

ANALYSIS OF THE TRAININGS IMPARTED BY WOMEN RESOURCE CENTRE FOR RURAL AND URBAN WOMEN COUNCILOR IN DISTRICT PESHAWAR, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Present study was conducted during December 2010, with the main objective to analysis trainings imparted by Aurat Foundation through Women Resource Centre on the performance of women councilors in Peshawar District. Data was collected by means of well design pre-tested questionnaire through face to face interview from two groups of women councilors i.e. one from Town-4 with rural background and second from Town-1 with urban background. From total of 184 women councilors in the whole district, 37 (20%) woman councilors were interviewed, 20 in Town-1 (urban background) and 17 in Town-4 (rural background). All the women councilors (100%) in these towns were the respondents of the study. The main findings of the study show that democracy and women political representation, local government structure, their duties and powers, project designing planning and development, law and strategy making for conflict resolution were the types of training they received. The tools used for this purpose were lectures, pictorial and graphic sessions, audio and video material workshops, literature, publications and exposure visits. The procedures of the trainings, methods and techniques were simple to understand. Atmosphere at the training session was comfortable. The female trainers benefited the rural women councilors the most. Majority of rural women councilors termed the training duration too shot. The participation in question-answer session for rural women councilors was low as compared to urban women councilors. The women councilor stated that the amount paid to them for daily expanses was not enough. The Study as a whole conclude that the trainings imparted by Aurat Foundation build the capacity of the urban and rural women councilors for performing different responsibilities in the local government system. The study recommends for need based trainings, full participation and interest of the councilors, enough duration for trainings sessions, paying of enough honorarium to the councilors and the resources person for trainings must be female.

Key Words: Women councilors, capacity building of rural urban women councilors, women participations in trainings, Local government and women councilors

1. Introduction

Various international, national and local conventions emphasized that enabling the population, regardless of gender to actively participate in social and economic wellbeing is critical for long-term and sustainable social, political and economic development. Gender inequalities can be attributed to limited access and control over productive resources, access to financial services, insufficient access to education, lack of skill, limited access to technology, cultural impediments and other constraints limiting employment options and participation in decision making (Drage, 1999).

Mikkola (2005) further argues that Gender hierarchy shows in family, inheritance laws and customs, valuations of women's work as opposed to men's work, and the power to make decisions in society, family and social networks. It shows in the opportunities available for development, education, health and nutrition. Changes in the status of women will become apparent in development only over a longer time period. In the Local Government (LG) elections of 2000-01, most of the political parties for the first time realized the importance of women members in their ranks. Although the LG elections were held on a non-party basis, it is a fact that majority of the Nazism and male councilors had political affiliations. A number of studies of women's empowerment are analyzed to make some important methodological points about the measurement of empowerment. Three dimensions of choice are indivisible in determining the meaning of an indicator and hence its validity as a measure of empowerment. The notion of choice is further qualified by referring to the conditions of choice, its content and consequences. These qualifications represent an attempt to incorporate the structural parameters of individual choice in the analysis of women's empowerment (Kabeer, 1999).

Women councillors have to work in a male-dominated and gender insensitive political environment, and since they often have little knowledge of the political process, their duties, responsibilities and powers, they cannot represent their constituencies effectively. Training of women in local government should be perceived in the broader context of local government capacity building and training, including gender sensitization of local governments involving men and women. The Aurat Foundation (AF) established in 1986 is an NGO working for women's empowerment in the society. The AF goals are to enable women acquire greater control over knowledge, resources and institutions. It wants to facilitate greater women and people participation in governance as well as influence social attitudes and behavior so that it is more sensitive to women's concerns. The AF wants to contribute towards creating an enabling environment for women by strengthening support structures. The AF is a national NGO with offices in the federal and provincial capitals. When the present government accepted the demand for 33 percent reservation for women through direct elations at the UC level. It was a challenge for the women of Pakistan, particularly for women's rights organizations and activists, who had been struggling for this reservation since long.

The Effective Representation of Women Councilors Project (ERWCP) of the AF has taken a major step towards empowerment of women councilors with the financial assistance of CIDA. The foundation has created support structures for women councilors by setting up five provincial and 70 district resource centers under a three-year program called "Effective Representation by Women Councilors". The project was conceptualized to strengthen the capacity of newly elected women councilors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A training programme was formulated with 62 master trainers from 24 districts. The first round of training from 22 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa covered 594 women councilors. In the second round of training, 564 women councilors were trained. District level consultation was arranged to discuss women councilor issues. 920 Nazism and men councilors participated. Provincial conferences were held first in Islamabad and then in Peshawar. The last activity of the project was a national workshop to share and consolidate for wider dissemination the experiences of women councilors from previous workshops. It also provided an opportunity to local representatives, particularly women councilors from all over the province to know each other and allow an increased interaction of local representatives among themselves as well as with community activists. NGOs, government and the donor agencies.

A set of seven booklets relating to the rules of business of district, Tehsil and UC were published. Other publications were on the LGO as well as handouts and 2 posters for networking and responsibility of women councilors. During the training workshops it was realized that repackaging of material might not be helpful for illiterate councilors. A radio drama was recorded and broadcast through Pakistan Radio for them. Also, audio cassettes were prepared for a wider dissemination.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

- i. To study the type of trainings received by the women councilors from women resources centre for capacity building and overall activities of the local government.
- ii. To evaluate the perception of women councilors on the trainings imparted by Aurat Foundation for the development of local government
- iii. To suggest recommendations on the basis of study findings.

1.2 Research Methods

Present study was confined to Peshawar district. The study analysis the training imparted by Aurat Foundation through Women Resource Centres on the performance of women councilors.

Aurat foundation was selected as the area of the study because this is one of the most prominent NGO, which has been working in almost all the district of the province since 1986 (Sajid and Asad, 2005). A large number of women councilors in district Peshawar have rural or rural cum urban background and are the beneficiaries of the Aurat Foundation. There are four towns in the whole district, Within Peshawar women councilors from Town-1 (with urban background) and Town-4 (with rural background) had been selected. There were a total number of 37 women councilors in these two towns, 20 in Town-1 (urban background) and 17 in Town-4 (rural background). All the women councilors (100%) in these towns were the respondents of the study.

Table-2.1.Total Number of Women Councilors and Sample Respondents

S.No	District/Towns	Total Union Councils	Total number of women councilors	20% sample women councilors
1	Town-1	25	100	20
2	Town-4	21	84	17
	Total	46	184	37

Source: Aurat foundation and own calculation.

The data were collected through questionnaire from sample respondents. For the collection of the data respondents were interviewed face to face. The collected data was codified, transferred to tally sheet and then entered to the computer. Microsoft Excel was used for data input and primary analysis, analyzed through frequencies and percentages and presented in the tabulated forms.

1.3 Results Analysis

In discussion in this study the analysis was started from training received before Aurat foundation, types of training, knowledge dissemination tools in training sessions, attendance in women resource centre training, participation in training arranged by other NGO's, duration of the trainings, venue of the trainings, atmosphere at the training session, participation in answer question sessions, methods and techniques used for trainings, trainer preference and premium traveling and daily allowances (T.A. /D.A) for respondents. So discussion started from training received before Aurat foundation;

1.3.1 Training Received Before Aurat Foundation

The data showed in Table 1.3.1 states that 45% of rural women councilors attended training programs for women councilors arranged by various governmental and non-governmental organizations. This refers to the fact that in the past the governmental as well as non-governmental organizations had not properly focused the women councilors belonging to the rural areas. These women councilors were also not appropriately motivated to attend the trainings with the agenda to enhance their skills for suitable performance in the local bodies system. On the other hand, 60% of urban women councilors benefited themselves from training programmes organized by various organizations for enhancing their skills and knowledge. This revealed that the focus of various training providing organizations in the past was more in urban areas than in the rural areas.

Table 1.3.1 Distribution of Respondents on Training received before the Aurat Foundation

Respondents	Have you received trainings before AFWRC				Total
	Received		Not received		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	8	45	9	55	17
Urban councilors	12	60	8	40	20
Total	20	47	19	53	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.2 Types of Training

It is of utmost importance to study the training types, procedures included in the training sessions, workshops and seminars arranged by the Aurat Foundation Women Resource Centre (AFWRC). Data in Table 1.3.2 shows that 8% of rural women councilors agreed that discussions and knowledge-based training activities about "Democracy and women political issues took place. Another 65% of rural women councilors were contented with the dissemination of information about "State of women in Pakistan". Seventy one percent of women councilors from rural areas were of the view that they receive training about "Local government structure, your duties and powers". Time period allocated for training session about "Project designing planning and development" was utilized by 65% of rural women councilors. To them Project designing planning and development is an area in which they have very little experience.

To gain proficiency in this field they needed good length of training sessions. About 65% of rural women councilors attended the training session covering the information about "Women and law, Strategy making for conflict resolution" were another type of training where 85% of rural women benefited themselves. On the other hand 95% of urban women councilors approved that "Democracy and women political issues" was the type of the training they receive. Another 75% of urban women said that they receive training about "State of women in Pakistan" and "Local government structure, your duties and powers" was appropriate. "Project designing planning and development" was another type of training to 70% of urban women councilors. Eighty percent of urban women councilors responded that the session covering the information about "Women and law" and "Strategy making for conflict resolution" were the types of training they receive.

Table 1.3.2: Respondents Distribution on Types of Training

Respondents	A		B		C		D		E		F		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	14	85	11	65	12	71	11	65	13	76	14	85	17
Urban councilors	19	95	15	75	15	75	14	70	16	80	16	80	20
Total	33	89	26	70	27	72	25	68	29	78	30	81	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

- A = Democracy and women political representation
 B = State of women in Pakistan
 C = Local government structure, your duties and powers
 D = Project designing planning and development.
 E = Women and law
 F = Strategy making for conflict resolution.

1.3.3 Knowledge Dissemination Tools in Training Sessions

The data showed in Table 1.3.3 depicts that all 100% of the rural women councilor's respondents called that knowledge dissemination in the training sessions took place through the lectures by resource persons. 90% said pictorial and graphic training sessions as the part of training. Audio/Video material workshops arranged by Aurat foundation was another source of knowledge dissemination of 85% of rural women councilors. Only 30% of the rural women councilors preferred exposure visits for meetings with women councilors from other areas. They were either reluctant to travel due to their family responsibilities or did not find it appropriate. The literature/publications provided by Aurat Foundation Resource Centre were another tool of knowledge dissemination of 50% rural women councilors. Mostly the literate rural women councilors preferred to seek knowledge room the publications and literature. Only 20% of rural women councilors used Letter, Telephone, and Fax, E-mail to develop contact with Aurat Foundation Resource Centre for knowledge seeking. Most of them either wrote letters or used telephone. It was noted that the rural women councilors either does not had the facility of Telephone, Fax, E-mail or they were not habitual of these facilities.

On the other hand, 100% of the urban women councilors responded; knowledge dissemination in the training sessions took place through the lecturers by resource persons, which also included pictorial and graphic training sessions. Majority (95%) of urban women councilors keenly attended Audio/Video material workshops arranged by Aurat foundation for knowledge seeking. Sixty percent of the urban women councilors preferred exposure visits for meetings with women councilors from other areas while 40% did not availed the opportunity to learn through exposure visits. They were unable to go because of their jobs or domestic responsibilities. The literature/publications provided by Aurat Foundation Resource Centre was another instrument of learning of 75% urban women councilors while 50% of the urban women councilors used one of the facilities of Telephone, Fax and E-mail.

It is worth mentioning that urban women councilors took interest in using excursions, exposure visits, the literature/publications, letter, telephone, fax and e-mail contact for knowledge seeking. On the other hand rural women councilors preferred lectures, pictorial and graphic training sessions and audio/video material workshops for knowledge pursuance.

Table 1.3.3: Respondents Distribution on Knowledge Dissemination Tools in Training Sessions

Respondents	A		B		C		D		E		F		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	17	100	15	90	14	85	5	30	9	50	3	20	17
Urban councilors	18	100	20	100	19	95	12	90	15	75	10	50	20
Total	35	95	35	95	33	90	17	45	24	65	13	35	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

- A = Aurat foundation resource persons lectures
 B = Pictorial and graphic training sessions
 C = Audio/video material workshops arranged by AF resource centre
 D = Exposure visits for meetings with women councilors from other areas.
 E = Literature/publications provided by Aurat foundation resource centre.
 F = Letter, telephone, fax, e-mail contact with AF resource centre.

1.3.4. Attendance in women Resource Centre Training

It is important to investigate the perceptions of the trainees about the training they received. This will tell us about the success or failure of the training system. It will also help in identifying the shortcomings in the training procedure and agenda. The data in Table 1.3.4 revealed that 40% of the women councilors from the rural areas attended the training sessions regularly while 60% of the rural women councilors' attendance pattern in the training session was irregular. They argued that the venue of the trainings (Women Resource Centre) was not close to their villages. As a result, they sometimes missed the training session. They further termed their busy routine at their homes as another reason for their absence in the training session. On the other hand, 65% of urban women councilor's respondents revealed that they regularly attended the trainings. The table also reveals that the attendance pattern of urban women councilors was higher than rural women councilors.

Table 1.3.4: Respondents Distribution on Attendance in Women Resource Centre Training

Respondents	Do you attend trainings regularly				Total
	Yes		No		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	7	40	10	60	17
Urban councilors	13	65	7	35	20
Total	20	53	17	47	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.5 Participation in Training Arranged by other NGO's Recommended by AF's Women Resource Centre

Data in Table 1.3.5 indicates that only 35% of rural women councilors attended the capacity building trainings arranged by other NGO's as recommended by AF's women resource centre. On the other hand 55% of the urban women councilors responded that they have attended the trainings arranged by other NGO's. This does show more regularity among urban women councilors in attending the trainings programmes recommended by women resource centre while the rural women councilors show little interest in these training arranged by other NGO's. They argued that time constraints and venue of the trainings were the reasons responsible for their failure to participate these training programs.

Table 1.3.5: Respondents Distribution on Participation in Trainings Arranged by Other NGO's

Respondents	Are you satisfied				Total
	Satisfied		Not satisfied		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	6	35	11	65	17
Urban councilors	11	55	9	45	20
Total	17	45	20	55	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.6 Duration of the Trainings

It is depicted from Table 1.3.6 that 55% of rural women councilors' called the training duration were too short while 20% found it enough.

Conversely, 25% of the rural women councilors were of the view that training duration was too long. Among urban women councilors, 75% of the respondents argued that the duration of the training was too short, while 15% of the urban women councilor thought that the duration was too long.

Table 1.3.6: Respondent Distribution on Duration of the Trainings

Respondents	Too long		Too short		Enough		Total
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	5	25	9	55	3	20	17
Urban councilors	3	15	15	75	2	10	20
Total	8	20	24	65	5	15	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.7 Venue of the Trainings

The data in Table 1.3.7 showed that 80% of the rural women councilors were of the view that the venue of the trainings was inappropriate. On the contrary, 70% of the urban women councilor responded that the venue of the trainings was appropriate. It is because of the women resource centre is located in the urban area, therefore, it is convenient for the urban women councilor to have an access to the venue of the trainings. In case of rural women councilors, they argued that the trainings venue should be within their union councils.

Table 1.3.7: Respondents Distribution on of Venue of the trainings

Respondents	Venue of the trainings				Total
	Yes		No		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	3	20	14	80	17
Urban councilors	14	70	6	30	20
Total	17	45	20	55	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.8 Atmosphere at the Training Session

Data given in Table 1.3.8 explains the atmosphere of the trainings for women councilors. It is evident from the table that 85% of the rural women councilor found the atmosphere during the training sessions comfortable. Also 95% of the urban women councilor responded that the atmosphere at the training sessions is comfortable.

Table 1.3.8: Atmosphere at the Training Session

Respondents	Atmosphere at the training session				Total
	Comfortable		Uncomfortable		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	14	85	3	15	17
Urban councilors	19	95	1	5	20
Total	33	90	4	10	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.9 Participation in Answer Question Sessions

The data presented in Table 1.3.9 showed the sample respondents view about participation in question answer sessions of the trainings. The data in table depicts that 40% of the rural women councilors participated in the answer question sessions while 60% of the respondents did not asked any question in the training sessions. On the other hand 65% of the urban women councilors respondents participated in answer question sessions. The table also explains that urban women councilor is more confident in asking about their queries while rural women councilors were hesitant in asking questions.

Table 1.3.9: Respondents Distribution on Participation in Answer Question Sessions

Respondents	Participation in answer question sessions				Total
	Yes		No		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	7	40	10	60	17
Urban councilors	13	65	7	35	20
Total	20	52	17	48	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.10 Methods and Techniques Used for Trainings

Data in Table 1.3.10 indicates the respondents viewed about the methods and techniques used for trainings. It is evident from the data that 60% of rural women councilors agreed that methods and techniques used for trainings were simple while another 40% said that the methods and techniques were complicated. On the other hand 70% of the urban women councilor replied that the methods and techniques used for trainings were simple enough to understand. The table also shows that urban women councilor capability to understand methods and techniques used for trainings was superior to that of the rural women councilor.

Table 1.3.10: Respondents Distribution on Methods and Techniques Used for Trainings

Respondents	Methods and techniques used for trainings				Total
	Yes		No		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	10	60	7	40	17
Urban councilors	14	70	6	30	20
Total	24	65	13	35	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.11 Trainer Preference

Table 1.3.11 shows the respondents viewed about the trainings preference for male and female councilors. It is clear from the data that 80% of the rural women councilor preferred female trainer to male trainer, 5% revealed their preference for male trainer and 15% of the respondents did not bother whether the trainer is male or female. Sixty five percent of the urban women councilor preferred female trainer to the male, 10% of the women councilor first preference was male trainer while 35% of the respondents were comfortable with both male and female trainers.

Table 1.3.11: Respondents Distribution on Trainer Preference

Respondents	Too long		Methods and techniques used for trainings				Total
	Male		Female		Both		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	1	5	14	80	2	15	17
Urban councilors	2	10	13	65	5	25	20
Total	3	7	27	73	7	20	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

1.3.12 Premium T.A. /D.A for Respondents

Table 1.3.12 explains the views of the sample respondents about the honorarium paid for attaining the trainings. The data in table X indicates that 25% of the rural women councilors agree that the amount of Rs.300 for daily expenses was enough while 75% of the respondents said that the amount was not enough. On the other hand, 45% of urban women councilor indicated the amount given to them, as T.A. /D.A. was enough while 55% of the respondents thought otherwise.

Table 1.3.12: Respondents Distribution on Premium T.A. /D.A

Respondents	Is the Premium Enough				Total
	Enough		Not enough		
	No	%	No	%	
Rural councilors	4	25	13	75	17
Urban councilors	9	45	11	55	20
Total	13	35	24	68	37

Source: Field Survey, 2010.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMANDATIONS

From the main findings of the study it is concluded that most of the women councilor were train by Aurat Foundation. The AFWRC had played its role in offering them orientation about the complex problems of gigantic magnitude. A review of the training program for women councilors reveals that this training program did give particular attention to the issues of democracy and women political representation, local government structure and their duties and powers, project, designing planning and development, law and strategy making for conflict resolution. One of the successes of the training program was to enhance their understanding about ethics, values, communication skills and somehow leadership skills.

Pictorial, audio and visual training sessions were arranged to target those women councilors who did not benefit themselves from lectures and publications. The following recommendations are forwarded on the basis of study findings.

- i. Training sessions should be planned according to the needs of the councilors and strategies should be devised to motivate women councilors to attend training sessions regularly.
- ii. The timings and venues should be according to the needs and accessibility of the women councilors.
- iii. Training sessions with pictorial, graphical, audio and video material should be used frequently and role-play methodology should be used in presenting important topics.

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