

ABSTRACT

Human rights activists face condemnation and stigmatisation from society. The cultural institutions of society have rarely approved their work. On the other hand, the status of women in traditional societies like Pakistan is of subordinate value, where the issues like gender-based violence are denied and culminated. Over the past few decades, gender-based violence has become a prime issue due to continuous activism. Feminist politics and liberal values have altered the shape of policymaking worldwide. However, the scope of effects is less significant than the issue. Women's rights activists face culmination in Pakistan, their work is not recognised, or they lack support from the system. With rising feminist interest groups in Pakistan, the opposing groups have mobilized against the agenda and their demands. The polar group – the conservative right – develops its roots in regressive and misogynistic politics with feudalist attitudes. The emancipation and agency of women, especially concerning sexual violence, would be detrimental to the traditional structural standing on the oppression of women. Over decades, NGOs coming on national levels to support the causes of women's empowerment have faced serious accusations of foreign funding and spoiling cultural institutions. Both independent feminist activists and NGOs have faced and deterred the former allegations of supporting the foreign cause of liberalisation.

The objective of women's rights activism has enacted social, political, economic, and legal change within a state and society which benefits women. Activism against sexual violence has always been the course of feminist agenda. Over the last three decades, activism around sexual violence has proven to be quite successful worldwide. However, developed and developing societies are prone to stigmatising activism around gender-based violence with roots embedded in victim-blaming and a lack of systemic support for the victims and survivors. The retributive system has been unable to draw rationale and transformative measures to protect victims/survivors and end sexual violence. This research aims at studying Pakistan and the scope of feminist activism on legislation. This study highlights direct and indirect activism, enacting various laws, reactions towards laws, a system of justice, and the debate around retributive measures to treat survivors.