

A Report on

PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS

Provincial Assembly of Sindh

June, 2013 - March, 2017



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Women constitute nearly half of the population but their representation in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh is considerably low. There are 30 women in the 167-member Sindh Assembly that means there is one woman lawmaker for every 758,932 women whereas there is one male lawmaker for every 180,733 men. The women representation in the government is even weaker. There is only one woman minister in the cabinet of 19. However, despite their less numerical strength, the women perform equally well or in some instances better than male lawmakers.

During last 30 sessions held between June 2013 and March 2017, women contributed 50% agenda on their own and eight percent in collaboration with their male colleagues. Their contribution to the oversight agenda i.e. Questions, Private Motions and Adjournment Motions was far greater than male lawmakers whereas their share to other agenda, including legislation and resolutions was also proportionate to their representation in the House.

The government legislation was male-dominated area in the Sindh Assembly; however, women lawmakers contributed to the Private Members' legislation and sponsored bills on education, health, consumer rights and social reforms. Women also initiated 729 (69%) questions, 58 (22%) resolutions, 33 (25%) Adjournment Motions, 133 (31%) Calling Attention Notices, 66 (52%) Private Motions and nine (26%) Amendments to Assembly's Rules.

The agenda initiated by women related to the sectors like governance, education, health and social welfare. Besides these, women lawmakers were also inclined to raise the issues of their gender in the Assembly. They highlighted the matters related to women workers' rights and violence against women.

The Assembly also took legislative action on several women-specific issues. Much of women-specific legislation was done in the backdrop of devolution of women development subject to the provinces under Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment. The Assembly approved the law for setting up Provincial Commission on Status of Women which works for the betterment of women folk in the province. Moreover, it legislated for prohibition of child marriages and protection of the rights of women workers in factories and other workplaces including their entitlement to maternity leaves. The Assembly also passed eight resolutions expressing its opinion on women-related subjects. It paid respect to the services of Benazir Bhutto, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy and Malala Yousafzai, recommended establishment of Commission on Status of Women and Women Caucus as well as urged the government to take action for women welfare in various areas.

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Women constitute nearly half of the population in Sindh province but they are under-represented in voter lists, legislature and cabinet. As per the Population Projections for the year 2015, there are 22,767,962 (48%) women in Sindh while 9,200,071 are registered as voters i.e. 44% of total voters. There are 29 seats (17%) reserved for women in the Provincial Assembly of Sindh. The incumbent Assembly also has a woman elected on a general seat thus making the total number of women 30. It means there is one woman lawmaker for every 758,932 women whereas there is one lawmaker for every 180,733 men. The women representation falls even further in the cabinet and the committees. Only four out of 33 Provincial Ministers (12%), five out of 43 Parliamentary Secretaries (11%) and two out of 48 Committee Chairpersons (4%) are women.

In this backdrop, the present report attempts to analyze the performance of women lawmakers in the Provincial Assembly of the Sindh during the period between June 2013 and March 2017. It seeks to compare what women contributed to the Assembly with what the House did for them.

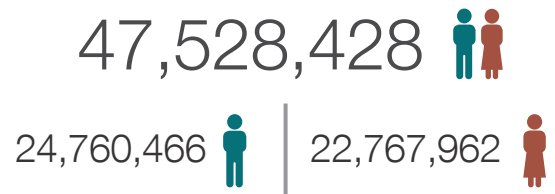
Following indicators of performance have been analyzed in this report:

- Agenda Contribution
- Participation in Debates

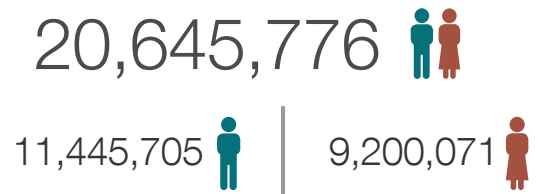
The report covers 30 sessions of the incumbent Assembly held in last 45 months. These sessions comprise 227 sittings. The official Assembly documents available on the website and gathered through direct observation of the Assembly proceedings have been used to analyze the women contribution in the Assembly's formal business. The participation of women lawmakers has been assessed using the records of TDEA-FAFEN's parliamentary database Openparliament.pk, which is based on direct observation of the Assembly proceedings.

Besides the woman lawmakers' performance, the report also includes the analysis of the Assembly's output on women related issues. The women-centric legislation and resolutions passed by the Assembly during the reporting period has been analyzed in this section.

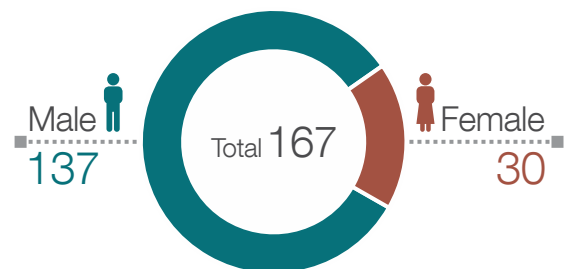
Population of Sindh



Registered Voters in Sindh



Members of Sindh



Seat Type of Women Members

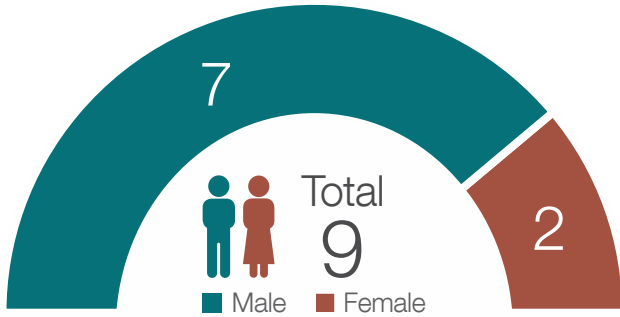


Provincial Ministers

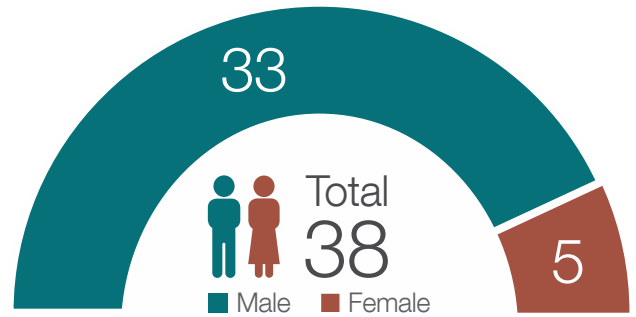


INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

Special Assistants to Chief Minister



Committee Chairpersons



POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF WOMEN MEMBERS



AGENDA CONTRIBUTION AND PARTICIPATION

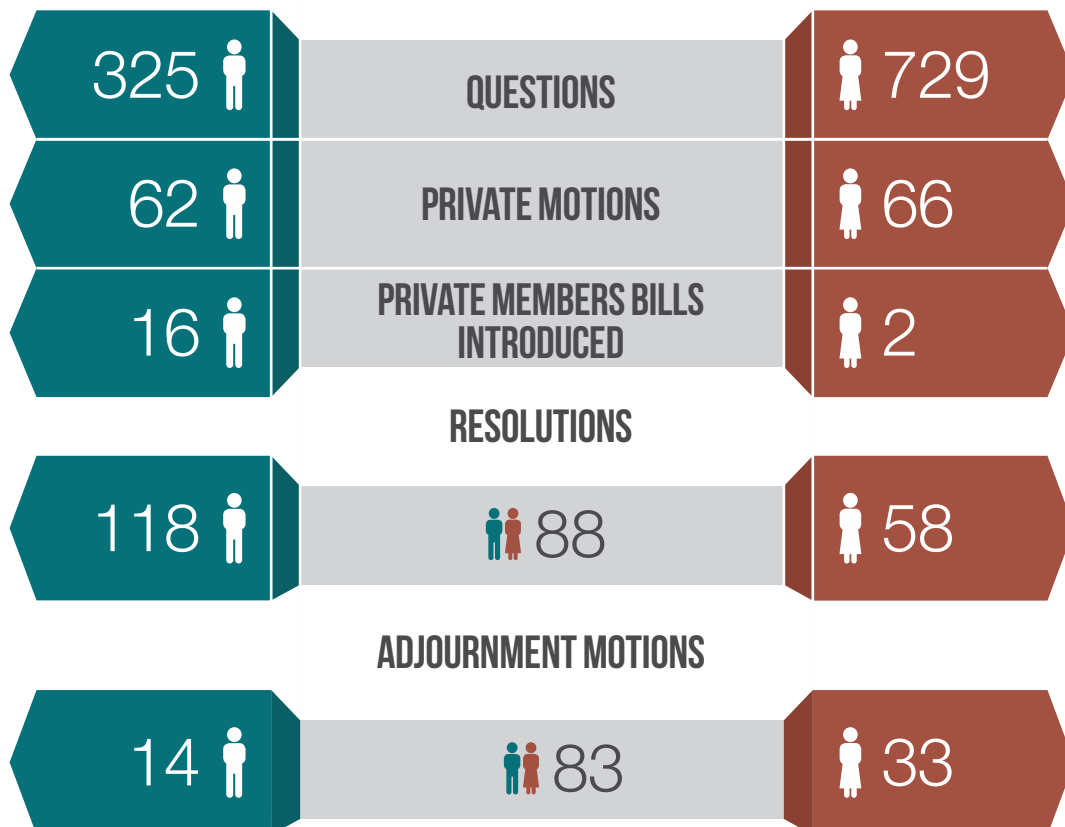
The lawmakers' commitment towards their duties as members of the Assembly can be gauged through their attendance, contribution to the agenda and participation in the House proceedings. The Sindh Assembly does not make the attendance of its members available on the website. The requests to acquire the attendance records under Freedom of Information law were also not responded to by the Assembly Secretariat. Therefore, the report analyses women lawmakers' contribution to the proceedings only.

The lawmakers participate in the proceedings through submission of agenda items and taking part in the debates. During the reporting period, all women lawmakers were observed to be active participants. Each of 30 women lawmakers contributed one or more agenda items as well as participated in the discussions.

Despite their low representation in the Assembly, women contributed 50% agenda on their own and eight percent in collaboration with male colleagues during last 30 sessions. Their contribution to the oversight agenda i.e. Questions, Private Motions and Adjournment Motions was far greater than male lawmakers whereas their share to other agenda including legislation and resolutions was also proportionate to their representation in the House.

Details of the contribution of women lawmakers in each parliamentary business are given below:

Gender Wise Contribution



LEGISLATION

The government legislation remains a male's domain in the Sindh Assembly due to low representation of women in the provincial cabinet. There is only one woman in 19-member Sindh Cabinet who holds the portfolio of Social Welfare.

During the reporting period, the House passed 127 government bills, all moved by male members of the cabinet. The women's participation in private members' legislation is relatively better than government legislation. There have been tabled a total of 26 Private Members' bills in the House so far. Women lawmakers were responsible for nine of these bills including two bills they co-sponsored with male lawmakers.

The Assembly has passed four women-supported Private Members' bills. Women legislation focused on establishment of universities and prohibition of corporal punishment. Four women-sponsored bills are still pending in the Assembly while one was clubbed with a government bill and has been approved. Moreover, two Private Members' bills of a woman lawmaker were not taken up despite appearing on the Orders of the Day. The women lawmakers of PPPP, MQM and PML-F participated in the Private Members' legislation.



#	Name of Bill	Status
1	The Sindh Reproductive Healthcare and Rights Bill, 2013	Not Taken Up
2	The Sindh Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, 2013	Not Taken Up
3	The Sindh Consumer Protection Bill, 2013	Introduced
4	The Mandatory DNA Testing Bill, 2013	Introduced
5	The Child Marriage Prohibition Bill, 2013	Referred the bill to Committee
6	The Sindh Marriage Functions (Prohibition of Ostentatious Display and Wasteful Expenses) Bill, 2013	Introduced
7	The Sindh Prohibition of Dowry Bill, 2013	Referred the bill to Committee



#	Name of Bill	Status
1	The Altaf Hussain University at Karachi Bill, 2014	Passed
2	The Altaf Hussain University at Hyderabad Bill, 2014	Passed



The Sindh Prohibition of Corporal Punishment Bill, 2015

Passed



The Etihad University Bill, 2017

Passed

RESOLUTIONS

The women lawmakers in the Sindh Assembly remained active in making recommendations to the government on public importance issues through resolutions during the reporting period. They sponsored 58 out of 264 (21%) resolutions on various public issues in individual capacity while also collaborated with their male counterparts in 88 (33%) other resolutions .

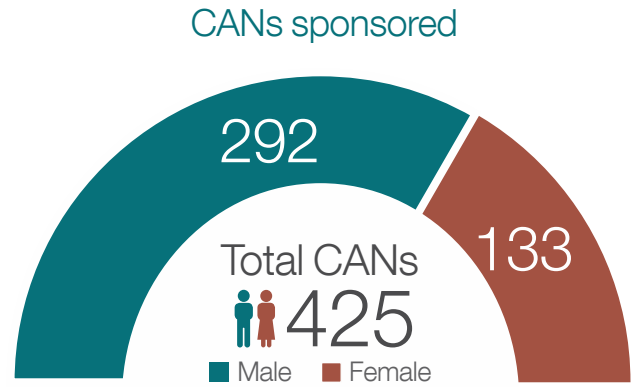
The resolutions raised by women lawmakers were related to issues of governance, law and order, human rights, education. These resolutions also highlighted women issues like recommendations of Council of Islamic Ideology regarding women; setting up institutions for women; launching awareness campaign regarding registration of women in the forthcoming census; violence against women and achievements of notable Pakistani women like Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy.

Following are the women who sponsored 30 or more resolutions individually or jointly.



CALLING ATTENTION NOTICES (CANs)

Women lawmakers effectively used Calling Attention Notices (CANs) to highlight issues related to governance and development during the reporting period. They sought government's response on various matters regarding education, health, labor and local government sectors. Out of 425 Calling Attention Notices appearing on the agenda, 133 (31%) CANs were moved by women. The women lawmakers from the Opposition benches showed keen interest in sponsoring CANs and keeping oversight on executive performance.



The women belonging to MQM sponsored 67 CANs while PML-F, PTI and PPPP women sponsored 47, 11 and eight CANs respectively. The government responded to 94 out of these 133 notices. Following are given details of CANs submitted by women.

 Nusrat Bano Abbasi 33 CANs	 Heer Soho 21 CANs	 Rana Ansar 11 CANs	 Dr. Seema Zia 11 CANs	 Naila Munir 10 CANs
 Naheed Begum 9 CANs	 Soorath Thebo 7 CANs	 Ghazala Siyal 7 CANs	 Mahtab Akbar Shah 7 CANs	 Sumeta Afzal Syed 6 CANs
 Irum Azeem Farooque 3 CANs	 Aisha Khatoun 3 CANs	 Shazia Jawaid 2 CANs	 Bilquees Mukhtar 2 CANs	 Khairunisa 1 CAN

PRIVATE MOTIONS

The Private Motion is a tool for lawmakers to highlight and discuss matters of public importance in the Assembly. A total of 128 Private Motions appeared on the agenda in Sindh Assembly during the reporting period. Of these motions, 66 (52%) were sponsored by female lawmakers and remaining 62 (48%) were submitted by male lawmakers. Nine of women-sponsored Private Motions were taken up for discussion in the House.

The women lawmakers belonging to MQM submitted 30 private motions followed by PPP, PML-F and PTI women who submitted 21, 11 four motions respectively.



ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS

The Adjournment Motion (AM) is a tool for lawmakers to discuss public importance issues in the House. The Sindh lawmakers submitted 130 Adjournment Motions during the reporting period on various matters related to governance. Nearly one quarter of these AMs (33) were submitted by women lawmakers while 14 (11%) were submitted by women in partnership with male colleagues. The House held discussions on 17 AMs while nine were rejected by the Chair, five were withdrawn by concerned lawmakers and remaining were left unaddressed.

Following are the women who initiated an Adjournment Motions on their own or collaborated with other colleagues in a motion.














QUESTIONS

The Question Hour is part of the Assembly proceedings when lawmakers quiz the government on issues of public concern. During the reporting period, women lawmakers actively participated in the question hours and asked more questions than their male counterparts. Out of 1,054 questions, 729 (69%) were submitted by women. However, only eleven out of 30 women lawmakers used the Questions to obtain information from the government on public issues and oversee the executive's performance.

The questions of women lawmakers were addressed to 49 ministries and departments of the government. The main focus of their questions was the departments of Works and Services, Wildlife, Food, Zakat & Ushr, Labour and Agriculture.

Following are given details of five women who asked highest number of questions.

 Nusrat Bano Abbasi 280 Questions	 Heer Soho 210 Questions	 Naheed Begum 65 Questions	 Naila Munir 48 Questions	 Bilquees Mukhtar 38 Questions
 Khairunisa 25 Questions	 Dr. Seema Zia 22 Questions	 Rana Ansar 21 Questions	 Saira Shahliani 9 Questions	 Sumeta Afzal Syed 7 Questions
 Mahtab Akbar Shah 4 Questions				

WOMEN-CENTRIC OUTPUT

The devolution of Women Development subject to the provinces under Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment prompted the provinces to take legislative action on women-specific issues. The incumbent Sindh Assembly has passed four women-specific bills during last 30 sessions. A brief description of these bills is given below.

[The Sindh Commission on the Status of Women Act, 2015](#)

The law provides for setting up Provincial Commission on the Status of Women for promotion of social, economic, political and legal rights of women.

[The Sindh Shops and Commercial Establishment Act, 2015](#)

The law was passed in wake of devolution of the subject of labor to the provinces under Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment. Among other issues, it includes provisions for entitlement of maternity leaves and working hours specific for women.

[The Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Act, 2013](#)

The law prohibits marriages of children under eighteen years of age and suggests punishment including fines and imprisonment up to three years.

[The Sindh Factories Act, 2015](#)

The law binds factories and other workplaces to reserve a common place for women employees and also set up child care center for under-six children of women employees.

RESOLUTIONS

The present Assembly adopted eight resolutions to express its opinion on women-related issues and make recommendations to the government on these. All of these resolutions were jointly sponsored by men and women lawmakers of the Assembly.

The House passed resolutions to pay its gratitude and respect to Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy and Malala Yousafzai for their remarkable services for the nation. Two separate resolutions recommended setting up Provincial Commission for Women and Women Parliamentary Caucus in Sindh Assembly. The House also urged the government to ensure registration of women in the population census and take steps for protection of women against domestic violence. Moreover, it also asked the provincial government through a resolution to convey its reservations and criticism of recommendations made by the Council of Islamic Ideology regarding women issues to the federal government.

About FAFEN

- FAFEN is one of the most credible networks of civil society organizations working for strengthening citizens' voice and accountability in Pakistan since 2006.
- FAFEN has harnessed information technology for real-time monitoring, facilitation and technical backstopping of partners for effective and result-based program delivery.
- FAFEN is the only civil society group to have been invited by the Judicial Commission to present the evidence of illegalities and irregularities documented through the course of General Elections 2013 Observation. The systemic and procedural issues identified by FAFEN have been acknowledged by the commission in its detailed findings.
- FAFEN's recommendations for electoral reforms have contributed to the work of Parliamentary Committee for Electoral Reforms.
- FAFEN's advocacy for parliamentary transparency, accountability and reforms has shaped public discourse on parliamentary reforms. Improved citizens' access to parliamentary information including daily public release of parliamentarians' attendance records can be directly attributed to FAFEN's work.
- FAFEN deployed 18,000 and 40,000 non-partisan and trained observers for the systematic observation of general election 2008 and 2013, respectively, largest citizens' observation ever undertaken in Pakistan.
- FAFEN's evidence and recommendations for reforms have improved the quality of public and political discourse on elections, its issues and need for reforms. Leading political parties and media houses extensively use FAFEN's election findings and analysis to build a case for reforms.
- With more than 18,000 followers on Twitter and around 100,000 on Facebook, FAFEN is considered one of the most reliable sources of electoral and parliamentary information in the country.

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