

Research Paper

Role of NGO's in Implementation of Women's Right in Pakistan

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Women are an important part of any society and in Pakistan they contribute almost more than half of the total population of the country. Women's are also having major contribution in economy, about 70% women of rural area are working in livestock and agriculture and almost 3/4th of urban women are working in non-formal sector. Although its government responsibility to implement laws and rule regarding women's right but they always need help from other institutions like non-government organization for practical implementation of these laws. The objective of this paper is to understand the contribution of NGO's about women rights. For this study secondary data is used as online data, published data of national and international institutions are helpful and productive. Data shown that NGO's working on different women's issues including forced marriage, sexual harassment, rape, violence against women and also provides support for women in according to distress and detention fund act. Other area's including women empowerment, helping relief and rehabilitation and accessing justice and legal rights and also fighting against the cruel practices like karo-kari, honor killing or etc. Previous studies showed that NGO's are facing both internal and external challenges. Internally from within the organization to work effectively and external challenges as NGOs are facing challenges from government policies, institution, religious extremist, cultural tradition of society. Government of Pakistan should take immediate action to restrain the self-made law of "Karo-Kari" (honor killing) and introduce strict punishment for this criminal act. Non-government organization should start awareness programs and electronic media should telecast programs that help to promote women right's awareness and also support to eliminate the self-made law of "karo-kari"(honor killing).

Key words: Role, implementation, women rights

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INTRODUCTION

Women are an important part of any society because of their multidimensional role in society. In Pakistan women contribute almost more than half of the total population of the country. Women's are also having major contribution in economy, about 70% women of rural area are working in livestock and agriculture and almost 3/4th of urban women are working in non-formal sector.

In constitution of Pakistan women are given all right that they deserve as human being. Like according to the

Article 25, clause 2 "there shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone". This article also guaranteed the equality of both men and women. Constitution also encourage the participation of women in every field of life like article 34 "the state shall ensure the participation of women in every sphere of the national life". Constitution also guaranteed security of their citizens as mention in article 28 that the "state shall be secure the wellbeing of the people irrespective of sex".

Islam give equal rights to women in every aspect of life. Main source named as Quran and hadith give the body of principle for the formation of Islamic law known as Sharia. In Quran there is verses state that

“Every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deeds”.
(74:38)
Surah Hujurat, verse 13 Quran states
“The most noble, in eye of Allah, is the one who is in good conduct”.

State of women rights in any society can be determining by the level of implementation and the rights they enjoying. In Pakistan society women are deprived of their rights that are guaranteed by both Islam and constitution of Pakistan. Due to some cultural, economic, social and political causes, rights are not given to women recognized by Islam and constitution of Pakistan.

In Pakistan women have not always been the subject to financial discrimination but also face discrimination about their basic rights as well because of the custom of the society like Karokari (honor killing), Qasas etc. Although women are contributing in the development and welfare of society but they also suffer from poor health, insecurity or sexual and physical abuses and also domestic violence. Women of rural area as compare to urban are more suffered from lack of having fundamental rights. (Malik, Hussain, 2014)

According to the World Bank development report, in Gender Empowerment Measure Pakistan ranks 82 out of 93 countries and in the gender inequality index of 2011 it ranked 115 out of 146 countries. Female literacy was 40% and violence against women increased from 7,571 in 2008 to 8, 5393 by December 2011. (Tara, M.G & Pulla, 2014)

In Pakistan the reason behind the suffered conditions of the women is lack of improper implementation of women's right by the government in society. Constitution of Pakistan gives rights to women including articles related to right to life and liberty, prohibition of slavery and forced labor, guarantee of equality and nondiscrimination, basic and religious freedom and safeguard or etc. (Bhatti et al, 2011)

Although government has the authority to make laws and rule regarding women's right but they always need the help from other institution like non-governmental organization for the practical implementation of these laws. To help the government in socio-economic and gender development of the country many NGOs are working in Pakistan.

OBJECTIVES

- This will help in understanding the current situation of Pakistan about women rights.
- This will help in understanding the contribution of

NGOs on women rights.

- To investigate the problems of NGO's facing during the implementation of women rights.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What are the challenges faced by NGO's in implementing women rights?

LITERATURE

The researcher has gone through the bulk of past literature produced on the “role of NGOs in the implementation of women rights in Pakistan” and found the following findings.

A research held by Munir Moosa Sadruddin in July December 2012 demonstrated that during last five years our government and NGOs was unable in successfully implementing children rights in the country. Like poor health, increasing illiteracy, child abuse demonstrated that children's rights were not effectively implemented in society. Although many NGOs doing impressive work in implementing and providing child right but a lot more has to be done like government should take serious step in implementation of policies and laws regarding children rights. (Munir Moosa, 2012)

A research published in April 2011 revealed that according to their capacity NGOs are doing very well regarding human rights implementation in the Pakistan. In this article they mention Punjab Rural Support Program (PRSP) that is working for the poverty alleviation and international organization Caritas which had major contribution in 8 October 2005 earthquake. This article also highlighted the weak role of government and suggests that government should coordinate with NGOs regarding the implementation of human right in the country. (Meekosha, Soldatic, 2011)

A study held on the “Role of Ngo's in Pakistan” identified that Pakistan government failed to provide proper rule and law to facilitate NGOs so that they lack in developing the trust with NGOs. Some NGOs use funding for their personal benefit rather than doing something productive in the society because due to political instability government did not have any proper check and balance on NGOs. (Ishtiaq Ahmed, 2012)

According to the research held at Hamdard University Karachi by Hameed-ur-rehman in May 2012 revealed that in providing right to education NGOs are doing their best according to their capacity in Pakistan but there is more need to develop. This article also demonstrated that there is need to properly monitor the utilization of the fund by the government. (Hameed & salima, 2012)

A research conducted by Akbar and Noor in FATA Pakistan in order to critically review the NGO's strategies for communication and for implementing plan. According to this research perception about NGO is not positive in

Pakistan particularly in rural area's NGO's specifically working for women are negatively perceived. Due to non-favorable environment NGO's adopt many strategies to communication their plan of action in order to implement their plans successfully. (Akbar, Noor, 2010)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study secondary data is used as researches related to the NGO's role in Pakistan and their role in women rights implementation. Online data, published data of national and international institutions are helpful and productive for this study. Due to time limitation it's not possible to cover all the NGO's working in women rights implementation so selected NGO's that are currently active in providing their services.

Shirkat Gah

Shirkat Gah is a non-profit organization that is working for women empowerment in Pakistan from 1975. This organization is working on women's issues including forced marriage, sexual harassment, rape, violence against women and also provides support for women in according to distress and detention fund act.

The organization helps women regarding discrimination they are facing in everyday life. Like this organization reports a case in which they help a girl who want to continue her studies but forced by her parents to marry with an aged person. Shirkat Gah successfully handled this case by convincing and informing her parents about her rights that are guaranteed by the law. Because "forced marriage of women through coercing or compelling in any manner" is a crime according to the act of forced marriage. The person who forced women for marriage will get "Imprisonment of up to 10 years but not less than 3 years and also a fine of five hundred thousand rupees". (Section 498B, PPC)

In July 2014 Shirkat Gah report a case of child marriage, in Muzafargarh they stop the marriage of 10-year-old girl with boy of 12 by contacting local police. Because according to the constitution of Pakistan marriageable age for girls is 16 year and 18 for boys.

Shirkat Gah struggling to provide rights to women by establishing different programs like women friendly space, through this program they help women of flood affected areas in reconstruction, rehabilitation and in gender-based violence. They help women according to women in distress and detention fund act that recognized that "financial assistance shall be provided to the women's who are facing extreme hardship". By organizing awareness campaigns, they play very important role in mobilizing women about their rights. SG in collaboration with national commission on the status of women Pakistan was successfully passing domestic

violence bills in December 2013.

Aurat Foundation

Aurat Foundation establish in 1986 under societies registration act 1860 as non-governmental organization. It's working for women's empowerment and for democratic governance. It's working for political, economic women empowerment, violence against women and also helps women in relief and rehabilitation and accessing justice and legal rights. Aurat foundation always had major contribution in relief and rehabilitation during disasters like Pakistan's worst ever floods in 2010, IDPs crises in 2008-2009 and also play leading role in earthquake of 2005 by providing facilities to the affected women's. This foundation also encourages women to participate in politics because constitution guaranteed equal rights "special representation shall be given to women in local government institution".

Currently Aurat foundation working on many projects including gender equity program, Waseela-e-Taleem etc. The Foundation is working on "Waseela-e-Taleem" (2012-2016) in collaboration with Benazir income support program to provide educational right to the people of lower class. The idea behind this program "Waseela-e-Taleem" funded by DFID is to assist government in achieving MGD target for universal primary education.

Pakistani Women's Human Rights Organization

Pakistani Women's Human Rights Organization is fighting for women's right and against the cruel practices like karo-kari, rape, honor killing and law like hudood ordinance and Sharia law which are badly affecting women across Pakistan. PWHRO expressed concern over the case of Asia bib a Christian woman has been sentenced to death for blasphemy in June 2009. After the claims of Muslim women against Asiya that she has made derogatory word for Muhammad S.A.W, the local cleric investigates the case and later on Asia was arrested and prosecuted under section 295 C of the Pakistan panel code that carries death penalty. PWHRO calls government to discourage such act in society because this lead to the murder of innocent people.

PWHRO reported more than 200 news in July 2014 about violence against women including gang-rape, trafficking and illegal immigration of girls, murder, honor killing, suicide attempts by the women both married and unmarried. This organization fight against the cultural practice of karo-kari in which male family member have authority to kill her girl if once she labeled as Kari means committed adultery. According to PWHRO in 2009 there were total 472 cases of karo-kari (honor killing) reported including 91 in Punjab, 220 in Sindh, 32 in NWFP and 127 in Baluchistan. (PWHRO, 2009).

NGO's Problems Regarding Women Rights Implementation

NGOs in Pakistan are facing both internal and external challenges. Externally NGOs are facing challenges from government policies, institution, religious extremist, cultural tradition of society and internally from within the organization to work effectively. All of the NGOs mention above facing problems in implementation of rights because of cultural tradition like karo-kari or honor killing.

Government of Pakistan should enforce viable and effective laws to curb the violence against women that occur within households and workplaces and also give assurance of their observance.

Government of Pakistan should take immediate actions to restrain the self-made law of

Karokari (honor killing) by giving strict punishments. We urge the government of Pakistan to honor their obligations under international law to protect women in the country. This can be done by immediately reviewing judicial practice and criminal laws, for instance the Diyat law which allows men to escape criminal prosecution after murdering their female relatives. The Pakistan government should declare domestic violence as criminal offence.

Electronic media should telecast the programmes that may support Pakistani society to eliminate the self-made law of "Karo Kari" (honor killing), that further instigates violence against women and to promote their respect & protection and to cultivate the ethical values so that our society and country may proceed true progress and prosperity.

Social welfare organizations should start awareness programmes regarding the honor and safeguarding of the women, interfaith ethical values, and the curse of "Karo Kari" (honor killing) and remove this totally from the country.

Reports of honor killings should be investigated and prosecuted. Wide-ranging and sustained public awareness programs should also be carried out to inform all Pakistanis of women's equal rights. In particular, law enforcement and judicial personnel should be trained in order to address impartially complaints of violence committed in the society.

CONCLUSION

Women are an important part of any society because of their multidimensional role in society. In Pakistan women

contribute almost more than half of the total population of the country. In Pakistan women have not always been the subject to financial discrimination but also face discrimination about their basic rights as well because of the custom of the society like Karokari (honor killing). To help the government in socio-economic and gender development of the country many NGOs are working in Pakistan. NGOs in Pakistan are facing both internal and external challenges. Externally NGOs are facing challenges from government policies, institution, religious extremist, cultural tradition of society and internally from within the organization to work effectively. State should preserve human rights by implementing laws because people do not exist for the state but state for the people. Struggle must be continued to protect the human rights.

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