

The Role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus in Decision Making and Legislation (2013-2018)

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¹ Zoheen Afzal ² Dr. Sadaf Bashir

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explore the role of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus (KPWPC) in legislation and decision making during 2013-2018. The research study utilized a qualitative research design through document analysis and interviews from parliamentarians of the KP assembly. It was found out that KPWPC has had some success in drafting legislation and creating awareness on various gender related subjects; however, it too faces challenges which constrain its effectiveness. These obstacles include hostility shown by male parliamentarians, lack in-experience in drafting legislation, lack of budgetary and administrative support and conflict of priorities when deciding between party agenda and the Caucus' goals. The research study concludes that there is an immense potential for KPWPC to achieve desired results, but it would require a more formal structure, budgetary support, capacity building and changes in prevalent norms which will help the body project itself to a greater platform.

Key Words: Gender equality, KPWPC, Women's empowerment, Women's rights.

1. Introduction

Women are traditionally excluded from the political sphere on the gender basis in a male-dominated society. In many legislatures, women parliamentarians are not considered as equals by male representatives. Hence, women parliamentarians have had no platform to make their voices heard in legislation and decision-making processes (Ali, 2018). Pakistan is a multi-ethnic and pluralist society with highly unequal and irregular social, political and economic development. The tribal, feudal, capitalist social constructions and weak political party structures shape divergent status of women across regions, class and rural-urban divides. While the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan avows the protection of women's rights under national legislation and asserts the concept of human rights without discrimination on the basis of gender. In reality, women in Pakistan complain of having been isolated from mainstream political sphere (Muhammad, 2019). In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province, women's participation and representation in Assembly has historically been a contentious subject in light of the prevalent cultural norms of the province. According to 2017 Census, KP province has 35.5 million habitants in total with 18 million males, 17.5 million females and 940 Transgender. Even though women account for about half of the population in the province, they are politically and socio-economically marginalized, lack access to basic services and rights. Since politics in Pakistan is male dominated, with men controlling the legislative agenda, female legislators are actively sidelined by the male peers. The percentage of women holding decision making positions in province level party organization structures is also low. Due to such obstacles, women parliamentarians in KP assembly struggle to represent the interests of women and other constituencies and find it difficult to effectively articulate progressive policy and legislative agendas.

To strengthen the status and voice of the women parliamentarians in the assembly as the majority of them have been elected for the first-time, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus (KPWPC) was created soon after the oath taking ceremony of the newly elected Members of Provincial Assembly in 2013. The establishment of KPWPC provided women

¹ MPhil in Political Science from Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar, Pakistan. Zoheen.Khan@gmail.com

² Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar, Pakistan. Email: sf.bashir84@gmail.com

parliamentarians a platform to work together for their own rights and to fight for women's causes and other policy issues. The KPWPC quarterly report of April-June 2016 mentions that the caucus conducted a variety of activities including meetings, study tours, workshops, seminars and discussions to make an impact in decision-making. The women's role in legislation and decision making is the key focus of supporters of women's political empowerment. Limited role of women in KP assembly is an obstacle for social justice and gender equality and advocates suggest that a robust role of women will boost the quality and outcomes of decision making. This study examines how female members of KP assembly with diverse political ideologies formed KPWPC, a cross-party political platform within the assembly, to achieve a common goal of women political empowerment and to foster gender equality in decision making in the KP assembly. The study sets the following objectives:

1. To examine the rationale behind the formation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus (KPWPC).
2. To analyse the role of KPWPC in decision making and legislation between 2013 and 2018.
3. To explore the challenges and obstacles faced by KPWPC to its effective performance and to put forward recommendations to strengthen its role.

2. Formation and Organization of KPWPC

Women caucuses or parliamentary groups are mechanisms that have been created within the parliaments of many countries to strengthen cooperation among women engaged in political life. Such caucuses can bring women parliamentarians together across party lines in effective alliances around a common goal (Women's Caucuses, 2011, p.2). United Nations Development Programme defines the WPC as follows: Women parliamentary caucus is gender-focused parliamentary body. These caucuses can bring women together from different parliamentary chambers, across party lines and can also engage other partners including civil society organizations and the private sector (United Nations Development Programme, 2016a).

Since 1947 the representation of women in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly has always been in a minority irrespective of the prevalent political systems. In 2018 General Elections, PTI secured majority of seats in KP assembly. Out of 124 total seats women got 22 reserved seats which is 17.7 percent. Women in assembly also realized that to tackle the dilemma of being marginalized in political matters of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, it is beneficial for them to also form a committee on similar lines as the National Assembly and Punjab Assembly. Consequently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Parliamentary Caucus was formed in 2013 with all 22 women on reserved seats as its members.

A formal Women's Parliamentary Caucus was formed by a parliamentary resolution in May 2015 by the KP assembly (United Nations Development Programme, 2016b). MPA Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli from Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) became founding Chairperson of the Caucus while Uzma Khan from JUI (F) had volunteered to be the General Secretary. After two years when Anisa Zeb took oath as MNA in September 2015, she had to leave her seat of WPC Chairperson. Elections were held for five positions of KPWPC on 23rd March 2016 under MPA Rashida Riffat of JI who had volunteered to be the election commissioner. The caucus was comprised of two bodies [see Table 1].

- i. Executive Committee/ KPWPC Cabinet having eight members
- ii. General Body which included all 22 women parliamentarians

In order to carry out its functions it was decided to conduct Executive Committee meeting every month and General Body meeting to be held every 03 months.

The caucus decided to publish quarterly report which would highlight its assembly business, meetings and activities (R. Riffat, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

Table 1: KPWPC Organisation				
SN	Names	WPC Members	Party Affiliation	Elected in General Elections
1	Dr. Mehr Taj Roghani	Chief Patron & General Body Member	PTI	First 2013
2	Meraj Humayun Khan	Chairperson	Qaumi Watan Party (QWP)	First time elected in 2013
3	Amna Sardar	Vice Chairperson	Pakistan Muslim League, Nawaz-Faction, PML (N)	First, 2013
4	Bibi Fozia	Vice Chairperson	Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, PTI	First, 2013
5	Uzma Khan	General Secretary	Jamiat Ulema-Islam, Fazal-ur-Rehman Faction, JUI (F)	Second 2008, 2013
6	Romana Jalil	Joint General Secretary	JUI (F)	First 2013
7	Aisha Naeem	Finance Secretary	PTI	First 2013
8	Zareen Riaz	Information Secretary	PTI	First 2013
9	Najma Shaheen	General Body Members	JUI (F)	First 2013
10	Dina Naz		PTI	First 2013
11	Maliha Ali Asghar		PTI	First 2013
12	Nadia Sher		PTI	First 2013
13	Nagina Khan		PTI	First 2013
14	Nargis		PTI	First 2013
15	Naseem Hayat		PTI	First 2013
16	Ruqia Hina		PML (N)	First 2013
17	Sobia Shahid		PML (N)	First 2013
18	Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli		QWP	Second 1988, 2013
19	Khatoon Bibi		Awami Jamhoori Ittehad Pakistan, IJIP	First 2013
20	Nighat Orakzai		Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians, PPPP	Third 2002, 2008, 2013
21	Rashda Riffat		Jamaat-e-Islami, JI	First 2013
22	Yasmeen Pir Muhammad Khan		Awami National Party, ANP	Third 2002, 2008, 2013

Source: Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, <https://www.pakp.gov.pk/2013>

However, it was not an easy journey for the caucus to establish its legitimacy as it faced hostility from the male members of the assembly. Moreover, it was allotted insufficient resources in fields of human resource, finance and logistics. Another major issue was that a room was required where members could gather for meeting and mutual learning, arranging such space took almost two years (A. Zeb, personal communication, May 30, 2018). As the caucus was not getting any funding by government, the caucus started contacting different NGOs for this purpose. After a stretched struggle of 2 years the caucus managed to get a space in assembly building which was equipped by UNDP.

2.1.Objectives of KPWPC

The KPWPC is an informal alignment of female Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) which aimed strengthening women and upholding their issues in KP assembly and increase their role in legislation by cross-party co-operation. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly (2013-2018) website states the objective of the caucus is to strengthen the voices of “ignored and sidelined” women, most of whom “had come to the Assembly for the first time, they were not confident enough to demand their rights.” It states that KPWPC “provided them a platform to struggle collectively for their own rights as well as bring more business pertaining to women issues to the Assembly debate.”

According to Ms. Rashida Riffat, member of KPWPC, the rationale behind the formation of WPC was to strengthen the voice of women parliamentarians who joined the assembly on reserves seats and were not being taken seriously. Ms. Rashida noted that any effort individually to bring a legislative proposal for women’s rights was simply shot down by the male members who simply said that we were not elected members so, we were not to be taken seriously. It was then that female MPAs decided that there is power in number and we got together to form this caucus. Ms. Rashida revealed that formation of KPWPC was also one of the suggestions given by the out-going government as well (R. Riffat, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

Ms. Anisa Zeb Tahirkheli, member of KPWPC, argued that the caucus was formed to address the absence of any impact made by the female gender. It was established to defend women inside and outside the KP assembly from any legislation which can have a negative impact on them (A. Zeb, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

Ms. Sobia Shahid from PML-N and member of KPWPC opined that in order to gain strength in political affairs, women members needed to get together and work together for a common goal (S. Shahid, personal communication, May 30, 2018). In that sense, the WPC is involved in activities focused at enhancing capabilities of women MPAs to enhance their participation in political decision making. The caucus hence, guards legislative priorities of women parliamentarians and increases their power and sway in the assembly. Consequently, the possibility of women’s issues being discussed in the legislature and articulated in legislation increases.

Mr. Arif Yousaf, MPA from PTI stated that we welcome this initiative taken by these women because they had otherwise been marginalized. As they had not been elected, they did not have access to funds like elected members. With this caucus, many male MPAs like me saw how these women have a great potential to take part in the governance of the province if given the right support. It also aims to grant greater role to women outside the parliament through legislation passed in provincial assembly. Through this platform they can work on other policy areas not necessarily focusing on gender mainstreaming and women rights (A. Yousaf, personal communication, May 31, 2018).

Though the caucus started with very low resources, women parliamentarians started holding meetings with different public, private and international organizations, generated documents and developed linkages with a number of stakeholders. The members of caucus have shown improved coordination and increased participation in different activities. It has also caught attention of civil society, donors and development partners who were pinning their hopes on it for utilization of their funds for women empowerment. Commenting on the rationale of formation of WPC, the then MPA Meraj Hamayun Khan writes:

“Creating a united forum for ourselves was necessary to face the dominance of the male members, whose arrogance is multiplied many times over due to their election success. They are completely insensitive to the feelings of their female colleagues and taunt them unashamedly, sarcastically pointing to their status on reserved seats. Slowly but surely we found our bearings and when representatives from different organizations approached us and expressed their interest in building partnerships with the caucus, our weakened self-esteem got a boost and we started showing our strength during assembly sessions” (Khan, 2018, p. 63).

In that sense, the caucus provides a unique platform to enables women parliamentarians to express their views and impact on the work of parliament.

1. Role of KPWPC in Legislation and Decision Making

3.1. Women Specific Legislation

Women specific legislation in KP provincial assembly faced many hurdles. Due to male majority and low representation of women in the provincial cabinet the government legislation has become a monopoly for the male members of assembly. Besides, women representatives being smaller in number could not perform bigger. However, KPWPC focused on Women’s issues and guaranteed their protection and prevention of discrimination through primary legislation (Acts of Parliament or Statutes etc.) or secondary legislation (Rules, Regulations, Orders). Only one bill was introduced by a female minister out of 121 total government bills passed by the assembly. However, the women lawmakers participated more actively in private member’s legislation. Out of nineteen private member’s bills six were introduced by the female members. Only two bills have been passed by the assembly while one has been rejected and remaining are under discussion or pending (Free and Fair Election Network, 2017; Table 2).

3.2. Legislation on Notable Policy Issues

Besides women specific legislation, KPWPC also discussed and addressed socio-economic and public policy issues affecting citizenry. Notable legislations which originated from the KPWPC members individually or in group are given in the Table 2.

Bill Name	MPA	Year	Nature of Legislation	Status
The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dowry, Bridal Gift and Marriage Functions Restriction Bill, 2017	Rashda Riffat	2017	Private Member Bill	Referred to Committee
The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minerals Sector Governance (Amendment) Bill, 2017	Anisa Zeb	2017	Government Member Bill	Passed
The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mines and Mineral Development and	Anisa Zeb	2016	Government Member Bill	Passed

Regulation Bill,2016				
The KP Regularization of Services of Teaching Assistant as Lecturers Bill	Meraj Humayun	2016	Private Member Bill	Passed
The KP (Amendment of Laws) Bill	Meraj Humayun	2015	Private Member Bill	Passed
The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government (Amendment) Bill, 2015	Nighat Orakzai	2015	Government Member Bill	Passed

Source: Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, <https://www.pakp.gov.pk/2013>

3.3. Advocacy and Oversight through Non-Legislative Business

The KPWPC members represented public matters, advocacy and oversight on assembly floor through resolutions, questions, Call Attention Notices (CANs) and adjournment motions. For example, the most important among all resolutions is —protection of rights of transgender. Though the 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan promises Human rights protection through Fundamental Rights Articles 8-28 and the Principles of Policy as specified under Articles 29-40, yet the transgender/ eunuchs have been a vulnerable group facing physical abuse, violence and discrimination. The issues of transgender were highlighted under KPWPC and a Joint Working Committee and a resolution was tabled in assembly demanding voting rights for transgender. The resolution was moved by Amna Sardar (PML N) which was unanimously passed by the assembly (“KP Assembly Passes Resolution,” 2016).

The KPWPC members used questions, CANs & Adjournment Motion as a power-tool to monitor the overall performance of government, discuss urgent issues of public importance and draw the attention of the governance to different public related problems and matters regarding governance, law and order, human rights, health, employment, communication and works, education sectors and many others [Figure 1]

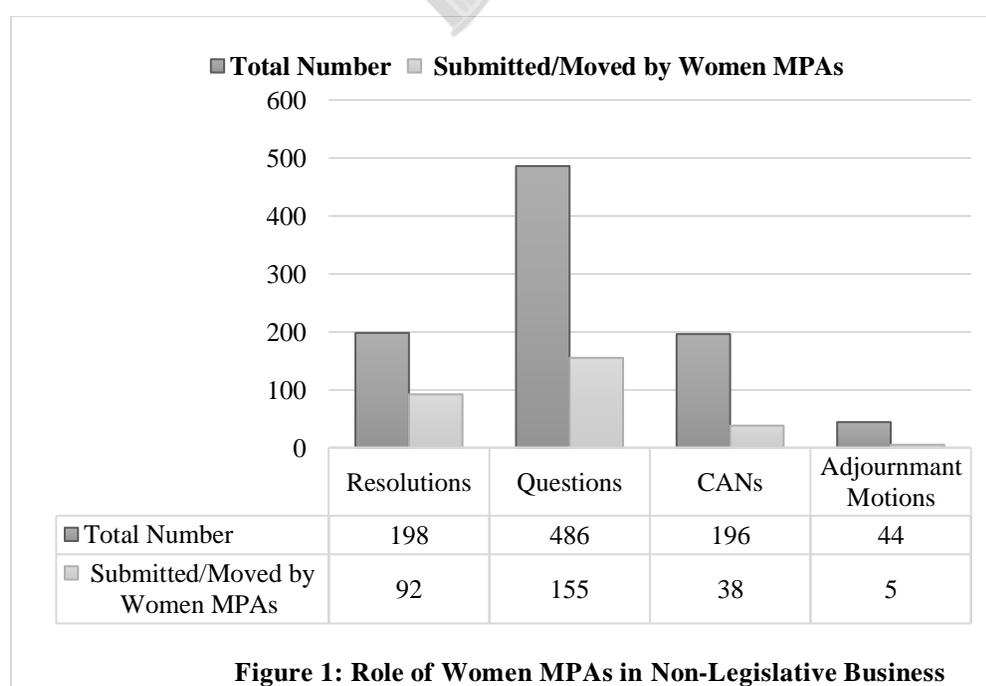


Figure 1: Role of Women MPAs in Non-Legislative Business

Source: Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; <https://www.pakp.gov.pk/2013/>

4. Challenges and Obstacles

The KPWPC faces a number of obstacles impeding its performance. The interview with Ms. Anisa Zeb highlighted a major issue of resistance from male members in the provincial assembly who would rather not see women parliamentarians actively participating in provincial politics. In this regard, hindrance is caused through lack of provision of infrastructure and open resistance to any bills brought forward by them. Ms. Zeb also expressed a key concern that there is lack of unity among caucus members as their respective party agendas frequently overshadowed the common goal of women empowerment for the caucus. She maintained:

My biggest fear is that rather than the caucus steering the direction for women rights in the KP assembly, the KP assembly political party agendas will be influencing it. Even though, the caucus is a formal body protected by law in KP, I don't think it will follow a consistent course of action. Every time a new government takes over, the direction of the caucus will also change (A. Zeb, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

Ms. Rashida Riffat also highlighted similar concerns as those of Ms. Anisa Zeb i.e., deliberate attempts are made by male members of the assembly to shoot down many of the proposed legislation brought forward by the caucus. A key bill on domestic violence has been sent back for review because male members were not endorsing it in its current form. She was of the view that the status quo cannot change unless membership of women in KP assembly is not enhanced. Ms. Rashid Riffat noted:

We are unable to find support for key legislations which we will feel are important for improving the conditions of women in the province. There are currently eight such bills which we have not been able to even table because of the opposition we face from the male members. What worries me more is that important bills on protection of women against domestic violence, human trafficking and protection of nurses from workplace harassment were outrightly rejected. I have come to this conclusion that if we want to make this caucus more effective then we need to increase the representation of women in the KP assembly. The number of reserved seats for women needs to be increased only then we can gain the strength needed to pass such legislation (R. Riffat, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

Being a member of the opposition party, Ms. Sobia Shahid identified the obstacles within the caucus which constrained its effectiveness. In her view, the main issue was favouritism whereby only women members affiliated with the ruling PTI were chosen for trainings and foreign visits. Due to her party affiliation, she also did not get support from other caucus members on bills authored by her. Ms. Sobia Shahid's perspective further emphasized on the issue of lack of unity within the caucus. Ms. Sobia Shahid commented:

As a caucus member, women parliamentarians of the assembly were supposed to work in a capacity beyond party politics but sadly that was not the case. Whenever, any foreign visits or trainings were scheduled, only members from PTI and its allies were sent. I also feel that the members themselves have not been very serious in carrying this mission. We had launched Zama Awaz, a helpline where women could call and register their issues. When it was launched, MPAs were assigned on a rotation basis to address the calls but eventually this initiative died down and then helpline was deactivated. I had also put up a bill on ensuring accountability. Even though the bill was considered, it was never approved, and I feel to some extent it was because I did not have the full support of fellow caucus members (S. Shahid, personal communication, May 30, 2018).

The interview with PTI member KP assembly, Mr. Arif Yousaf presents a completely different point of view coming from a male member of the assembly. It reflects on how male members do not feel that their actions in any way create any hindrance for their female counterparts. Perhaps it is this lack of self-reflection which does not allow them to sympathize with the challenges being faced by women parliamentarians. Mr. Arif point of view was that women of the caucus do not face any pressure from the male members. Mr. Arif stated:

MPAs like me have openly expressed our support for their cause. I do not know where you have gotten this impression [referring to pressure from the male members]. Women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa play a vital role as members of the household. They are more than capable of running legislative affairs (A. Yousaf, personal communication, May 31, 2018).

4.1. Analysis of the Performance of KPWPC

A study conducted by US Aid on the women parliamentary caucus in Indonesia, explained that if women make less than 15 percent of the parliament, then the probability of success in raising women issues and implementing possible solutions for them is very low (Sriwiyanto, 2017). The same can be observed in the KPWPC as it had also not been very successful in getting important laws passed which could protect women rights in the province (2013-2018). As given above Ms. Rashida Riffat explained that eight vital bills for women empowerment could not be tabled for discussion due to resistance from male members and lack of push by women. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MPA further built on this by stating bills for protection of women against violence; human trafficking and even protection of female nurses against workplace harassment were rejected. These bills sought to provide legal protection to women against these everyday challenges faced by them but the patriarchal mindset and dominance of male members in the assembly did not even allow debate on these matters. The only bill which has been passed was the dowry bill which out rightly banned demanding and delivery of dowry by either of the families. This bill was approved only because this subject had a direct impact on the interests of the male members of the assembly as fathers. This also implies that KPWPC is somewhat ineffective in conveying women's advocating certain policy issues to the party leadership.

Another major cause for KPWPC inability to get major legislation passed is that women parliamentarians, who do not have any prior experience, lack legal, technical and legislative expertise at hand which could assist the body in drafting proposed bills. Women parliamentarians due to lack of experience and lack of technical and legal support within provincial assembly of KP or in their political party's platforms perform inadequately in legislation. This was identified by Meraj Humayun in KPWPC quarterly report of July-September 2016. The proposed legislations are not adequately vetted and hence when the bills are scrutinized, they are turned down by the more experienced and knowledgeable male members.

The success of KPWPC is also hindered due to party affiliations as stated by Ms. Sobia Shahid. In many cases certain legislations could not be pushed for approval due to party influence despite the larger interest of the women in KP. In fact, women parliamentarians have limited support from their party leadership which is the main obstacle to work across party lines. Women parliamentarians have demonstrated they are committed participants in the legislative process. Yet they are not able to push a legislative agenda without support from senior party members. Without exercising voice within their parties, and some measure of electoral power to give them leverage, they are constrained as negotiators across party lines within their caucuses (Khan & Naqvi, 2018, p. 33).

Mairaj Humayun Khan opines that KPWPC provides women parliamentarians a platform to struggle collectively for own rights; however, she lamented the fact that less interest of some of the members of caucus and many other factors restrained from performing an effective role. Mostly the reason behind their less active participation is their unwillingness to go across their party lines. She argued: "We could achieve successful results and play our role to influence legislation positively if each member works in collaboration and puts her share in the caucus activities beyond

the party lines.” (“Study to Help,” 2018). The role of party politics also meant that members of the caucus affiliated with certain parties were favoured for foreign tours and trainings. Ms. Sobia alleged that only PTI members and coalition partner members were preferred for any foreign trips while opposition members were simply overlooked. Such actions not only pushed for resentment in certain members but also hindered the success of the caucus. As most women members lack practical political experience as compared to their male counterparts, restricting access to such training and exchange programmes proves to be counterproductive for women empowerment.

A survey explored women parliamentarians’ views on how to strengthen the women parliamentary caucuses by inviting to select as many of the suggested measures as they wished. The highest number of respondents (60 percent) felt that —incorporating it into rules and procedures of the assembly i.e. giving it constitutional status would make their caucus powerful. Other suggested measures included more donor and civil society support (45 percent); allowing women to act without needing party permission (50 percent); closer cross-party collaboration (41 percent), and political parties themselves pursuing stronger women’s agendas (45 percent) (Khan & Naqvi, 2018, p. 33). These responses reflect some of the challenges that also hinder smooth functioning of KPWPC including communication within the caucus, antagonism among political parties and approach of political parties to women’s political, socio-economic and legal issues. Another survey conducted by Blue Veins and the Australian Aid revealed that members of the caucus were not participating in its activities. The study reveals that the major reason for this is that there is no incentive designed to compensate them for their efforts. Only members of the executive committee of the caucus are eligible for getting perks and privileges. This creates feeling of discontent among members and resultantly the caucus success is adversely affected (Sohail, 2018). Other constraints such as low priority for budget allocation also restrain the efforts of the KPWPC but perhaps the biggest discouraging factor is the hostility shown for women specific initiatives by male members of the assembly. Ms. Anisa, despite her repertoire as a seasoned politician, has complained of unprofessional attitude of male members during discussions on proposal brought forward by the caucus. The male privilege and sense of superiority over women acts a barrier for the latter’s issues and concerns to be taken seriously. The cause is further hindered due to the influence of religious factions in the province who only believe in limited autonomy to women in day-to-day affairs. Therefore, the caucus has not had major breakthroughs in achieving a more equitable society for the women of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Though, KPWPC has been reformed after the new KP government was formed in 2018, its legislative effectiveness is yet to be seen.

5. Conclusion

The KPWPC was formed to promote women political empowerment women politic and push for legislation which can guarantee greater rights for women in the province. Though it has worked hard since its creation in 2013 on pushing for a much-needed change in the status quo, its success has been limited owing to the challenges it faces due to political, socio-cultural and institutional reasons. Despite some improvement in legislation, there are gaps between these legal frameworks and the realities experienced by women in the KP assembly and society. The body holds great potential but the need for greater organization and infrastructure support is the need of the hour. For the caucus to be taken seriously, the caucus must first take itself seriously.

Recommendation

- It is suggested that a dedicated budget is allocated to KPWPC for various objectives in the annual provincial budget to expand its area of focus and operate in a more organized manner and with greater autonomy.
- A constitution for the caucus would help it operate in an impartial manner without being dominated by members of a single ruling party. This could also help ensure more members

irrespective of their party affiliations get opportunities for greater exposure on capacity building and training trips.

- For capacity building of women parliamentarians, more local training within caucus should be organized with international trainers or master trainer programmes. This will not only reduce the concerns of impartial selection for training programmes but also cut down the cost of foreign trainings.
- The caucus should be provided with dedicated legal experts who would not only help the caucus draft bills but also play a role in training the members for writing better drafts so that when the proposed law is drafted, it is not simply turned down before being debated upon.
- The KPWPC should further engage Civil Society Organizations and international organizations such as UNDP to conduct research and help the caucus in effective formulation of proposal documents. Such organizations can also help the caucus in getting much needed media exposure both on local and international mediums.
- It is suggested that the public television channel should dedicate airtime for highlighting the caucus activities. However, the caucus should also use other mediums such as radio and social media more frequently to promote its agenda.
- Male members who share compassion for the goals of the caucus may be offered membership on the body. This will instil a greater sense of ownership and would help push for more successful legislation. This can lead to generate ‘a critical mass of male sympathizers’ among the parliamentarians to work towards women empowerment.
- The caucus should push for making it mandatory that women are given a quota in provincial cabinet and committees. In this way, KPWPC could be effective and efficient in conveying women legislators’ message and advocating their cause to the party’s leadership. The political empowerment & decision-making component of the ‘Women Empowerment Policy 2017’ of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also suggests representation of women legislators in parliamentary committees and other decision-making bodies.

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