

**THE IMPACT OF INCREASING FEMALE POLITICAL
REPRESENTATION ON THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN**

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ABSTRACT

The common rationale behind the fight for increasing female political participation and representation is that when some women come into positions of power they will bring about positive policy changes that empower other women in the country in terms of their political, social and economic conditions. An increase in political representation and participation of women strengthens the democratic system of a country and contributes to gender equality. In this paper I will focus on studying the relationship between increased female political representation in Pakistan on the level of their economic empowerment. I took the proportion of women in National Assembly as the indicator for female representation and the female labor force participation as the indicator for the economic empowerment of women in the country. Since there are a number of factors such as gender role attitudes, level of female education, rate of urbanization, and cultural, societal and religious norms, that impact both, female representation and their labor force participation, there is a chance of endogeneity in the model. To solve the problem of endogeneity, I've used gender quotas as an instrumental variable to represent the proportion of women in the parliament and have used the Two Stage Least Squares (2SLS) method to conduct the empirical analysis. Results show that increasing the proportion of women in the National Assembly has a significantly positive impact on the female labor force participation in Pakistan. Implications of this results and policy recommendations for the future are also discussed in the last sections of the thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

OLS: Ordinary Least Squares

2SLS: Two-Stage Least Squares

LFO: Legal Framework Order

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

ICCPR: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

KPK: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

FATA: Federally Administered Tribal Areas

ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan

FAFEN: Free and Fair Election Network

IFES: International Foundation for Election System

PILDAT: Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As of November 2018, only 24% of all national parliamentarians around the world were women (UN Women, 2019). All over the globe women find themselves at a disadvantaged position when it comes to politics. When it comes to politics or even the society as a whole, women in many parts of the world lack representation at all levels and find themselves miles away from positions of authority and decision-making power. The reasons behind this under-representation are context specific, i.e. they might be different under different socio-economic, cultural, religious, political and geographical contexts (Shvedova, 2005).

Statistics show that, in the recent years, female political participation and representation has been increasing, albeit at a very slow pace. For instance, there are three countries around the world, Rwanda, Cuba and Bolivia, where the current proportion of women in the parliament exceeds 50% (UN Women, 2019).

However, there are still some countries in the world that have an almost negligible (sometimes even zero) number of women in the parliament. This includes countries like Haiti, Kuwait, Yemen and Papua New Guinea etc. (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2019).

The figure below shows how, despite an upward trend, the share of women in world parliaments still falls short of parity:

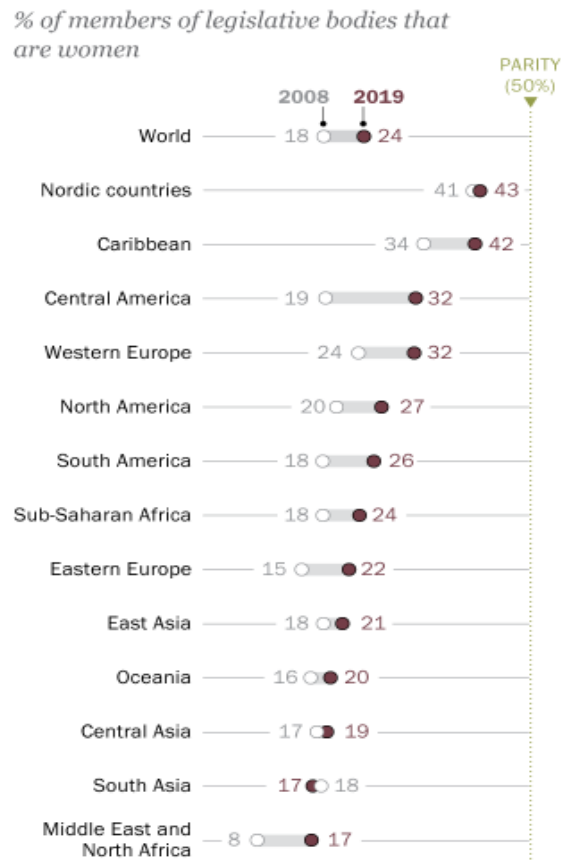


Figure 1: Percentage of Members of Legislative Bodies that are Women

Source: Pew Research Center, 2019 (Data taken from Inter-Parliamentary Union)

The statistics regarding female political participation and representation vary across different regions of the world. According to data collected till November 2018, Nordic countries had 43.3% women parliamentarians, the Americas had 30%, followed by Europe with 26.6%, Sub-Saharan Africa with 23.6%, Asia with 19.4%, the Arab states with 17.8% and, lastly, the Pacific with 17% (UN Women, 2019).

The distribution can also be seen in the graph below:

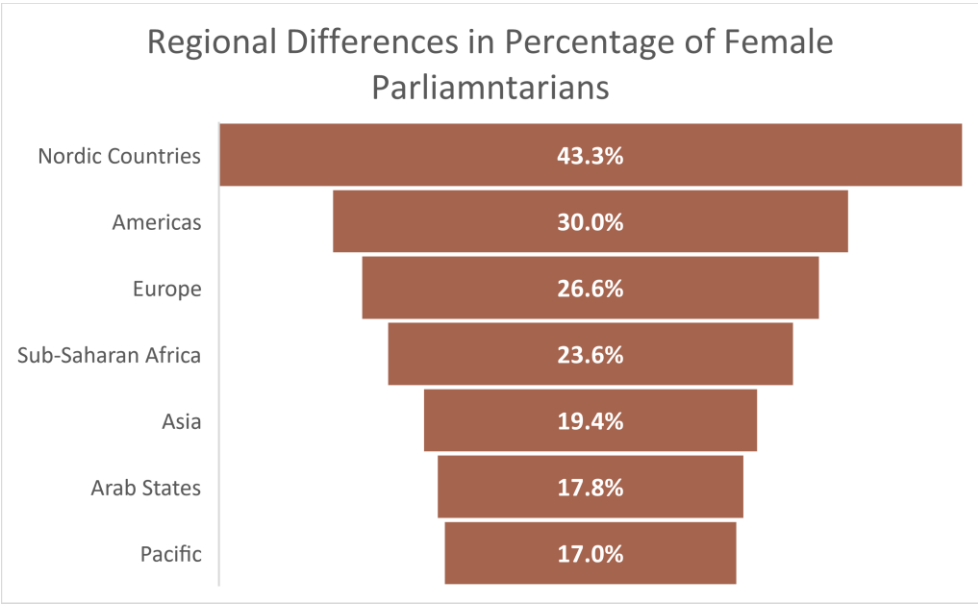


Figure 2: Regional Differences in Percentage of Female Parliamentarians

Source: UN Women, 2019

However, within the regions with lower percentages of female parliamentarians, there are some countries where the numbers for female political participation surpass those of Nordic and European countries. For example, when it comes to the representation of women, Rwanda leads the world, with 61.3% female parliamentarians in the lower house, while Bolivia has managed to achieve the highest percentage-point increase in the share of female parliamentarians since 2008 and it’s Plurinational Legislative Assembly is now composed of 50% women parliamentarians (compared to 15% in 2008), the third highest in the world (Geiger, 2019).

This relative rise in female representation around the world can be attributed to the introduction and implementation of gender quotas, a temporary affirmative action tool aimed at the promotion of gender equality within a country’s political machinery (EMA Human Rights Blog, 2019). Gender quotas can be used as a number of ways; e.g. either to specify numerical targets for the

number of seats that must be apportioned for women in a legislative body or to specify a minimum number/percentage of women that parties must include in their candidate lists (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze, & Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2014). By 2013, 118 countries around the globe were implementing legislative gender quotas in various forms (J-PAL, 2018).

Like most developing countries, Pakistan has used legislative gender quotas to increase female representation in the parliament in the recent years. However, the implementation of quotas in the country has not been consistent and was often discontinued during periods of military rule or some specific government regimes (Aurat Foundation, 2012). Thus, the proportion of women in the parliament kept on fluctuating and only achieved a steadily increasing trend in the last four government regimes (2002-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2017, 2018-ongoing) This can also be seen in the following graph:

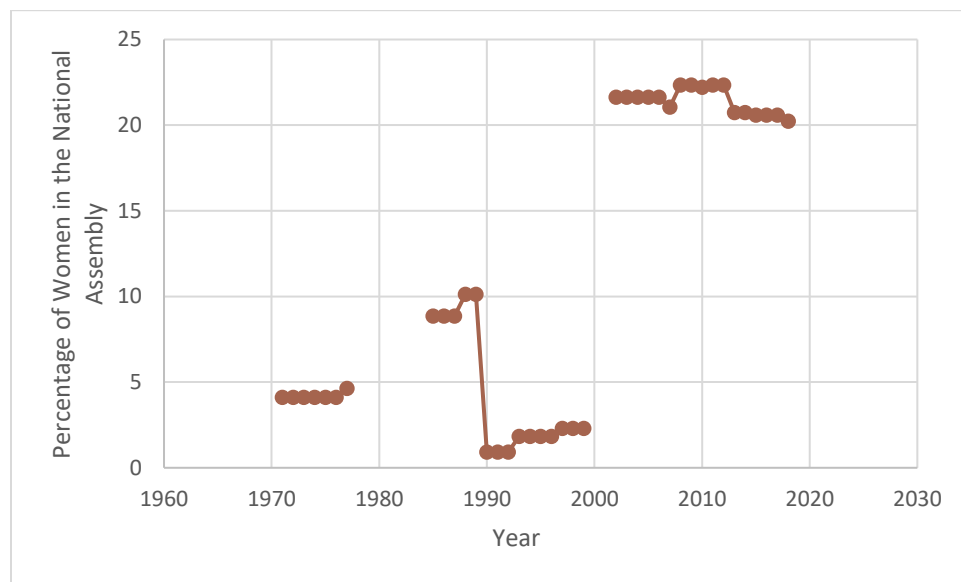


Figure 3: Proportion of Women in the National Assembly of Pakistan (1971-2018)

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018

The graph shows that in the past sixteen years, the proportion of women in the National Assembly (the lower house of the parliament) has been at all-time high. The breaks in the line of the graph represent periods of military rule in the country (1977-1984 and 2000-2001) (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

At this point, two questions come to mind; first, why is Pakistan, like the rest of the world putting so much effort into increasing the proportion of women parliament? And second, has the increasing proportion of women in the parliament been effective in empowering women economically and otherwise?

Answering the first question, true democracy requires the participation of all citizens. Thus, improving female political representation doesn't only impact gender equality but the democratic strength of a country as well. Raising the number of women involved in the political process leads to both, political and economic gains. It helps in challenging the existing social and political structures, that have rendered women as subordinates to men. Some of the political benefits include an increase in the number of women in the parliament, a decrease in corruption, an improvement in gender policy outcomes and an increase in inclusiveness. On the other hand, the economic benefits include the placement of women as actors of development, increased participation of women in the labor market and overall improvement in economic growth (Asiedu, Branstette, Gaekwad-Babulal, & Malokele, 2018).

For the second question, unfortunately we don't have any clear-cut answers yet, since this is a relatively new area of research, owing to a very low political representation of women in the past. Very little research has been conducted on the topic and each researcher focuses on their own area of interest to measure the impact. For instance, some researchers study the relationship of a higher proportion of women in the parliament with the increase in pro-women legislation while others

consider its relationship with overall economic growth of the country etc. The results of these researches are also divided.

In this research I would like to study the impact of increasing political representation of women in Pakistan with the economic empowerment of women in the country. Women in Pakistan often suffer from unfair distribution of opportunities and resources as compared to men. Oftentimes they lack access to proper education and healthcare facilities; which, when combined with the challenges they face in their workplaces (e.g. harassment, gender bias etc.), puts them at a disadvantage in the labor force (Waqar, 2018). In 2018, the female labor force participation rate stood at a mere 25.12%, compared to the male labor force participation rate of 82.64% (The Global Economy, 2018).

While many of the reasons behind the low female labor force participation are related to individual households, in the larger scheme of things, many women in Pakistan are prevented from joining the labor force because of cultural, religious and social beliefs which restrict women to work within households or within unskilled/informal sectors, lack of access to education, and lack of safe work places (most women are prevented from working because of fear of sexual abuse) etc. (Human Rights Watch, 2019).

Most of these challenges can be overcome by pro-women legislation and this is where the idea of increasing female political representation for the economic empowerment of women comes in. This can be done directly by introduction of economic reforms for women (e.g. introduction of gender quotas for different jobs or opening of vocational training sectors) or indirectly, by affecting other factors related to economic empowerment of women (such as education, working conditions etc.).

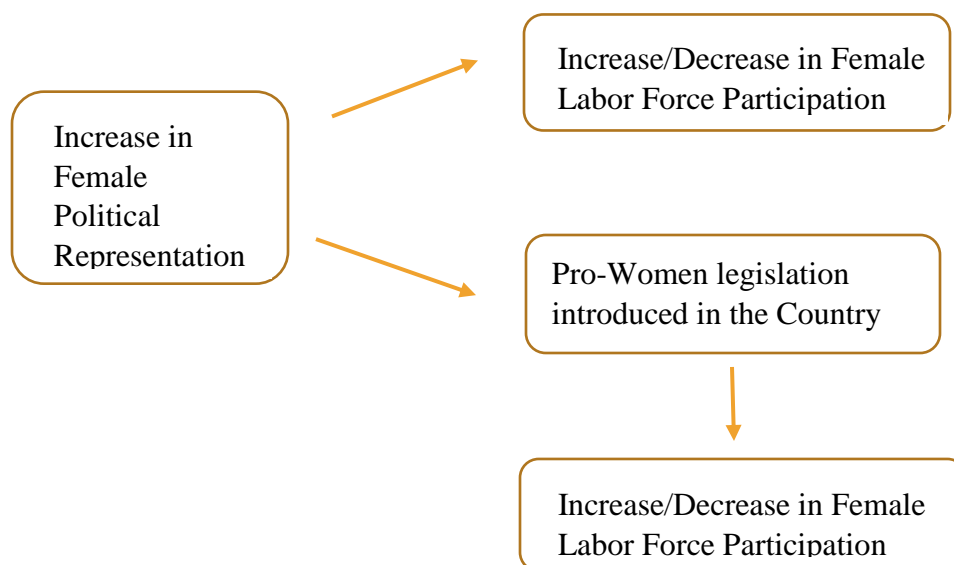


Figure 4: Mechanisms through which Female Political Representation Affects Female Labor Force Participation in Pakistan

1.1 Research Rationale:

As discussed before, having more women in the parliament can help in improving gender policy outcomes and can increase gender inclusiveness in the policy making process. Women benefit by increased female political representation through their placement as actors of development, increased participation of women in the labor market and an over-all improvement in economic growth (Asiedu et al.,2018).

However, very little scholarly research has been conducted in this area over the past years due to very few women serving in the parliament. Now, with this number increasing we can test the validity of the argument and find out whether having more women in the parliament does have a positive impact on the overall socio-economic conditions of women in the country (Sterken & Zia, 2015).

Like many other countries around the world, a number of measures have been taken in Pakistan (e.g. introduction of reserved seats) to increase the representation of women in the country. In this

research I will focus on the economic impact of these measures, i.e. I will aim to assess whether the theoretical relationship between increased female political representation (using the proportion of women in the National Assembly as the representative variable) and female economic empowerment (using female labor force participation as the representative variable) holds true in case of Pakistan. I will also discuss the implications of the results.

This research can prove to be an important contribution to this area of research since there is no previous research available for Pakistan on this specific relationship between female political representation and economic empowerment.

1.2 Research Overview

In the coming chapters I will present a critical overview of the literature available on the topic (Chapter 2), present the country context of Pakistan so that the reader can understand the context and relevance of the topic for the country (Chapter 3), present a brief overview of theoretical concepts, and the history and current condition of the female political representation and participation in Pakistan (Chapter 4), explain the data and discuss the methodology that I'll be using for my quantitative analysis (Chapter 5), explain the empirical strategy for the analysis and present the results of the empirical analysis (Chapter 6), discuss the limitations and implications of the results (Chapter 7), and provide concluding remarks along with possible policy recommendations (Chapter 8).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

From a political standpoint, greater inclusion of women in the political process has always been an important issue. Article 4 of the Universal Declaration of Democracy created by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 1997 states:

“The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences.”

Thus, women’s participation and representation in politics is a matter of importance for human rights and democracy. This has been reaffirmed by the national constitutions of a number of countries around the world, as well as by various international instruments working for human rights, including the “Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)” and the “International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)” (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2018).

Furthermore, the issue of increasing the political representation and participation of women can also be looked at from a socioeconomic gender equality point of view. More women in politics doesn’t only affect the range of policy issues that are discuss in national parliaments but also affects the proposed solutions. Research on the topic has shown that the gender of a legislator impacts their priorities when it comes to policy making. For instance, women legislators tend to focus more on issues related to women in general, family matters, and even minorities. They tend to give priority to development indicators such as health and education, issues which can positively impact the status of women in a country (Pepera, 2018).

However, in this research I will focus on the relationship between increasing female political representation and its impact on economic empowerment of women in Pakistan. Since this is a fairly new area of study, there hasn't been a lot of work done on the topic in the country. Thus, I will look at the existing research from Pakistan as well as some other countries around the world to draw parallels and understand the topic better. I will also look at researches where an increase in female representation has indirectly impacted the economic empowerment of women, e.g. through the introduction of pro-women legislation related to economic development, family laws, harassment or education etc.

Beginning with a broad view of how female political representation can impact economic growth in general, Xu (2015) conducted a cross-country and panel data research (from 1991-2013) to study the relationship between gender gaps in political participation and economic growth in 30 Asian countries. The author used the proportion of seats held by women in the parliaments as an indicator for political participation and studied their impact on the economic growth of various Asian countries. His initial results show that an increase in female political participation has no effect on economic growth. However, when he eliminated the years with extremely low number of women in the parliament and restricted his data sample to 2003-2013, he was able to see that higher number of women in the parliament positively impacted economic growth.

The problem faced by Xu (2015) is one of the main reasons why this topic lacks substantive previous research. Since the proportion of women in parliaments has started to increase substantively only in the recent decades, most of the researchers are starting work on the topic now.

Another research focused on data from 159 developing countries around the world to determine whether there's a relationship between higher number of women in the parliament and the passing

of gender sensitive legislation. The 5 main areas of gender-sensitive legislation used in the research are legal quotas from promotion of women's political participation, women's rights with respect to children's custody rights after divorce, laws on domestic violence, laws on rape and laws on sexual harassment. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS), Logit and Probit models were used to determine the results and it was seen that, keeping all other factors constant, countries that have a higher percentage of women in the parliament have a higher likelihood of introducing and implementing gender-sensitive legislation (Asiedu et al.,2018).

Various organization in Pakistan have also carried out research to assess the impact of increasing female representation on the women empowerment in the country and there have been some encouraging findings.

In the parliaments of 2002 and 2008, 9 very important pro-women legislations were passed and bills for all these legislations were moved by women parliamentarians who had joined the parliament through reserved seats. On the other hand, in the parliamentary history of Pakistan, male parliamentarians' record of moving pro-women bills has been extremely low. Another interesting fact found in one of the assessments was the fact that women parliamentarians who were elected on general seats were not as active as those who joined through reserved seats (Bari, 2015).

In their research, Khan and Naqvi (2018) have found that around 2008, when the number of women started to increase in the country's assemblies and when they formed caucuses, they were able to sufficiently bring forward their concerns and seek the required political support to introduce progressive legislation which would address issues related to sensitive cultural and religious norms.

Similar results were seen in the study conducted by Sterken and Zia (2015). They examined the proportion of female representation in the parliament in relation to legislative outcomes from 1990-2014 and found that in the country's history, the largest percentage of female legislation (around 62%) was passed during the time of the government regimes which had the highest number of women in the parliament (2001-2010). Increased women representation in the parliament allowed women to go after more prominent roles in the government and form relevant alliances and bodies to push for legislation related to women's issues.

National Assembly's performance assessment from June 2014 to February 2015 showed that female parliamentarians had a 50% contribution in carrying out the parliamentary business. As compared to oversight and representation roles, women parliamentarians were seen to perform much better in a legislative capacity (Bari, 2015). Women also attended the Assembly sessions more regularly than their male counterparts (Khan and Naqvi, 2018).

However, there have been studies that have found conflicting results as well. Some studies show that a higher number of women in the parliament doesn't necessarily translate into female empowerment in the country.

Rwanda has the highest percentage of women in the parliament in the entire world. A research conducted by Develin and Elgie (2008) looked at the effects of an increase in female representation. The results of the study were quite mixed. While they found that having more women in the parliament does indeed lead to a greater focus on women's issues, it was seen that the Rwandan government has a positive stance towards women's issues even before the increase in the proportion of women in the parliament. Most of the pro-women legislation was introduced in the parliament before the proportion of women parliamentarians reached such a high number. Thus, the recent improvement in pro-women legislation and policy making can be attributed to the

political culture and pro-women inclination of the culture, and not just the increase in the proportion of female parliamentarians in the country.

International Alert & Eastern Africa Sub-regional Support Initiative (EASSI) (2012) conducted a study on women's political participation and economic empowerment in four countries emerging from conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa, i.e. Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Uganda. All these countries have introduced and implemented gender quotas of 30% for women in all decision-making institutions. The research conducted in these four countries analyzes whether women's increased representation in decision making at the national and local governance level has translated into the adoption of gender equality policies and enhancement of women's socio-economic status at all levels of society. The results of the study showed that in most of these countries the quotas did not have the desired effect, except for Rwanda where the situation improved slightly. In the other countries, initially, the implementation of quotas was problematic since increased female political participation went against the cultural and societal values of those countries. Even when the participation increased, it did not have the expected impact on the policy making and gender equality process. A clear relationship between political participation and economic empowerment wasn't clearly established either.

United Nations (2005) published a report discussing the various facets of this debate, asking the question, whether putting more women in decision making roles could make a difference. Unfortunately, the answer wasn't yes, as a number of challenges were observed in the process. Most of the women who make it to politics have grown up in patriarchal societies where the ideas of gender inequality have already been integrated into their thought process. Thus, when they start their political careers, their policies might adhere to those ideas and their policies might not be any more gender inclusive in comparison to men. In most of the countries, political careers for women

are a privilege, enjoyed only by a selected elite. These women, however, are not familiar with the challenges and needs of the lower classes and may not be able to form effective economic policies for increased female economic empowerment for those who really need it. Some of the women also get influenced by men who are already in power, in order to sustain their political careers, and end up not being very effective policy makers with regards to gender equality.

One reason for the disparity in the results could be the context specific (e.g. religious, cultural and political etc.) among various countries and regions of the world. However, there is very limited literature available on the topic and we cannot make any conclusive remarks without further research.

CHAPTER 3

PAKISTAN; COUNTRY CONTEXT

Pakistan is a country in the South-Asian region of the world, created on 14th August 1947, after the partition of the Indian Subcontinent. Originally the country was made up of two parts, East and West Pakistan. However, in 1971, East Pakistan seceded and formed present day Bangladesh. Currently Pakistan has four main provinces, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) (BBC News, 2019).

A brief overview of some general information about the country can be seen in the following table:

Population (2017)	207.8 Million
Female Population (2017)	101.310 Million (48.75%)
Male Population (2017)	106.440 Million (51.22%)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2018)	313,138.3 USD
GDP per Capita (2018)	1,469.348 USD

Table 1: Statistical Overview of Pakistan

Source: CEIC Data, 2018

3.1 Economic Context

Since its formation Pakistan has faced a number of social and political challenges that have taken a toll on its economy as well, and it has remained largely unstable over the years (DAWN, 2017).

Pakistan has a mixed economy with three major sectors; agriculture, industry and services. In 2017 agriculture contributed 21% to the country's GDP, while industry and services contributed 20.9% and 57.7% respectively. Over the years Pakistan's trade account has mostly remained in deficit due to its high dependence on imports. This has also had a negative impact on the country's foreign exchange reserves and has led to the devaluation of the currency on numerous occasions. After

1980, Pakistan's economy faced a continuous decline for a number of years and was only able to recover slightly in the early 2000s. Some of the strengths of Pakistan's economy include a great geographical location, natural resources, abundance of labor and human capital while its main weaknesses are low literacy rate, lack of capital, absence of rule of law, inefficient and corrupt institutions, and dominance of a non-progressive mindset (Anwar, Abbas & Ashfaq, 2017).

In fiscal year 2018, Pakistan's economy continued the growth trend of recent years, with a growth rate of 5.8%. The main reason behind this growth was higher consumption in the economy driven by accommodative monetary and fiscal policies. However, this led to other macroeconomic imbalances. The current account deficit (CAD), already a big problem for Pakistan's economy, increased to 6.1% of GDP in the fiscal year 2018, as compared to 4.1% in 2017. This gap was caused by an increase in demand driven imports and the slow pace of export sector growth. The fiscal deficit also increased as compared to previous years and reached up to 6.6% of GDP. This was caused by an increase in spending and a decrease in revenue generation (World Bank, 2019).

In 2019, with the new government taking office, the economic condition of the country has only worsened. Pakistan currently faces the problem of continuously decreasing foreign exchange reserves, low exports leading to widening current account deficit, a widening fiscal deficit, increasing external debt and high inflation. All of these factors have also led to massive devaluation of the country's currency and has forced the government to once again knock on the door of international donors for loans (Malik, 2019).

3.1.1 Women in the Economy

Women in Pakistan constitute almost 49% of the population, and yet, the female labor force participation rate in 2018 was only 25.12%, while the male labor force participation rate was

82.64% (The Global Economy, 2018). Of the entire female labor force 27% are employed in agriculture, 17% in industry and 55% in services (World Bank, 2018).

The Global Gender Gap Index shows the gender gap based on a number of socioeconomic factors, and, in 2017, it ranked Pakistan 143 out of 144 countries. The poor ranking only highlights the large socioeconomic gap between the men and women in the country (Waqar, 2018).

Women also suffer from unfair distribution of opportunities and resources as compared to men. Oftentimes they lack access to proper education and healthcare facilities; which, when combined with the challenges they face in their workplaces (e.g. harassment, gender bias etc.), puts them at a disadvantage (Waqar, 2018).

In a report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), it was said that Pakistan's GDP can be increased by almost 30% if the women of the country are more empowered and are able to effectively contribute to the labor force (Waqar, 2018).

3.2 Cultural, Religious and Societal Context

The culture of Pakistan is a combination of regional, Islamic, Western and other global influences. The rise in globalization has increased Western influence in the country but Pakistan's culture is still dominantly framed by Islam. Even though religion is not the only determinant of cultural practices in Pakistan it is still the dominant binding factor for all regions of the country. The main religion in Pakistan is Islam, followed by almost 96% of the population. The remaining population comprises mostly of Hindus and Christians (UK Essays, 2018).

Pakistan's society is a patriarchal one, where men are considered to be the main authority figures and women are considered to be their subordinates (Ali et al., 2011). This power dynamic has put women at a very disadvantaged position in the country. Even though Islam outlines a number of

rights for women, women in Pakistan are sometimes deprived of even the basic rights. In most areas, especially the rural areas, women are considered to be the ‘honor’ of the men of the house and the men protect this honor by restricting the freedoms of the house’s women. They are oftentimes deprived of education, of their right to choose who they want to marry, and of their right to work or to move freely etc. Thus, women fall victim to violence, forced marriage, extreme restrictions on movement and even death (Herald, 2019).

The situation in urban areas is better, though still far from ideal. Women in the cities are now striving for higher education and moving forward from the traditionally acceptable professions for women; teaching and nursing. They’re now venturing into medicine, business, law, entrepreneurship etc. Thus, even though the situation of women is improving in Pakistan, the country still has a long way to go before it can achieve true gender parity (Herald, 2019).

3.3 Political Context

Pakistan came into being in 1947, and the political climate of the country’s short history has remained turbulent to say the very least. Tensions among the various provinces, a deep-seated conflict with India and, more recently, the threats of terrorism have prevented the country from gaining long term political stability (Snellinger, n.d.).

The country has been oscillating between periods of military rule and democratically elected governments. The government has also shifted the nature of its policies from secular to more religious and back according to their own interests (Snellinger, n.d.).

One of the biggest political problems of the country is the jealousy and resentment among the smaller provinces (Sindh, KPK and Balochistan) against Punjab, the dominant and the most powerful province. The secession of West Pakistan and its establishment as a separate country

(Bangladesh) in 1971 is the biggest example of the decentralized nature of the country. The gaps in the political system have often been filled by the army and the civil service (Snellinger, n.d.).

3.3.1 Political Structure

Currently, the government of Pakistan is composed of three distinct branches; the Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

The Prime Minister of the country is considered to be the Head of the Government, is the leader of the country's executive branch and controls all matters that relate the country's internal and external foreign policy. He also acts as the Chief Executive of the Republic. Members of the National Assembly elect the Prime Minister through a vote. The president of Pakistan, on the other hand, is only the ceremonial Head of the State and a civilian Commander-in-Chief of the country's armed forces (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

3.3.2 Parliament

The Parliament of Pakistan (also known as Majlis-e-Shoora) is bicameral in nature, i.e. it is composed of a Lower House (National Assembly) and an Upper House (Senate) (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

The Senate is a permanent legislative body, where all the four provinces enjoy equal representation. The elections for Senate members are conducted in their respective provincial assemblies and they serve for a period of 6 years. Senate also includes representatives from the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of the country and from the capital territory (Islamabad). According to the constitution, the Chairman of Senate, is next in line to take the position of acting president, in case the office becomes vacant (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

Currently, there are a total of 104 seats in the Senate, out of which 17 are reserved for women, 17 are reserved for technocrats and ‘ulemas’ (religious scholars), and four are reserved for non-Muslim minorities (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2019).

For the National Assembly, members are elected based on universal adult (at least 18 years of age) suffrage and serve for a period of five years. Each of the four provinces, FATA and the capital territory are assigned the number of seats in the Assembly based on their population (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

According to the constitution, the National Assembly consists of a total of 342 members, out of which 60 seats are reserved for women and 10 are reserved for non-Muslim minorities. (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2019) Women parliamentarians who join on the basis of reserved seats are selected by the respective heads of their parties (National Democratic Foundation, 2019).

3.3.3 Method of Election for Reserved Seats of Women

The method of election of women under the reserved seats provision has been outlined in Article 51, sub article 6(d) of the constitution. It says that:

“members to the seats reserved for women which are allocated to a Province under clause (3) shall be elected in accordance with law through proportional representation system of political parties’ lists of candidates on the basis of total number of general seats secured by each political party from the Province concerned in the National Assembly.” (Constitution of Pakistan)

This means that the women appointed on the reserved seats are selected by their respective party leaders and the number of women who get seats from each part depends on the overall number of general seats the party wins in the elections (Shah, 2018).

This method of system has often been criticized for being elitist and biased. Many party leaders have been accused of showing favoritism and rewarding the seats on the basis of favoritism rather than merit. Most party leaders also award the seats to women in their families. Another major flaw of this system is the fact that independent candidates cannot contest for these reserved seats. Thus, women aiming to join the Assembly on these reserved seats are dependent upon the decision of their respective party leaders (Shah, 2018).

Another issue raised with regards to the reserved seats is the gap between the demanded proportion of 33% and the granted proportion of 17%. women's rights movements have been consistently bringing forward demands for a quota of 33% since the mid-1990s but their efforts have been in vain. The demands for direct elections for these seats have also remained unfilled to date (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

CHAPTER 4

FEMALE POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND PARTICIPATION IN PAKISTAN

4.1 Theoretical background

This chapter deals with the explanation of some theoretical concepts which are vital to the understanding of the research.

4.1.1 Political Participation:

“Where few take part in decisions there is little democracy; the more participation there is in decisions, the more democracy there is.” (Verba & Nie, 1972, p. 1).

Political participation refers to those activities of citizens that affect the politics of a country. These activities include voting, carrying out demonstrations, signing petitions, contacting public officials, campaigning on social media platforms and other online forums, volunteering for political campaigns and related activities, and attending rallies of political parties etc. Political participation is considered to be an essential feature of a good democracy and can even be considered as an important criterion for assessing the quality of a democracy (Deth, 2016).

4.1.2 Political Representation:

“It is because the signifier exists, because it represents (through symbolic action), that the group being represented and symbolized exists and that in return, it causes its representative to exist as representative of a group.” Pierre Bourdieu, “La délégation et le fétichisme politique”

One of the simplest definitions of political representation have been provided by Hanna Pitkin (1967) where she says it means to “make present again”. Thus, according to these words, political

representation refers to the act of making the public's opinions and ideas "present" in the process of public policy formulation. It involves political actors, who represent and advocate on behalf of others in the political structure. In a nutshell, it can be considered as political assistance (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2006).

Even though both, political representation and participation, are important components for determining the political standing of the women in Pakistan, in this research paper I will only focus the empirical work on the relationship of female political representation with female economic empowerment, with only a brief overview of the female political participation in the theoretical part.

4.2 History of Female Political Representation in Pakistan

After the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the existent Constituent Assemblies were converted into dominion legislatures. The country's first constituent Assembly had only two women, one from East Pakistan (Begum Shaista Ikramullah) and one from West Pakistan (Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz). Adult Franchise (granting all citizens the right to vote without any sort of discrimination) was adopted by the assembly in 1951 (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The first constituent Assembly was dissolved in 1954 and indirect elections were held within the two provincial assemblies, to elect the second Assembly. This one had no women members at all (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The Assembly introduced the first constitution of Pakistan in 1956, under which 10 seats were reserved for women in the country's unicameral parliament (5 for East Pakistan and 5 for West Pakistan). Another important feature of this constitution was the dual voting right granted to women, known as the 'Principle of Female Suffrage and Women's Reserved Seats'. Under this

provision women were considered eligible to cast their votes for general seats in addition to their eligibility to vote for the candidates for women's seats. However, the constitution was abrogated on October 8, 1958, when the first Martial Law was proclaimed in the country, and no elections could be held under it (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The second constitution was introduced in 1962, under General Muhammad Ayub Khan, the military dictator at that time. This constitution allowed for a National Assembly constituting 156 indirectly elected members and 6 reserved seats for women (three each for East and West Pakistan). Under the constitution, female suffrage on in accordance with territorial constituencies was abolished and it was provided that women would be elected by the Assembly, using the method of indirect elections (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The constitution of 1962 was repealed in 1969, under the second Martial Law declared by General Yahya Khan. He introduced a Legal Framework Order (LFO), under which new general elections were to be held. This LFO included 13 reserved seats for women, 6 for West Pakistan and 7 for East Pakistan. At that time the country had a unicameral Parliament of 313 members and the women on the reserved seats were to be indirectly elected by the National Assembly members. The elections were held on December 7, 1970 but, unfortunately, before the new Assembly could convene, East Pakistan seceded from the country and things were put on hold (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

After the secession, only 144 members remained in the National Assembly from the Western Wing, who then formed the Constituent Assembly Pakistan. This Assembly first convened on April 14th, 1972 and included 6 women members, all of whom were elected on reserved seats (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The third constitution of the country was introduced in 1973, and a bicameral parliament was adopted by Pakistan under this constitution. Under the new constitution 10 seats were reserved for women in the Lower House (to be elected by votes of the National Assembly members). No such provisions were made for the Upper House. The provision for reserved seats was to expire after two more general elections or 10 years, whichever came later (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

Following the 1973 constitution, the next assembly was elected in 1977. This one, however, turned out to have a very short life-span and was dissolved just after three months of its election. Thus, the third Martial Law was introduced in the country on July 5th, 1977 by General Zia ul Haq. The constitution was also subsequently suspended (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The country resumed its political activities in 1985 and elections for the National Assembly were held on a non-party basis. This Assembly comprised of 237 members in total and the number of women's reserved seats was raised from 10 to 20 (under the 'Revival of Constitution Order'). The time period for the reserved seats was also changed to 10 years or 3 general elections (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The assembly was dismissed by President Zia-ul-Haq on May 28th, 1988 and the next party-based election were held on November 16th, 1988, after the death of the president. The new Assembly also had 20 women members (Aurat Foundation, 2012). In the Assembly's tenure from 1988-1990, Pakistan also had its first female Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. She was also the first woman to lead a Muslim country in modern history (Tikkanen, 2019).

The provision for the reserve seats lapsed after the dismissal of the 1988 Assembly by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in 1990. The following three elections (1990, 1993 and 1997) didn't have any provisions for reserved seats. This caused the number of women in the parliament to fall; the

percentage of female parliamentarians in the National Assembly fell to 3.2% after the elections of 1997. The proportion of women in the Senate was 2.4% at that time and in all the four provinces combined, it was 0.4%. This matter raised concerns from women rights organizations (Aurat Foundation, 2012). During the time period 1993-1996, Pakistan once again had a female Prime Minister (Benzair Bhutto). However, she was later assassinated in December 2007, a few months before the 2008 general elections (Tikkanen, 2019).

Following a military coup by General Pervez Musharraf, the Assembly of 1988 was dismissed in October 1999. After facing immense pressure from women's rights groups, the General agreed to raise women's representation once the political machinery was restored. Soon he introduced a new system of Local Government consisting of three tiers and at 33% of the seats were reserved for women in each of the tiers. They were to be directly elected at the Union level but indirectly at the other two (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

While this changed was welcomed by women rights groups, it faced backlash from almost all major political parties, who believed that these seats exceeded the number of women politicians in the country and, thus, would be difficult to fill (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The small victory for women was short lived and women's rights groups were, once again, disappointed when the plan for the Parliamentary and provincial elections was announced. The constitution of 1973 was restored through a Legal Framework Order (2002). Under this order, instead of the 33% representation, women were only granted a 17% representation in the National Assembly (60 out of 342 seats) and 17.6% in the provincial assemblies. For the first time, 17% seats were also reserved for women in the Senate (Aurat Foundation, 2012).

The elections of 2008, 2013 and 2018 also had 60 reserved seats for women in the National Assembly. In 2008, for the first time in its history a woman (Dr. Fehmida Mirza) was elected as the speaker of the National Assembly. She was also the first female speaker in the Muslim World (National Assembly of Pakistan, 2018).

4.3 Female Political Participation in Pakistan

Women in Pakistan have always faced numerous challenges in the area of active political participation. In Pakistan, politics has been considered a men's game and the few women who have tried venturing into it as politicians or voters have often been met with violence and resistance and are delegitimized for no other reason than their gender. Some female politicians have also faced harassment and threats of physical violence (Mahmood, 2018).

After Benazir Bhutto was elected as the first female Prime Minister of Pakistan, a number of religious verdicts (known as *fatwas*) were issued by some prominent Islamic clerics in the country, which stated that women could not head Islamic countries. Her political opponents went so far as to circulate doctored photos of her in a swimsuit, to present her as a Westernized woman who was a danger to the moral basis of the country, thus trying their best to discredit her on the basis of morality rather than merit (Mahmood, 2018).

In another instance, Zille Huma Usman, Minister for Social Welfare in Punjab was killed in 2007 for being a woman in politics. According to reports, she was attacked because she was not wearing proper "Muslim" clothing and because of the popular belief in the country that in Islam women are not allowed assume positions of leaders (Mahmood, 2018).

Sadly, these things are not stories of the past. Even in the elections of 2018, five female candidates were threatened with physical violence if they did not withdraw themselves from the elections. The threats came from members of the rival party (Mahmood, 2018).

Just like their efforts for political representation, the government of Pakistan is also trying to increase the political participation of women as electoral candidates and voters. The ‘Elections Act’ of 2017 was introduced to deal with this issue and introduced three main policy measures. First, it mandated that results would be nullified in constituencies where the turnout of women voters is less than or equal to ten percent. Secondly, the practice of restricting women from voting or contesting in elections was criminalized. And thirdly, under this act, all political parties were required to list female candidates in at least 5% of their non-reserved national and provincial assembly seats (Mahmood, 2018).

The Electoral Commission of Pakistan (ECP) also promoted female political participation by ensuring their safety and comfort on election day through the introduction of women-only polling stations where the staff was also female. The objective of this was to increase female voter turnout in more conservative parts of the country (Mahmood, 2018).

Even though the country has taken some steps forward when it comes to the political participation of women, it still has a long way to go.

4.4 Effects of Increased Female Political Representation

As seen in the sections before the representation of women in the parliament has been steadily increasing in the country in the recent years. This poses a further question; has having more women in the parliament been effective in terms of women empowerment in the country? One side of this will be the economic empowerment, which will be studied in detail quantitatively in the coming

sections. In this section, we'll take a brief look at the overall performance and impact of having more women in the parliament.

The performance of female parliamentarians elected to the parliaments of 1997, 2008 and 2013 was closely monitored by a number of International and domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media outlets and other civil society organizations. Some of these include Free and Fair Election Network (FAFEN), International Foundation for Election System (IFES), Pattan Development Organization, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), and Aurat Foundation. Some of the female parliamentarians also resented this scrutiny and considered it unfair since their male counterparts didn't have to face a similar situation (Bari, 2015).

Even though women also joined the parliament through general seats, since the majority of them reached there through reserved seats, monitoring them could provide an assessment of the female parliamentarians on general seats as well (Bari, 2015).

A number of organizations monitoring the performance reported that women who joined the parliament through reserved seats were seen to be active participants in the parliamentary business. The National Assembly from 2002-2007 had the second highest number of female parliamentarians in the history of the country. 60 of these women joined through reserved seats while the remaining 14 came on general seats. This was the first time that such a large number of women had joined the parliament and thus, they lacked experience and many parliamentary skills required to be effective members of the parliament (Bari, 2015).

However, an assessment conducted by the Aurat Foundation shows that these women contributed greatly to the parliament. Of the total questions moved in the parliament, 27% of those were moved

by women parliamentarians, while women parliamentarians also moved 30% of the total call attention notices, 42% of the private members' bills and 24% of the total number of resolutions. The high-performance trend of female parliamentarians continued for the two subsequent parliaments as well (Bari, 2015).

In the parliaments of 2002 and 2008, 9 very important pro-women legislations were passed and bills for all these legislations were moved by women parliamentarians who had joined the parliament through reserved seats. On the other hand, in the parliamentary history of Pakistan, male parliamentarians' record of moving pro-women bills has been extremely low. Another interesting fact found in one of the assessments was the fact that women parliamentarians who were elected on general seats were not as active as those who joined through reserved seats (Bari, 2015).

National Assembly's performance assessment from June 2014 to February 2015 showed that female parliamentarians had a 50% contribution in carrying out the parliamentary business. As compared to oversight and representation roles, women parliamentarians were seen to perform much better in a legislative capacity (Bari, 2015). Women also attended the Assembly sessions more regularly than their male counterparts (Khan & Naqvi, 2018).

The remarkable parliamentary performance of women parliamentarians who joined the National Assembly on quota has helped counter people's reservations about female parliamentarians on quota only getting there because of favoritism and only working for party interests. In a survey carried out by Institute of Development Studies in Pakistan, women legislators from the National and provincial assemblies, (who had joined on the basis of reserved seats) were asked whose interests they believe they represent. 75 % of them answered that they represent the "women of

Pakistan”, “women from their provinces or home regions” or “the people of Pakistan”. Only 19% of them said that they represent the interests of their respective parties (Khan & Naqvi, 2018).

From these assessments one can see that increased female representation in the parliament has indeed been having a positive impact on strengthening the position of women in the parliamentary structure of the country and on the introduction of pro-women legislation.

CHAPTER 5

DATA AND METHODS

5.1 Type of investigation

In this research I will study the impact of increasing female political representation on the economic empowerment of women. Proportion of women in the National Assembly (Lower House of the Parliament of Pakistan) has been taken as the independent variable (representing political representation) while female labor force participation has been taken as the outcome variable (representing economic empowerment of women).

However, this model suffers from the problem of reverse causality. While political empowerment of women is theorized to impact their economic empowerment, women's economic empowerment is also believed to make them more independent and encourage them to aspire to positions of leadership such as political careers. Thus, to solve the problem of reverse causality (endogeneity), I will use a dummy variable for gender quotas as an instrumental variable and apply it to the 2SLS model.

As mentioned above, the government of Pakistan has been the system of reserved seats to introduce gender quotas in the parliament over various time periods. In years after the quotas are applied the proportion of women in the National Assembly is also higher. Thus, the instrumental variable can help in observing the relationship between increasing female political representation and economic empowerment of women.

5.2 Variable Selection:

5.2.1 Explanatory Variable:

Percentage women in the National Assembly-The proportion of women parliamentarians in the National Assembly of Pakistan over the years.

Even though the Parliament of Pakistan has a bicameral structure, i.e. it has a lower house (National Assembly) and an upper house (Senate) I will only consider the National Assembly in this case since the bicameral system was only adopted after the 1973 constitution and reserved seats for women were only introduced in the Senate in 1985 (National Assembly of Pakistan).

Also, Senate members are elected through indirect elections (Senate of Pakistan) and thus the process is largely isolated from the voters.

5.2.2 Dependent Variable:

Female Labor Force Participation Rate- Percentage of women, 10 years and over, employed in the labor force.

5.2.3 Confounders:

In statistics, a confounder is a variable that influences both the dependent variable and independent variable, often causing a spurious association. The relationship between female labor force participation and the political participation of women in Pakistan can also be affected by a number of confounding variables. However, most of these variables are latent variables, i.e. variables that make intuitive sense but may or may not be measured in a particular dataset. In this study latent variables include cultural practices, gender role attitudes in a society, religious beliefs etc. All these factors have an impact on female labor force participation and the political participation of women

in Pakistan. However, since quantitative data is not available for them, they can't be used as potential confounders in the model.

There are some confounding variables which can be considered as quantifiable confounders for this model, but they lack proper data; e.g. the proportion of women who're married. Married women, especially in a country like Pakistan, are less likely to be involved in politics or join the labor force due to a greater focus on household and childcare duties, as discussed previously in the country context.

Two confounding variables, however, that can be quantified for the purpose of this study are the education level of women and the percentage of urban population in the country.

Education affects both, female political representation and their labor force participation. Higher levels of education can help women become more aware about the political climate of the country, gain necessary skills and knowledge to effectively take part and contribute to political activities in the country, overcome the challenges posed by the patriarchal norms of the society by becoming more economically and intellectually independent, and become part of networks that can become an important source of support in their political careers (Goetz, 2003). An increase in the level of education also tends to impact the female labor force participation in a number of ways. For instance, women with more education can apply for more skilled work and are less likely to have early marriages or children, thus giving them an opportunity to focus on work outside the house (Ince, 2010).

Additionally, while urbanization can create more independence and economic opportunities for women, it also comes with a number of gender-associated inequalities, e.g. higher chances of gender-based violence, employment constraints, barriers to quality education, lack of access to

proper health facilities, and difficulties in mobility etc. (National Democratic Institute, 2015). These factors negatively impact both, female political representation and their labor force participation

Here I took the percentage of female students in secondary schools to represent the changing trend of education among women and percentage of urban population to represent the rate of urbanization in Pakistan.

5.2.4 Instrumental Variable:

As mentioned before, I will be using the instrumental variable approach to eliminate the problem of endogeneity in the model. Here, I'll take the implementation of quotas as the instrumental variable. The variable will be a dummy variable, which is equal to 1 for years when the gender quota was implemented in the parliamentary elections and 0 otherwise.

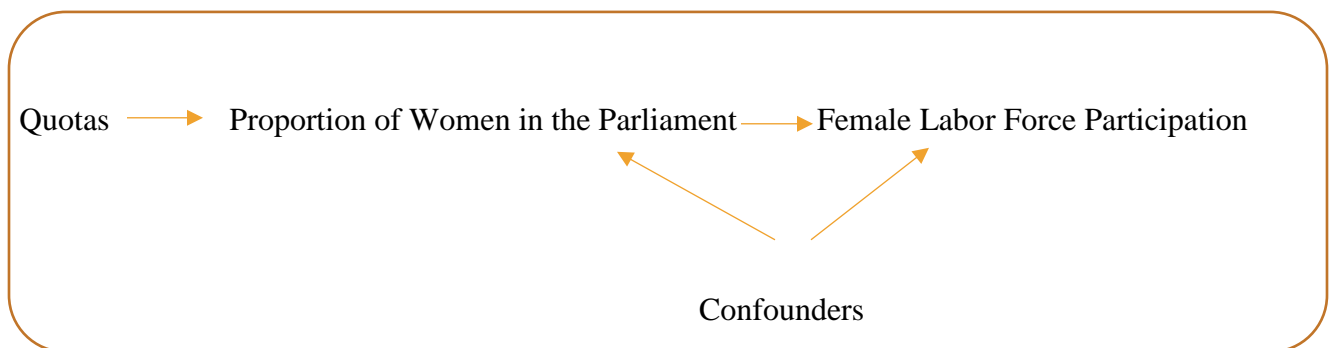


Figure 5: Relationship Framework for Variables

5.3 Type of Data:

In this paper I've used secondary data for the aforementioned variables.

5.4 Sources of Data:

Data has been taken from the following sources:

- Proportion of Women in the National Assembly – Inter-Parliamentary Union
- Female Labor Force Participation – Economic Surveys of Pakistan
- Percentage of Female Students in Secondary Schools – UNESCO-UIS Statistics
- Urban Population (% of Total)-World Bank

5.5. Missing Values:

As mentioned earlier, the availability of data is a big limitation for this research. Data is only available at the national level, and even that data has a number of missing values. Due to the constraints of less than ideal number of observations and the need to have data available for all years, for the sake of accurate analysis, I used interpolation to predict the missing values for the following variables:

- Female Labor Force Participation
- Percentage of Female Students in Secondary Schools

5.6 Time Horizon:

The time period for all the variables in the research is 1971-2017. Before 1972, East Pakistan (present day Bangladesh) and West Pakistan were the same country. After its inception in 1947, Pakistan went through long periods of political instability and military rule, where even proper elections could not be held. Ultimately East Pakistan separated and became Bangladesh in 1971. For this reason, I decided to begin the research period from 1972, the year when, following the 1971 national elections, the first constituent assembly was formed for present day Pakistan. The time period ends at 2017, the year of the latest available data, making a total of 45 years.

However, there were 10 years of military rule (Years 1977-1984, 2000-2001) in this time period, which have to be removed since the parliament was not functional during those years.

The final data set spans over a time period of 35 years.

5.7 Description of Data

In this section I will describe the time series trend of the various variables and observe how they've changed over the years.

5.7.1 Female Labor Force Participation Rate

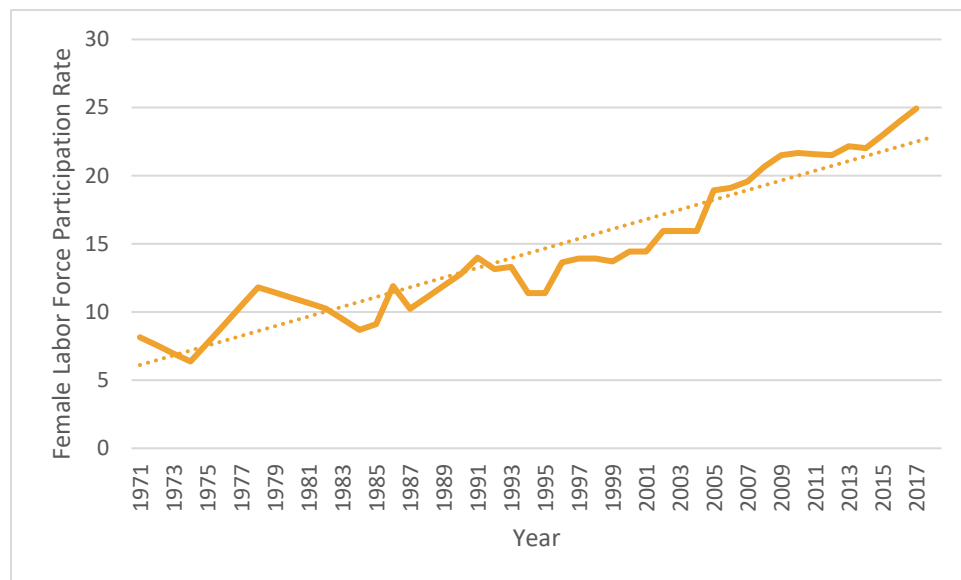


Figure 6: Female Labor Force Participation Rate (1971-2017)

Data Source: Economic Surveys of Pakistan

The graph shows that the female labor force participation rate has been rising steadily over the years. Some other descriptive statistics can be seen in the table below:

Minimum	1 st Qu.	Median	Mean	2 rd Qu.	Maximum
6.37	11.39	13.92	15.13	20.66	24.93

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Female Labor Force Participation Rate

5.7.2 Proportion of Women in the National Assembly

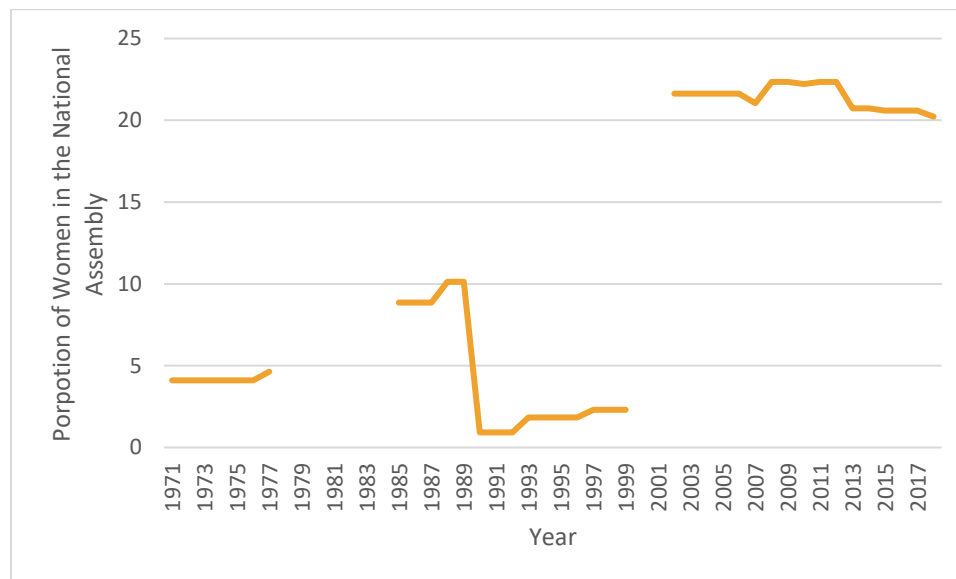


Figure 7: Proportion of Women in the National Assembly (1971-2017)

Data Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

The graph shows that the proportion of women in the National Assembly has been higher in the years with the reserved seats in comparison to years without the reserved seats provision (1990-1999). The proportion has been the highest during the past 4 government regimes (2002-2007, 2008-2012, 2013-2018, 2018-ongoing). The breaks in the graphs show periods of military rule in the country (1977-1984, 2000-2001).

Some other descriptive statistics for the variable can be seen in the table below:

Minimum	1 st Qu.	Median	Mean	3 rd Qu.	Maximum
0.92	2.30	8.86	11.69	21.64	22.35

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Proportion of Women in the Parliament

The number of total seats in the Assembly has not been constant over time. The graph below shows the number of women in the National Assembly as compared to the total number of seats:

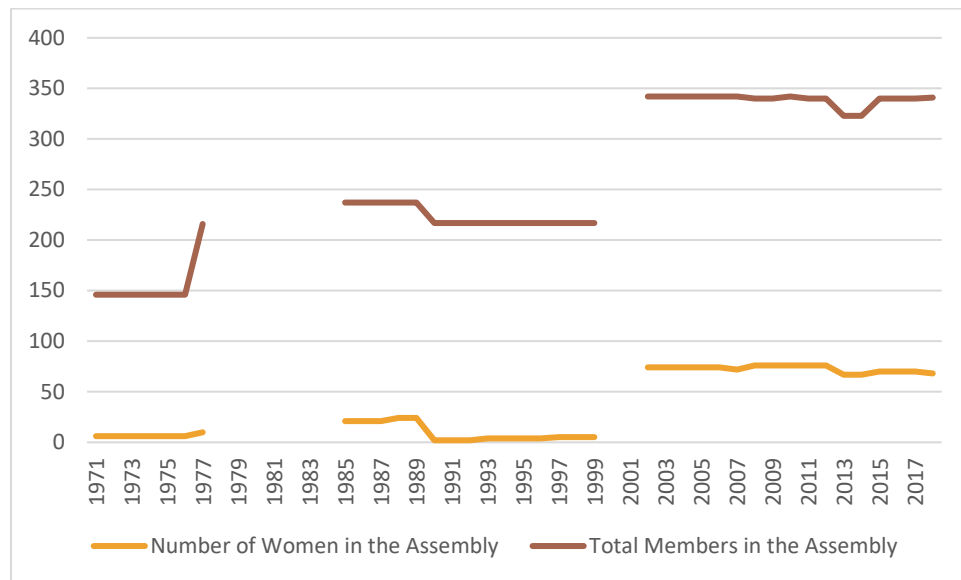


Figure 8: Number of women in the Assembly compared to the total number of Women (1971-2017)

Data Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union

From the graph we can see that the number of women in the Assembly has remained quite low as compared to the total number of members.

5.7.3 Percentage of Female Students in Secondary Schools

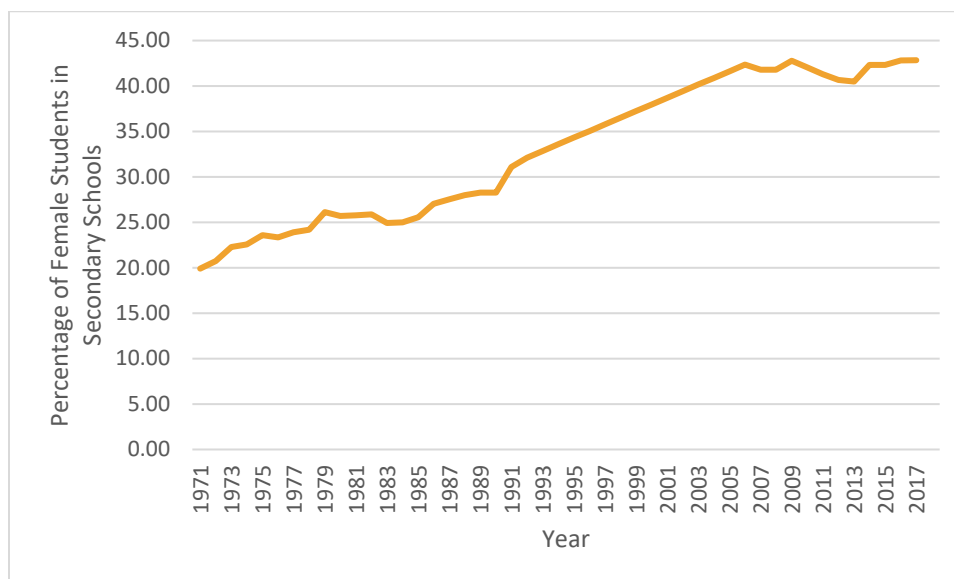


Figure 9: Percentage of Female Students in Secondary Schools in Pakistan (1971-2017)

Data Source: UNESCO-UIS Statistics

From the graph we can see that the percentage of female students in secondary schools in Pakistan has been enjoying a steadily increasing trend in the country's history.

Some more descriptive statistics can be seen in the table below:

Minimum	1 st Qu.	Median	Mean	3 rd Qu.	Maximum
19.90	27.98	35.77	34.35	41.62	42.84

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Percentage of Female Students in Secondary Education

5.7.4 Urban Population (% of Total)

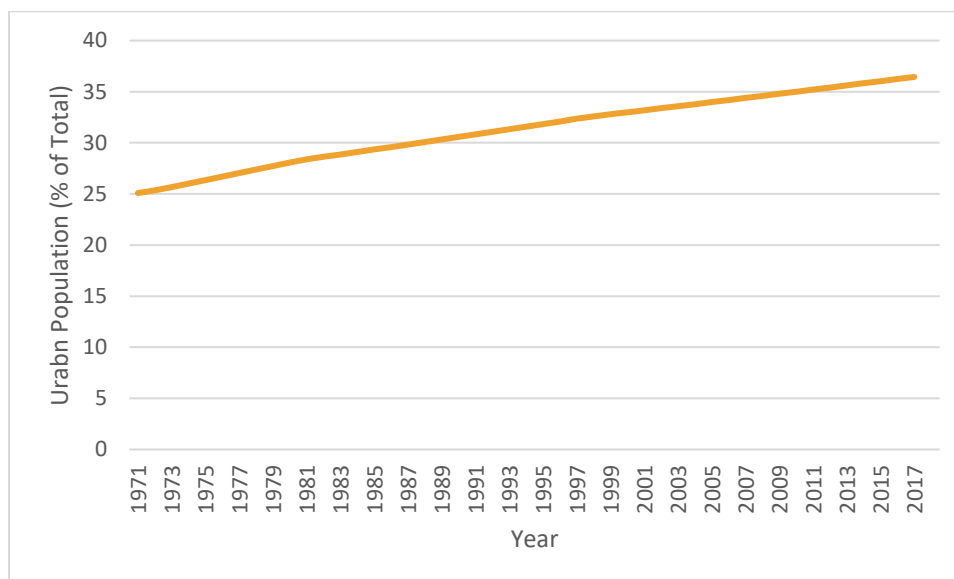


Figure 10: Urban Population (% of Total) in Pakistan (1971-2017)

Data Source: World Bank

The graph above shows that the percentage of urban population in Pakistan has been steadily increasing over the years. Some more descriptive statistics can be seen in the table below:

Minimum	1 st Qu.	Median	Mean	3 rd Qu.	Maximum
25.08	30.08	32.35	31.89	34.59	36.44

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for Urban Population (% of Total)

CHAPTER 6

REGRESSION MODEL AND RESULTS

To estimate the impact of increasing female political participation on female labor force participation rate I begin by estimating the following econometric model:

$$Y = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 Z + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

Where:

Y = Female Labor Force Participation

X= Number of Women in the Assembly

Z= Confounders (Female Secondary Education and Urbanization)

ε = Idiosyncratic error term that includes unobserved attributes like ability, and social norms, cultural and religious norms

My parameter of interest is β_1 , which captures the effect of having more women in parliament on the labor force participation of women. If the results show that $\beta_1 > 0$, this would indicate that having more women in parliament has a positive impact on the labor force participation of women.

6.1 Instrumental Variable Strategy:

Using the instrumental variable approach to estimate the effect requires the use of the two stage least square method (2SLS).

The first stage of the model can be specified as follows:

$$X = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{ Gender Quotas} + \alpha_2 Z + \eta \quad (2)$$

Where:

X= Number of Women in the Assembly

Z= Confounders (Female Secondary Education and Urbanization)

The structural equation is as follows:

$$Y = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 Z + \varepsilon \quad (3)$$

Where:

Y = Female Labor Force Participation

X= Number of Women in the Assembly

Z= Confounders (Female Secondary Education and Urbanization)

ε = Idiosyncratic error term that includes unobserved attributes like ability, and social norms, cultural and religious norms

6.1.1 Validity of Instrumental Variable:

Instrumental Variable Assumptions:

To make sure that the dummy variable for quotas is the right choice for the model, the following two assumptions need to be satisfied:

1. **Relevance Assumption:** The relevance assumption is satisfied if the explanatory variable (x) is correlated with the instrumental variable (z), i.e. $\text{cor}(\text{Quotas}, \text{Number of Women in})$

the National Assembly) $\neq 0$. In this case the correlation coefficient between the implementation of quotas and the number of women in the parliament is 0.68 and thus the relevance assumption is satisfied.

2. **Exclusion Restriction:** The exclusion restriction is satisfied when we can confirm that the instrumental variable is not correlated with the unobserved factors of female economic empowerment in Pakistan, i.e. the number of seats in the parliament are the only channel through which gender quotas can affect female labor force participation. This assumption cannot be fully tested since all the unobserved factors of female empowerment in Pakistan cannot be listed or quantified. However, it can be theoretically justified since parliamentary gender quotas are only introduced for the purpose of affecting the number of women in the parliament and are not directly related to any other political or socioeconomic factors.

6.2 Results

The results for the various regression models are as follows:

6.2.1 OLS Regression:

First, I ran a simple OLS regression (with and without the confounders) to get a general idea of the relationship between the number of proportion of women in the parliament and the female labor force participation rate. The results for the OLS regression are as follows:

Ordinary Least Squares

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	Female Labor Force Participation	
	(1)	(2)
Proportion of Women in the Assembly	0.489*** (0.060)	0.171*** (0.044)
Female Secondary Education		-0.118 (0.161)
Percentage of Urban Population		1.456*** (0.351)
Constant	9.405*** (0.881)	-29.244*** (6.156)
Observations	37	37
R ²	0.655	0.923
Adjusted R ²	0.645	0.916
Residual Std. Error	3.245 (df = 35)	1.580 (df = 33)
F Statistic	66.504*** (df = 1; 35)	131.628*** (df = 3; 33)
<i>Note:</i>		* p < 0.05 ** p < 0.01 *** p < 0.001

Table 6: Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression Results

The results for both regressions, with and without the confounders, are highly significant.

Without Confounder: A one percentage point increase in the proportion of women in the National Assembly is associated with an increase in the female labor force participation rate by almost 49 percentage points.

With Confounder: A one percentage point increase in the proportion of women in the National Assembly is associated with an increase in the female labor force participation rate by almost 17 percentage points.

6.2.2 Regression Results for Explanatory Variable and Instrumental Variable:

First Stage of 2SLS	
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Proportion of Women in the Assembly
dummy_quota	12.951*** (0.516)
Female Secondary Education	0.719*** (0.136)
Percentage of Urban Population	0.290 (0.309)
Constant	-31.732*** (5.437)
Observations	37
R ²	0.978
Adjusted R ²	0.976
Residual Std. Error	1.386 (df = 33)
F Statistic	496.404*** (df = 3; 33)
Note: * p < 0.1 ** p < 0.05 *** p < 0.01	

Table 7: First Stage of 2SLS

The results of the regression between the explanatory variable and the instrumental variable show a positive relationship and are highly significant and reaffirm the relevance assumption, thus confirming the validity of the instrumental variable. The results show that in years when the gender

quota is implemented, the number of women in the National Assembly increases by almost 13 units.

6.2.3 Two Stage Least Squares:

Two Stage Least Squares Method	
	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	Female Labor Force Participation
Proportion of Women in the Assembly	0.183*** (0.045)
Female Secondary Education	-0.131 (0.162)
Percentage of Urban Population	1.461*** (0.352)
Constant	-29.102*** (6.164)
Observations	37
R ²	0.923
Adjusted R ²	0.916
Residual Std. Error	1.582 (df = 33)
<i>Note:</i> * p < 0.1 ** p < 0.05 *** p < 0.01	

Table 8: Results of Two-Stage Least Squares Method

The results for the instrumental variable regression are also highly significant for the explanatory variable coefficient. This shows that increasing the percentage of women in the National Assembly by one percentage point increases the female labor force participation rate by 18.3 percentage points.

CHAPTER 7

LIMITATIONS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Research Limitations

Before moving forward with the discussion, I would like to point out some limitations I faced while conducting the research. The limitations may have affected the accuracy of my results and conclusions and future researchers in this area can work on them to conduct further research on the matter. They are as follows:

1. **Data Limitations:** Due to lack of proper availability of data there were a number of missing values for some of the variables. Most of the data in Pakistan has not been digitized and can be found only in some old journals or not at all. Since I was not physically present in the country I had to rely on online sources and ended up with missing values in the final dataset. I used interpolation to predict the missing values since I didn't want to the number of observations in the data. This might affect the accuracy of the results as the interpolated values are merely predicted and might be quite different from the real ones.
2. **Short Time Frame:** The data used for the empirical analysis ranges from 1972-2017 (45 years), some of which had to be omitted due to military rule and absence of a functional parliament in some of the years. This considerably reduced the time frame and the final data used in the analysis included only 35 years. For a time-series analysis this dataset is quite small and may not give precise results. Future research can be conducted after some years, with a wider time period, to get more robust results.
3. **Lack of Quantifiable Variables:** Most of the confounders relevant to this research are not quantifiable. For instance, there are a number of factors, such as cultural practices, societal

gender norms, religious beliefs etc. that affect both female political participation and labor force participation in Pakistan. However, these factors cannot be quantifiable and thus, cannot be used in the empirical analysis in this research paper. The results from this analysis cannot be considered a 100% accurate if these factors are not accounted for.

7.2 Discussion

The aim of this thesis is to determine whether an increase in female political representation in Pakistan has an impact on the economic empowerment of women in the country. The 2SLS model used to study the relationship shows that a significantly positive relationship exists between the two factors, i.e. an increase in the proportion of women in the National Assembly positively impacts the female labor force participation in Pakistan.

These results are quite encouraging for the ongoing efforts to increase female political participation and representation in the country. They provide support for the women rights movements that demand more political rights and representation for women, and for the government's efforts to implement gender quotas and raise female political participation as voters and candidates. They also establish female political representation as an important tool for economic empowerment of women in Pakistan.

These findings support theoretical work on the topic. As discussed before, most of the assessments and reports carried out in Pakistan have shown that female political representation has indeed positively impacted the political standing of women in terms of leadership roles and passing of more pro-women legislation. The empirical analysis reaffirms this positive relationship in the case of female political participation and economic empowerment.

However, considering the limitations of the research, these results have to be taken with a grain of salt. The precision of results may be affected by the short length of the time series and the interpolation of the missing values. Most importantly, the model suffers from the exclusion of important contextual factors that impact both, the political and labor force participation of women in Pakistan.

As seen in the country context, women in Pakistan suffer a number of societal, cultural, economic and religious restrictions. They are expected to accept male domination in their personal and professional lives and majority of them lack the independence to join the political system or the labor force. However, these factors lack quantifiable data and cannot be controlled for in the empirical analysis, thus negatively impacting the preciseness of the results.

During the years when the number of women in the National Assembly was the highest (2002-2018) were also the years when women's rights movements gained momentum in the country. Progressive feminist movements began in Pakistan in the early 1980s (National Geographic, 2019) and have been an important force in improving the status of women in Pakistan, albeit by a small margin. These movements have complemented the increase in political representation and may be an important driver for the increase in female labor force participation, an important feature not accounted for in the empirical analysis of this research paper.

The results of this research, while encouraging, cannot be taken as the last word on the matter and further work is required on the topic to gain more precise results.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Conclusion

Economic and political empowerment are both very useful tools to improve the socioeconomic status of women in Pakistan. Both of these can provide women with the independence and decision-making authority that can not only help them overcome challenges in their personal lives but elevate the status of the women in the country as a whole. As we've seen in this research, women politicians tend to focus on gender-policy issues and try to make the policy process more inclusive for women and sometimes even for minorities. This is why it is not only important, but necessary to increase female political representation and participation in the country. As more women issues come into focus and are countered with effective policy making, the status of women at various levels and sectors of the country will improve. The positive results of this research also reaffirm these theories.

However, women still face a number of challenges when it comes to increasing their political and economic empowerment, and despite the positive proof provided by literature, there are still those who believe that women have no place in the economic or the political system of the country. The challenges usually arise from cultural and social norms, religious beliefs and established gender role attitudes, all of which are deeply rooted in the society. Thus, the country requires strong, systematic and consistent efforts to counter these challenges.

Sadly, that's not usually the case in Pakistan. The politicians, majority of whom are men, prioritize political gains rather than focusing on women's participation in politics. This can be seen by the discontinuation of the gender quotas in some of the government regimes. Having more women in

parliament in one government regime and very few women in the next one, negatively affects continuity in policy formulation and implementation. Also, an increase in the proportion of women in the parliament needs to be complemented by more women in the executive branch of the government, and the local and provincial governments so that policies are not only introduced by also implemented effectively in all areas of the country. Women in provincial governments can also effectively deal with the issues specific to their respective provinces. Some policy matters in this regard can be seen in the following section.

8.2 Policy Recommendations

Some policy recommendations that can be effective in raising the political representation of women in the parliament and making it effective for the economic and overall empowerment of women in Pakistan are as follows:

8.2.1 Increase in Quota Provision and Direct Elections:

Currently, 17% of the seats in the National Assembly are reserved for women. In recent years, women rights organizations have been demanding an increase in the quota to at least 33%. While 17% quota is enough for a symbolic increase in representation, a 33% quota could lead to a substantive representation, i.e. it would allow women to gather more support in the parliament. This would also help the government in implementing a direct mode of elections for these seats. Many women who join legislative bodies on reserved seats are not taken seriously since it is believed that they are there just because of their gender and not their merit. This makes it difficult for them to push for their agendas and gain support on their legislative efforts. Also, since indirect elections mean that women joining on reserved seats are not assigned constituencies, they are isolated from voters and taking care of specific concerns.

A greater proportion of reserved seats could mean that there could be enough seats for the government to assign them constituencies and implement a method of direct elections for these seats.

8.2.2 Committee Assignments

Since men dominate the National Assembly they also dominate the committees. Women are usually assigned to smaller and uninfluential committees while men take charge of the leading committees. Assignment of women parliamentarians to committees relevant to economic development could lead to pro-women economic policies. Such committees may include those that deal with education, labor reforms, industrial reforms, and human rights etc. This could be a way in which women in the Assembly could directly affect the economic empowerment of women in the country.

8.2.3 Refinement of Women Rights Movements:

Pakistan lacks organized women rights movements. Absence of a clear agenda and the domination of the NGO sector has failed to establish the strength and relevance of the women rights voices within the country's policy debates. The NGO sector is often dependent on and has its objectives dictated by donors that might have their own vested interests. This takes the focus away from the true objective of women empowerment in the country (Bari, 2015). Thus, a refinement and clear definition of policy agendas the existing groups and organizations working on these movements could help bring forward gender policy agendas with clarity and strength and could help in gathering support for women rights issues in political and economic debates.

All of these policy recommendations are politically, administratively and financially feasible for the government. However, they may face some backlash from the political parties and the public who don't want more women involved in the political and economic structure of the country. Also,

while the first two recommendations can be implemented in the short run, the refinement of women rights movements requires a longer timeframe.

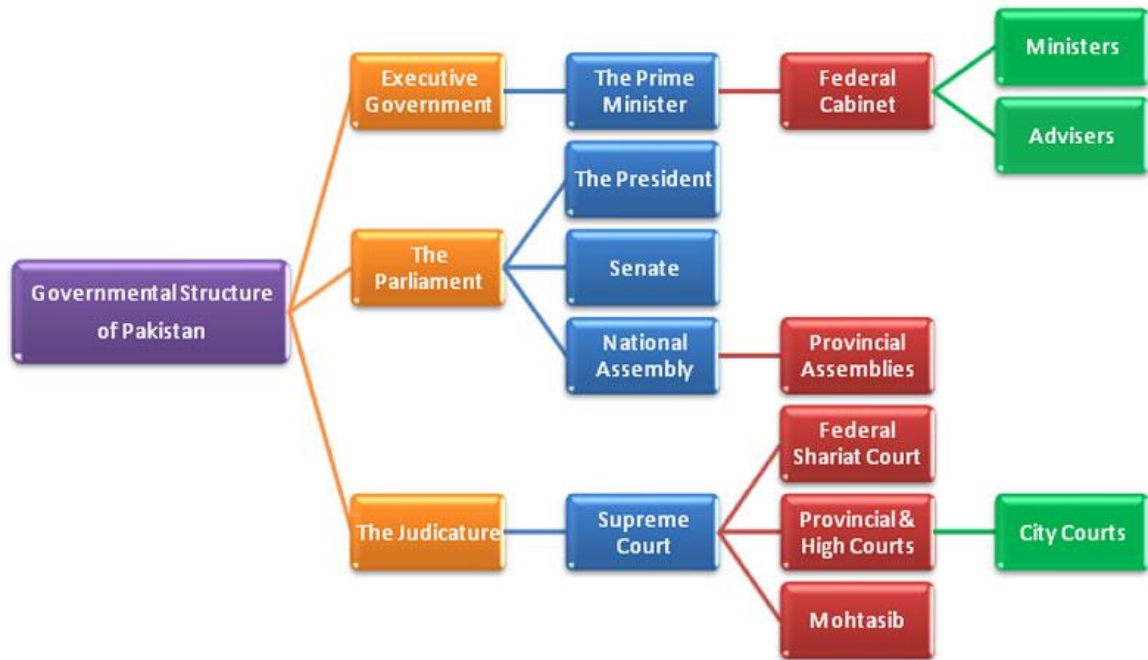
8.3 Way Forward

While this research provides very useful and relevant insights into the relationship between female political representation and economic empowerment in Pakistan, further work is required on the topic to gather more conclusive results.

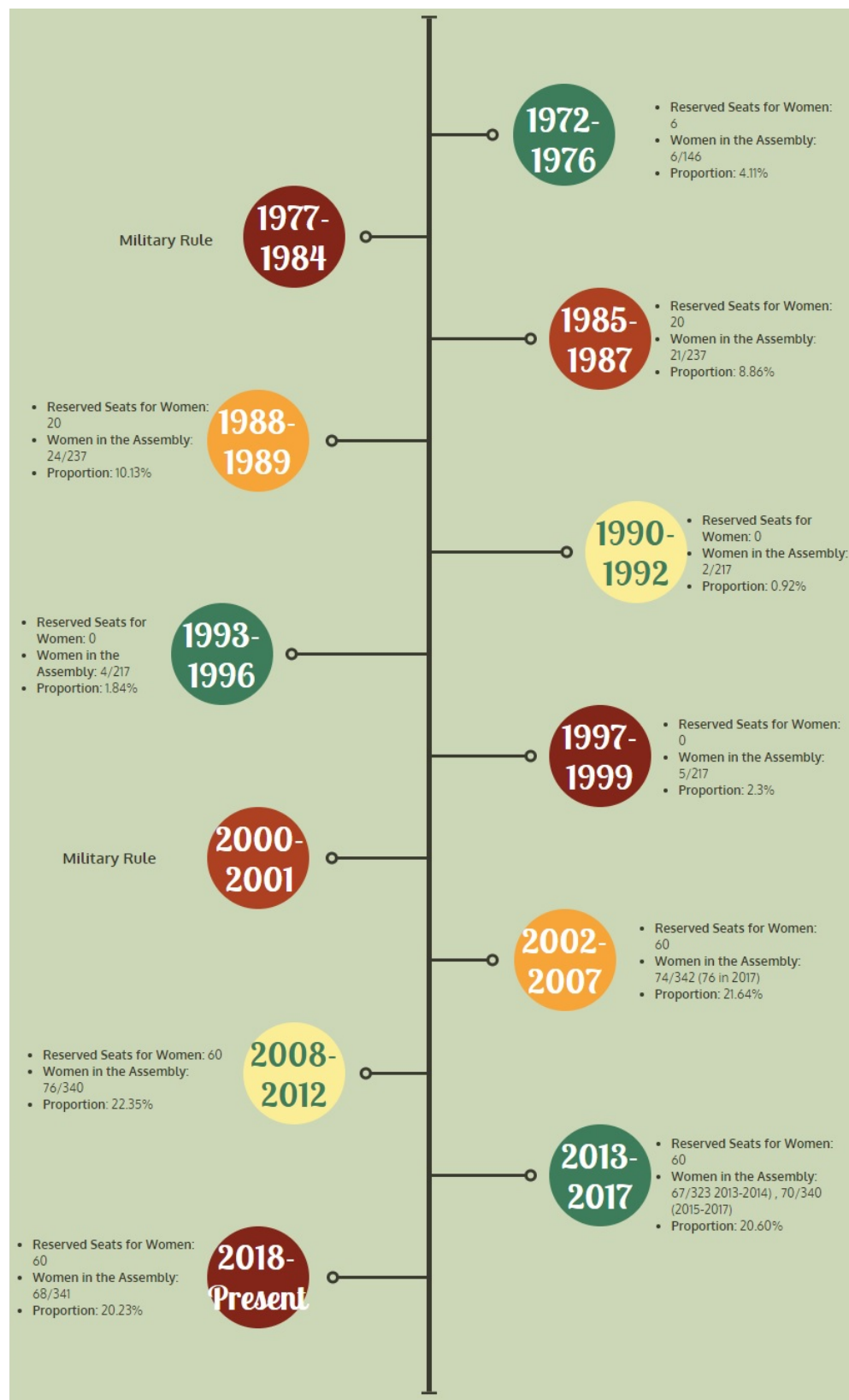
This could be done by gather more quantitative data on possible confounders, gathering data on constituency/municipality level to conduct panel data analysis and to expand the study towards the legislative bodies in specific provinces. All of these could help in obtaining results that are more precise and context specific.

APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Structure of Political System of Pakistan



Appendix 2: History of Female Political Representation in Pakistan (1971-2018)



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