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Role and Contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations in Women Empowerment: A Case Study of the All Pakistan Women's Association

Nasreen Aslam Shah

Introduction

In the process of nation building and socio-economic evolution, development plays a vital role as a procedure of growth towards advancement of the country and its people. The major objective of development is to improve the standard of life for all. In this development process, all the stakeholders of society are involved as governments can't perform all duties on its own when it comes to the well-being of the citizens. The representation of the civil society is very important in the national

N. A. Shah (✉)

Department of Social Work & Director, Centre of Excellence for Women's Studies, University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan

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process of decision making as well as mainstream development. Through non-profit organizations, governments become aware of the opinion of common people. This also creates pressure on governments in taking important decisions, and also helps with regard to providing voluntary services to people, changing thoughts and behaviours through training programmes and workshops, providing loans and services to women for empowerment, and so on.

According to Mr. K.S. Dadzie, United Nations Director General for Development and International Economic Cooperation, “the final aim of development must be the constant increase of wellbeing of the entire population on the basis of its full participation in the process of development and a fair distribution of benefits there. The development cannot be achieved by Government departments alone. Besides the Government agencies, NGOs can play an important role in improving the quality of life of our people” (Goel and Kumar 2005).

The development process can't be carried out by government institutions alone, but also with the help of nongovernmental organizations, as they play an important role in this process. Here, the question arises—what is meant by non-governmental organizations?

Basically, the term means those non-profit associations which work to bring changes in the society and provide social and charitable services even in extremely political, national, and international contexts through political influences. Although, it has become common among NGOs to work with the corporate sector and governments to make affirmative influence on the policy of governments and private sector approaches. NGOs are currently struggling to build inventive programs that can change or redirect the activities of the government and the private sector in a way that may possibly meet larger social or economic goals. That's why NGO performance results in expected improvement of the participatory organizations and has absolutely improved the community attitude and status of numerous organizations (Doh and Teegen 2003). As Dr. T. Adeoya Lambo, Deputy Director—General, WHO, in World Health rightly observed:

“What is happening around us shakes our complacency, challenges our faith in human progress and imbues us with an intense feeling of shame,

doubt and guilt. In a world where the gigantic scientific and phenomenal technological achievements command our administration and almost fetish acceptance, we are witnessing an intolerable degradation of man. Our pride is belonging to a generation that for the first time since the genesis of men has set foot on another planet cannot, however, disguise the awful truth that it may be easier to travel to the moon than to erase from the surface of the earth the image of inevitable poverty, human exploitation, injustice and the degradation of human welfare.” (Goel and Kumar 2005)

History of Non-Governmental Organizations

From ancient times, generous people have given of their objects to needy in the form of private gifts. They appointed almoners to distribute their rewards or people whom they trust to give out their patronage. History has evidence that generous people have made contribution in this arena. Before the dissolution of the Monasteries, most of the offerings for charity were distributed by them. Subsequently the church wardens were often nominated for this purpose. Moreover numerous trusts were also known for this as such. These were the founders of our modern-day non-profit organizations. Many good-hearted people were deeply motivated to help large numbers of poor who were living in miserable conditions, and they made a platform with other likeminded people to establish new associations for the assistance of the deprived people. Since then, this practice has continued, but due to poverty, the miseries of the previous century persist. However, this has created many other types of miseries; thus, es is still rising (Rizwi 2008).

Nature, Scope, and Role of NGOs

Nowadays, the role of an NGO is not only confined to provision of few benefits to the community. It also aims to create motivation in people, mobilize funds, leadership development in the community and encourage people’s participation in development programmes for autonomy. An

NGO works as an enabler, and as soon as the society becomes autonomous, its role is moved to another place where the services are required. Although, NGOs works for the assistance of people and provision of public goods as direct providers, many development NGOs are working for productive activities. The major role of NGOs as an activist or catalyst and as provider or implementer is where bureaucracy is unresponsive or incompetent, or when the programmes are not flexible, which leads to inefficiency and the deprivation of the poor. The functions of voluntary development organizations have changed over the years, such as welfare of people, sustainable development, development of community, and movements for rights. Non-profit organizations also work as power brokers, safety valve, resource mobilization, criticizers, unifying force, and provider of special needs. NGOs are supposed to reduce tension and coercion in society and integrate the people (Prasad 2000).

The roots of professional social work and organized social services are initiated from the charitable stance and religious outlook. The charitable action is an instinct in the mind of the people who through their humanitarian impulses grant services for the people who are suffering (Sarker 2015).

The NGO structure varies, depending on the needs and requirements of the society. They can be work on national level as well as worldwide. Even grass root organizations have become active and recognized for their work for the betterment of communities on an international level. Often, this happens through the built up of international linkages and support. Different NGOs are provided an institutional structure by International NGOs (Shetty 2013).

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), in Agenda 21, categorizes the civil society in (a) Women, (b) Children and Youth (c) Indigenous Peoples and Communities, (d) Non-governmental Organizations (e) Workers and Trade Unions (f) The Scientific and Technological Community (g) Business and Industry and Farmers.

These major groups are officially recognized by the United Nations, and to improve the conditions of these groups, mechanisms have been developed specifically for NGOs. NGOs and other civil society representatives are partners in administration, as well as a main thrust behind

more noteworthy global collaboration through the dynamic preparation of open help for universal declaration (Pace 2002).

These voluntary organizations are making a great contribution by supporting a huge participation in conducting activities worldwide.

Their details are as follows:

The advocacy of people, their awareness raising and identification, researching and analysing issues, and most importantly, informing people about these problems. Other than that, mobilizing people in utilizing media campaigns and other kinds of activism and develop awareness among business leaders and policy makers. NGOs act as a bridge between government and the masses as these organizations convey the opinion to higher levels. Another important task of organizations is to provide quality education for building capacity, prevalence of information, and giving training to masses and trainers, provision of social and operational services on human grounds for development, and also in assessment and observation as a third party, whether they are asked or not, about performance of public and corporate sector (Nelson 2007).

Commencement of the Non-Government Organizations in Pakistan

In Pakistan, voluntary organizations are growing and are recognized for their role to create awareness. Hence, they are purposely approached by the Government to encourage participation of people to provide social services to the needy people. The long-lasting partnership of public and private sectors has been clearly demonstrated in the umbrella of social welfare activities, explicitly, in community development, child welfare, women's development, health, education, and working with the disabled.

Pakistan was not established as effortlessly as was expected. A number of harsh realities came up at that time, although people had the courage to cope up with these difficulties. However, for many other people, the struggle for reorientation was hard due to numerous social and psychological problems that were created. Therefore, in the early stages, social work and social thinking was developed. Spontaneous efforts were made

during the period from 1947 to 1951 to overcome the immediate national crisis. From 1952 onwards, forms of difficulties were changed due to this nature of spontaneous good will to serve the humanity. The work being done was transforming into systematic yet simple, organized, and long-term social services.

A few welfare organizations existed at the time of the creation of Pakistan. Most of which served the impoverished, the blind, the hard of hearing, and the sick. But these organizations practically did nothing to cure the social ills. Therefore, it was an important assignment to develop voluntary agencies and prepare trainees of all the in-service social welfare training programmes throughout the country. The training of professional social workers later became a part of the curriculum in the universities.

The concept of welfare originated at the time of independence. It leads to the creation of many charitable organizations for women's socio-economic wellbeing. During the 1980s, the term "non-governmental organizations" gained popularity in Pakistan in comparison with the term "voluntary agencies"; which implied conception at a specific time to engage in charitable contributions of time and money thus also reflecting values designed to improve human lives (Rehmatullah 2002). Although the number of NGOs has increased, (Khalid 2001) the situation of non-profit sector is not that good in Pakistan. In the decade of 1990s, some promising growth resulting from a number of favourable factors like the return to democracy, the prevalence of deregulation and privatization, globalization process, civil society's international linkages, and the fall of financial strength of governments limited the public delivery of social services (Pasha and Asif Iqbal 2002).

The nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and women in development both effectively work together for change in society. There are few women NGOs, Behbud Association with branches in Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi—Maternity and Child Welfare Association of Pakistan, and Voluntary Health and Nutrition Association (PVHNA) (Banuri et al. 1997). The major problem is that all women NGOs and activist paid attention to gender issues, and ignored the wider societal background in which such gender inequalities occur. Women from upper class and middle class led female activists and established organizations of

women. The agenda formulation and the approaches of NGOs for accomplishment of objectives showed the leadership's class background. The economically advantaged and empowered class were also moderate in vision, having the opportunities and resources to stand for and lead (Rashid 2006).

Women NGOs like the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) support the gradual changes in the background of Islamic culture. The two main objectives of APWA were to make women participate in mainstream development of country, provision of education, and the creation of employment opportunities, mostly in the traditional handicrafts sector. APWA's major task is not to confine women to their homes as mothers or housekeepers, but to contribute to their economic growth. The initiative of APWA is to educate the people and to stop them from seeing women as just their spouse, mother, and house keeper. This is a difficult task as the society is used to seeing them as such. Such contrasts in belief can be a potential source of contention between association like APWA and customary researchers whose lessons are still largely accepted (Shah 1989).

As the oldest women organization of Pakistan, APWA has been actively working after the establishment of Pakistan, not only for the welfare of women but also in the formation of laws, women empowerment, and health. Therefore, APWA was selected as a case study for this chapter.

It is essential to mention Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan who established APWA and was a leading lady of that time. APWA's success was due to the efforts of her hard work and dedication.

Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan

Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan, originator of APWA and the better half of Pakistan's First Prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan, was a woman of outstanding accomplishments whose commitment to civil rights and societal wellbeing was acclaimed broadly and universally. Her endeavours to activate women inside the charitable services picked up numerous esteemed honours for her. Her enthusiasm for helpful causes and spearheading of

women is the reason why women rights have furnished women with a plan so that they can act collectively, (APWA 1987).

Begum Raa'na Liaquat is known to be the pioneer of the women's development in Pakistan. Her first chance to compose Muslim women introduced itself around the same time as when she framed a volunteer nursing and first aid services in Delhi. Then again, from 1947, as the evacuees poured in from over the edge, in the midst of the most pitiable conditions with cholera, diarrhoea, and small pox being rampant, she called upon women to approach and gather sustenance and therapeutic supplies from government workplaces (Khan 1995). During this period in Pakistan's history, there weren't many medical attendants in Karachi. So Begum Liaquat requested that the armed forces prepare women to give injections and first aid. Women were subsequently prepared in three to a half year courses and in that capacity, the Para-military powers for ladies were formed. During this period, young women were additionally urged by Begum Liaquat to take up nursing as a calling.

They were likewise trained in rifle shooting, writing, and a large group of different obligations so they could be valuable amid national emergencies, like the displaced people's emergency of 1947. As the founder and lifelong president of APWA, Begum Liaquat played a significant role in the development of women in political, instructive, financial, and many other different fields (Mulki 2013). To organize women in a systematic way, Begum Liaquat created the platform of APWA to bring welfare services to women and children without any help from donor agencies.

The All Pakistan Women's Association

APWA has been a particularly influential organization from its foundation. It has branches in 56 areas across Pakistan, both in natural and urban fringe areas. APWA is a patronage association depending upon the contributions for finance. APWA got the UNESCO Adult Literacy Prize in 1974 and later the Peace Messenger Certificate in 1987.

After the independence of Bangladesh, the association in that nation was renamed Bangladesh Mahila Samiti (IAW Communication Unit 2016). APWA was particularly the brain child of Begum Raa'na Liaquat

Ali Khan, who perceived requirements intended for a nationwide relationship to be united and to facilitate women's practices for their greater benefit. Under the sponsorship of APWA, Mrs. Liaquat set up schools, dispensaries, maternity homes, and family planning centres in both urban and country zones. Her essential ideology was well-being, instruction, and training. By mid-1950s, 32 branches of APWA having an aggregate participation of around 1200 ladies, had around 800 occupied with social work. APWA developed contacts by building 20 modern homes with other women, where approximately 40,000 women went through different phases of preparing yearly. Apart from these efforts, through its 13 basic education centres, 100 social welfare centres, six dispensaries, APWA extended its assistance to another 1500 were women.

Activities

Works of APWA

- The up-to-date and quick participation of women of Pakistani towards equality, development, and peace in the country.
- The development and well-being of the Pakistani women throughout the development of lawful, civil, legitimate, societal, and monetary status and rights.
- Endorsement of societal, learning, and cultural with economic programs.
- The Health and education of the people of Pakistan in the home, the family, and the country.
- Cooperation with government and UN socialized agencies UNICEF and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Status

APWA has an advisory position with the Pakistani Government; APWA has consulting position Category B with the United Nations.

Structure

General membership throughout Pakistan, governing body, executive body, national secretariat, national president, national vice presidents, secretary general, joint secretary general, treasurer, chairperson (APWA 1987).

Women from all divisions of life, rich and poor, highly educated to totally illiterate, came together at the call of Begum Liaquat and devoted themselves whole heartedly to the task of uplifting the status of Pakistani women.

The historical background of APWA is the historical background of women in Pakistan. APWA was framed to handle the outcast emergencies that developed because of migration amongst India and Pakistan. Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan accepted the mission of women development voluntarily and willingly without politicizing it. She strived for acknowledgment of a nationalized connection for managing as well as facilitating the women's movement for the societal and monetary strengthening of women and youngsters in Pakistan. Following more than 60 years of its reality, APWA has risen and is one of the most seasoned and regarded non-governmental association in the country. This association is extremely useful for women, particularly in earning own wages thus helping their families financially.

Objectives of the Research

Every research has its aims and objectives to proceed that help to find reasons and consequences. This study has the following objectives:

- (a) To find out if APWA still work as a caucus group for government as have been the case in the past
- (b) To find out the role of APWA for bring change in women's status in society
- (c) To find out the difficulties they face during organizational work

Research Methodology

In Pakistan, many NGOs are playing an active role in solving problems of society and bringing a change in the status of women. Similarly, APWA is the oldest non-profit organization that has done much more work and has brought a big change in women's lives in Pakistan. The aim of this research is to focus and highlight the efforts and functions of such an old non-governmental organization of Pakistan. Furthermore, this subject is selected to enlighten the welfare work done by NGOs and also promote the philosophy to make better changes in society, particularly for women.

Interviews were conducted from APWA Karachi headquarter office. Non-probability sampling method and purposive techniques have been used to get the accurate measures on this research problem. In non-probability, sampling size is not determined, and it often covers a few cases and is used for qualitative methods (Sarantakos 2005). This research is conducted by the case study method. Case study is defined as the collection of information about an individual, a family, a group of persons or organizations. Basically, it is an in-depth study to investigate about particular phenomena. As P.V. Young said, "Case study is a method of exploring and analyzing the life of a social unit, be it that a person, a family, an institution cultural group or even entire community (Ghosh 2015)". The case study is used in many situations as a research method (Yin 2014). Hence, the interview schedule was designed to investigate the non-profit organizational work functions and welfare work of APWA. Interview schedule consists of both close and open-ended questions. This interview schedule found out in-depth work of the APWA towards Pakistan and their women. Qualitative method is used to collect data for such document studies.

During study, the concerned authorities cooperated with humility and tried to provide knowledge as per their approach. The analysis of data is done by simple observational and qualitative analyses and derived conclusions.

In Pakistan, numerous NGOs are assuming the dynamic part in tackling issues of society and to bring about a change in the status of women. APWA, being the most matured non-benefit association, has done

significantly more work and has resulted in a major change in women's lives in Pakistan. The research issue expected to feature is about the endeavours and elements of such an old and reputable non-profitable organization of Pakistan. Moreover, this subject is chosen to enlighten the welfare work done by NGOs and further elevate the theory to improve change in the public eye, especially for women. The researcher arranged a meeting in APWA Karachi headquarter office. Henceforth, the meeting plan was intended to research the non-benefit hierarchical work capacities and welfare work of APWA. Meeting plan comprised of both close and open-ended questions. This meeting plan discovered inside and out work of the APWA towards Pakistan and their women. Subjective technique was utilized to gather information from such archives deliberately. The preparing of information was led by talking through contextual investigation. Meetings with the women were held in order to know their thoughts on how to explore issues and doing philanthropic work for improvement of women and their condition. Throughout the study, the concerned authorities extended their full cooperation and provided all available information. The investigation of information was finished by basic observational and subjective examinations and determined conclusions.

Interview

The researcher made contact with the focal person of APWA for the purpose of data collection and interview about the performance, service, and functions of APWA. After her permission, researcher visited APWA Karachi headquarters to study, analyse, and interview the people who worked at this oldest and respected organization of Pakistan. The central headquarter of APWA is situated at Garden West region of Karachi, near Saddar (central region of city consider as the heart of the city). Karachi is the metropolitan city of Pakistan, the industrial hub of the country, and the first national capital of Pakistan. Therefore, it is an area of the old city of Karachi, near the zoological Garden on one side and Saddar from the other side. The headquarters office is located at the place where the foundation of this organization was laid by Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan.

The building of APWA headquarters at Karachi is owned by APWA and was bought during her tenure as Governor of Sindh Ms. Farzana Rehman is the chairperson of public relations. She introduced me to the chairperson of APWA—Begum Mehar Afroz Habib. Begum Afroz briefly clarified about the association and its points and destinations. She said that the association was developed in 1949 by ladies of national stature with an aim to enable women by imparting training and improving their health.

After that, she referred the researcher to Ms. Farzana Rehman. Ms. Farzana Rehman illuminated about the APWA, its points, capacities, and history. APWA is a seventy one years old association, established by Begum Raa'na Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan and her likeminded affiliates in February 29, 1949 at a meeting held at her home. She was lifetime leader of APWA. The affiliation was enrolled by the Voluntary Social Welfare Agencies Ordinance 1961. In the early days, six to ten individuals worked in affiliation. Now, more than 15 individuals are working in the Karachi home office and different branches additionally have more than 15 workers. Majority of workers are women in this NGO.

APWA has more than 100 branches all through Pakistan and globally. Every region has such a significant number of branches, for example, in Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, and Khyberpukhtunkhwa. Likewise, the national level NGO has global branches in the UK, Canada, and America. When inquired about the nature of social work for women, she said that APWA was created to aid poor and penniless individuals; consequently, they confront a huge number of issues. In such a manner, we additionally confront such a large number of issues for taking care of the issues of women and society, for example, socio-cultural and social issues. As an association involved in women development, it faces additional difficulties owing to predominant patriarchal culture. Resultantly, the association is finding it difficult to sustain and enhance its outreach owing to lack of funds and donations. Another major obstacle is the mentality of individuals. We do social welfare for women, she said. Ladies have worked here for the entire night for advancement of affiliation and settling women issues. During winters, they even spent complete nights while

making shawls and knitting sweaters. She said that individuals support them for accomplishment of their objectives.

According to her analysis, following the hardships and too much efforts of association, the structure of society has changed to some extent. APWA has not only pursues legislation for improving the plight of women and children but also provides legal aid services. We have passed the Family Law Ordinance 1961, Child Marriage Act, through which women became eligible for property rights and land ownership, marriage and divorce registration, along with second marriage permission by wife and arbitrary council.

By maintaining legal aid centres, she said, it has modified the society by making people aware, making women empowered and confident, appraisal of feelings of philanthropic work and self-help. And we can observe these changes at a glance pour on thousands of beneficiaries of APWA. She further explained in detail with interest about the services of association and NGOs through analysing the women's issues. She said that though at the time of establishment it was the only NGO of its kind, there was no hindrance in extending its activities across the country. However, working on women issues was always considered to a difficult task in the longer run. Likewise, APWA also faces hindrances. Now, the association does not confront any sort of obstacles except fiscal issues. Ms. Farzana looks quite satisfied about the activities of the APWA.

She also said that by keeping up legal aid centres, it has changed the general public through making individuals mindful, making women enabled and sure, examination of sentiments of humanitarian work, and self-improvement. Furthermore, we can watch these progressions pour on a large number of recipients of APWA. She enthusiastically explained that collaborative efforts of Gos and NGOs had been very fruitful after effective categorization of women issues into functional sub domains. APWA was managed by incredible women in the past and has been in great hands since then but still faces multiple challenges. Yet, now the affiliation does not face any kind of obstructions aside from monetary issues. Ms. Farzana looks much fulfilled from exercises of APWA: "I am so much satisfied with the performance of APWA to bring social change because it is comprehensively paying attention on women's problems and children," she said.

She at that point informed about the capacities and the administration of APWA. She told that for the most part ladies are working here, the gatherings of governing body continue week by week, and after that, a methodology is figured out for capacities and administrations. This technique is about the improvement and social welfare of women and children. The technique additionally examined the lesser labourers for improvement of approach, administration, and usage. Working timings of establishment are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. APWA individuals work here voluntarily, just specialized staff does paid work. Upon asking, "How to function in this NGO, and is there a prerequisite of any capability to work?" She clarified that "there is no criteria or qualification barring anyone to work at APWA. The only things required are sensitivity, to human values supplemented by corresponding passion to work for welfare of poor individuals especially for women and children. Therefore, related NGO work here, we go to other cities and towns and gives their administrations to rustic urban individuals who require help and generosity, our affiliation have region focuses in various urban communities of Pakistan."

Ms. Farzana Rehman illustrated the three focal objectives of association: to educate women, to empower women, and to improve their health. APWA, at the beginning, worked only for women but with the passage of time, the aims have changed to the social welfare of women and children. On questioning about ways of funding, she said that APWA does not receive funding from any donor agency. She gave a detailed account of projects of the association. Major projects include health clinics for women and children, establishment of education centres and vocational institutes and efforts to improve plight of imprisoned women. Some of these projects been successfully completed while others are in progress. APWA has contacts with other NGOs and participates in different programmes of other NGOs. All the NGOs are cooperative to each other in Pakistan and all other NGOs consider APWA to be a respected NGO and a community-based organization. They record data of their services in documentation and soft copies. Association publishes annual reports and brochures; they have also published a report named APWA 50 years of service, in which history, projects, and efforts are compiled.

The association gives internship opportunities to students to their future improvement and advancement. They prepare their volunteers and labourers through expert specialists. They prepare and educate

individuals about the program coordination, operations like how to instruct, how to do work, and how to do function at an NGO. She assessed that Pakistan has been very fruitful for accomplishing Millennium Development Goals, now women are viewed as enough enabled and certain and NGOs are currently assuming their part for accomplishing these objectives as women's strengthening. Pakistani NGOs are powerfully taking part in the satisfaction of global understanding and targets. But there is sufficient time required to achieve the objectives. Although viewpoints in Pakistan confirm to the worldwide understanding but very little progress has been made so far. Consequently, APWA is likewise taking an interest in accomplishing their objectives and targets. As indicated by Ms. Farzana, APWA works for rustic and urban zones in various ways. Administrative responsibilities of rural projects are assigned to ladies with strong passion to achieve the goal of creating awareness amongst women about their rights. While in urban regions, they work for women empowerment. While responding to question regarding access to government departments / organizations, she said there are no issues as APWA is a non-benefit organization.

The most important thing she mentioned very proudly again and again is that they work voluntarily. They have no linkages from donors nationally or internationally. The association has no affiliation with US-AID, but internationally affiliated with United Nations, International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, and many others. At the end of the interview, she suggested some approaches for every sort of organization; she suggested that they create groups and work gladly, voluntarily, and without any self-indulgence. She identified health sector, women education, and women empowerment as the three domains that APWA should focus more in the future.

Discussion and Analysis

Pakistan is an Islamic Republic, established for the sake of Islam and its belief systems. Despite this, immense issues exists which have social, conservative, political, and religious context. Moreover, people living in Pakistan generally follow a few taboos which stifle women's rights. To take

care of these issues, government and charitable associations have been taking measures. The most enduring classes are of the poor, women, and children. The chosen NGO of the city do work their best for the welfare and strengthening of women. These selected NGOs in Karachi endeavor to protect and enact social rights while responding to incidents of violations and assisting the victims through designated authorities. For the most part, NGOs in Karachi chip away at the premise of social rights while gathering the data of the infringement of these rights, enactment, counteractive action of women rights, mishandle and restoring the casualties by the compassionate help through support, and awareness raising projects.

The All Pakistan Women's Association, abbreviated as APWA, the oldest organization of Pakistan, has been working since 65 years. It has been providing services for a long time, and has made history in Pakistan. It established a network of industrial homes, girl's schools, and colleges. It runs clinics and also outlets for crafts made by women who learn at their industrial homes. APWA plays a very important role to improve the social welfare conditions by utilizing political, economic, social, and technological factors in Pakistan (Patti 2000).

During the interview, Ms. Farzana Rehman indicated that the organization faced many problems during work, particularly the conservative mind sets of people and patriarchal society. "Purdah" in the beginning created many problems for the welfare of women. In Pakistan, gender relations are based on two perceptions (a) women are subordinate to men (b) family honour resides in women's actions. Another important issue is created that Purdah made different spheres of male and females (Blood 1996). Ms. Farzana said that although the situation now has been changed to transform attitudes and values due to the influence of NGOs, media, and education (Asian Network of Women in Communication 1996), it was very problematic to work in these circumstances.

By the creation of legal aid centres, people become aware about the rights of women and women feel more empowered and confident. Violence against women is a serious issue of Pakistan. Gender-based violence is insidious and constant, despite class differences, issues of caste, age, and society. In many different forms especially in family, community, and state levels, gender-based violence is perpetrated. Women with lack of confidence due to fear of violence develop a sense of insecurity.

Gender-based violence is continued at a wide range of levels, that is, at the family, group, and state levels, and in a wide range of structures (Shakil et al. 2013). Women have specific problems and suffer every day from intimate partner violence, which causes injuries, unwanted pregnancies, abortions, and sexually transmitted diseases. Many clinic-based studies showed that 52% women are victim of physical violence and 82% of women suffer from psychological violence (Zakar 2012). In Punjab, females often remain quiet due to family honour. To reduce the intensity of the issue, APWA launched Free Legal Aid Cell with the objective to provide free legal advocacy/awareness programmes (APWA Punjab 2016).

For the urban educated women, the 1950s and 1960s were hopeful decades, as society had all the allocations of being pushed towards an advanced dynamic future. The momentum for APWA's protest which started in 1955 was the second marriage of the Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Bogra that time, since the Family Law Ordinance places (among different conditions) certain controls on polygamy and divorce (Committee on Women's Studies in Asia 1995).

Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (MFLO) 1961 and Family Courts Act 1964 were the result of the continuous struggle of APWA. The endorsement of these laws was a holistic process followed by the Muslim Laws of marriage and divorce. The Family laws introduced essential marriage registration, set confinements on the act of polygamy, and changed the law identifying with dower and support in marriage and divorce. In addition, APWA without any assistance activated the women and the society and campaigned with the then government to order the family laws which gave lawful strengthening to women and children. It was because of the dynamic and tireless campaigning of APWA that three clauses maintaining women's equal status were embedded in the 1973 Constitution.

As APWA has the credit to take an interest fundamentally to pass the Family Law Ordinance 1961, Child Marriage Act, marriage and separation enlistment alongside second marriage authorization by wife and arbitrary council. With APWA, United Front for Women's Rights (UFWR) pressurized the government to bring in a new ordinance/bill for the protection of rights of women including marriage, polygamy, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, and children's custody (Maqsood 2016).

During emergencies, APWA always provides relief, looks after the orphans, has established an APWA college in Lahore, and created some vocational training centres. APWA's approach was interactive, progressive, and towards the betterment of society. According to Ayesha Jalal, APWA has gained extensive support from government and women's rights activists (Haider 2000).

Elite class women founded APWA to solve the problems of poor and middle class women. APWA's founding members actually could not differentiate between the problems of privileged and under privileged class women and had the opinion that all the women had the same problems irrespective of class, religion, or culture. However, this theory was proved wrong afterwards. Though APWA representative said that APWA did not receive any funding from donor agencies, it's also a reality that due to good relations with the government, APWA always received government funding because of its non-threatening status, as we can easily say that the organization's focus is on welfare and development of women including education and income generating schemes to strengthen the women economically.

While APWA struggled for political and legal reforms and achieved some as in 1953, APWA suggested ten reserved seats for women in the National and Provincial Assemblies.

Another criticism APWA faces in spite of a primarily non-political and welfare approach is by the religious sector of the country due to the unveiling. The ladies of APWA listened to many harsh comments as The Majlis-e-Ahrar, a right-wing orthodox party, tagged them as prostitutes. The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) also dislike them, even with having opposed the creation of Pakistan. The clash and stress between women's rights activist and right-wing religious lobbies has a long history, but at that time, it did not turn into an open war as afterwards. APWA also did not challenge the military rule; therefore, as APWA explained itself, it did not challenge the military dictatorship which defined itself as a generous, modest, and contemporary organization (Saigol 2016).

APWA also could not separate women's issues from peace and social inequality as they failed to project them as independent issues. At that time, famous women's organizations were occupied by the thinking of

only charitable work among women. On the whole, class position of these groups reflected the basic cause of not changing social status of women was that the association merged philanthropy with reforms and with participation of lower and middle class women these reforms applied from the top to change the system in to tolerable but without the understanding of ground realities and inequities (Rouse 1988).

No doubt, All Pakistan Women's Association played a very important role in the development of women in early years of Pakistan. But afterwards APWA lost the spirit and now a days, the organization is not as active as it was before. They continued the welfare approach, but with the passage of time the leading role which it played in the formation of women protection laws remained unsuccessful. APWA opened many schools, clinics, in far flung areas, but the scope is not improving as compared to the past.

It has been observed that in Pakistan, the understanding of women's rights isn't only a question of women's liberation; it is a development that ought to be mainstreamed and urged to dispose of brutality against women and children. The debate on women's rights about regard, respect, and human rights has been transparently recognized yet not rehearsed. APWA should work on these lines to motivate it and others so it can again revitalize its disposition.

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