

**RESEARCH PAPER****Legislation for Women Rights in PMLN and PTI Governments: A Comparative Analysis****<sup>1</sup>Dr. Muhammad Waqas Butt\*, <sup>2</sup> Saira Hasan and <sup>3</sup>Qirat Khushnood**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study compares the legislative initiatives for women's rights implemented by the PMLN and PTI authorities in Pakistan from 2013 and 2022. Using a wealth of legislative documents, statements of policy, and academic analyses, this study identifies significant legislative achievements made by the PTI and PML-N administrations in tackling issues of discrimination, gender-based violence, and socioeconomic inequality that impact women in Pakistan. Through placing the comparison of results within the theoretical framework about liberal feminism, this study advances our comprehension of the intricacies inherent in the debate around women's rights in Pakistan. Content analysis is a research tool has been used within some given qualitative data. While acknowledging the progress made by both the PML-N and PTI governments in enacting laws aimed at safeguarding women's rights, The results show that the PMLN administration has achieved greater headway in attaining legislative program goals, but the PTI government's measures on women's rights are being criticized.

**Keywords:** Autonomy-Support, Career Adapt-Abilities, Emerging Adults, Parenting Practices**Introduction**

In Pakistan, women's empowerment and gender equality have been major topics of discussion in sociopolitical debate. Successive administrations have tried to address these issues through legislative initiatives. Women's rights have been promoted by laws and policies put in place by the governments of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), two of the country's largest political parties. In order to better understand the parallels, contrasts, and effects of the legislative measures for women's rights that the PML-N as well as PTI governments have undertaken, this research study will compare and contrast them.

**Pakistan Tehreek Insaf ERA**

The political group Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) navigates the political arena outside of elections. It also explored the opportunities open to women in Pakistani politics by focusing on how female professional politicians got beyond institutional and structural barriers to political engagement.

- Free education & Scholarships; Child care assistance to working women
- Enforce laws for in-camera trial of rape cases
- Gender-related commitments in PTI's governance(P,18) Every police station has a women's support cell to assist and process the Constitution to guarantee women's equal position. Restoring Women's Ministries.
- Promotes a 20 percent quotas for female staff in elected offices".

- To provide uniforms, textbooks, lunches, scholarships, transportation, and sibling daycare as incentives for girls' education.

### **PMLN ERA**

- Women's representation in all legislative levels." Added gender sensitization to the law education curriculum and judicial academies. Create a Commission on Women to guarantee Women's Participation at All Levels.
- Women Protection Centres; "Land Rights Technical & Vocational Education for Women" Women's participation in developing political organizations policies and procedures"
- To safeguard their rights to inheritance and advance pro-women legislation, draft new anti-discrimination and EVAW laws and suggest the establishment of workplace sexual harassment committees."
- "To develop microcredit programs targeted at women's empowerment granting home building loans to widows in order to open daycare facilities for working women To promote women's entrepreneurship, a Women Entrepreneurial Finance Program will be launched".

Recent years have seen tremendous progress in Pakistan toward improving women's empowerment and gender equality, with laws acting as a vital instrument in this direction. From 2013 until 2018, the PML-N administration, under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, implemented a number of policies aimed at enhancing women's access to economic, healthcare, and educational opportunities. Following this, the PTI administration led by Imran Khan came to power in 2018 promising to give social justice including women's rights top priority.

Under PMLN leadership, the Pakistani government was taking the necessary steps to give women's rights in order to help them catch up to men. The government was firmly convinced that without giving women, who made up half of society, equal opportunities, the nation could not advance. Nawaz Sharif led the government in implementing measures to protect women's rights as outlined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), even though numerous reforms are still needed to allow women to participate in all spheres of life.

In order to help Pakistani young create better futures for themselves, PMLN launched the Prime Minister's young Loan. Of this program, 50% is designated for women in order to support them in starting their own enterprises and so enabling them to enjoy equal rights.

Although the administrations of the PML-N and PTI have pledged to advance women's rights, there may be substantial differences in their strategies and areas of policy interest. This study compares the laws passed by the two governments in an effort to determine how much each one has done to address important issues including violence against women, economic empowerment for women, and political engagement. Additionally, the report attempts to evaluate how well these legislative actions have improved the rights and position of women throughout Pakistan.

### **Literature Review**

Over time, Pakistan's legislative environment pertaining to women's rights has changed as a result of the introduction of diverse methods and policies by various political regimes. The goal of this evaluation of the literature is to provide light on the efforts, successes, and difficulties faced by the governments of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) in relation to their legislative measures for women's rights.

42 million of the 97 million people who were chosen to vote overall were women, according to the 2017 enrolment, which represents a significant portion of Pakistan's 207 million local residents. Pakistan suddenly adopts an inappropriate and twisted form of relating representation for the selection of women. Women's held seats are distributed according to the percentage of general votes won, which is presently 17%. The main cause of the sexual orientation gap in social, economic, and cultural spheres is the underrepresentation of women in fundamental leadership roles. It has resulted in open efforts and initiatives ignoring women's issues. To enable women to perform an outstanding and captivating role in fundamental leadership.

### **Legislative Initiatives Under the PML-N Government:**

The PML-N government, in power during 2013 to 2018, enacted a number of laws that supported women's empowerment and rights. According to Ali and Rehman (2019), the PML-N has worked hard to pass laws that will combat gender-based violence, increase women's access to healthcare and education, and expand their economic prospects. The Punjab Safety of Women Over Violence Act of 2016 and campaigns to boost the political representation of women on local and national levels are notable legislative accomplishments (Khan & Ahmad, 2020).

### **Challenges and Criticisms**

Even with its legislative efforts, the PML-N government was criticized for what was seen as its shortcomings in putting women's rights laws into practice and upholding them. Malik (2018) identifies obstacles that prevented women's rights from being fully realized under the PML-N rule, including lack of resources, patriarchal attitudes, and institutional resistance. Scholars have also pointed out differences between policy language and actual execution at the ground level, which raises concerns about the government's dedication to empowering women (Sharif & Khan, 2017).

The majority of female councilors, according to the study, had no idea what their roles and responsibilities were, had no training, no agenda, had never presented a scheme or proposal, had no access to funding, had never enjoyed a comparable position with their male counterparts, and had not made any significant progress since being elected. (Shazad, 2020).

### **Legislative Agenda of the PTI Government**

The PTI administration has made a clear commitment to promote gender equality and women's rights since taking power in 2018. Scholars have observed, meanwhile, that there is conflicting evidence about this agenda's execution. Critics contend that the PTI government's attitude to women's rights is inconsistent and does not adequately address structural hurdles, despite the introduction of programs like the Ehsaas Program targeted at socio-economic empowerment (Ali & Rehman, 2019). Khan and Ahmad (2020) stress that in order to turn policy promises into real results for women, significant legislative changes and more robust enforcement mechanisms are required.

PTI examined the ways in which female professional politicians overcome the institutional and structural barriers to political engagement, hence expanding the range of options accessible to them in Pakistani politics.

## Comparative Analysis of Legislative Approaches

There are parallels and divergences between the PML-N versus PTI governments' efforts to women's rights when comparing their legislative proposals. The success of the laws and programs that have been enacted by both administrations to address gender inequality varies depending on factors including institutional ability, political will, and socio-cultural circumstances. Furthermore, obstacles including poor execution, a dearth of funding, and deeply ingrained gender norms persist in impeding the advancement of women's rights in both regimes.

Many female candidates are first-time contestants, some do not have any political affiliation, and many still hail from political families. In order to retain their influence in the legislature, male party leaders have chosen their wives, daughters, sisters, or other female relatives for leadership posts in a number of well-known political parties, including the PTI, the PPP, and the PML-N. The female candidates acknowledge that families and power structures play a beneficial role in giving women more opportunity. It will need a variety of advocacy objectives, such as laws enabling women to inherit land and giving them the voice and authority to defend their rights, to change such beliefs. Comparing women running as independent candidate's vs those running on party tickets shows that women are receiving more and more tickets from political parties. (Zafar *et al*, nd). Since the PTI government came to power in 2018, its leader Imran Khan has shown a renewed interest in the fresh Islamization of Pakistan, and the overtly Islamic trajectory that governance and policymaking are taking is hard to ignore. Prime minister Khan — a man who has spent much of his life in the West — is endeavoring to lay the foundations of an 'Islamic' Welfare State, emulating the model of the city of Medina, the place where the first Islamic government was established (APP 2020).

Many women's rights movements in traditionally conservative Muslim countries, such as Pakistan, Farida Shaheed contends, may not meet Western definitions of "feminism" because they lack a modernist foundation. (Shaheed 2016).

it is certainly possible to analyse the contemporary Pakistan women's (rights) movement from other angles and link it with other policy areas (health, social welfare, employment, etc.), just as the implementation of the SNC can be interpreted in contrasting ways. The matters that I brought up and evaluated have to do with how the education reforms in Naya Pakistan have affected the women's rights movement. (Awan ,2022)

## Theoretical Framework

The term "theoretical frame work" refers to the methods by which the researcher poses questions, considers potential solutions, and formulates ideas. These theories are then compiled into a structure that frames the research topic. it is the appropriate method for locating a deep set of connections within a subject and demonstrating how they stay connected. Consequently, the women's rights as human rights struggle attempts to universalize and stabilize the category of 'women', at the same time as it addresses their situations in important though limited ways.

## Liberal Feminism Theory

Liberal feminist philosophy has played an important influence in creating laws on women's rights across political eras. This essay will look at the relationship between liberal feminism theory and legal decisions throughout history, focusing on the development of women's rights and the impact of liberal feminist ideas on legislation. Liberal feminists argue that female subordination stems from a series of traditional and legal barriers that prevent women from achieving fulfillment in the public's realm. The lack of options for

women's life chances and results motivated liberal feminists to address the issue through education and law.

Liberal feminism arose as a dominant feminist theory in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, pushing for men's and women's equality under liberal democracy. Liberal feminism is founded on its belief in individual liberties, equal opportunity, and the goal of equal treatment for all women through legislative and political change. Liberal feminists have historically engaged in political activity, legal lobbying, and policymaking to oppose discriminatory laws and policies that promote gender inequality.

Liberal feminist concepts have guided the creation of legislation and regulations aiming at improving gender equality and empowering women. One important feature of liberal feminism is its emphasis on legal reforms to combat entrenched discrimination and provide fairness under the law. Liberal feminists have advocated for legal improvements to protect women's rights in a variety of sectors, including jobs, schooling, female reproductive health, and political engagement.

In later periods, liberal feminists kept pressing for legislative changes to deal with various forms regarding gender discrimination. The period following World War II witnessed the passage of legislation supporting equal pay for the same job, non-discrimination in the workplace, along with access to health care and schooling. These legislative successes demonstrated the impact of liberal feminist views on government and helped to gradually expand women's rights in our society.

In the past several years, liberal feminists have maintained their advocate for legislative changes to address continuing disparities and hurdles to women's advancement. Pay fairness, maternity leave, childcare availability, and representation in politics remain top priorities for liberal feminist activists, whose fight to affect policies and hold politicians accountable for achieving gender equality.

The relationship between liberal feminism ideology and laws protecting women's rights is dynamic and multifaceted, influenced by historical backdrop, political conditions, and social movements. While liberal feminist concepts have impacted substantial legislative victories promoting women's rights, there are still hurdles to reaching full sex equality and eliminating entrenched patriarchal and discriminatory systems.

Despite advances in many areas, women continue to confront obstacles to equal access and representation in a variety of fields. The continuation of female wage disparities, underrepresentation in leadership roles, and continuous threats to reproductive rights highlight the importance of liberal feminism and the necessity for continual activism and campaigning to achieve gender justice.

Finally, liberal feminist theory is inextricably linked to the issue of women's rights legislation in governmental eras, as it offers a framework for studying and correcting gender inequalities through legislative and political changes. Liberal feminists have historically played an important role in defining legislative agendas, pushing for policy reforms, and fighting discriminatory behaviours in order to promote the cause of equality between men and women. While development has been made, the fight for women's rights remains continuous, emphasizing the continued relevance of liberal feminist engagement in establishing legislation and programs that promote equitable treatment for all.

## **Material and Methods**

Methodology in research is the ordered method of organizing, carrying out, and reviewing a study or research to answer an investigation's query or hypothesis. It includes

identifying the research objectives, choosing appropriate research methodologies and techniques, acquiring and evaluating data, and interpreting the results.

In this study, researchers use qualitative mode of inquiry for data collection for women rights legislation results in era of two political parties. Compared to the detached, sometimes dry approach that is frequently associated with more statistical procedures, qualitative approaches demand a very different personal position. (Allan G, 2020).

Qualitative conversations have been classified in a range of methods, with many contemporary works loosely distinguishing between unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. in this research article. We will concentrate on structured and informal formats because formal interviews frequently yield quantitative results.

The primary goal of this study is to conduct a comparison of two political parties: PMLN and PTI. The approach chosen for this study was "content analysis". Content analysis was first offered as a purely quantitative tool in consumer research, with counts used to evaluate the observed occurrence of pre-identified objectives. Kleinheksel (2020). For instructors with less research experience, content analysis is an acceptable qualitative strategy. This article will describe and demonstrate the technique of analysis of content as a method for analysing existing data.

### **Universe**

The scope of this piece is existing data on PMLN and PTI bills in Pakistan. We look at Pakistani legislation on women's rights.

### **Population**

Population refers to the primary or major field of study and specifies the area in which researchers will perform their research. "A population in scientific study is a group or class of participants, variables, or phenomena (Neuendorf, 2002). Researchers chose legislation bills passed by the PMLN and PTI governments.

### **Content Analysis**

The content analysis used to study and assess the legislative records of both political parties. In the present research, qualitative content analysis was utilized to achieve correct data in political regulations concerning women's rights.

### **Quantitative Content Analysis**

Qualitative content analysis has many of the characteristics that distinguish all qualitative research approaches. These similar characteristics extend to an important aspect in any study with qualitative designs: the incorporation of quality principles at every stage of the conducting process. (Roller, 2019).

### **Unit of analysis**

To compare the political legislations of the PMLN and the PTI administration regarding women's rights.

The researchers recorded political conversations and legislation concerning women's rights from 2013 to 2017 and 2018 to 2022, respectively.

For comparison, the researchers acquired existing data from the internet from different political eras.

## **Results and Discussion**

Different strategies for expanding women's rights in Pakistan are reflected in the legislative measures that the administrations of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) have undertaken. From 2013 to 2018, the PML-N government made great progress in passing laws to address gender-based violence, improve women's access to education and healthcare, and advance their economic opportunities. However, obstacles including resource limitations and patriarchal views made it difficult to turn these legislation into noticeable advances. On the other hand, the PTI government has prioritized women's rights and gender equality since taking office in 2018 with initiatives like the Ehsaas Program; nonetheless, there has been criticism of the consistency and efficacy of their work. Both governments have encountered challenges in properly implementing women's rights despite using different approaches, highlighting the continued.

## **Conclusion**

The comparative study of women's rights legislative initiatives during the governments of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) concludes that substantial efforts have been made to advance gender equality in Pakistan. Both governments have made progress in passing legislation to stop gender-based violence, increase women's access to education and healthcare, and encourage their economic empowerment, despite differing approaches. Nonetheless, obstacles still exist in the way of successfully putting these laws into practice and tackling deeply embedded societal beliefs that impede women's equality and full involvement. In the future, significant progress towards gender parity and the empowerment of women in Pakistan would require the continued commitment of policymakers in addition to strong enforcement mechanisms and wider societal reforms.

## **Recommendations**

In order to advance gender equality and women's rights in Pakistan, it is crucial to:

- Ensure that the laws in place are properly enforced.
- Through awareness initiatives, negative cultural attitudes can be changed.
- Make sure women can use the legal system, particularly in cases of assault
- Through education and training, support women both professionally and financially.
- Motivate more women to enter the political sphere.
- Collaborate together with activists and civil society organizations to address the concerns of women. Emphasis on these areas will enable Pakistan to move closer to achieving universal equality.

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