

AAWAZ Response Fund 1



Media Analysis of Women's Participation in Politics

JOURNALISTS FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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May 2013



Contents

Abstract	2
CHAPTER-	3
Introduction.....	3
Problem Statement	8
Justification	9
Hypotheses	10
Theoretical Framework/Theory of Change.....	10
Phase-I- Media’s Agenda Setting vis-à-vis women politicians across four key categories	11
Phase-II-Public Agenda Setting.....	12
CHAPTER II.....	13
Methods.....	13
Sampling	14
Instrument/Questionnaire.....	14
CHAPTER III	15
Findings and discussion	15
Finding 1	15
Focus groups and intensive interviews- Key findings	19
The deception of numbers.....	19
The Second Fiddle	21
The Society, corruption and laziness	21
The beauty barrier	22
Limitations	23
Conclusion (Recommendations).....	23
References.....	26
Annexure 1	30
Annexure 2.....	32
Annexure 3.....	34

Abstract

Media and politics are usually interdependent. With the onset of democratic political space in Pakistan, media assumed increased political participation from non-traditional segments of civil society. Since 2002, women's political participation apparently increased with the accretion of reserved seats for women in parliament as well as assemblies and 33% quota in the local bodies. Independent electronic media and print media also got more space and opportunities. During the last 10 years (2002-2012), expansion in media (outlets and space) in Pakistan, with constant coverage created opportunities for many to claim their share of news coverage. Since more women went into politics during this decade, they were exposed to media space for their political activities.

This research paper on 'Media Analysis of Women's Participation in Politics' aims to explore changes taking place in media patterns and messages vis-à-vis women in politics and their impact on society covering a decade from 2002 to 2012. We found that coverage of women politicians by media increased after 2008 when the PPP led the democratic government replacing Musharraf's government. But this increase could hardly influence the acceptance of women politicians in society because media largely portrayed women politicians as fashion celebrities and not as serious politicians.

This research found that though media provided expanded space to women politicians, it could not contribute as desired in terms of breaking barriers of gender, class and personal clout. Though since some women politicians have clout and are from affluent families and did get media space, generally there have been limited media opportunities for women politicians from the lower middle class.

Though the media did give space to women parliamentarians elected on reserved seats after they were nominated, this could not bridge the gap between society and these women parliamentarians as they did not have their constituencies and were not answerable to the masses/society. That is why media did not regard them as influential decision-making politicians. The women who were directly elected to the parliament have a different case. In this study we found that media failed to adopt strategies that would have engaged viable women politicians in dialogue.

CHAPTER-

Introduction

Women have had an important role in the politics of this country since its formation but media failed to highlight this role in an appropriate manner (Herald, 2007; The News, 2009).

Aurat Foundation, a leading NGO working for women's rights, believes that society fails to understand the role of women politicians in the country and there is a need to create awareness about more political participation by women.

The suppression of women intensified during the Zia era and the effects still linger (Yousaf, 2011; Paracha, 2010). There is a debate in society about Zia's agenda in contradiction to the founder of the nation, Muhammad Ali Jinnah (Dawn, 2012). Vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah may be taken as a yardstick to measure the role of women in politics and their public perception, be it pre-Partition freedom struggle or post-Partition phase of nation building (Butt, 2011).

Giving his message on March 10, 1944, at Aligarh, Jinnah said, "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you" (Shahid, 1976). According to Dr. Zafar Ali Raja (1991), the Quaid had a vision for women's involvement in practical and political life.

He drew media attention towards the battle media was supposed to wage against the social clutches that suppress women, the Quaid added during the same occasion:

"Another important thing, which I want to make clear to you is that no nation can made progress in the true sense unless its women participate in the development and construction work along with men. We are habitual of wrong customs and traditions of keeping women confined within the four walls of the house. This is not just cruelty but also a crime against humanity... There is no reason that women should live in the conditions in which they are being kept" (Sajid, 1984).

The Quaid's emphasis on creating an acceptable space for women in society was directly linked with media because, according to Matekaire (2003), "The media not only plays an important role in shaping the values of society but also reflects those values." Electronic media is leaving a greater impact on people's voting behavior in Pakistan than print media but women have a disadvantage since their improper presentation on electronic media is interfering in winning over the 'popular vote' through which 'political power emerges' (Yaser, Mahsud et al, 2011).

The representation of stereotypical images of women politicians such as their status, being elected on the reserved seats, their clothes and accessories seem to be the focus of their misrepresentation in the media. The study finds that the way the media represents these woman politicians, is tantamount to sensationalism, which violates media ethics. Moreover, misrepresentation in this way also deprives the audience of the real story

behind women's struggle for democracy, human rights, and abilities; and hence mars their right to have an informed choice to make informed decisions. This dangerous trend is contrary to the environment needed for democratic progress. (Dahl, 1989).

For political parties and personalities, media is a 'forum' to present their ideologies enabling the masses to hold the corrupt accountable on the basis of the information they are given. Hence, the importance of media in a democratic set-up is increased manifold (Ward, 2004).

Cook (1999) went one step further to state that only conveying the messages to the masses is not enough for media channels when it comes to politics but it is also imperative for it to start a healthy debate on different issues related to politics in such a way that all stakeholders (women politicians being a major stakeholder) have an equal opportunity to access voters. Taylor (1992) is justified in saying it is the expression of free will that makes elections an integral part of a democratic system but this is jeopardized when one of the main stockholders – women politicians – are handicapped by the media.

Fewer women are participating in the parliamentary canvas and media can no longer distance itself by insisting that it is the verdict of the people. Elections are not only about putting some politicians in or out of office, but they also reflect social values, which is often influenced by the media (www.grin.com).

Media is selective and influences 'voting patterns' with prescriptive and repetitive results (Harrop & Miller, 1987). While discussing the influence of media in shaping social behavior, researchers nowadays take what Lazarsfeld and his colleagues (1948) found as media's limited influence on voters, into consideration. But this may not be a case in Pakistan at the moment where media has recently been expanded and has acquired a dominant role in society. Further, copious studies found that the effects of media on society are anything but limited (Blumler & McLeod, 1974; Ranny, 1983; McLeod & McDonald, 1985; Simon, 2000).

Media makes some issues part of its agenda subsequently influencing public discourse (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). This study also explores this theory from the perspective of the presentation of women politicians by media and voter perception about them. Many researchers discovered that the issues that are more frequently reported by media outlets acquire more validity (Funkhouser, 1973; MacKuen, 1981; McCombs, 1977; Tipton, Haney, & Basehart, 1975; McLeod, & Byrnes, 1974; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987).

Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) argue that since voters look to media for information about political personalities to determine their future choices, media has the power to tilt their opinion either way – against or for gender biases. But media uses its power to attract the attention of the voters towards 'the looks' and 'domestic lives' of women politicians more than what they have in store for the betterment of society (Millar, 1996). Scherer (1995) conducted a study to explore the influence of media on the masses when voters go to polls in 12 European Union states and concluded that different media channels as well

as face-to-face communication influence different people.

Hendriks, Vettehen, Hagemann, & Snippenburg (2004) found that in the Netherlands, the more the masses consume media content, the more they become aware of political issues. In the light of the investigations of Gunther & Mughan (2000), politicians can increase their influence on voters if they figure out the media their voters choose. Media puts the feminine attributes over and above political insight and policy-making experience of women, giving their male competitors an edge over them in public discourse (Kahn, 1992).

Media doesn't do it for nothing but it has 'power elites' to serve, who want to edge out their competitors (including women politicians) to grab power but when media does this, it loses the range of its influence on voters (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). It is not only Pakistan's novice media that is suffering from this credibility deficit because it is not presenting an accurate picture of facts to the society but the media of developed countries is also facing this 'major issue' of 'declining credibility with a public that increasingly is cynical toward institutions of all kinds and blames the media for many defects...' (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Dogan, 1997; Giddens, 1999; Goldfarb, 1991; Norris, 1999; Patterson, 1993).

One of the reasons for the masses to go to media for political information is their taste for the 'stylistic dramatization' that OP-ED pieces satiate (Nimmo and Combs, 1992). Though all kinds of media are found wanting, TV and newspapers play a prominent role in keeping the masses abreast of politics (Popkin, 1991). Heated political debates on TV talk shows are gaining popularity but OP-ED pieces of newspaper still have an edge on TV (Vettehen et al., 2004). This is where, Ms. Shaheed, a civil society activist based in Lahore, told us in an interview that woman politicians are ignored. "I don't see enough OP-ED pieces on women politicians in print media," she observed. The perception among the masses that politicians are failures, politics is about corruption and media cronyism which leads voters towards cynicism (Cappella & Jamieson, 1996). The lack of credibility and cynicism serve to weaken the link between media content and political support of voters (Newhagen, 1994; Moy & Scheufele, 2000).

II

In regard to the political potential of women, Quaid-e-Azam would often say that 'if the woman of the house becomes a Muslim League member then everyone in the house including children, old people and youth will become Muslim leaguers' (Siddiqui, cited by Butt, 2011). The Quaid always acknowledged the potential of women unlike media today that specifies domestic roles for women. Ali (1977) mentions that speaking to a public gathering on March 10, 1944, Quaid-e-Azam said, "These great assets (women) should not be wasted."

On February 6, 1948, he told Muslim League Women's Wing: "You have the key to a big success. And that key is the next generation. Bring up your children in such a way that they become citizens who could be the pride for the nation" (Raja, 1991). After the

formation of Pakistan, he took it upon himself to pay tribute to women politicians: You have made many sacrifices for Pakistan, a country, which the whole world has now accepted as a reality. You will have to go one step forward. That day is not far when nations of the world will praise Pakistan. (Butt, 2011)

In his address to the nation on Radio Pakistan on August 21st 1947 just a few days after the formation of the new country, the Quaid mentioned women separately from men to advise them to work harder (Ali, cited by Butt, 2011). Speaking at Dawar Park, Dacca, on March 20, 1948, he pressed women to play their role, being ‘backbone of the country’ (Rashid, 2012).

In his speech to the Muslim Convention in Delhi on April 17, 1946, he said, “It is a good thing that a revolutionary change is taking place in women. This change is of great importance. No nation in the world can make progress unless the women of that nation move along with men.” (Hussain 1988). At one occasion, the Quaid encouraged Khurshid Ara Begum, a woman politician, saying, “Presently, you have a few women for supporters but, I am sure that you will soon have more. You continue your work. I assure you that women will have to play an important role for the uplift of the nation. The women in the Punjab have done well. I have full faith in the abilities and inspiration of women.” (Ahmed 1976).

Speaking to students of Islamia College for Women (Nawakot) on March 25, 1940, he said apart from pen and sword, women are the ‘third power, which is more powerful than both’ (Ahmed, 1976). Encouraging women to be active in politics, Begum Gaiti Ara Bashir Ahmed said, “Our loving Quaid-e-Azam ordered us (women) to become soldiers in the freedom struggle. And (we) should devote our whole time for the creation of Pakistan” (Ahmed, 1976). Addressing a group of girl students, Quaid said, “The task before you is big, and you should not lag behind at this moment of your life. Come and work side by side with men. Remain engaged in the freedom struggle along with us till we are successful... I witnessed the work of women, their problems and the hindrances that come in their work ... You young girls are luckier than your mothers because you are going to be liberated” (Akhtar, 1981).

The Quaid has gone an extra mile to set an example for politicians of his country to follow, taking his sister Fatima Jinnah along at almost all important occasions to the chagrin of male participants; making Fatima Jinnah a leading icon of the Pakistani Movement. According to Dr. Dushka Syed:

“The constant presence of Fatima Jinnah, the Quaid’s sister, was not accidental, but a message by this visionary leader that women should be equal partners in politics and that they should not be confined to the traditional home-bound role of wife and mother. It is not surprising then that he was constantly under attack of the orthodox religious parties. Once, so the story goes, he was about to address a mammoth public meeting, and was requested not to have Fatima Jinnah sitting on the dais by his side. He refused” (www.wpcp.org.pk).

The confidence that the Quaid gave his sister enabled her to stand against the country's first dictator Ayub Khan and '[H]er appeal went directly to the hearts of the people as she fiercely attacked the man who had suppressed the freedoms of speech and expression' (Mazari, 2006). Mazari's version shows the key role that women politicians play to wrestle people's right to freedom of speech and expression out from dictators. Ayub Khan's spin doctors had not spared a moment to outshine Fatima Jinnah on a controlled press that the country had at that time (Ziring, 2010). Though with the help of excessive use of power, Ayub succeeded in defeating her in 1965 elections but her struggle left the dictator 'weakened' (Jafferlot, 2006).

III

In addition to Fatima Jinnah, women politicians told us in interviews that Benazir Bhutto is an ideal for them to follow across party lines as she rose to the highest legislative office of the country (the office of the prime minister) twice despite all odds. At the start of her career, the youngest ever prime minister of the country – Benazir Bhutto suffered highly indecent propaganda tactics (Lamb, 1991). The army generals showered leaflets defaming her by projecting her feminine attributes among rural populations across the country and this technique of leaflets, according to Defleur & Larsen (1958) is instrumental in creating rumors.

Even her pregnancies became a 'topic of intense political discussion from military headquarters to editorial boards'. Nonetheless, she not only won the elections after delivering her first baby, Bilawal, as she named him, but gave birth to another baby while in office. "That is one less glass ceiling for women Prime Minister in the future have to break," she wrote in her autobiography (1988). Looking at the presentation of women, packed in taboos and stereotypes, on media, Shrinvastana (1989) is justified in saying that media is dominated by male characters. This male dominance encourages male chauvinism in the society, thus the need for media to become more 'responsible' (Konach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

Spring (1993) said that the media 'missed the point' when it tries to put only a few elected women in the limelight, ignoring the fact that their presence in the parliament is a result of a long-fought battle for 'political power on the part of women'. Women politicians not only need voter support but also ample media coverage to dispel the impression that they are not electable. Media should not divide domestic and international issues into female and male agenda, respectively, restricting the options of women to speak on national security and foreign policy (*Scanty Coverage*, 1992). Often, media gives women negative coverage that belittles them in public perception when it comes to politics (Aubin, Haak & Mangini, 2005). Demographic patterns of developed countries like the US show that women outnumber men but the breakdown of their parliamentarians does not reflect these statistics (Millar, 2001).

In the first place, women have a lack of resources to run for elections and then they are subjected to gender stereotypes by media, compounding the complexity of the situation (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). Stereotypes and gender biases by media-men put women

politicians in an unfavorable light (Millar, 1996). Larson (2001) thinks media is supposed to educate the masses about compatibility of election candidates with the system, regardless of their gender, but it presses the gender attributes in such a manner that women have a disadvantage. It is unfair that media praises women on the way they dress and praise men for the issues they raise as part of their political agenda (Kahn & Goldenberg, 1991). Another dangerous trend that media has adopted is that it has turned women politicians into models for style pages instead of politics and policy matters (Norris, 1997).

Sometimes, media puts domestic issues or traits like emotional, weak or not competitive as labels for women politicians, creating a 'misleading impression' (Kelly & Fisher, 1993). On the basis of Iyengar and Kinder's findings (1987), we are justified in saying that if our media had given women the space they deserve, the opinions of the voters would have been primed about women politicians and their performance would have been assessed without prejudices and gender biases.

On countless occasions, media persons said that they show the masses what they want to see but this simplistic statement does not hold ground since the media presents an interpretation of politics in the form of news stories and opinions that influence the voters (Gerstle et al., 1991).

Problem Statement

Looking at the media content in the expanded media market, one finds that media linked the already existing stereotypical images of women in Pakistani society with the emerging political cadre of women hailing from different political parties representing them as models to be copied by other women in terms of fashion and lifestyle, instead of projecting their talents and political knowledge. The women political cadre started emerging when the Musharraf government introduced the mandatory 33% quota of women in the local governments and increased the reserved seats for women in Parliament. Similarly, Media landscape opened up for the private sector to set up electronic television channels in 2002. These television channels due to their infancy could not rise above certain societal norms (taboos and tradition) and regulatory issues, and continued to marginalize women in terms of their portrayal as leaders.

During 2002-2007, media and woman politicians got enough space to interface with each other, but there were hardly any political processes where their involvement could be covered as the system was democratic but not parliamentary as all powers rested in the then president. Moreover, emerging women politicians from the local governments have nothing to do with media coverage. Thus, no more media space was allocated for women politicians during this period.

But as a result of the February 2008 elections, a democratic government came into power and elected a political president (Mr Asif Ali Zardari who replaced Musharraf the same year). The new president surrendered all his powers to the democratic government and restored the powers of the parliament. The era beginning from 2008 heralded a new phase

of democracy in Pakistan and in recent history for the first time, the democratic government completed its five-year term, the judiciary and the media emerged as new power players. Media got tremendous independence and new media space was opened up for political debates. The media also realized that since women in general and women in politics need to be given space they needed coverage all day.

The study finds that during the five years of democratic regime, media enjoyed freedom and included a select group of women politicians from different political parties, academy and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), human right groups in the debates taking place on certain subjects. This group could not represent all the women parliamentarians. Moreover, media gave space to the select group of women politicians from various parties but did not portray them as politicians but rather showed them as 'women' generally branded as either fashionable, or good in the kitchen.

Studies have proved that electronic media is presenting more women politicians than print media. Women politicians are presented more favorably on electronic media than print media. Can media serve as a bridge to enhance women politician's status in society so that others are encouraged by this trend? This study attempts to answer this question. This can only be possible by the acceptance of women politicians as political leaders in society and media could play a key role in this change of. This study addresses these problems and proposes solutions. Key women politicians in the province of Punjab, hailing from various political parties, have been interviewed so as to extract information about how media covers their stories and gives them space. The study analyses how media sees the participation of women in politics in the Punjab.

Justification

The study on media analysis of women's political participation provides a well-researched and thought provoking policy position that the frequency of coverage for women politicians increased after 2008 (during the democratic government led by the PPP and the coalition partners) but this increase could not be translated into the acceptance of women politicians in society because they are viewed negatively on media. An extensive literature review sets the scene for this analysis and provides strong base for discussions and findings in this study.

The scoping study speaks of a wide-ranging perspective on media spaces and women's political participation. It is hoped that the investment (human, intellectual and financial) on this scoping study holds real value as the study provides a research based assessment of available media spaces and how they are being utilized for highlighting women's political participation. The researchers analyzed media coverage, perceptions, threats and opportunities for women's political participation. The scoping study is not just a piece of smart research but rather a baseline study that sets a new trend in further media research in Pakistan on the subject of media and women in politics. The study entails policy messages in the chapter on findings and recommendations. These message, findings and recommendations may be used for raising issues about women's political participation at the higher decision making levels within the party, the opposition and in the government.

The study provides an opportunity for media professionals as well as reviewing their current coverage pattern for women politicians.

As required by the objectives of this research, the paper analyses the portrayal in the media (all media outlets i.e. newspapers, social media, television, radio etc.) of women active in politics and women's participation in politics over the last decade. It analyses messages (positive, negative, threatening and glamorous) relating to political participation of women making a comparison of media messages towards male vs. female participants in politics. The study further discusses drivers of change such as structural, institutional and agent-based factors and analyses how media-led messages change environment for women's participation (e.g. pressures on women, formal and informal processes through which women rise in political roles, local area acceptability about women's role).

Hypotheses

The following three hypotheses have been discussed in the following study.

1. Media began to give women politicians more space after Musharraf's regime (2008).
2. Increase in media coverage on women politicians has changed public perceptions about their role in politics in a positive way.
3. When projected in a negative light, women are not taken by society as serious political players.

Theoretical Framework/Theory of Change

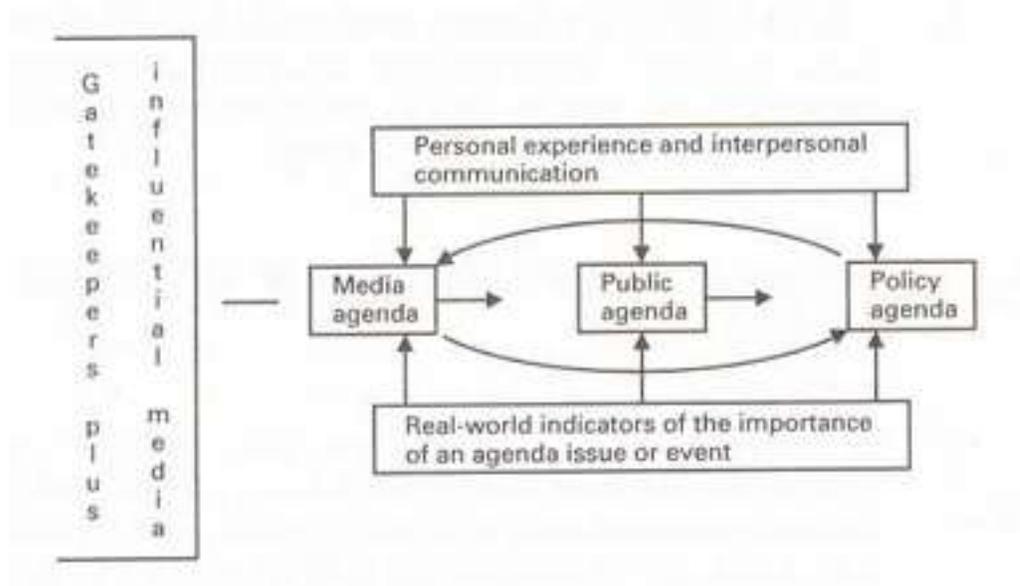
Like other social science research, media also has various theories based on scoping studies about media space and people's participation. The media researchers at the University of Twente believe that agenda setting in media is the creation of what the public thinks is important. Media has a powerful influence on prioritizing certain issues. Hence, in a way people tend to consume what media sells us as agendas of daily living. Here media uses its power and influence to manipulate the agenda.

Some scholars count agenda setting as an approach falling in the cultivation theory (Laughey 2007) while others are of the view that they are two different theories (Wimmer, Dominick 2000). For this study, we have treated them as two different theories and weighed findings of this study on the scale of agenda setting theory. Walter Lippmann (1922) suggested that media creates 'pictures in our heads'. The notion was later developed into a theory. Based on their experiment, McCombs and Shaw (1972) declared that there was a strong relationship between the issues raised by media and the issues being discussed in public.

"*The Agenda Setting Theory*" has been selected as the theory of change for this study amid our present day media's growing agenda setting role in public debates on two

counts: 1) it is not necessary that media reflects reality; 2) its focus on few selected topics of their choice tends to encourage people to believe that only these topics are important while others are not. **The Agenda setting theory is one of the most important theories of change while analyzing media content because it exposes media's pervasive role in political communications is not as important. If we really understand this theory, we can help influence media's agenda setting processes that may increase women's space in political communication.**

Model for Media's agenda Setting Theory



(Source: McQuail & Windahl (1993))

The above model is a classic example of how we can use the theory of agenda setting to bring about change in political communications in terms of amplifying voices of women active in politics. Media's agenda setting is very closely linked to public agenda and policy agenda. If we influence the agenda setting of media, we can really influence the public agenda and ultimately influence the policy agenda. This scoping study benefits from this theory of change while suggesting a way forward after the Media analysis of women's political participation.

Phase-I- Media's Agenda Setting vis-à-vis women politicians across four key categories

In the first place, agenda of media vis-à-vis women politicians was measured through analysis of its content spanning the decade starting from 2002 to 2012. The media content related to women politicians was divided in four categories corresponding to the messages and the tone it carries.

The four categories are 1) positive, 2) negative 3) threatening and 4) glamorous.

Operationalization of categories

For this study, media content was placed in positive, negative, threatening and glamorous categories on the basis of the message it delivered and the tone in which it is delivered. The scale for measuring these categories has been conceptualized in the Introduction. Its operationalized form is mentioned below:

Positive: Women politicians given opportunity to express their view on legislation, human rights, democracy, foreign policy, social and institutional reforms, instilling a sense among the masses that they are serious politicians.

Negative: Women politicians are engaged in shouts and grunts, accusations and allegations, claims and counter-claims, snubs and sneers, instilling a sense among the masses that they are not serious politicians.

Threatening: Women politicians are harassed (talked down by journalists or other experts); offensive words, tones and gestures are used; shut up and insulted by male or female participants; trial of personality; probe into domestic life in a way males are not; discriminations between their and their male colleagues' roles in politics and society, instilling a sense among the masses that they are inferior to their male colleagues.

Glamorous: Women politicians' female traits; dress; looks; style of moving and talking; and make-up are discussed and sometimes put on the sections reserved for fashion and design, suggesting that they are not politicians.

Phase-II-Public Agenda Setting

In the second phase, public agenda on this specific topic of presentation of women in media was measured through focus groups, quick surveys and intensive interviews. The respondents, being stakeholders in politics and media, did not only share their perceptions but also experiences they have had while working with media and politics. Majority of the respondents of intensive interviews for this study expressed their concerns about the way the media sets its agenda and portrays women politicians as a social commodity instead of thoughtful politicians. They were critical of gender insensitive reporting and gender imbalance coverage of media's political space and not providing a level playing field to all players, especially women politicians.

The scholars at the University of Twente refers to the Agenda Setting Theory as 'the creation of what the public thinks is important' and describes it as a powerful influence of media that impresses the audience/public about what issues are important. Walter Lippman says media presents the images to the public while setting the agenda. Similarly KcCombs and Shaw go a step further, saying that the mass media exerts a significant influence on the voters during the election campaigns. The research conducted on agenda

setting is basically based on two assumptions: a) media filters and shapes reality instead of reflecting it in real terms; b) media frames certain issues, in a certain time framework and the public tends to consume them as important. Through this emphasis the media sets the agenda for public discourse.

Through Pakistan's expanded media outlets, we witness different agendas from each outlet. Bernard Cohen (1963) stated: **“The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.”**

The interviews for this study and the participants of focus group sessions talked about the agenda setting role of the media, and the fragmented portraiture of women. They were of the view that media can set its agenda in such a manner that woman politicians are able to win acceptance of their work as politicians, leaders and honorable members of the parliament and society. If they are projected so, even those who occupy parliamentary seats reserved for women will no longer be considered less important. The majority of the respondents suggested that this agenda needs to be set in the media to ensure the participation of women in politics and decision-making process.

CHAPTER II

Methods

The problem, as defined in Chapter 1, was confronted with the methods of content analysis, quick surveys, focus groups and intense interview methods to reach a conclusion. Theoretical framework explains how these methods go along with the theory. The changes in media and public perception revolve around Musharraf's regime, the starting point for an expanded media spectrum.

A team of researchers collected secondary data from selected media stories and coverage of television anchored shows, radio and social media products on political issues and analyzed how much space media gave to women to highlight their role and participation in politics. The print media was divided in three categories representing 2002, 2008 and 2012 to see how print media has been covering the women's political participation. The data was viewed and analyzed with two angles; 1) the participation of women as newsmakers or participants in political activities and 2) how they performed while having discussions in the parliament and in media. Similarly, television shows were selected to analyze the women's political participation on media outlets.

Key Informant interviews helped understand, before, during and after 2008 media coverage as a comparative model. This criterion shows how media used to give space for women's political participation, this changed once private television emerged in 2008. A quick survey method and rapid assessment techniques were applied to reach answers to the research questions. The secondary data on women's political participation in the media was also used for a coordinated analysis to achieve the objectives of this research. **The geographical area for this research is the province of Punjab.** As many as six focus group

discussion and 20 Key Informants interviews were conducted in the province.

Media content analysis techniques were done to see the results of the research. Social Media experts were also among the key informants who gave vital information on the subject. Due to the paucity of time for this scoping study, qualitative method was used which lead to factual calculations to draw up results to the satisfaction of the research questions.

Sampling

Non-random and purpose sampling was used to find respondents in Islamabad (the federal capital) and Lahore, Multan, Sialkot and Faisalabad (Punjab province). As a result, a sample of 50 respondents was drawn to represent the population.

This sample of respondents with stakes in politics and media—women politicians, social society workers media researchers and journalists—served the purpose of focus group, quick surveys and intensive interviews.

Instrument/Questionnaire

A standard questionnaire was used for short survey, focus group discussions and intensive interviews. However, the researchers had the liberty and time to extend the questions in sessions with focus groups and female politicians in case of intensive interviews to get to the bottom of the matter. All the questions were set to test the hypotheses and the title of the research. Moreover, a content analysis was done in terms of measuring media spaces given to woman politicians in selected print and electronic media outlets. The content analysis is presented in the graphs in chapter-III.

CHAPTER III

Findings and discussion

Finding 1

An overview of content analysis of three mainstream newspapers – Jang, The Nation and Dawn – before, during and after Musharraf’s regime (2002-2012) shows that coverage of women went up immensely during his era and then came down. Despite this decline, the frequency remained higher than before.

Table 1: Number of news items on women politician

Name of Publication	Year 2002	Year 2008	Year 2012	Total Number of news Item on Women Politician
Daily Jang	131	215	146	492
Dawn	167	157	147	471
The Nation	376	383	200	959

Table 2: Measurement of space given to these news items

Publications	1-5 inch	6-10 inch	11-15 inch	16-20 inches	< 20 Inches
Dawn	71	114	175	61	50
Jang	107	85	189	182	14
The Nation	245	106	313	207	29

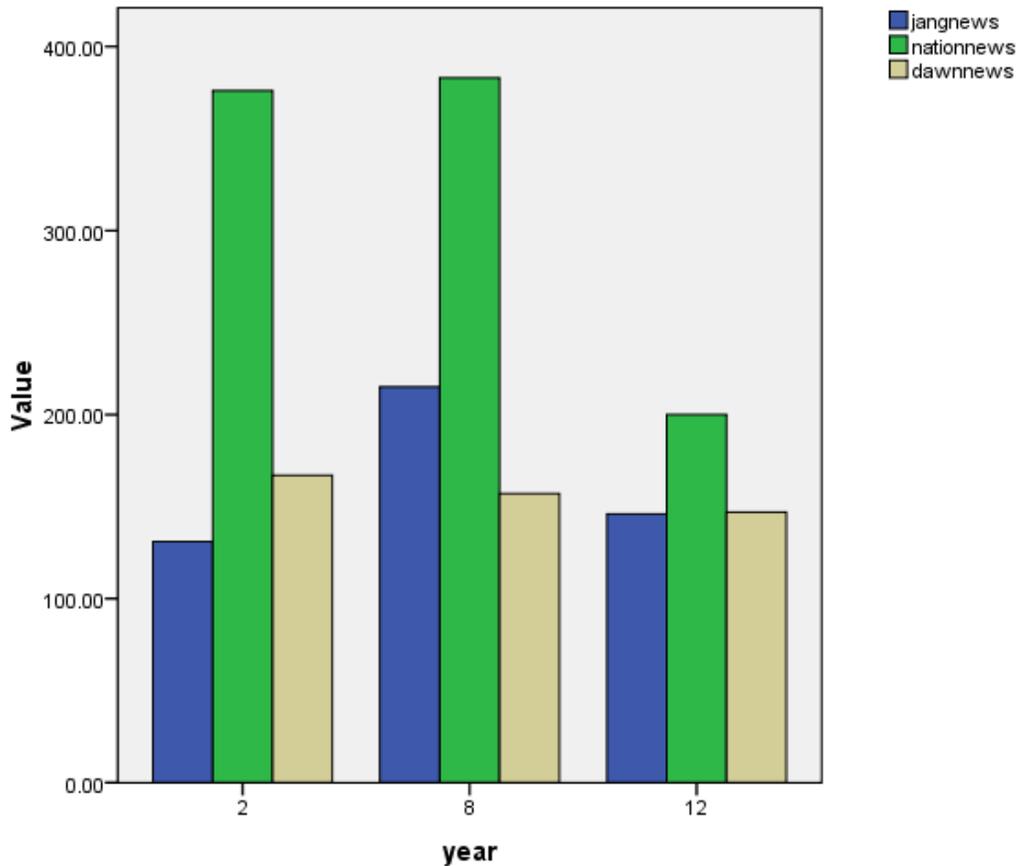


Figure 1 Coverage of women politicians on three major daily newspapers for the year 2002, 2008 and 2012 shows that The Nation gave maximum coverage to women politicians overall in 2002, 2008 and 2012.

Electronic media

Before Musharraf, there was only state-owned TV but he allowed the private sector to expand electronic media market. We have analyzed the latest content on electronic media to see the frequency and nature of content related to women politicians.

Table 3: TV channels, their programs, timing and duration of analysis

Date: From 18/ Dec/2012 to 31/Dec/2012

Timings: 4:00 Pm to 8:00

Name Channel	Name of Programme which were analyzed
Geo News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aik Din Geo K sath (Sunday) • Geomantary • GeoAjooba (Sunday)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hum Sab Umeed Say hai • Hum Awaam • FIR
Express News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To The Point • Takrar • News 6 PM • News Hour • Reporter Pakistani • Baat Se Baat • Express Fatafat • Shikanja
Aaj News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dosti Aisa Nata • Sawal Hai Pakistan Ka • Fear Files

Table 4: Frequency of coverage of women politicians shows that out of 4107 item aired on these TVs from Dec 1 to Dec 15, 2012. 536 were related to women politicians, directly or indirectly.

Name Channel	Coverage of women Politician
Geo News	179
Express News	270
Aaj News	87

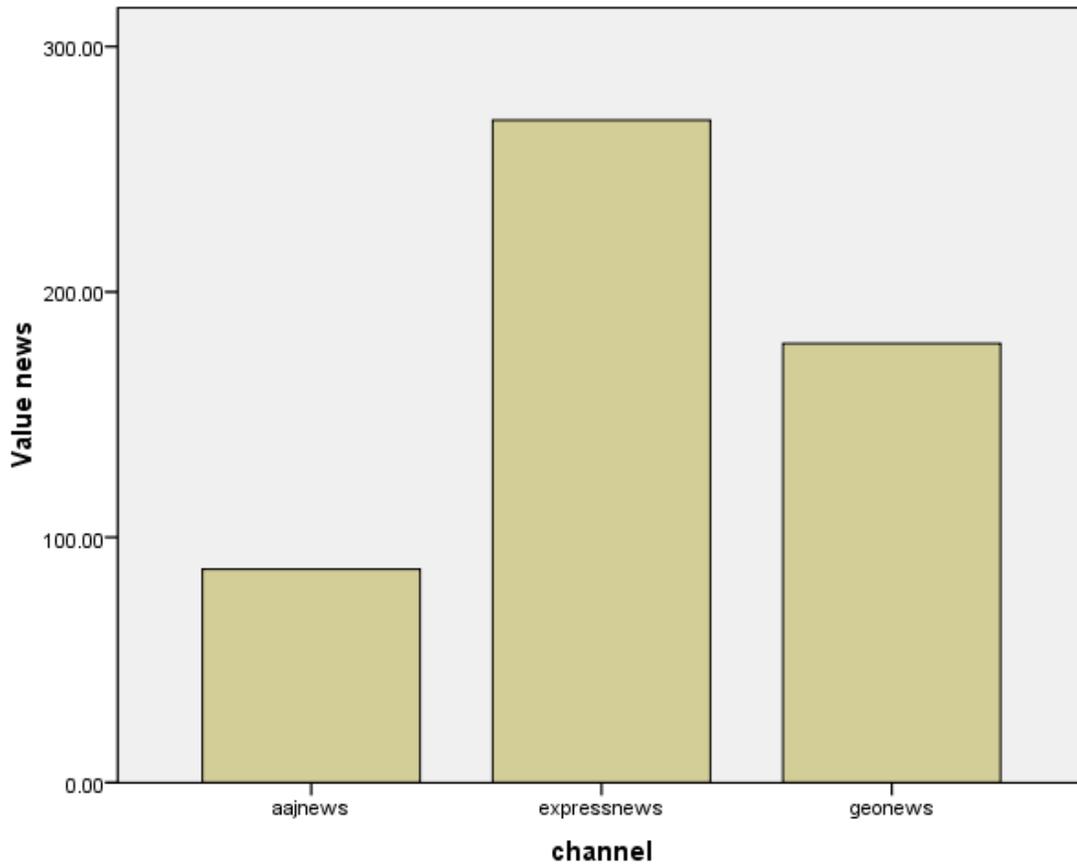


Figure 2 shows that Express News gave maximum coverage to women politicians, followed by Geo and Aaj News respectively.

Table 5: Express News portrays women in positive light the most.

Name of TV Channel	Positive	Negative	Threatening	Glamorous
Geo News	47	60	40	32
Express News	182	43	25	20
Aaj News	43	25	7	12

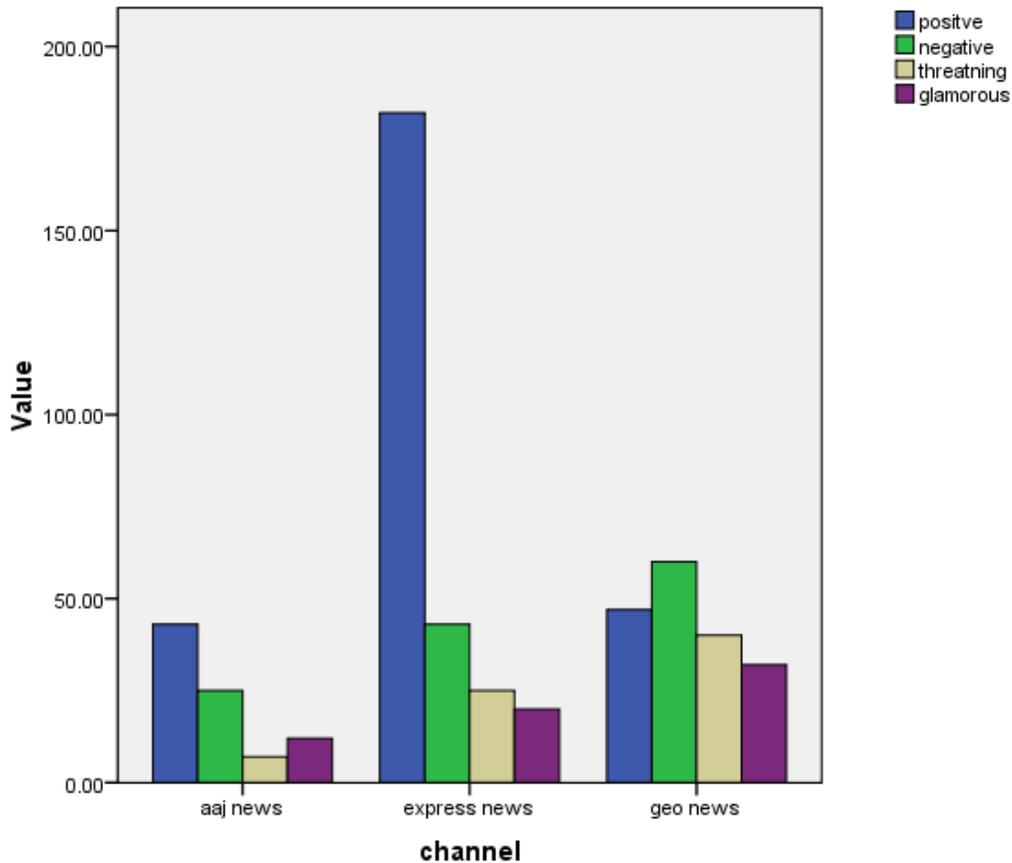


Figure above shows that Express News gave most positive news, while Geo gave the most negative coverage about women politicians.

Focus groups and intensive interviews- Key findings

The deception of numbers

The analysis has shown a significant increase in presentation of women on electronic media during and after Musharraf's regime. The result is strongly endorsed by respondents of focus groups and intensive interviews. The respondents are also stakeholders being politicians, media professionals or researchers, and civil society activists. Their opinion is informed and based on their observation of society and professional experiences. Almost all of them, 70 in number, observed the increase in participation of women politicians on media during and after Musharraf's regime but there was a difference between opinions of participants of focus groups and intensive interviews about the second hypothesis that media is changing public perception in such a way that women are inspired to take part in politics.

A dominant majority of focus group participants, who are local or provincial level actors, take courage from this increase in presentation of women politicians on media. The level

of satisfaction with the presentation of women politicians on media can be gauged from the fact that at times, male respondents in Multan and Faisalabad stated that women politicians are given relatively more space on media than their male colleagues.

In Lahore and Sialkot, female respondents said that the media played a pro-active role in supporting them in politics and welfare work. One female respondent in Sialkot quoted an incident in which media helped her start a welfare project in the city. A female politician in Lahore said: ‘Yes, media is our voice. It supported us a lot. It has helped spread our good image.’

But this majority is nonetheless disturbed by the discrimination between media portrayal of women and men in such a way that the women don’t feel encouraged to take part in politics. Similarly, the interviewees, who are provincial and national level stakeholders, see this increase in presentation of women on media as ‘ridiculous’. When media outlets increased, every segment of society got more coverage, which means the increased coverage is not specific to women politicians. They got less than their due share on electronic media and still continue to suffer bleak coverage on print media. (See table 2 and 4)

In print media, English language newspapers highlight the issues surrounding women politicians but the Urdu language newspapers gave women politicians a cold shoulder, typical of a male chauvinist society. Head of the state-run radio says, “It is true that influence of Radio has increased over the last 10 years ... But, once again their (media’s) role in women’s participation in politics is not up to the mark. Then it is also truth that the political elite of this country hardly cares about Radio.” The female politicians prominent on media see its treatment of their colleagues as balanced (50/50 as one of them said) but their approach is not reflective of others.

Focus group discussions were interesting as some of the participants came up with stereotypical images of women prevailing in our society for centuries describing them as the ones who have only one image that depicts them doing the chores. Even media and awareness tools did not help them reconstruct their images that also showed that media in its agenda setting does not care for changing gender insensitive stereotypical images in the minds of certain segments of society who are consumers of media information and construction processes. For example, a male participant in Multan said women are supposed to perform in-house duties and politics is not their piece of cake. Another male participant in Sialkot said media should teach women how to sew and do other domestic chores and not politics. Interestingly these opinions are prevalent in our society. These examples categorically manifest that media’s agenda setting focuses other than accepting women as leaders, politicians and key players in societal matters. Since media in their talk-shows portray woman politicians as having come from their kitchens. This negative image is also viewed by audiences, who then make derogatory and gender insensitive remarks about women in politics in the country. Media content managers need to set the agenda of public discourse portraying these women as leaders.

The Second Fiddle

The information gathered for this study suggests that in many cases journalists invite women politicians to their programs/shows when their male guests reportedly refuse to turn up. This is the reality a woman politician has to swallow when she comes on media – she is playing second fiddle to men. A leading civil society activist believes that increase in coverage of women politicians is linked with the increase in the number of women anchors. Her observation was fully substantiated by the statement of a leading women anchor who said, “I think media has not arranged special programs for women politicians. I, being a female anchor, usually invite women legislators to participate in my talk show in a bid to give equal treatment to women and men politicians.”

Women politicians have contributed to the law making process but media used them in many cases as a lure to attract more audiences instead of being serious stakeholders. Almost all the respondents observed that the stage is set for women politicians’ portrayal on media in such a way that are not treated with respect. Only one journalist, a female, said that she takes extra care of the fact that in her program, women are presented as equal to men and given the chance to take part in debates on policy matters, international relations, human rights, legislation and social reforms. Others think they have the potential to shed light on these serious issues but it remains untapped. In conclusion, the increase in presentation of women politicians on media failed to paint their image in such a manner that encourages others to participate. It is because the audience sets the agenda of its discussion in accordance with media representation of women politicians.

The Society, corruption and laziness

“I don’t blame the media fully. These gender biases are imbedded in our society. But media ought to break these biases instead of thriving on them for the sake of broader viewers/readership,” said a media scholar. Herald (2008) magazine writes that **despite increase in the coverage of women politicians on media, social perceptions about them are far from encouraging. These admissions of lapses in media rejects our second hypothesis.**

Media mirrors Pakistani society and those who work in the media are very much part and parcel of the society. The corruption in different segments of society reflects media as well. Media exposes stories of corruption in society and social media exposes corruption of Pakistani media elites. Reports suggest politicians pay hefty amounts to select groups of media people to get favorable coverage. Media analysts partly blame media owners for this corruption as they either pay low or no salaries to media people. Woman politicians hailing from affluent classes are also following suit and pay money and gifts to journalists, abundantly reported on social media.

“Connections do matter. Those with ‘friends’ at right places catch ample opportunity to express themselves to the public through media,” a female participant replied in Lahore.

Indulging in laziness, they do not only block some important information procured from a woman politician belonging to a smaller town, but they also leave a negative impact on

the public perception of women politicians. Seeing the same faces and listening to similar arguments again and again, media audiences are justified in thinking that the share of women in politics is limited only to this monotony that media shows them. The subtle damage that this approach does is creating a stress among a wide majority of women politicians disgruntled. “If I say anything, nobody will listen to it but if Shahzadi Umer Tiwana (politician from the prominent Tiwana family) says something, every channel will air it,” a women politician in Lahore said.

Another problem with this approach is that society is not aware of the achievements of politicians at the grassroots and out of ignorance they represent women politicians as not making contributions to local development. Women politicians from less prominent backgrounds feel cheated by this perception of increase in media coverage about women politicians. Their agony is summed up in a statement one of the respondents made: “There is much ‘coverage of the coverage of women politicians by media’ but in reality they (women politicians) are not there at all.”

Women politicians often complain about the lack of resources because few parties finance them and their position is secondary when it comes to the distribution of wealth within a family in Pakistan’s patriarchal society. They would not have faced these constraints in using media in an effective way if the media had been sensitive to their position. “Yes, absolutely it happens (class discrimination). I can’t offer dinners in five-star hotels for media makers as Samina Khawar Hayat; that’s why she steals the coverage,” said a female politician.

Media helps women get a good office even in their own political parties. The women who are given the opportunity to present their views stay in politics for a long time. But the problem is that the number of such women is very low. “There, sure, are pressure groups in the media. They have their own interests and benefits. They have a set of 30-35 faces, who are invited on a regular basis on prime time programs,” a woman politician pointed out.

The beauty barrier

After facing the barriers of gender and class, women politicians face another barrier –we may call it, the beauty barrier. According to our content analysis, in two weeks, Geo TV represented women politicians as glamorous 32 times. There are programs on media channels that show how a slim, smart and young politician walks on Constitution Avenue, highlighting her dress and glasses etc. It is a source of concern among female politicians, intellectuals and social workers (who we have studied in this project) that older and obese women politicians don’t even stand at the edges of media content. “I wonder what makes them ask Marvi Memon such questions: ‘have you ever loved somebody?’ and Sharmila Faruki ‘when will you get married?’ a participant of the focus group in Lahore commented.

Both political parties, and society in general, take women politicians less seriously after their their negative coverage on the media. It is because of this hostile perception that

fewer people vote for women politicians and dictators like Musharraf had to fix quotas for them in the parliament only to later boast of his efforts for ‘women’s empowerment’ in his book *‘In the Line of Fire’*. This quota serves to distance women parliamentarians from the masses as they get seats on the basis of their links, reported Aurat Foundation. But despite this quota, their number could not have risen to the desirable 33 percent in parliament. On the basis of this discussion and findings, we can conclude that the study has proved our first and third hypotheses and rejected the second hypothesis. *(Briefs of intensive interviews are given in the annexure if readers need their original message)*

Limitations

This time-bound research got very little time to complete this study. If focus groups and intensive interviews had been held after equal intervals, it would have resulted in more exact pictures. Resources were other obstacles since involving experts in such groups requires more resources. However, media contacts of the researchers made up for this deficiency to a large extent.

Conclusion (Recommendations)

The study notes that the frequency of coverage for women politicians has been increased since 2008 but this increase could not be translated into the acceptance of women politicians in society because they are portrayed negatively in the media. The study concludes that instead of breaking the barriers of gender, class and personality, Pakistan’s expanded media reduced space for women.

The short term arrangement of fixing their quota in parliament served to further increase the gap between women politicians and society. Media could have plugged this gap but did not. Media gave coverage to women in politics but did not project the role they played in parliament and in the provincial assemblies. They played a key role in legislation processes and they took part actively in the parliamentary debates. But their role has hardly been acknowledged in the media.

It seems that women’s political participation and leadership is regarded only when it concerns women from political parties and civil society but there have been no formal studies around that. During these two phases, the findings conclude that media builds its agenda in such a manner that women politicians enjoy more acceptance of their work in society. So, for a future policy change agenda, one needs to understand that in the context of Pakistani media and politics, it is important that women’s political visibility be regarded seriously.

The study notes that when the media spectrum increased, every segment of society got more coverage, which means increased coverage is not specific to women politicians. They got less than their due share on electronic media and still continue to get less coverage on print media.

Media has not befittingly covered the contribution of women politicians towards the law making process and did not take them as serious stakeholders. A woman journalist said she takes extra care of the fact that in her programs women are presented as equal to men and given the chance to take part in debates on policy matters, international relations, human rights, legislation and social reforms. Others think they have the potential to shed light on these serious issues but it remains untapped. We can conclude that the increase in presentation of women politicians on media failed to paint their image in such a manner that encourages others to come into politics. It is because the public set the agenda of its discussion in accordance with the agenda of media that seeks to compromise with aging social perceptions about women politicians.

Moreover society is not aware of the achievements of politicians at grassroots and in ignorance they assert that women politicians have made no contributions to local development. Women politicians from less prominent background feel cheated by this perception of increase in media coverage about women politicians. This contradiction is summed up by one of the respondents: “There is much ‘coverage of the coverage of women politicians by media’ but in reality they (women politicians) are not there at all.”

Musharraf did open up the media and the frequency of coverage for women increased in his regime, but this failed to change society’s perceptions about women, which were created by his predecessor dictator Ziaul Haq (Herald, 2008). It is for this reason that despite the increase in coverage about women politicians on media, the social perceptions about them is far from encouraging.

Both political parties and society take women politicians less seriously especially after their negative coverage on media. It is because of this hostile perception that fewer people vote for women politicians and the majority are occupying the reserved seats quota in parliament. This quota serves to distance women parliamentarians from the masses as they get seats on the basis of their links, reported Aurat Foundation. But despite this quota, their number did not rise to the desirable 33%. On the basis of this discussion and findings, we can conclude that the study has reaffirmed our first and third hypotheses and rejected the second hypothesis.

This study provides an eye opener for government, academia, civil society and donor communities in Pakistan so that they can work on increasing women’s political participation. There is a need for building a diverse agenda for women’s political participation by influencing decision makers in the media. The media coverage of women’s political participation can be increased through pro-active media work. Based on the findings and recommendation in this study, civil society and academia has to formulate media outreach programs, devise training programs for media persons so that they can keep in touch with sensitive issues. The civil society advocacy groups can draw up media plans with a view to increase media space for women politicians and can impart training to staff of like-minded groups, community groups and media professionals.

The Awaz project partners have established civil society and academia groups. They may organize training for journalists on rights based reporting. They can also conduct media interface training of the women politicians and parliamentarians so that they can speak the way media want them to. The Awaz partners can help generate content projecting women parliamentarians positively and build networking with media groups. The Awaz partners can launch a media campaign for the cycle of the project using results from this study and further follow up discussion with this research team. The partners in collaboration with Journalists for Democracy and Human Rights (JDHR), a reputed media think tank can draw up a media campaign strategy and a strategic plan to influence and leverage media in favor of women in politics.

One thing is certain that in this 24/7 media environment, there is space available for those non-traditional news-makers such as women in politics, minorities and marginalized groups. But this media space is largely consumed by male politicians. To grab more space in media for the women in politics, a well-structured media work is highly recommended as needed by this study.

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Annexure 1

Questionnaire

- 1- What media outlet(s) do you use?
- 2- How many hours of the day do you consume media?
- 3- Have you noticed different ways of presentation of women politicians on different media?
- 4- Since when have you started noticing their presentation on media?
- 5- What media (print, electronic or new media) presents women politicians more?
- 6- From among women representatives of local governments, parliamentarians and technocrats, which group is presented on media more?
- 7- Do women politicians participate in debates on issues like policy formation, legislation, security, human liberties and democracy?
- 8- Do women politicians get involved in claims and counter claims more willingly than serious matters as stated above (policy formation, legislation, security, human liberties and democracy)?
- 9- Do the women politicians have a strong political familial background?
- 10- When it comes to performance (legislation), do you see any difference between today's women politicians and the new lot of women politicians emerging out of quota fixation in parliament by Musharraf?
- 11- Musharraf widened media landscape, allowing the airing of private electronic media channels. Do you think there were enough women politicians to make use of this widening landscape at that time?
- 12- If not, do you think media encouraged women to take part in politics and elevate their status?
- 13- Have you witnessed a surge in the number of women politicians after new channels opened up?
- 14- Do you see any relationship between performance of women politicians on media and in parliament?
- 15- Can you narrate some unforgettable acts of women politicians in the media?
- 16- Can you remember some vital contributions women politicians made in the legislative process or community welfare?
- 17- What is your opinion on new laws related to harassment at the workplace, Hudood, domestic labor etc?
- 18- Do media have regular debates on legislation?
- 19- Do you feel media gives women credit for these legislations?
- 20- If yes, how?
- 21- What direction do media take with respect to the legislative process for the empowerment of women politicians?
- 22- Do you see any difference between portrayal of male and female politicians on

- media?
- 23- What change do you think is setting in in internal culture of political parties due to presentation of women on media?
 - 24- Has media helped political parties put women politicians in decision-making positions?
 - 25- What channels try to associate sex appeal, scandals, gender stereotypes, taboos with women? (examples may be counted)
 - 26- What media digs deep into the private life, relations and affairs of women politicians? (examples may be counted)
 - 27- Do you think looks matter more than position and responsibility when it comes to presentation of women politicians on media?
 - 28- Have you seen any change in old media trends of covering women's issues?
 - 29- What is your idea about women politicians in media.

Annexure 2

List of interviewees

Farah Zia, editor The News on Sunday

Rameeza Nizami (Waqt TV)

Sameena Khalid Ghurki, MNA PPP

Uzma Bukhari, MPA PPP

Beat Reporter

Ayla Malik, PTI

Zakiya Shahnawaz, MPA PML-N

Marvi Sirmad, civil society

Raza Rumi, socila media specialist

Unaza Ahsan

Raheela Qazi, JI

Myra Imran, journalist

Arifa Noor, editor Dawn Islamabad

Bushra Rehman, teacher media studies at PU

Sidra Chaudhry, chairperson media department at IIU

Asma Shirazi/Female Anchor person

Khawar Mumtaz, Shirkatgah

Nighar Ahmed, aurat Foundation

Humaira Awais Shahid (MPA+media owner)

Adnan Rehmat, media expert

Robina Qaimkhwani, MNA PPP

Kashmala Tariq, MNA forwrđ block

Annexure 3

Intensive Interviews

Fareeda Shaheed

Shirkat Gah, Lahore

I do not see that media's role regarding women's participation is exceptional. It is true that with the widening of media in the last 10 years or so the opportunities for everybody to come on media have increased including women politicians. But, I don't see many articles in newspapers or programs focusing on the issues of women's participation in politics and how can they be solved. Women parliamentarians have proved their importance and have been actively taking part in the legislative business at assemblies but their work has not been portrayed properly by media and they were mostly asked only to talk about issues related to women but when it comes to policy issues they were ignored by media. The scope has increased because several women have become journalists during the last few years. You can also see several women anchorperson now as well.

Their presence in local government helped many women from rural background to come to provincial and national politics. Many women who took active part in local government system now are part of the Punjab provincial assembly. It is true that media widened during Musharraf's era as well but it gave more opportunities to all sections of society to get space on media. People generally and women especially in Pakistan do not read newspaper and with the popularity of TV channels they got chances to see women politicians on TV. It is also true that most of the anchors try to have at least one female politician guest in each program. It is true that an element of glamour is also kept in mind while presenting women politician on TV channels but I think news media has also been getting conscious to present women on media as a voice and then because many women anchors have to come on TV so it also helped bringing a shift in perspective towards women politician in media.

Media do not have particular programs to promote women politicians, they have been getting more opportunities but I don't think media helped elevating their status in the internal politics of parties. Generally media has been helping communicate the message of politicians to the general public. Media loves scandals because they sell. Media gives more coverage to women politicians belonging to big families', in big cities and have connections. This is not only true about women politicians but also about male politicians from larger cities. It is important to help hear the voices of women politicians from rural areas.

Exposure of women politicians in media is very important. Media is needed to show the stories of women politicians focusing on their struggle and work. Sometimes, I hear that some young girls tell me that they are impressed by the work of some women politicians. But we need to focus more on emphasizing issues related to women's participation in politics.

There are strong biases in society about women and media. I do not hold media responsible for male oriented coverage of politics in Pakistan but media can help change the situation which it has not been doing well. Their performance and role both in parliament and the legislature has never been discussed seriously in the media.

Media repeats scandals about women politicians. I cannot recall when media portrayed women in a positive light. Media should give more opportunity to female politicians. Their performance in parliament should be highlighted. Media should focus on their work. Media hardly ever talks about the attire of male politicians, but this is not true of women. But, often both print and electronic media focuses on scandals because they sell. It is true that media gives more coverage to women politicians based in big cities or belong to influential families but male politicians are treated homogenously. Rural voices also need to be heard.

Exposure of women politicians demands have to be systematized through media. Media has never discussed women's role in parliament, even if some bills are presented by women parliamentarians there is no debate around the bill especially since bills are presented when there is a problem. Media never investigates why a particular bill is presented by women parliamentarians.

Women politicians scandals not only get more coverage but they are also repeated again and again. I cannot recall even a single positive portrayal especially in electronic media about female politicians but I can recall many of their scandals. Media should give more opportunity to women politicians and the issues related to participation of women in politics. Media should focus more on issues and initiate a debate instead of focusing on their attire, their hand bags, their shoes etc. We have never seen media discussing attire and outlook of male politicians. Their acceptability in society and parties is mainly because of their efforts I don't think media played a role in it. Media can help in projection but their success is totally dependent on their field. I have sometimes seen very well prepared women in TV talk shows. It is also an issue that our political parties do not train people how to tackle media. In our countries you only learn through personal experience.

**Anjum Safder,
MPA from PML-N**

Anjum Safdar, Faisalabad based MPA of PML-N. She has been active in politics since 1990. She elected as councilor in Faisalabad during 2004-05. She has been elected as Member, Provincial Assembly of the Punjab in general elections 2008 against one of the seats reserved for women. From 1999-2006 she also served as vice president women wing of PML-N Punjab chapter.

Media's positive role for empowering women legislators is a good initiative. It is true that media does a good job to educate women about politics, and does a tremendous job to inform womenfolk about their rights. Media should also highlight issues of women at

grass roots level and also promote achievements of women at grass roots level and media should also highlight career struggles of women legislators. PPP Chairperson Benazir Bhutto and Madhr-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah should be presented as role model for women parliamentarians and grooming women politicians.

Media has also been found riddled with corrupt practices as various influential personalities paid journalists to ensure their effective coverage in print and electronic media. Meanwhile, journalists who hailed from metropolitan cities like Lahore and Islamabad find it more convenient to ensure established relations with media persons that is why they get effective media coverage compared with politicians belonging to rural and suburban areas. Political parties in our part of the world do not devise any mechanism to ensure training and political education of their representatives and politicians, which is why the parliamentarians sometimes find it confusing to defend policies of their respective political parties and that's the reason why they avoid media queries.

It is true that women politicians dress well but women legislators and politicians should also inform themselves about changing political scenarios and key issues relating to policy and decision making. Women legislators should also focus on their respective constituencies and avoid shortcuts through media tycoons and PR agencies.

Samina Khawaer Hayat

MPA, PML-Q and central information secretary women wing of PML-Q

Media is playing a key role in women's empowerment in our society. I would like to share my personal experience: I was a housewife and this is my first constitutional tenure in the parliament. While seeing women on electronic media and voicing the rights and cause of women I got motivated and joined politics. Media helped me a lot at the start and helped increase my value in my own political party by providing space in both print and electronic media. Due to all that active participation, I got the slot of PML-Q Women's Wing Information Secretary. It is not appropriate that media focuses on the attire and makeup of women politicians and sometimes airs baseless and false news stories. Such baseless accusations tarnish one's image.

Our political party has a media cell where women legislators are given guidance for their appearance on electronic media and are being briefed about key issues and decision making. I think PML-N is an anti-woman party, as you will rarely find women defending PML-N except in some rare cases. I don't think that media portrayal of women is any better; however I would like to say that the world knows me due to media coverage but because of them I faced baseless allegations. It conveys my message to the public but sometimes news about women is not confirmed, specifically when a news channel commented that I own a fake degree. After my clarification they issued only a news **ticker** regarding baseless news. Though, on the whole, I do appreciate media's role in promoting women legislators.

Fauzia Behram

A PPP leader, active in politics since early 1980s. She was among the first women from district Chakwal who took part in politics and was elected as a member of the District Council in 1987. She was the only female member elected in general elections in the Punjab Assembly 1988-90. She has returned to the Assembly for the third term. She also took part in 2008 general elections for MNA.

Media is not playing its role to the extent it should play for coverage of women legislators and politicians. Media used to focus on negative points of women legislators instead of focusing on their work and efforts. The problem with media in our part of the world is that it portrays glamour and sensitizes us to the issues relating to women.

Another drawback of electronic media is that it aired breaking news without confirmation from the affected individual. Once a TV channel aired breaking news: Fauzia slapped a colleague in the House whereas such sort of news is not aired about male politicians.

In 1990 I was the sole woman member of parliament in the Punjab Assembly and that's the reason media used to focus on me and give me effective coverage. Nowadays women legislators and politicians also avoid interaction with journalists due to their aggressive and humiliating questions. Similarly, media persons and talk show anchors used to ask questions about our personal life and air news stories about our family lives. I would also say that women legislators participation on TV talk-shows should not be on the basis of favoritism but it should be decided because of experience and work.

It has also been seen that women legislators who visit talk-shows occasionally have lower profiles in their political parties but it should be the case that women who remain active on media should be given credit in their political parties. Media is not playing an encouraging role for women as witnessed by the fact that sometimes individuals become more prominent. Even in smaller cities and suburban areas it is more difficult to find media coverage without bribing media personnel.

Talath Naqvi

Information secretary, women's wing PTI Punjab chapter

I don't think that media has played a constructive and positive role in documenting women's participation in politics during the last 10 years. If some women politicians on key positions of some political parties get effective media coverage it doesn't mean that media is helping women legislators. PTI Women's Wing plays a very active role whereas PPP has got some faces which appear on the media to defend their party stance repeatedly whereas participation of PML-N women legislators is very low compared to other political parties.

Media encourages women politicians to groom themselves.

Print media across the board is better to some extent and as a politician if someone questions me on some issue if he gets information from some male politician, the media person prefers to quote the male instead of woman legislator. PTI women are generating political activity for the last few years and working so hard but quite often find less media

coverage whereas new individuals with political stature and background get more media coverage. New people in PTI like Javed Hashmi and Shah Mehmood Qureshi gets more media coverage against those women workers working on the ground for a long time. Even electronic media likes to prefer male politicians to give coverage and issue their condemnation tickers consecutively on TV screens whereas they never air condemn messages from women legislators and women politicians and it seems as if media runs after heavyweights.

To strengthen women's participation in power politics political parties should call women politicians to attend the party's policy meeting.

Our party always struggles to maintain 20% women in strategic dialogue meetings of party leadership. It is true that people with elite families get more media attention, like Ayela Malik. No doubt she is doing a fabulous job for the party but media should also allocate space for workers like us. The problem with media is that it sells crowd pleasers to grab public attention. Sensitive news stories are being aired to hijack viewership and specifically recycled news items concerning scandals about women legislators.

Items should not be aired constantly since it will lose its original attraction. It has also been observed that media favors male politicians whereas women politicians cannot find enough coverage. During the last 10 years public trends towards electronic media have not been altered too much but media portrayal of women politicians has changed to some extent since there is more women participating in politics.

Tayyba Zameer

PML-N MPA from Sarghoda, an advocate by profession, she has been active in politics since early 1990s. She served as president of the women's wing of Sarghoda city, PML-N from 1990-1998. She also served as member of the Central Working Committee of PML-N from 2001-06

Participation of women in politics encounters both societal approval and censure. Media role for women legislators is very sensitive as media exposure can either destroy or make a political career. It has been noticed specifically on electronic media that few women politicians and legislators are repeatedly depicted in live talk shows and other media programs and their ideas and opinions get enormous attention and coverage. In my opinion media work for empowerment of women is 50-50. If some individuals get more attention it means they are also grabbing the time from other politicians right to media attention.

Individuals who have no political roots in public utilize media to grab public attention and to some extent they remain successful through this domain and remain in the public eye and are noticed by senior leaders in their party. It is also a fact that some politicians remain busy in moving and drafting bills in the house but didn't get enough public attention whereas some remain on TV screens. Sometimes women legislators employ some individuals to draft bills in the house but they avoid media since they do not want to face questions. The quality of print media is still very good compared to electronic media.

Anyhow media plays an essential role in exposing both men and women politicians who are disingenuous. During the movement for judiciary reinstatement I worked very hard with the consultation of my party leadership and defended the party's position on electronic media. In the long term only those politicians and legislators will survive who have reason to stay not the ones who authenticate their existence through media. Media should also give importance to people at the ground level and instead of glamourizing news should cover real issues.

Saghira Islam

PPP, MPA from Sheikhpura district. Active in politics since the mid1960s, she is among the most senior female political leaders in the Punjab assembly. She served as president of the women's wing in Sheikhpura district from 1968-77. She also served as senior vice president of PPP Punjab women's wing from 1998 to 2008. She remained a Member, Provincial Assembly of the Punjab for three terms during 1977, 1988-90 and 2002-07; and has returned to the Assembly for the fourth term in general elections 2008 against one of the seats reserved for women. She remained Parliamentary Secretary for Women Development from 31, January 2009 to 26, February 2011.

Media should use precaution in reporting news about women legislators and politicians. In some cases media has been found guilty for promoting people on the basis of favoritism not facts. It has also been noticed that media persons project only those politicians and individuals who regularly provide stimuli to the media elites. No doubt media assistance is beneficial for one's political career but in order to accomplish this one should be resourceful and influential. Media tends to elevate some politicians while others who have a long history of struggles and sacrifices feel isolated for not being the chosen ones.

Nowadays, media has introduced star politicians and those people are given media time by anchors, but the media should examine the credibility of the individual who was showcased as party representative. People with fame, money and beauty get more coverage in media and that's the reason simple women cannot relate and are discouraged from political participation. Media should realize that Fatima and BB enter politics for their courage and resolve to win the hearts of people. Media should also portray the struggles of women politicians instead of focusing on scandals or what they wear.

Belum Husnain

MNA and president PPP Punjab women chapter

Often media has mixed effects, sometimes it benefits women legislators and sometimes it exposes people and jeopardizes careers. Usually talk-shows in the electronic media regard women legislators and politicians as a lesser priority when some key guest refuses to attend the show; they are left with no other option than to call women representatives of the same party. It has also been observed that talk-shows are totally dependent on favoritism and lobbys; meanwhile there are some politicians who are fame crazy.

While watching electronic media, one can conclude that media is promoting beautiful

faces and during prime hours negative issues are highlighted in order to garner public attention and escalate ratings. Once I suggested that female anchors of State Run TV should use 'Dupatthas' on their shoulders but I was accused of suggesting that all female anchors and newscasters should wear Hijab. During the last few years women legislators have outshone their male counterparts for moving different bills and motions in the house but media never gave credit to these women politicians.

Media usually criticizes women legislators for their costly bags, attire, and appearance but never for their work, often focusing on non-issues. In my opinion print media is far better than electronic media. It has often been observed that electronic media didn't confirm any news story before putting it on air. Media elites should bring change in their policy regarding sensitive news relating to women legislators and should develop values to confirm news sources before airing any news item. The main reason why families didn't want their children to join politics is the scandals that will implicate them. So I would like to say that media should be more cautious when reporting on women legislators.

Samia Raheel Qazi

Former MNA and president JJ women wing

It is true that women were playing important roles in legislative business before Musharraf's regime, but in electronic media, the portrayal of women legislator's increased greatly after Musharraf's regime. Musharraf increased reserve seats for women politicians and they got an opportunity to legislate women's issues in order to strengthen society with democratic values. I was active in student politics and I was the last elected General Secretary of Lahore College and after that in national politics my interaction with media remained very positive. In our society majority of people consider women as a tool for entertainment so women are vulnerable. I was very cautious and the media highlighted me accordingly.

I don't remember the media ever quoted me incorrectly. I think it's media that introduced Summaiaha Raheel Qazi as a politician. Most women get fame for their quarrelsome nature. But media gives more coverage to parliamentarian women. When I was a parliamentarian, my news coverage was better but my coverage has reduced a lot now. English newspapers did not cover religious parties and find it convenient to promote secular points of view. Even in parliament media has tilted towards male politicians. It is true that women used to avoid media but once you trust them, they are able to remain in the media.

Political parties should train their women legislators to handle media tactfully.

It is true that internal politics of political parties didn't provide any opportunity to guide their women legislators for media briefings and women legislators should be part of policy and decision making. During my parliamentary years, 'I moved 21 bills from 2002 to 2007 and I was credited for the best performance'. I have liked Benazir Bhutto since my childhood and she was the leader who was a symbol of courage and confidence for

women politicians. It is also true that the majority of women come to politics through their family background. Media should be very cautious regarding women since they are more vulnerable to scandals. Media should create public awareness and as elections approach media should highlight issues relating to party manifestos and achievements instead of indulging in bizarre topics to get public attention. Media should also develop an honorable relationship with politicians and specifically with women legislators.

Murtaza Solangi

Director General Radio Pakistan

I classify Pakistani media in two categories-state and **Seth** (yellow journalism??) media. There is very little independent and public interest media. State media is controlled by the state while Seth media is money driven and operates on sensationalizing issues. Pakistani media has not played a major role in women's political participation or their empowerment. It is true that influence of Radio has increased over the last 10 years especially FM radios. We have at present 108 private FM radios and 35 state owned FM radios operational in Pakistan. But, once again their role in women's political participation is not appropriate. It is also true that the political elite of this country hardly cares about radio. They are enthusiastic about Television and radio is not as good a source of dispensing information.

Literally, as far as coverage of women politicians in the Punjab based media is concerned, I have seen changes but they are far worse. For example, you would remember Samina Khawar Hayat, an MP in the Punjab assembly who talked in favor of polygamy in the Punjab assembly. The media picked the issue and debated it for months while on the other hand if women initiated some serious issues based debate in assemblies or their struggle as political workers, it hardly got mentioned in the media. Media focuses more on the scandals of women politicians rather than their contribution to politics.

It is true that media repeatedly shows the same faces of women politicians, those who are based in big cities, or belong to big families and have social influence. Then there are some women politician like Kashmala Tariq and Firdoos Ashiq Awan who have commercial value and sell more than others and so media always tries to find something sensational about them. Personal charm is also one factor. I think media can hardly influence internal political cultures of different parties. For example a politician belonging to JI may have been given as much coverage on media but it would hardly elevate her status in the party while on the other hand political parties like PPP, ANP etc may treat their women politicians differently.

Things can only be changed in a positive way for women's better coverage in media when they are in executive positions in political parties, public offices and media itself. Their presence in decision making processes can change the overall male narrative in society as well as media.

Mohsin Goraya

Lahore-based senior journalist and columnist who has served as a reporter with Nawa-e-Waqat and editor of political affairs with daily Express. He also worked with PTV as head of current affairs department. These days he has been working with Jehan-e-Pakistan newspaper as editor of political affairs.

I strongly believe that media's role in encouraging women's participation in politics is very important and over the last 10 years it has also played a very important role. One needs to understand that there are only 17-20 percent women in the Punjab assembly and overwhelming majority of them selected by the leadership on reserved seats for them. There are hardly a few of them who take active part in debates on different issues in the assembly and whenever a woman takes part in assembly business, she gets fair share of coverage in media. It is true that women who are well-contacted and develop friendly relationship with media get more coverage.

It is also true that only women politicians who are part of parliament got most of the coverage and its mainly because they have a forum available to them. There are several women politicians who were empowered even in their parties with the help of media. Samina Khawar Hayat of PML-Q is the best example. She started taking part in debates in the assembly and was quickly picked up by media. With her popularity on media, she quickly made progress in her party and now she is one of the most important women leaders of PML-Q. It is also true that most of the women politicians are media shy. In fact, their parties hardly train them how to treat media. Being a reporter, columnist and editor, I always try to get women's input in my stories but most of the time they are not aware of the issues. In some cases they even deny commenting because they are not aware of their party's position on issues. It is also true that I have hardly written a column on the issues related to women's participation in politics.

It is true that as a media person I am more interested in scandals and the lives of politicians-both male and female but scandals of female politicians sell more and in popular media we are forced to write what our audience or readers want to see.

He believes that things can only be changed in favor of women politicians in the media once internal culture of parties is changed to favor women. At present, they have no role in policy making

Mubashir Akram

Director Pinfo, leading media monitor organization in Pakistan.

No doubt media is playing a key role for social awareness but it has also been observed that electronic media repeats news items to garner public attention. I would like to share my personal experience: in an interview, an interviewer asked do you think that rape incidents have increased in our society or media coverage on such news has increased. Women's projection in politics increased gigantically after 2002 when reserve seats for women were increased to 72 in a 326 member house to fulfill the vested interests of the dictatorial regime. During Musharraf regime Zubeda Jalal, Sumera Malik, Ayela Malik and Kashmali Tariq played key roles.

Women politicians during the last 10 years have not been excelling in policy works as they left it for the bureaucrats. A mechanism should be devised for nomination of Women member's of parliament on reserved seats since the reserved seats were hijacked by the feudal class. Participation of women parliamentarians on policy works is very rare except Kashmala Tariq, who was ridiculed by Firdous Ashiq Awan and Mehreen Anwer Raja who were elected on reserve seats. She never works on policy issues but rather she generally protests and creates chaos in the house. Media elite specifically focus on few women parliamentarians who are seen on talk shows defending their political parties. The issue is that these 60 women legislators who were elected on reserve seats and 12 others who were directly elected through a public mandate have same jurisdiction.

Being a Media monitor since last three years, 'I would like to says that media has introduced breaking news culture to hijack public attention on unworthy news stories like, two people shot dead in this-that country and caravan of prime minister passed from the site. It's very easy for policy institutes like PILDADT and FAFEN to publish reports on women parliamentarian's performance but the truth is that electronic media has not played a positive role for women legislators. Media elite and women legislators have not developed cohesive and positive relations. Women legislators are rarely found for lobbying on some bill or move in the house, it is very easy to draft a bill on any specific issue but lobbying it in their respective parties and in the house is another matter.

In one word, relationships between media and women legislators could be termed as 'combative'. The epic between Kashmala Tariq and Firdous Ashiq Awan and later Hanif Abbasi and Kashmala when Hanif commented that I secured a seat in Parliament by securing 80,000 votes not through the support of generals. Women legislators despite all odds used to attach themselves with their party leadership as Farah Naz Isphani who was designated to a key position for which she doesn't have any relevant experience; however I would like to appreciate the role of PTI women leader Fauzia Qasoori for her party's policy issues.

I think Kashmala Tariq has outshone other women legislators. Our media and media persons also find it convenient to take versions of the news from a few select and notable women legislators at the cost of all other unknowns to file their table stories and to impress others for his coordination with key politicians. Media also used to give more coverage on scandals of women politicians comparing their endeavors on policy issues. I would like to share the incident of PML-N's parliamentary member, Shumaila Rana, who was accused of Credit Card theft, but later investigations revealed that she didn't steal the card; however media presented her as a culprit. Another episode of a woman legislator (Samina Riaz) who was also accused of such allegations but the media didn't highlight the incident to the extent that Shumaila Rana was exposed, because she belongs to an elite family (Riaz Ahmed Shaikh) and the issue was hushed up by media. Media promotes and protects the individuals who are favored by media elites.

As you know that electronic media has to fill the gap of coverage and to get public attention it aired Waheed Shah's thrashing incident and the issue turns into a nightmare when the apex court ruled suo moto on it. In our part of world you will see songs amidst

news bulletins and to the best of my knowledge it doesn't happen anywhere in the world. We are living in a patriarchal society and here one can't rule out the dominating role of males and the tune of the talk-shows is usually dependent on the mood of the anchor. The rating mania among talk-shows has minimized moral considerations. Social media in our part of the world is being used as a hobby and coverage of women politicians is not as good as it should be. Followers of Maryam Nawaz on Twitter are far greater than Khurram Dastagir for the reason that she is the daughter of Nawaz Sharif. She has no experience in practical politics and the reason is that people use to love politicians when they are out of power.

Marvi Memon's followers on twitter compared to Maryam Nawaz are far less as Maryam hails from an elite political family. The sole credit of Bilawal Bhutto, Asifa Bhutto and Bakhtawar Bhutto is that they are children of Benazir Bhutto. The trends on social media are very telling. Talk-Shows of Kamran Shahid in Express News regarding 'Tatto on Nude Arm of Veena Malik' raised the program ratings. It is unfortunate that the policy of the channels are not being set by editorial teams but solely depend on the mood of the anchor and availability of the guests. The same is the case with PPP, PML-N and PTI and when mainstream and notable politicians are not available they remain dependent on persons like Mehreen Anwer Raja and Sadiq-ul-Farooq. The situation is not different from Musharraf's regime.

Bushara Hameed

Assistant professor at institution of communications, University of Punjab Lahore.

Pakistani media is playing a very ridiculous role, since it does not show the caliber and expertise of women legislators but their garrulous skills in defending their party. Since the last 10 years when media in Pakistan got freedom, it has been presenting stereotypical sides of women's behavior and hardly exposes the intellectual side of women legislators. Meanwhile few individuals owing to their elite background get the opportunity to monopolize the media and are seen consecutively on media in prime time talk-shows. Contribution of print media regarding coverage of women legislators is very nominal except for a few English newspapers which highlight issues of women legislators whereas the contributions of Urdu newspapers for women legislators is almost non-existent.

The problem with electronic media is that it depicts women legislators as fashionistas, who use politics as a part time hobby. Media elites should bring change in their policies towards women legislators and highlight intellectual ability and the work that women legislators undertake. Another drawback that hinders the promotion of women in media is that media aims at promoting women legislators and male politicians with degrees from foreign universities and such biased practices on behalf of media minimizes the role of women legislators with local educational backgrounds. Sometimes, it seems as if media is trying to promote and uplift a specific tupe and class from society at the cost of all other politicians, political activists and social workers.

Maryam Waqas

Lecturer Mass Communication, Queen Merry College, Lahore

Overall prominence and coverage by media towards women legislators and their male counterparts is not on an equal footing. It has often been observed that to some extent media gives weight to women legislators for their looks. Media should promote and give opportunity to women politicians for endeavors in their respective expertise and for their struggles as politicians. One rarely finds news statements about women politicians in daily newspapers and as our research shows, if women legislators find place in media coverage it usually relates to schools' inauguration ceremony and participation in any political or protest rally but we hardly find any press release or statement pertaining to their party's political and administrative issues and any policy work they are involved with.

English newspapers give importance to engagements of women legislators to publish in their newspapers whereas Urdu newspapers and specifically 'Evening Newspapers' portray women legislators as commodities (I don't know what this means). Another drawback is that while giving coverage to women politicians the media focus is on scandals about women legislators and news regarding such scandals gets more coverage in print media as well as air time in electronic media. Sometimes in daily coverage of newspapers it has often been seen that pictures of women legislators find place in print media but without their news stories as media prefers to give place to women legislators for their pictures but not for their news stories. The coverage of the same event depicts women legislator's pictures but news stories of their male counterparts that also hinted at the dual policies of media towards women legislators and such practices should be shunned in order to restore confidence of women politician's profile building.

Rabia Shah

Aurat Foundation

Nowadays women legislators find place mostly on Talk-Shows during prime time but the issue is that the role depicted by women politicians in those by electronic media is not very constructive, positive or conclusive. Media is often seen assisting and promoting women legislators for play positive roles. One can't find positive and encouraging reports related to women legislators but scandals about women politicians spread on social media as well as in electronic media. Sometimes it seems that media is unable to see positive roles played by women politicians relating to their business work, policy issues and other affairs pertaining to the activities of the Provincial, National assembly or on specific committees. Scandals about women legislators find more space and airtime in print as well as on electronic media.

I would like to refer to 'Smoking Pics' of former Information Minister, Sherry Rehman on social media which got more coverage than all her personal and social endeavors and became the reason for her immense popularity.

Similarly, the attitude of electronic media is like social media; however English newspapers are far better about coverage of women legislators. English Newspapers like

The News, Daily Times, Express Tribune and Dawn gave proper coverage to women politicians and high light their business and personal achievements. Women Politicians, specifically elected on reserved seats in their respective political parties get less respect from their male colleagues. Disbursement of funds allocated to women parliamentarians is often decided by their male party leaders and they have no such discretionary powers to utilize funds and powers on their behalf.

Media should play its key role to change the mindset of society which wants to see women only in stereotypical and assigned roles. Women legislators and women anchors on electronic media used to speak like men (Shouting, abusive language).

To some extent media in our part of the world lacks training, capacity building issues and that's the main reason that media focuses frequently on personal appearances, attire, makeup and dress negating all other capabilities of women legislators. Such practices on behalf of media in the long run created the image of women politicians as they were inarticulate characters.

PPP gives space to women and educates cadre of PPP women's wing playing key role on policy and decision making issues in the party contrary to all other major political parties of the country. Media should also acknowledge its responsibilities to strengthen women in the internal politics of political parties. Electronic Channels through their talk shows should play constructive roles to create awareness in the society but we see that as the elections are approaching we rarely find any talk-show discussing manifestos of political parties in their program. In our part of the world policies of electronic media are being decided by anchors of TV programs and the issues like the projection of women could be settled by arranging programs with all the stakeholders. Media should focus its attention on the legislative role conducted by women legislators instead of focusing on their attire and appearance. Likewise media should also focus on women living in rural and semi-urban societies as women in metropolitan cities gets more attention as opposed to the women living in rural areas of the country. Media should work on equal footing to diminish any sort of favoritism.

Raza Rumi

Political commentator, blogger and expert on social media, researcher and consulting editor Friday Times

Media is playing a very crucial and encouraging role towards women's participation in politics and society. Media is highlighting the leadership role of womenfolk from national, provincial assemblies and from cabinet and committees of core importance. To some extent, women legislators and women politicians have very negative portrayals on electronic media. I would like to quote the incident being aired on Express TV Program (Kal Tak) hosted by Javed Ch and Firdous Ashiq Awan use very abusive language for their female counterpart Kashmala Tariq and due to sensitizing electronic media, that particular TV Channel has repeatedly aired that program to get public attention with the sole motive to escalate their ratings.

Likewise, comedy shows on TV channels use to mimic specifically women. Their stereotypical roles are being mimicked for the amusement of viewers. It's true that

women legislators from the elite-class have more access to media according to their resources and contacts in media. They utilize their advantages to outshine all other women legislators from middle-class background and from other parts of the country. I would like to quote US Foreign Secretary Hillary Clinton, who gets more coverage in the world contrary to all other congress leaders.

During the last few years women legislators have demonstrated more productivity on the business of legislation in a male dominated parliament. With the assistance of media women, from all parts of the country, are getting the opportunity to emerge as viable politicians. Keeping in view the struggle by womenfolk in society, media elites should revise their policy regarding women and as women constitutes more than 50% of the total population of the country, media should acknowledge their worth and give them equal coverage. Media should come forth by highlighting the social issues of women and contributions of women to better society. Since the last five years, Pakistan has been evolving in the social media and it could be too early to definitively conclude on women's empowerment but there is no doubt that social media has a huge potential to correct social attitudes towards women.

Asma Sherazi

Lead TV anchor

I think media has not arranged special program specifically for women and being anchor I usually call women legislators to participate in my talk show and we try to give equal treatment to women as we do with their male counterparts. Quite often it has also been noticed that women legislators in their respective political parties didn't get the attention of their leaders and it could be concluded that women's role in political parties is not very important and they are usually keep away from decision making issues. When I covered parliament in the capacity of a reporter and during my interaction with women legislators in the house, they complained that they have no say in policy or decision making in their political parties. Being an honest anchor I confess that I also prefer interviewing male politicians to female legislators and politicians.

Women legislators in party politics are usually unaware about policy issues and contrary to all other major political parties, PPP Women's Wing is more active on media and Talk-shows. Women legislators form part of various committees in parliament but the irony is that they have very little say in the domains of their party politics and keep away voluntarily from key policy and decision making issues. An analytical view of the major political parties revealed that ANP and MQM gave weight to their women legislators and that's why they get more media coverage compared to other women politicians from all the other political parties. PML-N women workers find it hard to get media coverage amidst dominating role of their male counterparts and that's the reason their PML-N's male politicians are seen frequently on print and electronic media and they even claim the work done by their women legislators.

Being a journalist, I can say that if we have to confirm or recheck any news story we prefer to confirm or make sure from some male politicians compared to any woman

politician. PPP is the sole political party where women have knowhow about policy issues and other decision making issues. Similarly, women legislators elected directly on the public mandate have more influence against the women politicians elected on reserve seats. Electronic media call women legislators for glamor but honestly I prefer to call them for the content and nature of my topic on the talk-show. Political parties usually underestimate their women legislators and treat them unfairly. At the same time it is also true, that women politicians with established contacts come in limelight in a shorter span of time and get more coverage in print and electronic mediums. The major drawback of electronic media is that it portrays women legislators with a different image as I would like to say that Kashmala Tariq being a woman legislator is very committed, able and intelligent woman politician and is knowledgeable about policy issues and struggles for women's protection bill. Media training is very essential to bring change for their attitude towards women as it has been said that media sells what can be sold.

Sarwer Bari.

Head Pattan

Media coverage related to women legislators is inadequate and to empower women in the social fabric, media should play its role by giving more positive space to women politicians. Representation of women in Local Government System was very active at grass root level and I would like to appreciate endeavors of women activists during the Swat Military Operation. Local Women Councilors helped a lot in the rehabilitation process of internally displaced people but on media, these women never succeed in finding any sort of coverage. Contrary to these women activists if any major politician or govt representative visited relief camps he gets media attention. Our entire society is predominantly elitist and the media elites used to prefer those who can assist media in the longer run.

Efforts of women activists during natural disasters are very important and used to motivate others but our media never bothers to invest on such long term investments. Powerful and influential individuals or politicians in our society get more media coverage. The making of Women's Wings in the political parties has marginalized the womenfolk and that's the reason women politicians didn't get the same coverage and space on media like male legislators and politicians. According to the resourcefulness of the elite class, Maryam Nawaz Sharif gets more coverage and airtime compared to other women politicians. If we took an analytical view of media coverage of women legislators, we find that only scandals get media coverage at the cost of all their useful efforts and struggle.

English newspapers in our country are doing a great job to highlight issues of women legislators and of common women in the country. With the evolution of social media in our part of the world, social awareness is making its sense but women in our country have very low access to social media. The findings of our survey on mobile technology in Pakistan revealed that different localities in Pakistan have access to mobiles and the ratio for Men= 69%, Women= 3%. The survey further revealed that the Women's Wing participation for women from Political Parties at District and Union Council Levels is

less than 3%. This is sheer hypocrisy of mainstream political parties as 70 seats are reserved for women in the parliament but the political parties are not sincere about women's empowerment at the grass roots level. Media should focus its attention on women at grass roots level, since that would facilitate women's empowerment.

Annexure 4

Guidelines for moderators

- Moderators should read the outline of the research so that they are in a better position to understand the project.
- Since the project is about media and women politicians, 8-12 participants should be selected for each focus group session with a background in media, interest in politics and an eye on portrayal of women politicians in the media.
- A moderator may conduct two sessions of a focus group if necessary, but it is recommended that only one session is held as a convenience for the participants.
- Before the session, a moderator should prepare his/her camera to take photos, notebooks to take notes and tape recorders to record the points he/she is short of time to note down.
- Before the session, a moderator should distribute the questionnaire among the participants so that they are able to give their written input if they want.
- During the session, a moderator should keep in mind that he/she is there to learn from the participants and understand their point of view instead of imposing his/her views on them.
- A moderator should leave the page blank under each question so that he/she is able to note down the points a respondent will make about this particular question.
- A moderator should give enough time to each of the respondent to clear their point but at the same time, be cautious that they don't deviate from the topic.
- A moderator should not allow one participant to represent others and monopolize the debate.
- Asking questions and driving more questions from their replies, a moderator should keep to the point.
- A moderator should keep from ridicule and sarcasm so that no respondent feels insulted or hurt.
- A moderator should break the session for a few minutes if he/she feels that the participants are getting tired or lack interest in the debate.
- A moderator should allow light humor to make the environment conducive for the session.