

## POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN BALOCHISTAN

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### Abstract

*The word women empowerment carries different meanings for different people and it is important to view its meanings in relation to social, cultural, political, ideological and geographical scenario of an area. Hence this paper defines women empowerment as women not only present in decision making position but also participating in the society in equal status with their male counterparts. As far as the political empowerment and related information is concerned, the problem faced in this regard are, the unavailability of complete and valid data and the hesitation of concerned authorities to provide relevant information as women related issues have never been the priority of the provincial government. In order to fill this gap, this study was conducted to solicit the perceptions of experts regarding the implementation of policies focusing on political empowerment of women in Balochistan. The perceptions of the experts from relevant field helped in finding out the gaps present in the formulation and implementation of these policies. The data for this purpose was based on closed ended questionnaire, in which a 6 point scale was developed to gauge the perception of the experts and their responses were evaluated with the help of Binomial test and Two way analysis of variance. The major conclusion was that the implementation of the policies regarding political empowerment of women in Balochistan is perceived to be highly unacceptable.*

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## Introduction

### Background of the study

The word women empowerment carries different meanings for different people based on their ethno-religious backgrounds and overall characteristics of a society. Hence it is important to view its meaning for the purpose of formal argument, in relation to social, cultural, political, ideological and geographic scenario of an area and define it accordingly. As Batliwala says, 'I like the term empowerment because no one has defined it clearly yet; so it gives us a breathing space to work it out in action terms before we have to pin ourselves down to what it means'.<sup>1</sup> In addition to the lack of clear specification of the meaning of the term there are serious information gaps about the ground realities, particularly in the developing countries, associated with women empowerment, which are only partially answered in this paper with reference to Balochistan.

Generally speaking the term women empowerment refers to the provision of decision making power to women, for instance journal of extension refers to 'empowerment as a multidimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives'.<sup>2</sup> The definition of empowerment as decision making is also cited by others in their works.<sup>3</sup> This characterization of the meaning excludes participation of women in different walks of life which is equally important as a part of the meaning of the term because such participation of women, not only increases their understanding about their rights but also develops their maturity level about how to bring constructive changes in society, against various biases and negativities. For this reason, participation qualifies as a necessary constituent of the meaning of women empowerment. This aspect of the meaning of the term is also supported by the definition of empowerment as, 'essentially the spirit of participation & involves delegating authority'.<sup>4</sup>

This is particularly true in the context of South Asia where women do have a little say in political decision making but there is a widespread denial to them in equal participation. In this study, the term women empowerment is defined as women not only present in decision making position but also participating in the society in equal status with their male counterparts.

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<sup>1</sup> Naila Kabeer, *Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment*. In Batliwala (1993:48).n.p.

<sup>2</sup> Anonymous, (1999), Journal of Extension, Vol.37, No.5. abstract [On.Line] [www.joe.org](http://www.joe.org)

<sup>3</sup> K.W.Thomas & B.A Velthouse. ( 1990) *Cognitive Elements of Empowerment: An 'Interpretive' Model of Intrinsic Task Motivation*. Academy of Management Review, Vol 15, N.4,666-681. In [On.Line] <http://dictionary.sensagent.com/empowerment/en-en/>

<sup>4</sup> [www.knowledgebrief.com/knowledgebrief/knowledgebrief.php](http://www.knowledgebrief.com/knowledgebrief/knowledgebrief.php)

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Global Perspective

History of women struggle to be at par with men reveals that the awareness about women rights and empowerment is not a new issue. Be it employment, politics, violence or education, different scholars and researchers have been stressing it at different points of time. Philosophers like Socrates emphasized the on equality and empowerment of women by saying, 'if women are to have the same duties as men, they must have the same education.'<sup>5</sup> As far as awareness about women empowerment is concerned serious attention to the issue started more than a century ago, with first women strike in 1828 in US when 400 female factory workers protested against the replacement of women workers with males.<sup>6</sup> They not only showed resistance against biased policies but also demanded equality of rights. This was followed by many other similar incidents. As a result of which Seneca Fall Declaration took place in 1848, which gave rise to the need of a strong forum for women so that they could expose the various inequalities and violations faced by them.<sup>7</sup> As the awareness increased, they understood that their issues would not be taken seriously unless they get an access to the decision making bodies at different levels of the government.

Since then it took almost 70 years of endless struggle after which they finally got the right to vote in 1928 which was the first major breakthrough for women in world. The situation further improved when women started coming up in jobs after the World War 2, with their changing roles. In 1946, another important forum, the Commission on Status of Women, was formed to ensure women rights and provide equality to women which was followed by the formation of CEDAW in 1979 to address anti women laws.<sup>8</sup> United Nation had been the driving force behind all these movements and establishment of agencies, commissions, and organizations like CSW, UNIFEM, CEDAW. An important event in this regard was the 4<sup>th</sup> world conference on women held in Beijing in 1995 followed by MDG's in 2000. The main concern of this conference, which still remains unaccomplished, was to bring women forward in authoritative positions and make them empowered enough to be a part of the decision making process at all levels.<sup>9</sup>

An important step of United Nations in this regard was the establishment of a separate fund in the name of UNIFEM in 1984 for the same purpose. In the beginning it monitored the participation of women in all mainstream activities.<sup>10</sup> Later on, after the Beijing conference 1995, the full fledged concept of gender mainstreaming was introduced. This concept implied that all member states of the Beijing world conference

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<sup>5</sup> M. Gillet.ed(1969).*Readings in The History of Education*. McGraw-Hill, Toronto

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous, *Feminism and Women's Studies: The women's movement- Our History* [On.Line] Available <http://feminism.Eserver.Org/theory/feminist/Womens-Movement.Html>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Michal Vaisben ( WFUNA Human Rights Program Coordinator), *A Brief History of the UN & Women's Rights* [On.Line] Available <http://www.wfuna.org/site/c.rv.IYIcN1JWE/B.3936735/>

<sup>9</sup> CAPWIP,*Issues in Women's Political Empowerment in the Asia Pacific Region* by Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics.n.pag.n.p

<sup>10</sup> Sadler J.2004.'UNIFEM's Experiences in Mainstreaming for Gender Equality. [On.Line][http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f\\_page\\_pid=188](http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=188)

should take it as a mandate that gender perspective should be a recurring theme of all policies, programs, legal, social, and advocacy, development, implementation and evaluation standards.

In context of South Asia, the formulation and execution of policies has not changed the grass root situation to a great extent. Though positive changes have taken place with the passage of time in the form of increased economic participation, enrollment rates of girls, and women entering in fields which were supposed to be male dominated in the past decades, in the background of the gigantic transformation, the core issue, which still remains unanswered, is that of women's' right and empowerment.<sup>11</sup>

The success of these campaigns depends on bringing forward the real issues at local level and suggesting solutions through women leaders at the same level. The fact should not be ignored that gender equality can be achieved if; biases and inequalities pertaining to rural and urban women are tackled properly. Once the issues at local level are highlighted, then these can be taken up to the national and international level for a catalyst move based on gender equality.

The developments in the global picture as summarized above suggest that women empowerment is no more a nonissue. Now it is rigorously directed towards bringing drastic changes in societies and turning the wheels of social development toward the promotion of gender equality and its acceptance in the world particularly in the third world countries. Another important point is that despite worldwide measures being taken to reduce the low rates of women empowerment in different fields, it is still not considered as a serious issue. Instead it is used to bring a glamorizing affect in government policies to make them look more socially responsible and pro women. That is why not a single country has been able to achieved hundred percent gender equality as yet.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the realization that a society may not achieve its social, political and economic goals without empowering women and making them strong enough to make decisions, participate and implement those decisions, the situation of Pakistan in this regard is deplorable, particularly in the area of political empowerment of women.

### **Problem statement**

The information about women empowerment in Pakistan, as depicted in the literature is either opinion based or limited to certain percentage pertaining to the representation of women in different levels of government. It does not state to what extent the policies of government about the political empowerment of women, have been implemented and unless we have a clear picture of the ground realities in terms of implementation of policies, it may not be possible for us to develop ideas relating to the roadmap of political

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<sup>11</sup> Vinita Pandey (2005) '*Empowering Women in India: Changing Horizons- The Kalanjiam Experience*'. Vol.10. No.1. Article Preview. n.p.

<sup>12</sup> Claros Lopez- and Sadia Zahidi, 2005. Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap[On.Line][http://weforum.org/pdf/GlobalCompetitivenessReports/Reports/gender\\_gap.pdf](http://weforum.org/pdf/GlobalCompetitivenessReports/Reports/gender_gap.pdf).

empowerment of women in Balochistan. Hence, this study is an effort to fill this information gap.

Further, the major problems faced in this regard are that, complete and valid data is rarely available in Balochistan and the concerned authorities are hesitant to provide information on the topic. The best alternative in this regard was the collection of information through the perceptions, which here refers to conscious understanding of experts defined as persons with high degree of theoretical or practical knowledge relating to political empowerment of women in Balochistan.

### **Research objective**

In the light of the problem and the research question stated above, the overall objective of this study is to find out the extent to which the experts perceive the implementation of the policies of political empowerment of women formulated by the government as acceptable.

### **Research hypothesis**

Considering the review of literature, random observations and the opinion of knowledgeable persons, the following hypothesis pertaining to the research objective were developed,

The major hypothesis was

1. The experts perceive the implementation of policies related to political empowerment of women in Balochistan as not acceptable

The other hypothesis were

2. The experts from public and private sectors have different perceptions about the implementation of policies regarding political empowerment of women in Balochistan.
3. The perceptions of experts about the implementation of the policies of political empowerment of women in Balochistan vary from category to category.
4. There is interaction between the sectoral backgrounds of experts and the categories of perceptions.

### **Significance of the study**

The perceptions of these experts are important because they are the people who are actually a part of the process of policy formulation, its implementation and analysis. They are in stronger positions to identify the discrepancies present in the formulation and implementation of policies regarding political empowerment of women in Balochistan.

Furthermore they may also tell why women are lagging behind in the political scenario and are not guaranteed equality in spite of the presence of policies and laws.

### **Research Methodology**

This study is a subpart of a larger exploratory research undertaken by the researcher to find out the situation of women empowerment in Balochistan through triangulation approach. It is based on the information collected from the experts defined as knowledgeable public and private sector persons directly or indirectly related to women empowerment in Balochistan, who have or had been working in authoritative positions. All these experts have been significant actors in the formulation, implementation and analysis process of the policies regarding political empowerment of women in Balochistan.

### **Sample**

In order to draw the sample of experts the Snowball sampling technique was employed to move from one subject of the study to the other in order to collect data. Keeping in view the objectives of research, efforts were made to ensure the representation of maximum number of available experts throughout the province. Therefore 40 experts were approached at provincial and local level, representing the government sector, civil society, NGO's, Donor agencies and activist groups which were further classified in the categories of government and private sector experts for the purpose of analysis.

### **Research instrument**

Prior to the selection and development of instruments, a thorough study of the relevant document, reports and secondary data was done, which were particularly focused on the topic of research. After a detailed study twenty nine statements were developed representing the relevant policies, reports and documents. These statements were then converted into closed ended items comprising a 6 point rating scale in which 1 represents strongly disagree and 6 represents strongly agree points of the continuum. This instrument was validated by three professionals including academicians and researchers who are actively working in the relevant field. These experts confirmed the validity of the questionnaires by checking their content and aspects of scale.

### **Data analysis scheme**

Keeping in view the major objective of research the collected data was divided into two categories of acceptable and not acceptable implementation on the basis of the cutoff point of 4 which was the minimum acceptable level in the rating scale and the responses that were 4 and above indicated the implementation of policies as acceptable and those

below 4 were unacceptable. In order to test the major hypothesis of the study, Z version of the Binomial test was applied.

Since, the researcher apprehended that the responses of experts belonging to different sectors (government and private) may be different; this factor was also considered in the study to support the conclusions drawn about acceptability. Further, the items with similar themes were grouped into 5 categories of perception. This was important because there was a possibility that the categories of perception might influence the conclusions. Therefore this factor was also given consideration. To analyze the influence of both of these factors (sectoral background and categories of perception) two-way Analysis of Variance was applied. So, both of these tests, (Binomial and Two-way Analysis of Variance) were used to evaluate the actual position of the results. Furthermore the overall means of the statements were used to rank them from the highest mean to the statement with the lowest mean, showing the status of implementation of women empowerment policies in Balochistan. Finally a discussion is provided in the light of the review of literature and the conclusions drawn from the results.

### **Political Empowerment of Women in Pakistan**

Pakistan in general has been quite unfortunate in the context of women empowerment. Right from the very beginning this issue was not taken seriously and was limited to papers and statements only and religious contradictions have been a part of our political history especially in context of women. These discriminations were not only related to religious issues in the form of discriminatory laws but the various actors in the society also contributed to it in the form of biased value systems and norms.

Since its inception, Pakistan inherited problems like a male dominated society, patriarchy which was an out birth of feudalism, misinterpretation of Islamic laws, and an extremely suppressed female population. These problems continue to be the same with very minor changes till date.

According to Weiss: 'the actual status of women in Pakistan is at its lowest ebb. Women in general are dehumanized and exercise little control over themselves or on affairs affecting their well being. They are treated as possessions rather than self reliant, self regulating humans.<sup>13</sup> The legal status of Pakistani women was never equal to that of men, in spite of the constitutional guarantee, that equality prevails for both men and women in law and all sorts of human rights and that there should be no discrimination in the rights of choice, security, dignity, liberty, freedom of movement.<sup>14</sup>

The bitter facts in the Weiss statement points to the indifferent attitude of the governments as well as the society towards the other half of the society i.e. women. This

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<sup>13</sup> Anita.M Weiss. (1990). *Benazir Bhutto & the Future of Women in Pakistan*. Asian Survey, Vol.3, No.5.pp.442 [On.Line] <http://www.jstor.org>. In Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women in Pakistan (Islamabad:1986).p.2.

<sup>14</sup> Shehla Zia & Farzana Bari. 1999. 'Baseline Report on Women's Participation in Political & Public Life in Pakistan.' pp.15.. Crystal Printers, Blue Area Islamabad.

also strengthens the realization that women cannot be empowered unless they occupy equally strong decision making positions in the political scene of the state.<sup>15</sup>

The first milestone in the political empowerment of women in Pakistan was Benazir Bhutto who emerged as the first democratically elected women prime minister of Pakistan and the empowerment of women became one of the major themes of the PPP's manifesto.<sup>16</sup> Further, the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women held in Beijing, has also been instrumental in the realization in Pakistan and elsewhere that equal participation of women at all levels of decision making is indispensable for growth and development of a country.<sup>17</sup>

The political scene in Pakistan during 90's showed little percentage of women who took part in elections and came up as voters. During late 90's the participation of women in provincial and federal levels was pathetically low as there was no representation of women through reserved seats. This political participation of women in National Assembly, Senate and four provincial assemblies was negligible. Similar kind of situation was prevailing at local bodies and none of the province offered 33% reserved seats for women.<sup>18</sup>

Later on through the efforts of NGO's, donor agencies, UN, human rights, civil society and political activists this low participation rate was taken up as a serious issue and in the local government elections 2000-2001, 33% seats were reserved for women which was a turning point in the traditional politics of Pakistan. This situation improved with the general elections 2002 where the number of women representation increased on reserved seats to 17% in the parliament.<sup>19</sup>

This representation is still unsatisfactory, as the demanded representation was 33%. One of the many contributing factors preventing women from mainstream politics is the representation of women through indirect elections and leaves them dependent on the male leadership of the political parties and increase allegations of nepotism.<sup>20</sup> The question raised here is that in spite of the increase of women in politics, most of the

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<sup>15</sup> Shehla Zia (2005), *Future Vision on 'Empowering SAARC Women'*. Address to First Meeting of SAARC Autonomous Advocacy Group of Prominent Women Personalities (SAWAG)on (21-22 June 2004).pp.12. Islamabad Aurat Foundation

<sup>16</sup> Anita M Weiss. (1990). *Benazir Bhutto & the Future of Women in Pakistan*. Asian Survey, Vol.3, No.5.pp.442 [On.Line] <http://www.jstor.org>. In Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women in Pakistan (Islamabad:1986).p.2.

<sup>17</sup> Naem Mirza and Wasim Wagha. *A Five Year Report on: Performance Of Women Parliamentarians in the 12<sup>th</sup> National Assembly (2002-2007)* by Aurat Foundation.preface.

<sup>18</sup> UNDP (2005). *Political & Legislative Participation of Women in Pakistan: Issues & perspectives*.pp.49.

<sup>19</sup> Amna Mehmood, *Political Empowerment of Women: A Comparative Study of South Asian Countries*. In *Document Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Women Development* [On.Line] [www.pu.edu.pk/psc/journal/PDF-FILES/Artical%20-%209.pdf.n.p.n.pag](http://www.pu.edu.pk/psc/journal/PDF-FILES/Artical%20-%209.pdf.n.p.n.pag).

<sup>20</sup> Shehla Zia (2005), *Future Vision on 'Empowering SAARC Women'*. Address to First Meeting of SAARC Autonomous Advocacy Group of Prominent Women Personalities (SAWAG)on (21-22 June 2004).pp.12. Islamabad Aurat Foundation



women politicians have an inactive role, which is evident from the fact that out of 38 laws made during five years (2002-2007), only two were related to women.<sup>21</sup>

The groups concerned with women empowerment and government has taken different initiatives in reports and document like, NPA, CEDAW, GRAP, etc, but the ground reality reveals discrepancies in the implementation of recommendations embodied in the reports, which is the reason why women in Pakistan in general and the women of Balochistan in particular are far behind as far as their political empowerment is concerned.

### Data Analysis And Results

Considering the nature of hypothesis and the level of measurement involved in the collection of experts' perceptions regarding the implementation of government policy pertaining to political empowerment of women in Balochistan, it was decided to use Z version of Binomial test for  $n \geq 25$  to test the major hypothesis of the study. The other hypotheses were tested by means of two way analysis of variance.

**Table. 1: Distribution of the perceptions of the experts about the implementation of the policy recommendations**

Acceptable	Not Acceptable	Total	Z
3	37	40	1.65*

\*significant at  $\alpha = .05$

The table shows that out of a total of 40 respondents only 3 respondents perceived the implementation as acceptable whereas 37 respondents perceived it as not acceptable. The data was analyzed by means of Z version Binomial test designed for  $n \geq 25$ . The analysis shows that calculated  $Z = 1.65$  is significant @  $\alpha = .05$ . Hence it is inferred that experts perceive that the policies of political empowerment of women in Balochistan are not being implemented.

To further check the validity of the inference, the influence of sectoral backgrounds and categories of perception which was assumed to be related to the perceptions of experts about the implementation of government policies of two political empowerment of women, both variables are analyzed below:

**Table.2: Influence of sectoral backgrounds and categories of perception on the perceived acceptability of the implementation of the policies of political empowerment of women**

Sources of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F
Sectoral Background (SB)	2.27	1	2.27	1.99*
Categories of Perception (CP)	3.99	4	0.998	0.88*

<sup>21</sup> Naeem Mirza and Wasim Wagha. *Op.cit.*

SB×CP	4.59	4	1.15	1.01*
With In	216.72	190	1.14	
Total	227.57	199	1.44	

\*not significant at  $\alpha = .05$

This table shows the difference between sectoral backgrounds and the categories of perception. The 'F' value as 1.99, 0.88, 1.01 regarding main effects sectoral background and the categories of perception and the interaction effect of both of these variables is not significant  $\alpha = .05$ . Hence, it is inferred that sectoral background and categories of perceptions have no influence on perceptions of experts regarding the implementation of recommended policies. Furthermore, both the variables do not interact in this regard. These results validate the inference drawn above in table.1 regarding the perceptions of policy implementation.

**Table. 3: Rank Order of the instrument Items in terms of the mean response**

Item.no	Mean	Rank	Item. No.	Mean	Rank
15	5.35	1	16	2.97	15
19	5.18	2	18	2.8	16
25	4.83	3	12	2.8	17
3	4.65	4	1	2.8	18
10	4.58	5	11	2.78	19
23	4.5	6	28	2.68	20
13	4.48	7	2	2.55	21
5	4.43	8	26	2.5	22
6	4.15	9	14	2.5	23
8	4	10	20	2.5	24
27	3.8	11	17	2.38	25
9	3.7	12	21	2.28	26
4	3.31	13	29	2.23	27
22	3.05	14	7	2.23	28
			24	1.98	29

The table.3 shows the rank order of mean responses to the 29 individual instrument items, used in the questionnaire for collecting the perceptions of the experts. The extreme left column shows the item numbers appearing in the instrument, along with their respective means in the right column.

In the table the ranks are arranged from the items getting the highest to the lowest means showing their implementation. Among the top 6 item, 4 of them are the items related to ideal situation rather than actual policies. The third and fourth highest item is related to political party provisions which have been able to bring changes for women in the political process and the agreement of the experts that women should serve as peace negotiators at national and international level respectively. Rank 6 and 8 which relate to item. No 10 and 13 stresses that trainings and education helps in the enhancement of the

performance of women at local bodies. The response in 9<sup>th</sup> rank i.e. 5<sup>th</sup> item is unexpected as is unexpected and needs further investigation. The role of civil society and media is also perceived to be toward positive side. The 12<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> rank related to item 9<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> item shows that local government has also played an important role in bringing women in the political scene. Rank 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> relating to item 18 & 16 showed that women usually do not have a previous political record except, only those who belong to political families. The 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> ranks referring to item 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> indicate that women councilors do not have easy access to funds. The rank 28<sup>th</sup> which refers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> last item shows that most of the public policy provisions for political empowerment of women have failed as major representation of women is through indirect elections due to which both the women MNA's and MPA's have almost limited participation in the policy formulation or implementation process. As we regress rank 18<sup>th</sup> relating to item no 1 shows that the issue of political empowerment of women is not taken as a priority, as a result of which a general agreement is developed in rank 21 and 29 related to item no 24 & 2 that women of Balochistan can never be a change agent as far as political empowerment is concerned. Some other contributing factors among items with lowest ranks i.e. 29<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> item indicate that tribalism is a major hurdle in this process.

## Discussion

The word women empowerment is not new and it has been present as an important issue since long. Different struggles to empower women around the globe have been initiated by women groups, activists and civil society at different points of time. The third world countries particularly Pakistan showed a deplorable picture of women empowerment with very few women in the forefront in the political scene.

The results of this study are in line with the general perception regarding the implementation of policies formulated by the government to empower women in political area as unacceptable. The results are also strengthened by the fact that the experts coming from different sectors do not differ in this perception. Furthermore the situation is the same across various categories of perception except those items of the instrument emphasizing ideals than implementation were perceived to be acceptable to the experts. This suggests that the experts perceive ideals relating to political empowerment of women as important. The critical analysis of individual items of the instrument reveals pessimism regarding women playing the role as change agent in the foreseeable future. One of the possible explanations against this state of affairs is the tribalism which permeates our psyche. However there are very strong reasons to believe that women empowerment is no more a nonissue. Since the experts tend to sympathize with the policy recommendation of the government without agreeing with the extent of their implementation as acceptable.

Despite that the perception of experts regarding issues and problems are important source of information, the role of actual data to understand the situation of political empowerment of women in Balochistan cannot be overemphasized. Unfortunately due to the reluctance of the government officials to provide access to data regarding the implementation of government recommendations, it is perceived that the validity of data

compiled by the researcher to bridge the information gap relating to the issue of women empowerment by means of the perceptions of expert, may not give a complete picture of the implementation of these policy recommendations. Hence, is a major limitation of this study.

### **Conclusions**

Keeping in view the objectives of the study it is concluded that most of the policies about political empowerment of women are not being implemented as this issue still remains to be secondary for the people who are sitting in parliaments and assemblies. The perceptions of experts from public and private sectors were the same which again supported the results about the non-implementation of the policies. The overall analysis showed that although the civil society and media has played a positive role to some extent but generally the overall environment of political empowerment of women in Balochistan, especially tribalism is not supportive. One positive development in this regard was the local government ordinance which proved to be a strong source of bringing women forward in the local bodies but there is no mandatory provision for women councilors to access of funds. The emphasis of the electoral system is more on increasing the quantity of women in politics rather than the quality of their role. There was a general agreement among the experts that the public policy provisions have failed to enhance the leadership capacity of women.

### **Recommendations**

This section comprises recommendations for concerned groups for the improvement of situation of political empowerment of women in Balochistan and on further investigation relating to political empowerment of women as suggested by the results of the study.

1. This study was related only to an expert perspective about political empowerment of women in Balochistan; it is recommended that the perceptions of the beneficiaries could also be helpful in this area for further research. Another aspect which needs to be researched is the importance of political education of women politicians. The perceptions of experts gathered here needs to be validated by means of official documents regarding the implementation of policies.
2. There should be mandatory representation of women in all standing committees of parliament, senate and provincial assemblies. Moreover there should be 33% representation of women in executive committees of political parties and legal action should be taken against any group or individual restraining women from any kind of political participation. It is also recommended that election system should not only focus on increasing the number of women as voters and politicians but also pay serious attention to help them play a positive role in political process.