow up and blossom politically²³.

Keeping the current scenario in mind no one can deny the bitter fact that, in Pakistan, the political atmosphere so far is not feasible for women politicians. Where the suppression of women's membership in their party wing by many Islamic oriented political parties is one example of the many in this regard. However, the change and development that happened in the history of Pakistan regarding the women's political participation in the year 2014, when the Pakistan Tahreek Insaf (PTI) proved itself as the second biggest political party in Pakistan with respect to votes. The PTI has got nearly 50% of active women members in the party. The party leaders ensured women's presence in party corner meetings, rallies, and campaigns, giving hope of ray to the women to participate in the mainstream politics of the country²⁷.

Pakistan being the Islamic republic state must formulate such policies and programs which can safeguard the equal political opportunities for both men and women. Islam is the first religion that granted dignity and rights to women treating them equal human beings who were being buried alive at the time of their birth before the advent of Islam. Moreover, in Islam, there is no indication which disregarded the status of women in society and politics. However, in Pakistan, women have fewer political engagements and are less politically empowered, and women are busy in conventional responsibilities within the walls of the homes taking care of families and children²⁶. To flourish the state system, economically, politically, and socially, the state must consider the full-fledged enfranchisement of women and give them chances for them to improve their livelihood²⁸.

According to the statistics shown by the Annual Global Gender Gap Report, published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), in October 2014, Pakistan ranked 141st of 142 countries, where frequent human rights violation has been observed and experienced. Pakistan's performance was judged to be the best out of the four areas, wherein political empowerment, Pakistan has maintained its position in 85th position worldwide²⁹. Additionally, the Human Development Index Report-2011, Pakistan's Human Development Index (HDI) ranking was 145/187 countries, while its Gender Inequality Index (GII) ranking was 115/146 countries. In Pakistan, due to absence of the political commitment, powerful vested interests, national development plans, neither concentrate on the sufficient attention to women's status, nor do they include components that can capitalize on their significant and unexplored human resource potential³⁰.

Social Capital Theory: The notion of Social Capital theory given by Robert Putnam in 1975 aimed to examine the functions of democratic government. He believes that real democracy will not be flourish without the participation of women. Women can gain their political goals through civic engagements, political affiliations and gathering. According to Putnam, civic engagements are the key and important determinant to generate social capital. The social capital among women encourages them, enhance the level of cooperation, confidence building, strengthen the social relationships both on a personal level and societal level³¹.

Similarly, social capital acquired the sequence of links, which could develop a strong relationship and to organize customs, associations, and behaviors. These characteristics smooth the progress of shared collaboration and direct towards better financial, political performance^{32,21}. Through societal capital, women can maximize their political participation through a chain of networks in a society, which capitalizes on their political involvement at the party level. The networking and association can enhance women's role in politics, and they will get to say in party level decision making. Social capital changes the narrative of women regarding politics. In addition, social

capital improves women’s knowledge, attitude, and practices towards politics and uses their collective efforts to achieve political goal³³.

In the context of Gilgit-Baltistan, only educated women have chances to gather and discuss politics and enjoy their social life. Many women belonged to the district Diamer where education rate is less than 30% among females have no chance and permission to take part in politics. The process of networking, civic engagements, and associations can be aware of women regarding their political, social, and economic rights.

Methodology

Research Design and Unit of Analysis: The researcher has chosen a quantitative research approach and a designed descriptive study. The inclusion criteria of the study were female respondents with the age bracket of 18 to 50 years, residents of the Gilgit-Baltistan, district Ghizer. In the selected District, the overall population is approximately 190,000 and women constituted about 49% as calculated by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). The researcher has calculated two hundred (200) sample sizes out of the total population with the 95% confidence interval (CI) and 5% Margin of Error (MoE) and simple random sampling utilized to reach the respondents.

Tools: The Structured closed-ended self-administered questionnaires were designed for acquisition of primary facts and figures. Here the preceded tool has been divided into two segments, the first segment consists of socio-demographic and economic backgrounds of respondents. The second section deals with the knowledge, attitude, and practices of women towards politics. The researcher has finalized ten (10) questionnaires at the pre-testing stage and minor modification in the tool as per observation. The respondents were given the appropriate time to complete the survey questions.

Data Collection: The field work was done from June 2019 to October 2019 from the twenty (20) clusters of District Ghizer. There are 132 clusters in District Ghizer, as divided by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) in 2016, before conducting the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICSGB-2016). The data were collected from twenty clusters through a systematic sampling technique. From every 7th cluster, ten (10) respondents were selected for data interview randomly.

Statistical Analysis: Both descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and inferential statistics (chi-square and bivariate correlation) have been used to evaluate the collected data. The latest version of SPSS was the data analysis tool. The results and findings were employed in percentages, frequencies and test the relationship through the Pearson Chi-Square Test and Regression Analysis.

Results and discussion

The total sample of the current research were two hundred (200) female respondents, selected from different selected clusters of

the district Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan. Despite of the higher rate of education and women’s empowerment, not a single woman is member of provincial assemble through contest direct election process.

Table-1: Demographic Profiles of the Respondents.

Parameters	Number = 200	%
	Frequencies	
Age		
18-24	133	66.5
25-31	53	26.5
32-38	06	3.0
38-Above	02	1.0
Not Respond	06	3.0
Education		
Under Matric	12	6.0
Intermediate	33	16.5
Graduate	153	76.5
Postgraduate	2	1
Occupation		
Unemployment	7	3.5
Labor	1	0.5
Students	137	68.5
The Govt officers	17	8.5
Own personal busines	3	1.5
Any other occupation	35	17.5
Marital Status		
Not Respond	2	1.0
Ever Married	36	18.0
Single	162	81.0

Table-1 showed the demographic profile of respondents, where most of the respondents, [n=133,66.5%] were between the age bracket of 18-24 years, [n=53,26.5%] women between the age

of 25-31-year-old. While not responding rate of this question was [n=6,3%]. The educational status of respondents shows that, [n=153,76.5%] were graduated and [n=33,16.5%] respondents were Intermediate. The occupations of respondents were that [n=135,68.5%] were students, [n=17,8.5] were government employees, and [n=35,17.5 %] were engaged in other deeds. Most of the participants were students and professionals. The reason behind the selection of professional and students was due to their independent status, self-empowered, and have fewer family pressures. According to the marital status [n=162,81.0%] of respondents were single and [n=36,18%] respondents were married. Many studies have shown that single, feminist, working, and educated women were more politically active as compared to uneducated and married women.

Table-2: Description of the Women Perception about Politics.

Parameters	Number = 200	%
	Frequency	
Association with Political Party		
Yes	101	50.5
No	99	49.5
Total	200	100.0
Know the importance of Political Activism		
Yes	165	82.5
No	35	17.5
Total	200	100.0
You have Right to Cast Vote		
Yes	185	92.5
Know not	15	7.5
Total	200	100.0
Nomination enhanced Politics Participation		
Agreed	146	73.0
Know not	39	19.5
Disagreed	14	7.0
Didn't Respond	1	0.5
Total	200	100.0

The Table-2, demonstrated the focused respondents' perceptions regarding politics and political activities/engagements. Results of the research undertaken showed that most of the respondents [n=101,50.5%] were associated with different political parties and, [n=99,49.5%] were not associated with any political party. Similarly, women have affliction with different federal level political parties and have active participation in politics indirectly. Furthermore, they are active indirectly in political activities, i.e. political campaigns, participating in rallies, fundraising campaigns, corners meetings, etc., As, above mentioned that, women are highly educated and women who were more active in politics were educated, women. The majority of [n=165,82.5%] respondents were aware of the importance and [n=35,17.5%] did not aware of the importance of political activism at the party levels. Furthermore, the majority of [n=185,92.5%] respondents saw eye to eye with it that they have got the right of casting vote, on their own. However, only [n=15,7.5%] of respondents have disagreed, it means women have the right to cast vote in any independent and autonomous state. Vote casting is the fundamental political right of women. In the present election of Gilgit Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA) 2015, more than 50% of the females did cast their votes from District Ghizer. Due to the de facto political status of Gilgit-Baltistan, there is no political party at the provincial levels, so that is why women have affliction with the federal level parties. Due to hold of federal-level political parties the women of GB have less political activities as compared to the other provinces and parts of the country.

Furthermore, nearly all the respondents agreed to it that their contribution to political activities is an imperative factor to empower themselves in polite society. Additionally, most of the respondents [n=146,73.0%] were consented, [n=14,7%] disagreed that the nomination increased the female's active participation in the political field. This implies the nomination and quota system is substantial to boost the females' involvement in politics.

Table-3 stated the political empowerment of women through political participation. Majority of the respondents [n=143, 71.5%] were agreed that women should take part in family decision making about politics and, [n=36,18.0%] were disagreed. Furthermore, majority of respondents [n=191, 95.5%] were agreed while few of the respondents [n=3,1.5%] have disagreed that they have cast vote on their choice and highest number of respondents [n=92, 46%] were agreed that, politics is the best life making a career for them in future. The table revealed that women of District Ghizer are highly politically empowered, have to say in family decision making about politics, cast vote on their own choices and most of the women were considering the politics as a career opportunity in future.

Although women are indirectly active in politics, their direct involvement is very less. Women are not encouraged by the male of Gilgit-Baltistan to contest the election process. One

female has contested the election process in the 2013 election but badly failed. She has secured less than 5% of the total registered voters of the region. This showed that women of Gilgit-Baltistan are politically deprived.

Table-3: Opinion of the Women towards Political Empowerment.

Category	Total Number = 200	%
	Frequency	
Free in Political Decision Making		
Not Response	02	1.00
Agreed	143	71.5
Know not	19	9.50
Disagreed	37	18.0
Caste Vote on their Choice		
Not Responded	01	0.50
Agreed	191	95.5
Don't Know	5	2.50
Disagreed	3	1.50
Politics is best career opportunity		
Not Response	1	0.50
Agreed	92	46.0
Don't Know	30	19.5
Disagreed	68	43.0

Table-4: Right to cast vote and cast vote on their own choice.

Chi-Square Tests	
Category	Values
Value	43.146
Df	9
Asymp. Sig	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	.002

Table-5: Associated to Party and Politics is the Best Carrier.

Chi-Square Tests	
Category	Values
Value	19.173
Df	6
Asymp. Sig	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000

a. 3 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .14.

Hypothesis: Those women who have an association with any political party are considering politics as the best carrier opportunity for them soon.

Table-5, founded the Pearson Chi-Square value 19.173. The DF is 6 and the Asymp. Sig is .004 which is less than the alpha value $p=0.05$, therefore, the value determined that it is highly statistically significant. The conclusion of the results showed that, those women who have an association with any political party are considering politics as the best career opportunity.

Table-6: Correlation matrix between Political participation and Women's Empowerment.

Category		Women's political empowerment	Political participation
Pearson Correlation	Women's political empowerment	1.000	.375
	Political participation	.375	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Women's political empowerment	.	.000
	Political participation	.000	.
N	Women's political empowerment	200	200
	Political participation	200	200

Table-7: The model summary.

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.375 ^a	.141	.137	.29519

a. Predictors: (Constant), Political participation

Table-8: The ANOVA^a.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	2.828	1	2.828	32.460	.000 ^b
	Residual	17.253	198	.087		
	Total	20.082	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Women’s political empowerment, b. Predictors: (Constant), Political participation.

Table-9: Coefficients Summary of variables.

Mode	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	1.067	.084		12.768	.000	.903	1.232
Political participation	.319	.056	.375	5.697	.000	.209	.430

a. Dependent Variable: Women’s political empowerment.

Table-6 and Table-7 showed the Correlation Matrix and Model Summary of the variables, respectively. The results showed that political participation has a relationship with women's political empowerment. Females from District Ghizer who are active in political activities are politically empowered. Political participation (POI_PART) included cast vote, association with any political party, involvement in party meetings, political gatherings, rallies, etc. Women’s political empowerment (W_EMPOW) included cast vote on their own choice, opinion has worth, access to education, casted vote, etc.

The Table-8 is a summary of ANOVA, where the Degree of Freedom is 1, Mean Square is 2.828, F is 32.460 and Sig. is 0.00 which is less than the p=0.005. The table showed that political participation has a significant relationship with political empowerment among women. Whereas Table-9 showed the Correlation Coefficient, where the value of Beta is .375, the t value is 5.697, significance value is 0.000. Both the Table showed that more political activeness has significant impacts on the political empowerment.

Discussion: Traditional culture, patriarchal social norms, and impoverished economic background are the hurdles to the females’ political involvement. Every democratic society needs

equal involvement of both male and female in politics. But in Pakistan, very only some women are participating in politics and civic activities to surmount these obstacles, to increase women’s political participation, to introduce the gender quotas and nomination system. The nomination and quotas system not only employ women in political realms but also empower them in their social life³². This regarded as an essential policy measured to boost women’s entrance to conventional politics. Similarly, the results suggested that the majority of [n=146, 73%] of the respondents were agreed that the nomination promotes women to take part in the political activities directly or indirectly. And their decision-making power at the domestic, civic, and governmental levels has also been heightened by political involvement. The objective of a nomination and quota system is to employ or recruit women into political positions, without contesting the direct election activity.

Furthermore, the reservation of only six (6) seats for women in the GBLA, by the Gilgit-Baltistan government show insufficient numbers of the females’ participation in the assembly as compared to their share in the population. The direct nomination of Ms Sobia Muqadam as Minister for women development, youth affairs and sports board, and Nasreen Bano as Parliamentary Secretary and four more female members on

reserve seats in GBLA by the Gilgit-Baltistan government shows the little or less female participation in the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly. These members are working to the best of their potential for women's rights and their social welfare. Similarly Khan and Fardus²¹ founded that the women, who got elected as members directly elected have opened a new horizon for their fellow women to participate in the decision-making bodies and work with the grass root levels of women's related issues. No doubt it is the women who can better understand the real issues faced by their fellow women in their daily life. The above figures show how little representation we have given to our women in the assembly.

On the other hand, the Indian government has a reservation of one-third seats to their women in their law-making bodies to boost the number of women involvements in conventional politics. Moreover, the Indian Government's move in 2009 for the approval of 50% of reserved seats for women in their Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and many other states, like that of the Rajasthan and Odessa show a good example to enhance the women's political participation and empowerment. Whereas, in Pakistan, it was only Mr Musharraf who valued women by increasing the quota of the reserved seats for women at the provincial as well as at the national level from 2% to 20% of women participation in the assemblies. Now the 33% of the quota of the women in the Union, Tehsil and District Councils in Pakistan shows an encouraging face, but still, this number shows less female participation in the assemblies as compared to the Indian women's participation in politics.

According to Bourdieu, Pierre³² and Putnam³³ expressed that; women's involvement in politics can be well described and understood through a social capital model, which asserted that networking supports women to improve their political involvement. Although, our women do have high social capital, yet they are not willing to devote their social capital in achieving political commitments due to the disappointment from family as well as from the parties they are affiliated with the respective party³⁶. Meanwhile Andersen¹⁶ has argued that politics have been men oriented in Western societies for a decade, where only professional and highly educated females were involved in politics and public work. Similar outcomes have been witnessed in the present study, that women are more involved indirectly in politics, such as involved in a political campaign, promotions, participate in political rallies, join different corner meetings, and are affiliated with different federal level political parties. In addition, a great number of females or respondents emphasized that women's involvement with political parties is also an important measure to empower themselves. Similarly, most of [n=165, 82%] the respondents were approved that women's involvement with political factions is important for women's political empowerment.

As it is the true, but bitter fact that Gilgit-Baltistan has been enjoying the status of a de-facto province of Pakistan due to being part of Kashmir issue but, the geostrategic and political

importance has given it a special place in Pakistan as well as the world. But the less political maturity, incompetence of the local political leaders as well as the less female participation in the politics could not get the deserving favor of the Pakistani government towards the genuine issues and problems of the region. As for as the women's participation and their empowerment are concerned the reason behind, their less political involvement and party affiliation are due to the lack of competent local political leadership. Moreover, the federal parties are also not encouraging women of Gilgit-Baltistan to come forward and contest the election and become part of mainstream politics. Although women of Gilgit-Baltistan are educated and informed of politics and political rights, due to fewer opportunities in politics, their engagements are so far being apolitical. Due to education and awareness, women are only casting votes, etc., on their own choices, but their political activities have no regards in party level.

The present study clearly showed that women of District Ghizer, Gilgit-Baltistan are conscious of their political rights pertaining to their political authority, and their opinions have worth in party. Similarly, [n=191,95%] respondents were agreed that they had cast votes on their own choice. Furthermore, women are less dependent on their husbands or family members in making political decisions. Numerous academics agreed that the true essence of pluralistic and secular democracy has not blossomed yet in a country, where women's activities are apolitical. Women have the right to partake in politics, either directly or indirectly. Women have the right to access information concerning politics and public activities. From the above-given information, we came to know that due to lack of political experience and backgrounds women of District Ghizer are not taking part in the electoral process. In addition, women are not encouraged at the party level to contest the election, because they believe that women are not fit for politics and civic work. Additionally, in Gilgit-Baltistan, reserved seats are only allocated to those females who have a background in politics, without evaluating the personal characteristics and capabilities of women.

Conclusion

Despite the high education, self-empowerment, and economic resourcefulness, women of Gilgit-Baltistan are not politically active and politically empowered. The social structure of Gilgit-Baltistan is patriarchal in nature. Male of Gilgit-Baltistan have magnificent behavior to cast vote to a female candidate. Additionally, at party levels, women have been discouraged to contest election process. That is why in the history of Gilgit-Baltistan even not a single woman has contested the election process and become a member of the Gilgit-Baltistan Legislative Assembly (GBLA). The allocation of only six reserved seats for the women in GBLA, which shows the very little number of the women representation as compared to their population ratio. Although, women of District Ghizer are active indirect political activities, such as involvement in political

campaigning, participation in party meetings, corner gathering, involvement in political rallies, and fund-raising process for elections. The general elections 2018 have witnessed the increased women's participation in politics, both directly and indirectly. Two major reasons, the Election Act 2017, and political protest and campaign of PTI, that created awareness among the women regarding the importance of women in politics. Women's turnover in the last election of 2018 was increased by a total 66 per cent as compared to the general election 2013 in casting vote. Moreover, the results showed that women were considered politics as a career opportunity in the near future. Indirect political participation and direct involvement in political engagements and activities in the party level enhance the women status to contest election process and become a member of GBLA.

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