

Abstract

Recognizing that women's inclusion is the cornerstone of a robust democracy and equitable society, Pakistan stands at a crossroads. Women comprise half of the population in Pakistan and without their effective participation in the political development of the country; it is simply not possible for Pakistan to reach the heights of progress it aspires to achieve. Unfortunately, Pakistani women's participation lacks in all aspects of political development. It even lags behind its South Asian peers which is one of the greatest reasons for Pakistan lagging behind others. This comprehensive study offers an extensive and pragmatic perspective on Pakistani women's journey towards active political engagement by examining the aspects of economic development, legal and administrative advancements, political participation and mobilization, democratic consolidation, and the aspects of social change. It unravels a narrative about women's participation in political development that interweaves challenges, progress, and aspirations. It analyzes the extent of women participation in political development of Pakistan. It establishes that the lack of women's participation in the political development of the country is due to the lack of women's involvement in the afore-mentioned sectors. This study endeavors to find out the proportion of female participation in the under-discussion five indicators of political development during the time period 2000-2022. Afterwards, it discovers the factors that impede women's participation in the political, legal, administrative, economic, and social sectors of Pakistan. Some of these factors are traditional gender roles, patriarchal culture, higher rates of illiteracy in females, legal and administrative gaps, gender-insensitive policies, unwelcoming party structures, limited mentorship opportunities, gender pay gap, workplace harassment etc. It also suggests some measures to overcome the said hurdles and facilitate maximum women's participation in political development of the country as it is the only way to ensure the country's progress.