WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF WEST BENGAL: A STUDY OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP SINCE 1990s

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

FOR THE

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IN

POLITICAL SCIENCE

By

ALOKA ROY
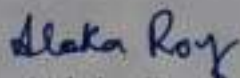
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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the thesis entitled "Women Legislators of West Bengal: A Study of Political Leadership Since 1990s" is my original and authentic research work carried out under the supervision of Professor Ranjita Chakraborty, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal, submitted by me to the University of North Bengal for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science and any part or full of this work has not been submitted previously by me or anyone to any other institutions including this university for the award of any degree nor has been published at any time before.

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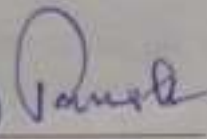
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ABSTRACT

WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF WEST BENGAL: A STUDY OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP SINCE 1990s

Aloka Roy

Although the names of women leaders are endless, but there seems to echo in the studies on women's political participation a strand of doubt about their capacity for their bounded existence compared to male leaders in politics. The dominance of the male leadership in politics, an outcome of twin prime factors out of many, i) the early entry of men in the domain of politics in the public arena and ii) the patriarchal structure of the society that is reflected in the functioning of the political parties. Doubtless, these are important factors in determining the status and role of women leaders in politics in India, but a review of the list of elected women leaders who have contested polls and have been elected reflect a sizeable number of women leaders and post 1990(due to the reservation of seats for women in the local self government and the realisation of the political parties that political importance of women leaders within the party)indicates a trend that shows two interesting facts – a) the number of women participating in the electoral fray has increased and b) the percentage of women in the higher decision making bodies (i.e. Council of Ministers) has increased both at the state West Bengal and national level. Also, post 1990 shows major changes that more and more women are contesting polls under the banner of the state and regional political parties or independently rather than the national political parties.

Therefore, 1990s is very crucial period, since then a new journey has been started in Indian politics.This study is confined to the elected women MPs and MLAs of West Bengal since 1990s.The study has investigated the socio-political fabric in the state of

West Bengal where we are currently having a woman leader heading the state government. However, that is not the rationale behind the research work. The rationale is that although a large number of studies on women's participation in politics exist, but the study has investigated answers to the question whether post 1990 there has been a shift in the perception of the society towards women leaders and how the women leaders themselves view the situation and finally to reflect on what particular feminine values have been incorporated within the whole idea of political leadership that is usually viewed as male and the women leaders emulating the masculine conception and image of leadership.

The study locates the research problem in the domain of i) find out the reasons behind the limited number of women in leadership positions in the political domain; ii) whether it is possible to frame out a model of leadership from the style of functioning of the women legislators of West Bengal.

Thus, the study intends to:

- To provide a feminist perception of representation and leadership in politics;
- To review the historical account of women's involvement in politics;
- To find out the existing differences between women and men leaders;
- To provide comprehensive assessment of the leadership styles of major women political leaders in West Bengal;
- To analyze the socio-political context of women political leaders in the state of West Bengal.

Considering the nature of the research problem we have applied broadly a qualitative research method in this study and also quantitative method to some extent. Interview method is used in this study in an extensive way. The primary data for this study
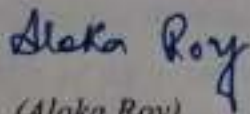
collected through the interview method covering nearly 50% women parliamentarians, legislators as well as ex-parliamentarians and ex-legislators of West Bengal. The secondary sources of data have been collected from various libraries and the political parties' offices.

The research study was conducted through an intensive case study based method and analysis of facts and political party documents the following research questions:

i) What have been the changes forced/normal that has led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics in India post 1990?

ii) What has been the percentage of difference between the women primary party members and elected members to the decision-making bodies of the state as well as the women leaders who contested polls and stood elected at the state and national level?

iii) Why according to these women leaders they find themselves different from the male leadership?

iv) Can we say that the women legislators in West Bengal are initiating feminine or feminist style of leadership?

A wide gap is there between the percentage of primary members and elected women leaders of all parties to the West Bengal state legislature. The difference found between the percentages of women contesting elections and women who have stood elected at the state (West Bengal) and national level is found to differ. Political parties utilized the strength of women primary party members during the election but did not promote them in the important positions after winning the election. Affection, care, sensitivity, politeness, sincerity, morality, co-operation, hard work, ability to build relationship all these characteristics of women leaders make them different from male political leaders. A

care, sensitivity, politeness, sincerity, morality, co-operation, hard work, ability to build relationship all these characteristics of women leaders make them different from male political leaders. A different opinion also exists that gendered characteristics are not associated with a good leader. In West Bengal women leaders neither exhibit the principles of feminist leadership nor feminine leadership in their way of functioning rather West Bengal follows the hierarchical power structure, and women leaders coped within the dominant mainstream discourse of leadership. There are several obstacles during the electoral participation of women leaders and with their intelligence, courage, and confidence they are able to overcome such obstacles. Also, with their self-confidence, self-determination and patience they handle more complex problems peacefully. We framed an alternative style/model of leadership for women that we call '*Womanist Leadership*'. The new concept of leadership is very close to Gandhi and Bose's concept of equality of sexes and framed on mutual co-operation and consultation between men and women. We cannot deny the fact that man and women are naturally entitled with unique potentiality and qualities. But this difference if utilized well would generate a new kind of leadership and contribute immensely to the development of the country.

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I would like to take this opportunity to dedicate my research work to my respected parents Smt. Anjali Roy, Late Bablu Roy and to my beloved brother Mr. Birbrata Roy for

all the supports, blessings and sacrifices they extended for my study and in accomplishing the research work. Whatever, I have achieved today is only because of their constant support and love. They never stopped me from pursuing my dream. I owe them a debt of gratitude.

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I am thankful to my all teachers of Political Science department for their sincere co-operation and kind concern throughout the work. I would also like to express my thanks to Principal Madam, Netaji Nagar Day College, Kolkata, for her support and co-operation whenever I needed during my work. I convey my thankfulness to my all colleagues who helped me in all possible and positive ways in the times of necessity and encouraged me to achieve my goal. My sincere and warm thanks to my close friends and well wishers for their constant prayer for my happiness, success and good health and for providing me encouragement whenever I needed during this venture and without these it would have been impossible for me to complete this work.

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Date: 24.01.2022

Place: Raja Rammohunpur,

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Aloka Roy

(Aloka Roy)

Dedicated to my mother, Smt. Anjali Roy, who became a widow at the young age of thirty-one and had to struggle in life for many years and in many ways to bring us up; to the memory of my father, late Bablu Roy, whom I had lost in my childhood who was a disciplined, responsible and affectionate person; and to my brother, Birbrata Roy, who left his study and dream for the responsibility of family and my education as well. Also, dedicated to all women who are fighting, directly and indirectly, to erase gender discriminatory attitudes within family and society.

PREFACE

The journey of women into political process either participation or representation or leadership is not smooth still it is very challenging mission in India. Though with the active initiatives of constitutional makers and national leaders political equality was given to women promptly. In the form of constitutional rights gender equality was guaranteed in the country. Constitutionally equal position of women with men was promoted though, in practice, it is often more challenging for women to access and exercise equal rights and opportunities to participate fully in all spheres and at all levels of political processes. Women face more challenges than their counterpart to get involve into politics. Generally, women recognize problems of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination in all most every aspect of life. Gender is one of the major factors influencing women participation, representation and leadership in politics. To rise in power women encountered with obstacles, restrictions and deterrents in the society as well as face strange problems in their political life. For women, it is more difficult to be a leader or being in leadership positions, particularly at the highest levels of decision making. In spite of several challenges, women are visible in the legislatures and decision making positions though the percentage always remained low.

We all know the fact that woman become a leader after facing lots of impediment and even she remain in the position by coherence with the obstacles. In spite of accepting the fact of difficult journey of women into political arena we are socialised to raise question about the performance of women as leaders or throw doubt towards women's efficiency as political leaders. Rather we should accept the fact that in politics when women want to come forward or want to choose political career even after acquainted that they will face lots of known and unknown challenges and have to encounter these that indicates their dedication to perform their political roles, duties, and responsibilities. Instead of praising their devotion and courage, we questioned their effectiveness. Even, we are socialised to projected women as proxy leaders. In the initial periods of this work I had encountered many statements about the doubt in women's meaningful use of power when they elected for higher political positions. But my belief in the women's efficiency as political leader becomes stronger when I started to meet with women legislators for their interview.

During the period of taking interviews of women legislators I went to MLA Hostel for an interview, where I found that I will interview a woman legislator who has a 2 years old

baby and for being an elected leader she has to visit Kolkata from Burdwan frequently. As usual I had started my work to ask research related quarries/ questions to her and I was observing that she was giving answers along with performing the work of feeding to her child, changing the baby's wet cloths etc and also I came to know during the interactions that she always come to Kolkata along with her baby and that day she came in Kolkata for attending meeting of a legislative committee. Literally, that day I got an opportunity to see very closely how a woman playing the dual roles with devotion and dedication without showing any ignorance towards any responsibilities and duties. Also, I have seen through the journey of research work that how a woman legislator exercising aged old customs of family/society and performing the public roles as well with devotion. One day after the completion of an interview a woman legislator requested to me do not leave her house without having lunch with them because she does not want to disobey the customs of their family that she learned from her in-laws. More importantly, after the 2 hours interactions with me she cooked for her family and also for me and serves the food with lots of devotion and love. All these incidents of my personal meetings or talks with women legislators help me to gather lots of valuable experiences for my work and also to get a clear image of women political leaders about how women are managing all the personal duties and public as well. That incited me to be more focused on my research aim and to nullified the age old generalised statement that women are proxy leaders. But, it is a pity that these women leaders are never projected in our state or country as Australian senator Larissa Waters, Argentinian MP Victoria Donda, Spanish MP Carolina Bescansa are appreciated for their actions as parenting and representing politics on the floor of legislatures. However, whatever facts I have collected and gathered by observing the reality throughout the entire research work which was invisible in the existing literature of political leadership of women.

Now women are not only confined to perform the traditional roles, they are performing all roles more efficiently including politics. The world has seen that women are no longer just engage to managing the household activities rather they are able to managing the whole country. If we look at the current situation of Covid-19 pandemic, we can see that all the countries of the world which are being run under the leadership of women have been much less affected by this current epidemic and these women leaders are handling this world wide crisis very efficiently compare to male leaders of the world countries.

This research work presents a study of women legislators of West Bengal focusing on the political leadership in general and in particular reasons behind the increased number of women in politics since 1990; the difference in the number of active women primary members and political leaders in the legislatures (State Assembly & Parliament); the characteristics/nature of women leaders; the difference with their male counterparts in terms of their style of functioning; the range of issues that they promoted; & the nature of obstacles to their political career and the measures to counter them.

The study is based upon a variety of primary and secondary sources and I faced numerous problems throughout the entire study to collect the necessary data. As keeping track of all related general and specific information and the data had been a laborious task. The difficulty was arranging the timings for women legislators for their interviews which proved to be an extremely challenging and arduous task in terms of their availability and also willingness to co-operate. With the persistent and continuous efforts and strong determination had made me able to contact them. One of the major hurdles has been the limited availability of the women legislators. The information and data published by the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Secretariat, political parties' documents and Election Commission's reports have been best use of in this study. The presentation of election data has been challenging job. However, the present study does not claim that it is a complete study rather it has a beginning but no end which provides the scope for further study and debate on the issue of women's political leadership.

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AITC- All India Trinamool Congress

AIFB- All India Forward Bloc

BLD- Bharatiya Lok Dal,

BJD-Biju Janata Dal

BJS- Bharatiya Jana Sangha

BSP- Bahujan Samaj Party

CPI- Communist Party of India

CPI (M) - Communist Party of India (Marxist)

DMK- Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam

EU-European Union

ICDS- Integrated Child Development Services

ICSSR- Indian Council of Social Science Research

IND- Independent

INC- Indian National Congress

IPU- Inter Parliamentary Union

I & T-Information & Technology

JD- Janata Dal.

JNP- Janata Party

JNU- Jawaharlal Nehru University

MBBS- Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery

MLA- Member of Legislative Assembly

MP- Member of Parliament

N.A- Not Available

NDA- National Democratic Alliance

NF- Northeast Frontier

NFHS- National Family Health Survey

OTH-Others

SWA- Swatantra Party

TMC- Trinamool Congress

UN- United Nations

UNESCO- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

YSRCP- Yuvajana Shramika Rythu Congress Party

WBTC-West Bengal Trinamool Congress

CHAPTER: 1

INTRODUCTION:

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1.1. BACKGROUND

In the Constitution of independent India, women are guaranteed political equality with men while women representation in the formal political structures is extremely low both in regard to numbers as well as global rank. In the Cabinet, presently there are only 6 women minsters out of total 27 ministers. As per Women in Politics Map report, 2017 (Published by Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women)India shares the 148th position which is far below than Nepal (48th), Afghanistan (54th), Pakistan (89th) and Bangladesh (91st). However, the Government of India directed state and local governments to promote equality by class and gender including equal pay and free legal aid, humane working conditions and maternity relief, rights to work and education, and raising the standard of living. In practice, though, it is often more challenging for women to access and exercise equal rights and opportunities to participate fully in all sphere and at all levels of political processes.

The right to vote can be said to be the starting point in the struggle for women's political equality. When we turn to the great tradition of Western political thought with the question of justice of gender in mind, it is too little avail (Shanley & Pateman, 1991). This is notwithstanding the fact that famous Western political theorists like Mary Wollstonecraft and J. S. Mill, have been drawing attention to of gender inequality. In the West women got voting right only in the middle of the 20th Century.

When we turn to the Indian tradition, we find that during the days of pre-independence, there were two groups among Indian women: one was in agreement with the Gandhiji that social equality is satisfactory for women and they don't need political rights whereas other women were of the opinion that women should have also political right or women suffrage that is very essential for their identity. After the independence this trend has continued till sixties. With the rise of active feminism in India in the seventies, the women's movement has assumed an individualistic nature where women demand human rights and personal independence dismissing the erstwhile socially defined roles. While, with the introduction of democracy Indian women have obtained rights of participation and representation in parliament and state legislatures but their percentage has remained extremely low. Indian women can vote and stand for election to all provincial and central bodies though the extent of their involvement falls far short to the equality promised by the Constitution. Though, some cosmetic legal steps have been taken by centre and also

state governments, not so much to improve the conditions of women but to win their support for election purposes. The 73rd and 74th Amendment Act, 1992 ensured the entry of more than one million women into political life at the grass root level. However, these amendments created 1,000,000 slots for elected women representatives. These reservations or quota brought quantitative changes, facilitated women to be represented in local governments only but not in State or Central Governments. Also, the Union Cabinet of the Government of India, on 27 August 2009, approved 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), though the Women's Reservation Bill, regarding 33 per cent reservation of seats for Women in the Parliament, is still pending in the Lok Sabha.

In spite of myriad obstacles, the 'new woman' today challenges the traditional notions of 'Angel in the house' and 'sexually voracious image'. In practice, however, it is often more challenging for women to access and exercise formal rights. The extent of women's participation in politics and women's access to decision-making can be seen as the key indicators of gender equality in a society. Women's involvement in politics means collective endeavour for social transformation. Participation of women in politics and in decision-making process is essential because policy making and their implementation are the basic function of the Government and women can be a part of the Government through their active participation in the political parties or politics, as they comprise about half of the population.

In the following decades of independence of India, we have seen that all the major national political parties, state parties and also regional political parties nominated women members several times to the elections and represented in the Parliament. Since 1980, Indian Parliament has started a new journey in the matter of women's representation in the legislatures. Among these political parties, Indian National Congress (INC) fielded women candidates to the elections in highest number ever. It is one of the largest and oldest democratically-operating political parties in the world. Founded by freedom fighter activists in 1885, it dominated politics nationally for most of the period from 1947–1989. After INC, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is the second major party in case of fielding more women contestants in the elections. It was founded in 1980, since then Indian Parliament started a new journey in the matter of women's representation in the Parliament. Apart from these two major parties, there were some political parties, state or

regional, that had given electoral tickets to women contestants at a time when its number was low. But after 1980, this trend has changed. A large number of women started to participate in voting as well as represent in all major political parties. The participation of women in the electoral process is an indicator of their political consciousness.

However, the growing number of women leaders indicates that the potentiality of women as political actors is not at all inferior to that of men. It is found in the existing studies on women's political participation that women with same educational background, same opportunities and rights behave equally with men and in some cases more actively than men. If women get equal rights and opportunities to participate fully in all aspects and at all levels of political processes then they can prove themselves as an active and successful political worker. It is also important to note that if a woman has been able to prove herself as an active parliamentarian for the first time then she has been elected repeatedly in the Parliament and that time does not matter from which political party she belongs. In this regard, women leaders such as Vijaya Raje Scindia, Dr. Sushila Nayar, Maneka Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee who were/are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men, so they don't need the reference of any political party. Since 1984, there has been a shift in the perception of women's political leadership in India, not only elite class women common women started to be promoted as leaders and the number of women participating in the electoral fray have increased and more and more women are contesting the polls under the banner of the state and regional political parties or independently rather than the national political parties. In 1984 and 1989's Lok Sabha election, there was marginal difference between women contestants of national parties and state or regional parties but post 1990 the difference becomes wider. In this context, we have proposed to study in detail women's political leadership in general and women legislators in particular in the context of West Bengal.

1.2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section will provide a brief overview of select literature on the proposed area of study *'Women Legislators of West Bengal: A Study of Political Leadership Since 1990s'*. We have categorized the reviewed literatures in the following manner: Firstly, the focus is given on the literature of women from a gendered perspective; secondly, the literature available on the studies of leadership and finally studies on political participation and women political leadership.

1.2.1. Literature on Women from a Gendered Perspective: There are huge available studies on womanhood, among them we have gone through very few in numbers include the following:

Simone de Beauvoir (2010), *The Second Sex*, has made a significant contribution on gender question more specifically on womanhood where she deals with lots of issues related to woman. The book also explores how women are challenging the assumptions regarding female gender and it also description on how woman is taught to assume her condition in the society, how they experienced their position and what universe she finds herself enclosed in and what escape mechanism are permitted her. Throughout the book, Simone de Beauvoir mentions many instances which women had faced throughout their living years, particularly with regard to marriage. The societal concept 'femininity' indicates some ill-conceived notion of equality that instigates many women to accept the usual unfulfilling roles of wife and mother. From the very beginning of her discussion Beauvoir identifies the economic factor of female subordination and the economic roots of woman's liberation, only in work woman can achieve autonomy. Beauvoir discusses the logistical hurdles which woman faces in pursuing this goal and also focussed on the new future for woman.

Betty Friedman (2001), *The Feminine Mystique*, is a study which focused on the conditions of American women during 1950s and 1960s. She described that traditional role of woman as mothers and house wives had created an identity crisis among American women. By several case studies she found problem of identity crisis of women. She examines the condition of unhappiness and dissatisfaction of women for being homemakers or for playing a conventional sexual roles (cleaning home, cooking for family etc). She argues that women were socially pressured to giving up own desires and dreams and compelled to become house wives that is an idealized image of womanhood hence they become depressed, frustrated and started to suffer a problem of identity crises. She also argues that men are allowed to search an identity for themselves but in case of women it is barred to search an identity different from idealized womanhood, they are restricted in the feminine gender roles. And finally Friedman argued that both men and women must reject the so called gender related concepts and women should pursue education for their self-fulfilment.

In Edgar F. Borgatta and Rhonda J. V. Montgomery (2000), *Encyclopedia of Sociology* an article by Jan E. Stets and Peter J. Burke on *Femininity/Masculinity*, is a work which deals with the gender-related concepts such as gender identity, gender roles, gender stereotypes etc. Gender identity influenced by gender roles, gender stereotypes and gender attitudes and the study also focused on the roots of femininity and masculinity. The article also explained three major theories regarding the development of femininity and masculinity and broadly analyzed that how one's gender identity develops through different modes or ways as well as brought out the different measurement scales of masculinity and femininity from a psychological view point. Authors have pointed out that how human's psychology playing a significant role in the matter of identification of one's gender and also discussed about the bipolar conception of masculinity and femininity. In sociological view, they addressed that gender can be identified by the behaviour and roles played by individuals. They argued that roles are not isolated rather it is related to counter roles. Actually they meant that the meaning of male or masculinity relative to that of female or femininity. Basically they examined the stability and change in gender identity.

A work by Birmingham Feminist History Group (1979) on *Feminism as Femininity in the Nineteen-Fifties?*, looking at the feminism in the fifties examines three domains: 'education', 'motherhood', and 'sexuality'. During this period (1950s) the writing and thinking explores the primacy of the role of women as wife and mother, family was the priority and women's entry into the economic world was the secondary work. Girls' education throughout the period stressed on women's domestic roles, the educational purposes of girls was primarily concerned with marriage, in this regard the study analyses many reports of several committees. Feminist writers were concerned with the role of mother during 1950s due to common war's effects, rapid growth of child welfare movements etc. The study also found that the ideology of fifties focused on the domain of female sexuality and reproduction roles. Basically the study explored that feminism in the 1950s constructed through the dominant notions of femininity while during these time feminists also stressed on the issues of equality and rights for women but this study didn't concerned with those issues. However, it is an important study on womanhood.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage and Ida Husted Harper (1882), *History of Woman Suffrage*, the book published in six volumes from 1881 to 1922, it is a history of the women's suffrage movement, primarily in the United States.

Written from the viewpoint of the wing of the movement led by Stanton and Anthony, its coverage of rival groups and individuals is limited. The History of Woman Suffrage provides only limited coverage to groups and individuals who competed with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton for leadership of the women's suffrage movement. It only partially portrays the role of Lucy Stone, a pioneering women's rights advocate and a leader of the AWSA (American Women Suffrage Association), a rival to the NWSA (National Women Suffrage Association) led by Stanton and Anthony.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and a committee of 26 women (1895 and 1898), *The Woman's Bible*, is a two-part non-fiction book, challenged the traditional position of religious orthodoxy that woman should be subservient to man. By producing the book, Stanton wished to promote a radical liberating theology, one that stressed self-development. The book attracted a great deal of controversy and antagonism at its introduction.

Mary Lyndon Shanley & Carole Pateman (1991), *Feminist Interpretation and Political Theory*, covers a great deal of ground on feminist perspectives. This book is very helpful for understanding the theoretical concepts of feminism and political theory. A more comprehensive study which discusses gender question, history of feminist politics and strategies of gender justice is Neeru Tandon (2008), *Feminism: A Paradigm Shift*. Hence, all these literatures simply to be guide to us for understanding the concepts 'Femininity' & 'Womanhood'.

1.2.2. Literature on Leadership: There has been a huge reservoir of published researches on theory and practice of Leadership in recent years. Some of the most important researches in this direction include the following:

Roger Gill (2011), *Theory and Practice of Leadership*, is a compile book of twelve specific themes. It is an attempt to presents a review of the nature and importance of leadership and tried to explain major leadership theories. Also, the author examines six core themes and practices of leadership include vision, purpose, values, strategy, empowerment, and engagement. It is a work of assessment of leadership competency and development needs. The model of six core themes tried to make a contribution to leadership thought and practice by focusing on several aspects of leadership such as cognitive, emotional, social, cultural, spiritual, moral and behavioral aspects and also given light on the collective leadership capacity i.e. leadership brand. Therefore, it must

be said that this book is very useful to understand the theoretical as well practical dimensions of leadership.

Jean Lau Chin, Bernice Lott, Joy K. Rice, Janis Sanchez-Hucles (2007), *Women and Leadership: Transforming Visions and Diverse Voices*, the book is an important step for understanding the challenges which faced by women leader when they enter male-dominated leader roles as well as it tried to provide some recommendations about feminist leadership (for instance leadership style should be collaborative rather than top-down, command- and-control because command-and-control leadership styles are prototypically masculine) throughout the chapters of this book. Also, it resembled the advices regarding the question what can be included in the main- stream leadership literature. The entire book is divided into three main sections. The first section deals with the models of feminist leadership and management styles; second section focused on the feminist process of collaboration particularly on the collaboration among feminist women as leaders within APA (American Psychological Association governance), nationally and internationally; and the section three focused on the voices diverse feminist groups and examined the experiences of feminist leaders. Also, the book tried to expand and transform current theories and models of leadership as well as sought to identify and explicate new models of feminist leadership. The book will provide us resourceful understanding of the styles and models of feminist leadership and will contribute towards conceptual clarifications involved in the study.

Payal Kumar (2015), *Unveiling Women's LeadershipIdentity and meaning of leadership in India*, is a book, broadly, focused on the several challenges including patriarchy, the caste system, harassment etc which are facing woman leaders in the context of India. The chapters in this book describe various gender-related phenomena. It also examines how the woman leader manages to overcome unique challenges while fulfilling the society's expectation that she ought to fit into stereotypical roles.The book is divided into three parts. The first part explores how women become leaders, where the chapters given light on the place of the female self in creating leadership opportunities; the second, the struggles women face as leaders more specifically explores how aspects of women's experience and gender perceptions both create the possibilities for and restrict the opportunities of women in leadership.; and the third, the possibilities for social change in and through women's leadership. The book concluded by throwing a light at the interplay

between social structures and women's agency and argued that by adopting the strategy of social change women will move towards achieving success as leaders as well.

Omita Goyal (2015), *Interrogating Women's Leadership and Empowerment*, is a book of compilation of twenty articles by various scholars which are presented in a form of chapters. All the chapters concerned with women's empowerment and leadership. It tried to focus on the situation of women in terms of empowerment and leadership and also explored their contribution to politics, business, education, social and economic development, the women's movement, health, law, insurgency, art, music, dance, cinema, literature, and craft. However, due to our area of interest we have reviewed following important chapters. Chapter 1 is on 'Understanding Leadership Lessons from the Women's Movement' where the author Devaki Jain argued that defining the concept of leadership from the viewpoint of women's movement in India is very challenging and she tried to redefine the idea or concept of leadership. The chapter 4 entitled 'Rockets with Fire in Their Tails? Women Leaders in Kerala's Panchayats'. The author J. Devika discussed the experiences of women leaders in local self governance in Kerala. She also talked about the experience of dalit women leaders and the dilemmas of empowerment. The chapter 7 by Karuna Chanana on 'Leadership for Women's Equality and Empowerment in Higher Education', which explored that, not only internationally but also nationally (India), in the level of higher education women's are more effective than man,. Women also have leadership qualities but for that they require adequate opportunities, in some sectors e.g. education, where opportunities have been provided, very positive result was found.

Leadership Influence: Independent Study, FEMA (2005, December), it is an independent study program by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), which explores the importance of leadership and its influence in emergency management situation, for lack of it, which can result in loss of public trust, loss of property or worse.How effective leadership is equally necessary for implementing mitigation programs and for emergency management preparedness and disaster prevention is also examined here. It addresses five consecutive units for a general understanding of the subject, includes- Leadership from within, which teach us the importance of self-knowledge as a resource for effective leadership;How to facilitate change which explore the topic of change and how to lead change effectively; How to build and rebuild trust which explore ways for building and rebuilding trust among employees and other emergency management stakeholders; Using

personal influence and political savvy which focus on the important role of leader as influencer and the skills for effectively influencing others; andstrategies for fostering a leadership environment which is the hallmark of effective leaders. Actually, the book produced a course summary for overall understanding of leadership and its influence.

Paula Burkinshaw (2015), *Higher Education, Leadership and Women Vice Chancellors: Fitting into Communities of Practice of Masculinities*, the book is basically addressed the important question that how much higher education leadership cultures were gendered. The author argued that (i) women vice chancellors learn leadership through negotiating and navigating gendered leadership cultures, (ii) these cultures can be interpreted within a theoretical framework which interprets higher education leadership as communities of practice of masculinities and (iii) having a critical mass of women 'at the top' may help to address these cultures. The book is an attempt to explore the issue of underrepresentation of women vice chancellors in UK higher education through the lens of gendered leadership cultures. Also, the book develops policy recommendations for the level of higher education, that women-only leadership education policy and practice across higher education; gender mainstreaming policy and gender analysis practice across higher education; and collaborative research at national rather than institutional level. Hence, it can help us to understand the gendered leadership cultures.

In addition to these, there are some articles on the area have been reviewed include: Anne W. Perkins, Ed. D. (2009), *Global Leadership Study: A Theoretical Framework*, proposed a framework for the study of cross-cultural leadership in the globalised world and discuses the theoretical foundations of leadership by creating a Global Leadership-Learning Pyramid which provides to the students the understanding of cross-cultural patterns of leadership. The author highlights six principles of Western leadership theories derived from history and culture, viz-Leader-Centered; Male-Dominated; Universal Traits; Task-Relationship Balance; Quantifiable Performance; and Individualistic leadership, with their inadequate character in non-Western settings. But, the author also opined that all six principles are not adequate in non-Western culture. The masculine leadership traits are not universally valued. The majority of the world, however, is collectivist. Here the emphasis is on group cohesion and loyalty, not personal achievement, merit, and reward. Therefore the individualistic principle of leadership is also limited. Finally, in order to overcome the limit of Western leadership theories, the

GLOBE Study proposed an integrated theory of leadership that attempted to account for culture-based differences in implicit views of leadership.

Leadership and Its Basis in Problems of Social Coordination, a work by Randall L. Calvert (1992), addressing point of this article is the necessities and responsibilities of leaders in order to solve the problems of social coordination with a little bit analysis of rational choice model of leadership. The author examines the nature of social dilemmas, the coordination problems because of social dilemmas, the role of leadership in such situations and looks into the question of what leaders do and how they able to remain leaders and hold their office. The author also offers a model of the stability of leaders and leadership institution.

Peggy Antrobus(2000), *Transformational leadership: Advancing The Agenda For Gender Justice* influenced by the 'women's' leadership' agenda of the 1995 Beijing Women Conference of the UN, focuses on a particular form of leadership e.g. 'transformational leadership' which advances the cause of justice for women within the context of economic globalization and fundamentalism. In this regard author analyses three approaches of social change, namely-the professional technical approach; the political approach and the counter-cultural approach, to understand what is needed to effect transformation of the global system to attain gender equality. The author argued that transformational leadership is possible within bureaucracy and often seems to emerge as a response to crises, or events that present an opportunity. This article has argued that to transform women who wear the title of 'leader' within formal bureaucratic structures is an important objective. So it is require to distinguishing between different strategies - those that lead to transformation, and those that are unlikely to do so - and between those women who are most likely to lead us on a transformational path, and those who prefer to remain within the status quo.

Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998), *Grassroots Leadership Reconceptualized: Chicana Oral Histories and the 1968 East Los Angeles School Blowouts*, tries to rediscover the history of unorganised and unappreciated women's voice by analysing the event of East Los Angeles School Blowouts, 1968. Based on the historical analysis, the author tried to explore how women offered leadership and how that leadership, while different in form and substance from traditional interpretations, was indeed meaningful and essential. The

study proposes a paradigm shift in case of grassroots leadership and highlights cooperative leadership paradigm and also outlines a reconceptualization of leadership that places women at the centre of analysis. For further understanding, the author, however, pointed out five interrelated dimensions of grassroots leadership:networking, organizing, developing consciousness, holding an elected or appointed office, and acting as an official or unofficial spokesperson. In addition to these, the author observes the multidimensional influence of gender issue and examines how we are able to move beyond the traditional notion of leadership through a cooperative grassroots leadership.

Awareness, Consciousness, and Resistance: Raced, Classed, and Gendered Leadership Interactions in Milagro County, California, an article by Josephine Mtndez-Negrete (1999), examines the ways in which the Chicana/Latino women community of Milagro County of California uses race, class and gender interactions to carry out their leadership role. Author also explores how these women internalized, understood, and discussed leadership interactions, and how their experiences serve to illustrate a reflective awareness of their social locations. The subject of this study is to negotiate racial, gender and class structures of inequality of Chicanas women. The study shows how these women learned to engage and manage numerous power interactions and learn to negotiate multiple identities in their activist and leadership endeavors. Chicanas, in this study, have identified woman-centered ideology and the study also identified politics of identity are complex in nature. Ethnic/race, gender, and cultural experience qualify and shape the nature of leadership and activism.

An article by Leonie Huddy And Nayda Terkildsen (1993), *The Consequences of Gender Stereotypes for Women Candidates at Different Levels and Types of Office*, which contains two parts, the first part is talked about the existence of gender stereotypes. Authors show a clear distinction between the masculine and feminine traits for achieving the position of national office. They also critically analyze voter's attitudes for preference of gender stereotypes. By testing through regression analyses, authors show that typical masculine instrumental traits proved more beneficial to a candidate seeking national office (the presidency and membership in Congress) than local office or more particularly than typical masculine traits.The study found that typical masculine or instrumental personality traits were considered strong pre-requisites for good national and executive-level politicians whereas feminine characteristics or traits were suitable for local and

legislative politicians. On the basis of ANOVA test the findings are: typical "male" qualities are considered crucial for higher office; masculine qualities were viewed as more important for national office than the typical feminine personality traits. And secondly, the study suggests certain measures to feminine traits for gaining national office. Women can win national office if they convince voters that they possess masculine traits and are competent enough as a male policy maker. Women candidates may also have to work hard to win over male voters those who not only preferred male candidates and male strengths but are also inclined to vote against a female candidate due to the societal perception of gender stereotype.

However, all these literature may contribute to the development of some theoretical understanding of leadership models and styles as well.

1.2.3. Literature on Political Participation and Women Political Leadership: In the third category, we find there are lots of researches on Political Participation and Women Political Leadership. They include:

Bruce O. Solheim (2000), *Women's Political Leadership in Scandinavia and Beyond,* highlights an alternative form of leadership and role of women in politics. The prime focus of author is to develop a cooperative and nonaggressive style of female political leadership through an interdisciplinary analysis of the Scandinavian political system. The book begins by establishing a rigorous theoretical baseline on gender equality and/or differences with a debate of whether women leaders promote peace and social justice better than their male counterparts; then the focus turns to women in power with a case study of the Scandinavian political system. In order to understand more deeply the role of women leaders in society, the book also examines the political ascendancy and administration of three female national leaders, two are from Scandinavian countries, and one is from developing world, to provide an international point of comparison. This book contends that it would be important to assess the impact of male and female leaders who employ a more power-sharing type of leadership.

Eileen McDonagh (2009), *Women's Political Leadership and American Democracy,* equality is the prime focus of America's nationalist constitution and in order to establish gender equality this book highlighted the nature of women's political leadership in American democratic system. The book starts with a serious question of women's

political equality in USA in regard to their representation as elected leaders. This book focuses on the maternal identities with the demand of public policies representing maternalism and also examines that how gender ideology is critical to women for political leadership position as well as highlights the failure of the American state to adopt maternal traits (e.g. public policies as welfare provision etc). Also, the book mentioned certain measures to promote women in the political arena and suggested a cross-national analysis of the pattern of women political leadership as well. Hence, the book is useful in terms of women political leadership.

Madhuparna Gupta (2015), 'Women, Power and Leadership: Case Studies of Indira Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher and Golda Meir', is a book, analyses in brief different feminist theories and tried to explain women's positions and responsibilities in politics from different perspectives. It analyses and evaluates the behavioural attributes or patterns, personalities, styles of functioning, leadership skills, policy formulations and the strategies of the three powerful women leaders of the world and women Prime Ministers as well. With regard to domestic and foreign policies of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher and Mrs. Golda Meir, the author presented a comparative study of the nature of their leadership, along with the personal and institutional factors that played a crucial role in their arrive to power. Also, the study tried to conduct comparative analysis of the present day women leaders with the past leaders. Hence, the study may be helpful in finding comparative characteristics of other women leaders who assumed highest political office in the 1980s, 1990s and in the post cold war.

Filomina Chioma Steady (2011), Women and Leadership in West Africa: Mothering the Nation and Humanizing the State, the objective of the study is to investigate women in leadership in Africa in general, and explore the factors behind the successful female leadership, with in-depth field study in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone [Three countries of the Mano River Union (MRU)]. Another objective is to discover alternatives to socially constructed, male-dominated, authoritarian, and war-prone leadership. The study also focused on female ideas of leadership and authority; contribution of female leadership to the countries and to women in general; and an identification of the challenges faced by women leaders. The book examines female leadership in six areas: political, economic, religious, traditional, professional, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as well as examined four themes, first is the link between

motherhood and leadership; the second is conflict as a catalyst for female leadership; the third is the legacy of indigenous female leadership; and the fourth is the Queen Mother paradigm of parallel leadership [In Ghana, where the Asante Queen Mother Paradigm provides examples of parallel leadership]. The study found a strong correlation between the symbol of motherhood and leadership.

Women's Leadership and ParticipationCase studies on learning for action, Joanna Hoare and Fiona Gell eds. (2009), is a book of compile case studies on women's participation and leadership. The study has taken the documents from the programmes which are supported and conducted by Oxfam GB (Oxfam is a registered charity in Englandand Wales and Scotland) and its partners around the world. Case studies of the Philippines, Israel, and the UK seeking to nurture and also drawing attention to women's leadership and participation in the sphere of economy by supporting their activities in civil-society organizations. There were other four chapters' deals with the case studies of Sierra Leone, Honduras, Cambodia, Haiti and present a description of programme work to encourage women's political participation in the formal structures of government. And a case study in Britain which deals with two projects of Oxfam GB in order to enable women to gain a greater understanding of the structures that sustains gender inequality and keeps them in poverty. One project focusing on economic literacy and empowerment in Scotland, and the other a participatory research project on women's experiences of poverty. This chapter discusses experiences of these two projects. And lastly, the case study of Chile describes the important link between increasing women's participation in the economic and social sectors, and tried to promote at the political level women's employment rights. Finally, the book also given focus on two important new initiatives of Oxfam GB: one is in Africa on 'Raising Her Voice' is a global programme and the other one is on 'Women Leading Change in the Middle East and Maghreb region'. Hence, the book will undoubtedly be a good resource in discovering many factors involved in women's leadership and participation.

A chapter on '*Women and Leadership*' in G.S Pai's (2012) book *Hand Book of Women Studies*, explains the concept of leadership that leadership can be defined as a special kind of 'soft power' and also discussed about the characteristics of women leaders. This work also has given a look on the styles of leadership as well as it analyse the types of leader. The author argued that formal and informal both the structures of opportunity play a crucial role in enabling leadership qualities in women and also mobilizing them towards

participation in public realm. It also argued that women's groups are very important in encouraging and enabling leadership qualities in women. Hence, there is no doubt that the present research study would be enriched by this work.

A chapter on *The Politics of Progress* in D.L Rhode's book *What Women Want An Agenda for the Women's Movement*, deals with the factors of women underrepresentation in political leadership in United States of America. It is noted in this chapter that women issues were avoided by early women politicians though this tendency has been changed in recent phenomenon. Contemporary women politicians are more likely concerned with the issues which are related to women. The author focuses on the differences between man and women regarding policy preferences. Women are more interested in social services rather military intervention where as men are more likely to support military intervention. In addition, this chapter has given a light on 2012's election of America where one of the reasons of victory of Obama over Romney was the absence of pro-women policy record of Romney. Finally, the chapter concludes by throwing light on some agendas for change in the existing structureof politics.

In addition to these, there are some important works in the form of articles on the area include: *The Upsurge of Women Activism in India,*a work by Jana Everett(1983), tried to shed lights in the context of male domination how women activisms in India gradually developed from the colonial period to the present and the status of women gradually has been changed. Author, however, explain the issue from two perspectives: the middle class women activism and the activism among lower-class Women. In India, several cases of middle class women activism has been discussed for instance student activism. On the other hand, in order to explain the lower-class women activism in India author tried to convey an idea of the strands of activism that exist among lower-class women and the primary focus has been given on three examples: 1) tribal women in the Shahada movement; 2) women tobacco workers in Nipani; and 3) the Self Employed Women's Association of Ahmedabad. Apart from these, the author discussed about the obstacles behind the emergence of mass feminist movement in India as well.

Virginia Scharff (1995), *Feminism, Femininity, and Power: Nellie Tayloe Ross and the Woman Politician's Dilemma*, this article highlights the story of a political legislator, Nellie Tayloe Ross; how she appears in the forefront of politics really from a domestic arena and represents herself as a feminine activist; how she strive to reconcile feminine

modesty with political ambition as a loyal democrat. As she was women governor, there is a challenge for her to prove that whether women were fit to govern or not. To prove this womanhood she always demonstrates her abilities as an individual, regardless of sex. Gender equality was her primary objective. To her there is no difference between man and women in administrative ability.Woman will succeed or fail just as a man will succeed or fail.She wanted to run not as a woman but as an individual. Women in politics these days face the both dilemmas: affirming their femininity and their equality.Women who succeed in breaking the previously all-male domains and maintain positions of power by adopting a tactic of feminine deference, run the risk of never getting credit for their real achievements as it was happen to Nellie Tayloe Ross.

Margaret Stacey and Marion Price (1980), *Women and Power*, a work which focused on two dimensions; firstly it has given light on the history of women's position in case of power and secondly it discussed about the changes which helped women in the moves towards political power. Also, this paper focused on the stories of several societies where women enjoyed powerful and respectful positions in ancient world and the paper found that women of some classes at various age of history and in various places exercised power and authority over man in fact they have used such power and authority over other women which divided them against one another. The authors argued that in recent days women are exercising power and influence which they have derived from their family and from their formal and legal relationship to men (fathers and husbands) though they are still facing dominant ideologies and challenges in the form of family. The authors, finally, discussed the factors which work in favour of women to exercise power though women enjoying the power under the domination of male.

Aruna Rao and David Kelleher (2000), *Leadership for Social Transformation: Some Ideas and Questions on Institutions and Feminist Leadership*, highlighted the attempts to promote gender equality in institutional setup and describes how institutional efforts encouraging gender inequality. So, this article tried to focus on the efforts of changing rules which could bring equality such as devolution of power and the recent efforts to professionalize NGO's. It also intends to look at briefly some of the institutional challenges which are facing by feminist leadership and to relate these to the question of leadership in NGO's which are involved in the domain of development and human rights. The work is also given importance on the concept of transformational leader and discussed about the existing ways of working, action, and power to become a

transformational leader. The authors contend that transformational kind of leadership required to challenge institutional inequality and to bring equality.

Current Perspectives on Asian Women in Leadership: A Cross-Cultural Analysis (2017) edited by Yonjoo Cho, Rajashi Ghosh, Judy Y. Sun & Gary N. McLean is a book of compilation of twelve chapters contributed by various scholars. The book provides an overview of Asian women leaders in ten different socioeconomic and cultural contexts included China, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand. All the chapters concerned with women's leadership. In the Chapter 2 women's leadership roles and status are discussed in China's unique transitioning cultural, economic, social, and political contexts. Chapter 3 focused on India and presents a detailed discussion of how traditional beliefs about gender roles and modern notions of women's independence create a contesting space for Indian women leaders. The Chapter 4 focused on the cultural factors of Indonesia that direct the key roles of family in the empowerment or disempowerment of female identity as leaders. Chapter 5 concerned with the state of women's leadership development in Japan. Chapter 6 through the discussion of challenges and opportunities which Korean women leaders faced tried to provide answers to the question why has Korea's remarkable economic success failed to translate into women's improved status? Analysis of Malaysian women in leadership from historical, political, economic, and cultural perspectives has been covered in the Chapter 7. How women in Myanmar find opportunities to perform in a leadership role, how they overcome significant barriers, and the strengths of women in rural areas discussed in the Chapter 8. In the Chapter 9 institutional factors and women's personal characteristics of women leaders have been discussed that become crucial in breaking barriers in women leadership development in Sri Lanka. The factors allowing Taiwanese women to become leaders in spite of several barriers are the focus of the Chapter 10. Also, Thai women leaders' histories, aspirations, frustrations, and experiences are discussed in the Chapter 11. Finally the last Chapter 12 provides an overview of similarities and differences of women in leadership in Asian countries and regions and also provides a vision for the future of women in leadership in Asia.

Chin-Chung Chao, Louisa Ha eds. (2020), *Asian Women Leadership: A Cross-National and Cross-Sector Comparison*, is a book, broadly, focuses on Asian women leadership and illustrates performed styles, experiences, opportunities, challenges, and management strategies across sectors academic, business, regions, politics, immigrants, etc in almost

all major Asian cultures China, India, South Korea, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Taiwan, etc. and in the United States. Also, the book draws comparisons with female leadership in western societies and discusses the possibilities for inter-cultural encounters. And the book concluded by discussing the contribution of Asian women leadership research as part of immigrant leadership, minority leadership and disadvantaged group leadership research that enriched the study of leadership.

The Political Asceticism of Mamata Banerjee: Female Populist Leadership in Contemporary India, is an article by Proma Ray Chaudhury, addressing point is thestylistic performance of populist leadership by Mamata Banerjee of the All India Trinamool Congress in the state of West Bengal, India, and focusing on her adoption of the discursive mode of political asceticism, nativist rhetoric, and religious iconography.The article delineates Banerjee's populist engagement with a particular mode of power, political asceticism and explores perceptions of her leadership. Also, the article illustrates that the self-makings of female populist leaders remain fraught and contested, while they contribute substantially toward redrawing the boundaries of both conventional leadership models and the broader political and cultural context where they perform their leadership.

Titty Varghese (2020),*Women's Political Participation and Leadership in India: Examining the Challenges,*it is a case study based article that basically focuses on political leadership of women in Local Self Government institutions of Idukki districts in Kerala. The study focuses on two elements –i) to identify the challenges faced by women in political leadership positions in India; and ii) focuses on the importance of women's political participation in Indian democracy. The study shows that the number of women participation has increase in local self government and behind it the impact existing policy of the government. So the study shows that more national and state level policies are require improving the participation of women in political process and for women's leadership.

Apart from these, there are lots of important researches on the area. They include: Antar Jyoti Ghai (2009), Snehalata Panda (1995), S. Sharan (1995), Azza Karam with Others (1998), Kamala Kumari (2012), Ranjana Kumari and Anju Dubey (1994), Anne Stevens (2007), Devaki Jain (2000), Sudhir Verma (1997), Toshimenla Jamir (2012), K.C. Vidya (1997), Pamela Singla (2016), Dr. K.S. Saxena (1999), Pritam Singh (2003), Dr. M.

Ramachander & Dr. K. Lakshmi (1993) among others. The present research study is likely to benefit being informed by the theoretical groundings and methodological rigour employed in all these literatures.

1.2.4. Research Gap and the Necessity of the Present Research: A brief review of the existing literature on the Women and Politics reveals that such studies are not sufficient reference to the study of Women in Political Leadership in India, although there are valuable contributions by myriad academicians, scholars, and researchers. The available literature have not explicitly dealt with women political leaders in India considering the changes in the political arena since post 1990, more specifically any one has not taken ever an initiative to present a study of the elected womenMPs and MLAs of West Bengal since 1990 to present. Moreover, there are only a few studies on the women political leadership of West Bengal in general. In particular, there is no specific case study on the elected women political leaders of West Bengal. Hence, there is visible research gap on the area. The present study intends to bridge this research gap.

1.3. DEFINITION, RATIONALE, AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1. Definition of the Research Problem: Our research study investigated the conceptual understanding of political representation and political leadership from a feminist viewpoint, the Indian historical context of women's participation in politics, the leadership styles of women political leaders in West Bengal on the one hand, and since 1990 the changing perception of the society towards women leaders. Also, this research study has investigated the socio-political fabric in the state of West Bengal where we are currently having a woman leader heading the state government.

1.3.2. Rationale of the Study: The present study analyzed the socio-historical conditions of India as well as the social process which obstructed, several times, women to be active political leaders. While, from the period of 1980 Indian Parliament started a new journey in the matter of women's political participation and since 1990 due to the changes in the perception of the society and the state as well as political parties the percentage of women representatives increased and they started to play very crucial role in the parliament and the state legislatures. The increasing number of women representatives in Indian politics has given a push to common women to take the position of political leaders, though before 1990 the leadership position was mostly dominated by elite women. Also, post 1990 shows major changes that more and more women are contesting polls under the

banner of the state and regional political parties or independently rather than the national political parties though earlier women contested polls and had been elected reflect a sizeable number of women leaders from the national political parties. However, within such changing context it is required to focus into the nature of women leaders and the differences of women and men leaders in terms of their functioning as well as the unique challenges for the woman leader in the Indian milieu and how do they overcome challenges. Therefore, this constitutes the rationale for our research study.

1.3.3. Scope of the Study: This study is confined to the elected women MPs and MLAs of West Bengal who have been elected since 1990s. Post 1990 indicates that the number of women is increasing in case of participation in the electoral fray and more women has entered the political arena to contesting polls under the banner of regional political parties rather than national political parties as well. Therefore, 1990 is a very crucial period, and it can be taken as the beginning of a new journey in Indian politics. Due to this shift in the pattern of Indian politics this study has the following objectives:

- To provide a feminist perception of representation and leadership in politics;
- To review the historical account of women's involvement in politics;
- To find out the existing differences between women and men leaders;
- To provide comprehensive assessment of the leadership styles of major women political leaders in West Bengal;
- To analyse the socio-political context of women political leaders in the state of West Bengal.

1.4. RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESIS

1.4.1. Statement of the Research Problem: In spite of several existing obstacles, the names of women leaders are endless, but there seems to echo in the studies on women's political participation a strand of doubt about their capacity for their circumscribed existence compared to male leaders in politics. Post 1990 the trend shows two interesting facts a) the number of women participating in the electoral fray has increased and b) more and more women are contesting the polls under the banner of the regional political parties rather than the national political parties. (b) The percentage of women in the higher decision making bodies (i.e. Council of Ministers) have increased both at the state (W.B) and national level.

Lack of women's participation in decision making due to gendered public sphere is supposed to make way for greater capacity and awareness after more participation is ensured through policy reforms. It is also construed that the perspectives that women lead to governance issues would facilitate a change in the nature of leadership as well as the choice of issues to be selected /given priority in policy making.

It is however, argued that unless gendered structure which is too hard to remove especially when women internalize the role of masculine leadership, or the threshold value for effective leadership is reached the change that is desirable cannot be attained. The characteristics attributed to leadership are those associated with masculinity. There is a substantial co-relation between characteristics that define a good man and characteristics that define a good leader. Many women have met or almost met the criteria of masculinity had some success as political leaders (e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Condoleeza Rice, Madeline Albright, Golda Meir etc). Therefore, men are assumed to have leadership capacity while women's masculinity is doubted until proven (Sjoberg, 2009). While the definitions of 'feminine leadership' recognize that women bring different qualities to leadership like greater attention to collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making and above all relationship building (Batliwala, 2010). Studies that have discussed women leadership have often done so within the constraints of the traditional interpretations of both femininity and leadership.

The study locates the research problem in the domain of i) unearthing the reasons behind the limited number of women in leadership positions in the political domain; ii) whether it is possible to frame out a model of leadership from the style of functioning of the women legislators of West Bengal.

1.4.2. Research Objectives &Research Questions:

The study aims to address the research gap as has been identified from the literature review where there has been found a myopic focus on the new trends of women's leadership. The following sub-sections deal with the research objectives and questions that have been answered through the study.

1.4.2.1 Research Objectives:

The major objectives of the study are -

1. To understand the difference in number if any in the number of women active in political parties as primary members and subsequently in leadership positions in the legislatures (State Assembly & Parliament);

2. To delineate the reasons behind the increase if any, in the rate of participation of women in politics since 1990;

3. To inquire into the nature of women leaders and find out the difference if any, with their male counterparts in terms of their style of functioning, the range of issues that they select to support, etc; and

4. To find out the nature of obstacles to their political career if any, and how did they counter them.

1.4.2.2 Research Questions:

The present study through an intensive case study based method and analysis of facts and political party documents has found the answers of the following research questions:

1. What have been the changes forced/normal that has led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics in India post 1990?

2. What has been the percentage of difference between the women primary party members and elected members to the decision-making bodies of the state as well as the women leaders who contested polls and elected at the state and national level?

3. Why do we see that the women political leaders today are actively participating in the elections? Does that indicate a change in structural factors like education, economic empowerment, social reforms etc responsible for high/low/non political participation?

4. Why according to these women leaders they find themselves different from the male leadership?

5. Can we say that the women legislators in West Bengal are initiating feminine or feminist style of leadership?

6. How have been they able to overcome obstacles if any, in their political career?

1.4.3. Hypothesis:

The following hypotheses have been designed which are tested in course of the study:

1. (a) Since 1990 there has been a sizeable increase in the number of women leaders throughout West Bengal.

   (b) Since 1990 there has not been a sizeable increase in the number of women leaders throughout India.

2. (a) There exists a difference in the nature of leadership between women and men.

   (b) There exists no difference in the nature of leadership between women and men.

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1. The Fundamentals: Considering the nature of the research problem as stated above, we had proposed to apply a qualitative research approach in this study. Qualitative research is a broad methodological approach which encompasses many research methods e.g. individual interviews, focus group method, observation and action research etc. Within a qualitative research framework we get an analytical exploratory understanding of issues. In social research we need to be reflexive about our theoretical, normative, and social positions as our habits cannot be separated from the particular everyday social arenas and fields that we navigate within. Interview method is used in this study in an extensive way. Interview method is a direct observation method by some structured sets of questionnaire. In order to make the study objective, samples/participants were selected on the basis of judgmental random sampling from the field itself while tried to select those women legislators who have/had been elected more than once. The rationale behind the use of this method was to get an equal representation within the sample. Through a participatory interview method it was aimed to collect all the necessary data from the field, by building a good rapport with them and not hurting their sentiments, so that we can actually bring out the real information about our research problem.

Political behavior is a function of several variables. For the purpose of analysis, the collected data have been analyzed through several variables. These variables have been divided into two groups: (i) Those relating to the socio-economic and political characteristics of the respondents; and (ii) Those covering the statements of respondents on the dimensions of women political leadership. In order to have a proper understanding

of the study we have discussed all the variables on the basis of first group and finally focused on the statements of women political representatives.

1.5.2. Sources of Data: The primary data for this study collected through the interview method covering women parliamentarians, legislators as well as ex-parliamentarians and ex-legislators of West Bengal. Data has been collected through structured and unstructured interviews with 25 respondents (MPs and MLAs who were elected more than once) who were purposively selected (to suit the objective of the research and understand the emergent leadership), from the total number of women legislators (from 1991-2016 in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly at 119 places 51 women leaders have been repeatedly represented, and from 1991-2019 in the Parliament total 53 women leaders were elected from WB, among them 13 women have been repeatedly represented at 38 places), on the basis of an interview schedule. In addition to these primary sources we have taken the help of secondary sources as well. The secondary sources cover books, journals, periodicals, government notifications, gazette publications, petitions, memoranda, research articles, and newspaper articles from local newspaper, websites, historical records, political parties' documents etc.

I visited to different libraries as- Library of Indian Social Institute, New Delhi; Library of National Commission for Women, New Delhi;Library of Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS), New Delhi; Dr B. R. Ambedkar Central Library, Jawaharlal Nehru University; The ICSSR-NASSDOC library, New Delhi; The National Library of India, Kolkata; Library of Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta;West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library, Kolkata; Library of North Bengal University, Siliguri, Darjeeling; & also visited to offices of different political partiesto collect the secondary data for our research study.

1.5.3 Data Collection and Analysis: The collection of data was an arduous task due to the very nature of the information required as well as the period of our work that fell during the run-up to the Bidhan Sabha election when the political environment was difficult. However, the respondents were gracious enough to grant me time either offline or through the online mode and patiently answer my questions. Not only this they allowed me inside their homes and hearth, sharing with me their stories of struggles and hopes. Studies on women's political participation and leadership have often come out with this that, women are usually proxy leaders. However, as in one of my visits I encountered a

woman legislator who had come to attend the legislative sessions with her young son and was deftly managing her motherly duties as well as her professional work. In another instance I was a witness to the new model of woman leader in India, who was modern in her outlook but at the same time was managing her homely responsibilities, serving food as she was talking about deep political issues. In no way could one call her dominated since she was actively taking decisions at home and outside as she led party workers and performed her legislative duties.

The data was collected through field observations and interviews that were mixed combining both the structured as well as the unstructured questionnaires. Apart from the interviews, visits to the party offices and individual party leaders yielded a rich amount of data. Political ethnographic method was used to derive intensive knowledge about the women legislators, their way of leadership and the *difference* that made them different. The data collected was subsequently tabulated and descriptive statistical methods were used to project the findings. Graphical representation of data was made as well as the narrative method was also put to use for data analysis.

1.6. THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Traditional definitions of leadership emerged at a time when both political leadership and the scholars who studied it were almost exclusively male (Sjoberg, 2009). It is of this reason that gender related social conceptions female and femininity remain neglected in our concepts of leadership and males and masculinities became the central account of leadership.

In order to understand it clearly let us review the definitions of leadership which reveal the following ideas:

- The individual as leader, and the leader as a man,

- The leader as hero and leadership as heroism,

- The leader as decision maker,

- The leader as embodiment of character and integrity,

- The leader as provider of vision, mission goals and strategy for the enterprise, and motivating others to share those goals

- The capacity to influence, inspire and motivate others behavior and actions (Batliwala, 2010).

The above mentioned core ideas of leadership are related to masculine leadership and create stereotypes, therefore, it can be deduced that the concept of leadership is a gendered concept. The characteristics attributed to leadership are those associated with masculinity. There is a substantial co-relation between characteristics that define a good man and characteristics that define a good leader. Many women have met or almost met the criteria of masculinity had some success as political leaders (e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Condoleeza Rice, Madeline Albright, Golda Meir etc). Therefore, men are assumed to have leadership capacity while women's masculinity is doubted until proven (Sjoberg, 2009).

Generally, the word 'sex' means biological differences between 'women' & 'men'. The word 'gender' describes socially constituted differences between those perceived to be women and those perceived to be men. In other words 'sex' is a term that describes different biological characteristics and 'gender' describes the social perceptions born of those perceived biological differences (Sjoberg, 2009). Social gender categories can be classified as masculinities and femininities, where masculinities are characteristics associated with perceived manhood and femininities are characteristics associated with perceived womanhood. Masculinities and femininities are constituted by behaviour expectations, stereotypes, and rules which apply to persons because they are understoodto be membersof particular sex categories (Enloe, 2004). The definition of gender as 'assumed' group characteristics makes it clear that gender is a social construction. Quite opposite is true, social construction such as gender construct social life (Prugl, 1999).

However, in gender discourse, some characteristics are generally associated with masculinity and others with femininity. Characteristics associated with masculinity include strength, objectivity, power, autonomy independence, rationality and aggressiveness and characteristics associated with femininity include weakness, sympathy, marginality, dependence, emotion and passivity. Men are associated with the public sphere i.e. work, politics and public life, while women are associated with private sphere i.e. motherhood, the household and the bedroom. Men are the protectors while women are the people that men protect (Sjoberg, 2009). A leader is denoted as the one who is like a lion, fearless, physically strong and ready to take challenges. The attributes

that a leader has is socially constructed to match with a biological male whereas, femininity is socially constructed as physically weak, timid someone to be protected and guided which as attributes do not match with the definition of a leader.

Naturally, we look at the concept of leadership through a 'gender lens'. The gender lenses 'focus on gender as a particular kind of power- relation'. Gender lenses also focus on the everyday experiences of women as women and highlight the consequences of their unequal social position (Steans, 1998, 5). Women though very few in numbers, who do lead are often neglected in the discussions of leadership or treated differently than their male colleagues. Studies of female leaders show that their personal lives receive substantially more attention than those of male leaders, and that their leadership capacity is more likely to be questioned for the same decision that a male colleague makes (Tickner 1992, 2001; Sjoberg 2006; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Duerst- Lahti and Kelly 1995a).

The definitions of 'feminine leadership' recognize that women bring different qualities to leadership, while greater attention to collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making and above all relationship building (Batliwala, 2010). Studies that have discussed women leadership have often done so within the constraints of the traditional interpretations of both femininity and leadership.

Consequently, masculine character of leadership definitions produced leadership theories or approaches which are naturally masculine in nature. Theories /approaches were made in the consideration of maleness character of leaders where women consideration had been massively neglected. Studies of leadership often neglect women who are leaders. Leadership is not only sex-specific but also gender specific (Sjoberg, 2009). There is a bias against women in political leadership even when women have the same traits as male leaders (Sjoberg, 2009). As D'Amico and Beckman pointed out, there is actually a higher burden of proof of masculinity on women leaders than there is on male leaders. Gendered power plays a role in leadership opportunities and judgments about the quality of leadership (Sjoberg, 2009). Therefore, it must be said that on the basis of above mentioned leadership discourse a woman can be a leader when she can convince her constituency that she is as capable as a man in areas traditionally understood as domains of masculine prowess. Leadership will not be un-gendered until our understandings of successful leadership account for and deal with gender assumptions (Sjoberg, 2009). In

this context, the objective of the present study is to investigate what particular feminine values have been incorporated within the whole idea of political leadership in West Bengal that is usually viewed as male and the women leaders emulating the masculine conception and image of leadership. The research also investigated new directions and ongoing challenges in the area of women and leadership and offered an alternative model of leadership in respect of women.

1.7. CHAPTERISATION

The research work is organized in the following chapter format:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction:** The first chapter is introduced the study delineating the existing literature, research gap, objectives and questions and the theoretical frame of the study along with an explanation on research methodology guiding the study.

- **Chapter 2: Conceptualising Representation & Leadership in Politics from a Feminist Standpoint:** The second chapter has outlined the theoretical standpoints on representation and leadership in politics.

- **Chapter 3: Women's Entry into Politics in India: A Historical Review:** The third chapter is reviewed the journey of women of India in the political domain.

- **Chapter 4: Women Legislators in West Bengal: A Study of Major Women Leaders Since 1990:** The fourth chapter is specifically focused on women leaders in West Bengal, mainly MPs and MLAs. The chapter also has case studies of major women leaders.

- **Chapter 5: Women Leaders: A Review of Leadership Styles:** The fifth chapter has focused on the style of functioning of the women leaders, the issues they choose as policy making issues and the values they espouse.

- **Chapter 6: Politics of Difference: Does It Make A Difference?** The sixth chapter is about whether a significant difference exists between the men and women leaders. It also examined whether the women parliamentarians and legislators in West Bengal stand out as feminine or feminist leaders or are still trapped within the dominant discourse of leadership synonymous with masculinity as an attribute.

- **Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusions:** The last chapter is summarised the study and provide a conclusion to the research problem taken.

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CHAPTER: 2

CONCEPTUALISING REPRESENTATION & LEADERSHIP IN POLITICS FROM A FEMINIST STANDPOINT:

CHAPTER OUTLINE

2.1.Introduction

2.2.Representation: General & Theoretical Concept

    2.2.1. Ancient Political Thought and The Concept of Representation

        2.2.1.1.Ancient Greek Political Thought and Representation

        2.2.1.2.Ancient Roman Political Thought and Representation

    2.2.2. Medieval Political Thought and Representation

    2.2.3. Early Modern Thinkers and The Concept of Representation

        2.2.3.1.The Contractualists and Representation

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        2.2.4.1.Federalist's Perception of Representation

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        2.2.4.5.Heinz Eulau, Hanna F. Pitkin, A.H. Birch, Alfred De Gracia's Perception of Representation

2.3.The Concept of Political Representation

    2.3.1. Types of Political Representation

        2.3.1.1.Hanna F. Pitkin's Typology

        2.3.1.2.Anthony Harold Birch's Classification

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        2.3.1.4.Representation by Population

        2.3.1.5.Representation by Area

        2.3.1.6.Dyadic Representation

        2.3.1.7.Proportional Representation

        2.3.1.8.Quota System/ Quota Representation

        2.3.1.9.Group Representation

    2.3.2. Feminist Argument about Political Representation

2.4.Definition of Leadership

2.5.The Concept of Political Leadership

    2.5.1. Theories of Leadership

    2.5.2. Feminist Standpoint about Leadership

2.6.Representation and Leadership in Politics

2.7.Conclusion

     ➤ Summary

2.1.INTRODUCTION

Political participation is the hall mark of a democratic setup. Nature, success and effectiveness of democracy largely depend on the extent to which equal, effective and actual participation is provided by the system to all its citizens. Participation in politics is a pre-requisite and minimal requirement for a successful democratic political system. Political participation has been defined in various terms. Political participation is a broader and complex term, expresses itself in various kinds of overt and manifest political activities. In more clear terms, the concept of political participation includes activities like-

- ➤ voting,
- ➤ campaigning in elections,
- ➤ convincing other persons to vote in a particular way,
- ➤ attending public meetings,
- ➤ distributing party literature,
- ➤ joining an organization or a party,
- ➤ contributing money to a party,
- ➤ contesting election and
- ➤ holding public or party office, etc (Lester, 1965, p.17-19).

Political participation means not only exercising the right to vote, but also power sharing, co-decision making, co-policy making at all levels of governance of the state(Singh, 2000, p. 619).

Modern-day democracies are indirect, representative democracies. It is through the electoral process that individuals choose their representatives who perform the act of governing on their behalf. It is through their elected representatives that the adult citizens indirectly take part in the process of policy making. The electoral process not only helps to realize the individual's right to political participation, but through it another essential function of a political system is also performed, that is the function of political recruitment. An individual can take part in the electoral process in a number of ways- as a voter, as a candidate, getting involved in the nomination of candidates, taking part in election campaigns, discussing politics, distributing party literature, attending political meetings and so on. In whatever ways he/she takes part, the individual actually performs the act of political participation. Such participation naturally assumes greater importance

in a democratic political system. There is also a close interrelationship between the electoral process and an individual's political consciousness. A higher level of political consciousness may lead to an increased rate of electoral participation. Again, an increased rate of participation may in turn help in a higher degree of political consciousness (Roy, 2015).

As people's participation is needed in democracy and participatory democracy cannot be practicedproperly without leadership it is essential to focus on leadership. Democratic leadership is embedded in an institutional context that aims to prevent corruption and the abuse of power. In fact the nature of ademocratic state depends on the qualities of leadership. So, in the study of political process, in order to understand political participation we must concern about the concept of leadership along with representation.

With this brief note about political participation in the electoral process, we will now focus on the concept of 'Representation'. This is necessary because representation is also a form of electoral participation which constitutes just one of the many aspects of political participation.

2.2.REPRESENTATION: GENERAL &THEORETICAL CONCEPT

The concept 'Representation' is defined and used in several ways by different writersor thinkers. The representation concept has been developed more by politicians and propagandists than political scientists. The concept of representation is crucial to the modern representative democracies, because it is identified with democracy generally indirect democracy. The word 'representation' derives from the Latin word 'representare' which means literally to bring before one, to bring back, to exhibit, to show, to manifest, to display (Beard& Lewis, 1967, p.98).

The origins of the concept of representation can be traced back to ancient times. The ancient Greeks elected some officials and sometimes sent ambassadors, involving in those activities which include acts of present conception of representation, though they did not have a corresponding word to representation. The Romans had the word 'representare' from which the present word 'representation' is derived. But they used it to mean the literal bringing into presence of something previously absent or the embodiment of an abstraction in an object. They did not apply it to human beings acting for others, or to their political institutions (Pitkin, 1967, p.244-51).

Representation as a concept may be understood as the making present again, of some entity whether personal or abstract. Representation, in the sense of human being representing other human being is particularly a modern conception. This development could be seen mainly from the 14th century. This is clear from a detailed linguistic study made by Hanna Pitkin (1967). To her, probably late in the fourteenth century, the Oxford English Dictionary used the word 'represent' to mean to bring oneself or another into the presence of someone, to symbolize or embody concretely, to bring before the mind; whereas the adjective 'representative' means 'serving to represent, figure, portray or symbolize. During the fifteenth century, the concept of representation expanded to mean also to portray, depict or delineate. It came to be applied to inanimate objects which stand in the place of or correspond to something or someone. At the same time the noun 'representation' appears to mean image, likeness or picture. Human beings are not entirely absent from these early usages, they appear in these usages primarily in two ways. On the one hand, representation was meant as an inanimate object or image standing for a human being, on the other, it was used to represent a human activity of presenting, of depicting, of painting a picture or staging a play, though not as an activity of acting for others (Pitkin, 1967,p.244-51). It is found in the record of Oxford Dictionary, there are no illustrations of the concept of representation in political sense till the 16th century.

Also, the meaning of representation has changed in different times and contexts of history of political thought and theory. The concept of representation is very important and complex in nature and the meaning of the representation applied in different ways in different contextsof history like in ancient times, in medieval or in modern age the concept of representation has been used in different way. Therefore, in the following sectionswe will enlighten the origin history of representation and will try to understand the several usageof representation in ancient, medieval and modern contexts of political thought.

2.2.1. ANCIENT POLITICAL THOUGHT AND THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION:

The concept of representation has undergone different changes with respect to the political and social context in history. The Greeks and the Romans conducted public business through representative institutions, but their political theories could not provide adequate understanding of representation as an instrument of power. However, for our

general understanding of the unique trajectory of the concept of representation we have focussed on the Greek and the Roman thought.

2.2.1.1.ANCIENT GREEK POLITICAL THOUGHT AND REPRESENTATION:

Plato's political thought was mainly concerned about the characteristics and education of a philosopher-king. He felt that the philosopher-king need not follow any laws or regulations as he can act by virtue of his wisdom. Jellinek, holds that the Greeks had no notion of representation as applied to the creation of legislative assemblies. Aristotle, the father of Political Science, believed that propertied-classes should play a large role in the government and through their assembly citizens should pass upon fundamental questions, chooses the magistrates and holds them to account for their official action. As observed by Gewirth, to Aristotle, "the legislator or the primary and proper cause of the law, is the people or the whole body of citizens, or the weightier part thereof, through its election or 'will' expressed by words in the general assembly of citizens, commanding or determining that something be done or omitted with regard to human civil acts, under temporal pain or punishment".Thus, Aristotle considered legislator as primarily a law-maker whose law-making functions include passing of new legislation and repealing of unnecessary laws. In saying that the legislator is the people, or the whole body of citizens or the weightier part thereof, he did not specify about who is a legislator. A reference to elected representatives could also be noted in this context. Law-making function, according to Aristotle, could be exercised directly by the legislators or could be delegated to some person or persons who exercise the law-making power on behalf of the legislator. Thus the persons to whom this function is entrusted are not the legislator in the absolute sense. But they became legislators only in a relative sense as they function only as agents. This gives an idea of representative as delegate and representation as an instrument limiting the power of the ruler. Aristotle is mainly concerned about direct democracy in small city-states rather than representative democracy, as it exists in large nation – states(Lakshmi,1990, p.29-31).

2.2.1.2. ANCIENT ROMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND REPRESENTATION:

Like ancient Greeks, the Romans favoured a more democratic form of government. Roman conception of state lies between the organic theory of state, where the state fully includes the individual, and Epicurean conception, which considered state as a non-essential institution, giving the highest place to individual freedom. The Roman thought

conceived state as a natural institution, allowing the possibility of creating laws, where new laws were enacted in the form of an agreement between the magistrates and the people in their assemblies (Lakshmi,1990,p.32).

Roman thinkers, particularly Polybius and Cicero, favoured a mixed type of government. Polybius adopted the Greek classification of government (monarchy, aristocracy and democracy). To him, it was essential to combine the better elements of all forms of governments. Accordingly in the Roman constitution, the consuls represented the monarchic principle, the senate was essentially aristocratic and the popular assemblies were democratic. He also envisaged an elaborate structure of checks and balances, so that no single branch of government becomes dominant to ignore the opinion of others. Polybius speaks of the responsibility of the consuls to the senate and to the people, and of the responsibility of the senate and tribunes to the people. But he does not look upon the Roman officers of state as peoples' representatives even does not consider the actual composition of the Roman senate as representative as in modern sense (Lakshmi, 1990,p.32-33). Observed by Beard and Lewis (1967), that it is not correct to say, representatives were unknown to Greek and Roman politics and thought, rather it's presence were in very few cases. Hence, the modern concept of representation in legislative bodies has no historical connections with Greek and Roman representative agencies. Even, it is also difficult to find the notion of popular representation in early medieval thought which was dominated by religion.

2.2.2. MEDIEVAL POLITICAL THOUGHT AND REPRESENTATION:

Throughout the middle ages, there seem to be two views about the origins of political authority - descending and ascending theories of authority which were to some extent, pertinent to the problem of representation. According to the descending theory, the authority of some men over others could only be regarded as rightful if it were divinely sanctioned.The ascending theory of political authority developed during the later medieval period, the chief exponent being Marsilio of Padua who considered that authority originated with the people and was delegated by them to the rulers.He preferred an elective monarch for this purpose whose duty was to interpret and administer law rather than making it. The monarch, in his view, was just a delegate of the people who acts on behalf of his people in upholding their laws. He subordinated the church to state though he does not intend to build an egalitarian society in any modern sense.Maude

Clarke, in her study of the origins of representation in the middle ages, found that different kinds of representation such as personification and specific acts, undertaken for reasons of administrative convenience and political action hearing directly upon public laws could be seen in this period (Lakshmi,1990, p. 34-35).

The concept of representation of classes emerged in medieval Europe as a device of administrative convenience, where the king summoned the parliament for the purpose of levying taxes.Beard and Lewis (1967) traced four principal stages in the development of representative government in England. The first parliaments were called by monarchs primarily for the purpose of voting taxes for the royal treasury and represented the estates of the realm, mainly two estates-land and commerce. In the second stage, the tax-voting body became a law-making body where the members of parliaments began to list their protests in the form of petitions to the king for redressal. If the king approved a petition, then it became a law, binding on his officers and subjects. The third stage was reached by a gradual process culminating in the revolution of the seventeenth century, when the king was substantially deprived of law-making and tax-voting powers, and his civil and military administration was confined within the limits laid down in constitutional measures. During the final stage, under the influence of the French Revolution and American Revolution which declared all men were equal and that each one was entitled to an equal share in governing and with the gradual extension of the suffrage, the modern concept of representative government finally emerged (Lakshmi,1990,p. 35-36).

2.2.3. EARLY MODERNTHINKERS AND THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION:

2.2.3.1.THE CONTRACTUALISTS AND REPRESENTATION:

At the beginning of the modern age, the Social Contractualists namely Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau asserted that state was not a divine creation and that political authority is something which has been conferred on the government by the people. Thus, they made people the source of power. Their emphasis on the problems of political authority and obligation regarding the formation and legitimisation of the state led each of them refer to the concept of representation (Lakshmi,1990, p. 36).

Hobbes' analysis of representation proceeds from the notion of a person to distinguish between natural and artificial persons. He concludes that a representative is a kind of artificial person. He defined representative as an agent who has the right or authority to

make the represented obliged to whatever actions or policies that the representative thinks appropriate. The state of nature led Hobbes defend political absolutism and to try to convince people that they are morally obliged to obey the orders of the 'Leviathan' whom he called as their representative (Lakshmi,1990, p. 37).

John Locke in his "Two treatises on Civil Government" endeavours to provide more rights to represented than to the representatives, and to make representative in some sense responsible to the represented by placing the right to change the government in the hands of the people, though he never defined the terms representative or representation as such (Birch, 1971, p.35).

Rousseau, the major exponent of direct democracy in modern times, argues that political representation is not possible as it involves 'willing for other' which is not feasible in actual practice as no man can will on behalf of others. He considered that real freedom is not possible in a representative form of government as a representative might look after another person's interests, if they were clearly known, but he would hardly formulate another individual's will. To solve this problem, he expounded the theory of General will,which is neither a majority will nor the sum of individual wills (Eulau, 1978, p.43).

Thus, the social contructualists provide some insightful aspects of political representation, though they did not provide any definitive requisite of the concept of representation and could not explain clearly the essential links between the representative and the represented.

2.2.3.2.EDMUND BURKE AND THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION:

According to Burke (1729-1797), political representation is the representation of interest which has an objective, impersonal and unattached reality and government should rest on wisdom but not on will, as the good of nation emerges not from a general will but from the general reason of the whole.Burke emphasised that a representative should be and capable of conceiving broad based and relatively fixed interests such as agricultural interests, mercantile interests rather than particularised and narrow interests like individual businessman's interest or a single farmer's interest (Lakshmi,1990, p.40). Burke conceived that representation has a substantive content, and election of members of parliament is intended to supply this content and bring about an effect of virtual representation. To him, "virtual representation is that in which there is a communion of

interests and sympathy of feeling and desires, between those who act in the name of any description of people and the people in whose name they act, though the trustees are not actively chosen by them". To him, such representation is even better than the actual representation as "the people may err in their choice, but common interests and common sentiments are rarely mistaken" (Burke, 1887, p.293). Thus, various sets of ideas – elite representation of nation, actual and virtual representation of constituencies, parliamentary deliberations, accurate reflection of popular feelings together give rise to comprehensive Burkean theory of political representation (Pitkin,1967, p.188).

2.2.4. MODERN POLITICAL THINKERS AND THECONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION:

2.2.4.1.FEDERALIST'S PERCEPTION OF REPRESENTATION:

The Federalists Madison, Hamilton and their supporters were not successful in their efforts to arrive at a final theory of representation. As pointed out by De Grazia, although they may have wanted certain interests in society to be finally and definitely represented in the structure of government, they could not imagine how that would be possible (De Grazia, 1951, p.99).

2.2.4.2.BENTHAM, JAMES MILL - UTILITARIAN THEORY AND THE CONCEPT OF REPRESENTATION:

The Utilitarians and the Individualists provided a highly individualistic conception of representation. Based on their conception of pleasure and pain, Bentham and James Mill put forward the microcosmic view of representation, where the representatives share the interests of the represented. To them the representative should be able to recognise the common interest of the society and should have enough motivation in terms of his own private interest to enact the appropriate legislation. In the words of James Mill, "as the community cannot have any interest opposite to its interest, the interest of the representatives to be identified with those of the community". Bentham argued in favour of frequent annual elections to keep representatives alert, to keep them under the control of the represented and to see that they would not be given enough time to develop distinct interests of their own, different from those of community in their capacity of politicians. James Mill held that 'the benefits of the representative system are lost in all cases in

which the interests of the choosing body are not the same with those of the community' (Mill,1955, p.73).

2.2.4.3. JOHN STUART MILL AND REPRESENTATION:

To J.S.Mill, representative government is "the only government which can fully satisfy all the exigencies of the social state in which the whole people participate"(Shields, 1958, p.66-67). He advocated representative form of government, extended suffrage through proportional representation as devices to safeguard fundamental human freedoms.J.S.Mill visualised representative government as the ideal form of government, with proper weightagegiven to the better educated and more responsible members of the community, denying illiterates and non-tax payers the right to vote.He did not specify the exact term for the members of Parliament. He supported trustee role of the representative and believed that the representative should be more educated and experienced than the represented and that while the representatives owed to their electors the benefit of their wisdom, they should not be bound to follow their constituents' judgement (Lakshmi,1990, p. 44-46).

2.2.4.4. IDEALISTS, MARXISTS, COLLECTIVISTS, GUILD SOCIALISTS AND REPRESENTATION:

To, idealist political thinkers like T.H.Green and Bernard Bosanquet, representation is not to encourage or emphasize diversity of opinion but to reduce such difference by harmonizing various conflicting sectional interests in a society or community (Lakshmi,1990, p. 46). Their argument can be best summarised in Ernest Barker's opinion, who considered the real basis of democracy as the "discussion of competing ideas, leads to a compromise in which all ideas are reconciled and which can be accepted by all because it bears the imprint of all" (Barker, 1942, p. 36).

According to the Marxian conception, in a class bound society where political system and institutions among others is the superstructure, whose base is the mode of production, representative institutions of liberal democracies work as stooges in the hands of ruling class, which works for perpetuating its own class interests. Marxists rule out the possibility of real representation in a class bound society (Lakshmi,1990, p. 46).

The Collectivists and the Guild socialists like G.D.H. Cole and David Truman viewed modern society, distinct from feudal and agrarian society is composed of sections and

groups with overlapping interests and affiliations. This pluralistic view of society led them to believe that elected representatives will inevitably act, to a considerable extent, as delegates of particular interests (Lakshmi, 1990, p. 46-47).

2.2.4.5.HEINZ EULAU, HANNA F. PITKIN, A.H. BIRCH, ALFRED DE GRAZIA'S PERCEPTIONOF REPRESENTATION:

The concept of representation is widely used in modern age mainly due to its linkages with other modern concepts like democracy, liberty and equality. According to Heinz Eulau (1978), in the context of modern government, neitherresponsibility nor responsiveness can be assured through thetechnique of representation as a representative cannot possiblybe responsive to each of the hundreds of thousands ofconstituents he represents and for the same reason it ispractically impossible for the electorate to hold the representative responsible for his decisions. He felt that the Burkean conception and other normative theories of representation are obsolete as they are based on the behavioural assumption that responsibility and responsiveness are assured by "some similarity, achieved mechanically through relevant psychological processes,between the characteristics, attributes, attitudes, or goals ofthe representative and represented". He argued that such anassumption is false and a viable theory of democraticrepresentation must be based on the assumption in of an inevitablestatus difference' between the representative and there presented (Lakshmi, 1990, p.48).

Pitkin (1967), who has made a comprehensive study on the concept of representation, assumed that representation has an identifiable meaning applied in different but controlled and discoverable ways in different contexts.She considered representation as acting in the interests of represented in a manner responsive to them and it is necessary that both representative and represented must act independently and in case of conflict, it is the representatives that should act in a way which prevents conflicts. Pitkin's study is useful in that it laid emphasis on the need for responsiveness, but she failed to give guidelines which will be useful to measure or assess the level of responsiveness (Lakshmi, 1990, p.48-49).

Another prominent theorist, A.H.Birch (1971), used the concept of representation not only in political and non-political situations but also in a variety of ways. He expounded three main ways in which the term 'representation' is commonly used, together with

various specialized or subsidiary usages. The three main usages, each logically distinct from the others, are as follows:

I.   To denote an agent or spokesman who acts on behalf of his principal;

II.   To indicate that a person shares some of the characteristics of a class of persons;

III.   To indicate that a person symbolizes the identity or qualities of a class of persons (Birch, 1971, p. 15).

On the basis of these three different usages, Birch classified the concept of representation into different types (which we would discuss in the latter part of this chapter) and unlike Hanna Pitkin, he believed that there is no need at all to reduce the various usages and theories to a single definition.

Alfred de Grazia (1951), in his "Public and Republic" suggested that the search for broader meanings of representation both in the present and the past, must be conducted at three levels-community level, discussion level and administration level (De Grazia, 1951, p.3).Grazia defined representation as "a condition that exists when the characteristics and acts of one vested with public functions are in accord with the desires of one or more persons to whom the functions have objective or subjective importance". Representation exists on three distinctive levels: community, discussion, and administration. The first of these involves symbolic or expressive representation, and is common to all types of government since it concerns the consensus between ruler and ruled. Discussion includes legislation and the bargaining part of the political process. In administration, general acts are brought to bear on the individuals in the community (Hogan, 1951, p.586).

Thus, there are several concepts and definitions of representation that have been advanced by various political theorists in different historical periods under the aegis of different dynamic social and political circumstances. And in this perspective we should remember one of the most important arguments of Hanna Pitkin that "one must know the context in which the concept of representation is placed in order to determine its meaning". For Pitkin, the contemporary usage of the term 'representation' can significantly change its meaning (Dovi, 2018).

However, with the introduction of modern age the concept of representation started to become popular and widely applied to the modern political system in the senseof political

connotation. Basically the modern concept of representationmeans thepolitical representation and it become prime concern to contemporary modern thinkers. The following section will enlighten the concept of political representation in the context of modern democracy.

2.3.   THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION:

Political representation is not a simple concept, there are hardly few who share the same content or agree unanimously on a single definition. The literature concerning political representation contains many different definitions. Now we will throw light on several interpretations and definitions given by a number of major scholars. As Hanna Pitkin (1967) defines: to represent is simply to "make present again"; it is a most brief and simple definition, so that is not adequate to understand clearly the concept of political representation. While, Pitkin more precisely defines: political representation is, in fact, representation particularly in the sense of "acting for", and that this must be understood at the public level. The representative system must look after the public interest and be responsive to public opinion, except, insofar as non responsiveness can be justified in terms of the public interest. At both ends, the process is public and institutional. Pitkin considered political representation as primarily a public, institutionalised arrangement involving many people and groups operating in complex ways of large scale social arrangements, as the modern representative acts within an elaborate network of pressures, demands and obligations.The individual legislator does not act alone, but as a member of a representative body. Hence his (representative) pursuit of the public interest and response to public opinion need not always be conscious and deliberate anymore than the individual voter's role. Representation may emerge from a political system in which many individuals, both voters and legislators, are pursuing quite other goals. Pitkin specifically said, "We must be cautious, also, about the absence of rational pursuit of the public interest by individuals. I do not wish to suggest that it is totally expendable, for I doubt whether any institutional framework could produce representation without conscious, rational, creative effort by some individuals. But there is latitude in a political system for apathy ignorance and self seeking. That the social institution can produce a 'rationality' most individual members seem to lack is easier to believe at the level of the voter than at the level of the legislator. And this may well be because a higher degree of individual rationality, of conscious representing and pursuit of the public interest is required in the legislative system than in the public. Undoubtedly, creative leadership is needed in any

political system, and such leadership does not just happen. But when we speak of political representation, we are almost always speaking of individuals acting in an institutionalized representative system, and it is against the background of that system as a whole that their actions constitute representation, if they do" (Pitkin, 1967, p. 224-25).

Nancy L. Schwartz (1988) provides, perhaps, radically a new understanding of representation. As she sees it, representatives should be- and, in the past, have been- more than mere delegates or trustees of individual desires and interests and the process of representation more than the appropriation of power and control. Ideally, representation should transform both representatives and citizen. Representatives should be caretaker of the community, not the watchdogs of special interest of groups and individuals. Moreover, representatives should serve as founder of their constituencies, constituting communities whose members value citizenship as an end itself. Schwartz describes political representation is an activity and an institution which connects the people, however defined, to the government. Representation 'makes present that which is not literally present' in political life, it makes the people present in the actions of the governing power of the state. Legislative representation is a medieval and modern notion; the origins of political representation occur in the medieval practice of the monarch summoning the great men of the realm to give their assent to certain taxes he wishes to levy. Political representation is modern in its connection to the idea of sovereignty. Modern political representation starts as a device of political rule from the center, in the territorial ruler's search for human sovereignty(Schwartz, 1988, p.2-3). She contended to see representation as a device for democratizing and limiting the state rather she sees representation as a way to constitute national sovereignty.

Another eminent political thinker on representation J. Ronald, Pennock (Pennock & Chapman, 2017) prescribes, the word 'representation' may not always have had the same meaning. In a particular time, somewhere the word representation meant that a 'representative' was a person who should do only what his constituents demanded of him, and also it meant, in other places, at the same time, that a 'representative' was a person empowered to do whatever he choose on behalf of those whom he represented. Considering the concept of political representation Pennock said that, all legitimate governments are "representative". Further, he explained, from the time of medieval kings to modern totalitarian dictator or rulers, all regimes obtained legitimacy from their

subjects through several means. On this ground, Pennock argued that political representation is not a modern concept and not confined to the democratic state as well. Though, in contemporary modern democratic state system all representatives are the members of the elected legislature as the representative body, where elections are providing the great sanction for assuring representative behaviour. More precisely, he said, in the modern state political representation meant representation of elected persons, particularly, they are the members of a legislature with power, collectively, to make laws and determine national policy. Thus, the political representation relates to responsiveness, accountability and authorizations and it is supposed to believe that political representatives tend to secure governmental action in the interest of those whom they are represented.

Thus, traditional as well as modern understandings of political representation are related to the formal procedures or concepts of authorization and accountability, that Pitkin called formal representation (discussed in detail in the section of types of political representation). Election become very much crucial within nation states, as a consequence, in the context of modern democracy or representative government the main focus of most of the theories of representation is on the role and behaviour of representatives as should they act in favour of their constituents or should they act independently of constituents' wishes. Specifically, "political representation is understood as a way of (1) establishing the legitimacy of democratic institutions and (2) creating institutional incentives for governments to be responsive to citizens" (Dovi, 2018).

But, it would be incorrect if we think that the theoretical discussion of political representation is static rather it is appear as dynamic and subject to changing political realities. Hence, the contemporary understanding of political participation is changing due to domestic and international political transformation. Increasingly international, transnational and non-governmental actors play an important role in advancing public policies on behalf of democratic citizens—that is, acting as representatives for those citizens. Such actors 'speak for,' 'act for' and can even 'stand for' individuals within a nation-state. It is no longer desirable to limit one's understanding of political representation to elected officials within the nation-state. After all, increasingly state 'contract out' important responsibilities to non-state actors, e.g. environmental regulation. As a result, elected officials do not necessarily possess 'the capacity to act,' the capacity

that Pitkin uses to identify who is a representative. So, as the powers of nation-state have been disseminated to international and transnational actors, elected representatives are not necessarily the agents who determine how policies are implemented. Given these changes, the traditional focus of political representation, that is, on elections within nation-states, is insufficient for understanding how public policies are being made and implemented. The complexity of modern representative processes and the multiple locations of political power suggest that contemporary notions of accountability are inadequate (Dovi, 2018). Within such changing perspective, representation is no longer contained within the formal representative arenas. Therefore, some political thinkers presented alternative conceptions of representation which are non-elective in nature. Political thinkers John Dryzek and Simon Niemeyer (2008) proposed a concept of non-elective representation that is– discursive representation, where transnational actors represent discourses.Discourses means "a set of categories and concepts embodying specific assumptions, judgments, contentions, dispositions, and capabilities", not real people. The concept of discursive representation can potentially revisits the promise of deliberative democracy. Also, Michael Saward has thrown the lights on non-elective representative claims and rejected the "idea that representation is first and foremost a given, factual product of elections" (Saward, 2006, p. 298).Saward suggests that non-elected representatives would have the advantage of not being subject to the "temptations of the election-snapshot", focusing on more continuous and long-term ideas. They would also be able to follow their own ideas; they can be partial because they are a randomly selected member of the citizenry, not elected on the basis of a proposed programme (Saward, 2009, p.8). [Here we would not go through in detail about non-elective representation, as the main concern of our study is elective representation, though such kind of representation increasingly recognized as important in contemporary study of political representation]

Apart from them, there are various political thinkers – Jane Mansbridge (2003), Mark Warren (2008), Lisa Disch (2015) –who provides an important insight for contemporary discussions of democratic representation.Mansbridge identifies four forms of representation in modern democracies: promissory, anticipatory, gyroscopic and surrogacy (detail discussed in the section of types of political representation). By specifying the different forms of representation within a democratic polity, Mansbridge teaches us that we should refer to the*multiple* forms of democratic representation.

Democratic representation should not be conceived as a monolithic concept. Mark Warren shows in his study of democratic representation apart from elected representatives there exists another kind of representatives who play very important role in participatory democracy that he considered as citizen representatives who mainly work as supplements of the elected representatives in areas of functional weakness, usually related to communication, deliberation, legitimacy, governability, or attentiveness to public norms and common goods (Brown 2006, Warren 2008). Unlike the elected representatives citizen representatives are non-elected which involve non-professionals means who are selected or self-selected for representative purposes. Mark Warren's concept of citizen representatives (Warren, 2008) opens up a theoretical framework for exploring how citizens represent themselves and serve in representative capacities. Disch offers an alternative approach, what she calls "the citizen standpoint". This standpoint does not mean taking at face value whomever or whatever citizens regard as representing them (Political Representation, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Rather, she describes it as an epistemological and political achievement that does not exist spontaneously but develops out of the activism of political movements together with the critical theories and transformative empirical research to which they give rise (Disch, 2015, p.493).

However, the concept of political representation is an elusive concept. According to Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, political representation, on almost any account, will exhibit the following five components:

1. **Some party that is representing** (the representative, an organization, movement, state agency, etc.);
2. **Some party that is being represented** (the constituents, the clients, etc.);
3. **Something that is being represented** (opinions, perspectives, interests, discourses, etc.); and
4. **A setting within which the activity of representation is taking place** (the political context).
5. **Something that is being left out** (the opinions, interests, and perspectives not voiced).

Theories of political representation often begin by specifying the terms for the first four components. For instance, democratic theorists often limit the types of representatives

being discussed to formal representatives — that is, to representatives who hold elected offices. One reason that the concept of representation remains elusive is that theories of representation often apply only to particular kinds of political actors within a particular context. How individuals represent an electoral district is treated as distinct from how social movements, judicial bodies, or informal organizations represent.

The concept of political representation is described in many ways by many scholars and already we have mentioned in our discussion that political representation is no longer confined to only one kind of representation, so within the changing political context several scholars specified the different forms of political representation. Hence in the next section we will discuss about different types of political representation.

2.3.1. TYPES OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION:

The concept of representation has risecontroversy among political theorists regarding 'style' and 'focus' of representatives.There is no unanimous view about the conflicting interest of representation, whether the representatives should represent local or national interest. There arevarious political thinkers those who presented different views on the types of representation. Here we have tried to focus on different kinds of representation.

2.3.1.1.HANNA F. PITKIN'S TYPOLOGY:

Sheconceptualizes four different views of representation: formalistic representation, descriptive representation, symbolic representation, and substantive representation.

I. *Formalistic Representation*: The institutional arrangements that precede and initiate representation.According to Pitkin, the formalistic representation basically aims to give authority to representatives through elections, referring the institutional arrangements like prescribed rules and regulations that precede and instigate representation. Formal representation has two dimensions: authorization and accountability.By authorization a representative obtains his or her standing, status, position or office and accountabilityis an ability of constituents to *punish* their representative for failing to act in accordance with their wishes (e.g. voting an elected official out of office) or the *responsiveness* of the representative to the constituents.

II. *Symbolic Representation*: Symbolic representation for Pitkin is a kind of "standing for", and refers to the extent to which a representative can represent the represented. She equalizes it with a flag which does not reflect actual power or ability, but represent a nation (Pitkin, 1967, p.92). She places more importance not on the power that a symbolic representative exercise rather emphasizes on the feelings it evokes among the represented (Pitkin,1967, p.97).

III. *Descriptive Representation*: For Pitkin, "descriptive representation", means that representatives should reflect the descriptive characteristics of their electorate. The extent to which a representative resembles those being represented. Descriptive representation focuses mainly on the number of elected representatives in the political institutions. In this kind of representation, electoral systems are playing role in determining the number of elected representatives.

IV. *Substantive Representation*: Substantive representation is a view that concentrates on "the activity of representing" or "the role of a representative" (Pitkin, 1967, p.115). Substantive representation means 'acting of representatives in favour of represented', specifically 'more support for represented's interests'. Pitkin's (1972, p. 209), substantive representation is "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them". This definition puts forward three criteria for substantive representation. Firstly, it is about representative acts as opposed to, for instance, intentions or attitudes. Secondly, the results of these representative acts should be in the interest of the represented. Thirdly, the representatives should be responsive towards the ones they represent. Applying this to the substantive representation of women, Pitkin's definition implies that women's interests and female citizens are central to the representative process (Celis,2008, p. 3).

2.3.1.2.ANTHONY HAROLD BIRCH'S CLASSIFICATION:

He classified four different types of representation which can be described as symbolic representation, delegated representation, microcosmic representation and elective representation.

I. *Symbolic Representation*:It refers someone who is representing a number of persons in a symbolic way. The term 'symbol' is normally applied to an emblem or physical object which calls to mind some larger and usually more abstract entity. As

examples,the hammer and sickle is a symbol of the U.S.S.R., Christian cross is a symbol of the crucifixion. In a similar fashion, a symbolic representative calls of mind, or serves as a concrete embodiment of, a whole group or category of persons.

II. **_Delegated Representation_**:The term designates a person who has the acknowledged duty of defending or advancing certain interests specified by his or her principal. A sales representative, an ambassador, a lawyer all are a representative in this sense of the term. The function of this kind of representative is to achieve certain goals set by his or her principal, and the extent to which these goals are achieved is a criterion of successful representation. However, delegated representation conveys only functions and probable behaviour of the representative.

III. **_Microcosmic Representation_**:It is well exemplified in the term 'representative sample', which indicates a sample of the relevant population chosen by statistical methods so that the main characteristics of the population will be mirrored in the sample. The term denotes a person who is in some respects typical of a larger class of persons to which he or she belongs, for instance, the varied membership of the club is fairly well in the composition of the executive committee. This kind of representation explores something about personal characteristics of the representative.

IV. **_Elective Representation_**: It recognizes that elected assembly members are representatives because they have been appointed by a particular process of election to occupy that role. In practice, most elected representatives pay at least some attention to the interests and values of their constituents, but also feel free to exercise their independent judgement about what is best for their party or their country. How far they lean one way or the other depends upon the nature of the governmental system within which they work. It is also important to notice that the behaviour of elected representations may vary from one period to another within the same polity due to the requirement of time and situation (Birch, 1971& 2007, p.133-39).

2.3.1.3.JANE MANSBRIDGE'S CLASSIFICATION:

JaneMansbridge (2003)in her important work "Rethinking Representation" identifies four forms of representation in modern democracies: promissory, anticipatory, gyroscopic and surrogacy, all these are legitimate forms of representation. Exceptpromissory

representation, all the three forms representation does not have any relation to 'mandate' or 'trustee', all are new concept of representation.

I. *Promissory representation*focused on the idea that during campaigns representatives made promises to constituents, which they then kept or failed to keep. Itis a form of representation which resembles Pitkin's concept of formalistic representation.

II. *Anticipatory representation*, flows directly from the idea of retrospective voting. Representatives focus on what they think, their constituents will approve at the next election, not on what they promised to do at the last election.

III. In*gyroscopicrepresentation*, the representatives 'looks within', as a basis for action, to conceptions of interest, "common sense," and principles derived in part from the representative's own background.

IV. Finally, *surrogaterepresentation* occurs when a legislator represents constituents outside their own districts (Mansbridge, 2003, p.515).

2.3.1.4.REPRESENTATION BY POPULATION:

It is a method which ensures equal representation of population in the Parliament/Assembly. Representation by population means that the number of members of the legislative assembly should depend on the number of voters. More clearly, the number of representatives or the number of allocated seats for each constituency depends on the number of population that means elected representatives will be chosen by more or less numerically equivalent blocks of voters. The higher population province allocated a large number of seats whereas low population province allocated less number of seats. Representation by population is popularly known as "rep-by-pop", which is the shortened term also. If we consider the necessity of rep-by-pop will find the reality that it become essential for low population electoral province in order to give equal and meaningful representation to remote communities. Rep-by-pop is also the alternative to rep-by-area (Representation by area).

2.3.1.5.REPRESENTATION BY AREA:

America is the best example of representation by area. In the American Constitution, there is the provision of two senators per state, at least one representative per state. In some country,such as America, Canada, and many federal and provincial electoral

districts having few numbers of voters that is less than the population of a city blockthough cover larger areas. To avoid the unequal representation due to the population imbalance factor between larger rural areas and small urban areas "rep-by-pop" method become significant.

2.3.1.6.DYADIC REPRESENTATION:

The process of dyadic representation we can see in the U.S. Congress system. It is the degree to which the policy positions of legislators reflect the policy preferences of their constituents—a form of representation that has become known as dyadic representation (Weissberg, 1978, p.535-47), clearly, the elected representatives must follow the mass opinion, preferences and there would be the electoral linkage between individual legislators and their constituents.

Within the context of party affiliation, the policy preferences of the constituents, and the policy preferences of an individual legislator play in an interweaving manner in shaping the actions and preferences of the members of Congress. Dyadic representation means how well the sitting legislator acts as an agent for the constituency on legislative decisions (Ansolabehere and Jones, 2011).

2.3.1.7.PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION:

Proportional representation (PR) is a term used to describe a range of electoral systems in which the distribution of seats corresponds closely with the proportion of the total votes cast for each party or individual candidate. PR offers alternatives to first past the post and other majoritarian voting systems based on single-member electoral areas, which tend to produce disproportionate outcomes and to have a bias in favour of larger political groups. PR allows diverse voices and interests to be heard and considered in parliament, government, and the policymaking process. It also enables better representation of minority groups (Shugart 1994), as well as women (Darcy, Hadley, and Kirksey 1993; Norris 1985), and better ideological congruence between the government and voters in comparison to majoritarian systems (Huber and Powell 1994; Powell 2000; Powell and Vanberg 2000). There are several forms of proportional representation. Some are focused solely on achieving the proportional representation of different political parties (such as Party List PR) while others permit the voter to choose between individual candidates (such as STV-PR). Apart from these, another common form of representation is mixed

member proportional representation (MMPR). The degree of proportionality also varies; it is determined by factors such as the precise formula used to allocate seats, the number of seats in each constituency or in the elected body as a whole, and the level of any minimum threshold for election.

In case of **Party List** voting system, legislators are elected in large, multi-member districts. Each party puts up a list or slate of candidates equal to the number of seats in the district. Independent candidates may also run, and they are listed separately on the ballot as if they were their own party. On the ballot, voters indicate their preference for a particular party and the parties then receive seats in proportion to their share of the vote. Lists can be "closed" or "open"; open lists allow voters to indicate individual candidate preferences and vote for independent candidates. In a closed list system, the party fixes the order in which the candidates are listed and elected, and the voter simply casts a vote for the party as a whole ("Fair Vote", n.d.)

The **Single Transferable Vote**(STV) system is known by several names. It is called the "*Hare-Clark system*" in Australia. In the United States, electoral reform activists have taken to calling it "*choice voting*." Currently this system is used to elect parliaments in Ireland and Malta ("FairVote", n.d.).Single transferable vote uses in small multiple-member districts, with voters ranking individual candidates in order of preference. During the count, as candidates are elected or eliminated, surplus or discarded votes that would otherwise be wasted votes are transferred to other candidates according to the preferences. STV enables voters to vote across party lines and to elect independent candidates.

Mixed-Member Proportional Representation(MMPR) goes by a variety of other names, including "*the additional member system*," "*compensatory PR*", the "*two vote system*," and "*the German system*." It is an attempt to combine a single-member district system with a proportional voting system. Half of the members of the legislature are elected in single-member district plurality contests. The other half are elected by a party list vote and added on to the district members so that each party has its appropriate share of seats in the legislature ("FairVote", n.d.).In this system, a voter exercises two votes. On polling day, a registered voter receives two ballot papers—one for their single-member district and the other for a party of his or her choice.The party list vote determining the balance of the parties in the elected body.

2.3.1.8.QUOTA SYSTEM/ QUOTA REPRESENTATION:

Quota representation is defined as an affirmative action which applies to confirm a fixed percentage of representation of a specific group. Generally, this measure is used to increase the number of participation and representation of this specific group in the formal decision making bodies. Sometimes, it used to represents a critical minimum such as 30 or 40 percent. There can be two models of quota representation,*gender-specific* and *gender-neutral*. In case of gender-specific quota, a particular group of people require a minimum percentage within the total percentage, for instance women represent a minimum percentage among total candidates, whereas in gender-neutral quota, there is a provision of minimum and maximum of both genders while in some countries gender-neutral quota actually led to represents men candidates.

In this system it becomes obligation of the political parties to field a certain proportion of women candidates in their final list of candidates selected for contesting in the election. The proportion of female candidates contesting, sometimes vary from five to ten percent of the total candidates contesting. This system of quota helps the female candidates to certainly enter into the final candidate selection list, which otherwise contain the influential male politicians (Dahlerup, 2007). Candidate quotas according to Htun and Jones do necessarily ensure the increase in the number of female candidates in the decision-making bodies, since there is a chance of female candidates being placed at the bottom of the list and therefore might be able to get elected (Htun and Jones, 2002).

There are several types of quota systems distinguished on the basis of various criteria.If one takes into account where the quota system is mandated, then quotas may be either statutory or voluntary. **Statutory candidate quotas** are included in the constitution (e.g. in Burkina Faso, Nepal, the Philippines and Uganda) or in electoral law (in many parts of Latin America, and in Belgium, France, Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina), and they relate to the gender composition of the electoral lists of all political parties. **Voluntary party quotas** are adopted by political parties and take the form of internal party requirements to nominate at least a minimum number or percentage of women. In general, statutory quotas are considered more effective than voluntary party quotas. However, some countries including Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands, have achieved high levels of women in parliament without the use of statutory quotas.

If the stage of the selection process at which the quota is applied is the criterion of division, there are three types of quotas depending on whether they aim to change the gender composition of the pool of aspirants (potential candidates), candidates or those elected.

The first kind of quota – often dubbed "*aspirant*" or "*primary*" quotas – have been used in countries with plurality (single winner) electoral systems. So-called "all-women shortlists" – a controversial model introduced by the British Labour Party –may serve as an example.In the second case a *typical quota* rule is that a certain minimum percentage of female candidates must be placed on lists of candidates for public election by political parties. This type of quota is primarily used in countries with proportional electoral systems.In the third case, quotas take the form of *seats reserved for one gender*. Reserved seats can be found mainly in Asia, the Middle East, and in post-conflict African countries (e.g. Rwanda and Uganda). The electoral systems of EU Member States do not provide for reserved seats; voluntary party quotas at candidate level are the most commonly used quota type within the EU ("Quotas in Politics", 2012).

2.3.1.9.GROUP REPRESENTATION:

Group Representation is an electoral measure which is used to establish representation of minority group in the formal electoral bodies. Instead of single candidate, a number of candidates come together as a group to stand for election. The objective of group representation is similar to quota representation where a minimum representation of minorities is ensured. In Singapore, the whole electoral area is divided into the single member constituency and the group representation constituencies. In a group representation constituency a voter casts a ballot for a team of candidate instead of individual candidate, as a consequencethe nature of parliament become multiracial insteadof single race. Thus, the group representation is effectively represents the interest of every social group which is requires for the success of every democratic country. In practice, group representation is highly implemented to ensure women representation in the parliament.

In the above,discussion about political representation in democratic arena we have found that in the history before 18th century political representation was advocated only men's representation in the political process, and there exists a gap of women's representation

which was properly highlighted by the feminist scholars, so in this context without discussing feminist interpretation of representation we would not be able to understand the fact of political representation, so in the below section we will focus particularly on feminist's views on political representation.

2.3.2. FEMINIST ARGUMENT ABOUT POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Since the French Revolution the women's movement has demanded the right to vote and to be present in political assemblies as women citizens in order to influence political decisions and place women's interests, issues and concerns on the political agenda (Marques, Pereira and Siim, 2002, p.170). French suffragist, *Jeanne Schmahl* was one of the leading head of French women's and suffrage movement. Her dedication to the advancement of women was important in France and allowed women of all classes to become active members of society and politics.She fought for equal universal suffrage for women, French women were excluded from this right (until 1944) while men's universal suffrage was formally ratified during the Revolution of 1848 in France. She argues that women deserved the equal right to vote, because they were working in increasing numbers in the economy and were having a responsibility for the future of their children and family (Schmahl, n.d.).

'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' (1792), where Mary Wollstonecraft expressed that, women were rational beings who should be able to be educated, earn their own livings, and develop their characters "regardless of the distinction of sex" (Gurko, 1974, p. 16). To justify this statement, the woman's rights movement and the demand for woman suffrage emerged in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century from a variety of other movements (Baker, 2002, p.21). Initially, suffrage was one of several reforms intended to end the significant legal, political, religious, and cultural discriminations against nineteenth-century women. In the 1840s and 1850s, activists targeted injustices ranging from child custody laws that favoured fathers to prohibitions against women speaking in public, the denial of equal education, and the existence of a double sex standard (Baker,2002,p.3).

Voting became the essential political utility by which women could achieve other improvements in their status (Baker, 2002, p.3). *Susan B. Anthony*, a well known American women suffragist, and others believed that once women won the right to vote, they would instantly force the passage of laws that they had been demanding for decades.

Other reforms may have been sacrificed by activists who focused on suffrage, but the vote also provided women with a clear common goal and an agenda that was compatible with both assertions of natural equal rights and equal citizenship in the American republic (Baker, 2002, p.23-24). *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*, a prominent leader of the women's right movement (one of the principal organizers of the first women's right convention, which is known as Seneca Falls Convention, 1848), argued that the elective franchise is the first right of a citizen, without it women are unable to make their presence in the functions of legislation and subjected to all forms of oppressions. To her, right to vote is the basic right to establish equal opportunities in educations, earnings, abilities, and civil status and in all rights which were restricted by unequal laws. Suffrage became the primary goal of the woman's rights movement during the 1850s and remained so until women finally achieved the right to vote in 1920 (Baker,2002,p.21). Nearly seventy-five years battle of American women finally ended by the enactment of prohibiting the denial of the right to vote "on account of sex" in 1920.

One of the important figure head, *Emmeline Pankhurst*, along with her two daughters Christabel and Sylvia, gave a new impetus to women movement in United Kingdom. Through her various speeches she incited women to fight for enfranchise in Britain. She believed only through political power women can secure themselves, to redress the grievances women must have political right, suffrage, if women have not got the vote then they must either submit to laws which just or unjust, administration which just or unjust. She found that freedom and liberty are entirely for male and not for women. Taxation of men without representation is called tyranny but taxation of women without representation is not matter of concern of anyone. In addition, she said that the liberal principle 'Government of the people, by the people and for the people' is also included only male where in half of the people, women, totally ignored; women do only their duty to pay their taxes and obey the laws but when they tried to execute the principle of liberty in practice, then they found themselves in a very unfavourable situation. In her speech she expressed that due to unwillingness of British government to respond in constitutional methods women had to follow the militant path in order to get political right.

Pankhurst expressed that '*the only way to deal with this thing is to raise the status of women; first the political status, then the industrial and the social status of women. You must make women count as much as men; you must have an equal standards of morals;*

and the only way to enforce that is through giving women political power so that you can get that equal moral standard registered in the laws of the country. It is the only way' (Emmeline Pankhurst's Freedom or Death speech, delivered at Hartford, Connecticut, 13th November, 1913). It is very remindful that Pankhurst gave huge contribution to the life of women. However, in 1918, British women achieved partial right to vote and finally in 1928 full ratification of equal suffrage with men.

Universal franchise has been recognized as a means to the representation of different group interests in democratic institutions. Women are now acquired their formal citizen status, but there is still a problem with their citizenship as a practice. They can be represented in politics by the right to vote, but they are not fully exercising their capacity to be representative, since their right to be elected is far from being effective (Marques-Pereira and Siim,2002, p.173-74). In feminist thought the main emphasis has not been on political representation but rather on women's participation in politics and on their mobilisation and organisation in the context of civil society. Representation and participation can be seen as two different perspectives on how to include women in politics. One has focused on women's participation and empowerment 'from below' and the other on representation 'from above' in political institutions. The two perspectives may indeed be interpreted as two different models to include women in politics in order to give them 'a voice and a vote' (Marques-Pereira and Siim,2002, p. 170).

Representation is contested in both political theory and feminist scholarship. The liberal republican and deliberative approaches to democracy have not been able to explain why women's exclusion from politics has been reproduced in modern democracies after women have gained the vote. The feminist paradigms have challenged universal models of democratic citizenship based on the male norm that have not addressed the exclusion of women and marginalized social groups from democratic institutions. Feminist scholarship has recently proposed new models to include women and marginalized social groups (Marques-Pereira and Siim,2002, p.171).

Due to several interconnected reasons representation become central political issue to many feminists. Through universal franchise democratic political system assures equal representation of all groups. The under representation of specific group in formal political institutions, decision making bodies is considered to be a democratic problem of justice, legitimacy, responsiveness and effectiveness (Phillips, 1995). There is a variety of

feministliterature about women'spolitical representation and participation. Most of the literature focuses on what **Anne Phillips** has outlined as the four distinct arguments for women's equal participation in formal politics; the argument about *role models*, the argument concerning *justice*, the argument concerning *women's interests* and the argument concerning the *revitalization of democracy* (Phillips, 1995, p. 62-63). The first is based on the belief that (a) women bring different skills to politics and provide *role models* for future generations; the second implies that (b) women appeal to *justice* between sexes; the third holds that (c) it helps in the representation of particular *interest of women* in state policy; and the fourth rely on that (d) it results in 'a *revitalised democracy* that bridges the gap between representation and participation' (Philips,1998, p. 228).

The advocates of a balanced representation of women and men in politics have five basic arguments: *justice, proportionality, utilitarianism, differences of interests and needs,* and *behaviours and values*. The argument of justice is based on the idea that expression must be given to the interests of the different social groups and so doing give substance to a deliberative democracy. The argument of proportionality implies that political representation must reflect as faithfully as possible, in quantity, the relative size of the different social groups in the community. The utilitarian argument underscores the lack of efficiency and legitimacy of a political system where half of society involved. This is sometimes followed by a belief that an increase in the political representation of women would lead to change in politics, which would take greater account of 'women's interests'. The argument of specific value and behaviour is based on the idea that women have their own identity, separate from men's. From this perspective, an increase in the number of women representatives would mean a change in political values and the way in which politics is conducted (Marques-Pereira and Siim,2002, p.175).

For some, it is an obvious matter of justice that there should be an approximate gender balance, and it simply does not seem right that one sex should be able to dominate to the near exclusion of the other. In contrast to the under-representation of the very young or the very old, which can be seen 'as part of a normal and natural life cycle' (Phillips,1993, p. 63), many feminists argue that this exclusion is politically significant because it both reflects and helps maintain discrimination and oppression. In the influential *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, **Iris Young** has argued that justice requires that we give

political recognition to existence of gender difference (and also to other group differences such as those based on ethnicity and physical ability), and that denying their existence contributes to oppression rather than equality. She therefore argues for an elaborate system of representation in which all oppressed groups, including women, would have a guaranteed role in policy formation; such guarantees would not be necessary for the privileged, who already have access to decision-making positions (Bryson,1999, p.112). For Young, representation of the social groups in the political processes, that means representing the social perspective of these groups deriving from its structural position in society. Social groups are structured around differences such as gender, race, nationality and religion, but these groups cannot be defined through common interests or through similar opinions (Celis, 2008, p.5-6). This kind of representation implies the right to propose policies based on their own interests and even a right of veto when general policies risk affecting them. This argument comes from a critical perspective on universalism. Young considers that the idea of equal treatment for all groups is a false universalism that only excludes those who do not comply with the dominant norms and perpetuate de factodiscrimination (Marques-Pereira and Siim,2002, p.176).

Such arguments assume that women have shared interests as members of an oppressed group. For some **radical feminists**, these interests are directly opposed to men's; if women are to use the state to improve their situation they must be represented in it, for they can expect only opposition from their oppressors. Although others argue that men can benefit from or support feminist demands, experience suggests that they are unlikely to prioritise them. To the extent that women's claims for better pay and employment opportunities involve exposing and attacking men's privileged workplace situation and its basis in inequalities within the home, the interests of the sexes would appear to be in conflict, at least in the short term (Bryson,1999,p.112-13). As Joni Lovenduski has argued: 'The core of women's interests is comprised of their disadvantaged position in the division of labour within the family, and for as long as that division persists it is sufficient reason for insisting that women's interests may be represented only by women' (Lovenduski, 1986, p. 208).

Although **liberal feminists** are less likely to see the issue in terms of group oppression, they too can agree that women's biology and social situation can give rise to distinct concerns and priorities that they need to articulate themselves. Most feminists therefore

believe that it is wrong that men can legislate on issues to do with reproduction or sexual violence without women's voices being adequately heard. Most also see that, as the primary carers of children, disabled adults and elderly people, and as the bulk of poorly paid, part-time workers, women also have particular concerns and interests in relation to welfare and employment policies, even when these appear to be gender neutral (Bryson,1999, p.113).

A further set of arguments stems from the claim that women can bring special qualities and or experiences to politics. Such claims have a long history, and formed an important strand of earlier claims for the vote, when it was asserted that the 'womanly values' of temperance, purity and peace would lead to an improvement in the standard of public life. Today, the idea that women are more peaceful, compassionate and caring remains a powerful one, as does the claim that they have a distinctive way of thinking about justice. At a more practical level, many claim that women politicians would have no time for the infantile. As in the west, the British politician Shirley Williams has argued that women members of parliament are more able than men to provide the caring qualities needed for effective constituency work. Although some argue that such 'womanly' values are based in biology, many others see them as a product of women's experiences; from this perspective, it may be important to have decision-makers who have had experience of caring (Bryson, 1999, p.113).

None of the above claims is straightforward, and they have all been heavily criticized. For many critics, they seem to rest upon a freezing of gender identities, and an essentialism, which labels individuals by one attribute and ignore both the differences between women and the interests, which some women share with some men. As such, they can counter to post-modern accounts of the fluid and changing nature of gender, and, as so often in the past, they tend to equate the interests of women with those of the minority who are the most likely to win political office (Bryson, 1999, p.113-14).

Such criticisms are not without foundation. Quite clearly, women are not all mothers or badly paid, part-time workers, nor do they all feel themselves to be sexually exploited or oppressed, and many are positively opposed to feminist goals. Moreover, the kind of women most likely to be elected to parliament are those who have most access to political resources and whose lives most clearly resemble those of successful men; unlike men, this means that they are disproportionately childless, as well as being white and middle

class (in the early 1990s, 40 per cent of British women MPs did not have children, and only one was black). Such women may not be no more likely than many men to understand the needs and priorities of women intimidated by racism, or struggling to survive on state benefits; they may also have even less experience of childcare than male legislators, most of whom are or have been part-time fathers (Bryson,1999, p. 114).

This does not mean that the under-representation of women is not important, but that it cannot be isolated from other forms of inequality. Feminists interested in improving the situation of all groups of women, rather than of an elite minority, must therefore retain as awareness of the complex nature of a 'politics of solidarity'. They must also remember that it is not simply the number of women in political office that is important, but what women do when they get there, and Anne Phillips cautions that 'However plausible it is to say that male dominated assemblies will not adequately address the needs and interests of women, it cannot be claimed with equal confidence that a more balanced legislature will fill this gap'(Bryson,1999, p. 114). Increasing the presence of women in politics is not the solution of democratic problem of what Philips has called responsiveness and effectiveness rather there must be substantive representation. There are many instances of female political representatives who have done nothing for their sex. Hanna F. Pitkin defines substantive representation is "acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them" (1972, p. 209). Substantive representation should not only focus on quantitative evolutions but also take qualitative dimensions into account such as the diversity of women's issues addressed. The substantive representation of women are gendering policy debate frames and policy decision content, and developing feminist policy feedback in policy implementation (Celis, 2008).

There have also been debates among feminist about the methodologies of change although the most have argued that women experience and need to resist what Skjeie calls 'the duty to yield' (1991) when it comes to pressing gender claims in politics; liberal feminists until recently worried about moving away from the principle of meritocracy, but Kymlicka opened up the debate on group representation in order to take into account historical injustices (1995); Philips argued for a participatory mode of consultation of women linking the local community with party conferences and representatives (Philips,1998, p.238); Marxists feminists wanted to work with raising consciousness as a means for not only mobilizing women but also changing their thinking about the sexual

division of labour, which they found to be at the heart of gender inequality. More recently, there is emerging a consciousness in both academic and policy circles that affirmative actions or quotas are 'a fast-track to quality' (Dahlerup and Freidenwall, 2005). However, some still do worry that this emphasis on increasing the presence of women in politics absorbs too much of the energy from women's movement without producing enough rewards in the form of progressive changes in women's lives (Hassim, 2016). This aligns with some of the earlier worries about the focus on what Hannah Pitkin has called 'descriptive representation' (Rai &Spary, 2019, p.17-18).

However, different strands of feminism have emphasized different arguments but most are agreed that their needs to be more women in political institutions. Women's movements formulate women's interests and lobby or work together with the state to represent women. Women representatives should act to prioritise needs and interests, which male politicians have overlooked. The more limited experience of women representatives in the United States and Britain also suggests that they have had an impact of political agendas and they are generally more supportive of feminist issues than men, regardless of their party affiliation. Therefore, reinforces the claim that increasing the numbers of women in parliament is still an important feminist goal (Rai & Spary, 2019; Celis, 2008; Bryson, 1999).

After discussing feminist concept of representation we understood that representation could be two types in general viz. "from below" and another is "from above". After the French revolution feminist activists were only concern about right to vote means participation from below, but after getting the right to vote the feminist activists shifted their thoughtto women must participate or represent from above. More clearly, participation from aboveindicates that women must represent in the political bodies and shouldbe anintegral part to decision making bodies. Women through exercising political representationthey enter into political leadership role and even without being a part of leadership it is impossible to uplift the condition of women socially as well aspolitically. So, it is clear thatrepresentation is the primary way to enter into the leadership role and that is very much require to change the deprived condition of them and for the sustainable development of the society. Hence, the concept of leadership and political leadership become pertinentto our study and we will focus on it in the following sections of this chapter.

2.4. DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

Leader, generally, defined as one person who is able to influence a group of people or individuals towards the achievements of specific goals. On the other hand, leader, operationally, means a person who possesses position of power in any organization or in the formal structures of the government or otherwise. Leadership is a broader concept; it is very difficult to define leadership unanimously. Eminent personalities had their own views and hence have defined leadership in their own way. Some of the definitions on leadership are as follows:

Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals.

Leadership is a process of influence between a leader and those who are followers (Hollander, 1978, p. 1).

Leadership is the behavior of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal (Hemphill & Coons, 1957, p. 7).

Leadership is an influence process that enables managers to get their people to do willingly what must be done, do well what ought to be done (Cribbin, 1982).

Leadership is defined as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement (Rauch & Behling, 1984, p.46).

Leadership is that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more other persons and gets them to move along together with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment (Jaques & Clement, 1994, p. 4).

Leadership is interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals (Tannenbaum, Weschler &Massarik, 1961, p.24).

Leadership is the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants. A leader is one who successfully marshals his human collaborators to achieve particular ends (Prentice, 1961, p.143).

Leadership is the art of influencing others to their maximum performance to accomplish any task, objective or project(Cohen, 1990, p. 9).

Leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (Katz, & Kahn, 1978, p. 528).

Leadership is the initiation and maintenance of structure in expectation and interaction (Stogdill, 1974, p.411).

Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2006, p. 8)

Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals (Donelly, Ivancevich, & Gibson, 1985, p. 362).

Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose (Jacobs & Jaques, 1990, p. 281)

Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for the shared aspirations (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p. 30).

Leaders are those who consistently make effective contributions to social order, and who are expected and perceived to do so (Hosking, 1988, p. 153).

Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation (Hersey, & Blanchard, 1988, p. 86).

Leadership is typically defined by the traits, qualities, and behaviours of a leader (Horner, 1997).

Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988, p. 86).

Leadership is the ability to step outside the culture to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive (Schein, 2010).

Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2010, p.3).

Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of members...Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Any member of the group can exhibit some amount of leadership.... (Bass, 1990, p.19).

Leadership occurs when persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

However, the various definitions of leadership revealthe following ideas:

- The individual as leader, and the leader as a man,

- The leader as hero and leadership as heroism,

- The leader as decision maker,

- The leader as embodiment of character and integrity,

- The leader as provider of vision, mission goals and strategy for the enterprise, and motivating others to share those goals

- The capacity to influence, inspire and motivate others behaviour and actions (Batliwala, 2010).

- Most importantly, the core context of leadership is the personality.

Thus, leadership is a broader concept and many disciplines have interpreted it in many ways, here the focus of our study is political leadership so we will illuminate the concept and theories of political leadership in the following manner.

2.5. THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

'*Leadership*' is not just a word, it's a more complex concept, and there is no unified definition. It was first included in English dictionaries in the nineteenth century (Rost, 1991, p.18). Yet concepts closely connected with leadership are fundamental to many texts of political philosophy. Leadership pervades the familiar concepts of sovereignty, ruling, and representation. In its broadest sense, leadership is central to all human social activity: 'Leaders determine or clarify goals for a group of individuals and bring together

the energies of members of that group to accomplish those goals' (Keohane, 2010, p.23). Political leadership is an especially prominent example of this behaviour, the type that springs to mind when most of us think about leadership. The concept of power and authority is closely connected with, specifically, political leadership; leaders generally exercise power; but not all powerful persons are leaders. Authority is attained by performance. Yet not all political leaders have formal positions of authority, and not all persons who hold official authority provide leadership (Keohane, 2014, p.1). Political thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Lenin, Michels, Arendt, and Weber - all were defined political leaders in terms of power and authority.

Plato's conception of statesmanship or leadership is exceptionally lofty, almost godlike in its scope. Plato elaborates plans for preventing his rulers (philosopher guardians) from abusing their power over other citizens, not by external constitutional restraints on the leader's authority, but by internal restraints of character, education, and a profound sense of duty, whereas **Aristotle** concentrated on constructing a framework for the use of power (Keohane, 2014, p.3). Aristotle defines the statesman as one who 'exercises his authority in conformity with the rules imposed by the art of statesmanship and as one who rules and is ruled in turn' (Barker, 1995, p.1252a). According to Aristotle, as ruler/statesman and as the citizen shall show a distinctive art or skill. To him, men must learn to be ruled as well as learn to lead by having good followers. The distinctive form of skill or excellence that sets the citizen as statesman or leader apart from the same citizen in his capacity as follower is practical wisdom—prudence, or good judgement. This shared prudential leadership, exercised only within a constitutional framework.**Marcus Tullius Cicero** gives his highest praise to 'a ruler who is good and wise and versed in all that contributes to the advantage and prestige of the state. He favours a mixed form of governance (combining elements of kingship, aristocracy, and democracy) where the leader's political skill shall be the merits of the nobler classes, and the rights of the many are all accommodated. Also, Cicero acknowledges the role of luck in obtaining and maintaining power. **Machiavelli** provides the paradigmatic statement in the Western political tradition of the view that effective leadership is personal, powerful, and, to a large degree, unconstrained. Actually, he believed that the success of the individual prince in obtaining and retaining power (Keohane, 2014, p.4). Machiavelli notes that the success of rulers

depends on their innate abilities (*virtù*)—qualities such as courage, decisiveness, good judgement, and ruthlessness—but also by luck (*fortuna*) (Skinner & Price, 1988).

Montesquieu favoured representative forms of governance where representatives of the people undertake what they cannot do for themselves. He asserts that a monarch should hold executive power because of the need for rapid and expeditious action; the legislative power should be exercised by the people's representatives. He also talked about the restraints, as the legislative restrained by executive power, and the executive is by the legislative' (Keohane, 2014, p.6). **Rousseau** combines absolute popular sovereignty with effective political leadership provided by a few (Keohane, 2014, p.10). He was referring the rule by a small number of wise men rather than a monarch, believing that monarchs will inevitably abuse their power. To prevent such an outcome, instead of Montesquieu's system of elaborate institutional checks and balances, Rousseau preserves the legislative sovereignty of the community assembled as a whole. Rousseau was insistent that the people are the only appropriate sovereign in any state though he believed that ordinary people are not good at making complex political decisions (Keohane, 2014, p.6). His goal is to find a way to bring them together in a form of leadership that will provide both effectiveness and accountability. Like Montesquieu, **Michels** also had little faith in the political competence of ordinary people or their potential for sustained political involvement. From the viewpoint of him, leadership is about making and implementing decisions for large numbers of other people (Keohane, 2014, p.7).**Lenin** agreed with Michels on the 'technical indispensability of leadership' (Keohane, 2014, p. 8). In the view of Lenin, the political consciousness necessary to make a revolution would never emerge spontaneously among the working class; it must be brought to them 'from without', by a small group of enlightened, battle-tested leaders (Lenin, 1929, p. 32). Lenin asserted firmly that 'professional revolutionists' are essential to making a successful revolution, a 'stable organization of leaders to maintain continuity' (Lenin. 1929, p. 116). 'Without the "dozen" of tried and talented leaders.....professionally trained, schooled by long experience and working in perfect harmony, no class in modern society is capable of conducting a determined struggle' (Lenin. 1929, p. 114). **Arendt** asserts that political power can only be a pluralistic gathering of perspectives and wills (Keohane, 2014, p.10). Arendt's theory can be read as describing a 'leaderless' form of political activity. She can also be interpreted, however, as presenting an alternative theory of leadership. Instead of identifying 'ruling' over others as the distinctive activity of

political leadership, Arendt describes a situation in which citizenscollectivelycraft solutions to common problems, define and clarify their common goals, and mobilize the energies of their community to act in concert. No one is ruling and no one is being ruled, instead, Rousseau's vision of a truly democratic decision making process is developed in a direction that proved very fruitful for later theorists of deliberative democracy (Keohane, 2014, p.8). **Weber** emphasizes the lonely initiative of the leader constrained by his own internal judgement and sense of responsibility (Keohane,2014, p. 10). Weber asserted that anyone who holds political power needs three qualities: 'passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion'. Passion in this sense means serving a cause, having a goal larger than your own advancement as a leader. A good leader, however, does not just pursue such a passion single-mindedly. The leader must also be aware of his responsibility for those he leads and for the state, and show a sense of proportion in pursuing the chosen purpose. For Weber, the sense of responsibility is so crucial to leadership because a leader cannot just step away and refuse to decide; he is responsible for the society he leads and has to take one course or another, even when every alternative is fraught with moral ambiguity (Keohane, 2014, p.9). A leader is also 'responsible for what may become of himself under the impact of these paradoxes', once he 'lets himself in for the diabolic forces lurking in all violence' (Gerth and Mills,1958, p. 125). Also, for Weber, proportion is 'the decisive psychological quality of a politician: his ability to let realities work upon him with inner concentration and calmness. The leader must be able to step back and look coolly at his own behaviour (Keohane, 2014, p.9).

However, Plato had depicted leadership as rooted in the military duty of the guardians to protect the state. Machiavelli asserted that the first business of the prince should always be preparation for war, and Lenin saw his vanguard party as an embattled group of revolutionary leaders. Weber, like Plato, appears to assume that the structures are less likely to be effective than the internal character and motivations of a political actor dedicated to providing responsible leadership for his community (Keohane, 2014, p.9).

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2010), a leader is variously 'a person who commands a group, organization, or country: a member of the government officially responsible for initiating business in Parliament', or 'the person or team that is winning a sporting competition at a particular time' (Shore, 2014, p.2). From an anthropological perspective, political leadership is a system of social relationships involving authority,

charisma and other forms of personal or institutional power, whose rules are specific to, and embedded within, particular cultural contexts. Anthropologists have long recognized that leadership as an institution hinges on culturally specific and relational understanding of authority, or, as Sahlins (Sahlins, 1963, p. 290) put it, 'leadership is a creation of followership' acquired by demonstrating that the leader 'possesses the kind of skills that demand respect'. Max Weber's classical distinction between 'legal rational', 'traditional', and 'charismatic' ideal typical forms of authority continues to inform most anthropological analyses of leadership. Legitimate authority in every society constitutes a type of power in which leaders (as rulers) successfully uphold the claim that they govern in accord with law or tradition and in which people willingly obey commands because they perceive the exercise of power to be legitimate (Shore, 2014, p. 3). Bailey (Bailey, 1988, p. 5) states, more specifically, political leadership is the art of controlling followers through the strategic mobilization of morality, rituals, and symbols (Shore, 2014, p. 8). Being an art, it necessarily requires 'cultural capital'—or talent. Stanley Renshon developing this idea (Renshon, 2000, p. 200) uses the term 'leadership capital' to highlight the way the competences and capacities for the performance of leadership are 'deeply embedded in and reflective of the cultures in which they operate'. Prime ministers and presidents are not only speaking for their countries; they often symbolize them too. When institutions fail to work properly, it is often put it down to a 'problem of leadership'—yet people still look to leadership to solve the problems. Political leaders are expected to be adept performers in that social field called the 'political stage', or 'public life' (Shore,2014, p. 2).   However, leadership, as a field of study, focuses in understanding the qualities, abilities, and behaviour that make for effective leadership.

Furthermore, understanding political leadershipthrough the lens of leaders takes one to the province of psychology. It rests on the idea that it matters who governs us. It entails an agent-centred view of politics and government. In other words, public debates and decisions are shaped by the views, drives, skills, and styles of individuals who occupy formal office (Hart, and Rhodes, 2014, p.3). From a political psychology perspective, leadership is an umbrella concept that can be understood only by examining these ingredients in combination (Hermann, 2014, p.8).

From the feminists perspective political leadership is also power relationship. Feminists defines leadership is a gendered concept, in addition to power-as-domination, feminist

work has looked at power-as-empowerment and power-as-the-ability to work in concert, or power-to and power-with (Allen, 1998, p. 32). In other words, they are looking for power as the ability to work together or fight against oppression, rather than just to dominate or oppress (Dahl, 2000, p. 475–94). This sort of power can be seen as deconstructive of top-down, coercive forms of leadership, and provide direction towards cooperative, empathetic, bottom-up forms of leadership (Sjoberg, 2014, p.8).

In recent decades, the development of representative democracy on a large scale has created new forms of popular participation. Nonetheless, governance by a small number of leaders continues to be a defining characteristic of our political associations (Keohane,2014, p.1). To many scholars democratic practice cannot do without leadership. Modern democracies depend on at least some kind of political leadership (Blondel, 1987). In contemporary democratic regimes, in which political leadership has become vested in the executive branch of government in particular, power is subjected to a series of limits and constraints. Democratic leadership is embedded in an institutional context that aims to prevent corruption and the abuse of power and to ensure that leaders are responsive to their followers, through a variety of accountability mechanisms (Hendriks, 2014, p.2).

However, the concept of political leadership reveals the following ideas:

- Political leadership is closely connected with power and authority.

- Political leadership extents the concepts of sovereignty, ruling, and representation.

- It rests on the idea that who governs us.

- It entails an agent-centred view of politics and government.

- It is a system of social relationships involving power, authority, charisma, abilities, views, behaviours and the style of individual (who occupy formal office) as well.

- It also determines the success and failure of political institutions.

- Finally, political leadership is an art of controlling followers through the strategic mobilization of morality, rituals, and symbols.

2.5.1. THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

In the study of leadership, there are various types of theories, is detailed below:

Sl. No	THEORIES	PARAMETERS	CORE-THEME (MAIN IDEA)
1.	**Great Man Theory**	**1**. Leadership ability is innate. **2**. Motive is welfare of mankind. 3. Hereditary qualities of leadership.	Based on the belief that leaders are exceptional people, born with innate qualities, destined to lead. Advocates of this theory believe that leaders are God gift to mankind and they have come on earth for seeking welfare of mankind by using their gifted qualities. No one else can become such a great leader because these qualities of leadership cannot be acquired through formal education and training. It is also assumed that the set of qualities which the leader uses for influencing others are entirely his personal possession which he must have received from his family members and cannot transfer it to others. Great Man was born not made.
2.	**Trait Theory**	**1**. Physical factors of leaders (height, appearance, age, etc.). **2.** Aspects of personality of leaders (self-esteem, dominance, emotional stability, conservatism, etc.). **3.** Aptitudes of leaders (general intelligence, fluency of speech, creativity, etc).	The Trait approach focuses on the leader himself. Trait theories emphasize the personal qualities of leaders and focus attributes that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. The basic assumption of this approach is that leaders tend to be bigger and brighter than the rest of the members of the society, and therefore, they are characterized by distinct physical, intellectual and personality traits which enable them to exercise influence over the followers.
3.	**Behavioural Theory**	**1.** Behavioural patterns of leaders. **2.** What leaders actually do, how they	The Behavioural Theory concentrates on what leaders actually do rather than on their qualities. Different patterns of

		motivate subordinates, how they communicated, how they carried out their task.	behaviour are observed and categorised as 'styles of leadership'. From the point of view of the subordinate, leadership is experienced as a 'style'. Researchers were particularly interested in identifying leader behaviours that enhanced the effectiveness of subordinates. In leader behaviour theories, the focus was on what leaders did, how they delegated the tasks, how they communicated, how tried to motivate their subordinates, how they carried out their tasks, and so on. The theories underline that the behaviours can be learnt and an individual trained in the appropriate leadership behaviours would be able to lead more effective.
4.	**Situational/ Contingency Theory**	**1.** Leadership style depends on the situation. **2.** Leaders may change their behavioural patterns or way of functioning by the demand of the situation.	This theory sees leadership as specific to the situation in which it is being exercised. For example, whilst some situations may require an autocratic style, others may need a more participative style. It also proposes that there may be differences in required leadership styles at different levels in the same organisation. The Situational theory subscribes to the notion that a leader can change his behavioural patterns demanded by needs of the situation. The Contingency theory is a refinement of the situational viewpoint and focuses on identifying the situational variables which best predict the most appropriate or effective leadership style to fit the

			particular circumstances.
5.	**Path-Goal Theory**	**1.** Leaders clarify paths to goal attainment. **2.** Leaders decide the behavioural patterns of subordinates for goal accomplishment.	The Path-Goal Theory of Leadership is a direct extension of the expectancy theory of motivation. This theory of Leadership arguing that the principal function of a leader is to make valuable organisational awards available in the workplace and to clarify for the subordinates the kinds of behaviour that will lead to goal accomplishment and valued awards. In other words, the leader should clarify paths to goal attainment.
6.	**Functional Theory**	**1.** Main function of leader is to help the groups or subordinates because leader emerges as a consequence of the needs of a group of people.	The functional perspective interprets leadership in terms of functions to be performed in helping the groups not in terms of qualities inherent in certain persons. The functionalists regard that the leader emerges as a consequence of the needs of a group of people and of the nature of the situation within which that group is to function.
7.	**Motivation Theory**	**1.** Motivate subordinates to achieved designed goals as well as rewards.	Based on the assumption that the effective leader can increase subordinates motivations by. (a.) Clarifying subordinate perception about the goals of work. (b.) Explaining how goals and designed rewards can be achieved, (Linking meaningful words with goal attainment).
8.	**Life Cycle Theory**	**1.** Association of subordinates with the leader through telling, selling, participating and delegating. **2.** Effective leadership depends upon the maturity of	Contends that the most effective leadership style depends upon the maturity of subordinates. The theory defines maturity, not as age or emotional stability, but as desire for achievement, a willingness to accept responsibility and task related

		subordinates that means a willingness to accept responsibility and task related experiences and ability.	experience and ability. The leadership style is described by the association between superior and subordinates through a "life cycle" of four phases: Telling, Selling, Participating, and Delegating.
9.	**Acceptance Theory or Followership Theory**	**1.** Acceptance and satisfaction of subordinates is most important. **2.** Leader must be a person who is able to fulfil follower's basic needs.	The theory asserts that followers are important in deciding whether a person is a leader or not. If followers accept a person their leader he is leader irrespective of his traits or behaviour. According to this theory, followers must form groups. The theory cannot be applied without group of followers. The theory is based on the assumption that groups have certain basic needs which they want to fulfil through their leader. A person who is successful in satisfying their basic needs is assumed to be their leader. On the contrary, if he does not succeed in getting their needs satisfied he can neither said to be a good leader nor he will be allowed to function as such. The major weaknesses of this theory are that it ignores the quality aspect of leadership.
10.	**System Theory**	**1.** Leader combined the efforts of the people to achieve the goals. **2.** It considers all the variables present at the same time, i.e. leader, follower's situation, goals, leadership traits, environment and group's nature, characteristics and	It follows that leadership is a sole behaviour which co-ordinates the efforts of the people and stimulates them towards the achievement of their goal in a particular situation. It considers all the variables present at the same time, i.e. leader, follower's situation, goals, leadership traits, environment and group's nature, characteristics and needs, role, behaviour of the leader and his coordinating efforts. This theory

		needs, role, behaviour of the leader and his coordinating efforts.	is recognized as the modern theory of leadership and it is more acceptable to followers.
11.	**Group and Exchange Theory**	**1.** Positive exchange between the leader and the followers in order to achieve group goals. **2.** Rewards given by the leader to the subordinates in form of praise, increase in pay, promotion, etc. help in the accomplishment of group goals. **3.** The rewards have a positive impact on attitudes, satisfaction and performance of the followers, who in turn give due regard and respect tothe leader.	According to this theory, there must be a positive exchange between the leader and the followers in order to achieve group goals. It stated that the leader provides more benefits to the followers who help him to achieve the goals of the organisation on or the leader may consider followers as burden or cost. The rewards given by the leader in form of praise, increase in pay, promotion, etc. help in the accomplishment of group goals. The rewards have a positive impact on attitudes, satisfaction and performance of the followers, who in turn give due regard and respect tothe leader. The leader emphasizes initiating structure when followers do not perform well, and on the contrary leader increases his emphasis on consideration when followers perform the job well. Thus, to this theory, if the exchange between leader and followers is positive, it leads to mutually beneficial relationship.
12.	**Nurturing-Task Theory**	**1.** Leader demands task performance and maintains a high level of productivity. **2.** Leaders also show care and affection for the well-being of their people and are committed to their professional growth. Such leader also plays	The nurturing-task (NT) leadership style has two components: concern for the task and nurturing orientation towards the subordinates. A nurturing task leader demands task performance and maintains a high level of productivity. However, such leaders also show care and affection for the well-being of their people and are committed to

		a pattered role and encourages participation as well as understands expectations of subordinates.	their professional growth. Such leader also plays a pattered role and encourages participation. He understands expectations of his subordinates. He knows that they realise dependency and personalized relationship, accept his authoring and look towards him for guidance and direction.
13.	**Crucible Theory**	**1.** An absorbing event or experience, which transforms an individual into a leader.	It has given importance to crucibles in the formation of leadership. A 'crucible' (an absorbing event or experience, which transforms an individual) is critical in the development of leaders. A crucible can be a tragedy such as war, death of a loved one, losing an election, or a joyous experience.
14.	**Attribution Theory**	**1.** Leader as a processor of information. **2.** Leader find out factors which affect subordinate's behaviour.	The attribution theory depicts the leader as a processor of information. The attribution leader determines whether the subordinate behaviour was caused by the subordinate, by the nature of task, or by the nature of work situation. In other words, the leader must categorize the subordinate behaviour into the three dimensions: (1) person, (2) entity task, and (3) context.
15.	**Transactional Theory**	**1.** Leader - follower relationship. **2.** Mutual benefits that mean rewards given by leaders to follower and in return received loyalty of the followers.	This theory emphasises the importance of the relationship between leader and followers, focusing on the mutual benefits derived from a form of 'contract' through which the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the commitment or loyalty of the followers.
16.	**Transformatio nal Theory**	**1.** Leaders try to accommodate with the	The central concept here is change and the role of leadership in

| | | changes in the environment. 2. Leader looks for new direction. 3. The aim is the empowerment of the followers and their involvement in the organisational process as well as the encouragement of self-confidence and autonomy. 4. Shift goals from personal interests and security to greater good. | envisioning and implementing the transformation of organisational performance. Transformational leadership is a process in which the leaders take actions to try to increase their associates' awareness of what is right and important, to raise their associates' motivational maturity and to move their associates to go beyond the associates' own self-interests for the good of the group, the organization, or society. Such leaders provide their associates with a sense of purpose that goes beyond a simple exchange of rewards for effort provided. |

Source: Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, and Dennison, 2003, A Review of Leadership Theory and Competency Frameworks; Leadership: Theoretical Framework, 2013; Bryman, 1992; &Leadership Theories. Retrieved from
https://refubium.fu-berlin.de/bitstream/handle/fub188/8415/02_Kap2.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

In the above we have discussed about the several theories of leadership and found that woman values have been overlooked and there is no such theory which incorporated women qualities. However, now we will focus on feminist arguments on leadership.

2.5.2. FEMINIST STANDPOINT ABOUT LEADERSHIP

The above mentioned core ideas of leadership are related to masculine leadership and create stereotypes, therefore, it can be deduced that the concept of leadership is a gendered concept. The characteristics attributed to leadership are those associated with masculinity. There is a substantial co-relation between characteristics that define a good man and characteristics that define a good leader. Many women have met or almost met the criteria of masculinity had some success as political leaders (e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Condoleeza Rice, Madeline Albright, Golda Meir etc). Therefore, men are assumed to have leadership capacity while women's masculinity is doubted until proven (Sjoberg, 2009).

Generally, the word 'sex' means biological differences between 'women' & 'men'. The word 'gender' describes socially constituted differences between those perceived to be

women and those perceived to be men. In other words 'sex' is a term that describes different biological characteristics and 'gender' describes the social perceptions born of those perceived biological differences (Sjoberg, 2009). Social gender categories can be classified as masculinities and femininities, where masculinities are characteristics associated with perceived manhood and femininities are characteristics associated with perceived womanhood. Masculinities and femininities are constituted by behaviour expectations, stereotypes, and rules which apply to persons because they are understoodto be membersof particular sex categories (Enloe, 2004). The definition of gender as 'assumed' group characteristics makes it clear that gender is a social construction. Quite opposite is true, social construction such as gender construct social life (Prugl, 1999).

However, in gender discourse, some characteristics are generally associated with masculinity and others with femininity. Characteristics associated with masculinity include strength, objectivity, power, autonomy independence, rationality and aggressiveness and characteristics associated with femininity include weakness, sympathy, marginality, dependence, emotion and passivity. Men are associated with the public sphere i.e. work, politics and public life, while women are associated with private sphere i.e. motherhood, the household and the bedroom. Men are the protectors while women are the people that men protect (Sjoberg, 2009). A leader is denoted as the one who is like a lion, fearless, physically strong and ready to take challenges. The attributes that a leader has is socially constructed to match with a biological male whereas, femininity is socially constructed as physically weak, timid someone to be protected and guided which as attributes do not match with the definition of a leader.

Traditional definitions of leadership emerged at a time when both political leadership and the scholars who studied it were almost exclusively male (Sjoberg, 2009). It is of this reason that gender related social conceptions female and femininity remain neglected in our concepts of leadership and males and masculinities became the central account of leadership.

Naturally, we look at the concept of leadership through a 'gender lenses'. The gender lenses 'focus on gender as a particular kind of power- relation'. Gender lenses also focus on the everyday experiences of women as women and highlight the consequences of their unequal social position (Steans, 1998, p.5). Women though very few in numbers, who do lead are often neglected in the discussions of leadership or treated differently than their

male colleagues. Studies of female leaders show that their personal lives receive substantially more attention than those of male leaders, and that their leadership capacity is more likely to be questioned for the same decision that a male colleague makes (Tickner 1992, 2001; Sjoberg 2006; Sjoberg and Gentry 2007; Duerst- Lahti and Kelly 1995a).

The definitions of '*feminine leadership*' recognize that women bring different qualities to leadership, with a greater attention to collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making and above all relationship building (Batliwala, 2010,p.7). Studies that have discussed women leadership have often done so within the constraints of the traditional interpretations of both femininity and leadership.

Consequently, masculine character of leadership definitions produced leadership theories or approaches which are naturally masculine in nature. Theories/approaches were made in the consideration of maleness character of leaders where women consideration had been massively neglected. Studies of leadership often neglect women who are leaders. Leadership is not only sex-specific but also gender specific. There is a bias against women in political leadership even when women have the same traits as male leaders. As D'Amico and Beckman pointed out, there is actually a higher burden of proof of masculinity on women leaders than there is on male leaders. Gendered power plays a role in leadership opportunities and judgments about the quality of leadership. Therefore, it must be said that on the basis of above mentioned leadership discourse a woman can be a leader when she can convince her constituency that she is as capable as a man in areas traditionally understood as domains of masculine prowess. Leadership will not be un-gendered until our understandings of successful leadership account for and deal with gender assumptions (Sjoberg, 2009).

2.6. REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP IN POLITICS

Representation and leadership, both are requisite concept in the study of politics and we must understand that both are not simple concept, there is no single definition about these. The concept of representation becomes meaningful with the introduction of modern representative democratic political system but leadership is an indigenous concept. The concept of political representation,traditional as well as modern, relates to the formal procedures of authorization and accountability, in fact it means particularly acting for others (Pitkin). More precisely, in the modern state political representation meant

representation of elected persons, are the members of a legislature with power, collectively, to make laws and determine national policies. Thus, the political representation relates to responsiveness, accountability and authorizations and it is supposed to believe that political representatives tend to secure governmental action in the interest of those whom they are represented (Pennock).Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals; and the political leadership is a system of social relationships involving power, authority, charisma, abilities, views, behaviours and the style of individual who occupy formal office as well.Here, we would focus on the question that why both the concepts are require to understand properly the theory of political process.

In feminist thought,women's exclusion from politics has been criticised and focus has been given on their inclusion in politics. So, to feminist scholars participation and representation are considered as significant means to include women in politics, though both are different perspectivesand may be interpreted as two different models to include women in politics in order to give them 'a voice and a vote'(Marques, Pereira and Siim, 2002).Participation is a means to include women in politics 'from below'and representation is another means to include women 'from above' in political institutions.By the right to vote women can be participated in politics but without the right to be elected they are not fully exercising their capacity to be representative.

Feminist scholarship has challenged the dominant principles of political representation and has introduced new visions of democracy that allow for the inclusion of women as well as marginalized social groups (Young, 1990; Philips, 1993, 1995). In this regard, election plays a crucial role, firstly, as an agent of mobilization whereby it works to educate people politically; and secondly, as a means to elect representatives for the representation of different group interestsin formal political institutions. Until early 1990s, gender identity was not an issue in political representation. During the 1990s feminist scholars have analysed demands for gender quotas and parity as a means to include women in politics, place women's concerns, interests and social perspectives on the political agenda and transform political institutions (Philips, 1995). The political arena is no longer limited to the competition for political power. It has today become one of the places where identities are expressed and recognised. In this context parity and quota can therefore be interpreted not as the response to a crisis of representation, rather one of the

reflections of the claim for political equality. Anne Phillips introduced the notion of 'the politics of presence' (1995) institutionally reflected in parity and quota as a means of 'democratizing the public'(Marques, Pereira and Siim,2002, p.174).More broadly speaking, in recent decades, a significant number of political parties have taken steps to increase the representation of women in national assemblies, often by introducing gender quotas. Phillipsactually proposesfour key arguments: *first is the role model that successful women politicians offer; the **second** is principles of justice between the sexes; **third** is to identify particular interests of women that would otherwise be overlooked; and the **last** key argument is that to see women as introducing new forms of political behaviour.* The case for quotas depends on the idea that interests are gendered, but should not presume a unitary set of women's interests. The use of quotas raises new questions about the accountability of representatives to their constituents(Phillips, 2003).The quota is exactly a means to open up a space where women can acquire the necessary expertise that has been denied to them (Hust,2004, p. 31). Though, there are various critical points raised against gender-quotas, some critics oppose gender-quotas as affirmative action which refer to women's lack experience whereas some concerned with social divisiveness; and some expressed doubt that quotas do not guarantee women's interests or needs will be addressed in the political bodies.

In this context, arise relevant questions: Whether quotas or equal gender representation in political institutions is a key to gender equalityor not? Whether elected women representatives would also promote women's interests or not? The question of accountability is still open. At an intuitive level, an increase in the number of women elected seems likely to change both the practices and priorities of politics, increasing the attention given to matters of child care, for example. But what does it mean in terms of political representation? Elections are typically organised by geographical constituencies, which hardly ever coincide with concentrations of women or men. In the case that elections are held on a party basis (what Phillips assumes for democracies in the West and at national level), the candidates are assumed to represent a party's interests. In what sense then can the women elected through this process carry the additional responsibility to represent women? (Hust,2004, p.38).

Yet, there is already some empirical evidence from Western democracies that female legislators do indeed promote women's issues, though this evidence is sometimes

contested. Wangnerud (2000) has argued that studies conducted by men normally declare gender differences among politicians to be insignificant, whereas female researchers found that women did indeed make a gender-specific contribution to policies. Dahlrup, who studied the effect of women increased presence in Nordic politics, came to the conclusion that though it is difficult to isolate the effect of the growth in women's political representation from the general social development, certain changes can be directly attributed to the increase in women's political representation. Among these are a lessening of the stereotyping of women, the creation of new role models of women in public life, a change in some social conventions (though the main features of the political culture remain untouched), and the removal of open resistance against women politicians (Dahlrup, 1988, p.295). Furthermore, Lena Wangnerud (2000) has empirically tested that women do represent women's interest (defined as the recognition of women as social category; the acknowledgement of the unequal balance of power between sexes; and the occurrence of politics to increase the autonomy of female citizens) more than their male colleagues in the Swedish Riksdag (The Riksdag is the unicameral national legislature and the supreme decision-making body of Sweden). Empirically, this was measured by female verses male attitudes and behaviour in areas such as gender equality and social welfare policy. Pippa Norris and John Lovenduski (2001) got a similar result from a survey carried out in British Parliament after the election of 1997 (Tony Blair elected as the British Prime Minister). They found that on the scales related to women's interests, namely affirmative action and gender equality, women and men differed significantly across party lines. Concerning other issues like free market economy or stand towards the European Union, however, party affiliation proved to be more significant than gender. Sarah Childs (2001) has excluded the party factor, but found in a qualitative survey of 33 newly elected Labour women MPs in the 1997 British Parliament that more than two-thirds are 'attitudinally feminist'. Also in Norway several studies since the mid-1980s have indicated a consensus among the political leadership that gender makes a difference in politics. A series of issues were specified where women differ from men, which included representational politics, labour market politics, body politics and care politics. However, also in Norway, party alliances are maintained as the primary political identification (Skjeie, 2001). Thus, there is empirical evidence that some women's interests are more likely to be pursued by women than by men in politics, though on established political issues gender might not be the decisive factor. However, it is not so easy to know beforehand whether and where party loyalty or the autonomy of the

representative might succeed, especially when we look at politics across different cultures (Hust,2004, p.38-39).

In principle, the autonomy of the representative is immensely significant, though representatives are party members and the party discipline is more important in Western democracies. Nonetheless, critics argue that in many countries especially rural countryside, women are not autonomous in their decision making usually they are depicted as proxies and dependent on the wishes of influential males as well. The concept of autonomy is the core content of Western notions of individualism though there is found identified regional differences.

In respect of leadership, we can remember the concept of what Phillips called role models that elected successful women can serve. Inspiring by such role models many women do believe themselves to be capable of performing well in politics. When more women become present in politics and they could serve as role models as a result they inspire others to come forward. We can expect with this fuller inclusion of previously excluded groups will alter the direction of policy or the content of the decisions that are made as well as the way politics is done (Hust, 2004. p. 36). The point is that transformation of politics would provide the way to open up a space where new range of policy options will be included. For instance, citizens can pressure political parties to take new issues and once these issues are on the agenda then they can use the ballot box to punish those who still ignore them (Hust,2004, p.38), in that way new ideas will be included in political bodies and later turns into public policy.

In connection with the argument for the transformation of politics, some feminists have argued from a completely different direction. They argue against the dominance of interest group politics and believe that this would be challenged by the inclusion of women. They expect women politicians to introduce a different set of values and concerns. This view has a long-standing tradition in feminist thought, and is also seen in recent developments. In the West, this is captured by, for example, the concept of a 'politics of care' (Jean Bethke Elshtain, 1990 & 1993) focused on the implication of motherhood and caring for women's political role. This belief is grounded in assumptions that the traditional role of women and the socialization of girls as caretaker of the family, as nurture and guardian of dependents, be it children or the elderly, leads to a different way of dealing with politics. Women are supposed to be more concerned about the

common good; their style of doing politics would be less aggressive. Some believe that women are more co-operative and concerned about the environment and sustaining the community (e.g. Vandana Shiva's notion of 'eco-feminism' in India)(Hust,2004, p.40). Also, in discussing about the gender inequality in the study of international relations, feminist thinker *J. Ann Tickner* talked about different qualities of women than men soldiers and the diplomats of realpolitik, such as the quality of mediation, quality of finding cooperative solutions and the quality of caring for others as well. She granted greater values to these women's qualities and advocating for more women in positions of power. While Cynthia Enloe clearly explained in her works *Bananas, Beaches &Bases*, &*The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire*, women are still in disadvantageous position in international politics, economy and military bases even feminists perspectives is invisible in the account of international relations in spite of their significant contributions in shaping stable political and military relations among nations. Enloe shows in her writing the existence of major arenas of gendered international politics where women qualities had been completely ignored. Although Tickner tries to avoid essentialize stereotypical traits of 'masculine' or the 'feminine', she actually wants to erase constructions of gender difference and to create a concept of security which is non-gendered (Griffiths,1999). Furthermore, it is also voiced in India that women possess moral power (shakti) which renders them not, or less, corrupt and women would thus introduce cleaner politics (Hust,2004, p.40). The 'womanly values' of temperance, purity, peace and caring make women more able than men in order to promotes the common interest and improve the standard of public life and to provide the caring qualities for effective constituency work.

Anne Phillips is rather unconvinced by those types of arguments that propose a female superiority in moral terms, and she was proved right at least in the study's investigation concerning corruption. One reason is that this expectation overburdens the elected women representatives with a responsibility that only very few see themselves able or willing to shoulder. Furthermore, it is not advisable to base the argument for an inclusion of women into politics on premises that they will be 'better' politician than men. Are such arguments really necessary? Why do women need to be better than men to qualify for a political office? It does not mean that women will not introduce changes in the political process, but we cannot know beforehand what these changes will look like. One should also be cautious concerning the magnitude of these changes. As mentioned above,

Dahlerup had pointed out that though changes occurred because of a greater number of women being present in Scandinavian politics, the basic political culture has not changed (Dahlrup, 1988,p.295). There are definitely social differences between men and women that do result from their different responsibilities and social locations, and one can expect that these also translate into different approaches to politics and power (Hust,2004, p.41). But Phillips makes us aware that *'[t]hese initial differences may be far outweighed by the common experiences men and women will later share in making their way through political life. I incline to the view that politics is more formative than sex, and that the contrast between those who get involved in politics and those who do not is deeper difference between those who are elected'* (Phillips, 1995,p. 75).

This down-to-earth view is much more appealing and should be taken seriously if we do not want to get severely disappointed. It is important to take into consideration the formative power of the political system in which the women have to act. But, there is no guarantee that women's needs or interests will be addressed when the gender composition of political bodies will be change (Hust,2004, p.41). Phillip's statement on the effect of a quota for women makes the matter more clear: *It is possible-if highly unlikely- that assemblies composed equally of women and men will behave just like assemblies in which women have a token presence; it is possible- and perhaps vey likely- that they will address the interests of certain groups of women while ignoring the claims of others. The proposed change cannot bring with it a certificate of interests addressed or even a guarantee of good intent. In this, as in all areas of politics, there are no definite guarantees* (Phillips, 1995, p. 82). Despite, changing the composition of decision making bodies is especially important because women's interest are not precisely demarcated and might only be developed and formulated once women are also drawn into the political process (Hust,2004, p.38). However, structural transformations are slow to happen where the quota can be worked as an instrument to accelerate the motion of change.

Phillips stated in *'The Politics of Presence'* (1995) that in the understanding of traditional liberal democracy representation more or less depends on how well it reflects the opinions or preferences or beliefs of the voters where the personal characteristics of the representatives – gender, race or other social attributes- are not important. Here we should turn our focus towards, what Phillips noted, the shift from direct to representative democracy where the emphasis shifted from 'who' the politicians are to 'what' (policy,

preferences, ideas) they represent. Thus, themechanism of accountability to the electorate becomes the main concern of representation. Where such processes are successful, the discretion and autonomy of representatives would be reduced and it seems also to minimize the importance of who the politician is or the representative is (Phillips, 1995). Considering this explanation we should reconsider the concept of leadership disregarding the notion of gender, as mentioned earlier the concept of leadership is a gendered concept. Studies of leadership often neglect women who are leaders. If we remember what Phillips noted, *politics is more formative than sex*(i.e. formative power of the political system) then it can be expected, in the discourse of leadership a woman can be a leader without attaining the, traditionally defined, masculine characteristics (e.g. strength, aggressiveness, power etc) and without convincing others that she is capable as a man in areas traditionally understood as domains of masculine prowess rather through adding some new different values and qualities such as- greater attention to collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making and above all relationship building (Batliwala, 2010) to political system and which will provide the possibility to develop a different style of leadership based on feminine attributes. The definitions of 'feminine leadership' recognize that women bring different qualities to leadership. However, it must be said on the basis of above mentioned emphasis that we should less, or not more, concerned about the sex or gender of leaders, i.e. whether woman or man, which is in Phillip's notion 'who', rather should concern more about policy, preferences, ideas which leaders are addressing or representing , which is in Phillip's notion 'what'. When we are concerning about 'who' naturally we look at the concept of leadership through a 'gender lenses' and unconsciously promoted gender inequality to leadership studies as we done in almost all areas of politics. We must think about the characteristics of good leader not about the gender of leader. Only a good leader can able to promote the interests and needs of all masses and it possible only when we will change our understandings about the successful leadership account.

2.7. CONCLUSION

In modern representative democracies universal franchise has been recognized as a minimum standard for equality and justice in societies. Representation of women in the domain of politics is a matter of justice and democracy because all the sections of the society should have the right to participate in decision making process. However, presently in most countries it has become clear that universal suffrage did not in itself

lead to the establishment of balanced representative legislatures. Representation and leadershipcan be seen as means to involve women 'from above' in political institutions. To eradicate the problem of women's under-representation in formal political structures, feminists voiced to introduce gender quotas to increase women's political representation. Electoral gender quotas that are not just symbolic but actually are embedded in the electoral system in place may rapidly increase women's political representation, as seen in South Africa, Costa Rica, Mozambique and Argentina (Dahlerup, 2005). Feminists not only want to increase the number of women in the national legislatures, they actually tried to address the issues related to women which male politicians have overlooked. Also, feminists pointed out that in politics gender is manifested in the highlighting of major characteristics of men politicians and women politicians have to conform to gender expectations as well as the punishing of certain characteristics of women politicians that defy gender expectations. Women are under-represented in political leadership. Feminist work on political leadership across academic disciplines has asked important questions about gendered ideas of leadership as well as gendered expectations of political leaders. Gendered lenses have been used to examine how women are under-represented in positions of political leadership and to encourage consideration of 'how the epistemological and ontological bases of conceptual frameworks may misrepresent the experiences of women as leaders, thereby distorting our specific knowledge of such experiences and our general knowledge of the phenomena of leadership as gender-encompassing' (Bensimon, 1989, p. 149).

In the study of politics, representation and leadership both are important concepts in order to understand the democratic political process. To feminists, both the concepts are gendered concept where women and their role have been overlooked since the inception. People's participation, irrespective of gender, class, caste etc, is the pre-condition for the success of participatory democracy, while the means of people's participation are gendered. As a consequence of it we find that the absence of women in the decision making process. In the context of participatory and representative democracy during the 1990s feminist scholars have challenged the legitimacy of male-dominant principles of political representation and decision making.So, in the feminist political thought, women's exclusion from politics has been criticised and focus has been given on their inclusion in politics. In this regard, representation and leadership are considered as significant means to involve women in politics, focuses on women's empowerment 'from

above' in political institutions. The matter of inclusion of women into politics has been described in two respects- *justice and difference arguments*. The justice argument is about women should have equal opportunity to play a role in public decision-making process on the basis of right to equality and that may results to descriptive and symbolic presence of women in the formal political structures. This argument does not rely on the concept that women have different quality that can bring change in the behaviour of political structures and in the practice of political process. The difference argumentsencompass the view that women and men have different ideas, values, perspectives and experiences. So both genders in politics will bring a different way of doing politics as well as different policy perspectives. As we mentioned in the earlier discussion of this chapter the fact that masculinities and femininities are associated with different set of characteristics for that different values, interests and perspectives of both genders may be addressed by them, though there exists several confrontational perceptions regarding the role of male and female representatives and leaders. Difference arguments also reflect the view that if women, particularly, achieve critical mass then they will bring a different way of doing politics as well as different policy perspective. Considering the women's family roles we can say that a new approach to politics based more on consensus-seeking and consultation and less on power-aggression and head-kicking will be or has been developed with the inclusion of women in politics and that will promote democratizing the public and common interest. Women leaders exercise the power as capacity developing means and to bring changes, to empower others rather than exercising power over others. With the inclusion of women in politics not only women interests will be addressed, also womanly values (temperance, purity, peace etc) will change the nature of politics, the identities of all social marginalised class will be expressed and recognised, the power of endurance of politics will be increased, the political process will be transparent and might be corruption free or less-corrupted and most importantly women's leadership would improve the standard of public life.

Therefore, in a different way the representative roles would be performed by the women leaders that may create a way for transformative leadership rather than transactional models of political influence. Also, we should think about the inclusion of women in politics in respect of difference arguments, rather than justice arguments, which promote substantive representation. As we all know, in our social and political structures there are a higher burden of proof of masculinity on women leaders because gendered notion of

power plays an important role in leadership opportunities and judgments about the quality of leadership. In the leadership discourse, a woman can be recognised as a leader when she able to convince her constituency that she acquired the qualities of a male leader because leadership is an area as we traditionally understood the domains of masculine prowess. Feminist approaches to politics and political theory have shown gendered situations where women are yet obligated to fulfil the gender expectations. Hence, the leadership discourse will not be un-gendered until our understandings will not change about leadership account. In this regard, we should concern about the concept of good leaders rather than the gendered concept of representation and leadership. Although we must try to avoid essentialize stereotypical characteristics of the 'masculine' or the 'feminine', and should try to erase constructions of gender difference and to grant greater values to good qualities of human that may create a concept of 'Good leader' which would be non-gendered.

> ### SUMMARY:

- Representation and leadership, both are requisite concept in the study of politics. The origins of the concept of representation can be traced back to ancient times. Representation as a concept may be understood as the making present again, of some entity whether personal or abstract. Representation, in the sense of human being representing other human being is particularly a modern conception. This development could be seen mainly from the 14th century. The concept of representation is crucial to the modern representative democracies.

- Traditional as well as modern understandings of political representation are relates to responsiveness, accountability and authorizations and it is supposed to believe that political representatives tend to secure governmental action in the interest of those whom they are represented. In the context of modern democracy or representative government "political representation is understood as a way of (1) establishing the legitimacy of democratic institutions and (2) creating institutional incentives for governments to be responsive to citizens" (Political Representation, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

- The concept of representation has rise controversy among political theorists regarding 'style' and 'focus' of representatives. There is no unanimous view about the conflicting interest of representation, whether the representatives should

represent local or national interest. There are various political thinkers those who presented different views on the types of representation.

- In feminist thought the main emphasis has not been on political representation but rather on women's participation in politics and on their mobilisation and organisation in the context of civil society. Representation and participation can be seen as two different perspectives on how to include women in politics. One has focused on women's participation and empowerment 'from below' and the other on representation 'from above' in political institutions. The two perspectives may indeed be interpreted as two different models to include women in politics in order to give them 'a voice and a vote' (Marques-Pereira and Siim, 2002, p. 170).

- There is a variety of feministliterature about women's political representation and participation. Most of the literature focuses on what *Anne Phillips* has outlined as the four distinct arguments for women's equal participation in formal politics. The first is based on the belief that (a) women bring different skills to politics and provide *role models* for future generations; the second implies that (b) women appeal to *justice* between sexes; the third holds that (c) it helps in the representation of particular *interest of women* in state policy; and the fourth rely on that (d) it results in 'a *revitalised democracy* that bridges the gap between representation and participation' (Philips, 1998, p. 228).

- Leader, operationally, means a person who possessed position of power in any organization or in the formal structures of the government. Leadership pervades the familiar concepts of sovereignty, ruling, and representation. The concept of power and authority is closely connected with, specifically, political leadership. Political thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Lenin, Michels, Arendt, and Weber - all were defined political leaders in terms of power and authority. Political leadership is a system of social relationships involving power, authority, charisma, abilities, views, behaviours and the style of individual (who occupy formal office) as well. It entails an agent-centred view of politics and government. Different theories of leadership emerged on the basis of different parameters.

- From the feminists perspective political leadership is also power relationship. Feminists defines leadership is a gendered concept, in addition to power-as-domination, feminist work has looked at power-as-empowerment and power-as-the-ability to work in concert, or power-to and power-with (Allen, 1998, p. 32). In

other words, they are looking for power as the ability to work together or fight against oppression, rather than just to dominate or oppress (Dahl, 2000, p. 475–94). This sort of power can be seen as deconstructive of top-down, coercive forms of leadership, and provide direction towards cooperative, empathetic, bottom-up forms of leadership (Sjoberg, 2014, p.8).

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CHAPTER: 3

WOMEN'S ENTRY INTO POLITICS IN INDIA: A HISTORICAL REVIEW

CHAPTER OUTLINE

3.1. Introduction

3.2. Women's Political Participation in Indian Politics: The Historical Context

    3.2.1. Women in Pre-Independence Period

    3.2.2. Women in Post-Independence Period

        3.2.2.1 Women in Electoral Politics

        3.2.2.2 Comparative Assessment of Women's Participation and Representation variation across States

3.3. Conclusion

    ➤ Summary

3.1.INTRODUCTION

The movement for gender equality the world over has been one of the defining developments of our time. While women have made significant advances in many societies, women's concerns are still given second priority almost everywhere. According to the Report of the World Conference of the UN Decade for Women, Copenhagen, July 1980: "While Women represent 50 per cent of the world adult population and a-third of official labour force, they perform nearly two-thirds of all working hours, receive only a-tenth of world income and own less than one per cent of the world property". The world over women are struggling to break the shackles that bind them and challenging the unequal distribution of power in society. Transforming the existing egalitarian pattern of gender relationships necessitates leadership in the state, markets and civil society—the key centres of power in the present globalising economy. It is, therefore, imperative for women to be in the corridors of power and have the power to negotiate a better deal for themselves, if they are to influence policy decisions which have an impact upon them. Empowerment of women in all spheres, in particular the political sphere is critical for their advancement and the foundation of a gender-equal society. Women's political empowerment is premised on "three fundamental and non-negotiable principles: (a) the equality between women and men; (b) Women's right to the full development of their potentials; and (c) women's right to self representation and self-determination". In empowerment, the key indeed is 'power': it is power to 'access', 'control' and make 'informed choices'. To use an Indian expression, it is *shakti*, which is manifested through the use of a mix of power, effectiveness, capability, force and influence to challenge and transform the structures and institutions of patriarchal ideology and existing power relations. According to the Jakarta Declaration, "Empowerment of women is not only an equity consideration; it is also a necessary precondition for sustainable economic and social development. Involvement of women in the political arena and in decision-making role is an important tool for empowerment as well as monitoring standards of political performance." The applications of the philosophical underpinnings of Jakarta Declaration are necessary, because in the countries where women have gained near equal representation such as in the Scandinavian countries, they have begun to alter the very nature of politics (Fadia, p.538-40).

In India, women's status has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. From ancient times through the medieval period to modern India, the history of women has been eventful. In ancient India, reverence was given to women as mother's

image, a symbol of life, strength and purity with immense capacity for patience, sacrifice and suffering. Woman was depicted as '*Shakti*' and it was an accepted belief that where woman is respected, there is divine presence (Jharta, 1996. p.47).In modern India, women have held high offices in India including that of the President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and Leader of the Opposition. In the context of present research study, it is require assessing the history of women's involvement in freedom struggle movement and after the Independence their participation in political process and formal political structures for understanding the role of Indian women in political leadership. In this chapter, we have given a look into how women of India outdone a journey into the political domain.

3.2. WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN INDIAN POLITICS: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In the Rig-Vedic period women enjoyed a highly respectable position. The Vedic period can be called the 'Golden Age' regarding the status of Indian women. Women enjoyed a position of equality and were respected both in the family and society as well. They were imparted education like men and enjoyed a considerable freedom in their personal matters. The community as a whole showed concern and respect for them and they played a significant role in the familial, socialand political life (Jharta, 1996, p.47). There was no difference, in terms of rights of powers, between men and women. We find mention of several tribal assemblies such as the 'Sabha', Samity, Vidatha, Gana in the Rig Veda, which exercised deliberative, religious and various military functions. From the political point, 'Sabha' and 'Samity' were more important and women were allowed to attend 'the Sabha' and 'Vidatha' in the Rig Vedic times. But from the latter Vedic period to medieval period, women were reduced to a derogatory position, thought to be inferior in the quality and thus were subject to the domination of male citizens.

In the latter Vedic period 'Vidatha' was completely disappeared. Women's right to participate in 'Sabhas' was denied and replaced by nobles and Brahmins. Thus the character of the village organizations changed and women were reduced to a derogatory position. In the family an increasing power and domination of the father was also discerned. Women did not take part in political activities as actively in the later Vedic period as in the Rig-Vedic period. They did not form a part of the Sabha. However, a reference in the Atharva Veda shows that women attended Samity (Jharta, 1996, p.48).

Kings were advised not to be guided by women or to govern kingdoms with their help. Women were also deprived of political right of succession to the kingdoms. In this period, we find no example of women ruling kingdoms and taking part in politics generally (Jharta, 1996, p. 48). A small number of women theologians could only take part in philosophic discussions and some queens got the opportunity to participate in coronation rituals. But the greater chunks of women, common women, were thought to be inferior in the quality and thus were subject to the domination of male citizens (Roy, 2015).

Women's position continued to be downgraded gradually due to certain internal changes in the society in post-Vedic period. Compulsory marriage, introduction of dasi-system, specialization of Vedic education and denial of religious and therefore intellectual education to women contributed much to their degradation. Institution of marriage and family confined them to home and early marriage, lack of education and some Brahmanical notions added to their ignorance and made them dependent upon men-folk, in respect of political affairs also (Jharta, 1996. p.49). The lower status of Women continued in Mauryan and Gupta period. However, in Mauryan empire, there were women spies and women constituted the force for the personal security and safety of the king (Jharta, 1996. p. 50), which means that during this period there was a faith in the competence and faithfulness of women. In the Gupta age, also, women were not disqualified from the exercise of public rights (Jharta, 1996. p. 50).An elaborate account of people and their economic, social, and cultural life is available from the descriptions of the famous Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien (399-414 A.D.). In the Gupta period women were allowed to take part in listening to the epics and the 'puranas' (mythology) but they had no right to property. However, they sell and mortgage their immovable properties including ornaments and jewellery given to them at the wedding ceremonies. The main reason behind their subordination to men can be attributed to the complete dependence on their husbands for their livelihood and maintenance (Roy, 2015).

Though there were a few capable and intelligent women, who actively took part in politics of the land and could influence the policies of the concerned governments, the overall status of common women had worsened during the Mughal rule. Such personalities as Rani Jodha Bai, Rani Durgavati, Rani Rupmati, Nurjahan and her mother Asmat Begum, Tara Bai Jiaj Bai were exceptional but all of them belonged to rich and ruling family. Thus the greater part was uneducated and poor village women who were

exempted from participation in all kinds of public activities, not to speak of formulation and implementation of the policies (Roy, 2015).

Besides, women were considered as merely the machine of child production and an object of enjoyment by elites, nobles, and the emperors. There was a fashion to keep a large number of wives, slaves and beautiful concubines in their 'harems'. Like the Mughals, the Rajputs also adopted the same policy of keeping multiple wives. Akbar had five thousands women in his 'harem' and Raja Man Singha kept about one thousand women in his 'harem'. The Sunni Muslims could keep four wives at a time legally and Shia Muslims enjoyed the liberty to have even more than more wives. Women were not allowed to go outside without aids. They were deprived of education and thus were the victims of age-old ignorance and superstition. On the other hand, the social evils like marriages, prohibition of widow marriages, polygamy and the practice of 'Sati' (women's cremation with her dead husband)were widely prevalent in society. All these social evils made them subject to social exploitation and crippled their participation in any outside activities including politics (Roy, 2015).The disintegration of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century and the consequent political confusion added to the miseries of Indian women (Jharta, 1996, p.54).

3.2.1. WOMEN IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:

With the British rule women's position became the worst in the history of the country. The 19th century reform movement and the social renaissance initiated the process of improving the status of women. The struggle for their uplift took place mainly in making laws for social reforms; women's education; and political rights. Efforts were concentrated on the first two in the 19th and early 20th centuries whereas political rights of women were achieved during the active phase of the independence movement. The emergence of renaissance in the 19th century opened the eyes of Indian intelligentsia to the disgraceful social conditions of their own people especially that of women. They realized the shameful position of Indian women, which was nothing but a tale of suffering and humiliation from birth to death (Jharta, 1996, p.54-55).

Social reformers, who were by and large men, moved by the most pitiable conditions of women in society and felt that Indian society could not develop unless the conditions of the women improved. The crusaders in the dominant Hindu society were Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar etc. These social

reformers fought against the system of sati (women's cremation with her dead husband) purdah (veil) and child marriage. The reformers supported widow remarriage and education of women. The movement launched by these social reformers had a limited goal. Their main aim was the reform of Hindu society and women's issues were tackled from that point of view. Basically, none of the social reformers challenged the male domination of the patriarchal system. Rather, it could be said that the movement launched by them was to make the patriarchal system a bit humane. Nevertheless, the social reform movement has created some social awareness amongst women (Saxena, 1994, p. 394).

The situation improved since the 19th century when women began to participate in various movements and agitations. But most of the struggles were dominated by the women of the elites of the society. It is pointed out that, "The elite perspective is dominant, which relates women's peasant women" (Sinha, 2000, p. 70). The modern educational system and the international women's movement also influenced the women of India. After the First World War a large number of women joined India's freedom struggle. M.K. Gandhi made women an integral part of all struggles which he launched during the freedom struggle against British colonialism. Women's participation in this movement was modest and it cannot be said that these movements were women's movements because the mere presence of women in any movement cannot make it a women's movement. The freedom of the nation was important for men and women as citizens of the country and as such women were also involved in it (Saxena, 1994, p. 394).The house wives, young girls, windows, old women and even tawaifs and prostitutes directly or indirectly participated in the freedom movement of the country though most of these are unrecorded. Also, it is important to mention here that the role of tawaif (tawaifs in the North, devadasis in the South, baijis in Bengal and naikins in Goa, these professional singers and dancers were dubbed as "nautch girls" during the British rule, and their profession was conflated with prostitution in the late 19th century; Rao, 2019) in the freedom movement is remain unsung always, while tawaifs also emerged as a key source of strategic support for many of the freedom-fighters during the rebellion of 1887; the homes of the tawaifs acted as places for secret meetings, while their enormous financial clout helped sustain the struggle against colonial rule (Purohit, 2020). However, the massive participation of women in freedom struggle was largely accomplished by the call given by Gandhi in the 1920s.

Since the beginning of the 20th century women irrespective of caste, creed and social position began to participate in political activities to evict the British Raj. Gandhi encouraged women by saying that India needed women leaders who were *"pure, firm and self-controlled"* like the ancient heroines: Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi. These were heroines who had suffered at the hands of men but survived with dignity. It was these heroines Gandhi recalled when he told women who wake up and recognize their essential equality with men (Forbes, 1998, p.124).If women were to be 'free' they had to be fearless'. Gandhi rightly realised that it was more a matter of psychological fear and helplessness, culturally imposed upon women by society, than physical weakness which kept women crippled. His constant message to them was that bravery and courage were not the monopoly of men. Even if all women could not become Ranis of Jhansi they could emulate the still better example of Sita who even the mighty Ravana dared not touch (Kishwar, 1985, p. 1691). Gandhi compared the British Rulers to the demon of Ravana who abducted Sita, wife of righteous King Ram. Under colonialism the enslaved people were losing all sense of dharma (righteousness). Restoration of the rule of Ram would come only when women, emulating the faithful and brave Sita, united with against this immoral ruler (Gandhi, 1965, p. 57-58 & 391-95).

The major events where women participated in large number in the pre-independence era were - *Anti-partition Movement of Bengal* (1905), *Non-cooperation Movement* (1920-22), Salt *Satyagraha* (1930), and *Quit India Movement* (1945-47) (Roy, 2015).The Swadesi Movement aroused a strong sense of patriotism and identity among the Bengali women. Women participated in the "**Anti-Partition Movement of Bengal**" in 1905 and tried all along to increase mass participation on women in public life. Sarala Devi set up clubs for physical culture and organized 'melas'(fairs) and organized regular meetings of women for raising consciousness among them. Even some great personalities of foreign origin like Annie Besant, Margaret Cousins and Sister Nivedita played important roles in making them conscious of their position and role in the society. Under the aegis of the moderate, highly educated, rich, and urban born women the revolutionary movement against the British imperialism started to granulate in India. Madam Bhikaji Rustom K.R. Kama, the 'Mother of Indian Revolution' and Kamala Devi participated in the anti-British movement in India. Their participation in the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements against the British rule was encouraging (Roy, 2015).

In the first **Non-Cooperation Movement** of 1921, Gandhi consciously involved women in the attempt to link their struggle with the struggle for national independence. But the programme for women was devised in a way that they could remain at home and still contribute to the movement. It was with a remarkable insight that Gandhi, without challenging their traditional role in society; could make women an important social base for the movement (Bandyopadhyaya, 2009, p. 239). It was victory for Mohandas K. Gandhi and promised a more active role for women than that offered by the swadeshi vow. Congress declared April 6-13, 1921satyagraha week, and women interested in politics held meetings to show their support. At one of the several meetings which Sarojini Naidu addressed, women decided to form their own political organization. Rashtriya Stree Sangha (RSS), an independent women's organization, required its members to join the District Congress Committee. Speaking to this group in August, Urmila Devi, the widowed sister of Bengali Congress leader C.R Das, urged women to be ready to leave their homes to serve the country. By November, 1000 Bombay women were demonstrating against the Prince of Wales' visit to India. In Bengal, events took an even more dramatic turn. C.R Das along with volunteers arrested for the incident of selling Khaddar (homespun cloth) on the streets of Calcutta in spite of government's ban on political demonstrations. Then his wife, Basanti Devi, his sister, Urmila Devi, and his niece, Miss Suniti Devi took to the streets and were arrested. After that a huge crowd of 'Marwaris, Muslims, Bhatias, Sikhs, coolies, mill-hands and school boys' milled around until the police released the women. Gandhi immediately recognized the value of having women form picket lines. Writing in Young India he urged women from other parts of the country to follow the brave example of Bengali women. The arrest of respectable women was viewed as an appropriate tactic to shame men into joining the protests. Less predictable, and certainly not an intended outcome, was the way these arrests affected other women. Times were changing. Women from all provinces of British India stepped forward in response to Gandhi's call. Gandhi's appeal went beyond 'respectable' women to women marginalized by middle-class society. He had a reputation as a political leader who believed women counted and had faith in their capacity to help the nation and themselves (Forbes, 1998, p.126-27).

In addition, during the Gandhi-led non-cooperation movement from 1920 to 1922, a group of courtesans in Varanasi formed the Tawaif Sabha to support the independence struggle. Husna Bai, who chaired the sabha, urged members of the group to wear iron

shackles instead of ornaments as a symbol of protest and to boycott foreign goods. In other parts of the country too, former courtesans and prostitutes sought to participate in the freedom movement. Gandhi met a group of prostitutes in Barisal (in present-day Bangladesh) and Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), who expressed the desire to join the Indian National Congress. Gandhi urged them to give up sex work and start spinning the charkha instead. "My whole heart is with these sisters. But I am unable to identify myself with the methods adopted at Barisal," he wrote in an editorial in Young India, his weekly publication, in June 1925. "...I am firmly of opinion that, so long as they continue the life of shame, it is wrong to accept donations or services from them or to elect them as delegates or to encourage them to become members of the Congress" (Rao, 2019). The middle-class women who were participating in the movementin large numbers were uncomfortable with them, that was the reason the contribution of tawaif to freedom struggle movement remain unknown and unsung to us.

M.K. Gandhi urged women to boycott foreign cloth, spin and join in public defiance of British laws. At the same time, women's organizations were petitioning the British government for the franchise. Though Gandhi was not in favour of legal change rather he advocated celibacy of women. Saraladevi Chaudhurani, Muthulakshmi Reddy, Amrit Kaur and other women who followed Gandhi did not abandon the franchise issue. They were impressed with his empathy for women, personally committed to his vision, but unwilling to give up their work on behalf of civil rights (Forbes, 1998, p.128).Women, as part of Indian people, fought for freedom from colonial masters, but the nationalist leaders, including Gandhi, had not raised any voice against the male dominated social structure of Indian society. The humane treatment to women was in a sense the end of ideology of the women's right (Saxena, 1994, p.394).However, Gandhi helped ensure the entry of women into public life. The way of their participation in these initial years was patronized by participation of urban, middle class women in the political life of the country (Bandyopadhyaya, 2009, p.252).

In addition, Women's participation in the **Civil Disobedience Movement** of 1930-32 differed qualitatively and quantitatively from the early 1920s and won them a place in history (Forbes, 1998, p.129). The **Salt Satyagraha** marked a new high watermark of women's participation in the movement. Women's associations played an active role in violating the salt laws. Gandhi was constructing a new ideal for Indian woman and

rewrote passivity and self suffering as strength. Gujrati women living in Bombay responded to this message by forming an organization to plan and direct efforts to close shops selling foreign clothes. Bombay women's picketing and demonstrations from 1930-32 received more attention than women's activities in any other part of the country. The women's political organization, The Rastriya Stree Sangha, had remained under the presidency of Sarojini Naidu with Goshiben Naoroji Captain and Avantikabai Gokhale as vice-presidents. It stated its goals as swaraj and women's emancipation. By 1930, the leadership and structure of the RSS were sufficiently developed for it to spawn a new, smaller organization, the Desh Sevika Sangha (DSS) (Women Serving the Country) whose members were ready for action. In May 1930 with the Sevikas already picketing, Sarojini Naidu was nominated to lead the raid on the Dharasana salt works. She directed and protest and was arrested the same day and released. Her presence was symbolic both for Indian nationalists and British authorities. Many of her Indian supporters feared for her safety, but she told them: "I am here not as a woman but as a General". On May 21, Sarojini was arrested second time and sentenced to a year in prison. Her leadership inspired hundreds of women emulate her bravery by marching in the streets. Demonstrations and picketing continued in Bombay until 1931 when Gandhi was released from jail. During this time women proved their effectiveness in agitational politics. Merchants, faced with women picketing their shops, signed the pledge not to sell foreign cloth until an honourable peace had been arranged for the country. On the streets women joined men for flag-raisings and demonstrations. The Desh Sevikas organized a number of demonstrations that grabbed headlines and inspired women all over India (Forbes, 1998, p.130-35).

Also, Women of Bengal came forward at this time and participated in demonstrations. Calcutta women made and sold salt, picketed cloth and liquor shops, preached the value of Khaddar, and took processions into the streets. The capital city was also the heart of revolutionary struggle and women's colleges became centers for recruiting new members. In district towns and villages women joined processions, wore khaddar, and hid fleeing revolutionaries. In this setting Gandhi's influence was no greater than that of prominent local leaders. Bengali nationalism had always valorised violence and this ethos profoundly influenced the participation of Bengali women in the freedom struggle.In 1928, the first formal organization Mahila Rastriya Sangha (MRS) formed to mobilize women for political work in Bengal. Latika Ghosh, an Oxford-educated teacher, founded

this organization because Subhas Chandra Bose had asked her to. He was impressed with Latika's ability to successfully field a women's demonstration against the Simon Commission and insisted she develop a women's organization connected with Congress. She confessed that she made a poor colonel, unable to stay in step or salute properly, but she wanted her female vulunteers to appear as the equals of men in the struggle for freedom (Forbes, 1998. p.137). She achieved her goal; observers reported seeing women in a new light:

"As the ladies clad in their saris marched past to the sound of the bugle and the beating of the drum, there could be traced not a touch of all the frailties that are so commonly attributed to them. No faltering, no hesitancy, no softness associated in popular minds with the womanhood of Bengal but chivalry written on every face and manifest in every movement" (Forbes, 1998. p.137).

The MRS had goals similar to the RSS in Bombay; they wanted to achieve swaraj and improve women's status. Calcutta women formed the Nari Satyagraha Samiti (NSS) in 1929 in response to the congress call for women to be ready to serve the nation. This group had a core of 15 to 20 women who were willing to picket and risk arrest. They were all Bengali women belonging to the three highest castes: Brahmins, kayasthas, and vaidyas. At the same time as these women were picketing and joining processions, other women were recruited by revolutionary organizations. Most of the women of revolutionary groups at this time were students. Most of them joined secret societies after they had worked with women's organizations and with Congress. Whereas previously women had supported revolutionaries by keeping house for them, spreading propaganda, collecting funds, hiding and transporting weapons, and even making explosives, now they were directly involved in revolutionary acts. By 1933 most of the women revolutionaries were in prison and were subject to extreme police violence. Women from rural areas responded to the call to break the salt laws. There are many accounts of their bravery (Forbes, 1998, p. 135-41).

Though, in Madras the nature of women involvement in the movement was different. Madras women never joined the revolutionary movement, nor were they subjects to extreme police violence. C. Rajagopalachari, a leading member of Congress, regarded picketing liquor shops was one of the most dangerous forms of protest in Madras and deemed inappropriate for women. Inspiring by Kasturbai (Gandhi's wife) Smt. S.

Ambujammal, the only daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyenger who was a brilliant lawyer and congress leader, joined the non-cooperation movement in 1920 and in 1928 she formed the Women's Swadeshi League in Madras. Krishnabai Rau, a loyal Gandhian since childhood, organised the Desh Sevika Sangha (DSS) under the aegis of the Swadeshi League. DSS women picketed foreign cloth shops with men volunteers. Standing at the entrance of shops, they stopped customers and pleaded with them: "India is already downtrodden. Please do not help in its further degradation by buying foreign made goods". When the police first moved against the demonstrators, they attacked the men but not the women. This only strengthened women's resolve to join the movement against the British. It was not long before the police began to treat women protesters the same as men. Madras women were among the first arrested in the country. In a protest incident police by lathi-charging killed three people and wounded five. This event frightened both Congress leaders and women satyagrahis neither of whom wished to incite mob violence and or provoke police retaliation. It had the effect of dampening the enthusiasm of women for mass demonstrations (Forbes, 1998, p. 143-46).

In North India women from Allahabad, Lucknow, Delhi, and Lahore joined public demonstrations and shocked a public unused to seeing respectable women in the streets without veils. In these northern cities demonstrations occasionally attracted as many as 1000 women, but most of them were much smaller. Leadership came from a few families, for example the Nehrus and the Zutshis, and most demonstrators came from schools and colleges. In Allahabad, women from the Nehru family were important leaders. Nehru's mother, Swarup Rani Nehru, wife, Kamala made public speeches and went door to door urging women to join movements. Women's demonstration in Delhi had a great impact on the men who witnessed them. The government's confidential records include detailed reports of how women's activities brought men into the movement. On one occasion Delhi women blocked access to the courts. They were surrounded by male supporters who acted as a protective shield. The women were steadfast in the face of police attacks and astounded everyone with their bravery. In the north, the political movement engaged elite women and women without any education. They belonged to two different worlds but they shared the burden of social norms that inhibited their autonomy (Forbes, 1998, p.146-49).

However, there were distinct regional differences in the number of women who joined, in their relationship with congress leaders, and the extent to which they synthesized women's interest with nationalist issues. Bombay women were the best organized, the most independent, and fielded the largest demonstrations. In Bengal women attracted a great deal of attention because of their militancy. Marching alongside men in the congress parade and later joining the revolutionary parties, they became the subjects of folksongs and legends. In Madras, where leaders were unwilling to use women's talents, fewer women joined the movement. In North India, the Nehru and the Zutshi families provided strong women leaders who put the nationalist agenda first. One cannot doubt their grasp of the importance of feminist issues but their immediate concern was mobilizing women for political demonstrations. They did not think it possible to raise women's consciousness about both politics and women's right at the same time.Most women leaders were unable to get beyond their own sense of respectability when they sought recruits. An exception to this, of course were the women who joined the revolutionary movement. They worked closely with men, wore disguises, travelled alone or in the company of strangers, and learned how to shoot, drive cars, and make bombs. Even though they were valorised they were not regarded by all as "respectable" women. Gandhi called them "unsexed" and Rabindranath Tagore wrote a novel in which the sexual allure of the revolutionary heroine was used to recruit young men to the cause. The revolutionary women have described themselves as sacrificing all the things a woman wants-marriage, children, a home-for the country. No one, including the revolutionary women themselves, considered revolutionaries representative of Indian womanhood (Forbes, 1998, p.155).

The demonstrations organized by the women in cities did little to generate a feminist consciousness. They marched and picketed in sex-segregated groups, usually wearing distinctive orange or white saris to emphasize their purity and sacrifice. Their directives came from the Congress Committees. Rural women, unless they were windows, protested with their families. Women could "come out" because the house was on fire. The expectation was that once the fire was out, women would go back inside the house (Forbes, 1998, p.156).

While the salt satyagraha and the civil disobedience movement encouraged and brought about greater participation of women, they also clearly brought out the fact that Gandhi,

for the time being, could only envisage a supportive role for women in the movement. By now, some women were getting impatient of playing an auxiliary role, and they wanted to fight for freedom like men, and not extend the traditional division of labour between men and women to the movement as well. However, according to Gandhi, the job even more suited to women's nature was the picketing liquor and foreign cloth shops. He chose women in this job because of their 'inherent' capacity for non-violence (Bandyopadhyaya, 2009, p.241). Gandhi's insistence on non-violence as a revolutionary weapon contributed to creating favourable conditions for mass participation of people, especially women. The programmes of action undertaken as part of nonviolent satyagraha were such that women would not feel limited or unequal to men; as they inevitably do when sheer muscle power or capacity for inflicting violence are to determine the outcome of a struggle. Thus women's traditional qualities, such as their lesser capacity for organized violence, were not downgraded but were held up as models of superior courage (Bandyopadhyaya, 2009, p.244).

Mahatma Gandhi understood the potentiality latent in women and believed that, "Woman in the companion of man gifted with equal capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of the activities of man, and she has the same right to freedom and liberty as he..." (Bandypadhyaya, 2002,p. 30). "Morally indecent" Bengali women were also touched by Gandhi's message. Manada Devi Mukhopadhyay tells in *Sikshita Patitat Atmarcharit* ("Autobiography of an Educated Fallen Woman", 1929), of how she and other prostitutes joined in collecting funds for Congress in 1922 and in 1924 participated in C. R. Das' *Satyagraha* against the lascivious and corrupt Mahant of Tarakeswar temple. Women throughout India participated in the Non-Cooperation movement by joining the processions, picketing, using Khadi and Charka and by renouncing all kinds of foreign goods, clothes and education (Roy, 2015).

Both Hindu and Muslim women also participated in the Non-Cooperation movement and worked for strengthening the bond in both the communities – Hindu and Muslim. Kasturba Gandhi, Abida Banu Begum, Hem Prabha Majumder, Rameshwari Mehra took part in the struggle against the British Raj by popularizing young girls to attend public meetings and in other constructive activities. Women outnumbered men in the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928. Dandi March (1930) was organized with a view to re-establish the right of the Indians to prepare salts from the sea. Women were not permitted to take part

in the movements initially, but at the request of Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya, Gandhiji agreed to accommodate Sarojini Naidu, Mithuben Patel with his team for the Dandi March on April 6, 1930. Gandhi was arrested on 7th April, 1930 and he nominated Sarojini Naidu to lead the programmes at the Dharsana salt fields. After the arrest of Gandhiji, people from all sections of society massively participated in the Salt Satyagraha. The peasant, artisan and rural women also took active part to make it a national movement. Women, leaving behind household activities, come out to the streets in thousands to participate in political activities and faced police oppression and baton that led Nehru to observe, "Our women came out to the forefront and took charge of the struggle. Women had always been there of course, but now there was an avalanche of them which took not only the British Government, but their own men folk by surprise. There were these women, of the upper or middle classes leading sheltered lives in their homes, peasant women, working class women, rich women – coming out into tens of thousands in defiance of government orders and police lathis. It was not only the displays of courage and daring, but what even more was surprising was the organizational power they showed" (Nehru, 1947, p.27).

The dalit women were also not lagging behind. They also took active part in freedom struggle. Women of the other backward classes like the Santals, Oraons and Mundas also actively participated in the movement. Participation of women in the struggle for freedom reached another stage with the launching of Civil Disobedience Movement by congress when women courted arrest along with male freedom fighters. Their participation gathered momentum during the **Quit India Movement** when they prepared themselves to sacrifice even their lives for the freedom of the country. In course of the movement most of the top political leaders were imprisoned and the movement became leaderless for the time being but found its leaders in women. They took the leading role in organizing meetings, taking out processions, raising slogans and holding strikes to cripple the Government (Roy, 2015). Aruna Asaf Ali, Kalpana Joshi, Preeti Waddadar, Kanaklata Barua, Roopvati Jain, Durga Bai, Sushila Devi Usha Mehta were the famous figures of the 1942 movement.

Participation of women in social and political movements was not confined to the freedom movement only. They took part in movements against the tyrannical Zamindars and their atrocities. The last phase of the freedom struggle is marked by the mass

resistance of common people, both men and women against the oppression of the Zamindars, Jotedars and Mahajans. The mass uprising at Worli (Maharastra) against the Zamindars in the hilly areas of Thane district mainly spearheaded by the women force was directed against the exploitative practices of the Zamindars like 'Vet' and the systems of Lagan Das' and 'Bibaha Das'. Women played a significant role in the Worli Movement which is remembered as an act of courage and empowerment of women. During the course of these movements hundreds of women participated in the meetings, processions, demonstrations and some of them developed leadership qualities. Women had to face torture, abuse and threat both in house and outside and ultimately could not stick to their goal. But their determination and commitment to united actions against the common enemy to end exploitation and oppression strengthened the process of women empowerment (Roy, 2015).

With the dawn of 20th century, some progress was observed in the field of women's education which gave rise to the development of a consciousness among the educated women and this manifested itself in the emergence of some women's organisations (Jharta, 1996, p.57). Through their participation in various organizations and associations, unions and clubs, women developed their self-confidence to take up the position of leadership in larger spheres. In 1913, a Brahmin Widow's Home was founded by Subhalaksmi and Mahila Seva Samaj was also established in the same year in Mysore. Muslim women who are generally considered home bound and conservative did not remain far behind. They came forward to join the mainstream in some cases and participated in the formation of various associations in the 20th century. In 1916, All India Muslim Women's Conference was established by Begum of Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh). In 1917, the Muslim Women, led by Abu Begum, proposed a resolution against polygamy. In 1917, some elite and urban educated upper class women inspired a large number of women to participate in movements for achievements of their demands. These women, under the leadership of Dorothy Zinarasara, established Women Indian Association (WIA) of Madras (now Chennai) in 1917. Under the auspices of this organisation, a deputation led by Sarojini Naidu with the support of Mahatma Gandhi, met Lord Morley when he visited India in 1917. It demanded equal voting rights for women along with men (Jharta, 1996, p.57). They, at first, struggle for the Women's franchise. In 1925, National Council of Women in India (NCWI) was set up by Lady

Dorab Tata. All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was formed under the joint initiative of Smt. Margaret Cousins and the Women's India Association (Roy, 2015).

The story of how women came to be first represented in legislatures in 1920s is in itself quite instructive. In 1917, during the visit of the Secretary of States for India to discuss Home Rule, fourteen representatives led by Smt. Sarojini Naidu met Montegu, the then Governor General of India, and Viceroy Lord Chelmsford in Madras. Apprehending a forthcoming discrimination against women in respect of franchise, they submitted a memorandum demanding equal status for women. The memorandum reads, "When the franchise is being drawn up, women may be recognized as 'people' and that it may be worded in such terms as will not disqualify our sex but allow our women the same opportunities of representation as our men" (Bandypadhyaya, 2002, p. 64).The Indian National Congress took up the issue of women's equal right to vote and their political representation. In 1918 it adopted a resolution that, "women possessing the qualifications are laid down for men in any part of the scheme shall not be disqualified on account of sex" (Bandypadhyaya, 2002, p. 64). Thus women throughout India began to understand the need for equal right to voting and representation. The more their consciousness grew, the more they participated in political movements.

In the mean time, the Southborough Committee or the Franchise Committee came to India with a view to going through the women's demand for right to vote. After a thorough study, the Committee observed that social condition was premature to confer the franchise to Indian women at that juncture. On 2nd July, 1919 various women's organizations decried the comments of the Southborough Committee and in August,1919 under the leadership of Sarojini Naidu and others (Smt. Herabai Tata, Barrister Mithan Tata, Annie Besant) a group of women leaders placed their demand for equal franchise along with men before the Joint Parliamentary session of Britain. When the members of Women Indian Association (WIA) met the Lady Secretary of State for India, she referred the matter to the Provincial Councils of India considering it as a 'domestic subject' of India. Instead of rejecting this demand, the British government was simply leaving it up to each of the individual provincial legislatures that they had just set up in India to grant or to refuse the franchise to women. Their assumption was that since Indians were so 'backward', they would never accept the idea of equal political rights for women. But despite the fact that at this time there was no mass-based women's suffrage movement in

India, each of the Indian provincial legislatures voted to make it possible within a short span of time for women to be represented at par with men without much fuss (Kishwar, 1996, p.2867).

However, after prolonged deliberations, the right to vote was granted to women in India under the Government of India Act, 1919 which came into effect from 1921 and Kamala Devi became the first woman M.L.A in 1926 in Madras Provincial Legislature. Though, this right was confined to a very limited number of women. She was the first to demand a uniform civil code for enhancing gender justice. She opposed the child marriage and stressed on the abject situation of women in the mining industry. It is observed that "many of her ideas that seemed radical are accepted as even today, like the right to maternity leave and child care and the need to consider women's paid household labour and economic activity" (Gopalakrishnan, 2004, p. 93).In 1930, when a meeting of representative women's organizations drafted a memorandum demanding immediate acceptance of adult franchise without gender discrimination, it was turned down by the British government. The same demand received a totally different response from the Indian leaders. The very next year, in 1931 the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress took the historic decision committing itself to the political equality of women, regardless of their status and qualifications (Kishwar, 1996, p.2867).Annie Besant became Congress Party president as early as 1919. Sarojini Naidu was Gandhi's choice for president of the Congress Party as early in 1925.Starting with a more active and creative role, women's participation in politics enhanced dramatically in the 1930s and 1940s which ushered a new era in women's movement. Indian women got franchise at a time while their counterparts in many other European countries and America were struggling for universal suffrage.

3.2.2. WOMEN IN POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:

In the pre-independence period, the women's mobilization was very much a part of the nationalist movement and that was the witnessed an increasing participation of women, while India's history has taken a surprising turn after independence. The decades following independence witnessed a remarkable decline in women's involvement in politics. From the end of the 1930s to the early 1950s women participated in a wide range of social and political movements. But in the five decades after independence women have become marginalized in politics as compared to the earlier decades.

Global data on parliaments, as per IPU's records of October 2020, across the world reveal the fact that India in spite of the largest democracy lags much behind other countries including its neighbors such as Nepal (45[th]rank), Bangladesh (105[th]rank), and Pakistan (110[th]rank) when it comes to the matter of women's participation in politics. While India shares the 145th position with 14.4% women parliamentarians, it is ranked 100 places below Nepal and 35 places behind Pakistan. Even China at 80th spot and Bangladesh at 105 are well above India.

After independence in 1947, Indian women have been given, formally, an equal status to men by Constitution. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth. It is a guarantee against every form of discrimination. According to article 15(3), nothing shall prevent the state from making special provisions for the benefit women and children. Article 16(1) of the constitution guarantees 'equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state' (Jharta, 1996, p.61).Article 39(a) guarantees right to an adequate means of livelihood for all citizen. Article 39(b) guarantees equal pay for equal work for both men and women. According to article 39(c), that the health and strength of workers, men and women, and the tender age of children are not abused and that citizen are not forced by economic necessity to enter occupations unsuited for their age or strength. Article 42 guarantees humane and just condition of work and maternity relief. This is in accordance with Article 23 and 25 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 51-A clause (e) says that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India- to promote harmony and sprit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India, transcending linguistic and religious or sectional diversities, to renounces practice derogatory to the dignity of women.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment has added the following articles to the Constitution providing reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Article 243-(D) (2) states not less than 1/3 of the seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to S. C or as the caste may be S.T. Article 243-(D) (3)-extends political reservation to women not less than 1/3 of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats shall be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat. Article 243-(D) (4) extends reservation to elected offices as well. The office of the chairpersons in the Panchayats or any other level shall be reserved S.C and the S.Ts and women in such a manner as

legislature of a state may, by law provide. The legal Constitutional framework in India would appear a combination of Communitarian perspective on one hand and that of liberal democracy on the other hand. In spite of such provisions in the Constitution, the decades following independence witnessed a decline in the women's participation in politics. These rights appeared illusionary as there was a shift from the aims of the Constitution. Gap started widening in all political spheres. Article 325 makes no special electoral rolls on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Article 326 emphasizes that elections to the legislative assemblies of state are to be held on the basis of adult franchise.

With the right of universal adult franchise and all other political rights conferred by the Constitution, women's participation in political activities has increased and improved. Today we can see women taking active part in politics holding high offices. Though their number is not very high but their capacity in administrative and political matters has well organized. There have been woman Prime Minister, woman ambassadors and delegates to international bodies, woman Governors, woman Chief Ministers, ministers and legislators who have shaped the history of our country (Jharta, 1996, p. 61). But the overall situation is not very satisfactory. There is a difference between the constitutional rights and the rights enjoyed in reality by women. Seventy-five years of independence have made very little impact on women's active participation in politics. Their performance quantitatively has been rather insignificant. With a few exceptions women have remained outside the domain of power and political authority (Jharta, 1996, p. 62).

With the establishment of Central Social Welfare Board in 1953, this provides financial assistance as well as direction to voluntary welfare organizations, so that many women's organizations came into existence. In 1954, under the shelter of Leftist Political Parties, Indian Women's National Organization (National Federation of Indian Women) connected with International Democratic Organization, were established. The best-known organizations became institutionalized. While the prominent women's organizations had been criticized for their 'welfarist' approach and faulted for not preparing women for new responsibilities. The National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW) drew attention on "*Women's struggle for equal rights and responsibilities in all spheres of life and for improvement in their living conditions*" (Forbes, 1998, p.225). There were other women, close followers of Gandhi, who saw economic and social change as more important than legal and constitutional rights. They too were dissatisfied. But many of these individuals

also believed in voluntarism and focused their attention on grass-roots projects. But till 1970, many organizations were on paper for the sake of names only. Their contact with general women was at the time of election only and they saw the problems of women in the limited perspective of implementation of welfare programme. Till 1970, Planning Commission also did not make any effort by thinking that welfare programmes will automatically reach to the women. In spite of Government's lack attention towards women's problems they were involving in movements and participating in the common struggles of peasants, laborers, and scheduled tribes etc. Moreover, the issue of women's participation seems to have lost the kind of moral and political legitimacy what it enjoyed during the freedom movement (Roy, 2015).

Women's Participation in Telengana movement is a glorious part of the history in post-independence period. The feudal land owning system, eviction of the title less sharecroppers from the land, unlawful tax collection and compulsory working without wages led the people of Telengana to revolt against the Nijam of Hyderabad. Women along with men participated in the revolt (Roy, 2015).In the post-independence period, the organized participation of women in the protection of environment and ecological balance is a case towards women's empowerment. The 'Chipko' Movement was a movement basically organized by women themselves. Women have always a special liking for the protection of trees. Vandana Shiva observes "Three Hundred years ago more than 300 members of the Bishroi Community of Rajasthan, led by a women called Amrita Devi, sacrificed their lives to save their Khejri trees by clinging to them. With the event begins the history of Chipko" (Shiva, 2001, p.192). We have found that, women are becoming more vocal in demanding resettlement and rehabilitation of the people in states like Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and in Maharashtra. The participants in the Narmada Bachao Andolan which include a sizeable number of women activists consider the raising of the height of the Sardar Sarobar Dam beyond 110 meters of height as a case of 'homicide of the people in the valley' (Lyla, 2004, p.94). Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) which includes the most vibrant women workers has brought the debate between development and displacement to the forefront.

Indian women have been participating in the World Social Forum (WSF) since its inception at Porto Alegre in Brazil in January 2001. Besides popularizing the idea of an 'alternative world' the World Social Forum (WSF) is also engaged in promoting the cause of women's political participation. "Women's struggle against patriarchy and the

unending battle against all forms of social exclusion based on descent, ethnicity, and race were specifically brought on the World Social Forum (WSF) agenda in Mumbai. More than the right to equality, the World Social Forum (WSF) enshrines the right to difference. And it commits itself to redressing any situation in which difference is a basis for social inequality" (Sinha, 2000, p.5).

Though women take active part in freedom movement in a meaningful way, they gradually rolled themselves back in the household activities after the achievement of freedom. The National leaders like Nehru and Gandhi did not show much interest after independence in involving them in the process of nation building. Strangely enough that Gandhi had to take a retarding view. Gandhi said, "She is passive, he is active, she is essentially mistress of the house. He is the bread winner." (Sinha, 2000, p.70)

The United Nations Organization became worried at the level of women's participation worldwide in the political arena. As a result, the United Nations adopted the convention on the political rights of women in 1952. Since the Mexico Conference (1975) four other International Conferences (Copenhagen 1980; Nairobi 1985; Beijing 1995; and +5 Review Conference) on women have been held under the U.N. auspices. "All the conferences have emphasized women's political empowerment as key concern" (Rajput, 2001. p.226).

Pam Rajput (2001) mentioned in his work that The General Assembly of the United Nations observed that, "........*the actual participation of women at the highest levels of national and international decision making has not significantly changed since Beijing 1995 and gross under-representation of women in decision making bodies in all areas, including inter alia politics, conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, the economy, the environment and the media hinders the inclusion of a gender perspective in these critical spheres of influence. Women continue to be underrepresented at the legislative, ministerial, and sub-ministerial levels...*"

3.2.2.1.WOMEN IN ELECTORAL POLITICS:

While, with the introduction of democracy Indian women have obtained rights of participation and representation in parliaments and state legislatures but their percentage has remained extremely low. Indian women can vote and stand for election to all provincial and central bodies though the extent of their involvement falls far short to the

equality promised by the Constitution. Considering the issue of women's reservation, the attitude of the national leaders and the makers of independent India are well reflected in the composition of the national and state legislations in India. In 1973, All India Panchayat Parishad in its Sixth National Conference recommended reservation for women in at least one third of the seats. This resolution was followed by a report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) in 1974. Though, the Committee rejected the demands for women's reservation in legislative bodies of the states and the Centre but recommended statutory women's Panchayats at the village level because of the neglect of women in rural development programmes. Two members of the Committee disagreed with the decision of not recommending reservation for women in legislative bodies and argued that greater representation of women on national and state level legislatures would build up a number of spokespersons for women's rights and opportunities. Hence, the recommendations of the Sixth National Conference of the All India Panchayat Parishad were largely ignored for a period of more than fifteen years. Later, the National Perspective Plan, 1988, urged all political parties to ensure at least 30% women among the candidates put up for election. However, none of the parties came anywhere near the promised 30% in any of their decision-making bodies, nor have fielded a comparable number of women contestants. In 1989, Rajiv Gandhi announced that 30 per cent of seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions would be reserved for women. The issue of women's reservation in Panchayati Raj Institutions became an election issue and when Congress returned to power in 1991, the 73rd and 74th Amendment Bill providing for one-third reservation or 33% quota for women in local self-government institutions were passed in December 1992, and were ratified by all states by April 1993. These Amendments created 1,000,000 slots for elected women representatives. These reservations or quota brought quantitative changes, facilitated women to be represented in local governments only but not in State or Central Governments (Roy, 2015).

In 1996, the Constitution (81st) Amendment Bill, proposing 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament was introduced. Though the major political parties supported the demand, but they themselves gave less than 15% of their total number of tickets to women. The political parties raise the issue of reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures just to earn the support of women organizations and activists for election purposes. Thus Reservation of seats for women is just an electoral plank. Over the long 14 years, the Women's Reservation Bill has crossed a very controversial

journey. However, after a long debatical journey finally in the Rajya Sabha the historic women Reservation Bill was passed on 9th March 2010 and yet it is pending in the Lok Sabha. However, the Union Cabinet of the Government of India, on 27 August 2009, approved 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The Indian states which have already implemented 50% reservation for women in PRIs are Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. As of 25th November 2011, the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Tripura also reserve 50% of their posts for women(Roy, 2015).

The right to vote can be said to be the starting point in the struggle for women political equality. The participation of women in the electoral process is an indicator of their political consciousness. In the pre-independence period, there were thousands of outstanding women all over the country with the experience of the freedom movement behind them. Their involvement for long years in social and political work, running educational institutions, and so on, would have given them the requisite training and experience to be effective parliamentarians. But they were systematically ignored and bypassed. However, the very politicians who pay lip service to women's causes on public platforms and help enact laws favouring women actually help sideline women in their own parties. The marginalisation of women in Indian politics is that it is happening despite widespread social opinion in favour of women's active political participation (Roy, 2016, p. 38).

There are several socio-economic constraints by which women have been marginalised. The number of women in the leadership positions at the local, village, district, state and national level is still not commensurate with their numbers in society. In India, limited adult franchise was granted to women in 1937. Since then, women have been participating in political process, as voters, as candidates contesting the elections, involved in deliberations both in State Assemblies and Parliament and also through holding public office at different levels in the Judiciary. Voting is the basic activity by which the citizens get assimilated in the political process. Women's participation in formal elections is to a great extent dependent on the mobilization efforts of the political parties, general awareness among the community of the importance of exercising franchise and overall political culture (Kumar, 1995, p. 94). Hence, over the years,

women's participation by way of voting has been growing but not steadily as it is clearly visible in the Table no 3.1.

TABLE NO: 3.1

Percentage of Female Vote in General Elections (1952-2019)

Year Of Lok Sabha Elections	VOTING PERCENTAGE		Gap Between Male And Female Voting Percentage
	MALE	**FEMALE**	
1952	53.0	37.1	-15.9
1957	56.0	39.6	-16.4
1962	62.1	46.6	-15.5
1967	66.7	55.5	-11.2
1971	60.8	49.11	-11.69
1977	65.62	54.91	-10.71
1980	62.17	51.2	-10.97
1984	68.17	58.59	-9.58
1989	66.13	57.31	-8.82
1991	61.58	51.34	-10.24
1996	62.06	53.41	-8.65
1998	65.86	57.69	-8.17
1999	63.96	55.63	-8.33
2004	61.98	53.63	-8.35
2009	60.24	55.81	-4.43
2014	67.00	65.53	-1.47
2019	67.00	67.17	+0.17

Source: 1st to 4th (1952 to 1967) General Elections from Susheela Kaushik, "Women, Women's Issues, and Ninth General Elections," Teaching Politics, Vol. XV, Nos. 3 & 4, 1989, pp.113.

Statistical Reports on the 5th to 17th General Elections (1971-2019) to the House of the People in India, Election Commission of India, New Delhi, available at eci.gov.in

The above table shows that over the years women's participation by way of voting has been growing but not steadily. It has shown that constant rise from 37.1% in 1952 to 39.6% in 1957 and 46.6% and 55.5% in 1962 and 1967 respectively. In the subsequent years it kept on fluctuating. From 1971 to 2009, there was a large turnout of women voters (58.59%) in1984. But again it declined steadfastly to 57.31% in the general election of 1989 and 51.34% in 1991 respectively and the women polling remained within 51-57 percent in the years from 1977 to 2009. Since 2014 the situation has changed and surprisingly it upturned to more or less 10% that narrowing the gap between men and women voters. In 2009, it was 55.81% and in 2014 it became 65.63%. In 2019, women turn out in greater numbers than in previous elections. For the first time the turnout of

women exceeded that of men, it is 67. 17%, it is the highest ever percentage and the men voting turnout is same as it was in 2014 (67%). The difference between male and female voting percentage shows that except in 2019, women always lagged behind of men in voting turnout. Hence, the 17th Lok Sabha (2019) is the ray of hope for women that are showing the gender equality in political participation is no longer away from them.

If we have a look at the past history of the women's political participation we find that no serious efforts appear to have been made to mobilize women as political pressure groups by any political party. Caste, personality and families of candidates appear to be more important to voters than party ideology. Some other facts like education, religion, class and tradition also seem to affect women's participations. However, voting an indication of political participation for women in India, has its own strength and weakness. Voting has a tremendous impact for equalizing and mobilizing women. Yet, it has to be noted that voting requires the least initiative and internal motivation. Very often the women citizen treats the day of voting as a welcome break from her dull and tiring routine and does not appear to have a notion of why she should vote for a particular candidate (Kumar, 1995, p. 94).

In India, the major national political parties voiced their support for women's representation in parliament, although they themselves gave less than 15% of their total number of tickets to women. Their election manifestoes sometimes contain declarations relating to Women's empowerment, but a close scrutiny of the lists of contesting candidates of different political parties do not justify their claim. Political parties seem uniformly reluctant to field women candidates. Table no 3.2 shows party-wise representation of women in the Lok Sabha elections from 1957 to 2019.

TABLE NO: 3.2

Party-wise Women Representation in the Lok Sabha, 1957-2019

Year	INC	*Left Front	BJS/ BLD/ BJP/ BJD	JNP / JD	SWA/ BSP	IND	OTH	No. Of Women Contestants	No. Of Women Elected
1957	19	1	0	-	-	-	2	45	22
1962	26	1	0	-	4 (SWA)	-	-	66	31
1967	19	1	1(BJS)	-	3 (SWA)	2	3	67	29
1977	6	3	8(BLD)	-	-	-	2	70	19
1980	20	3	-	4 (JNP)	-	-	1	143	28
1984	37	2	-	-	-	-	3	162	42
1989	15	4	5	2	-	-	3	198	29
1991	20	3	10	2	-	-	2	326	37
1996	16	2	14	4	-	-	4	599	40
1998	10	5	15	-	1	1	11	274	43
1999	14	4	15	1	1	1	13	284	49
2004	12	5	10	-	1	-	17	355	45
2009	23	1	13	2	4	-	16	556	59
2014	4	1	30	-	-	-	27	668	62
2019	6	0	46 (41-BJP5-BJD)	1 (JD-U)	1 (BSP)	2	22*	724	78

*Left Front- CPI/CPM

*AITC-9, YSRCP-4, DMK-2 &from other various political parties-7

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

The above table reveals that till 1996 elections Congress was the leading party of giving more representation to the women in the Parliament. A majority of women contest from the Congress Party even while the overall percentage of party tickets given to women remains shamefully low. In the next two elections the situation has been changed slightly, the BJP took the lead in respect of women representatives in the Lok Sabha. The table shows that the Congress had 19 out of 22 women representatives, with Left Front and other party claiming 1 and 2 respectively in the second Lok Sabha in 1957. The 10th Lok Sabha (1996) again had 16 out of 40 women MPs from the Congress, 14 from the BJP, 4 from the JD, one each from the CPI, and CPI (M). The number of women MPs increased to 59 in 2009; the 15th Lok Sabha had 23 Congress women MPs out of a total of 59, 13 from the BJP, 2 from the JD, 1from the Left Front and 4 from BSP. The 16thLok Sabha

had total 62 MPs in the Parliament out of 668 contestants. 30 MPs elected from BJP, 4 from Congress, 1 from the Left Front. The present Lok Sabha has 78 women MPs that is the highest ever number. In the 16th (2014) and 17th (2019) Lok Sabha, the performance of Congress party concerning women is very much poor and while BJP's performance (30 & 41) is noteworthy. However, apart from two major national political parties (INC, BJP), the other national and state-level political parties put up some women candidates for elections, but their representation to the women in the Parliament is very much poor, never cross the limit of 5, though AITC (All India Trinamool Congress) is exceptional, its women representatives were 10 in 16th (2014)Lok Sabha and are 9 in 17[th](2019) Lok Sabha. Hence, over the years, the number of women contestants for election has increased but the number of women representatives to the Parliament has not increased in order of women contestants. Therefore, the overall representation of women in Parliament is too low compare to men representatives (Roy, 2015).

The process of turning the Congress Party into an instrument of authoritarian rule started after the Nehru era. As Indira Gandhi and her sons came to power, the Congress Party degenerated dramatically and saw a further decline in women's political participation. Even though women across the country related to Indira Gandhi as a symbol of inspiration and saw her as Durga incarnate, she did not care to channel that enthusiasm into facilitating the entry of more women into politics. She seemed particularly averse to sharing the limelight with other women politicians, especially those who had cultivated an independent political existence. Therefore, many women stalwarts like TarkeshwariSinha and Nandini Satpathi as well as women of Indira Gandhi's own family (barring the corrupt and sycophantish Sheila Kaul variety) were deliberately eclipsed during Indira Gandhi's regime. Thus India's celebrated woman prime minister played a leading role in pushing women out of the political arena by making the world of politics so unsavoury that few self-respecting women or even men would dare venture into it. Not surprisingly the few women who survived were either as tough or corrupt as the worst of the male politicians or were wives and other female relatives of powerful male politicians who provided the necessary protection. Hence the phenomenon of 'biwi- beti' brigades making their appearance during election time while during normal times the Congress Party lost its claim to having the largest contingent of active women workers (Kishwar, 1996, p.2867).

When Rajiv Gandhi came to power in 1984, he tried to project a pro-woman image for his party. He fielded a slightly larger number of women candidates (40 out of 492). In the sympathy wave that followed Indira Gandhi's assassination, the Congress Party won by a landslide benefiting even the new-comers among women and 37 of the 40 Congress (I) women candidates were elected to the eighth Lok Sabha. There were 44 women MPs during Rajiv's first tenure as prime minister. Yet they constituted no more than 7.9 per cent of the total. However, barring a few exceptions, he attracted mostly glamorous socialite types of women into the party (counterpart to his Doon School brigade) because by then the Congress Party had lost the ability to attract a new generation of dedicated women (or men) workers into the party (Kishwar, 1996, p.2867).

Now-a-days the BJP attracts far more women workers than the Congress but the BJP and other parties also use their women's fronts as mere auxiliaries mobilised into action for demonstrations, mass protests and campaign work during elections. In recent years, the BJP is overtaking the Congress Party in fielding relatively larger number of women and giving them a certain visibility. And another fact is that the individual parties have fielded progressively fewer women candidates over the decades (Roy, 2016, p.40).

Though the women voting participation is not very poor in comparison to men, but their participation and representation in law-making and law implementing bodies is very deplorable (see Tables 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5).

TABLE NO: 3.3

Women Members in the Lok Sabha (1952-2019)

Year of Lok Sabha Elections	Total No of Seats	No. Of Women Contestants	No. Of Women Member Elected	Gap Between Contesting & Electing Percentage of Women Members	Percentage of Elected Women Over Total No. of Seats
1952	499	51	22	56.87	4.4
1957	500	45	22	51.12	4.4
1962	503	66	31	53.04	6.1
1967	523	67	29	56.72	5.5
1971	521	86	22	74.42	4.2
1977	544	70	19	72.86	3.4
1980	544	143	28	80.42	5.1
1984	544	162	42	74.08	7.7
1989	529	198	29	85.36	5.4
1991	544	326	37	88.66	6.8
1996	541	599	40	93.33	7.3
1998	545	274	43	84.31	7.8
1999	543	284	49	82.75	9.02
2004	543	355	45	87.33	8.2
2009	543	556	59	89.39	10.8
2014	543	631	62	90.18	11.4
2019	542	724	78	89.23	14.3

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

The table 3.3 shows that there were 51 women contestants in the first general election held in 1952. Their number increased to 631 in 2014. As far as women members in the Lok Sabha are concerned, 22 (4.4%) women were elected to the first Lok Sabha in 1952. In the subsequent elections their number fluctuated. In 2014, 62 (11.4%) women are elected out of 631 contestants to Lok Sabha. However, in 15th and 16th Lok Sabha the overall representation of women is too low barely 10 or 11% in comparison to their about 50% share in voting population (Roy, 2016, p.41). While, 78 women members are elected in 2019, which makes 14.3% and this is the highest number ever. Also, the table shows there is exist percentage of difference between contesting and electing women members, since 1991steadily the difference becomes wider, in 1996 the gap of percentage was 93.33%, that is highest ever percentage.

The representation of women in Rajya Sabha (Council of States) is also not encouraging. The following table (No.3.4) gives us a clear picture of the women strength in the Rajya

Sabha. In years 1952-54, the numbers of women representatives were 15 out of 219 total members and their number reached at 30 out of 245 in the years 2014-2016 which is the highest number ever but again it was starting to decline. In the Rajya Sabha, 28 women members are there in the years 2018-2020.This trend indicates that various ruling political parties in the respective states of the country are biased against women in nominating them to the upper house. Presently (as per available data till 17[th]November, 2020) we have 25 women members in the Rajya Sabha which makes the percentage of 10.33% but it is very much deplorable. From the below tabulation it is clear that yet women have to walk a long way for equal representation in the governing bodies. However, the situation of Rajya Sabha in case of women representatives is better compare to Lok Sabha (Roy, 2016, p.41).

TABLE NO: 3.4
Women Members in the Rajya Sabha

Years	Total No. Of Seats	No. Of Women Members	Percentage of Women
1952-54	219	15	6.85
1954-56	232	16	6.90
1956-58	236	20	8.47
1958-60	236	22	9.32
1960-62	236	24	10.17
1962-64	238	17	7.14
1964-66	238	21	8.82
1966-68	240	23	9.58
1968-70	240	22	9.17
1970-72	243	14	5.76
1972-74	243	18	7.41
1974-76	244	17	6.97
1976-78	244	24	9.84
1978-80	244	25	10.25
1980-82	244	29	11.89
1982-84	244	24	9.84
1984-86	244	24	9.84
1986-88	245	28	11.43
1988-90	245	25	10.20
1990-92	245	24	9.80
1992-94	245	17	6.94
1994-96	245	20	8.16
1996-98	245	19	7.76
1998-2000	245	19	7.76
2000-2002	245	22	8.98
2002-2004	245	25	10.20
2004-2006	245	28	11.43
2006-2008	245	25	10.20
2008-2010	245	24	9.80
2010-2012	245	27	11.02
2012-2014	245	24	9.80
2014-2016	245	30	12.24
2016-2018	245	28	11.43
2018-2020	245	28	11.43
2020- Till 17th Nov 2020	242	25	10.33

Sources: https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/member_site/women.aspx
http://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/information_booklet/INFORMATION%20AT%20A%20GLANCE.pdf
file:///C:/PH.D/Rajya%20Sabha%20members%20list/chapter-10.pdf
file:///C:/PH.D/Rajya%20Sabha%20members%20list/chapter-2.pdf
file:///C:/PH.D/Rajya%20Sabha%20members%20list/women%20members%20in%202016.pdf

Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at
all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality has persisted. Notwithstanding

substantial improvements of de jure equality between men and women, the actual participation of women at the highest levels of decision-making has not significantly changed and under representation of women in decision-making bodies present in all areas. Women continue to be underrepresented at the ministerial level; the following table reveals the reality in this regard (Roy, 2016, p.42).

TABLE NO: 3.5
Women in the Council of Ministers (1952-2019)

Year of Lok Sabha Elections	Total No. Of Ministers	No. Of Women Ministers	Percentage
1952	26	2	7.6
1957	38	3	7.8
1962	52	8	15.3
1967	51	5	9.8
1971	53	4	7.5
1977	44	4	9.09
1980	51	6	11.7
1985	40	4	10
1989	39	2	5.12
1991	39	9	23.07
1995	49	5	10.20
1996	39	4	10.25
1998	42	4	9.52
2002	80	7	8.75
2004	67	7	10.4
2009	79	7	8.8
2014	46	7	15.2
2019	58	6	10.34

Source: www.parliamentofindia.nic.in

The table 3.5 shows that a clear picture of the number of women ministers in the Council of Ministers since 1952. Their numerical strength is also marginal in decision making bodies. Only a few women have succeeded in getting into the council of ministers. As is clear from the below table, the maximum number of women ministers has been only 9, in the year 1991. Women membership in the Council of Ministers, which is the apex policy making body in India, has never gone beyond 10 percent mark. There had never been more than one woman cabinet minister; most of the women ministers had been of the rank of the state ministers or deputy ministers. The table shows that in 1962 and 1991, comparatively more women were in the Council of Ministers. In 2019, though the number of women voters (67.17%) is larger than men voters (67.00%) but still their presence in the council of ministers remains very disappointing, again it decreased to 10.34% from

15.2% in 2014. However, from the following tables it is clear to us that the representation of women in the national level political institutions is very deplorable. The results of 1st to 17th General Elections reflect low level of women's participation in Lok Sabha. Women comprises nearly 50 per cent of the total population, but their share in the highest decision making body is always less than 15 per cent. In the first general election their representation in Lok Sabha was only 4.4 per cent and it became only 14.3 per cent in the recent 17th Lok Sabha election (2019). Though women's representation in the Lok Sabha is not of course a barometer of their representation in the political process, but it is a marker of sorts. This shows that the actual power is male monopoly with just a few exceptions. Women are not only rare in decision-making positions, even if they are elected, they have to struggle within the formal structure heavily weighted against them. In independent India, pervasive gender discrimination has resulted in sidelining even veteran women politicians. It is difficult for women to establish a foothold without patronage from powerful men in the party. This is indeed a matter for serious concern because the level of political participation among women acts as a reliable barometer of the health of its democracy (Roy, 2016, p.43).

However, since 1984, there has been also noticed an important shift in the perception of the society towards women's participation in politics and women leaders and post 1990 indicates a trend that the number of women participating in the electoral fray have increased and more and more women are contesting the polls under the banner of the state and regional political parties or independently rather than the national political parties. In 1984 and 1989, there was marginal difference between women contestants of national parties and state or regional parties but post 1990 the difference becomes wider. In this regard, the following table 3.6 is showing the clear picture.

TABLE NO: 3.6
Performance of Women in National Parties vis-a-vis Others

Years Of Lok Sabha Elections	Political Parties	Women Contestants	Elected Women Members
1984	National	63	39
	State/ Regional/ Independents	99	3
	Total	**162**	**42**
1989	National	87	26
	State/ Regional/ Independents	111	3
	Total	**198**	**29**
1991	National	119	35
	State/ Regional/ Independents	207	2
	Total	**326**	**37**
1996	National	125	36
	State/ Regional/ Independents	474	4
	Total	**599**	**40**
1998	National	107	31
	State/ Regional/ Independents	167	12
	Total	**274**	**43**
1999	National	104	35
	State/ Regional/ Independents	180	14
	Total	**284**	**49**
2004	National	110	30
	State/ Regional/ Independents	245	15
	Total	**355**	**45**
2009	National	134	43
	State/ Regional/ Independents	422	16
	Total	**556**	**59**
2014	National	146	36
	State/ Regional/ Independents	522	26
	Total	**668**	**62**
2019	National	171	58
	State/ Regional/ Independents	553	20
	Total	**724**	**78**

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

The rising importance of state level parties in national politics in what many have called the "third phase of democratization" in Indian politics. The Lok Sabha elections of 1989, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2004 and 2009 in India have brought into sharp focus the importance

of coalition building and part alliances in order to win elections, so much so that it is recognized that they have 'become a central factor shaping politics in India' (Siddiqui, 2010, p. 351). The regional political parties in India emerged as a result of India's vast diversity and the federal structure of the Indian polity, which paves the way for a kind of 'electoral federalism'. The regional political parties most have followed the national parties in the case of formation of a particular wing for women within the party, and under the inspiration, guidance and activities of the women wings of political parties increasing the number of women in politics. As a result, changes in party politics in India present alternative opportunities for women in India. Several prominent female political leaders have occupied the office of chief minister in different states simultaneously, some for a longer period than others (Siddiqui, 2010, p. 353). State level parties and regional parties have provided the avenues to women for political participation, so women become confident about their ability in political spheres and even they also started to contest elections individually in more number. Thus changing Indian electoral politics has led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics in India.

Some point to the changing political party system; others attribute this to India's vast diversity in terms of electoral demands, from Dalit movement of Uttar Pradesh to the regional identity discourse of the southern states. Many see both as factors causing change of political scene of Indian electoral politics. Secondly, populist politics in India is driven by discourse centred around a politics of identity, which fragments and destabilises the political agenda. Region-based politics as a result of India's vast diversity and the federal structure of the Indian polity have also contributed to this fragmentation of the political agenda and has given rise to the emergence of a fickle and unstable coalition politics sometimes based more on expediency than ideology or policy agenda (Siddiqui, 2010, p. 351).

Also, there are several factors that helped to increase the number of women leaders in politics such as proper education, positive perceptions of society, changing behaviour of political parties and attitudes of male leaders(detail discussed in the chapter 4), government's policies and schemes, e.g. quota reservation, which played significant role in local-governance we have seen, has a great impactin regard to greater number of women's participation in politics.

3.2.2.2.COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION VARIATION ACROSS STATES:

While India has a good record of women holding all the important posts in the country, the overall participation of women in politics is not very satisfactory. While a large enough proportion of women turn out to vote and the gender gap in turnout has dropped to the single digits in the 1990s from almost 20 percent in 1971 and presently sometimes it crossed men's turnout but women still are not well represented in political life that requires them to be active in the public sphere – such as membership in Parliament and in State Legislative Assemblies. To redress the low level of participation by women in deliberative bodies the Government of India, in 1992, amended the constitution (73rd and 74th amendments) that reserves a third of the seats in the *Panchayats and Municipalities* (local governments) including the chairpersonship of these local bodies for women (Chhibber, 2002, p.410). This constitutional amendment has indeed brought women into local bodies (Gopalan and Shiva, 2000, p.119). But, the question arises why still women's participation in politics is lower? Prominent arguments, both in India and elsewhere have suggested that women's participation is generally lower either because they have been socialized differently (especially as far as marriage, motherhood, employment, and property ownership are concerned), or because they have fewer resources. An implicit assumption in these sets of arguments is that the lower levels of participation of women are mostly the result of a process of socialization that leads them to think of political activity in a different way than men. In other words, women don't take as active a part in political life because they don't think (as autonomous actors) that political participation is important. An implication that follows from this line of reasoning is that women do not think that entering political life would necessarily be advantageous for if they did, as autonomous actors they would participate. But this argument is not true always, it observes that women are aware of the advantages that politics brings but are still not active participants in political life. This lower level of participation is not only a consequence of the resources that women possess but also a result of the place of a woman in the family (Chhibber, 2002. p.409-29).

Political participation of women can be measured in three different dimensions: their participation as a voter, their participation as an elected representative and their participation in the actual decision making process (Shanker, 2014). In India, the

experience of different states in regard to women's involvement in politics is very unsatisfactory. Table 3.7 shows the statistics of the voting percentage of women and the percentage of women representatives across different states in the recently held (2019) Lok Sabha elections. As following Table indicates, women have consistently turned out to vote nearly equal or equal to men such as Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Lakshadweep etc and even sometimes female turnout become more than men for instance Goa, Manipur, Daman & Diu, Puducherry though their representation is surprisingly nil in these states. Only Chandigarh is exceptional union-territory where women representation is 100% and in Tripura it is 50% though in both states women voter turnout is less than men. The following table provides the evidence that the gap is visible across the different states in the matter of representation in spite of equal voter turnout.

TABLE NO: 3.7

Statistics of the Voting Percentage of Women and the Percentage of Women Representation across different States/ UTs in17[th] (2019) Lok Sabha

Sl. No	States/ UTs	Women Voter turnout Percentage over total No. of Voters	Percentage of Women Representatives over Total No. of seats
1	Andhra Pradesh	49.94	16
2	Arunachal Pradesh	49.44	0
3	Assam	48.62	7.14
4	Bihar	48.93	7.5
5	Goa	51.75	0
6	Gujarat	45.37	23.07
7	Haryana	45.67	10
8	Himachal Pradesh	50.17	0
9	Jammu & Kashmir	46.3	0
10	Karnataka	48.58	7.14
11	Kerala	52.02	5
13	Madhya Pradesh	46.18	13.79
14	Maharashtra	45.93	16.66
15	Manipur	51.74	0
16	Meghalaya	52.17	50
17	Mizoram	50.41	0
18	Nagaland	49.12	0
19	Odisha	49.33	33.33
20	Punjab	46.83	15.38
21	Rajasthan	47.22	12
22	Sikkim	47.15	0
23	Tamil Nadu	50.39	7.89
24	Tripura	48.92	**50**
25	Uttar Pradesh	46.16	13.75
26	West Bangal	48.66	26.19
27	Chhattisgarh	49.1	27.27
28	Jharkhand	48.65	14.28
29	Uttarakhand	49.18	20
30	Telangana	49.58	5.88
31	Andaman & Nicobar Island	47.09	0
32	Chandigarh	47.21	**100**
33	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	47.98	0
34	Daman & Diu	52.41	0
35	NCT OF Delhi	44.64	14.28
36	Lakshadweep	50.08	0
37	Puducherry	52.96	0
	Total	**47.45**(Across India)	**13.42**(Across India)

Source: www.eci.gov.in

The position of women in public political life in India is deplorable–particularly in their virtual absence in legislative bodies – at the state and at the national level. What is surprising about the fact that there are very few women present in legislative bodies in the Indian states is that the proportion of women in the legislature remains low even in those states where women have a better quality of life in terms of access to education and life expectancy such as Kerala. The smaller proportion of women who have a place in the *Lok Sabha*is replicated in the *Vidhan Sabhas* (state legislative assemblies) as well (Chhibber, 2002. p.409-29). Table 3.8 shows the percentage of women representatives in the most recent State Assemblies women who are members of the legislative assemblies and it is clear that the proportion of women who find a place in these legislatures is low and remains in the single digits for almost every state. What is remarkable about this very low level of representation for women is that it occurs even in states like Kerala where it is only 5.71% that have been hailed for their favourable treatment of gender concerns. While women indeed have achieved almost universal literacy in Kerala and are far more active in the labour force, their political presence in the legislative bodies is remarkably low. This difference, by itself, should give pause to arguments that seek to link women's education and employment to a place in public political life axiomatically. Since women in India have little place in the public arena or they may also express less faith in the political process (Chhibber, 2002. p.409-29).Table 3.8 provides evidence that Indian electoral politics is still the domain of men.

TABLE NO: 3.8
Women's Representation in State Assemblies

Sl No.	States/ UTs	Election Year	Percentage of Women Representatives Over Total No. of Seats
1	Andhra Pradesh	2019	8
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2019	5
3	Assam	2016	6.34
4	Bihar	2020	10.69
5	Chhattisgarh	2018	**14.44**
6	Delhi	2020	10
7	Goa	2017	5
8	Gujarat	2017	7.14
9	Haryana	2019	10
10	Himachal Pradesh	2017	5.88
11	Jammu & Kashmir	2014	2.29
12	Jharkhand	2019	12.34
13	Karnataka	2018	3.13
14	Kerala	2016	5.71
15	Madhya Pradesh	2018	9.13
16	Maharashtra	2019	8.33
17	Manipur	2017	3.33
18	Meghalaya	2018	5.08
19	Mizoram	2018	0
20	Nagaland	2018	0
21	Odisha	2019	8.90
22	Punjab	2017	5.12
23	Puducherry	2016	**13.33**
24	Rajasthan	2018	12
25	Sikkim	2019	9.37
26	Tamil Nadu	2016	9.33
27	Telangana	2018	5.04
28	Tripura	2018	5
29	Uttar Pradesh	2017	10.55
30	Uttarakhand	2017	7.14
31	West Bangal	2016/ 2021	**13.26**

Source: www.eci.gov.in

At the local level, women participation as an elected representative is high primarily because of the reservation introduced for women as per the 73rd amendment in the Indian

constitution. The 73rd amendment to the Indian constitution was introduced in 1992 with the ostensible purpose of giving women a larger voice in the political process. The amendment reserve, not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every *Panchayat*for women and it would also ensure that a third of the chairmanships of the *Panchayats* would be reserved for women. In so far as the 73rd amendment also required that states hold elections to the *Panchayats*, and as the amendment was adopted in 1992, the amendment could influence the extent of political participation by women almost instantaneously (Shanker, 2014). Though, many states introduced 50% reservation, within own jurisdiction, for women at grassroots level, so that political empowerment of women is increased. The enhanced reservation is applicable to the total number of seats to be filled by direct elections, the offices of Chairpersons, and the seats and offices of Chairpersons reserved for scheduled castes and tribes. Providing reservation for women in panchayats is under the jurisdiction of states and so many states have exercised their rights to give such reservation. While states like Bihar, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have already implemented 50 per cent quota for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. As per the information available with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 20 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal made provisions of 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in their respective State

Panchayati Raj Acts. A statement showing the number of elected women representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the country, State/Union Territory-wise is given atTable 3.8.Half of the Indian states ensured 50% (Andhra Pradesh,Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim & Telengana) even in some cases more than 50% women's participation and representation in PRIs such as Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand & West Bengal. But, concerns have been raised over the genuine participation of women as an elected representative. It has been reported that the men have been ruling with their women as a proxy.

TABLE NO: 3.9

States/UTs Wise Percentage of Elected Women Representatives in PRIs Elections

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	Total PRIs Representatives	Total Elected Women Represetatives	Percentage of Elected Women Representatives
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	858	306	35.66
2	Andhra Pradesh	156050	78,025	50
3	Arunachal Pradesh	9383	3,658	38.98
4	Assam	26754	14,609	54.60
5	Bihar	136573	71,046	52.02
6	Chhattisgarh	170465	93,392	54.78
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	147	47	31.97
8	Daman & Diu	192	92	47.91
9	Goa	1555	571	36.72
10	Gujarat	144080	71,988	49.96
11	Haryana	70035	29,499	42.12
12	Himachal Pradesh	28723	14,398	50.12
13	Jammu & Kashmir	39850	13,224	33.18
14	Jharkhand	59638	30,757	51.57
15	Karnataka	101954	51,030	50.05
16	Kerala	18372	9,630	52.41
17	Ladakh	NA	NA	NA
18	Lakshadweep	110	41	37.27
19	Madhya Pradesh	392981	196490	49.99
20	Maharashtra	240635	128677	53.47
21	Manipur	1736	880	50.69
22	Odisha	107487	56,627	52.68
23	Puducherry	NA	NA	NA
24	Punjab	100312	41,922	41.79
25	Rajasthan	126271	64,802	51.31
26	Sikkim	1153	580	50.30
27	Tamil Nadu	106450	56,407	52.98
28	Telangana	103468	52,096	50.34
29	Tripura	6646	3,006	45.23
30	Uttar Pradesh	913417	304538	33.34
31	Uttarakhand	62796	35,177	56.01
32	West Bengal	59229	30,458	51.42
	Total	**3187320**	**1453973**	**44.03**

Source: Press Information Bureau, Govt. of India www.pib.gov.in as on 23rd September, 2020.

* NA- Not Available

In Rajasthan, West Bengal, Kerala, Assam and Gujarat, Maharashtra, local government has been extremely important whereas it has been less significant in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. In Uttar Pradesh, on the other hand, local government is almost non-existent. The position of women in these states is also different. The female-male ratio varies from 993 in Andhra Pradesh to 908 in Uttar Pradesh as per 2011 Census while female literacy varies between 75.87 percent in Maharashtra to 57.18 percent in Uttar Pradesh. The states also differ in economic indicators and party strength. Their per capita income in 2019-20 ranged from Rs. 202.727 (in Maharashtra) to Rs. 70,418 in Uttar Pradesh. The political landscape of the states too was different with different party system configurations in each state. The right wing Hindu party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has a significant presence in Uttar Pradesh, Maharahstra, and Gujarat; the Communist Party of India (Marxist) ruled West Bengal and presently TMC leads West Bengal; the Congress party or the split wing of INC is still an important electoral force in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Kerala and Assam. Politics in Kerala is dominated by two political fronts: the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Indian National Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) since late 1970s. These two coalitions have alternated in power since 1982. INC was the leading political party of Assam. Rajasthan is also ruled by two parties Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Indian National Congress (INC). The current government in Rajasthan is that of the Indian National Congress. Hence, the number and percentage of women's representation at grassroots level depends upon political and other factors of each state. It is remarkable presence of women in the PRIs of Chhattisgarh, Assam and Uttarakhand, 54.78%, 54.60% and 56.01% respectively.

3.3.CONCLUSION:

Women's right to equal political participation, including their right to vote, was accepted very gracefully in India much earlier than most western societies conceded to this demand. Indian women did not even have to fight for this right, unlike their western counterparts. Since 1980s, the increase in the electoral participation women in India has the visibility of women in the legislative politics. But, this has not happened in the exercise of executive and judicial power due to their lack of presence in the decision making structures. Electoral participation and quotas through affirmative action alone are not enough to result in gender equity. Although, we have raised our voice for women's

reservation as the means of women's political empowerment, but at the same time it is also true that, the large number of women in legislature will not be the appropriate solution to the problem. It is foolishness to think that it will solve the entire problems faced by women and bring equality immediately. But it is just a step to mobilize women into the political arena. Therefore, women's involvement in politics requires special consideration, and cannot be left to the forces that presently dominate our parties and Government (Roy, 2015).

In the present scenario, it is important to note here that the struggle of women to prove themselves as equal to men, in the political arena, is found more difficult work. When a woman has been able to prove herself as an active parliamentarian for the one time then she has been elected repeatedly in the Parliament and that time political party does not matter from which party she belongs. In this regard, women leaders such as Vijaya Raje Scindia, Dr. Sushila Nayar, Maneka Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee who were/are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men, so they don't need the reference of any political party. But, for one time, if she has been failed to prove herself then she may never be choose by the same political party for the election. Though, this trend we have seen rarely in case of male candidates. In case of men members, they don't need to prove themselves again and again but this is necessary for women all the time. In this respect, one thing is need to mention here that male party leaders have shown little willingness to include women in party decision making bodies or help to create a suitable atmosphere for women's participation in their own organizations. This attitude of male party leaders is not a healthy sign towards women participation in politics as well as in decision-making bodies and also for democracy. Hence, all these tendencies towards women participation in the political process making the journey of women towards politics harder literally.

However, here the entire chapter tried to examine the history of the journey of Indian women in the political domain. The women all over the world, east-west, north-south, as silent sufferers made tremendous contribution to society in the past, which remained unrecognized and therefore, history is considered 'his' achievements and 'hers' has been completely blacked out. This secondary and relegated position of women in social and political life is not a contemporary phenomenon but has been in existence since the beginning of the civilized society in India. For centuries, women have been suppressed, oppressed, and treated as subordinates, not equal to men in various fields of activity and

politics is one among them. Throughout the ages women have been struggling to set equal steps with men and trying to cope with the existing in egalitarian gender relations in all spheres of life.

> ➤ *SUMMARY:*

■ In India, women's status has been subject to many great changes over the past few millennia. From ancient times through the medieval period to modern India, the history of women has been eventful. The history of women's participation in politics has been divided into pre and post-independence period.

■ Since the 19th century women began to participate in various movements and agitations. But most of the struggles were dominated by the women of the elites of the society. After the First World War a large number of women joined India's freedom struggle.M.K. Gandhi made women an integral part of all struggles which he launched during the freedom struggle against British colonialism. The house wives, young girls, windows, old women and even tawaifs and prostitutes directly or indirectly participated in the freedom movement of the country though most of these are unrecorded. The massive participation of women in freedom struggle was largely accomplished by the call given by Gandhi in the 1920s. The major events where women participated in large number in the pre-independence era were Anti-partition Movement of Bengal (1905), Non-cooperation Movement (1920-22), Salt Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience Movement (1930), and Quit India Movement (1945-47) (Roy, 2015).

■ The decades following independence witnessed a remarkable decline in women's involvement in politics. From the end of the 1930s to the early 1950s women participated in a wide range of social and political movements. But in the decades after independence women have become marginalized in politics as compared to the earlier decades. Indian women have been given, formally, an equal status to men by Constitution. But there is exists a gap between the constitutional rights and the rights enjoyed in reality by women. Seventy-five years of independence have made very little impact on women's active participation in politics. Their performance as representatives quantitatively has been rather insignificant in the formal political bodies. With a few exceptions women have remained outside the domain of power and political authority (Jharta, 1996, p. 62). The number of

women in the leadership positions at the local, village, district, state and national level is still not commensurate with their numbers in society.

- For centuries, women have been suppressed, oppressed, and treated as subordinates, not equal to men in various fields of activity and politics is one among them. The secondary and relegated position of women in social and political life is not a contemporary phenomenon but has been in existence since the beginning of the civilized society in India.

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CHAPTER: 4

WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN WEST BENGAL: A STUDY OF MAJOR WOMEN LEADERS SINCE 1990

CHAPTER OUTLINE

4.1.INTRODUCTION

In democracy, citizens' active participation in political affairs is crucial and necessary because it provides legitimacy to the system and also strengthens the democratic fabric (Palmer, 1976, p.50-57). The idea of democracy is to ensure 'a Government of the whole body by the whole people, equally represented' (Mill, 1962, p. 256-57). A focal point of the current discourse on democracy is the concept of political representation. The 'politics of ideas' has come to be 'challenged by the alternative politics of presence' (Phillips, 1995, p.5). Accordingly, there is a growing demand as women comprise about half of the population, this section of society requires due attention in the system and a due share in political decision-making process with the feminist cry 'personal is political' and 'political is personal'. It is argued that democracy would be failed in its objectives if women lack equal opportunity to participate in the governmental decision-making process. They are to be equal partners in the nation-building and political development, so women would be able to facilitate their 'real' empowerment.

Today more and more voluntary organizations and national agencies have been more concerned about women questions, their activities expanding new areas of action and they are also seeking to reach out to women in the rural and remote areas. The approach to women's issues is also gradually changing from one of protection and welfare, to that of participation and empowerment. With independence Indian women were guaranteed political equality with men. Indian Constitution ensures equality into various articles. Therefore, the Central and State Governments of India have endeavoured to uplift the socio-economic and political conditions of women through various legislations, policies and programmes. With such initiatives the number of women participating in the electoral fray has increased but the number of women representatives in the formal political structures has never exceeded 15 percent of all seats. With the introduction of democratic governance Indian women have obtained right to vote, right to participation, right to stand for elections and right to representation in the parliaments and state legislatures but their percentage has remained extremely low. Across the country today, there are estimated to be 656.288183 million (as per World Bank data on population, 2019) women in India and bringing these women into politics were an act of positive discrimination.

However, the idea of political representation and leadership is implicit in the concept of political participation. Precisely, political representation means representation of elected

persons, are the members of a legislature with power, collectively, to make laws and determine national policy, in fact it means particularly acting for others (Pitkin). Thus, the political representation relates to responsiveness, accountability and authorizations. And, political leadership is a system of social relationships involving power, authority, charisma, abilities, views, behaviours and the style of individual who occupy formal office as well. To feminist scholars, participation and representation are considered as significant but different means to include women in politics. Participation is a means to include women in politics 'from below', i.e. to exercise right to vote and representation is another means to include women 'from above', i.e. to get elected, in political institutions. In this perspective, taken into consideration of the notion of *Role Model* given by Phillips we have found the relation between the idea of political representation and political leadership. To Phillips, elected successful women can serve as *Role Model*. Inspiring by such role models many women do believe themselves to be capable of performing well in politics. When more women become present in politics and they could serve as role models as a result they inspire others to come forward. We can expect with this fuller inclusion of previously excluded groups will alter the direction of policy or the content of the decisions that are made as well as the way politics is done (Hust, 2004, p.36). This forms the background against which this chapter will specifically focus on elected women leaders in West Bengal, mainly MPs and MLAs. The chapter will have also case studies of selected women leaders.

4.2. THE PROFILE OF THE STATE: WEST BENGAL

West Bengal located in the eastern part of India; Bay of Bengal is lying to the south and bordering three alien countries and five Indian states, Bangladesh in the east and Nepal and Bhutan in the North; Indian state Sikkim to the north, Assam to the north-east, Odisha to the south-west and Jharkhand and Bihar to the west. West Bengal comprises with the Darjeeling Himalaya hill region, the Ganges delta, the Rarh region and coastal Sundarbans with an area 88,752 km^2, it has population of 91,276,115 (Census, 2011) of which male and female are 46,809,027 and 44,467,088 respectively. In 1947, when India gained independence Bengal was partitioned along religious lines. The western part went to the dominion of India and was named West Bengal. The eastern part went to the dominion of Pakistan as a province called East Bengal (later renamed East Pakistan in 1956), becoming the independent nation of Bangladesh in 1971. In 1950 the Princely State of Cooch Behar merged with West Bengal. In 1955 the former French Enclave of

Chandannagar, which had passed into Indian control after 1950, was integrated into West Bengal; portions of Bihar were also subsequently merged with West Bengal. Both West and East Bengal experienced large influxes of refugees during and after partition in 1947. Refugee resettlement and related issues continued to play a significant role in the politics and socio-economic condition of the state. Presently, West Bengal is divided into 23 administrative districts (Wikipedia). The economy of the state is largely based on agriculture though it has small-medium sized enterprises, its per capita domestic product in 2019-20 ₹115,748 which is the India's 23rd highest GSDP. The female-male ratio is 950/1000 and total literacy is 76.26% as per census, 2011.

Figure 4.1: Districts of West Bengal

The West Bengal State Assembly is unicameral legislature, which is called Vidhan Sabha, with 295 members (MLAs), including one nominated member from the Anglo-Indian community. The state contributes 42 seats to the Lok Sabha and 16 seats to the Rajya Sabha of the Indian Parliament. The system of Panchayati Raj was introduced in the State in 1956 through the West Bengal Panchayat Act. Though the next 21 years Panchayati Raj system was not an effective institution, failed to empower grassroots people. Since1978 several Constitutional Amendments have taken place in the Panchayati Raj system in West Bengal and now it has emerged as the most effective and vibrant organ of grassroots democracy in the state (Mandal, 2008). Also West Bengal is one of the most

urbanised states in India. The urban governance through the 'Urban Local Bodies' (ULBs) i.e. Municipal Corporations, Municipalities and Notified Area Authorities, in the state of West Bengal dates back to British regime in 18thcentury. As a matter of fact, Kolkata Municipal Corporation or "KMC" (earlier known as Calcutta Municipal Corporation) is one of the oldest municipal bodies of the country. In 1726, a Mayor's court was established by a Royal Charter. The Bengal Municipal Act was passed in 1932, which brought about several innovative changes in municipal governance in the presidency. The post-Independence era witnessed repeated amendments to the Bengal Municipal Act (BMA) of 1932 in order to face the challenge of rapid urbanization in the state. Finally, the BMA was replaced by the West Bengal Municipal Act, in 1993 and it incorporated the provisions of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. The West Bengal Municipal Act, 1993 also has gone through several amendments. However, the urban governance in West Bengal is being implemented through 118 Municipalities/ Notified Area Authorities and 7 Municipal Corporations (Source: Department of Urban Development & Municipal Affairs, Govt. of West Bengal).

TABLE 4.1: Basic Information about West Bengal

Area of the State	88,752 km^2
Density of Population(as per Census, 2011)	1028
No. of Districts	23
Approximate Population (as per projection, 2021)	10.19 Crore
Total Population(as per Census, 2011)	91,276,115
Male	46,809,027
Female	44,467,088
Sex ratio	950
Total Literacy (as per Census, 2011)	76.26 %
Male literacy	81.69 %
Female literacy	70.54 %

Source: censusindia.gov.in

4.3.THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL

There are a host of demographic information, which could provide a handful of socio economic indicators in relation to the status of women. To keep our analysis simple only few of them have been gleaned out in order to get some basic inside into our point of

concern. The indicators taken are sex ratio, literacy rate and percentage of school going children in the age group of 6-17 years and few other indicators on women's health and decision making.

In terms of sex ratio there is marked improvement during the last three decades of the 20th century (1991-2021) both at the national level as well as in West Bengal. In fact, West Bengal has shown a marked improvement in sex ratio during these period from 917 (1991) to 950 (2011). In fact the state has improved its position in terms of sex ratio from 22nd in 1991 to 17th in 2011 among the Indian states and union territories during the last two decades of 20thcentury.The sex ratio figure of the Indian states and union territories reveal that the top 10 states in 2011 are Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Telangana, Odisha and Mizoram. It is also notable that Kerala (Female- 1084, Male-964 as per Census 2011) and Puducherry (Female- 1037, Male-967 as per Census 2011) are the only two States where female population is more than the male population. In West Bengal Darjeeling district (970) stands first in terms of sex ratio followed by West Midnapore (966), Hooghly (961), Murshidabad (959), South 24 Parganas (956), Birbhum (956), North 24 Parganas (955), Bankura (954), Jalpaiguri (953) and other districts.

A look into the literacy scenario reveals that the state of West Bengal has shown an increase of about 11% in female literacy during the last decade of the 20th century. The female literacy rate for the state stood at 59.61% in 2001 and reached to 70.54% in 2011. However, the state remained ahead of the national average on female literacy rate during 2011. Apart from the literacy figures the available information on the population in the age group of 6-17 years attending school by age and sex provides an interesting insight. Of all the females in the age group of 6-17 years 85.9% (though it became lower 76.8% as per NFHS 2019-20) attend school in West Bengal compared to 68.8% in India as per NFHS 2015-16. The corresponding figure for the males in the same age group is lower 83.7% in West Bengal. A close look also reveals that with the increasing age school attendance for females rises significantly.

The information on state of women's health specially at the reproductive age provides valuable insight into the status of women in any society. Two aspects of women's health prevalence of anaemia and antenatal care are taken in the present analysis. The available

information reveals that in India 53.2 percent of ever married women suffer from iron deficiency anaemia which is even higher in West Bengal 59.8 percent. In terms of antenatal care West Bengal shows much better result. In India where 58.6 percent of women at reproductive age group receive antenatal care from a qualified doctors outside home, in West Bengal such care is available to about 87.3 percent of women in the same category as per National Family Health Survey report, 2015-16 though it falls to 72.6% during 2019-2020.

Finally, some of the observations on never married women involved in household decision making clearly revealed that in West Bengal, as in India, the decision making power of women mainly revolves around her kitchen. About half or more have no power to decide on their own health care and purchase of jewellery for household items and staying with their parents or siblings. Moreover, about half of the ever married women in West Bengal have no access to money which all are indications towards powerlessness of women in the society (Mitra and Mitra, 2006, p.78-80). West Bengal being a part of the world community cannot escape from the bad effects of commercialisation and globalization. Still it seeks to protect the rights of women enshrined in the Constitution of India; enhance their dignity and ensure their participation in the economic, social and political activities.

4.4.WEST BENGAL:WOMEN AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Three decades after independence Indian National Congress (INC) dominated nearly all of the states of India. Similarly, since the time of 1952 to till 1977(1st to 7th State Assembly election) in the West Bengal State Assembly, Indian National Congress (INC) was the ruling party. However, in 1977, the Communist Party of India (CPI-M) won in the state legislative elections and became the ruling party. From 1977-2011 (8th to 14thState Assembly election), the CPI-M remained in power for 34 long years as the world's longest-serving democratically elected communist government until it was lost office in 2011. After a long period, in West Bengal under the woman leadership Mamata Banerjeethe All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) came into power. AITC had been an ally in what was then the Congress Party's national ruling coalition government. The AITC's founder and leader, Mamata Banerjee became the State's first female Chief Minister. Since the inception of West Bengal in its' political history we had only one female Governor (Padmaja Naidu, from1956-1967) and presently have woman Chief

Minister. While during the freedom struggle women from Bengal actively participated in demonstrations and arrested in large number and became subject to police violence. In 1928, the first formal organization Mahila Rastriya Sangha (MRS) formed to mobilize women for political work in Bengal and Calcutta women formed the Nari Satyagraha Samiti (NSS) in 1929 in response to the congress call for women to be ready to serve the nation. By 1933 most of the women revolutionaries of Bengal were in prison and were subject to extreme police violence (Forbes, 1998, p. 135-41). In spite of such bravery stories of Bengali women during freedom struggle, after independence they remain uncounted and even invisible and sometimes deplorably visible in the elected decision making bodies (Legislative Assembly & Council of Ministry) of the State, Table 4.2 & 4.3 showing the fact in this regard.

4.4.1. POLITICAL PARTIES AND WOMEN MEMBERS:

In a democratic setup, the political road to decision-making usually leads to the parliamentary system via the political parties. Though the ultimate aim of various political parties is to achieve power, they differ in their ideologies and programmes (Kumari & Dubey, 1994, p. 61). So, it becomes imperative to see the general attitude of various political parties towards women in general, what has been the level of representation of women in the different political parties at the primary membership level and whether the percentage is reflected in the leadership level? All political parties in their manifesto support equal status of women that women should be given equal rights, but the question is that, in actual reality to what extent they actually succeeded in giving equal position to women within their own parties (Kumari & Dubey, 1994, p. 69). Table 4.2 provides a look at party wise figures of women members will help painting a picture, the extent to which all parties except one party provide chances of nearly equal participation within their own party setup. It has found that no sincere effort is made by the political parties so that a significant number of women can enter into the party organization and particularly at the decision making process. All parties have specified women's wings i.e. Mahila Congress (INC), All India Democratic Women's Association (CPI-M), Mahila Morcha (BJP), Trinamool Mahila Congress (AITC), which are playing very important role in regard to motivate and encourage women to participate in politics. But these women's wing work within the limitations of the party's women's issues. The role of Women's Organization is of crucial importance in this regard. But, no political

party is giving due importance while making the party's propaganda (Ghatak, 2010, p.293). In general, women primary party members are utilized by the party during elections to mobilize womenfolk or else they are given the responsibility of holding a campaign meeting to represent their party, in place of senior male candidates. Women members are generally used to do social work for the party during natural calamities etc. Even within the party, majority of the women are not given any important positions and responsibilities.

TABLE: 4.2

Membership Level of Women in Four-leading Political Parties of West Bengal

Name of Party	Total Membership in West Bengal	Number of Women Members in West Bengal	Percentage of Women Members in West Bengal	Total Members in the Highest Decision Making Body (State-level)	Number of Women in the Highest Decision Making Body (State-level)
INC	10, 00, 000 (Approx)	4, 00, 000 (Approx)	40%	39	4 (10.3%)
BJP	50,00,000 (Approx)	20,00,000 (Approx)	40%	3	0
CPI-M	1,85,500	9,275	5%	18	5 (27.8%)
AITC	80,00,000 (Approx)	40,00,000 (Approx)	50%	174	29 (16.7%)

Source: Data supplied by the respective political parties (All figures are of 2016)

In this regard, equally important is the role of the family and social obligations. But, family and social obligations prove to be a major hindrance for women. The role of the family in this regard is not encouraging. It is not a regular feature that women are taking equal role even in the decision making process of the family. With a view to improve the position of the women in the lawmaking body the first active role should be taken by the family and then by the political parties. The status and position of women first should be improved from the family level. The women's organizations have to take prime responsibility regarding the question of women's equality and women's rights. Social and political organizations should come forward and help in this regard. Women's representations in all section of the party organization have to increase. Legislation and constitutional measures are not enough to improve the representation of women from regional to national decision making body. Poor women's representation in the legislature is not at all a good sign for the betterment and success of any democratic society (Ghatak,

2010, p.293). However, the Table 4.2 shows evidence that there is found a huge gap between the level of women's primary membership and leadership in decision making bodies.

4.4.2. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE ELECTORAL POLITICS: THE EXPERIENCE OF WEST BENGAL

Right to vote can be said to be the starting point in the struggle for women's political equality. The participation of women in the electoral process is an indicator of their political consciousness. In India, limited adult franchise was granted to women in 1937. Since then, women have been participating in political process, as voters, as candidates contesting the elections, involved in deliberations both in State Assemblies and Parliament and also through holding public office at different levels in the Judiciary. Women's participation in formal elections is to a great extent dependent on the mobilization efforts of the political parties, general awareness among the community of the importance of exercising franchise and overall political culture.

4.4.2.1.POLITICAL PARTIES AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

In a democratic set up, the political road to decision making usually leads to the system via the political parties. While analyzing the role and participation of women members in various political parties, it becomes imperative to see the promises or programmes which they have for the upliftment of women in their manifestoes, and to what extent they encourage women within their party organizations.
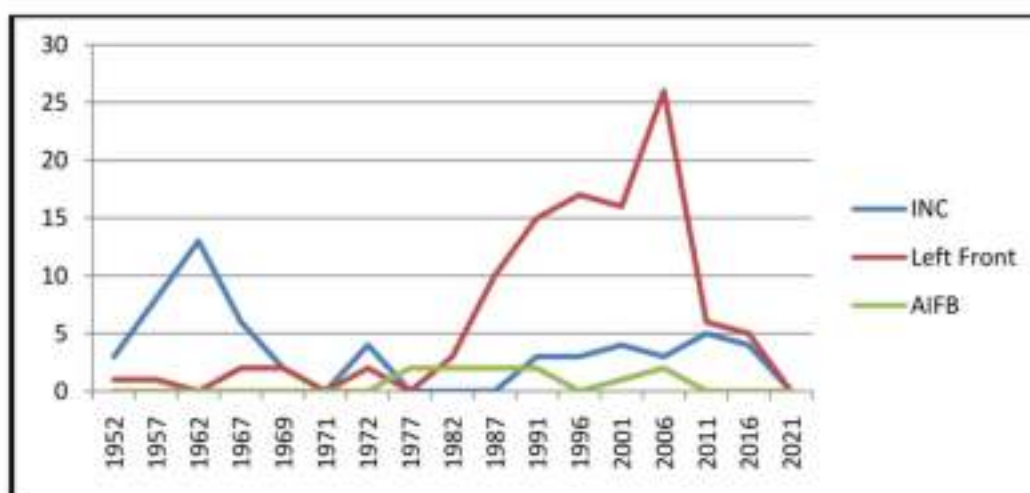
TABLE: 4.3
PARTY-WISE WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN WEST BENGAL VIDHAN SABHA, 1952-2021

Year of Assembly Elections	INC	Left Front	AIFB	Others	IND	AITC	Total
1952	3	1	0	2	0	0	6
1957	8	1	0	1	1	0	11
1962	13	0	0	1	0	0	14
1967	6	2	0	1	0	0	9
1969	2	2	0	3	0	0	7
1971	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1972	4	2	0	1	0	0	7
1977	0	0	2	1	1	0	4
1982	0	3	2	2	0	0	7
1987	0	10	2	1	0	0	13
1991	3	15	2	3	0	0	23
1996	3	17	0	2	0	0	22
2001	4	16	1	3	0	5	29
2006	3	26	2	3	0	3	37
2011	5	6	0	0	0	26	37
2016	4	5	0	1	0	29	39
2021	0	0	0	7 (BJP)	0	33	40

Source: Compiled from the data available with the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library.

*IND =Independent, *Left Front= CPI (M)& CPI (M)

FIGURE NO: 4.2
PARTY-WISE WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN WEST BENGAL VIDHAN SABHA
1952-2021

The Table 4.3 reveals the fact that till 1962 election the maximum number of female candidates has been fielded by the Indian National Congress and Congress was the

leading party of giving more representation to the women in the assembly though it is very few. But, from 1977 the situation has been changed totally, the number dropped to one and then zero, there was a tendency towards a sharp decrease in the number of women contestants set up by the Congress. The number of women contestants put up by the Congress, however, always remained much below its stipulated target of 15% of the total candidates. The target of 15% was officially fixed up by the party in 1957 and since then it has been repeatedly reiterated. From 1982 the Left Front party (CPI & CPM) has showed more positive attitude in setting up women candidates. The number of women candidates fielded by the party in 1987 was 10. The other smaller parties have shown fluctuations in this respect. It may be noted that though women candidates contested the elections as independents but the success of such candidates was insignificant. In almost all the elections, the unsuccessful independent women candidates lost their security deposit. From the year 2001 in the political map of West Bengal a new political party that is All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), has emerged under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee and started performing well, presently it is the leading party in West Bengal politics.

The table shows that there were only 6 women representatives in the first assembly in 1952. Their number increased to 40 in 2021, it is the highest ever number. In 2011 & 2016, 37 and 39 women were elected in the assembly. In the present Vidhan Sabha we have 7 out of 40 women MLAs from BJP and 33 from AITC. First time in West Bengal, there is no representatives from the Congress and Left Front in the current legislative assembly and this is the first time ever BJP started to represent women members in the assembly. However, the overall representation of women in the Vidhan Sabha is too low compare to men representatives. Women's participation in the elections to the State legislations shows that only a few women avail the opportunity of representing in the assembly. Thus, the above table indicates evidence that the political parties do not usually nominate women as candidates in the Assembly elections. Though, in 2011 Government of India approved 50% reservation for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions, with this women's representation has been improved in the local governance but the 33% women's reservation in the Parliament and state assemblies is still a matter of uncertainty.

### 4.4.2.2.LOK SABHA AND WOMEN OF WEST BENGAL

It is evident that in the Lok Sabha there is a gross under-representation of women. Table 4.4 indicates the number of women representation in the Lok Sabha. In the present Lok Sabha out of 42 Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal, women representation is 11. Women representation from West Bengal in Lok Sabha has been as follows (Table 4.4).

TABLE: 4.4
Representation of Women Members from West Bengal to Lok Sabha 1952-2019
(Since 1977 total Seats of West Bengal are: 42)

Years of Lok Sabha Elections	Total No. of Seats	No. of Women Contestants	No. of Elected Women Member (Lok Sabha)	Percentage of Women Over Total No. of Seats (all India)	No. of Elected Women Member from West Bengal
1952	499	51	22	4.4	1
1957	500	45	22	4.4	2
1962	503	66	31	6.1	2
1967	523	67	29	5.5	2
1971	521	86	22	4.2	2
1977	544	70	19	3.4	2
1980	544	143	28	5.1	2
1984	544	162	42	7.7	5
1989	529	198	29	5.4	2
1991	544	326	37	6.8	3
1996	541	599	40	7.3	4
1998	545	274	43	7.8	5
1999	543	284	49	9.02	5
2004	543	355	45	8.2	4
2009	543	556	59	10.8	7
2014	543	631	62	11.4	12
2019	542	724	78	14.3	11

Source: Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

FIGURE NO:4.3
Representation of Women Members From West Bengal To Lok Sabha
1952-2019
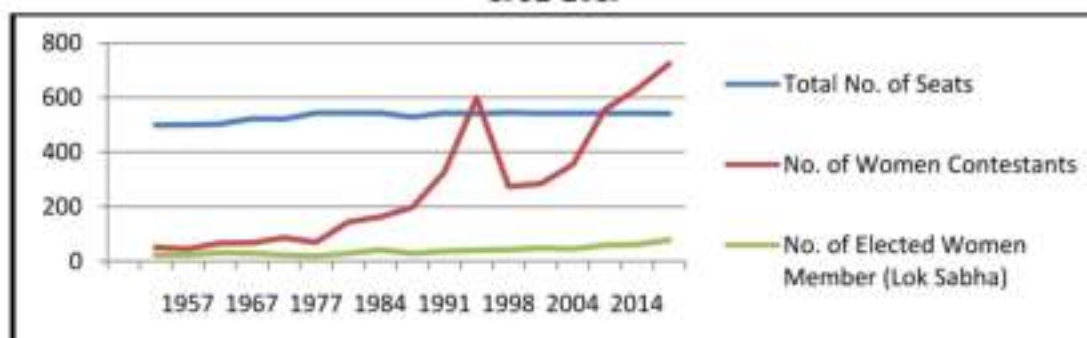
The early Lok Sabha of 1957 had two women members out of 31 seats and from 1957 to 1980 in six Lok Sabhas, there were two women members from West Bengal. Since 1984, the number of women MPs from West Bengal is fluctuating. In 1984, West Bengal had 5 women representatives to the Lok Sabha and in the next three Lok Sabha; West Bengal had fewer women MPs such as 2, 3, and 4 respectively. Again, the number of women MPs from West Bengal became 5 to two consecutive Lok Sabha. In the 14th and 15th Lok Sabha, the West Bengal had 4 and 7 women MPs out of total 42 Lok Sabha seats. The table 4.3 shows that in the 16th Lok Sabha, 2014 people of West Bengal have elected maximum number of women parliamentarians. The state has elected 12 women MPs in 2014 compared to 11 in the 2019 general election and it was the highest ever number. The percentage of women MPs has increased from 4.4 to 14.39 between the first Lok Sabha to the seventeenth Lok Sabha. The representation of women in Rajya Sabha is also not encouraging. Presently from West Bengal out of total 16 members 4 women are representing in the Rajya Sabha, which is to some extent promising compare to Lok Sabha. However, the presence of women in the Upper House is a little higher but the overall condition is not so much encouraging.

4.4.2.3.WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The representation of women in the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal, as reflected in Table 4.5, shows that there were 6 women elected out of 238 total seats in 1952 and the number of women MLAs has reached to 40 out of 294 seats in 2021. The percentage of women MLAs has increased from 2.52% to 13.60% in 2021 and this is the highest ever percentage. The number and percentage of women members in the assembly always fluctuated and never crossed the limit of 14%. The table shows there is also exist

percentage of difference between contesting and electing women members, since 1996 the difference becomes wider steadily.

TABLE: 4.5

WOMEN MLAs OF WEST BENGAL, 1952-2021

Years of Assembly Elections	Total No. Of Seats	Total No. Of Women Contestants	Total No. of Elected Women Members (Legislative Assembly)	Gap Between Contesting & Electing Percentage of Women Members	Percentage of Women MLAs Over Total No. of Seats
1952	238	-	6	-	2.52
1957	252	17	11	35.3	4.36
1962	252	17	14	17.65	5.55
1967	280	20	9	55	3.21
1969	280	19	7	63.16	2.50
1971	280	-	6	-	2.14
1972	280	-	5	-	1.78
1977	294	27	4	85.19	1.36
1982	294	23	7	69.57	2.38
1987	294	35	12	65.72	4.08
1991	294	74	23	68.92	7.82
1996	294	114	22	80.71	7.48
2001	294	114	29	74.57	9.86
2006	294	139	37	73.39	12.58
2011	294	174	37	78.74	12.58
2016	294	194	39	79.9	13.26
2021	294	240	40	83.34	13.60

Source: Compiled from the data available with the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library.

Very few women have been able to reach the high level of power and authority. This is true not only in India but in other countries of the world also. Though West Bengal had a woman Governor for a full decade, from 1957 to 1966, poor representation of women in the state legislature and Ministries has been reflected from 1952 to 2021. Poor representation of women in the legislature is held to be the main reason for the small number of women in the ministries (Sen Choudhury, 1995, p.115).

FIGURE NO: 4.4
WOMEN MLAs OF WEST BENGAL, 1952-2021
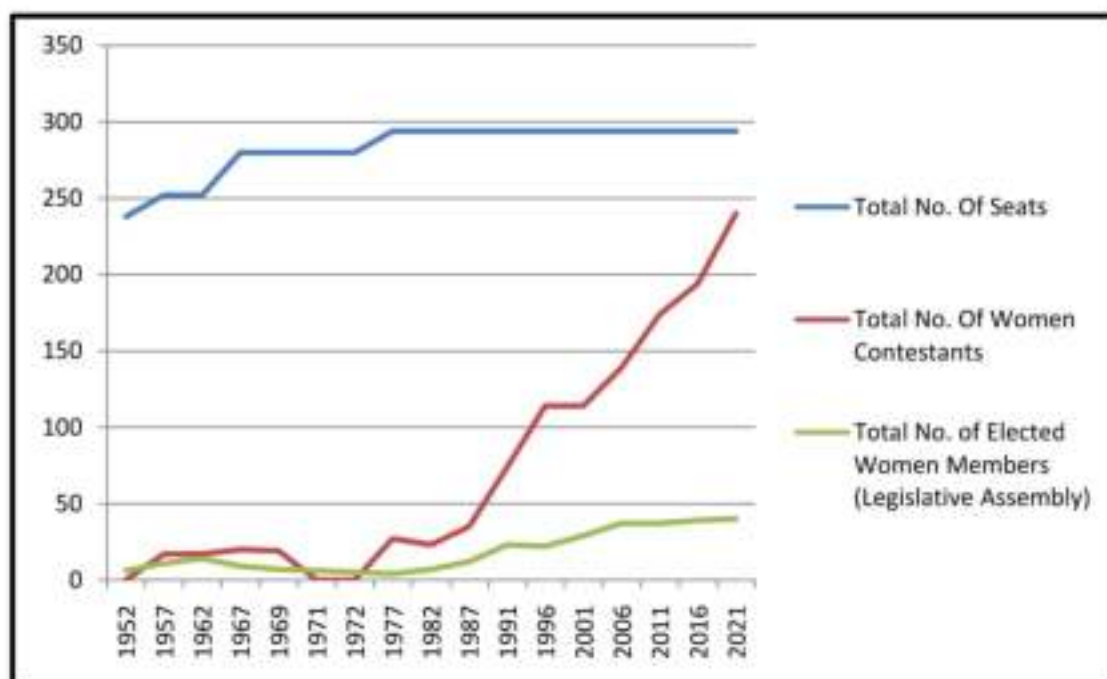
4.4.2.4.PRESENCE OF WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY OF WEST BENGAL

As far as Women Ministry is concerned, there were 2 women ministers out of a total 30 ministers in 1952. The largest number of women ministers have been found in the ministry formed in 1962, there was 13.51% representation of women in the ministry as mentioned in the table no 4.6. Two women were included as Cabinet Ministers and three as Deputy Ministers. But, the situation changed in two years time when the post of Deputy Minister was discontinued. Only two women remained as Cabinet members till the Fourth General Election. When United Front Government was formed in 1967, West Bengal had a ministry without any woman. When the United Front came back to power in 1969 with an overwhelming majority in the Legislative Assembly, two women were included in the ministry: one as a rank of Cabinet Minister and one as a Minister of State. The short-lived Government of 1971 also did not have any woman Minister (Sen Choudhury, 1995, p.115).

Politics in West Bengal turned a full circle in 1972, when a Congress Government was formed again. But out of 28 members ministry included only one woman as a Deputy Minister. The Left Front came to power in West Bengal in 1977 and since then the number of women ministers has fluctuated within one to four. In 2011, All India

Trinamool Congress (AITC) under a woman chief had been come to power in West Bengal, though the number of women ministers had remained 4 where 45 or 40men in the council of ministers till 2016 (see Table 4.6). The number of women ministers has been doubled in 2021 from 4 to 8. Sixty-nine years has been passed from first assembly election, but the situation has not changed remarkably; the number of women ministers has changed from 2 to 8 only while we expected that the women's underrepresentation in the decision making bodies would be changed when the State Government started to lead by a Woman Chief. On the basis of available data, the following table indicates that the percentage of women in the 1962 ministry was 13.51%and in 2021 percentage is 18.60% that is the highest ever.

TABLE: 4.6

WOMEN MINISTERS IN WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT, 1952-2021

Year of Assembly Elections	Total No of Ministers	Total No of Women Ministers	Percentage of Women Ministers Over Total No. of Ministers
1952	30	2	6.66
1957	30	2	6.66
1962	37	5	13.51
1967	19	-	-
1969	31	2	6.45
1971	26	-	-
1972	28	1	3.57
1977	30	1	3.33
1982	45	2	4.44
1987	32	1	3.12
1991	44	4	9.09
1996	48	4	8.33
2001	NA	-	-
2006	NA	-	-
2011	45	4	8.88
2016	40	4	10
2021	43	8	18.60

* NA-Not available.
Source: http://wbicc.in/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Council-of-Minister.

FIGURE NO: 4.5
WOMEN MINISTERS IN WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT, 1952-2021
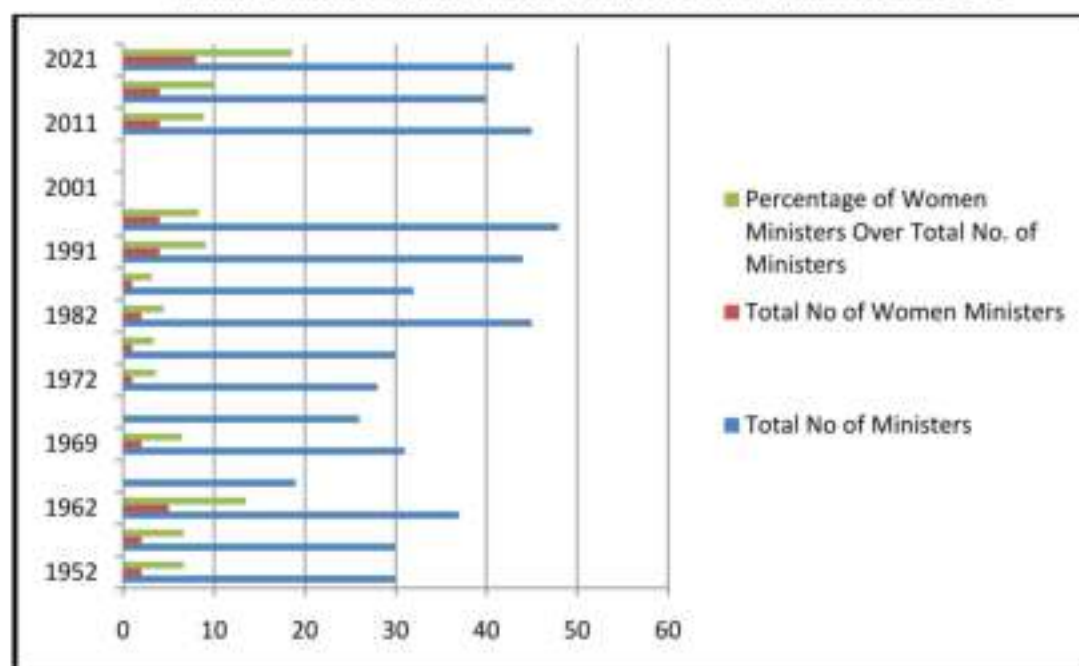
The Congress Government as well as United Front and Left Front Government, was allotted comparatively marginal portfolios to women. Even, presently under the woman Chief Minister of West Bengal, the position of women ministers has not changed; still the important portfolios like Home, Finance, or Defence remain in the hands of male and have never been held by a woman. Hence, it is found that the women ministers are very negligible in the state of West Bengal; there are only 8 women ministers out of total 43 ministers. In spite of Constitutional and Governmental endeavours women's underrepresentation remains persistent and pervasive. West Bengal is not an exceptional state in India where membership of women in the legislature is abysmally low, it is only 16.66% women representatives over total number of seats (as per 2021 Assembly election) in compare to that the percentage of women representation in the parliament is slightly better, which is 26.19% in Lok Sabhaover total number of seats (as per 2019 Lok Sabha election).

4.4.3. WEST BENGAL: A FOCUS ON ELECTED WOMEN LEADERS IN POLITICS

In the 1990s, there was considerably higher participation as well as representation of women in politics, the world over as compared to the previous decades. This change was noticed also in other vital areas which were usually off-limits for women such as in the

bureaucracy, the judiciary and in business. Both developed and developing countries witnessed and accepted the dramatic rise in the numbers of the women holding key posts. Women even hold the key posts. Women even held the offices of president and prime minister in several countries (Kumari, 2012). This trend is more marked in developing countries like India, even within the India there are some states where we observed the similar trend. Indian States such as Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, West Bengal etc are/were leading by Woman as head of the states and as head (Governor) of the governments (Chief Minister). Presently, there are 4 Indian states where women are holding the post of Governor (Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Telengana) and West Bengal is the only states of India leading by woman Chief Minister.

The matter of women's involvement in politics in the state West Bengal, post 1990 indicates a trend that more and more women are contesting the polls from various political parties and the number of women participating in the electoral process has increased also (see above table 4.4).In this study Women legislators, MPs and MLAs of West Bengal, have been selected because they are most important part in the decision making process of the Government. Actually, legislators make the laws which actually govern the state. The elected women leaders must ensure women's empowerment through the political institutions which they represent. Therefore, it is necessary to develop structures and methods for accountability from women elected representatives and to develop links and support systems between women's groups and the women in political institutions (Nath, 1997, p.14).In this respect, arguments of Anne Phillips is notable in favour of increased political leadership of women: (i) Successful women politicians act as role models for the others; (ii) States increasing the proportion of the women elected would ensure the principles of justice between the sexes; (iii) Ensuring the fulfilling of certain interests of women, which may otherwise be neglected; and (iv) Enhancing the quality of political life (Phillips, 1995, p. 62).

However, this section is based mainly on field interviews and also draws upon a selective review of literature on leadership. Twenty five women leaders from West Bengal were meet and spoken with in the course of the study. The interviews are based on a one time interaction and there were no follow-up visits. However, even with this limitations of interviews provided a glimpse of the qualities of leadership that have emerged in different places and the difference it has made to the lives of women. Each of these women is in a

leadership position, either a member or ex-member of legislative assembly or of the parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha). They each play a role in the public sphere as well as in the private sphere within the home. Their life experiences are different, the natures of the issues that exercise them are different, and their perception of their own present and future roles is very different. These profiles are based on quick interviews and may not reveal many things for which a longer stay and better understanding of the area would be essential. While fully recognising this limitations the interviews bring out certain issues which appear to us to be worthy of further and more detailed study. What we have tried to do therefore is simply to list the various issues that seemed to emerge from the interviews and discussions (see chapter 5 & 6), which seem to us to be potentially rewarding areas in any future study.

4.4.3.1.ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS: THE STRUCTURAL FACTORS

The problem of active political participation of women in the elections can differ from one place to the other. The reasons for or low political participation may be sought in the cultural, socio-economic and political realities of the women. Generally, women's reproductive and family roles make it difficult for women to be actively engaged in politics. In many societies, economic dependence, lack of political socialization and women's domestic responsibility are the key factors that limit the political participation of women. Also, many families were not willing to finance the elections of their women from family funds, do they do so for male members from family funds. Since most women have no economic resources of their own, their aspirations could only be fulfilled if they were fully backed by a political party. The pattern of socialisation of girls and social norms also partly accounted for women's low political participation based on the paradigm of the public and private dichotomy. Many women are deterred from active participation in politics due to the threats of violence and character assassination which are on the rise. The argument that domestic duties prevented them from participation is commonly used by women (Jamir, 2012, p.82). However, in the present political process of entry into decision making political institutions there is growing influence of money and muscle power, backroom dealings and communalization and criminalization, due to these, many women have left political parties and formed in formal women's groups

(Nath, 1997, p. 12). Women groups probably play an extremely important role in encouraging and enabling leadership.

However, it is noticed in the post decades of 1990 in West Bengal women are taking active part in the elections. In spite of various obstacles women are step forward in governance structures. There are several factors that helped the women leaders to actively participate in the elections. Field study indicates that at a personal level, all women legislators were unanimous in their opinion that for effective women participation in governance process literacy is must require. Women's talent and efficiency are necessary for all round development of the society and country as well. Women education is highly necessary for the society as mothers are the first teachers of their children. In order to examine the relationship between education and political participation, the women legislator's educational qualifications are shown in Table 4.7. It is significant to note that education has played a major role in moulding women's participation in politics. In this study we find that 24% of women legislators hold post-graduate and 48% graduate degrees, that means almost 75% of the women legislators are highly educated by the Indian standards. This shows that law or decision making women are academically well-qualified. Hence, there is a positive co-relation between education and participation of women in politics.

TABLE: 4.7

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE LEGISLATORS

Sl. No.	Education	No. of Women Legislators
1	Secondary Level (V to X)	02
2	Undergraduate (X to B.A/B.SC/B.COM)	05
3	Graduate	12
4	Postgraduate	06
Total		25

Thus, we can see that proper education has a great impact on the active participation of women leaders in the elections and governance as well.

> Education makes them aware of their rights and responsibilities and the proper way to get the rights and fulfil the responsibilities. They also become some of the role models in their fields and any other field which give them aspirations.

> Education increases their confidence in themselves. They get confidence to speak their mind freely and frankly. It gives them the confidence to believe in

themselves and their own power role and responsibilities. All women leaders were unanimous in their acknowledgement of enhancement in their confidence labels, knowledge, decision-making capacity, elevation of social status, political awareness and subsequent personality development.

➢ Education let them know the value of things and opportunities and to utilise them to the fullest.

➢ Education helps them to make proper planning and develop their managerial skills which help them in proper governing and balancing their household duties and public duties.

➢ Education gives them the confidence to save themselves from any kind of exploitation by the men, be it in day to day life or in public sphere through education they can know the provisions against exploitations.

Also, it is found from the field study apart from education-

➢ *Family support,*

➢ *Positive perceptions of society towards women leadership,*

➢ *Changing behaviour of political parties and*

➢ *Attitudes of male leaders,* all are helped women leaders to participate in the elections actively.
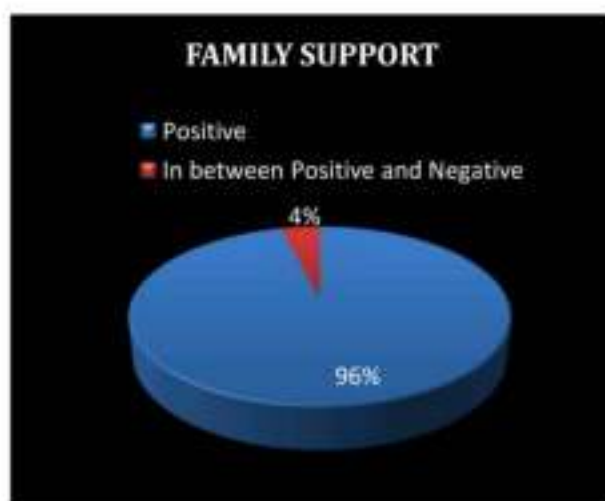
FIGURE NO: 4.6   FIGURE NO: 4.7

FAMILY SUPPORT

■ Positive
■ In between Positive and Negative

4%
96%

SOCIETY'S ACCEPTABILITY
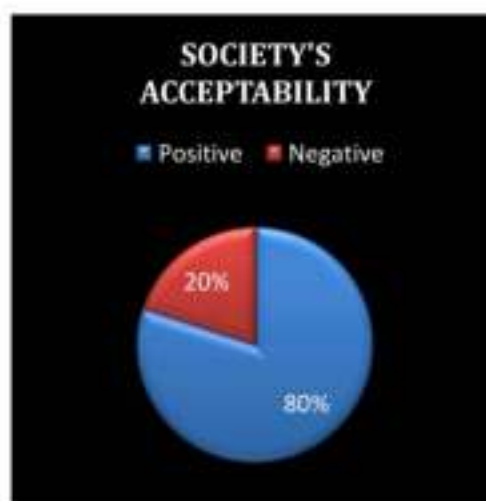
■ Positive   ■ Negative
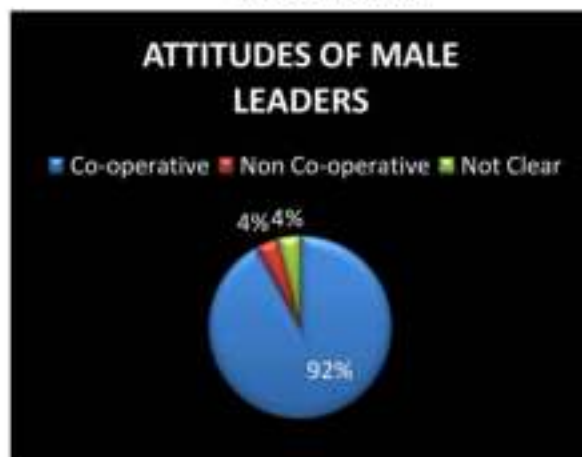
20%
80%

FIGURE NO: 4.8

FIGURE NO: 4.9

Up-to 96% of interviewed women leaders were unanimous in their opinion that their families are supportive and up-to 80% women leaders considered society's perception is positive in the matter of their participation in election (see above figures 4.6& 4.7). Present days, the behaviour of political parties is changing regarding women's involvement in electoral activities which are helping women leaders to perform their political roles. In response to co-operation from male leaders', up-to 92% women leaders agreed that now-a-days male political leaders are co-operative in the matter of women's participation in politics (see above figures 4.8& 4.9). Also, some women legislators argued that government's policies and schemes, e.g. quota reservation, in regard to women's political participation playing the significant role which we have seen in local-governance, though there are sometimes also visible that women played proxy representation for their husband, father-in-law, father or son. Apart from that, with the emergence of many regional political parties in the state politics (discussed in the chapter 3) women are getting the opportunity to involve in the political process. However, all these are the factors which are making the presence of women visible in the electoral process.

4.4.4. THE CASE STUDIES:

This section attempts to draw a the case studies of some women legislators in terms of their entry into politics, their socio-economic background, their involvement in party decision making process and participation in legislature proceedings. The details of 9 women legislators as case studies as are described focusing mainly on the aspect of the proposed questions raised in the problem of the present study.

➢ **Case Study-I**

Ms. Mamata Banerjee, popularly known in the All India Trinamool Congress party (AITC) and in West Bengal as 'Didi', was born in 1955 and is now 66 years old and unmarried. She involved in politics when she was only 15, student of under-graduation. She is the first woman who became the Chief Minister twice of the state West Bengal. Also, she has achieved many milestones in her Political career. By profession she is an advocate and political and social worker. Ms. Banerjee, one of the senior most members of Indian Parliament, had been elected seven times from different political parties to the Lok Sabha. Though, she had entered in the Parliament through the 8th Lok Sabha in 1984 but 1984 was not the beginning year of her political carrier. From 1975-1980, due to several protest incidents she gained attention of local Congress group and handed over the post of General-Secretary of Mahila Congress (I) in West Bengal and she remained General-Secretary of Mahila Congress (I) in West Bengal, 1970-1980; Secretary of District Congress Committee, South Calcutta, 1978-81.

She was born into a lower middle class Bengali Hindu family in Kolkata. Her family was pushed into poverty by her father's early death, which happened when Banerjee was in her mid-teens. The large family, consisting of the widowed mother, six brothers, and two sisters, subsequently faced much hardship. Unlike many others in a similar situation, she forged ahead with her education and between the mid-1970s and the early 1980s she earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Calcutta University, a law diploma, and a qualification to be a schoolteacher. But Banerjee's lived experience of acute privation during her formative years as a person and as a political activist is at the root of her identification with the poor and the vulnerable. Unlike many other politicians in India, this is not an affectation but genuine empathy born of lived experience. Banerjee's non-elite, ordinary social background and her cultural authenticity go a long way towards explaining her mass appeal in India's fourth-most populous state, and consequently her weight as one of the most important figures in India's regionalised polity of the early twenty-first century. But understanding her lived experience as a politician is also essential to making sense of her as a leader. She has literally risen from the grassroots of politics. She began her political life as an activist of the Congress party's student wing in West Bengal in the mid-1970s (her parents were staunch Congress supporters). She spent the first two decades of her political life as a loyal organiser of the Congress party, the sole significant opposition to the CPI (M)-led regime in West Bengal. Starting in 1990,

she rose rapidly to become by far the most popular opposition leader in West Bengal. By the mid1990s she had developed a mass following in the state, which enabled her to not just survive the exit from the Congress but strike out on her own. When Banerjee finally ousted West Bengal's entrenched regime from power, it was the culmination of two decades of 'struggle' resembling a personal and political crusade. The struggle met demoralising setbacks on the way, notably in state elections in 2001 and 2006 and the national election of 2004. At times she felt discouraged, but she picked herself up and persevered, convinced of the rightness of her cause, and she waged her campaigns in her characteristic combative style. She relishes 'struggle'. Unlike the other women political leaders in India, Mamata Banerjee is a completely self-made leader– she never had a comparable mentor-figure, let alone any advantages of birth or political lineage to call upon(Bose, 2016).

Mamata Banerjee rose without any family connections, through sheer grit and determination, to become a recognised regional and national leader. She has a number of achievements to her credit: she was elected six times to the Lok Sabha from the South Kolkata constituency; she was a Youth Congress leader in West Bengal; she formed her own party—the TMC—which is positioned as both anti-Congress and anti-Left, an ally of both the NDA and United Progressive Alliance–II (UPA–II); she was appointed railway minister in both governments. However, the most seminal achievement has been defeating the Communists who were in power for almost 34 years, a feat that could not be achieved by the Congress opposition (Banerjee, 2004). Like Jayalalithaa—a colourful and unorthodox woman leader with huge public bases, flamboyant personality and 'populist appeal' (Banerjee, 2004, p. 285)—Banerjee does not conform to public standards of feminine behaviour; she does not only have a reputation for unpredictability, ruthlessness, and a volatile temper, but also a mastery of the timing of public gestures, the manipulation of public sentiment, sycophantic loyalty from followers and complete control over the party. In contrast, her public image is clean; she is viewed as honest and supported by the poorer sections, especially women, although she has used both 'assertive and paternalist populism' to build her constituency and gain power (Banerjee, 2004, p. 302). Unmarried and from a modest, lower middle-class family, she still dresses in inexpensive khadi sarees and slippers and lives frugally in her old house in a congested south Kolkata area. But Banerjee has displayed little capacity to effectively govern West Bengal. Rather, she is a 'street fighter' ready to *gherao* (ambush) political leaders, join

marches and sit-ins on the streets, even as chief minister, for social and political causes. Her followers compare her to the goddess Durga and a tigress for the twin qualities of female courage and intolerance for injustice, which voters find rare in politicians (Banerjee, 2004, p. 303).

She was elected to the 8th Lok Sabha in 1984 and re-elected to the 10th and 11th Lok Sabha in 1991 and in 1996 from the Congress Party. Again she was re-elected to the 12th Lok Sabha in 1998 from another political party (WBTC) and 1999 onwards from 13th to 15th Lok Sabha, three times (1999, 2004 & 2009), she had been elected from the AITC (All India Trinamool Congress) party. Presently, she is the Chief Minister of West Bengal.

During her long political carrier she had held so many important positions. From 1991 to 1993 she was the Union Minister of State, Human Resource Development, Department of Youth Affairs and Sports with additional charge of Women and Child Development; Union Cabinet Minister, Railways, 1999-2001; Union Cabinet Minister, Coal and Mines, 2004; again Union Cabinet Minister, Railways, 2009-2011.

This case study shows that this woman leader is entered in politics at young age from very ordinary lower middle class family though she is well educated, dynamic, confident and courageous woman. She is one the woman chief ministers of Indian states, and presently she is the only incumbent woman chief minister in India. She has emerged as a leader by virtue of talent as she had no political family background. She has not only been successful in winning parliamentary seat several times but also became the chief minister of the most populous state of India twice.

As a Chief Minister of West Bengal she started many schemes like Shishu Aloy, Kanyashree, Sabuj Sathi, Khadya Sathi, Sabujshree, Shikshashree, Gatidhara Scheme, Gitanjali, Shishu Sathi, Swasthya Sathi, Anandadhara, Sabala, Yuvashree, Swabalamban etc for improving socio-economic conditions of middle and lower class people. Kanyashree and Sabala schemes launched specifically for the upliftment of girls. Apart from Women's reservation Bill apparently, there is other women specific issue, which was taken up by her in Assembly or raised in the Parliament.

➤ **Case Study-II**

The second case study is about another women legislature who belongs to Communist Party of India (Marxist). She is associated with politics from last 52 years. Right from her school days she was associated with the leftist movement. The initial inspiration to enter politics was from her family; her father was involved in politics. She was also influenced by Naxalbari movement (1967-68). She confessed that Naxalbari movement inspired her lot, which makes in her an enthusiasm to work for establish justice in the society. So from childhood she finds interest in political activities with the intention to serve the people. After her marriage there was no difficulty for her because her husband was also active in politics.

Smt. Anju Kar, who is 66 year old now, and widow, she completed Graduation, by profession she is a full time political and social worker. He contested first general election in 1982, she contested 5 times and elected while she faced several obstacles from opposition party. From 1982 -1987 and 1991- 2006, she was a member of legislative assembly. As a woman legislator she remained in decision-making bodies long 20 years with a pause of 5 years. She came from a middle class educated family. She has political background. Still she is well connected to her political party and whole years she is busy to attend party's conferences, workshops, campaigns, organisational activities. She had to play a dual role one for the public life and other of single widow mother of her daughter which she finds a difficult task.

One important aspect of her political life has been that she was minister from 1991-2006 in several important portfolios, as from 1991-2001 she was Ministerof State For Adult Education, Non-formal Education, Audio Visual Education, Social Welfare Homes, Education of The Handicapped(Excluding Integrated Education For Disabled Children), Library Services And Social Education Extension And All Matters Relating To District social Education offices and Extension offices(Social Education) in the department of Education; and from 2001-2006 Minister of State of Municipal Affairs. In 1998, she received prestigious *Noma Award* on the achievement of Literacy Programme from UNESCO. This was due to her excellence and talent in leadership. She had been Member, Library Committee, 1982 & 1987; Member, Subject Committee on Welfare, 1990;Member,Subject Committee on Education, Information & Cultural Affairs, Sports & Youth Services, 1997.

She fights for the problems of the local people. She has taken up many issues of atrocities on Women in the Assembly. she also raised issues related to various problems like agricultural development, health, social welfare of women and child as well as physically challenged, education etc. She started many social work related to the women empowerment such as women literacy and their income generation, for instance created 10 lakhs self help groups and ICDS projects. She admitted that very few women are vocal in the assembly. She feels that the family responsibilities are hindrance for women to enter into politics along with that lack of political knowledge and political consciousness, illiteracy and financial crisis make the road complicated for women to get involved in politics. She was one of the opinions that women should be educated and trained before they enter politics. They should be given more responsibility; they should join politics in larger number in order to put strong resistance to criminalization of politics. She also argued that political parties should take positive efforts and government should take also initiatives to involve women in politics. She supported reservation of seats for women and believed that with the reservation women's participation in politics will be ensured in large number.

Smt. Anju Kar, one of the major women political leaders in West Bengal. She became role model to many common women through her dedication to political activities and still, her strong personality provides confidence and courage to women to make a foot hold in politics.

> **Case Study-III**

This case study is about another women legislator, Smt. Sabitri Mitra, who is 59 years old now. She is teacher by profession. She joined active politics because of inspirations of a male political leader of Malda district, Gani Khan Choudhury. Welfare works for the Malda district by Gani Khan Chaudhary inspired Sabitri Mitra to get into involve politics. She realised politics give the platform for doing welfare work for the people.

She joined Indian National Congress in 1982 at the age of 20. From 1982- 1990 she was active Congress worker. She contested first general election in 1991 and also elected. Since 1991 she elected repeatedly till 2011, only in 2016 she defeated. She is the only woman leader in West Bengal without any pause being member of West Bengal

Legislative Assembly since 1991 to till 2016. We have not found any woman leader in the state who remained in decision-making body long 26 years without any political ground.

She was elected from Araidanga constituency on Indian National Congress ticket till 2006 and elected 4 times. Though she contested election on All India Trinamool Congress ticket from Manikchak constituency in 2011 & 2016 and elected in 2011 (15th Legislative Assembly) and defeated in 2016. One important aspect of a political life has been that she was made minister in Mamata Banerjee's Council of Ministers. From 2011- 2016, she was Minister of women and child development department; Minister of social welfare as well.

During her long time presence in the Assembly she was member of many important committees and worked on many party post in the Congress including Member, Ex-officio member; standing committee on social welfare disaster management and refugee relief and rehabilitation, 2011; subject committee on welfare tourism sports and youth services, 1993, 1996; subject committee on relief refugee relief and rehabilitation, tourism welfare, 1997& 2001; standing committee on food and supplies food processing and fisheries, 1997; standing committee on irrigation and development, 2001; standing committee on public works and public health engineering, 2006; Yuba Congress committee and Zilla Congress committee etc.

As a representative of her constituency in the Assembly she has raised issues specific to her area as well as those of general concern in the Assembly. She takes keen interest in all assembly proceedings and never had any problems in putting her viewpoint convincingly on the Assembly floor. She has moved several resolutions successful in the Assembly. She introduced amendment Bill in education like hike the amount of scholarship. However she contained it that all women legislature should unite and extend their support on women's specific issues irrespective of their affiliation to different political parties. One very interesting factor that came out was that she was against reservation of seats for women and believed that there should not be any discrimination between women and men legislators. Rather she feels that all male legislators should strongly support women related issues. Given an opportunity women can do equally well as men.

Also, she has contribution towards women's empowerment and educational development, such as she had major efforts for making educational institutions in Malda district. Apart

from that being a social worker she is still working for the welfare of the people in her constituency even after her defeat in last election.

She came from a middle class family without out any political background. However, she expressed that her husband supported and motivated her always in challenging situation. She faced lots of problem during the time of contesting election even after facing life threatening risk she never give up the intention of welfare of the people of her constituency. She showed her concern for the criminalization and communalization of politics. She contended that mass awareness programs and electoral reforms can help in educating the people to counter the existing social evils.

> **Case Study-IV**

This is a case study of a leading woman legislator. She was a practicing advocate in Calcutta High Court till 2011 election. She is an active member of Trinamool Mahila Congress, the women's wing of All India Trinamool Congress (AITC). However, right from her college days she was associated with student politics. Till 2009, she was an active worker of Indian National Congress as her paternal family was strong follower of ideology of INC, so from childhood she followed and believed in the same. In 2009, she joined AITC with the intention to work for society's welfare. She elected in the Assembly first time in 2011on AITC party's ticket from Dum Dum Uttar constituency and she re-elected in 2017 through by-election from Kathi-Dakshin constituency. Smt. Chandrima Bhattacharya born in 1955 in Kolkata, West Bengal in an upper caste Brahamin family. She is now 67 years of age. She completed B.Com and LLB from University of Calcutta.

Smt. Bhattacharya changed her party from Congress to AITC because she inspired by the leadership style of Ms. Mamata Banerjee. From 2011 she assesses herself as 24 hours political worker for the people, it was not because of circumstances but because of her choice she joined active politics. In two terms of Mamata Banerjee's Government, she gets the independent charge of Minister of Housing; Minister in-charge of Health and Family Welfare, Land and Land Reforms and Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation, Panchayats and Rural Development. In 2012, she was promoted as a Cabinet Minister and given independent charge of Judicial and Law department. Along with the charge of Ministry, she was Member, Public Accounts Committee, 2011; Standing Committee on

Self Help Group and Self Employment, 2011. Within a span of short time she handled several important portfolios of West Bengal Government.

She raised issues mostly health, legal, rules and regulations as well as whole range issues related to the general problems and in fact noting specific to women related problems. She introduced land related bills, housing bills health regarding bills and many others but not women specific bills in the Assembly. She has never raised an issue related to the women in the Assembly. Though, to empower the women she initiated many efforts such as she tried to strengthen women economically forms self help groups. Therefore, she wants women to be economically independent and this in her view is possible only if women have knowledge and awareness of one's self and society and of personal needs, health issues and legal rights. One important thing came out that she does not believe there are genuinely any obstacles to enter into politics for women, at the same time she said that women have to do hard work more than men to get a foothold in politics. To raise the participation of women in politics she suggested political parties should play active role. She thinks women must participate in politics because through it women can be conscious about their legal rights and about the availability of social and economic resources which make them empowered automatically. Also, she feels to establish gender justice to empower women is required. She emphasises that there should be no discrimination between men and women and that they should be treated equally in all realms of life.

This case study shows that this women leader is well educated and be involved in politics at very young age though it takes long time to be a part of formal political structures.

➤ **Case Study-V**

This is another case study of leading woman legislator of West Bengal Smt. Sonali Guha (Bose) started political carrier at very young age, who is now 52 years old. The initial inspiration to enter politics was from her parents. After her marriage there was no difficulty for her because her husband is also very active in politics. Also, she admitted that because of her husband being in politics, she has more exposure and better awareness. Smt. Guha is a science graduate. She is the first woman deputy speaker in West Bengal Legislative Assembly. She is known as trusted lieutenant of Mamata Banerjee. She elected in the Assembly first time in 2001 though she contested first time in

the general election in 1996 and she re-elected second, third and fourth time in 2006, 2011 & 2016 respectively on AITC party's ticket from Satgachhia constituency. Since the formation of AITC she is with it. She is life time member of AITC. Smt. Guha is associated with politics from last 35 years. She has participated in many protest incidents of AITC and organised election campaigns for the party, raised funds for the party in its initial years.

Smt. Guha has been raising problems of her constituency in the Assembly and general problems as well. She visits her constituency frequently and actively involved in the development of her constituency. She headed many local political organizations which are working for empower4ment of women. As a woman leader she tried to provide all facilities of governmental schemes to women. She campaigned for Government's female centred schemes such as Kanyasree and Rupasree. She had to face strong opposition when she stood in the elections even faced physical assaults by police in several protest incidents. She said that her male colleagues are very co-operative to her and she has no experience of any indifference attitude of them anytime, anywhere. She argued that she and her party do not believe in difference between women and men leaders. She strongly advocated for women reservation in the Parliament and Assemblies to raise the participation of women in politics. In this regard she opined that Government should take more initiatives to increase the women's political representation. She thinks women's apathy towards political participation because of family's obstructions and economic crisis.

Smt. Guha is a fourth time member of Legislative Assembly, since 2001 to till today she has been member of several committees, Member, Library Committee, 2001; Standing Committee on Cottage and Small Scale Industries, Co-operative and Animal Resource, 2001; Committee on Govt. Assurance; Committee on Education,2001, Committee on the Entitlements of the Members, 2011. She has been Chairman, Standing Committee on Labour 2006-2009; Chairman, Standing Committee on I & T; Chairman, Library Committee, 2011; Chairman, Committee on Privileges, 2011; in 2011 she became Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. She was also given many assignment in her party, for instance she was president of West Bengal Trinamool Chhatra Parishad, which she completed successfully.

This case reveals that a woman legislator entered into politics at early age and she not only has been successful in winning Assembly seat four times but also became successful woman leader and inspires many ordinary women to be a part of politics.

> **Case Study-VI**

Here is a case of another woman legislator from CPM who belongs to the middle class family and has been Minister in the State. Smt. Bilasi Bala Sahis is now 59 years old now. She completed graduation, who is teacher by profession. Her family was partially associated with politics. Since last 33 years she has been associated with politics. She had joined CPM as a life member in the year 1987. At the age of 26 she entered into politics, it was not because of family heritage or favourable circumstances but because of her choice that she joined politics.

She is an active member of the women's wing of the CPM, All India Democratic Women's Association. She was the secretary of mass organisation of the party. Presently, she is doing works as a party member to organise meetings, workshop, conferences, and other committee related works. She always finds co-operation from male party members in organisational works.

Smt. Sahis elected in the Assembly first in 1991, after that she re-elected in 1996, 2001 and in 2006. She is also fourth time member of West Bengal Legislative Assembly (WBLA). She faced many challenges to discharge her duties as a representative and with her understanding on the situation she overcomes challenges. The 20 years tenure from 1991-2011, she had given charge of several portfolios of State Ministers, Minister of Forest department in 1996 &2006 and Minister of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare department in 2001; Minister Of State Of Backward Classes Welfare Department, 2001. She had been also Member, Subject Committee on Panchayat, 1991; Select Committee on the West Bengal Panchayat (Amendment) Bill, 1994.

She concerned about the issues related to women, so she tried to convince women regarding benefits of Self-Help groups (SHGs) and had become successful by created SHGs within her constituency. She expressed her view that education is the only means which make women conscious about their social-political and economic rights, women should be properly educated otherwise society will not be completely developed. Education for women is also requiring for the establishment of equality. One important

matter noted from her view that she was against to provide special provision to women such as reservation of seats rather she said we should change our perception towards women as weaker section and provide them equal opportunities in every sphere of life.

She rose on the floor of the Assembly women-related issues or problems specially safety for women. Along with that she was concerned about the development issues of her constituency, i.e. water, roads etc. though she never introduced any bill in the Assembly. She thinks lack of family's support and understanding political issues are the general problems behind the under-participation of women in politics. In this respect she suggested political parties should take initiatives to make aware and to motivate women in the field of politics. For the sustainable development of the society she opined that there should be more women leaders in politics.

This case study evolves a story of a woman legislator who is educated and coming from a middle class family and entered into politics by her own choice and make a no of women economically independent and politically aware and became a role model to many common women.

> **Case Study-VII**

This is a case study of a woman parliamentarian, who is now 77 years old. Smt. Minati Sen is a graduate lady and was a teacher. She had no difficulty in entering politics because her father-in-law and mother-in-law was directly associated with the Congress politics. She saw her mother-in-law during the time of elections actively participated in political activities. Her brother was actively involved in politics, who was a trade union leader though her father was partially attached with politics. The initial inspiration to enter politics was from her brother. Since college days she was active in student politics and believed in the ideology of Left parties and she had been actively participated in various cultural activities, such as theatre, debate and other co-curricular activities and organized blood donation camps, rehabilitation programmes. After her marriage she got the environment of politics within the family, though there was ideological difference but she never faced any ideological contradiction within the family. Later, she contested three times Lok Sabha election on CPI-M ticket.

Smt. Sen is associated with politics since 1962 and started active politics at the age of 37. She was the president and secretary of Jalpaiguri district committee of All India

Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) and was the former secretary of State Organization of AIDWA, women's wing of the CPI-M. She rendered all kinds of support to the socially and economically deprived women through AIDWA. Mrs. Sen elected to the 12th Lok Sabha in 1998 and re-elected to 13th and 14th Lok Sabha in 1998, 1999 & 2004 respectively from Jalpaiguri constituency, West Bengal. During her parliamentary tenure she was member of various committees, such as – Committee on External Affairs and its Sub-Committee-II, 1998-1999; Committee on External Affairs, 1999-2000; Committee on Empowerment of women, 2002-04; Consultative Committee under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1998-1999 and 2000-04; Committee on Empowerment of Women, Committee on Water Resources and Consultative Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment 2004; 2006 onwards Committee on Empowerment of Women and Committee on Empowerment of Women; 2007 onwards Committee on Water Resources. In addition to these, she was also Member of (i) National Council for Teachers Education, 1998; (ii) Governing Council of National Mission of Sarva Shikshya Abhiyan.

She expressed her concern about the differential attitudes of our society and political parties as well towards the women even she said that such behaviour she found within her own political party also. She confessed that women always given less importance within her party, in the case nominate women candidates for the elections, and several committees and even it is mostly visible in the of matter of allocating the charge of ministry in the Left Front Governments of West Bengal. She said, the names of women come first when the situation comes to retrench the ministry and their names come last when the matter comes to allocate ministry. She confessed that she is witness many incidence where in spite of ability women are excluded from decision making organs of the party only because of they are women. According to her, women still are not getting the equal opportunity to prove them capable in the sphere of politics. She thinks these attitudes of political parties should change otherwise society could not be developed. In this regard, she advocates reservation of seats for women in the Legislature and decision making bodies since women constitute 50 percent of the total population of the country. She emphasises that there should be no discrimination between men and women and that they should be treated equally in all realms of life. Also, she worked towards bringing changes in the society such she fought for the eradication of dowry system of society. Smt. Sen raised a number of issues of women's empowerment along with issues related

development of her constituency, issues related to article 377 and introduced a bill on to remove lottery system on the floor of Parliament.

She feels that women's lack of confidence, family co-operation and discriminatory attitudes of the society are the barriers behind the less participation of women in politics. To raise their number she suggested we should make women politically aware, boost up self confidence of them which will make them vocal about their rights and freedom. She stated that as a woman leader she feels women are more responsible, dedicative towards duties.

However, this story of senior woman leader, who coming from an educated higher class family, brings the fact in front of us that she is firm on her opinion. Her family's support gives her enough opportunities to turn her dreams into reality.

➢ **Case Study-VIII**

Here is another case study of women parliamentarian, Smt. Malini Bhattacharya, who also belongs to the CPI-M. She is a broad minded liberal lady, does not believe in caste and religion, she is an atheist person. She has completed Post-graduation and Ph.D at Jadavpur University, by profession she was a professor, Writer and Artist. She is a life member of CPI-M and President of AIDWA. Other than political organization she was also member of various social and educational organisations; Member of Regional Advisory Board of the Film Certification Board, 1986-90; Bangla Academy; Rajya Lok Sanskriti Parishad, West Bengal; Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal; Court of JNU, January 19, 1990; involved in teachers' movements and cultural movements in West Bengal.

Prof. Bhattacharya has been associated with politics for the last 50 years when she was in her 30s.She got involved in politics due to her ideological belief in leftist political party and she thought politics is a way of social service. She is a member of party since 1975. In 1985, she had been member of delegation of CPI (M) Social Scientists to China. She was elected to Lok Sabha first time in 1989 (Tenth Lok Sabha) and again re-elected in 1991 (Tenth Lok Sabha). She had been member of Consultative Committee, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1990 and Committee on Environment and Forests, 1991.

She stated that she had faced several problems in discharging her duties as a representative and to handle such problems she trained herself to take up issues not necessarily pertaining to women and also went around her constituency to be in touch with people. She strongly advocated for reservation of 33% seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. She suggested amendments to Representation of People Act to discourage money power and muscle power in elections. According to her, women bear a disproportionate part of household responsibilities, they face discrimination inside political formations like parties and trade union unions and criminalization of politics all are deterrents of women's participation in politics. By helping to implement Government schemes like Anganwadi she tried to empower women. She was vocal in the Parliament on the legislations mention in the article 23, destruction of Babri Masjid, health issues, intellectual property rights, cultural policy etc. By taking up cases of violence against women, by participating in the passage of laws like National Commission for Women Act, PCPNDT (Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques) Act, she also worked towards bringing changes in terms of policy decisions of the Government. She said, in the matter of women issues she found some male members are very co-operative, some women members are indifferent. She showed her concern for the indifferent attitude of political parties towards women's participation in politics.

She thinks women should participate in politics because they are capable enough which they had proved earlier by the participation in the pre-independence movement. For the interest of democracy women should provide opportunities to be a part of decision making process otherwise democracy will remain flawed. Within political parties there is discrimination even on the floor of Parliament women are not generally allowed to speak in other issues, though women get co-operation from male colleagues when women related issues raised, so she suggested there should be positive efforts to erase such inequalities immediately.

This case study shows that this woman leader comes from highly educated and higher class family and entered politics by her choice though there was her family support. Hence, it was not difficult for her to be active in politics.

➢ **Case Study-IX**

This is a case study of leading woman parliamentarian who changed her party from GNLF (Gorkha National Liberation Front) to AITC. She won on GNLF tickets continuously three times, in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly, first time in 1996, second time in 2001 and third time in 2006 from Kurseong constituency. She changed her party in 2014. Smt. Shanta Chhetri was born in 1957 in Kurseong, Darjeeling, 64 years of age now and was 39 years when elected in 1996 in the Assembly, before that in 1994 she elected in the Kurseong Municipality. She is post-graduate in Commerce and by profession is a social worker. She is recipient of President Girl's Guide (Bharat Scouts and Guides). Presently, she is Member of Parliament (MP), Rajya Sabha 19th August, 2017 onwards from AITC.

Since, 1994 she has been associated with politics, her family members were not in politics. She entered in politics due to her personal interest and thought politics is also a way which can provide a platform of social work. In the Assembly she had been member of various committees, Committee on Education, Information & Cultural Affairs, 1996; Committee on Privileges, 1996; Standing Committee on Health & Family Welfare-2001; Committee on Women& Child Welfare; Entitlements Committee. Also, she has been member of several local organisation and associations of self-Government institution, statutory body or learned society, such as working president of AITC's District (Darjeeling) Committee of Hill, 2014;Member: North Bengal University Court. Member: Divisional Consultative Committee (N.F. Railway); Member: W.B. Wild Life Advisory Board; Member: W.B. State Legal Authority Services; Member: Governing Body, Downhill School & Victoria School, Kurseong; Member: Governing Body Darjeeling Polytechnic. Presently, she is Chairperson of National Health Mission Recruitment Committee.

She is in favour of the 50% seats reservation for women in the Assembly and in the Parliament as well. She said from her experience that limited numbers of women were coming forward to join political activities and also there were few women in the elected bodies but now-a-days women are participating in politics in a large number. She felt that societal and family obligations as well as general apathy, for instance security crisis, towards politics are the causes keeping away women from politics. Political uncertainties in the country are also discouraging women from political participation. She stated, in spite of all political parties' efforts to recruit more women in political structures, still

women remain as passively active in politics. Smt. Chhetri worked for sexual assault and abuse against women and women trafficking. As a representative of her constituency in the Assembly, she had raised issues specific to her area, i.e. development of Darjeeling in aspect of education, roads, forest, irrigation, natural disasters, tourism, social welfare and various problems of DGHC (Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council). Being a MP she has been vocal on the floor of the Rajya Sabha on mob lynching, Kolkata metro railways, and development of Darjeeling etc. She said that her men colleagues were/are very co-operative to her in the Assembly and in Parliament as well while when performing as a woman leader she faced sometimes indirect interference from male members with her party. She suggested, increasing the number of women in politics, political parties should take initiative to increase awareness of women especially rural women.

This case study also tells us that a woman with higher education and without political family background can be successful political leader and can inspire other to be a role model.

➢ SUMMING UP OF CASE STUDIES:

The above mentioned case studies show that the conception of women leaders towards the role of women in politics, their status in the political party and their opinion and suggestions for certain remedial measures to be undertaken in order to improve the role of women in the political process.

All these case studies reveal that women legislators emerged as leaders through electoral process and many of them were elected to the Assembly and Parliament as well three-four times consecutively. This shows their popularity in their constituencies.

Most of the women legislators of our case studies belong to families having a political background, with the support of their parents are there spouse they have established themselves in the party organisation. Therefore, they suggested that women should be motivated, politically educated and should be encouraged to participate in the political process. Though, some of women political leaders without having political background have been successful and became the inspiration of many women. Majority of them felt that women related issues are discussed casually and importance paid to such issues is marginal. This is primarily because women are not represented in large numbers in

different elected bodies either at the local level or other state level or at the national level. They therefore stressed the need for at least 30% representation for women. Two of them even suggested that it should be 50% because women constitute 50% of the total population.

Many of them suggested that women should be properly educated and their awareness should be increased so that they can effectively participate in the political process particularly in the decision making process. Although on the floor of the house they tried to raise various issues but most of them seem to be more concerned with issues related to women. Irrespective of their party affiliation and they seem to unite and take a common stand on the floor of the House on women's specific issues. They also expressed their concern about the indifference attitude of male leaders in the Assembly and the Parliament as well. One of them shows concern about the indifferent attitude of some women legislator in some cases. Some of them also suggested that political parties should take positive endeavours to raise the number of women in political structures.

4.5. EMERGENT TRENDS OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN WEST BENGAL

In the political history of West Bengal we had only one woman governor and one female chief minister. So it is reasonable to think that a very limited number of women had been/ has been leaders in the state politics since the inception. Since 1990s the trend of marginal number of women leaders started to change due to several factors (discussed in the chapter 3 & 4), while not remarkable. Women started to become members of the legislature or able to reach top political positions mainly because of their family connections means they are either the daughters, or wives, of well-known male political leaders. There were a very handful number of women leaders those who have succeeded due to their personal interest and hard work. Till the first decade of 21st century, women leaders have been able to enter politics either through their family linkages or by their hard work and dedication. This picture is undergoing a gradual change from the first decade of 21st century and a new emerging trend has been observed in women's leadership of West Bengal. Women started to become members of the legislature without family connection and hard work, but only on face value or popularity in the glamour world. Presently in West Bengal, women leaders elected from three different backgrounds- (i) political or family linkages, (ii) personal interest or hard work and (iii) face value or popularity (film actors, singers, sports person etc). While, a handful number

of women reached at top political position by their hard work but a majority number of women elected from political and popularity grounds in the state.

Recently we can see that many celebrity women candidates are contesting election and becoming the member of Legislative Assembly and Parliament in West Bengal, which has been very visible in the state election of 2021. The celebrity women candidates have no political family connection or they have never been fulltime political worker, not even did any hard work to get a party ticket to contest the election or not fully dedicated to political activities, though they become leader easily because they are celebrity. This trend is become more popular in Bengal now-a-days. In this regard, one important question arises that is this trend justifying to dedicative and fulltime women political workers? In practice, after spending major times of life, facing lots of hurdles from society and political spheres and along with huge family responsibilities a woman have to prove herself that she is eligible to bear the responsibility of people's representative and she might be chosen as party candidate to contest the election. Whereas in the case of celebrity women all these rigid criteria become loose and flexible, hence in such situation another question arises why it happen? If women celebrities elected as leaders that is not a matter of issue, because a political leader can come from any field, any profession etc but the issue of concern is after getting elected do they justify their post which they hold? The answer may 'No', and this is a serious issue of concern. Now in this regard another question arises why they have been given the opportunity to become elected political leader? The answers of all these questions related to electoral gain. Celebrity women political leaders are playing the role as part time political worker which is the most serious concern of democracy. Political leadership cannot be a part time activity rather it requires fully dedicative attention towards policy making that cherish the aim of democracy and public welfares. The celebrity candidates actually treated as number nothing more than that. The pillar of representative democracy, political parties are playing the vital role in this regard, West Bengal is not an exception. Presently in a democratic country, like India, election decides everything, so in West Bengal to gaining the political power the political parties (AITC & BJP) of West Bengal using the celebrity candidates as an electoral plank to form the government. As a result, most of the celebrity candidates are become just like puppet candidate in the elections. Also, we have mentioned in the previous chapter that elections are held on a party basis and party loyalty is an important issue in West Bengal, so the candidates are assumed to represent a

party's interests. In recent years, politics has grown more polarized, hence, to remain in political power position it has become increasingly difficult to cross party lines. Therefore, such situation in West Bengal may create a new trend of political representation that we may call 'Puppet Representation'. Perhaps, the puppet representation effectively works when the elected leaders are celebrity and that is comparatively less effective when the elected leaders are fulltime political worker and take the matter of politics very seriously.

Moreover, another importantly trend has been visible in West Bengal just before the last assembly election (2021) that is defection in high rate. Many notable women leaders, who are full time political workers (such as Smt. Sonali Guha (Bose), who was the first woman deputy speaker in West Bengal Legislative Assembly, has changed her party due to not given election ticket by the party also many other instances there) of West Bengal has changed their party due to several reasons, while after election results they expressed a wish to return their old party. The defection trends of women leaders bring the special characteristics of women (loyalty, moralistic) into question which leads us to think that most importantly when the issue is about to gain power or retain in power then both sexes, men & women, behaving in similar way. However, recently the emerging trend of defection also visible among women leaders, in a slightly more higher rate than earlier, in the state of West Bengal.

Therefore, the above discussion reflects the light on the emergent trends of women political leadership in West Bengal which must be our very serious concern for the sake of democracy. Within such new emergent political trends we are very much doubtful about the efficacy of democratic decision or policy making institutions.

4.6. CONCLUSION:

West Bengal being one of the states of India with lots of diversity has a diverse demography. In many levels and various dimensions of life, from domestic to public life, women have faced lack of confidence among their counter parts. West Bengal is not free from gender discrimination; man-woman disparity is still present. Women need to be involved in decision making process in order to bring their demands in the national agenda and in the state agenda as well. And the participation of women in policy making increases the quality of governance. Though, the government has put many efforts in

bringing the women in the mainstream of the governance, but in practical, the scenario has changed only a little bit. It is a fact that customs traditions and norms that subjugated women steel pass east and women have to function in this framework. Mere increasing the quantity is not going to help. The necessity of the hour is that the government's attempt should be made worthy by making qualitative development along with the quantitative development. All the women are brought to the forefront, they are either not given their due or they are not able to present themselves. These are due to various problems that the women face in their practical life.

Presently, in spite of women's participation in politics of West Bengal in larger number but the reality reflects that women were disproportionally allocated to just health, social services and education while the important portfolio finance was a male-only grouping. While some of the women legislators welcomed gendered allocation of responsibilities, others viewed it as a form of discrimination that reflected society-wide attitudes about women.

The case studies of selected women legislators reveal that if a woman has been able to prove her as an active legislators or parliamentarian for the one time then she has been elected again and again in the Assembly and Parliament and that time political party does not matter from which party she belongs. Women leaders, who were/are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men, so they don't need the reference of any political party, but if once she has been failed to prove herself then she may be never choose by the same political party for the election. Though, this trend we have seen rarely in case of male candidates. In this respect, one thing is need to mention here that male party leaders have shown little willingness to include women in party decision making bodies or help to create a suitable atmosphere for women's participation in their own organizations. This attitude of male party leaders is not a healthy sign towards women participation in politics and also for democracy. Hence, these tendencies of participation and attitudes towards women participation in the political process should be removed or changed in order to establish gender equality in decision-making otherwise democracy will be meaningless literally.

In West Bengal, in 2021 women for the first time240 contested and 40 got elected. It is expected that by this time, a preliminary leadership has grown among the women in the political sphere in West Bengal which plays a *role model* for the rest of the state. In this

chapter, an effort has been made to understand what the primary membership level of women in the different political parties and whether that percentage is reflected in the leadership level within the respective political parties or not and what are the factors that have helped the women political leaders to actively participate in the elections as well. It is observed in this chapter that though in some cases, women leaders are taking active part in the decision making process but they could not motivate women in large numbers to participate in the decision making process. At the same time, it is observed that when women are getting the opportunity their interest in development of the state is also increasing and their presence in politics is also increasing. Finally, we may say that the disadvantageous position of women in the state is only a matter of some time. Now the women legislators and parliamentarians are performing the role of change agents and they have to go long way to bring about a remarkable change.

> *SUMMARY*:

- West Bengal being a part of the world community cannot escape from the effects of gender discrimination and injustice. In terms of sex ratio, literacy rate, women's health and decision making power West Bengal is showing a marked improvement during the last three decades of the 20th century (1991-2021). Though the State improving at a very slow pace. Still it seeks to – (i) protect the rights of women enshrined in the Constitution of India; (ii) enhance their dignity and ensure their participation in the economic, social and political activities.

- In the political history of West Bengal, Indian National Congress (INC) was the ruling party from 1952 to till 1977 (1st to 7th State Assembly election), from 1977-2011 (8th to 14th State Assembly election) the CPI-M remained in power and since 2011 (15thto 17th State Assembly election) in West Bengal under the woman leadership Mamata Banerjeethe All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) is ruling the State. Since the inception of West Bengal we had only one female Governor (Padmaja Naidu, from1956-1967) and presently have woman Chief Minister (Since 2011), still women are deplorably visible in the elected decision making bodies (Legislative Assembly & Council of Ministry) of the State.

- Considering the arguments of Anne Phillips in favour of increased political leadership of women: (i) Successful women politicians act as role models for the others; (ii) States increasing the proportion of the women elected would ensure the principles of justice between the sexes; (iii) Ensuring the fulfilling of certain

interests of women, which may otherwise be neglected; and (iv) Enhancing the quality of political life (Phillips, 1995, 62), the present study has been selected women legislators, MPs and MLAs of West Bengal.

- Women's entry into politics of West Bengal, post 1990 indicates a trend that more and more women are contesting the polls from various political parties and the number of women participating in the electoral process has increased.

- Education, family support, positive perceptions of society towards women leadership, changing behaviour of political parties and attitudes of male leaders and government policies all are helped women leaders to participate in election actively.

- The case studies of major women leaders of West Bengal highlighted the conception of women leaders towards the role of women in politics, their status in the political party and their opinion and suggestions for certain remedial measures in order to improve the role of women in the political process.

- Presently in West Bengal, women leaders elected from three different backgrounds- (i) political or family linkages, (ii) personal interest or hard work and (iii) face value or popularity (film actors, singers, sports person etc).

- With the increasing number of women in the elected bodies, though it is not very satisfactory, it is expected a preliminary leadership has grown among the women in the political sphere in West Bengal which plays a *role model* for the rest of the state.

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CHAPTER: 5

WOMEN LEADERS: A REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

CHAPTER OUTLINE

5.1. Introduction

5.2. ocio-Economic Background and Prominence of Women Legislators in West Bengal: An Analysis

  5.2.1. Socio-Economic Background

  5.2.2. Prominence of Women Legislators

5.3. Political Culture and Women's Political Representation in West Bengal

5.4. Women's Culture in Politics

5.5. Characteristics of Women Leaders

5.6. Styles of Leadership

5.7. Women Leaders: The Issues of Concern

  5.7.1. General or Human Interest Perspective

  5.7.2. Women-Specific Interest Perspective

5.8. The Values Espouse by Women Leaders in Politics

5.9. Conclusion

  ➤ Summary

5.1.INTRODUCTION

Empowerment has been generally understood as a process through which existing power relation can be challenged or as a way of gaining and controlling informational resources. At times, empowerment is confused with being in a formal position of power. Being in a formal position of power is not always equivalent to being a leader. Sometimes people born with innate qualities to lead or they may become leader by their physical and personal qualities or may by their behavioural pattern or motives etc. So, formal position of power is not closely connected to leader while political leadership is closely connected with formal power and authority. Political leadership is an agent-centred view of politics and government. However, leadership implies empowerment. Political leadership can be seen to play an important role in empowerment of women. Women through their political leadership are able to create the space for women's empowerment. Women leaders in politics are seen as an effective tool for mobilizing women and also as an effective pressure group to push a women's agenda.

In the study of political leadership the styles of leadership is consider an important part of discussion. Generally leadership exercised in a numerous different ways. The styles of leadership reflect the behavioural pattern of leaders, particularly what leaders do (behavior) nd how they act (process). The style is understood as relatively stable patterns of behavior and the strategies. Based on different characteristics of leaders a particular leadership style emerges. Leadership characteristic means behavior, knowledge, skill or emotional attribute of the leader. Presently, West Bengal is only an Indian state governing by a woman leader and the number of women increasing in the state politics. As the growing participation of women in politics of West Bengal, it becomes important to analyze the styles of functioning of women leaders within the State. In our study a total of 25 women political leaders were selected for interviews in order to know the leadership style of women leadership in West Bengal which is based on their characteristics as leaders.

The concept of political leadership denotes that women differ from men on scales of political activity. The political behavioural pattern is different of men and women. In the aspects of education and employment female participation is less than the male participation, so we find very few women leaders in politics as well. Women leaders are often neglected in the discussions of leadership or treated differently than their male

leaders. In the study of female leaders their personal lives receive substantially more attention than their political activity. It is also noticed that women's leadership capacity is questioned for the same decision that a male leader makes. Leadership theories or approaches were made in the consideration of masculine character of leaders where women characteristics had been massively neglected. Leadership is not only sex-specific but also gender specific. There is a bias against women in political leadership even when women have the same traits as male leaders (Sjoberg, 2009). Most importantly, with the presence of women leaders in the political structures the questions of concern issues become important. Being elected as women representatives how well the opinions or preferences of the electorates have/will be reflected by them become an issue. The existing studies that have discussed women leadership have often done so within the constraints of the traditional interpretations of both femininity and leadership. Generally, it is assumed that women have lack of skills, experience and language which generate political knowledge and a sense of political efficacy and it is very rarely accept that women are expertise in many areas including politics. But in practice, it is found frequently more women act like men that is, register, vote, contribute to campaigns, attend political meetings and work for parties-the more they demonstrate their involvement in politics and their sense of political efficacy. For women to become fully visible in politics, an epistemology is needed which shifts from male-oriented to female-oriented modes of political behaviour, communication and decision making styles derived from the actual experiences and interests of women, while at the same time remaining suspicious of the universality and self definition of any experience (Grant, 1978, p.110 & 112).

In the context of politics, with the inclusion of women we hope that may lead to the inclusion of several positive values for society and democracy as well, for instance less corrupted administration, less aggressive behaviour, concern for common good, care about the environment, more co-operation, tolerance will be promoted in the political affairs. So, based on primary data, this chapter would concentrate, in respect of West Bengal, on the political culture and women's culture in politics, the style of functioning based on the characteristics of women leaders, the concern issues of women elected leaders and what kind of values promoted by women legislators in general.

5.2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND AND PROMINENCE OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN WEST BENGAL: AN ANALYSIS

Women's interest cannot be isolated from the social, economic, and political interests of groups, strata, and classes in the society. The socio-economic and also political background influences the extent of political participation. In this study, total number of 25 women parliamentarians and legislators of West Bengal have been selected because they are the most important part in the decision-making process of the government. Actually, they formulate the policies and laws which actually govern the state. But, unfortunately their percentage in the formal political structure is very deplorable. So, this section is an attempt to comprehend the socio-economic characteristics of women legislators of West Bengal Legislative Assembly and parliamentarians from West Bengal. Here, also it is require finding out what is the relation between socio-economic-political background and women leaders in politics. Through analyzing their background this section will illustrate the questions who are the women leaders in West Bengal and how they have emerged as leaders.

5.2.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND:

In this study, women leaders mean elected women legislators to West Bengal Legislative Assembly and parliamentarians from West Bengal. The background variables- Age of women at the time of entry to formal political structures (Assembly & Parliament); Place of birth; Marital status; Religion; Education; Nature of family; Occupation/Profession; and Family income per month; have been selected in order to have in-depth knowledge about women leaders in West Bengal. The findings on these variables as follows-

TABLE: 5.1

AGE AT THE ENTRY INTO FORMAL POLITICAL STRUCTURES (Assembly & Parliament):

Sl. No.	Age Groups of Enter in Politics	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	15-24	17	68
2	25-34	4	16
3	35-44	2	8
4.	45-54	2	8
	Total	25	100

Age profile of women legislators reveals the fact that the maximum women, that is 68%, entered into the assembly and parliament at the age of 15-24 years. This indicates that

comparatively more young women have been entering into politics. There were only two women legislators the age between 45-54 years. Women of the age groups 25-34 (16%) and 35-44 (8%) are not fairly free from the domestic and family responsibility; especially the age groups 25-34, women are engaged in child bearing and rearing. Due to all such responsibilities, women legislators of this age group are in lesser number enter into politics.

TABLE: 5.2

PLACE OF BIRTH OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

Sl. No.	Place of birth	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Rural	8	32
2	Semi-rural	2	8
3	Urban	15	60
	Total	25	100

The birth place is an important parameter in respect of political participation.So far as the birth place is concerned, it is observed from the table that in the maximum women leaders (60%) born in the urban area and the 32% in rural area and the remaining 8% in the semi-rural area.

TABLE: 5.3

MARITAL STATUS OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

Sl. No.	Marital Status	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Married	16	64
2	Unmarried	1	4
3	Widow	8	32
	Total	25	100

It is often believed that woman's single status is more helpful to enter in politic actively. The facts about marital status are presented in the above table 5.3. Marital status is another important factor to influence women's participation in politics. In the present sample of 25 women legislators, it has been observed that only 1 woman unmarried and the rest 24 were married. Therefore, this study reveals that majority women legislators (64%)were married and out of 24 married women 8 (32%) were widow.

TABLE: 5.4

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

Sl. No.	Educational Level	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Secondary Education (V-X)	2	8
2	Undergraduate (X- B.A)	5	20
3	Graduate (B.A etc)	12	48
4.	Post-graduate (M.A/ LLB/Ph.D. etc)	6	24
	Total	25	100

The above table 5.4 shows that only 8 per cent of the women legislators were under matriculates. The numbers of graduates are the highest, nearly half (48%). In the case of under-graduates, the position was far better than non-matriculates (20%). The fact is that high educational level of the women members is found in the case of women leaders.

The following table 5.5 shows that teachers are more involved in politics than other professional women. While from various professions women are entering in politics. The fact is that in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly and Parliament there is a better representation of women having higher level of education. Among the women legislators 36 per cent are teachers and rest 64 per cent come from different occupations.

TABLE: 5.5

OCCUPATION OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

Sl. No	Occupation	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Service	3	12
2	Teacher	9	36
3	Doctor	1	4
4	Advocate	1	4
5	House Wife	3	12
6	Others	8	32
	Total	25	100

The following table 5.6 showing the religion of women leaders. Religion as one of the variables seems to be insignificant in the present study because only two women legislators are Muslims and rest 22 are Hindus and 1 is Atheist.

TABLE: 5.6

RELIGIONOF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

Sl. No.	Religion	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Hindu	22	88
2	Islam	2	8
3	Atheist	1	4
Total		25	100

In addition, some other interesting observations are that women living in the nuclear family highly interested to join politics and living in the joint family women are less interested towards participation in politics. So, maximum number of women legislators (76%) in West Bengal become from nuclear family. In this case study wehave found that the family income of women leaders is also another important parameter to module one's involvement into politics. It has found that the family income of all respondents is above 10,000 rupees. So, such a high average family income may be expected to have some impact on the political participation of women. The study also found that larger no of women legislators do not have land. So, it can be said that the ownership of land may not be an important factor for political participation of women.

TABLE: 5.7

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND NO. OF TIMES ELECTED WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

No. of Times Elected	Secondary Education (V-X)	Undergraduate (X- B.A)	Graduate & above (M.A/ LLB/Ph.D. etc)	Total
One Time	-	2	1	3
2-3 Times	2	2	12	16
4 Times & above	-	1	5	6
Total	2	4	18	25

In examining the relation between education and number of times elected, it is seen that the consecutively repeated representation of women legislators from their assembly does not seem to be related to their level of education. It may be observed from table that there is 1 woman legislator who are under-graduate but represented her constituency more than four times. Similarly, 2 under-matriculate women have represented their constituencies 2-3 times.

Presently, a new trend is emerging in West Bengal, wherein without prior experience more women legislators elected, so the number of new entrants (without prior experience) has increased in West Bengal mostly since 2011.

From the analysis, it may be said that some relationship does exist between the variables such as age, education, family income, occupational status, and family backgrounds and the participation of women in the formal structure of politics. Though, it is risky to draw a general conclusion from this limited number of samples, it can be still observed that on the whole, in other political spheres women lag behind men but if they have the same socio-economic environment then they behave in the same way as their counterparts. It is not only theenvironment which makes women politically more backward than men, there are many factors.

5.2.2. PROMINENCE OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

The question is in West Bengal how did women rise to political power or how they have emerged as leaders. The contributing factors and other circumstances of becoming leaders are described here on the basis of some general observations and the specific interviews conducted with them.

Most of the women leaders in the present study belong to the national political parties like the Communist Party of India (Marxist), Indian National Congress, and All India Trinamool Congress (AITC). These parties have been in power more than one time in the state of West Bengal. Thus the broader understanding and linkages are in the tune with the ideals of the senior party leaders and the emergence of women leadership, therefore entirely depended upon the party high command. The high command often made the choice of women candidates for nominating them to contest the elections. Therefore, the emergence of state level leadership is also show of loyalty either to the past or the present leadership of the party high command.

A question related to the immediate incident or event which motivated them to enter politics brought out the following information. Twelve women leaders attributed it to factors of the need to welfare works for people and social development as well. In addition, few of those who joined in response to the inspiration from contemporary political leader's activities and also for personal feelings that Indian politics moving towards democracy in true sense. The 11 leaders said that they were aware that through

political power they could only strengthen their efforts to fulfil their goalto equality. But from the answers such as-husband's death or involvement is the motivating factor or the reason for entering politics, it is found that the close dependence of a woman on her husband and the lack of any other political motive.

To examine, how women have become leaders, the variables- family linkages, dynastic succession (Widow of leaders) and personal interest have been studied.

TABLE: 5.8

FACTORS IN EMERGENCE OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN WEST BENGAL:

Sl. No	Factors	Numbers of Women	Percentage
1	Family Linkages	15	60
2	Dynastic Succession(Widow of leader)	4	16
3	Personal Interest	6	24
	Total	25	100

The ideological belief,favourable inspiration, and desire for social work have been considered as personal interest, which indicates those women who become leaders by virtue of own talent and without having any family political connection.

In examination of the pattern of the paths to rise in power of women legislators it is found that 15 women (60%) out of 25 women legislators inherited power from family, father, mother, or husband, which is visible in the above table 5.8. They were having family linkages, which helped them to become leaders. There are few of the women (24%) who rose to power on their own without aid of family may be powerful family connections. Such women leaders have been either social workers or favourable inspiration or any particular ideological belief. Apart from these, widow of leaders has been also a factor in the West Bengal politics. There are 4 widow women (16%) who had been given tickets after the death of their husbands to fill in void. The widow of leadershas been without any other considerations than the husband's death and therefore, no relationship does exist between their education, family background and their emergence as leaders. In this context it is necessary to mention here that women leaders who have occupied positions of power but act as an agent on behalf of male leaders of the concerned political party and exercise power in their interests, this is called proxy representation. Also, there are instances that the women leaders who become from politicized families where both husband and wife are together active in politics of the area then there is maximum chance

to emerge proxy phenomena and women legislators exercise power under the influence of their male relations.

5.3.POLITICAL CULTURE AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN WEST BENGAL:

After the Second World War the concept of political culture become popular in the study of Political Science. The term culture actually defines a way of life and when culture transmitted into political action is known as political culture. In order to understand the political system of any particular country or state it is important to understand the political culture of that particular state or country. Political culture of any country determines by the attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviour of people towards the political system. Also, it has been observed that the political culture fundamentally differs from country to country. According to Almond,political culture is a set of attitudes, beliefs, notion, faith and understanding of political system, political issues, political ideology and political characters. History, geographical position, socio-economic factors, ethnic factors and religion of the state influence the political culture. Almond and Verba (1989) in their famous book '*The Civic Culture*' (1963) have listed three basic types of political culture, through which it can be explained why people do or do not participate in political processes. These are:

(a) *Parochial Political Culture*, where citizens are mostly uninformed and unaware of their government and do not possess any tendency to participate or take little interest in the political process, like Mexico.

(b) In *Subject political culture*, citizens are somewhat informed and aware of their government and occasionally participate in the political process, like Germany and Italy. Such a type of political culture sometimes people find it difficult how to influence the working of the political system.

(c) *Participant political culture*, where citizens are informed and actively participate in the political process and influence it's working, like United Kingdom and the United States.

Also, in 1966 in order to measure the political cultures of United States Daniel Elazar (1972) in his book '*American Federalism: A View from the States*' first identifies three

distinct political cultures of United States, which combine to form the American political culture. These are:

(a) *Traditionalistic political culture*, the Government wants to maintain status-quo of social and economic hierarchy and it only promotes elites to the political system. In such culture citizens are not expected to participate in politics or even to vote.

(b) *Individualistic political culture*, Government's role is limited, primarily to keep the market place functioning. Such culture neither promotes nor lessens the citizen's participation in the political process and corruption is tolerated.

(c) *Moralistic political culture*promotes people's participation in the political process and the Government works for the public interest, general welfare and corruption is not tolerated here.

Perhaps more importantly, the similarity is found in the types of political culture of Daniel Elazar with Almond and Verba's typology, as traditionalistic political culture similar to parochial political culture; individualistic political culture similar to subject political culture and moralistic political culture similar to participant political culture. In this respect, the individualistic as well as subject political culture is not adequate to understand the political culture related to women's political representation in the legislature due to the presence of apathy of people's political participation in such kind of political culture.

Therefore, in order to understand the connection between the political culture and women political representation in the context of West Bengal we may correlate women's representation in politics with traditionalistic or parochial political culture and with moralistic or participant political culture. The statistical data shown (in the chapter 4) that political life of West Bengal generally dominated by male leadership, which leads us to assume that people of the state are socialized to believe that politics is men's work and not an appropriate pursuit for women that limited women's personal development, social choices, opportunity to share fully in the dominant values of the society and even to participate in the political system and structures as well. As a consequence in the earlier political history of the state women leaders were missing or rarely found in the political structures till 1987 (see the statistical data of chapter 4). So we can relate such kind

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political culture of the state to the type of traditionalistic or parochial political culture. In traditionalistic cultures female participation in legislative politics is discouraged by male leaders who seek to maintain a male prevalence and status-quo in politics. Hence, in the traditionalistic political culture the state had fewer women representatives.

Since 1990s, male dominated political culture of the state has been started to change though at very slow pace. The number of women increased in the political structures since 1991 as statistical data shown (see the chapter 4). The percentage of women legislators in 1987 (4.08%) is compared with that in 2021 it is found that the percentage of women representatives has increased more slowly, at 13.60 percent (see the chapter 4). This difference in growth explains some of the increase in the negative correlation with traditionalistic culture, and positive correlation with moralistic or participant political culture although other factors may also have contributed to the difference. Hence, the changed political culture of West Bengal is related to moralistic or participant political culture. The moralistic political culture associated with values and styles that have been associated with women-put the interests of the people above their own, and commit to improving the condition represented and so forth. Hence, in the moralistic culture the state seemed to encourage women representation in the politics.

It is important to mention here that a significantshift in the political culture of West Bengal from traditionalistic to moralistic or participant political culture is occurred due to several factors such as education, positive perceptions of society, changing behaviour of political parties and attitudes of male leaders, government's policies and schemes, e.g. quota reservation, emergence of many regional political parties in the state politics etc (detail discussed in the chapter 3 & 4)helped to increase the number of women leaders in politics. However, from the perspective of democratic theory, the political culture provides a gratifying explanation of women's political representation. Also, it seems to indicate that the traditions and cultures of some states may cause women representation to lag behind popular support for women's full participation in political affairs.

5.4. WOMEN'S CULTURE IN POLITICS

At the end of the 18th century the women of France demanded that the goals of the Revolution should apply also to them. During the 19th century feminist marched through the streets of many countries demonstrating for women's suffrage. And in the 1960s enraged young women formulated the slogan 'the personal is political'. These events

indicate different phases in women's history when women have organised and acted as a gender based interest group. Regardless of the position one may talk about the appropriateness of using interest theory in the analysis of women's conditions, it is an unquestionable fact that during recent centuries women have acted politically on the basis of their gender.

Partly following Kraditor (1965), Helga Hernes (1982, p.91) formulates three different lines of reasoning found in discussions concerning women's political participation. The essential point in the *justice reasoning* is women's right to political participation; the contents of political decisions are of less concern. In the *resource reasoning* the claim is made that if women do not participate in politics society is deprived of some particular knowledge and skills that women possess. According to the *interest reasoning* women's interest are different from men's and often in conflict. Throughout history,women's demands for political rights have been motivated by different aspects of these three types of reasoning. The justice reasoning, based on the ideology of natural law, was used primarily during the earlier phases of the first wave of women's movement to justify women's suffrage.

When their demands for suffrage encountered a strong and forceful opposition women gradually move to the resource reasoning, often emphasizing women's 'feminine' nature. In addition to their particular skills and knowledge, women would bring others special qualities to political decision making: unique feminine and mothering qualities would contribute to a more peaceful world (Evans, 1979; Kraditor, 1965). During the same period reasoning in terms of advantage and interest started to develop. Kraditor (1965, p. 43-45) mentions the presence ofdifferent forms of reasoningwhile she calls expediency, 'women needed the ballot for self protection'. Thus, until the 1920s women organised on the basis of their gender although the reasoning they used to justify women's political rights changed.

After women became politically eligible and attained the right to vote it seemed less and less necessary to assert their right to political representation as women. Instead, women's political participation was defended by claiming that women as individuals should hold the same political right as men (Shapiro, 1981, p.701-02). The demands for the right to political influence raised by the second wave of women's movement during the 1960s and 1970s may, from an interest perspective, seem like a step backwards to the representation

by Estate. In fact it was a totally new evidence of the existence of social conflicts based on gender (Jones, Kathleen and Jonasdottir, 1988, p. 79-80).

The concept 'women's culture' in politics presents two aspects, firstly, *suppressed culture* and on the other hand *women's culture carries a potential for change and liberation that affects the entire society* (Jonasdottir 1984, p. 96-97). The suppressed culture includes elements such as passivity, dependence on men, and lack of self confidence. On the other side women culture presents independent qualities, positive values and activities borne bywomen in connection with their care for others' well being (Halsaa, 1977, p.110-13). Jonasdottir (1984) argues that an important difference between the women's culture perspective and earlier theories of patriarchy is that women lives are not viewed as being entirely controlled by men, nor are women considered to be totally powerless. By using the theoretical approach of a specific women's culture we can discover those values and contents in women's lives which are independent of the male world and not nearly compensatory in relation to it (Jones and Jonasdottir, 1988, p.82).

To assess the women's culture and women's characteristics (discussed in the next section) of West Bengal in the context of politics, a total of 25 women political leaders, who are/ were members of Parliament and State Assembly, were selected for interviews from the State of West Bengal. In the interviews these women leaders shared their understandings and observation in respect of the suppressed women culture in West Bengal politics. They expressed that generally women are not allowed to participate in political activities like meninterruption comes first within the family. To participate in political process women need support which may a means to boost self-confidencein thembut the fact is different.Also, women bear a disproportionate part of household responsibilities and they face discrimination inside political formations like parties and trade unions. Economic dependency and sometimes security crisis due to some uncomfortable people inside the parties and outside the parties make suppressed culture for women. Criminalization of politics is also a deterrent for women. In contrast to that, there is another culture exists within the State that women have potentialities to change the perception of society. Women legislators can also represent women's culture through their actions to end the discrimination and inequities that women face within the society. Women can be considered to have shared interests in alleviating inequities and oppression resulting from their gender position, which can lead to public welfare, common values, perspectives that can be inculcated in politics. In addition, large proportion of women leaders can be

considered to act as advocates on behalf of weaker sections as well as women than the men in the legislature.

5.5.CHARACTERISTICS OF WOMEN LEADERS

In general, there are some characteristics of women political leaders which are following:

- Women leaders have the ability to respond positively to hardship;
- They have empathy with others;
- Willingness to speak out;
- Honesty;
- Women leaders are moralistic;
- Ability to get support from family and spouse;
- Strong belief in the power of collective decision making;
- Collaborative nature of women leaders;
- Attentive in works;
- Above all capacity to build relation with others.

It is need to note here that all the above mentioned characteristics recognised as the characteristics of feminist leadership which cherishes our hope that women could bring different qualities to leadership.The present study has been found some qualities or characteristics of women leaders,by analysing the opinions and experiences of elected women leaders in West Bengal (interviewed),which arediscussed in below.

- Women are friendly in nature;
- Politeness and flexibility;
- Women leaders have more patience;
- Sincere in works;
- Affectionate and careful;
- More sensitive towards social problems;
- Abide by ethical values;
- Ability to convince others;
- Honest and hard worker;
- Dedicative towards responsibilities;
- Good management skill;
- Co-operative and collaborative.

In the process of interviewing when the question asked to women legislators that as a woman leader what qualities do you think that makes you different from a male leader?They replied that thespecific characteristics (above mentioned)whichgenerate their diverse qualitiesto lead and also make them different from their male colleagues. Though there were four women leaders those who did not believe in gendered categorization of characteristics of leaders. Rather they replied as an individual everyone is possessing unique and different characteristics,qualities and skills. Therefore, every individual is different from others and also leaders are different to each other in qualities, in styles of functioning etc. From the *individual-as-difference approach* (for details see chapter 6) the thought of gender distinctions is notbe our concern. Also, they believed that leader should be gender-neutral and suggested that we must be concerned about the qualities or characteristics of good leader rather than so muchfocused on gender of the leaders.Thus, the women's culture and characteristics of West Bengal makes it very clear that barriers and efforts both are important aspects of politics of West Bengal especially in the context of women's political leadership.

5.6. STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

A style of leadership refers to the strategies and behavioural patterns through which a leader seeks to achieve his or her goals. Leadership can be exercised in a number of different ways (Heywood).The style approach focuses exclusively on what leaders do (behavior)and how they act (process), where style is understood as relatively stablepatterns of behavior. Northouse (2004) defines leadership as a processwhereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve acommon goal, emphasizing process or a transactional event over thetraits or characteristics residing in the leader. Leadership is composedof task behaviours that focus on goal accomplishment or relationship behaviours that help subordinates or followers feel comfortable with themselves, the situation, and each other (Chin, 2007, p.6).In the study of leadership, there are various styles of leadership, is detailed below:

TABLE NO: 5.9
STYLES OF LEADERSHIP

Sl. No	STYLES	CORE THEME
1.	**Expressive Leadership**	The expressive leaders are those who show solidarity and believe in seeking suggestions from other members of the group. This type can suit to behavioural approach which lays stress on the leader-follower relationship and where leader is considered as an integral part of the group. These leaders act in consultation with others for the accomplishment of objectives of their group.
2.	**Instrumental Leadership**	Instrumental leaders are those who don't have any belief in asking for suggestions or advice from others but in turn gives their own suggestions every time without caring for the views of their group men. Corresponding to the 'showing solidarity' characteristics of the expressive leaders, these leaders emphasize on showing disagreement with all those acts or suggestions put forth by the group men.
3.	**Autocratic Leadership**	It is closely associated with the classical approach to management. Not seeking subordinates opinions, the autocratic leaders hold conflict and creativity to a minimum. In this style, the entire authority is concentrated in the hands of the leader. He/she decides all policies, gives orders to subordinates and demands complete obedience from them. He/she withholds rewards or gives punishment. This type of leader usually supervises closely and motivates through incentive and fear. The autocratic leader is task-oriented and places little value on showing consideration to subordinates as a leadership technique.
4.	**Democratic Leadership**	Democratic style is based on the basic principle of

		participation of subordinates in decision making process. It is also known as participative style of leadership. in this style, the leader allows the subordinates to participate in the decision making process. All policies and decisions are arrived at through such group discussions. The communication flows freely and is multi-directional.
5.	**Laissez Faire** **or** **Free-Rein** **or** **Freehold Leadership**	In this style, the leader gives complete independence to the subordinates in their operations. He/she allows them to set their own goals and achieve them. In other words, this style involves complete freedom for group or individual decision with no or minimum participation of the leader. Leader's only job is to supply various materials and information asked by the subordinates.
6.	**Rational-Legal Leadership**	This style based on the stability of leader - follower relationship. This is, most likely, acts undertaken by these leaders may not mean criticism of the sources of legitimacy. If the followers would view with disfavour leadership acts of the rational-legal leader, the leaders may be replaced, but the sources of legitimacy would remain intact without incurring any distaste of the followers.
7.	**Paternalistic** **or** **Orientation Styles**	Under this category, there are two types of styles, which are discussed as below:
a.	**Employee Oriented** **or** **Nurturing Task Leaders**	The nurturing task leader helps his subordinates to grow up and assume greater responsibility as much as his subordinates can handle, openly shows affection for those who work hard; if subordinates need help he/she helps as much as he/she can; has affectation for his/her subordinates and listens to their personal problems and family matters. Leader helps his subordinates in their career planning and believes that

		subordinates acquire a sense of responsibility under the care and guidance of a good leader.
b.	**Production or Task-Oriented Leaders**	In this style, leaders believe that their main concern is only to get the work done and for this purpose, they keep the subordinates busy all the time, in their zeal to produce more, they ignore the human aspect of the subordinates. They are of the opinion that they can attain results by better planning, engaging better methods and machines, and keeping the employees busy all the time.
8.	**Charismatic Leadership**	The Charismatic leaders attract followers on the basis of qualities of persuasiveness theypossess.The category of charismatic leadership was developed by Weber. The Charismatic leaders, he describes attract authority because of "devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or the exemplary character of an individual person and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him."
9.	**Shared Leadership**	This type of leadership also known as distributive leadership. The major role of sharedleadership is to enhance the capability and motivation.
10.	**Dominant Leadership**	This is the man who maintains his authority by virtue of his own personality and his innate force of character.This kind of leadership can never be attained by mere assertiveness and imitative. This typeof man is confident in action and prepared himself to do anything that he expects his followers to do. He is not afraid of making mistakes because he knows that his power resides in his own innate strength of character. The dominant leader is far more readythan the institutional leader to initiate new ideas and to take risks. It is in general true that all great captains of war have been of this type.

11.	**Responsible Leadership**	Responsible leadership is a blend of commitment, understanding and determination. Most of the characteristics of the responsible leader can be summarized under two headings: the avoidance of opportunities and the avoidance of utopianism. Leadership is irresponsible when it fails to set goals.
12.	**Organizational Leadership or Institutional Executive**	Leadership as such is synonymous with holding office or some position of prestige and responsibility in some institution or organization. Such leaders have not created the conditions of leadership but have been invested with authority to get the work executed or carried by followers. They have no persuasive influence over their followers. Since they are responsible for their work, to their employees, their interests, it is natural, are focused more upon the welfare of the institution than on the need of the employees and less on the question of establishing a relationship with them. The executive leader's major interest is to control their actions in promoting the interests of institution.
13.	**Formal Leadership**	A formal leader is one who possesses organizational authority to direct and control the activities of his subordinates. He can issue orders and instructions to his subordinates by virtue of his formal authority in the organization.
14.	**Informal Leadership**	Informal leaders who do not hold any managerial post in the organization. An informal leader is not appointed by the management as in the case of a formal leader. Sometimes, informal leaders become more acceptable to the workers are compared to the formal leaders. They are able to achieve the voluntary co-operation of the workers in all matters.
15.	**Transactional Leadership**	This theory emphasises the importance of the

		relationship between leader and followers, focusing on the mutual benefits derived from a form of 'contract' through which the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the commitment or loyalty of the followers.
16.	**Transformational Leadership**	Transformational leaders are usually associated with informal structures of power and they are seems more capable in voicing people's concerns rather than formal position holders of power.
17.	**Participative Leadership**	Involvement of the people in the planning and controlling, as well as the doing of their work and this involvement benefits both the organization and its members.Benefits of participation are not limited to the employees; management gets the benefits of their contribution as well as their enthusiastic work.Participative leadership does not appear to be effective in all situations or for all groups. Personality differences, for instance, may make followers more or less interested in participation.
18.	**Consultative Leadership**	Leaders solicit opinions from the group before making a decision but they do not feel obliged to accept the groups thinking; these leaders make it clear that they alone have final authority to make final decisions.
19.	**Some Other types of Leadership**	There are some other leadership styles, are discussed in below:
a.	**Bureaucratic Leaders**	The leader who has a bureaucratic style believes in hierarchical disposition; maintains fair rules and regulations; believes in clear cut democratization of responsibility and work; tries to confine himself to his own jurisdiction; and believes that if people follow everything in writing then there will be probability of less conflicts in the organization.

| b. | Creative/ Innovative Leaders | Creative leaders are accepted leaders on the basis of the contribution made by them in their branch of knowledge. Their contribution is generally of great relevance to human upliftment. |
| c. | Consensual Leaders | Consensual leaders encourage group discussion on an issue and then make a decision that reflects the general agreement (consensus) of group members. Consensual leaders delegate more authority to the group. This style leads to considerable delay in decision-making because every member has to give his/her consent. |

In Indian politics we have seen in the early years of independence women became members of legislatures or they had been able to reach top political positions mainly because they were either the daughters, or wives, of well-known political leaders.Women leaders those who having succeeded their fathers/ husbands, for instance Indira Gandhi or Sonia Gandhi,but in recent years, this picture is undergoing a gradual change. While dynasty and family connections remain important variables determining entry and functioning of the large majority of women leaders in politics, a handful of women leaders have been able to enter politics on their own interest, hard work and emerge as independent and strong leaders in their own right (Pai, p.108).Mamata Banerjee, Uma Bharati, Jayalalithaa, Mayawati, Sheila Dikshit are such kind of leaders who have/had climbed the ladder of top positions in politics due to their own hard work. As this study based on the context of West Bengal which is leading by Mamata Banerjeeand where more and more women begin occupying the positions of leadership compare to earlier. Very recently it has been observed, particularly from the second decade of 21st century, in West Bengal women leaders are elected from non-political background (without family linkages), even without any hard work, and they get elected as women leaders only through their face value or popularity in the glamour world. Presently in West Bengal, basically women leaders elected from three different backgrounds, namely, political or family linkages, personal interest or hard work and face value or popularity (film actors, singers, sports person etc). While, a handful number of women reached at top political position by their hard workbut a majority number of women elected from political and popularity grounds in the state (detail discussed in the chapter 4). Naturally, in this

context a core question arises as what style of functioning or leadership women leaders follow generally and particularly in West Bengal.

In order to understand the style of functioning orleadership of women leaders here we have followed the pattern of characteristicsof leaders that shape the perceived leadership style of the leaders. Based on their characteristics, women political leadersexercisednumerous styles of leadership. Expressive, democratic, employee oriented or nurturing task, shared, responsible, transactional, transformational, participative, consultative, creative/innovative and consensual leadership styles are inextricably connected to the characteristics of women political leadersas the ability to build and maintain relationships, self-awareness of the leader, flexibility, delegation, freedom, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, motivated by emotional reward, the ability to collaboration and an awareness of social need as well as the ability to understand social need.

Feminist principles dictate that all will be involved in planning and decision making, and consensus building is valued. The feminist literature has shown that women tend to use nurturance to engage, communicate, and lead. The use of a collaborative process is viewed as leveling the playing field between leader and follower, and to create more egalitarian environments; these collaborative and egalitarian processes have been described as "shared leadership" (Chin, 2007, p. 10). Feminist women have noted that women emphasize planning and organizing work using an empathic approach, while placing less emphasis on the "need to win at all costs" compared to men ("Women May", 1997).Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt& van Engen, (2003) found from a meta-analysis of transformational and transactional leadership styles among women that female leaders were more transformational than male leaders and also engaged in more of the contingent reward behaviours that are a component of transactional leadership which identifies areas of strength in the leadership styles of women. A transformational style is also consistent with feminist principles of inclusion, collaboration, and social advocacy (Chin, 2007, p.7).

However, the leadership of women emphasizes reciprocity, mutuality and responsibility towards others; is collective and participatory; focuses on relationships and empowerment and highlights outcomes as a central goal of leadership. In contrast to men's style, they

deemphasize hierarchical relationships, individualism and one-way power relationships (Pai, 2012, p.320).

As the number of women increases in politics and in leadership roles in West Bengal, it is important to analyze the styles of functioning which are exercised by women leaders of the State.West Bengal is presently only an Indian state which is governing by a woman leader, Mamata Banerjee's leadership increases the number of womenwho enter politics and reach the pinnacle of politics.Semi-structured interviews were used to get the insights of 25 interviewees in the West Bengal. The analysis was developed using a series of templates which provided the flexibility to interpret and categorize the findings in order to answer the research question and accomplish the objective, combining both deductive and inductive reasoning. Among interviewed 25 women leaders 4 leaders did not mentioned any different characteristics of women leaders, in fact they stated they did not believe in any such categorization of characteristics between men and women leaders. Hence, the analysis is based on 21 women leaders.

The styles are defined by a composition of different characteristics of women leaders. Similarly, here we used a set of qualities of women leaders to describe the leadership styles. Leadership characteristic which is defined as a behavior, knowledge, skill or emotional attribute of the leader; and, that in combination give birth to a person's particular leadership style. We have formulated a model framework for understanding the styles of leadership based on some parameters.

TABLE NO: 5.10
MODEL OF WOMEN'S STYLES OF LEADERSHIP IN WEST BENGAL

Sl. No.	Characteristics/ Qualities	Functions	Styles of Leadership
1.	Affectionate and careful	Acted as vigorous advocacy on behalf of disadvantaged groups, for instance, promoted the interest of marginalised groups.	Nurturing Task Leaders/ Employee Oriented Leadership
2.	Co-operative and collaborative	Reached at the decisions or policy formulation after discussion with other members.	Democratic Leadership
3.	Friendly, Polite and flexible	Interacted with all sections of society and easily build relationship with them which make good rapport.	Informal Leadership
4.	Sensitive towards social problems	Raised people's concern, for instance, health issues, educational and cultural policies etc.	Transformational Leadership
5.	Sincerity and dedication	All the women leaders saw their role as essentially serving the needs of others. Do all allotted works and responsibilities, such as various committees' works.	Responsible Leadership
6.	Ability to convince others	Motivate and inspire women to enter into politics as they get involved in planning and decision making process.	Participative leadership

Our analysis shows thatabove mentioned six styles of leadership which are exercised by women leaders in West Bengal. Some women leaders have proved highly capable in political mobilisation, establishing their own strong political image with the results evidence five to six times elected by the people and hold the position of ministers as well, good example being Smt. Anju Kar, Smt. Shanta Chhetri, Smt. Chandrima Bhattacharya and Smt. Sabitri Mitra also proved adept at shifting support from changing one party allegiance to another. The styles of functioning of them make a good rapport with the people and achieved their reliability. Through which they maintaining a strong control over them and reaching at the power-position repeatedly.All the women leaders studied, including those who rose through dynastic succession, faced many obstacles and hardships and it took time and effort on their part to gain recognition as national leaders (Pai, 2013, p. 118).

5.7. WOMEN LEADERS: THE ISSUES OF CONCERN

Representative democracy implies that not all citizens share the power of decision making directly, but via representatives, who chosen through election by all the citizens.Representation is considered to be more or less adequate depending on how well

it reflects the opinions or preferences of the electorates by their representatives.Thus, the main role of the elected representatives is to promote the citizen's interests and execute the policies which consist their interests.

Feminist argued that women occupy a distinct position in society. In India, women are generally confined to the home to caring for the youngand needy, to unpaid family work or lower paid outside work and even rural women more busy to gathering fuel and drawing water for the home. Phillips argues that from these particular experiences of women, specific needs, preferences, or concerns do arise that are not adequately addressed in male-dominated politics. Apparently, the equal right to vote is not strong enough to deal with this problem-there should also be equality among those elected to office (Phillips, 1995, p. 66).However, there is a serious challenge from those that wonder whether women do indeed have distinct and specific interests.Lele (2000) claims that there are a range of concerns that are common to all women by virtue of their being women because of that they do indeed form a constituency.

"Thus the first argument for reservation concerns their needs on account of their gender linked priorities, for instance the enormous violence perpetrated against women- both sexual and physical-and therefore the need for legislation to provide safety and ensuring the execution of that legislation. The second issue concerns women's needs and demands on account of the economic/social/political status they occupy in the Indian society, for instance property laws, right to divorce, right to positive discrimination in areas of education and health and other areas of development" (Lele, 2000).

All this might not be enough to establish a set of interests shared by all women-in fact, there are individual differences based on class, caste, religion or location. If interests are understood as the way in which express their priorities, there is definitely considerable disagreement among women, as has been established by recent feminist theory (Hust, 2004. p.37).

An analysis of what women political leaders, who were interviewed, are doing in addition to being members of the legislative bodies is necessary in order to assess their role in politics. In addition, their actions by way of participation in the legislature and opinions expressed there often reflect their activities and interests outside. How far do their roles as politicians reflect their concerns for society or the interests of their constituencies? Are there any issues which interest them specifically because they are women? Are women in

power more likely to bring other women into power or promote a feminist political agenda?To begin with -how did women political leaders view their role in society and politics? - for a large majority (19) the goal was to serve the people and society. Particularly, it reflected on their assessment of politics as a necessary means for any meaningful work. It is difficult to judge from their answers whether viewed politics as goals in them or only as instruments to achieve something higher. Another question related to discover the immediate incident or event which motivated them to enter politics. Twelve women leaders attributed it to factors of the need to welfare works for people and social development as well. In addition, few of those who joined in response to the inspiration from contemporary political leader's activities and other eleven leaders said that they were aware that through political power they could strengthen their efforts to fulfil their goals.

For the purpose of analysis, we engender a model that employs two different perspectives describing the specific interests that women political leaders are represented. The first perspective addresses itself to general or human interests and the second to the women specific interests.

5.7.1. GENERAL OR HUMAN INTEREST PERSPECTIVE:

Women politicians and leaders are seen as representatives of human interest in general and also of the interest of certain deprived groups, regardless of gender. This perspective also reflects the complementary viewpoint that women's particular experiences and knowledge are seen as a political resource. The concern for general issues likewise has varied from leader to leader. A majority of women leaders (21) claimed to be currently interested and involved in more than one issue or activity. These varied from state to local or constituency-level like the provision of education, health, budget, rule-regulation, cultural policy, safety in railways-metrorailways, preservation of forest, andinfrastructure like electricity, housing, irrigation, the constructions of roads etc. Their specific target groups were, by and large, the weaker sections of the community-the poor, deprived sections like the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, women children and minorities. These are very general categories and constitute more than half of the India's population. Women leaders belonging to radical political parties mentioned the working class as their specific target group. In addition, it is important to mention here that party loyalty is an importantissue in West Bengal. Elections are held on a party basis, the candidates are

assumed to represent a party's interests. In that sense, a question arises-can the women elected through this process carry the additional responsibility to represent women? Another few (4) women politicians mentioned child development as their issues of priority. And the 15 women political leaders mentioned that issues of economic development like promotion of agriculture and general employment creating activities are their area of concerns and they wanted to implement various government schemes and identify beneficiaries etc.

All the 25 women leaders pronounced themselves in favour of the issue of people's participation in politics. On the value of voting elections, nearly all agreed. They believed that it was possible to change the government, particularly by voting it out of power. So this is a reflection of an understanding and commitment to democratic values and institutions and of a keenness to see people participating equally and fully.

The issues with which women leaders were seen to be concerned were related to human interest perspective while there existsa contradictory viewpoint that the women can only represent care of environment and human beings, for instance children, the elderly and the different deprived groups. However, women leaders raised all the issues were deeply related to social, political and economic development of the society and state as well. In addition, it is important to mention that women strive toward the same goals and use the same means as those considered appropriate for men in the case of human interest perspective.

5.7.2. WOMEN-SPECIFIC INTEREST PERSPECTIVE:

In general, the research on women who hold political office reveals a tendency for women to be slightly more concern than men. In looking at the women's issues on which the women political leaders claimed to be involved were immensely varied and that bringing out the importance of context in any study of women's leadership.Early women politicians tended to avoid identification with women's issues (Reingold, 2000, p.3). Contemporary female politicians are more likely to see themselves as representingwomen, but the limited consensus on what representation entails (Reingold, 2000, p.219). Women do not speak with a single voice, and what constitute "women's interest" is not always self-evident. It is often possible to find common ground around issues central to women's well-being concerning work, family, violence, reproduction, and economic security. The question remaining is whether putting more women in office

is a reliable way to advancing that agenda. A large body of scholarship suggests that women's representation matters in getting women's issues onto the agenda (Rhode, 2014, p.154). Some studies suggest that increased women's representation leads to more women-friendly policies in state-by-state comparisons (Caiazza, 2004, p.35). While other research finds no relationship between greater gender equality in political representation and greater gender equality in social policies or outcomes (Reingold, 2006, p.9).Sometimes, party affiliation and ideology become more important than to be concern withwomen's issues. As politics has grown more polarized in recent years, it has become increasingly difficult to get women to cross party lines in support of women's issues(Rhode,2014, p.154). However, it is generally understood that women legislators can do more work for the welfare of women than male legislator, but it is found in this study that this generalisation is not accepted by all these leaders. To a large number of women leaders a maximum number of issues of concern were in social work and developmental like educating girls and women and income generating activities for instance to form self-help groups. It appears that the preferences voiced are also guided by the state-sponsored schemes or programmes available, since finances are normally tied to them. Another reason might be that women do not have the ability and autonomy yet to formulate and defend their preferences. However, the fact is found that among interviewed elected women leaders,only three (Smt. Minati Sen, Smt. Shanta Chhetri & Smt. Kumkum Chakraborty)had been fighting atrocities against women like dowry, oppressionand women trafficking. Four leaders (Smt. Bilasi Bala Sahis, Smt. SeuliSaha, Smt. Manju Basu& Smt. Anju Kar)mentioned that as various kinds of violence, both physical and mental, occur against women, therefore, they feel the need to ensure women's safety and'women security' became their prime concern issue.This means that effective leadership appears to build upwards from the felt need of women, rather than implementing a programme or scheme devised externally. Only one leader (Smt. Minati Sen)answered that reservation of seats for women in the legislature is a special measure for promoting women's right in representation and political power and they likely to promote this issue.And the major number women leaders (14) had not participated in such activity.On the issue of women's participation in politics all the women legislators agreed to strengthen their efforts to increase the level.

The above discussion does not augur well for the supposition that women legislators indeed introduce new issues on women in the legislature. Yet, the picture is not that clear.

Preferences for doing something for women are not very different between the genders. However, we find among the women leaders it is much less concern for the women issues. Concerning a special preference for bettering the situation of women, there is less attention and efforts given to that matter since the beginning. While since 2011, Mamata Banerjee's leading government had taken some measures, mainly introduced few government schemes like Kanyasree (a conditional cash transfer scheme with the aim of improving the status and well being of the girl child in West Bengal by incentivizing schooling of all teenage girls and delaying their marriages until the age of 18), SabujSaathi (a scheme giving free bicycles to girl students), Rupasree(a one-time financial grant of Rs. 25,000 for economically stressed families at the time of their adult daughters' marriages), Sabala (a scheme for adolescent girls aims to improve the nutritional and health status of girls between 11 to 18 years of age), etc, for the welfare and upliftment of women and girl, which are not adequate for the substantive and sustainable development of women.Recently,West Bengal TMC Government of Mamata Banerjee has launched a new scheme called "West Bengal Lakshmi Bhandar Scheme 2021" to provide financial support to the women head of the families living in both urban and rural areas of the state. Also, this scheme starts with the aim to ensure women empowerment and provide a sense of security to women. While this scheme in West Bengal is now in its infancy so its effectiveness cannot be ascertained.

However, all leaders face obstacles and disadvantages that must be overcome if they are to achieve policy and political success. It is not unreasonable to assume that one of the reasons women leaders have not been more demonstrably profeminist is because such a policy agenda might be considered radically anti-status quo and pushing these issues would be too politically risky. Still, this will depend a lot on developments, political positions, power and authority that give women a higher capability to develop and defend their decisions and priorities. One thing, from interviews with individual women leaders, became clear that effective women leaders have a sense of their space at both the private sphere and also the public sphere. The motivation for emergence of women leaders is the effort to advance both strategic and practical gender needs.

5.8.THE VALUES ESPOUSED BY WOMEN LEADERS IN POLITICS

For women leaders and feminist leaders, the objectives of leadershipinclude empowering others through (a) one's stewardship of an organization'sresources; (b) creating the

vision; (c) social advocacy andchange; (d) promoting feminist policy and a feminist agenda (e.g. familyorientedwork environments, wage gap between men and women); and(e) changing organizational cultures to create gender-equitable environments (Chin, 2007, p.15).Similarly, in the political context, electing and appointing more women to public office (i.e. descriptive representation) may lead to the inclusion of several positive values for society as well as democracy.

Many theorists as well as activists cherish the hope that the inclusion of women into the political process would change the way in which politics is done. They expect women leaders to introduce a different set of values and concerns. Certain changes can be directly attributed to the increase in women's political representation. Among these are- a change in the perception of stereotyping of women, a change in some social conventions, the creation of new role models of women in public life, to reduce criminalization of politics, corruption might be lessen in politics etc.

> With the descriptive representation, women would bring different values in politics, and that may change the way of politics, this view has a long-standing tradition in feminist thought, and is also seen in recent developments. In the West, this is captured by, for example, the concept of a 'politics of care' (Elshtain, 1990 & 1993). This belief is grounded in assumptions that the traditional role of women and the socialization of girls as caretaker of the family, as nurturer and guardian of dependants, be it children or the elderly, leads to a different way of dealing with politics.

> Some feminists demand to change the socio-cultural conditions that repressedwomen in public and in the home. Women directly and indirectly challenged the traditionalperception that women did not belong in politics because they have the qualities of purity, motherhood, and self-sacrifice and were too pure and weak, toouneducated and passive. As a result of their efforts, women have gained access to formalpolitical positions. So now women's presence and actions in politics affected conventionalperceptions of women in India. Through theinclusion of women in political processes apolitics of difference to insist on the expansion and consolidation of democracy.Women have effectively utilized the politics of difference to change the way the public views women in positions of power.

➢ An argument discounted by Phillips that the elected women can serve as role models.When more women become present in politics they could serve as role models and motivate, inspire other women to come forward as well. The empirical evidence is West Bengal where under a woman leadership the number of women contestants had been became more than double since the assembly election 2011(see chapter 4 for details). Mamata Banerjee, she made her way to power through hard work, honesty, engaging with the population and playing smart politics. She remains an exceptional figure in the history of West Bengal, and this work illustrates that many obstacles still impede women's access to politics, but her leadership has shown that women can do the job and will open doors for women in the future.

➢ Women are supposed to be more concerned about the common good; their style of doing politics would be less aggressive. Some believe that women are more co-operative, tolerant and thoughtful of others. They also believe that women are more concerned about the environment for the sustaining the community. In India, Vandana Shiva most notably pus forward this view in her notion of 'ecofeminism' (e.g. Shiva, 1993).

➢ It is also voiced in India that women possess moral power renders them not, or less, corrupt because corruption is apparently believed to be a male 'quality' and women would thus introduce cleaner politics. Now look to women to change politics in a way that will minimizecorruption and better represent the people. While, Phillips is unconvinced with the argument that women's superiority in terms of morality and they do not connected withcorruption.

➢ Paxton and Hughes present two central types of arguments for women's political representation (2007). Justice arguments for women's inclusion in politics focus on women's equality to men, while utility arguments emphasize the ways that the practice of politics can be improved by the inclusion of women.The representation of all members of society can help to ease social tensions and stabilize democracy (Paxton and Hughes 2007; Htun 2005).The presence of women can increase the overall diversity of ideas, values, and political styles represented within political process, thus strengthening democracy and representing a wider range of societal interests and options for policy solutions. Research has also shown that women tend to be more cooperative and peaceful and therefore have a different way of

doing things that might improve the ways that men have used to govern societies throughout history (Hunt and Posa 2001; Skjelsbaek 2001).

➢ Furthermore, it is expected an increase in the number of women elected seems likely to increase the attention given to matters of women's issues. Women legislators do represent women's interests more than their male colleagues it is tested by Lena Wangnerud (2000) in an empirical study of Swedish Riksdag. While there is no warranty, women leaders would always promote feminist policy and represent feminist agendas. Women's presence in politics does appear to be associated with a greater respect for women, even if it is because of their perceived differences rather than a notion of equality. This change in attitude toward gender has allowed for women to engage in politics and achieve substantive change in women's interests, such as greater access to reproductive healthcare and measures to prevent violence against women. Women's equal access to the full decision-making process, giving them the opportunity to enact policies that can create substantive change for issues important to women and begin work toward changing public perceptions of women and their roles in society (Steinmetz, 2013, p.52).

However, as gender is a socially constructed category, there are stereotypical images about women and men in public life, their leadership characteristics, their relative strengths and weaknesses. Many feminists point to the 'moral capital' argument which suggests that women are less corrupt (Dollar, Fisman and Gatti, 1999) than their male counterparts; less likely to act opportunistically from self-interest; more likely to exhibit softer behaviour on social issues; score more highly on 'integrity tests'; take stronger stances on ethical issues with resulting benefits to the democratic governance of society (Spary, 2007). Celebrating this difference they hold that women need not, and must not, change when they enter public life, a strategy that gives them an initial advantage. In spite of rigorous efforts and numerous possibilities of women leaders toward political process still their number in state politics remains abysmally low which indicates we have to walk a long way for the equality in terms of gendered leadership concept.

5.9. CONCLUSION

This study provides an understanding of the characteristics, styles of functioning of women in political position in West Bengal. This study provides evidence that all these

characteristics and the styles of functioning of womenleadersmake different from the male leadership. Being involved in political activities women would be politically educated and become conscious socially, politically and economically which will make the vantage point for change the societal perceptions towards women and will ultimately contribute towards complete development of the state in true sense. These aspects encouraged common women to be an active part of politics.

With women attaining prestigious positions of political power there should be erosion in paternalistic attitudes in society, attitudes that relegate women to child care and domestic functions. The number of increased female leaders had/has the effect of increasing the amount of female adolescents that aspired to political leadership positions. It is found in very recently ended state assembly election of West Bengal the number of young MLAs in the 25-40 age group has raised to 14% (Ramakrishnan, Akhil, Kanadje&Raghavan,2021).The connection between what people see in society and what people believe is the proper place is very dependent on each other. If people see women being successful in public positions such as elected positions and positions of influence in both government and non-government this will change the way that society view women's proper role (Wemlinger, 2009, p. 12).

The brief perusal of the functioning of some women leaders shows that there is no one model which fits all women leaders. Women leaders in West Bengal are as honest, affectionate, careful, co-operative, collaborative, sincere, dedicative, friendly, polite and able to convince others. Mamata Banerjee viewed as honest; her followers compare her to the goddess Durga and a tigress for the twin qualities of female courage and intolerance for injustice, which voters find rare in politicians (Banerjee, 2004). She became the role model to common women and inspires them to get involved in politics. As a result inspirational path leads some womento the top political position, Chandrima Bhattacharya, Sonali Guha (Bose) for example. While Mamata Banerjeedoes not conform to public standards of feminine behaviour; shedoes not only have a reputation for unpredictability, ruthlessness,and a volatile temper. In contrast,her public image is clean; she is viewed as honest and supportedby the poorer sections, especially women, although she has usedboth 'assertive and paternalist populism' to build her constituencyand gain power. Unmarried and from a modest, lowermiddle-class family, she still dresses in inexpensive khadi sareesand slippers and lives frugally in her old house in a congested

southKolkata area(Banerjee, 2004, p. 302). Her living style motivates the women of lower class for political participation. She is a 'street fighter' ready to *gherao*(ambush) political leaders, join marches and sit-ins on the streets,even as chief minister, for social and political causes(Banerjee, 2004, p. 303). Hence, all these provide the inspiration, motivation and courage to ordinary women to be a part of political activities and they reflect the feminine characteristics in leadership roles.

All the women leaders studied, including those who rosethrough dynastic succession, faced many obstacles and hardshipsand it took time and effort on their part to gain recognition aspolitical leaders. Hindu imageryand stereotypes are invoked; they are seen as *mother-figures*, or *didi*. There are different expectations from men andwomen, which put the latter at a distinct disadvantage making itnecessary for them to work harder and prove themselves as efficientand capable in politics, even more so when in power. Failure in the case of women leads to fingers pointed at gender, but not in the caseof men (Pai, 2013, p.118).

All this suggests that it is difficult for women to enter andbuild a career in politics. At the same time, in recent decades, significant changes have taken place in the state—risein women's literacy, social movements, economic growth, and reservation of seats for women in panchayats—which have provided a more fertile ground for women leaders inpolitics. In this situation, a small number of women leaders haveemerged and, through sheer hard work and determination, achievedstatus, respect and recognition on their own. Nevertheless, thistrend remains exceptional and difficult for other women to emulate. Clearly, change is required at two levels. First, attitudes towomen must change together with improvement in their economicposition so that they acquire the potential to compete with men.Second, internal reforms of parties must take place so that they donot remain family concerns in which women are expected to besubordinate members with little voice of their own (Pai, 2013, p.118).

The presence of women in politics is not a sufficient condition for the development gender equality. Reforms of the institutional structures is not the solution, rather it limits women's access to and constrain their ability to use political office, which are necessary to enhance the descriptive and substantive representation of women in politics.The acceptance of women politicians is based in the conception of a politics of difference which says that women are not the same as men, but different in a positive way.When

women will have equal access to the full decision-making process and would have the opportunity to enact policies that can create substantive change for issues important to women and begin work toward changing public perceptions of women and their roles in society(Steinmetz, 2013). Furthermore, gender affects authority and women leadersand commands less legitimacy, authority and respect from the electorate. In the next chapter we shall have a look exactly at this issue, namely whether a significant difference exists between the men and women leaders or not.

> ➤ *SUMMARY:*

- The socio-economic characteristics of women legislators of West Bengal reveal the fact that the relationship exists between socio-economic background and the participation of women in the formal structure of politics. The family linkages, dynastic succession and personal interest are the contributing factors for women emerged as leaders in West Bengal.

- Political culture of West Bengal in regards to women representation is related to traditionalistic culture and the moralistic culture. In traditionalistic cultures female participation in legislative politics is discouraged by male leaders who seek to maintain a male prevalence and status-quo in politics whereas in the moralistic culture the state seemed to encourage women representation in the politics. A significant shift in the political culture of West Bengal from traditionalistic to moralistic or participant political culture is occurred due to several factors.

- The concept 'women's culture' in politics presents two aspects, firstly, *suppressed culture* and on the other hand *women culture carries a potential for change and liberation that affects the entire society* (Jonasdottir 1984, p. 96-97). In the concept of political leadershipwomen include some different characteristics, for instance co-operation, collaboration, sincerity etc.

- Mainly, the six styles of leadership-Employee Oriented Leadership/ Nurturing Task Leaders, Democratic Leadership,Informal Leadership,Transformational Leadership,Responsible Leadership,Participative leadership exercised by Women leaders in West Bengal.

- The issues with which women leaders were seen to be concerned were related to human interest perspective as well as women specific interest perspective.Women leaders raised all the issues were deeply related to social, political and economic development of the society and state as well. And most importantly women strive

toward the same goals and use the same means as those considered appropriate for men in the case of human interest perspective. The emergence of women leaders is the effort to advance both strategic and practical gender needs.

- In the political context, electing and appointing more women to public office (i.e. descriptive representation) may lead to the inclusion of several positive values for society as well as democracy, for instance the concept of a 'politics of care'; the qualities of purity, motherhood and honesty; with the presence of women politics would be less aggressive; women leaders may minimize corruption in politics; elected women leaders seems likely to increase the attention given to matters of women's issues. The presence of women can increase the overall diversity of ideas, values, and political styles represented within political process, thus strengthening democracy and representing a wider range of societal interests and options for policy solutions. Research has also shown that women tend to be more cooperative and peaceful and therefore have a different way of doing things that might improve the ways that men have used to govern societies throughout history (Hunt & Posa 2001; Skjelsbaek 2001).

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CHAPTER: 6

POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE: DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

6.1.INTRODUCTION

The concept of gender and leadership inextricably connected to each other. Gender plays a significant role in determining a person's style of leadership. The gender of a person becomes important while discussing leadership qualities. Also, leadership is not a gender neutral concept. We look at the concept of leadership through a 'gender lenses'.As Linda K. Richter (1990-91) writes "Male dominance has been legitimized in law and custom. Politics or the public life of the polity has been presumed to be a natural sphere for men while for women, to the extent they had a space or turf to call their own, the 'natural' sphere was presumed to be private". Jean Blondel (1987, p. 25) in a cross-cultural study of political leaders concludes that "leaders are overwhelmingly male". Also, Sjoberg(2009) argues that the core ideas of leadership are related to masculine leadership and create stereotypes, therefore, it can be deduced that the concept of leadership is a gendered concept. The characteristics attributed to leadership are those associated with masculinity.In social culture, women and men are still expected to manifest certain qualities in their thought and function. The qualities include friendliness, kindness, and unselfishness which are assumed to be hallmarks of femininity. In contrast the qualities assigned to men such as assertiveness and instrumental competence that are associated with "masculinity".

Gender stereotypes are pervasive, well documented and highly resistant to change. These stereotypes not only describe stereotypic beliefs about the attributes of women and men, they also tend to prescribe how men and women ought to be. Men are stereotyped with agentic characteristics such as confidence, assertiveness, independence, rationality and decisiveness whereas stereotypical attributes of women include communitarian characteristics such as concern for others, sensitivity, warmth, helpfulness and nurturance. In addition to conforming to the stereotype-based expectations, it is also expected that women should avoid behaviours that are incompatible with the stereo-type (Yadav, 2010).

In leadership roles, gender stereotypes are particularly damaging for women because agentic, as opposed to communitarian, tendencies often are indispensable. According to the role congruity theory, the agentic qualities thought necessary in the leadership role are incompatible with the predominantly communitarian qualities stereotypically associated with women, thus resulting in prejudice against female leaders (Eagly& Karau, 2002).

Many of the impediments women face in the leadership domain stem from the incongruity between the female gender role and leadership role. Women face a double standard in the leadership role: they must come across as extremely competent but also be seen as appropriately 'female', a set of standards men are not held to. One way women can increase their perceived warmth and their influence is by combining communitarian qualities such as warmth and friendliness with agentic qualities such as exceptional competence and assertiveness. Because women engage in most transformational behaviours and contingent reward behaviour to a greater extent than men they probably will begin occupying and succeeding in a greater number of leadership positions in our society, helping to break down think leader-think male stereotype. Moreover, the incongruity between the leadership role and female gender role is gradually decreasing. Recent research indicates that women have become more assertive and valuing leadership and power more as job attributes, without losing their femininity. Besides the perception about the leadership role is also changing and it is being seen as less masculine and more androgynous (Schein, 2001).

Therefore, gender is an important factor of both the path to power as well as the exercise of leadership. Gender biased perceptions and expectations are understood to have a significant impact on assessments of behavioural style and performance of the leaders. While, scholars belonging to the post-modern, Southern and Black feminisms criticise the gender-as-difference argument and point to the tremendous diversity in politics across the Indian subcontinent due to differences in identities based on region, religion, caste and class, which come together to create gender inequality in a number of ways (Spary, 2007, p. 263). Thus, one can argue that there are as many differences among women as between men and women, which have been lost in the internalisation of differences between genders that is part of the daily discourse on them (Pai, 2013, p.108). However, the present chapter would focus on the contested issue whether a significant difference exists between the men and women leaders or not. Also, it will examine whether the women legislators of West Bengal stand out as feminine or feminist leaders

6.2.CHALLENGES OR BARRIERS FOR WOMEN

In general, women recognizeproblems of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination in all most every aspect of life. Gender is one of the major factors influencing women participation and representation in politics. For women, it is difficult

to be a leader or being in leadership positions, particularly at the highest levels of decision making. To rise in power trace women encounter with the obstacles, restrictions and deterrents in the societyas well as face strange problems in their political life. To understand the gender gap in political representation, based on literature survey as well as field collected data, we can identify some recurrent barriers:

➢ Women perceive the electoral environment as highly competitive and biased against female candidates;

➢ Women are much less likely than men to see themselves as qualifies for leadership role;

➢ Potential female candidates are less competitive, less confident, and more risk averse than their male counterparts;

➢ Women have disproportionate family responsibilities that interfere with the time required for successful political careers;

➢ Women are less likely to receive encouragement to run for political office, both from political officials and activists and from family and colleagues;

➢ Women may also be deterred by the media portrayals of female candidates as less intelligent or mainstream than male candidates.Sometimes media depicts them as bossy, combative and not enough feminine etc (Lawless and Fox, 2012).

➢ The increasing violence, sexual harassment and victimization of women at the ground level in many of our political parties are even more detrimentalin recent decades.

➢ In addition, women are disproportionately concentrated in lower level and lower authority leadership positions than men, which is commonly called the *glass ceiling*,the invisible barrier preventing women from ascending into leadership positions (Yadav, 2010).

Furthermore, women have more negative feelings than men toward certain aspects, such as losing privacy and sacrificing time with family etc. They dare to enter politics today due to some societal imposed culture or thought, such as sometimes they may believe it is necessary to deny their sex in order to compete with men that is attaining or holding a leadership position. They may think they are successful when they evoke the comment 'she is just like a man'. Women also shouldered disproportionate family obligations. In dual-career couples, they were six times more likely than men to bear responsibility for the majority household tasks and about ten times more likely to be the primary childcare

provider. Women worked about the same hours as men but spent two-thirds more time on child care (Lawless and Fox, 2012, p.14). All these responsibilities and feelings make the situation more challenging for women.

When the person who achieves a top leadership role is female, the political and personal biography both allow and force attention to the interplay of perceptions, expectations, interpretations of life experiences, and myths that make up the social definition of reality and 'appropriate' gender roles (Baxter & Lansing, 1983; Conway, Bourke & Scott, 1989). The lives and careers of women who have headed nations offer a unique vantage point on the role of gender in political life. The prevalence of gender distinctions becomes clearer as one recounts the challenges and opportunities that leaders have faced in their climb to the top. The depth and tenacity of gender stereotypes become clear when they continue to affect individuals even after they have achieved the ultimate political position (Genovase, 2013, p.3). Also, women leaders face cranked judgement than their male counterparts when they make mistake, simply because they are women.

However, women face more primary challenges, perhaps because they are more vulnerable than their counterparts that may discourage them to ascending into leadership positions,whilehaving women in leadership positions does not necessarily bring gender equality but could make a move towards equality.

6.3. WOMEN LEGISLATORS: OBSTACLES AND MEASURES TO INHIBIT THE OBSTACLES

6.3.1. OBSTACLES:

The Figure 6.1 indicates that out of 25 women leader respondents 15 said that they faced direct or indirect obstacles, 1 replied faced problem to some extent and nine women legislators have denied any difficulty in their political career. In details obstacles are discussed below

FIGURE NO 6.1

- Protest or strong objection from the opposition political party in infrastructure development activities, like constructing roads, bridges etc.
- Faced sudden physical attack at the time of routine visit in constituency area even sometimes got open and direct threat to death for standing beside the people to resist anti-social and criminal activities in politically disturbed area.
- Sometimes administrators within constituency did not co-operate to carry out welfare and development works, group politics is also there.
- Sometimes faced gender discrimination within the respective party pertaining to decision making power, even not getting co-operation always from male members of the party.
- In spite of being elected people's representatives did not get recognition in ruling party's political programmes because of not being elected from ruling party and even did not get any call from ruling party for getting involved in some developmental works which is initiated by the ruling party and carried out in respective constituency.
- Need to prove capability repeatedly as an elected leader if once unable toelected then in the nextelections they were not given party ticket to contest the election.
- Mostly, women are allotted lower level and lower authority leadership positions than men.
- Also, faced victimization, mental harassment and character assassination.

6.3.2. MEASURES TO INHIBIT THE OBSTACLES:

Total Fifteen women legislators said that they have been overcome the obstacles in their political career through the following measures:

➢ By own rational thought convinced the protesters that the initiated developmental works would improve material well being (welfare) of people and united the people to make a support group in favour of initiated welfare plan for them.

➢ With the support and co-operation of the public get the courage and confidence to overcome the obstacles and ultimately become succeeded.

➢ Self-confidence, self-determination and patience helped to handle more complex problems peacefully.

➢ Sometimes directions, guidance and suggestions from the supreme authority of the party helped to inhibit the obstacles.

➢ When problem rose on any particular issue within constituency usually communicate face to face with the constituents to reach at the root cause of the problems and took required steps to solve the issue as early as possible.

➢ Sometimes ignored the criticism of opposition party and build friendly relationship with them to handle the problematic situations.

➢ Understand the problematic situation and then took the measures as situation requires, for instance sometimes it required to be silent and sometimes to be vocal.

6.4.ADVANTAGES& DISADVANTAGES FOR WOMEN AS LEADERS

In spite of several challenges, women are visible in the legislatures and decision making positions though the percentage always remained low. However, changes in societies, states and organisations are beginning to make it easier for women to reach top positions. The culture almost everywhere is changing; gendered work assumptions such as male model of work, the notion of uninterrupted full-time careers and the separation of work and family are being challenged (Yadav, 2010, p.32). We all know the fact a woman become a leader after facing lots of impediment and even she remain in the position by coherence with the obstacles.

FIGURE NO: 6.2
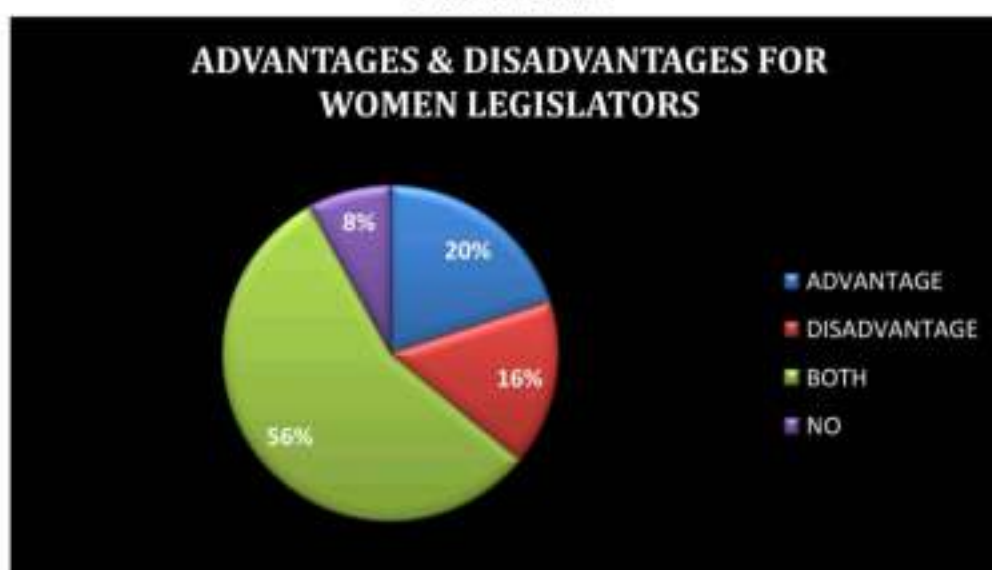
During the field work we found the data, womenleaders are,with deterrents, getting some advantages at the time of performing their duties as a leader.The figure 6.2 shows that along with advantages, 56% women legislators mentioned that they faced some disadvantages alsofor being women leaders, like due to their responsibility of children and family, they are not allowing to stay outside and out of station for long times; fear to losing social respect they should keep social distance when working with male political workers.20% women legislators saidthat for being women leaders they can easily get co-operation from each and every sections of the society particularly in conflictive cases, people withdraw dhharna or protest actions very quickly when they get assurance from a woman leader or they may feel ought not to harass a woman, even being a women leader they get relief from political disturbances especially at late night incidents, women able to gain the trust of constituents easily so they can reach inside the conflicts or problems and find the solution promptly, in the cases of development activities women are able to convince everyone and gain the enormous support and also getting priority when women related issues arose in the house of Parliament or state legislature. Therefore, we found that all these support, co-operationand assistance allow the emergence of female leaders in political systems also motivate and provide the mental strength to common women to be associated into politics.

6.5.DO MEN AND WOMEN LEAD DIFFERENTLY?

Since 1990s, despite the challenges and might be advantages, women are showing a remarkable presence in top leadership positions in Indian politics. Mamata Banerjee as leader of Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Mayawati as leader of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) are instances in point. Therefore in a pertinent way, in our studysome core questions arise as whether a significant difference exists between the men and women leaders? Whether women lead in a different manner from men? Whether women or men are more effective as leaders have garnered greater attention (Yadav, 2010)?

Essentialized accounts attempt to explain differences in leadership capabilities and style between men and women by arguing that women are naturally more caring and nurturing and men are naturally more aggressive because of differing hormone levels, the natural sexual division of childbearing and female attributes bestowed upon them for use in motherhood (Siddiqui, 2010, p.353).Others would argue that these differences are more symbolic than real and that difference exists more substantially among women than it does between men and women. The internalization of symbolic differences on an unconscious level has resulted in their materialization through the everyday "performativity" of gender stereotypical behaviour (Butler, 1999, p.35).Therefore, writers are asserting that there are indeed gender differences in leadership styles and that in contemporary society women's leadership is more effective (Book, 2000; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1995).

Virginia E. Schein (1989, p.154) notes the implications of potential differences between male and feminine style of leadership:

"That women would lead or govern differently is not new. Women's leadership has been linked with enhancing world peace, reducing corruption and improving opportunities for the downtrodden. If women, as keeper of the values of social justice, nurturance and honesty, are put in charge, then the conflicts, corruption and greed around us will go away-or so say proponents of this view. The maximalist perspective within the now fragmented feminist movement supports this idea. It argues for innate or highly socialized gender differences and views women as more likely to exhibit cooperative, compassionate and humane types of behaviours than men".

Based upon natural characteristics and assigned gender behaviour we have listed the traits and issues associated with man and woman. The following tables 6.1 present the traits of woman and man & 6.2 present the issues of women and men leader'spreference.

TABLE NO: 6.1
TRAITS ASSOCIATED WITH WOMAN AND MAN

Sl. No	Woman's Traits	Man's Traits
1	Compassionate	Emotionally stable
2	Hard working	decisive
3	Speaks out honestly	Tough
4	Moral	Better qualified
5	Handles family responsibilities while serving in office	Handles crisis
6	More liberal	More conservative

TABLE NO: 6.2
ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH WOMEN AND MEN LEADERS

Sl. No	Woman's Preference	Man's Preference
1	Helping the disadvantage groups	Trade
2	Health care	Agriculture
3	Education	Security
4	Environment	Budget

Whether the style of leadership among men and women is actually different or is simply constructed as so, the significance lies in the effect this perceived difference has on the leader-follower relationship. Astin and Leland assert that "while studies show no clear pattern of difference in behaviour between male and female leaders, subordinates react differently to similar behaviour according to whether the leader is a man or a woman" (Stivers, 1993, p.69).Thus the perception of a leader's behaviour is in part an outcome of gendered societal perceptions of men and women in leadership positions. In cases of political leadership, the issue of gender only becomes an issue for the women politician; failure for the male politician is rarely attributed to gender (Siddiqui, 2010, p.354). Nevertheless, studies show that "female leader's style of governance [in India] is certainly not softer, less autocratic or more equal than that of male leaders...women's rule is not necessarily more democratic or less confrontational than that of male leaders (Hellmann-Rajanayagam, 2004, p.3)...". Behavioural traits may never embody the same meaning for a woman as they do for a man, and vice-versa. Thus male leadership

behaviour will not be interpreted the same as female leadership behaviour, in part due to the institutionalisation of hegemonic masculine behaviour as the behavioural norm (Siddiqui, 2010, p.355). Scholars like Sunder Rajan (1993, p.108) suggest that there is little difference between men's and women's style and performativity, professing that women leaders imbibe the male organisational norms.

Early research on leadership style differences between women and men compare it either interpersonally oriented and task-oriented styles or democratic and autocratic styles. In a meta-analysis of 1990 (Eagly& Johnson, 1990, p.233-56), it was found that contrary to stereotypic expectations, women were not found to lead in a more interpersonally oriented and less task oriented manner than men in organisational studies. These differences were found only in settings where behaviour was more regulated by social roles. The only robust gender difference found across settings was that women led in a more democratic, or participative manner than men. These studies also revealed that women were devalued and branded autocratic or directive when they led in a masculine manner. This was a manifestation of the prejudice women experienced in leadership positions (Yadav, 2010, p. 17-18).

However, in the early 1980s, leadership researchers began studying a new style of leadership first articulated by J. M. Burns (1978) as transforming leadership, later modified and expanded into transformational leadership by B. M. Bass (1985, chapter 9). A recent meta-analysis by Eagly, Johannesen- Schmidt, and Van Engen (2003) has found that women styles tend to be more transformational than men's, and they also tend to engage in more contingent reward behaviours than men, all of which are aspects of leadership that predict effectiveness (Yadav, 2010, p. 18).

In addition to leadership style, the relative effectiveness of male and female leaders has been assessed by a number of research studies (Jacobson & Effertz, 1974; Tsui & Gutek, 1984). It has been found that overall men and women are equally effective leaders, but there are gender differences. For instance, women were less effective than men in military position, but they were somewhat more effective than men in education, government and social service organisations and substantially more effective than men in middle management positions, where communitarian interpersonal skills are highly valued. In addition, women were less effective than men when they supervised a higher proportion of male subordinates (Yadav, 2010, p. 18).

Thus, empirical research supports small differences in leadership style and effectiveness between men and women. It shows that the women experience slight effectiveness that disadvantages in masculine leader roles, whereas more feminine roles offer them some advantages (Yadav, 2010, p. 19). However, women exceed men in the use of democratic or participatory styles, and they are more likely to use transformational leadership behaviours and contingent reward, styles that are associated with contemporary notions of effective leadership (Fondas, 1977).

6.5.1. POINT AND COUNTER-POINT:

Academic researchers have a greater diversity in their views. Many argue that there arelittle or no differences on leadership style and effectiveness.

One approach to women as leaders has been characterised as the 'women do lead differently' approach. It is asserted that women in general possess particular skills in communication, interpersonal relationships and negotiation and conflict resolution (Collins and Singh 2006, p.14). Some theorists also attribute to women leaders the rare ability to create easily a strong *esprit de corps* (Stanford, Oates and Flores 1995, p.10). These, as compared with what are taken to be the male qualities of self assertion, independence, control and competition are characteristics which may be valued in subordinates but not, when displayed why women as leadership qualities (Alimo Metcalfe 1995, p.8). Essentialists assume that differences are innate. Others argue that women and men are socialized by family, social and media pressures and by differences in their experiences into differing reactions and styles.

By contrast another approach to leadership by women finds little or no difference in leadership styles. A number of studies have suggested that variations amongst men and amongst women may be as great as those between them (Stevens, 2007, p.136). For example women who become leaders may, to a greater extent than those who do not, exhibit behaviours (thinkingstrategically and taking risks) that are also notable amongst men who are leaders (Collins and Singh, 2006, p.15; Oshagbemi and Gill, 2003). Two leading American journalists, exploring the likelihood of a female President of the United States, suggested that the first female President was likely to have ' the body of a woman but the character traits of a man'. Amongst the leading American women politicians they interviewed they found a general view that the actions of British Prime Minister Margaret

Thatcher during Falklands war had made a marked difference to the perception of women leaders: she 'did a great thing for women leaders' - it can no longer be said that women leaders cannot be tough (Clift and Brazaitis, 2000, p.21).

On the basis of above mentioned two approaches, we analysedthe content of women legislators of West Bengal. In our empirical study, based on *'women do lead differently'* approach, it is found that women legislators Smt. Sakuntala Paik, Smt. Anjali Mondal, Smt. Sadhana Mallick, Dr. Tapati Saha, Smt. Shanta Chhetri, Smt. Minati Sen, Smt. Kanika Ganguly, Smt. Kumkum Chakraborty and Smt. Mitali Roy argued that women leaders work differently than male leaders. While women legislators Smt. Chandrima Bhattacharya, Smt. Protima Rajak, Smt. Manju Basu, Smt. Bilasi Bala Sahisand SmtFirdousi Begumargued thateachwomen leaderwork differently.Women legislator only Smt. Rupa Bagchi agreed with both of the above arguments. For the conveniences of the analysis we engendered three approaches as –*individual-as-difference approach, gender-as-difference approach*and *mixed* (of both) *approach.* The individual-as-difference approachimplies that every individualpossess different characteristics and skills. On the basis of their different characteristics they work differently to each other. And the gender-as-difference approachexpounds that leaders work differently on the basis of their gender associated characteristics. As a consequence, women and men leaders work differently from each other.The mixed approach considers that every individual have unique characteristics as well as they perform their gender assigned roles and both the aspectsare visible in their working practices.

Women legislators associated with gender-as-difference approachexpressed that –

- ➤ Woman leaders are work more attentively;
- ➤ They are able to identify with everyone particularly with a woman more easily and can build relation with them;
- ➤ They are sensitive and more concerned about societal problem and able to take more serious initiative to solve these issues;
- ➤ Can paid more efforts to understand the inner problem of the family and can also paid greater attention to problems;
- ➤ They are more determined to reach their goal;
- ➤ They are hard worker and tried to work impartially;
- ➤ They can think deeply and able to take decision promptly;

- ➤ Able to give response toward situational demands of the people;
- ➤ They try to work with negotiation and co-operation&
- ➤ Less confrontational, so they try to avoid the situation which creates conflict.

Our study found also women legislators Smt. Mamata Bhunia, Smt. SeuliSaha, Smt. Swati Khandoker, Smt. Anju Kar, Smt. Asima Choudhuri, Smt. Sabitri Mitra, Smt. Malini Bhattacharya, Smt. Smita Bakshi, Smt. Mala Saha,Smt. Sonali Guha (Bose) stated that *no or little differences exists between men and women leaders*. They consider there are certain attributes which more manifest in leader rather than in men and women. The combination of co-operative, attentive, assertive, objective, rationality, nurturance in a unified effort, which is the mark of the good leader as in fact a bringing together of those traits popularly characterised as masculine and feminine. For example, for ages, competition, aggression and power etc were treated as masculine traits. But now a day, it is found that women are as competitive and prone to power-wielding or aggressive as their male counterparts. Mrs. Gandhi as the Prime Minister was said to be "the only man in the company of old women" in her cabinet. There is nothing that separates Sonia Gandhi, Mayawati, Vasundhara Raje, Sheila Dikshit, Renuka Chaudhury, Kanti Singh, Uma Bharati, Sushma Swaraj and even Mamata Banerjee as less competitive, power-wielding or aggressive than Manmohan Singh, Pranab Mukherjee, Sharad Pawar, Arjun Singh, Digvijai Singh, L.K. Advani, Jyoti Basu etc. Hence, the gender considerations are no longer entertainable (Sharma, 2010) in leadership studies.

However, from the above discussions we have reached to a point that in performing leadership different situations require different styles. The leader adept at recognizing what the situation requires and adapting his or her style of leadership to fit that situation stands a better chance of achieving success than the leader who rigidly adheres to one style of leadership in all situations (Genovase, 2013, p.338).While the stereotypical beliefs remain strong so that, when working as leaders or managers, women (and men) are expected to behave as our culture defines them on the basis of their gender alone. Thus it is anticipated that a woman leader will be more "relationship centered, nurturing, and sensitive" than a man (Martin, 1993, p. 275).

6.6.FEMINIST LEADERSHIP

To examine the important issue of the study that whether the women parliamentarians and legislators in West Bengal stand out as feminist leaders or are they entangled within the

dominant mainstream discourse of leadership, we should know about why feminism is important to leadership, what feminist leadership is and whom we considered as feminist leaders.

A famous feminist scholar in India, Srilatha Batliwala a year ago in a video talked about why is feminism important to leadership. She said, feminism is important to leadership because we cannot actually define feminist leadership without defining feminism itself, what is feminism meant to us. She defines feminism as an ideology, a way of analysing society and a vision of what a just society looks like. As an ideology feminism believes in equality for all not just between women and men, it is a non-binary vision. Feminism is a unique way of analysing society through the lense of power, who gets what, who does what, who decides what and who sets the agenda. Most importantly, feminism is unique because it opens the door and looks inside at how power operate in the most intimate private spaces. It is only feminists who recognize for instance that even our bodies and our minds are sides of power and control and that is why feminism is important to leadership because it seeks equality and justice in spaces where no one has entered before.

Feminists define leadership is a gendered concept. A feminist perspective on leadership focuses on the influence of gender on interpretation of leadership. Leadership texts and role models in society imply that leadership as patriarchal, hierarchical, competitive, heroic, and individualistic. The societal gender roles of men align with leadership and consider that men can and be more effective leaders. With that recognition feminist analysis assumes that the characteristics experiences of men, as more privileged beings, and of women, as the "second sex", result in different conceptions of good leadership (Bensimon, 1989, p 149). It is generally accepted that women are underrepresented in leadership roles and they have traditionally faced more barriers to becoming leaders then men. The literature and research about women's styles of leadership have based on stereotypes characteristics and societal beliefs about femininity. While Stereotypes feminine attributes do not generally mesh with society's perspectives about leadership. The stereotypes feminine attributes are seen as nurturing, more relational, emotional, more caring, less assertive, and less confrontational than men. As Eagly, Karau & Makhijaninote, "gender role expectations spill over onto leadership roles . . . and produce important consequences" (1995, p. 140).

Feminist reformulates the interpretation of leadership based on the concept of power. Gender is about power and power is gendered. The relationship between gender and power has both a substantive aspect (The relatively disempowered position of women) and a conceptual aspect (the power of gender) (Peterson and Runyan, 1999, p.31). From feminist perspective, politicalleadership is associated with power that inextricably linked with the domination of women, to liberate themselves from this women are trying to organise themselves collectively. Instead of there being leaders and followers, women would empower themselves through taking responsibility for decisions, which would be reached by consensus. Leaders have varying, but substantial, power over followers. Power determines who gets to be the leader, how they lead and the stability of the leadership. This sort of power is the sort that feminists call 'power-over' (Allen, 1998). Amy Allen explains that power-over is the 'ability of an actor or set of actors to constrain the choices available to another actor or set of actors in a non-trivial way' (Allen, 1998, 33).This idea of power is gendered both in theory and in practice. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan (1999, p.213) explain that 'to un-gender power and politics we must alter the gendered division of power that established and had continued to reproduce masculinist politics. Feminist work has looked at power-as-empowerment and power-as-the-ability to work in concert, or power-to and power-with (Allen, 1998, p. 32). In other words, they are looking for power as the ability to work together or fight against oppression, rather than just to dominate or oppress (Dahl, 2000, p. 475–94). Hence, the feminist reinterpretation of power includes not only power-over but power-to and power-with.

Feminisms are not only interested in power but in empowerment, which is a key concept in the logic of emancipation (Lennie 1999, 103). According to June Lennie, empowerment discourse includes: social justice principles; open, honest communication; getting understanding through using ordinary language; developing trust and legitimising and validating community issues; letting everybody 'have their say'; listening to the community without judgment; using consultation to 'break down barriers' between experts and non-experts with the goal of empowerment; and aiming for common understandings (1999, p. 104). Empowerment discourses lead feminisms to an additional, creative interpretation of power (Huntley 1997, p. 300). Amy Allen introduces the concept of power-with, or solidarity used to act in concert (1998, p. 35). Many feminists employ Hannah Arendt's understanding of power (Elshtain 1985; Elshtain 1992; Tickner

1992). Arendt defines power as 'human ability to act in concert and begin anew' (Elshtain 1985, p. 51; Arendt 1970). John Hoffman explains that 'by emphasizing plurality and community, Arendt consciously seeks to distance power from *domination*' and to understand power collaboratively (Hoffman 2001, p. 151). Arendt's understands makes power the true opposite of violence (Elshtain 1992, p. 273). Power, here, can be seen as the *deconstruction* of traditional, coercive forms of leadership. Amy Allen contends that feminisms should look for an integrative approach to power, seeing it as not a mutually exclusive ideal-type but a complex web which we can understand and make choices about (1998, p. 26).

It is noteworthy that mainstream books on leadership do not include discussions of feminist leadership, even when focused on women. For example, neither Brown and Beverly (1998), in a volume entitled *Women and Leadership*, nor Rosenthal (1998), in one entitled *When Women Lead*, index "feminism." On the other hand, they do index "feminine" and "femininity" (Lott, 2007, p.25). Also, Lisa Mitchell, a feminist labor scholar, writes "The exact term 'feminist leadership' proved to be scarce in the literature that discusses women in leadership positions" (Mitchell, 2004, p.2). In practice, there is a difference between women's leadership and feminist leadership, because the latter has a particular political standpoint (Bunch, 2002). Bernice Lott introduces three insights about the existing approaches to leadership and women (Lott, 2007, p.24-27):

- ➤ That mainstream research and theorization only engages with the *'feminine'*—not *feminist*—style of leadership;
- ➤ Even works *devoted to women's leadership*do not address or discuss feminist leadership; and
- ➤ The *attributes of feminine leadership styles are all within the accepted gendered roles of women*, i.e., nurturing, caring, sensitive, cooperative, consultative, inclusive etc (Batliwala, 2010, p.8).

Before turning to the question of feminist leadership, we need to examine what we mean by the concepts of feminist and feminism. Also in this regards, we should know the distinction between "***feminine***" and "***feminist***", is a crucially significant one—in both theory and practice. The term "*feminine*" is defined by behaviours presumed to characterize women whereas "*feminist*" is defined by a set of assumptions and values, and

attention to empirically validated historical and contemporary circumstances and power inequities (Lott, 2007, p. 25-26). Lott described fundamental to *feminism* is the value that all persons should be permitted equality of opportunity for full development to the extent that this development does not impede that of others. Since ample historical and contemporary evidence shows that women as a group have experienced significantly fewer opportunities and greater restrictions than men, feminists—who may be either women or men—pay particular attention to women's experiences and circumstances (Lott, 1994, p. 6). Martin (1993, p. 276) notes that feminism is primarily a "political orientation." It is aimed at ending the power inequities between women and men, with the social category of woman understood as not unitary—but situated in ethnic, social class, age, and other significant contexts. Thus feminism is concerned with fostering change—political, social, and economic—in the interest of justice and maximizing opportunities for personal growth and well-being. With this as the fundamental objective, feminist practice uses a variety of strategies and tactics to achieve it. Martin (1993) and others suggest that feminist practice illustrates the valuing of mutuality, inclusion, co-operation, nurturance, empowerment, participation, and the devaluing of status differences, competition, and separation (Lott, 2007, p.27).

Indeed, we found the results of our web-based search that many literatures about feminine leadership, female leadership and women in leadership and while very few data exists about feminist leadership. Sometimes it also found that the term feminine leadership and feminist leadership used interchangeably. Also, Lottassertsthatitiscriticaltomakeadistinctionbetweenfeminineandfeministleadership,since the former does not engage with gender power and women's lack of access to formalpositions of authority (Batliwala, 2010, p.9).A leadership style that conforms to the way women are expected to behave, whether attributed to nature, socialization, or gender role, is *feminine leadership* (Lott, 2007, p.25-26). But, feminine leadership fails to recognize and make salient the inherent power differential based on societal oppression (or sexism) that disproportionately affects women as compared to men. Feminine leadership also fails to recognize heterogeneity among women, relying on essentialism and stereotypes (Gasser, 2014). On the other side, *feminist leadership* considered as the new paradigm for the social equality, justice, and social transformation which suggests the alternative method of leading. Despite differences among feminist theories, there are

central points of agreement about equality of representation and empowerment (Gasser, 2014).

Much of the early feminist work on leadership emerged from North American feminists, and occurred within larger discussions of power, and of alternative, non-patriarchal, non-hierarchical structures and organizations (Bunch and Fisher, 1976, p. 2-13). Southern feminists were perhaps less focusedon leadership per se at this time, but equally engaged in experiments with alternativestructures and processes, and with deep analyses of the gendered nature of power in thesocial, economic, and political realm.And in both North and South, there was widespreadresearch and analysis of women's exclusion from power and authority in the public realm,with accompanying advocacy campaigns for increasing women's access to political power,and for greater representation of women in leadership positions in government, business, and civil society (Batliwala, 2010, p.9).

Consequently, feminist approaches to and definitions of leadership were often indirect products of their struggles to examine their own relationship to and practice of power, to advance gender equality in positions of power in the public and private sector, and to create feminist structures that would not reproduce the patriarchal models that dominated most societies and cultures. There was a very vibrant search for theory and practice in alternative ways of using and applying power, new, non-hierarchical organizational forms, and thus, new ways of leading (Batliwala, 2010, p.9-10).

To find a single definition of feminist leadership is more challenging, there are many different definitions of feminist leadership, some of which are as follows:

The point is that wherever we are as women, wherever we are situated in our lives, we can advance a feminist agenda if we stop thinking about how to be leaders and think rather about how to be doers, how to be agents. Gerda Lerner (1995)

.... feminist .... leadership is ... women and women's organizations sharing power, authority and decision-making in our common pursuit of social, legal, political, economic and cultural equality. DAWN Ontario

Patriarchy, reflected through all the structures and institutions of our world, is a system that glorifies domination, control, violence, competitiveness and greed. It dehumanizes men as much as it denies women their humanity. So we need leadership that will explore and expose these links and challenge patriarchy. The only leadership that does this is feminist leadership. -Peggy Antrobus (2002)

In modern leadership theory, the leader plays [a] star role (takes the lead, becomes the head), all others become bit players, supporting characters, and extras in the play, the theatrics of leadership. Modern leadership is by definition hierarchical, male and phallic spectacle. Feminist leadership is more circular, bottom up and less male. -David M. Boje (2000)

Leadership from a feminist standpoint is informed by the power of the feminist lens, which enable the feminist leader to identify injustices and oppressions and inspires her to facilitate the development of more inclusive, holistic ....communities. Feminist leaders are motivated by fairness, justice, and equity and strive to keep issues of gender, race, social class, sexual orientation, and ability at the forefront ..... The elements particular to a feminist leadership construction include a focus on both individual or micro—level and societal or macro—level social justice concerns, a desire to bring marginalized voices to the center of the conversation, and a willingness to take risks as on strives to enact a transformative agenda. -Tracy Barton (2006)

Following the above definitions a composite definition of feminist leadership given by Srilatha Batliwala as follows:

"Women with a feminist perspective and vision of social justice, individually and collectively transforming themselves to use their power, resources and skills in non—oppressive, inclusive structures and processes to mobilize others —especially other women— around a shared agenda of social, cultural, economic and political transformation for equality and the realization of human rights for all" (Batliwala, 2010, p.14).

ActionAid, an international federation working for a just world free from poverty, oppression, and patriarchy, to achieve its goal adopted a set of feminist leadership principles. We found that to mention here all these principles because clarity can be

achieved on feministleadership. So let us turn now to the principles of feminist leadership (ActionAid's Ten Principles of Feminist Leadership", n.d.).

I. Self-awareness

To lead with empathy and open minds, feminist leaders should keep their egos in check. In order to do this, they should work towards accepting their vulnerabilities, as well as recognising and valuing their strengths and those of others.

II. Self-care and caring for others

Feminist leaders should take care own emotional and physical well-being, in order to renew their inner sources of inspiration and compassion so they can continue to give of their best. Also, they encourage and support others to do the same, actively working towards a more flexible and supportive work environment, particularly for those with caring responsibilities.

III. Dismantling bias

Feminist leaders help to uncover and challenge any forms of discriminatory policies and processes at workplace. If they found any discrimination then call them out and change them. Also, they must be aware of how their own privileges can make others feel disempowered or inferior, as well as how they react to others' privilege, and deliberately change their behaviour to treat everyone as equals.

IV. Inclusion

Feminist leaders must create ways for everyone to be equally heard, respected and successful and to recognize and respond to different barriers to participation.

V. Sharing power

Feminist leaders create spaces for others to lead. They work together to establish shared goals and trust and empower colleagues to share leadership in reaching those goals.

VI. Responsible and transparent use of power

Feminist leaders should be clear and transparent in making decisions, with appropriate consultation. They also believe in allocating resources.

VII. Accountable Collaboration

Ensuring collective goals are clearly defined and feminist leaders work collectively to overcome the challenges and also accountable for achieving them.

VIII. Respectful Feedback

Seeking, giving and valuing constructive feedback as an opportunity for two-way learning. Try to resolve conflict through active listening, timely intervention and promoting non-violent and respectful communication and behaviour.

IX. Courage

For the aim transformative change, seeking out new ideas and learning from mistakes rather than fearing failure, and empowering those who work with to do the same.

X. Zero Tolerance

Intolerance for any forms of discrimination, exploitation and abuse of power in the workplace, and support those who do the same.

A feminist management or leadership style, according to Martin (1993), encourages competition not between individuals but between work units, promotes open discussion and democratic participation, shares resources, and helps subordinates grow and do their best by empowering, not exploiting, them. Based on electronic messages posted on feminist leadership website, Chin (2003) proposed collaborative, nurturing, empowering, and consensus building. Others suggested visionary, inclusive, addressing difficult issues, encouraging and honoring the contributions of others, valuing growth and development, and being supportive of others' strengths (Lott, 2007, p.28).

Therefore, what do we mean by feminist leadership? Feminist leadership is the process of re-distribution of power and responsibility and a vision towards social justice, equality, empowerment and fairness. It believes in non-violence, non-discrimination, co-operation, equal share and equal participation. Feminist leadership is not individualistic rather it is collaborative, based on sharing of power and building collective leadership. Feminist leadership is not just the feminine qualities of women leaders rather it offers a political approach for alternative method of leading and through practicing feminist way it could, include certain values like sharing or distribution, inclusion or empowering, relationship building, collectivity, tolerance, sensitivity, integrity, morality, altruism to leadership.

6.6.1. STRESSES FOR FEMINIST LEADERS:

Many feminist leaders participating in the leadership role felt that they were expected to behave in ways consistent with "feminine roles." Some felt marginalized if they behaved in ways associated with gender since they were then viewed as weak. Many felt there was

a gender bias influencing expectations of how they should behave as women leaders, thereby creating no-win situations that became impediments to effective leadership. Many women commented about how they are diminished when they demonstrate "feminine traits" in their leadership styles. They also felt constrained by how they should behave given the gender attributions placed on their behaviours. All too often, behaviours associated with femininity are rated as negative with respect to leadership. Tears signal weakness while nurturing leadership styles are viewed as lacking in substance. Conversely, women are also viewed negatively when they adopt styles and traits characteristic of men leaders. An aggressive and direct man is often viewed as forthright and taking charge as a leader while the same behavior in a woman is viewed as overbearing and angry (Chin, 2007, p.14). Along with, the context, circumstances and social environment in which leadership is practicing is also creates constraints for feminist leaders. Feminist leadership may be far more difficult in some environments than in others (Lott, 2007, p.29). Presently, women in leadership roles typically lead within masculinized contexts, which are homogenous and do not incorporate the diversity of gender and ethnic differences. Power dynamics, gender role expectations, and added stressors in these masculinised environments are different for women leaders compared to men (Chin, 2007, p.15).

6.6.2. SUGGESTIONS TO COPE WITH STRESS:

A feminist leader must advocate for policies that support child care and family obligations, adequate access to health care, pensions, and other employee-friendly benefits. Such advocacy will certainly be met with arguments about the availability of resources, typically described as "scarce" when perceived as challenging to the status quo. But resources can be re-allocated and distributed in accord with feminist values as well as pragmatically geared to improving the environment, satisfaction, and outcomes of work. Madden points out that "there will always be institutional inertia, external pressure, and financial constraints" (2005, p. 12) pitted against thrusts for change. But feminist leaders must incorporate into their work attention to the special issues of women and of people who are among the least privileged and typically invisible: ethnic minorities of colour, poor and working class, and non-heterosexual. And, when challenging status quo hierarchies and patriarchal structures, feminist leaders must be prepared with relevant knowledge about the consequences of power inequities, and about the effectiveness of strategies for change (Lott, 2007, p.29).

6.7. LEADERSHIP STYLES OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN WEST BENGAL: IS IT FEMININE OR FEMINIST STYLE?

Women are underrepresented in political leadership perhaps in every country in the world, India is not exceptional. In West Bengal, women's participation in politics and representation in the parliament and state legislature has increased since 1990, but still remains below 20 percent while retaining their credibility and effectiveness as leaders. Among the Indian states, West Bengal is exception in the case of political leadership because it is the only state which is leading by a woman leader. So, it becomes important to find out that are women political leaders of West Bengal following femininevalues or they adopted "feminist" styles and still be effective as leaders if they are functioning in masculinised context?

When we consider the question of whether it is possible in our existing mainstream culture to be practiced in a way feminist leadership then we envisage difficult issues. In examining feminist leadership, we may focus on the more important question of what the leadership is intended to accomplish as Chin (2003, p. 2) has observed, that when "women get a seat at the table," feminist principles will "be used to promote a feminist agenda." In this study of legislative leaders of West Bengal we found that differences in the legislative agenda of women. They are more concern with infrastructure development, social services and economic development and much less concern for the issues of women. There is less attention and efforts given to improve the situation of women. Since 2011, the state government is leading by a woman leader though the number of women leader in upper echelon political positions fluctuated within 10% to 13%, it is increasing but at a very slow pace (Discussed in details in the chapter 4). Under-representation of women in the legislature indicates that the principles of feminist leadership i.e. inclusion and mobilize other is invisible in the functions of women legislators. The role-model theory may not practise in West Bengal. In addition, particularly in decision making body still the presence of women is poor, as per current date it is only 18%, even West Bengal follows the hierarchical power structure where low weightage ministry is distributed to women representatives which reveals the fact that equal participation, equal sharing of power is also effectively not working in the state. It is highly unlikely in a hierarchical structure that there will be much encouragement for decisions to be made collaboratively or for empowerment to be an objective. Initially, this study assumed that

with the presence of woman Chief Minister the scenario of unequal power distribution would be abolished but that did not happen. It has been observed throughout the entire research study the leadership nature of the state is individualistic, hence it fails to build collective leadership, which is the core principle of feminist leadership. Generally we were optimistic that with the presence of women legislators feminist principles 'will be used to promote a feminist agenda' as Chin (2003, p. 2) observed, this is also inexistent. In the state, under the woman leadership, few government schemes introduced for the upliftment of women and girls, which are not adequate for the actual development of women. So, the fact is that the presence of women representatives in state legislatures may not influence policy adoption. While the target focus group of women leaders remain the weaker sections of the society, the poor, disadvantaged groups like the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, women children and minorities which slightly reflect the value of altruism. With respect to style of leadership, the women were as likely as men to be goal-directed, which we considered idealtype of leadership masculine in character traits.

In the practice of feminist leadership the context of leadership plays a very vital role. Context means the situational demands, constraints, and circumstances, the characteristics of the social environment. Sometimes it become difficult to practice feminist leadership in some environments, for instance political party's loyalty create the constraints to represent the women's agenda because political leaders in West Bengal are assumed their position on the basis of electoral performance of a particular party, hence they are bound to represent a party's interests and agenda. Elected women representatives through this process carry the additional responsibility to represent women's interest. In certain circumstances like emergencies, to consensus-building strategies become more difficult since the situation requires directive action. When women leaders intent to follow peaceful coexistence then they may be described as weak, which puts a question mark on their credibility and effectiveness of their leadership.

Along with these, in regard to the other principles of feminist leadership like dismantling bias, tolerance, courage, constructive feedback, we did not find any clear evidencewhile analysing the style of functioning of women leaders. For leadership to be feminist, the values of feminism must be clearly demonstrated in objectives, practice, and anticipated outcomes, which proceed towards social justice that is absent in West Bengal. Feminist leaders are likely to face serious ethical dilemmas in carrying out the business of the

organization or group where they are employed or voluntarily functioning (Lott, 2007, p. 30). That proves women leaders are working with lots of internal and external pressures and it is very difficult to be a feminist leader who is in a position to counter such challenges.

Most importantly, also it has been observed that in West Bengal within the practice of political leadership the feminine attributes as compassion, nurturing, emotional, more caring etc are seen very rarely. Mostly, women leaders neither exhibit natural qualities of woman nor cultural attributes in their way of functioning. Hence, women legislators of West Bengal cannot be said to practice the style of feminine leadership.

Therefore, the goal of social equality, justice and social transformation is not clearly visible in the functioning style of women legislators of West Bengal, while certain efforts might be taken towards it but the percentage is not optimistic. The absence of feminist leadership might be caused due to our gendered culture, expectation or the context of leadership or apathy to think differently or lack of confidence or lack of courage or fear to get rejected or fear to lose power etc. What may be the reason behind the issue that is not luminous paint, it is found that *the women legislators as well as parliamentarians in West Bengal are still working within rigid hierarchical power structure and unable to challenge and change that so automatically they coped within the dominant mainstream discourse of leadership, which is synonymous with masculinity as an attribute. We are also doubtful whether we can confirmthat their style of functions reflects any particular feminine values within the idea of political leadershipand to consider them as feminist leaders also. They have been found to take neither an aggressive nor a submissive position but an assertive stand in many cases. They acknowledged that patriarchy has an overbearing presence and influence but they prefer to take a subtle position of continuously hitting it lightly so that the influence weakens. They intend to enter politics and bring a change from within. They intend to act as facilitators for other younger women who intend to join politics.*

6.7.1. WHAT WOMEN LEADERS WANT:

Though, it is doubtful that whether women parliamentarians and legislators of West Bengal would be considered as feminine or feminist leader or not but it is clear to us what they want in regard to leadership style. Interview was taken of selected 25 women leaders

and in the interview the question asked: Do you think that women bring different qualities (e.g. greater attention to collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making, and relationship building etc) to leadership? Except three leaders all were unanimously accepted that women can bring the qualities collaboration, co-operation, collective decision making, and relationship building in practice of political leadership. Women leaders Smt. Protima Rajak, Dr. Tapati Saha, Smt. Shanta Chhetri, Smt. Minati Sen, Smt. Mala Saha, Smt. Kumkum Chakraborty, Smt. Mitali Roy showed their consent that they think they should frame out a feminist style of leadership based on such attributes and should stop to imitate masculinise attributes of leadership in West Bengal and also they argued they exercisingpolitical leadership along with their traditional roles and values. While, among them some leaders such as Smt. Sakuntala Paik, Smt. Rupa Bagchi, Smt. Mamata Bhunia, Smt. SeuliSaha, Smt. Swati Khandoker,Smt. Anju Kar,Smt. Asima Choudhuri, Smt. Sabitri Mitra, Smt. Manju Basu, Smt. Bilasi Bala Sahis said that they think the leader should follow both the styles that means what the situation requires and adapting his or her style of leadership to fit that situation for better chance to achieving success. In addition,they suggested and believed that the leader should not be rigid to a particular style of leadership in all circumstances.And other three leaders Smt. Sadhana Mallick, Smt. Smita Bakshi, Smt. Sonali Guha (Bose) did not agree with the question. They did not believe there is or there should be any gender demarcation within leadership style. They rather believe that leadership is gender neutral. They however, agreed that they had to face several challenges both within their homes and outside and work doubly hard to prove themselves.

6.8.CONCLUSION

It is very true that a politically ambitious woman cannot escape the consequences of social beliefs that gender differences are politically relevant. She must come to some understanding of herself as a person and as a political figure that resolves, manages or repress the tensionsbetween her emerging self-view as capable of functioning effectively at the highest political levels and the generalized social view that neither she nor any other woman has that competence. Regardless of how she handles the internal impact of gender roles, she must also develop strategies for dealing with team as a strategic aspect of her career, because others may react to her in terms of gender. At times that will mean overcoming or circumventing restrictions. If one hallmark of the ultimately successful

political leader is the ability to transform apparent liabilities into assets, then we might expect to see her manipulate traditional stereotypes of women to outflank or disarm opponents. However, male-centered theories of leadership may indeed be re-examined in light of the rise of women in leadership positions in both the public and corporate worlds (Genovese, 2013, p.5-10). On the other hand, Bernard Bass notes:

"Because situational changes are rapidly occurring for women in leadership roles, earlier research may need to be discounted. Despite the many continuing handicaps to movement into positions of leadership owing to socialization, status conflicts and stereotyping, progress is being made. Some consistent differences remain between boys and girls and less so, among adult men and women managers and leaders. Characteristics that are usually linked to masculinity are still demanded for effective management. Nevertheless, most differences in male and female leaders tend to be accounted for by other controllable or modifiable factors, although women will continue to face conflicts in their decisions to play the roles of wives and mothers as well as of managers and leader" (Bass, 1990, p. 737).

While some early research into gender differences suggested that men and women were different in their styles of leadership, more recent research, especially that coming from neuroscience, paints a more complex and nuanced picture. Yes, there are biological differences between men and women that do lead to some differences in how boys and girls behave (Gray, 2004). These differences-nature-often lead to an exaggerated sense of gender distinctness and often elicit responses from adults that reinforce and grow these differences-nurture. What begin as biological instincts and biases in brain function, which culturally germinate and grow, are amplified over time by stereotyping and gender role expectations, thereby making differences more pronounced (Gilligan, 1993). As Alina Tugend (2001, p.173) writes, "What start as innate differences lead us to treat boys and girls differently, which then exacerbates the divide".

Many researchers, such as Astin and Leland (1991), see men and women as exercising very different styles of leadership, with males using a hard style of leadership that stresses hierarchy, dominance and order. Women, on the other hand, exercise leadership characterized by a soft style of cooperation, influence and empowerment. While when were examining the style of leadership exercised by the women who have headed government, no clear pattern emerges (Genovese, 2013, p.337-38).

Further, several key gaps between men and women are closing (Genovese, 2013, p.11). Political leadership by women is not regarded dramatically different from that of men. Women leaders are no better or worse than men. Nor have women leaders been typically anxious to give greater representation to other women within their own organizations or in the political process generally. Representation of women has not necessarily increased greatly under the leadership of women (Yadav, 2010, p.34).

In the context of West Bengal, political leadership by women have not particularly shown significant changes over the last ten years. While, on the one hand some women politicians have reached to higher political positions by their own competence and they agreed it is difficult to rise and work within the male dominated party hierarchies, on the other hand some women have managed to become leaders when they have set up own political party. But the fact is that once they have successfully established themselves as leaders, there has been an unquestioning acceptance of their leadership and decisions even by the party members which is largely male, here we can remember the name of Mamata Banerjee remarkably. With the changing nature of societal culture and institutional structures and the developmental opportunities women are getting attention in power politicsand they have proved their competency in political leadership along with their traditional roles and values. Changes also happen in the incongruity between women and leadership. Hence, we are optimistic likely to see more women in leadership roles in near future.

> *SUMMARY:*

- Gender is one of the factors influencing women participation and representation in politics. To rise in power trace women encounter with the obstacles, restrictions and deterrents in the society. For instance electoral environment as highly competitive for women; women have disproportionate family responsibilities that interfere with the time required for successful political careers; increasing violence, sexual harassment and victimization of women at the ground level in many of our political parties, the glass ceiling etc.

- In spite of gap, there is a confluence of factors contributes to leadership effectiveness and rise of women leaders. Changes in societies, states and organisations are beginning to make it easier for women to reach top positions.

The culture almost everywhere is changing; gendered work assumptions such as male model of work, the notion of uninterrupted full-time careers and the separation of work and family are being challenged (Yadav, 2010, p.32).

- There are several arguments regarding the issue that whether a significant difference exists between the men and women leaders. Essentialised accounts explain that women are naturally more caring and nurturing and men are naturally more aggressive because of differing hormone levels. A recent meta-analysis by Eagly, Johannesen- Schmidt, and Van Engen (2003) has found that women styles tend to be more transformational than men's, and they also tend to engage in more contingent reward behaviours than men, all of which are aspects of leadership that predict effectiveness (Yadav, 2010, p. 18). The relative effectiveness of male and female leaders has been assessed by a number of research studies. It has been found that overall men and women are equally effective leaders, but there are gender differences. For instance, women were less effective than men in military position, but they were somewhat more effective than men in education, government and social service organisations and substantially more effective than men in middle management positions, where communitarian interpersonal skills are highly valued. Academic researchers have a greater diversity in their views. Many argue that there are little differences and some considered there are no differences on leadership style and effectiveness.

- In the study of legislative leaders of West Bengal, it is found that differences in the legislative agenda of women. They are more concern with infrastructure development, social services and economic development and much less concern for the women issues. There is less attention and efforts given to bettering the situation of women. Even when the state government is leading by a woman leader though the number of women leader in upper echelon political positions fluctuated within 12% to 16%, it is increasing but with a very slow pace.

- For leadership to be feminist, the values of feminism must be clearly demonstrated in objectives, practice, and anticipated outcomes, which proceed towards social justice that is absent in West Bengal. The goal of social equality, justice and social transformation is not clearly visible in the functioning style of women legislators of West Bengal, while certain efforts might be taken towards it but the percentage is not optimistic. The absence of feminist leadership might be caused of gendered culture, expectation or the context of leadership or apathy to

think differently or lack of confidence or lack of courage or fear to get rejected or fear to lose power etc.

- It has been observed that in West Bengalwomen leaders are neither exhibit natural qualities of woman nor cultural attributes in their way of functioning, more clearly, they are not practising the style of feminine leadership.

- In the context of West Bengal, political leadership by women have not particularly shown significant changes over the last 10 years. Women politicians are still struggling to reach at higher political positions by their own competence and they agreed it is difficult to rise and work within the male dominated party hierarchies. At the same time, the fact is once they have been successful to establish themselves as leaders then there has been an unquestioning acceptance of their leadership and decisions even by the party members which is largely male.

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CHAPTER: 7

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS:

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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7.1.SUMMARY

In spite of having constitutional provisions, for instance equal franchise and electoral quota system in the grassroots level, women in India are still not visible equally in the political structures, decision making bodies as their counter parts. Representation and leadership are consideringthe means to empower women 'from above' in political institutions though the problem of women's lower presence in representation and leadership in politics is still clearly visible. Since Independence the struggle of women to prove themselves as equal to men, in the political arena, is found more difficult work due to the existence of gender-inequality and gender-discrimination in our society. Women's lower presence in varied structures and processes of society has brought gender to the centre point of all developmental endeavours. "It is now widely recognized that seemingly well worked out plans and programmes being both gender-biased and gender blind can have disastrous consequences for women" (Kumari, 1994, p.33).Just society cannot afford inequalities that women still facing in power, status and income.In order to bring change conscious efforts should be taken. To eradicate the problem of women's lower presence in formal political structures, our society and families should give importance to women's issue and support them mentally and morally. So, the other agents of society and the governments as well would take this issue seriously. In this perspective, the State has to take some corrective actions to ensure that women participate equally in the political sphere. Also, it is imperative to adopt certain affirmative action to eliminate the existing discrimination to ensure political equality as guaranteed in the Constitution. While we know, in order to bring gender-equality, constitutional provisions and legal steps are not enough, there is most important requirement is to change the mind-set of society and its members (Roy, 2017, p.54-55). Therefore, it is stated that with these special measures the pictures of deplorable presence of women in representation and leadershipin politics might be altered. At the same time it is very important to pay more attention to the quality of representation and leadership rather than the quantity.

The low level representation of women in political process and decision-making bodies forms a key concern for our society and states. The success of democratic political system depends on the equal and active participation and representation of various sections of the population, where women are far behind. The present study has focused on women legislators of West Bengal to study political leadership since 1990s, particularly to seethe reason behind the rising level of women's political participation post 1990, women's

primary membership level in the different political parties and the percentage of elected women leaders at the state and national level, the contributory factors behind the active participation of women political leaders in the elections,the differences between women and men political leadership and the problems women face being as political leaders.

West Bengal being a part of the world community cannot escape from the effects of gender discrimination and injustice. In terms of sex ratio, literacy rate, women's health and decision making power West Bengal is showing a marked improvement during the last two decades of the 20th century & first decade of 21st century (1991-2021). Though the State improving at a very slow pace. Still it seeks to – (i) protect the rights of women enshrined in the Constitution of India; (ii) enhance their dignity and ensure their participation in the economic, social and political activities. The assessment of women's political leadership in West Bengal raised questions like whether with the increasing number of women in the elected bodies would women perceive the taste of equality in life or would alternate the structure of power. Whether a preliminary leadership would grow among the women in the political sphere in West Bengal or would women have the opportunity to enact policies that can create substantive change for issues important to women and begin work toward changing public perceptions of women and their roles in society.

The existing many research studies reveal that gender affects authority and women leaders. Therefore, for women, it is difficult to be a leader or being in leadership positions, particularly at the highest levels of decision making. To rise in power women encounter with the obstacles, restrictions and deterrents in the societyas well as face strange problems in their political life those are completely unknown to their male counterparts. These barriers restrict their involvement in politics and their performance in the legislative body also."The reasons for women's diminished role in political arena include traditions, physiology, lack of vertical mobility, concern for home and family, psychology, and lack of patronage, particularly from senior women politicians" (Bhatt, 1995, p. 90). There might be other many reasons which hinder women's active political involvement.Thus, the present study has been undertaken on the women legislators of West Bengal and made an attempt-(i) to analyse the reasons behind the increase if any, in the rate of participation of women in politics since 1990; (ii) to understand the percentage of difference, if any, between the women primary party members and elected members as well asthe women leaderswho contested elections and have stood elected at the state and

national level;(iii) to probe into the factors that have helped women leaders to participate inthe elections actively; (iv) to inquire into the characteristics of women leaders; (v) to find out the style of functioning, the range of issues that they select to support and the difference if any, with their male counterparts etc; and (vi) to find out the nature of obstacles to their political career if any, and how did they counter them.

7.2.RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study focuses on the following specific questions:

1. What have been the changes forced/normal that has led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics in India post 1990?

2. What has been the percentage of difference between the women primary party members and elected members to the decision-making bodies of the state as well as the women leaders who contested polls and elected at the state and national level?

3. Why do we see that the women political leaders today are actively participating in the elections? Does that indicate a change in structural factors like education, economic empowerment, social reforms etc responsible for high/low/non political participation?

4. Why according to these women leaders they find themselves different from the male leadership?

5. Can we say that the women legislators in West Bengal are initiating feminine or feminist style of leadership?

6. How have been they able to overcome obstacles if any, in their political career?

In the first question "What have been the changes forced/normal that have led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics post 1990?" we have studied the performance of women in national, state andregional parties even also individually in the general elections of India since 1984 and also studied the rising importance of state level and regional parties in national politics. The present study has been limited to understandthe reasons behind the increase in the level of participation of women in politics since 1990.

The second question has studied the primary membership level of women in the different political parties of West Bengal and whether the percentage of women primary members

is reflected in the leadership level within the respective political parties as well. This question has also taken note of the percentage of women leaders who has been given tickets to contest polls at the state and national level and the percentage of women leaders who have stood elected. In this study, leader operationally means the elected women legislators, MPs and MLAs, of West Bengal.This indicates women have reached to a position recognised as leader through the selection and nomination of political parties for the elections and it is very rare they have recognised as leader due to their own hard work without the umbrella of any political parties'. In this perspective, the socio-economic backgrounds and the situation which drives women to get involved in electoral politics-all these have been studied with reference to those women who were identified as leaders.

The third question related to the contributoryfactors that have helped the women political leaders to actively participate in the elections. As women, they have to play some gender-specified roles, like motherhood, domestic duties etc, given by our society and family which are deterred women from active participation in politics. There are many other factors in the society and problems in the political sphere which deterrents women to become active in the elections.In spite of various obstacles women are step forward in the post decades of 1990 in West Bengal, there are several factors for women leaders' active involvement in the elections. All thefactors have been studied for searching answer of this question.

The fourth question, which has been studied "what makes women leaders different from the male leadership?" actually means their characteristics, their style of functioning and the values espouse by women leaders in politics. Being a leader what has been their contribution towards upliftment and empowerment of the women in particular and society in general.This has also based on thecharacteristics of political leadersthat men and women exerciseddifferent styles of leadership from each other. This question has also involved an analysis of positive values which might be included through electing and appointing more women leaders to public office.

And the fifth question was examined the obstacles that have been women leaders faced while performing their duties as a leader and also how they have been able to overcome these obstacles. There are some major issues that facilitate women leaders to performing duties as a leader, have also been examined in this question.

7.3. AREA OF STUDY

The study has been confined to the state West Bengal (WB). West Bengal is a very important state in terms of providing leadership.West Bengal State Assembly is unicameral legislature, which is called Vidhan Sabha, with 295 members (MLAs), including one nominated member from the Anglo-Indian community. The state contributes 42 seats to the Lok Sabha and 16 seats to the Rajya Sabha of the Indian Parliament. In the political history of West Bengal, Indian National Congress (INC) was the ruling party from 1952 to till 1977 (1st to 7th State Assembly election), from 1977-2011 (8th to 14th State Assembly election) the CPI-M remained in power and since 2011 (15th to 17th State Assembly election) in West Bengal under the woman leadership Mamata Banerjeethe All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) is ruling the State. Since the inception of West Bengal, it had only one female Governor, Padmaja Naidu, from1956-1967 and presently have woman Chief Minister (Since 2011). Post 1990, women's entry into politics of West Bengal indicates a trend that more and more women are contesting the polls from various political parties and the number of women participating in the electoral process has increased. The important national leaders have always focused attention on this state. The state of West Bengal has produced some men and women leaders of national and international repute. Presently, West Bengal is the only state in India which is governed by female chief ministerthat is the reason it become important and famous as well. That is why West Bengal has been selected for the present study. Due to its strategic location, general reputation, socio-political fabric and cultural history the state becomes important centre of political activities. The demographic and other salient features of the state, status of women in state, their political activities and political parties they belong to have already been explained in the earlier chapters.

7.4. IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS-UNIVERSE AND SAMPLE

The study deals with the women legislators of West Bengal since 1990s. Actually in this study, women legislators means elected women MPs and MLAs of West Bengal since 1991 in the State Assembly and the parliament (Lok Sabha) as well through the state assembly and general elections and this is prime unit of our analysis. The women leaders, in the context of our study, consist of all women MLAs elected from 11th to 16th (1991-2016) Assembly elections held in West Bengal and 10th to 17th Lok Sabha elections so

far, and therefore, constitutes the universe of the present study. A profile of all women legislatorsfrom 1991 to 2016 in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly and from 1991 to 2019 in the Lok Sabha elected from West Bengal was prepared and it was observed that about 51 women were elected as legislators more than once in the Assembly and 13 women were elected more than once in the Parliament. Many of them represented continuously their constituencies several times, and one as many as seven times. The study has tried to find out the attitude of her male colleagues toward her and also identify various interventions that can ensure and enhance an increased and qualitatively better participation of women both in Legislature and in political party.

From 1991 to 2016, six Assembly elections have been conducted in West Bengal in which a total of 182 women were elected. Out of the total 182 women legislators, 51 women legislators were elected more than once.Also, from 1991 to 2019, eight Lok Sabha elections held in which from West Bengal total 53women were elected, out of which 13women legislators were elected more than once. A list was prepared of all women legislators and it was observed that 51 women have been repeatedly appearing at 119 places in the list of Legislative Assembly and 13 women MPs have been repeatedly appearing at 38 places in the list of Lok Sabha. If 51 are excluded from 119, the remaining 68 have to be deducted from the 182 and thus, the total numbers of women legislators were reduced to 114 and pertaining to women MPs if 13 are excluded from 38, the remaining 25 have to be deducted from the 53 and thus, the total numbers of women MPs were reduced to 28. Therefore,114 women MLAs and 28 women MPs constitute the total number of women legislators 142. Out of these 142 legislators we have selected purposively 25 women legislators as sample(which is 35% of the universe), the important criteria for the selection of women legislators was their experience as legislators and their position as minister or something else.

7.5. DATA COLLECTION

At the initial stage, a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of existing literature on women from gender approach, women's political participation and women political leadership in particular was made. In the second stage, a structured questionnaire was formulated to extract information from women legislators on specific areas and issues. The questionnaire was designed to obtain facts on personal attributes, information on involvement in politics, association with political parties, participation in electoral

politics, role as a representative and a minister, role in legislature politics, response to certain general and women specific issues, suggestions on an increased and qualitatively better participation of women in political process and decision making bodies. In the third stage personal interviews were held with 25 women legislators (11 sitting & 14 ex-legislators). Most of the legislators were contacted at their residence while some contracted over telephone. Interestingly, ex-women legislators were found to be modest and co-operative than sitting members.

Case studies of nine women legislators were done. They were selected taking into account their experience, the number of times they had represented their constituency and their position as minister or something else. For describing the case studies, interviews of the legislators, observations, supplementary information available in their life history in various records have been used. With the co-operation of the legislators as also by our own perceptions and preparations, it could be possible to collect required information on all 25 women leaders.

7.6. DATA ANALYSIS

The information collected from various sources including interviews schedules was transferred to the data sheets and then were analysed. The huge data on various aspects have been analysed and arranged in tables and in figures for interpretation. The case studies material, however, were qualitatively analyzed. The information on background variables was quantitatively analysed. The relationship of various factors has been indicated on the basis of numerical distribution presented in the table. Thus, the data of 25 women legislators have been analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

7.7.CONCEPTS/TERMS

In our study we have used the following concepts as technical terms for precision and abstraction.

7.7.1.MASCULINITY &FEMININITY:

Both the term emphasizes gender not biological sex. Social gender categories can be classified as masculinities and femininities, where masculinities are characteristics associated with perceived manhood and femininities are characteristics associated with perceived womanhood. Masculinities and femininities are constituted by behaviour

expectations, stereotypes, and rules which apply to persons because they are understoodto be membersof particular sex categories (Enloe, 2004). The concepts masculinity and femininity is produced within the institutions of society.

7.7.2.REPRESENTATION:

The word 'representation' derives from the Latin word 'representare' which means literally to bring before one, to bring back, to exhibit, to show, to manifest, to display(Beard & Lewis, 1967, p.98). Representation, in the sense of human being representing other human being is particularly a modern conception. Representation involves action or speech on behalf of a person, group, state etc.

7.7.3.POLITICAL REPRESENTATION:

Political representation is understood as a way of (1) establishing the legitimacy of democratic institutions and (2) creating institutional incentives for governments to be responsive to citizens" (Dovi, 2018). In the present study, political representation implies the representation by elected individuals in the legislature.

7.7.4. LEADER:

Leader, generally, defined as one person who is able to influence a group of people or individuals towards the achievements of specific goals. On the other hand, leader, operationally, means a person who possesses position of power in any organization or in the formal structures of the government or otherwise. In the present study, the women elected leaders or legislators at the state level and national level, namely, the State Legislative Assembly, and the Parliament have been considered as the women leaders.

7.7.5.LEADERSHIP:

Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals. The core context of leadership is the personality of the leaders. Leadership occurs when persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

7.7.6. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP:

Political leadership is closely connected with power and authority. It is an agent-centred view of politics and government which rests on the idea that who governs us. It is a system of social relationships involving power, authority, charisma, abilities, views, behaviors and the style of individual (who occupy formal office) as well.Political leadership also determines the success and failure of political institutions.

7.7.7.POLITICAL CULTURE:

The term culture actually defines a way of life and when culture transmitted into political action is known as political culture. In order to understand the political system of any particular country or state it is important to understand the political culture of that particular state or country. Political culture of any country determines by the attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviour of people towards the political system.

7.7.8. GENDER EQUALITY:

Gender equality means that there is no discrimination on grounds of a person's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. Gender equality may be measured in terms of whether there is equality of opportunity, or equality of results (Singh, 2003).

7.7.9. GENDER DISCRIMINATION:

Gender discrimination means to give differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of their gender. In a patriarchal society, this involves systematic and structural discrimination against women in the distribution of income, access to resources, and participation in decision-making (Singh, 2003).

7.7.10. EMPOWERMENT:

Empowerment is an important element of development, being the process by which people take control and action in order to overcome obstacles. Empowerment especially means the collective action by the oppressed and deprived to overcome the obstacles of structural inequality which have previously put them in a disadvantage position. It is the process by which women mobilize to understand, identify, and overcome gender discrimination, so as to achieve equality of welfare and equal access to resources.

Empowerment may be analytically distinguished from "self –reliance"; which may be defined as people's ability to advance themselves within the existing social system (Singh, 2003).

7.8. FINDINGS

In the present work, it was proposed to study mainly five questions. These questions were referred to thereasons behind the increase level of participation of women in politics since 1990; the percentageofdifference between women primary party membersand elected members as well aswomenleaders who contested elections and have stood elected at the state and national level;the factors that have helped womenleaders to participate actively inthe elections; the characteristics of women leaders;the leadership style of women legislators in West Bengal;and the nature of obstacles they have faced in their political career and the measures to inhibit them. These questions have been studied in the context of women legislators of West Bengal. Twenty five women legislators were selectedfrom 1991 to 2016 in six Assembly elections and from 1991 in eight Lok Sabha elections till 2019.

Out of the 25 women legislators, 22 are those who have represented their constituencies more than once and some of them as many as five or seven times. On the basis of the facts collected about 25 women legislators and the nine purposively case studies, the findings on the main questions are presented below:

7.8.1. THE REASONS FOR INCREASING LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN POLITICS SINCE 1990:

(i)   Since 1990, state level parties and regional parties have provided the avenues to women for political participation. In the formation of coalition government in India, state level parties played very important role. As a result, the regional political parties become the central factor in the electoral politics in India. With the involvement in these political parties women become aware about the social, economical, political issues and about their rights. So, they gradually become confident about their ability in political spheres and they also started to contest elections in more number under the banner of state and regional parties and even individually than national political parties. Thus changing Indian party system

and electoral politics has led to the increase in the level of participation of women in politics in India since 1990.

(ii) Women wings of political parties have been playing a key role for increasing women's active participation in politics.Usually, women find a comfort zone in the political parties' women wing, they boosted their confidence for participation in politics being attached with the women wing of any particular political party, and alsothey got incited by the activities of such wing concerning women issues. It was found that since 1990, regional parties started to gaining important foothold in national politics and also these parties most have followed the national parties in the case of formation of a particular wing for women within the party, and under the inspiration, guidance and activities of such women wings of political parties increasing the number of women in politics.

(iii) The 73rdand 74thConstitutional Amendment of 1992 has also extended women's participation in politics.These amendments provide the scope of participation by women in deliberative bodies the Government of India, which reserves a third of theseats in the local governments (Panchayats and Municipalities) including the chairpersonship of these localbodies for women. Even, many Indian states introduced 50% reservation for women at grassroots level, so that political involvement of women is increased. Hence, all these initiatives of the central and state governmentsaffected women's political participation at the grassroots level. The enhanced number of women in politics of the grassroots levels to some extent influences the participation of women in the state level politics and which ultimately affects the women's participation in national level politics.

7.8.2. THE GAP BETWEEN WOMEN PRIMARY PARTY MEMBERS AND ELECTED MEMBERS AS WELL AS CONTESTING & ELECTING WOMEN MEMBERS AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL POLLS:

(iv) It was found that, as per membership data of the year 2016, INC and BJPhave 40% (Approx) and AITC has 50% (Approx) women primary members of their total membership, only CPI-M has very low that is 5% active women primary members of total membership. But the percentage of primary membership of political parties is not reflected in the highest decision-making bodies of the state. The fact is,INC represents 10%, CPI-M represents 27% and AITC represents 16% women members in the highest decision-making bodies of the

state where BJP's women representation is nil. There is found a huge difference between the percentage of women primary members and elected women leaders of all parties to the state legislature, except CPI-M. In contrast to primary members of CPI-M the percentage of elected women leaders at decision making bodies is far better than other parties.

(v)   It has found that no sincere effort is made by the political parties so that a significant number of women can enter into the party organization and particularly at the decision making process.Women primary party members are utilized by the party during elections to mobilize womenfolk or else they are given the responsibility of holding a campaign meeting to represent their party, in place of senior male candidates. Women members are generally used to do social work for the party during natural calamities etc. Even within the party, majority of the women are not given any important positions and responsibilities.

(vi)   Another important aspect that is the difference found between the percentages of women contested elections and women who have stood elected at the state and national level. In the elections of Lok Sabha from 1952 to 2019, the difference is existing, initially (from 1952-1967) there exists not much difference but from later years (since 1971) the difference becomes wider. Particularly from 1991 the difference between contesting and electing women started to become wider and in 1996 the difference was 93%, in 2014 90% and currently it is 89%.

(vii)   The difference between the percentage of contesting and electing women leaders also found in West Bengal Legislative Assembly elections. From 1952 to 2021 seventeenth assembly elections have been conducted in West Bengal. Till 1991, the difference between the percentage of contesting and electing women was not much (though the difference of 1952, 1971 and 1972 is not identified)but since 1996 the difference becomes wider, in 1996 it was 81%, in 201680% and presently it is 83%. Thus, it can be said that the difference is narrower in the state level than national level.

7.8.3. THE STRUCTURAL FACTORS FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN LEADERS IN THE ELECTIONS:

(viii) It was found that the post decades of 1990 in West Bengal women are taking active part in the elections. At a personal level, all women representatives were

unanimous in their opinion that for effective women participation in governance process literacy is must require. Education has played a major role in moulding women's participation in the elections. Out of the 25 women leaders six (24%) were post-graduate and twelve (48%) were graduate, that found almost 75% of the women legislators were highly educated. Education increases their confidence in themselves. They get confidence to speak their mind freely and frankly. It gives them the confidence to believe in themselves and their own power role and responsibilities. All women leaders were unanimous in their acknowledgement of enhancement in their confidence labels, knowledge, decision-making capacity, elevation of social status, political awareness and subsequent personality development.

(ix)   It was found that out of the 25 women leaders 24 (96%) women leaders got full family support in the matter of electoral participation. The role of the families in this regard was very encouraging. The changing nature of patriarchal families paved the way for active participation of women in the electoral politics.

(x)   The patriarchal and conservative societal perception becomes positive in the matter of women's participation in elections. It was found that twenty (80%) women leaders have not faced any social obligations for electoral participation rather with the changing perception of society regarding women's involvement in elections increases the number of women in the political sphere. Society's changing perception has been reduced social obligations for women and also incited them to become active in electoral performances.

(xi)   Now-a-days male political leaders are found co-operative in the matter of women's participation in politics. 23 (92%) women legislators have gotten co-operation from their male colleagues during the time of performing electoral functions and this attitudes of male leaders make a comfort zone for women to perform their electoral duties very actively and significantly as well.

(xii)   The positive attitude of political parties widen out the road for women's participation in politics. 13 (52%) women leaders found positive attitudes of their political parties towards women's active participation for elections. Since 1990, the behaviour of political parties is changing regarding women's involvement in electoral activities which are helping women leaders to perform their political roles. While it was found that in 24% cases political parties did not take any significant efforts for women's active participation in the electoral

process and also in equal percentage cases political parties were indifferent, did not show any concern for women's involvement in politics.

(xiii) It was found that the Government's policy i.e. quota reservation, played significant role for women's active political participation, which we have seen in local-governance, i.e. Panchayats. The reservation of seats for women provided the opportunity to participate in the electoral functionsand ensured their active and fearless electoral participation as well.

7.8.4. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ELECTED WOMEN LEADERS:

(xiv) With the interaction of women legislators it was found that women leaders are actually possess several characteristics which are very different in nature from the characteristics of male leaders.According to all women legislators,except four,all these specified characteristicsgenerate diverse qualitiesto lead which make them different from maleleaders.

(xv) Women are friendly in naturethat indicates women have the ability to build relationship with others. Through the quality of relationship building they become aware about the problems of the constituents spontaneously and take the steps to solve these problems. Hence, the quality of relationship building helps women leaders to perform their leadership role well.

(xvi) Women leaders are polite and flexible in behaviour and also have more toleration power. The politeness and flexible behaviour of women leaders make them more acceptable or approachable to common people and patience also make them able to handle crisis situation very calmly and peacefully.

(xvii) Women leaders are found more sincere in their duties and responsibilities. When they are given any responsibility usually they perform all responsibilities with very sincerely. Not only sincerity, dedication also found in theirworks, both the characteristics of women leadersadd different qualities to leadership.

(xviii) It was found that women leaders are affectionate, careful, hard worker, also more concerned about the common good and sensitive towards social problems. The socialization process of girls make them caretaker of the family and nurturer and guardians of dependents (children and senior citizen) that leads to different way of dealing with politics. From family girls learn how a family was living and handled crisis situation that leads tocreate good management skill in them and which helps to become a good leader.

(xix)   Generally, women have moral power, which renders them not, or less, corrupt and introduce cleaner politics.Women leaders are foundthat they are abide by ethical values and in a better way represent the people.Their style of doing politics is reducing corruption and improving opportunities for the downtrodden.

(xx)   In many cases women leaders had been able to convince people particularly whom those who stand in opposition side.Even they are more co-operative in works, preferred to work collaborativelywith others that lead less aggressive in performing duties of a leader. They are keeper of the values of social justice and honesty as well.

(xxi)   It was also found that out of the 25women leadersonly four did not believein gendered categorization of characteristics of leaders. Rather they believed that every individual possessed unique characteristics, qualities and skills, so every individual is different from others and also leaders are different to each other in qualities, in styles of functioning etc. From this approachthe thought of gender distinctions of leaders' qualities is not a matter of concern. Also, they believed that leader should be gender-neutral and suggested that people must be concerned about the qualities or characteristics of good leader rather than so much focused on gender of the leaders.

7.8.5. LEADERSHIP STYLES OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS IN WEST BENGAL:

(xxii) Women related issues were not promoted in the legislature by the women legislators rather they were more concerned with infrastructure development, social services and economic development. Since 2011, under the leadership woman Chief Minister, few government schemes introduced for the upliftment of women and girl, while these are not adequate for the actual development of women. Therefore, it may be said that the presence of women representatives in state legislatures did not influence policy adoption. Though the target focus group of women leaders remain the weaker sections of the society, the poor, disadvantaged groups like the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, women children and minorities. With respect to style of leadership, the women leaders were as likely as men leaders to be goal-directed, which considered idealtype of leadership, masculine in character traits.

(xxiii) In West Bengal, unequal power distribution not abolished. West Bengal follows the hierarchical power structure and low weightage ministry distributed to

women representatives in spite of having Woman Chief Minister, which reveals the fact that the principle of feminist leadership i.e. equal participation, equal sharing of power still effectively not working in the state.

(xxiv) Still women are under-represented in the legislature.The serious efforts for inclusion and mobilization ofwomen in large quantitiesinto politics were invisible in the functions of women legislators. The leadership nature of the state is individualistic. Therefore it becomes failure to build collective leadership, which is the core principle of feminist leadership.

(xxv) Political leaders in West Bengal are elected on a party basis hence they are bound to represent a party's interests and agendas. In such circumstances elected women representatives carried the additional responsibility to represent women's specific issues and interest in the legislature.Even in major cases of decisionmaking women leaderswere not allowed to express their opinion and they were only directed to follow the imposed decisions of the party. Therefore, it may be said that the collective decision making principle of feminist leadership absent in West Bengal.

(xxvi) In regard to the principles of feminist leadership like dismantling bias, tolerance, courage, constructive feedback, it was not found any clear concept by analysing the style of functioning of women leaders. For leadership to be feminist, the values of feminism must be clearly demonstrated in objectives, practice, and anticipated outcomes, which proceed towards social justice that wasmissing in West Bengal.The goal of social equality, justice and social transformation was not clearly visible in the functioning style of women legislators of West Bengal, while certain efforts might be taken towards it but the percentage is not optimistic.

7.8.6. PROBLEMS OVERCOME BY WOMEN LEGISLATORS:

(xxvii) Out of 25 women leader respondents 16 said that they faced direct or indirect obstacles and nine women legislators have denied any difficulty in their political career. During the course of interview held with them, two women legislators, however, categorically said that they faced physical attack and direct threat to death for standing beside the people to resist anti-social and criminal activities in politically disturbed area and other visits to their constituencies. There were many instances where women legislators faced many obstacles like protest or

strong objection from the opposition political party, lack of co-operation, gender discrimination within the respective party pertaining to assigned positions and decision making power, victimization, mental harassment, character assassination etc in their political career, as they have narrated some instances of violence inflicted on them during the interview. They have succeeded to overcome all these problemsby pursuing certain measures.

(xxviii) Majority of them have said that by own rational thought convinced the protesters that the developmental works initiated to improve material well being (welfare) of people and united the people to make a support group in favour of initiated welfare plan for them. With the support and co-operation of the public get the courage and confidence to overcome the obstacles and ultimately become succeeded.

(xxix) There are few instances where women legislators clearly pointed out that self-confidence, self-determination and patience helped to handle more complex problems peacefully. Direct or face to face communication with the constituents helped them to reach at the root cause of the problems and took required steps to solve the crisis issues as early as possible.

(xxx) To inhibit the obstacles sometimes helped the directions, guidance and suggestions of the supreme authority of the party. They said that sometimes they have ignored the criticism of opposition party and have builtfriendly relations with them to handle the problematic situations. Proper understanding of the problems assisted to take the measures as situation requires, for instance sometimes it required to be silent and sometimes to be vocal.

However along with all these findings, the present study also found that a significant number of legislators have family political history and family linkages and majority of women leaders have come from middle class family background. They have been playing multi-facet role for the benefit of their own society and public at large. The participation in the Assembly and Parliament, more or less, is the function of their numerical strength. The women legislators have denied any hindrance in their entry into politics. In the present study, it is also found that majority of women legislators appear to lead local area and could not think of the outside world, they have role in setting up objectives of welfare, manipulation of means of state action for implementation of various welfare policies and programmes for their constituency people. Only very few women leaders

from the high position in the political structure of society have greater influence on the people. As findings suggest, a significant number of women leaders consider Mamata Banerjee, Sonia Gandhi, Sushma Swaraj as their role model to draw inspiration and to lead. Majority of women legislators agreed that they faced gender-discrimination while their lower participation in the legislature is not due to any gender discrimination but mainly due to their lower numerical strength in the legislature. The gender equality seem to be almost non-existent in the party functioning as many important responsibilities in the parties are not given to them because of their gender.

7.9. LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY AND THE SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

With the selected sitting and ex-women legislators personal interviews were held. Arranging the timings for meeting with women legislators for their interview proved was an extremely challenging and difficult task in terms of their willingness to co-operate and also their availability. Therefore, persistent and continuous efforts had to be made to contact them. This proves that it was not an easy job.

One of the major constraints of the present study has been the collecting information on women primary membership of the political parties, except CPI-M no other party maintaining systematic and proper recordsof membership. It was very arduous task to collect membership data, continuous efforts had to be made to contact party offices and it became extremely tardy. Moreover, as leaders of major three political party of West Bengal expressed their inability to provide exact number of primary members of respective parties.

Another limitationof the present study was the paucity of literature specifically on women legislators of West Bengal. No systematic and comprehensive studies have been done on women legislators. This paucity of literature did make our task difficult to a certain extent. The available information and documented proceeding are not gender specifically arranged in the Vidhan Sabha Secretariats, further even this information was not easily accessible. Hence, the fact is that it was a challenging opportunity to explore an area that has hitherto been left untouched.

The present study based on limited number of women legislatorsand could not deal with all women politicians in the state of West Bengal. Another limitation has been the very

poor and unclear response to the queries from the women legislators. This study focused upon the legislators of West Bengal only. This study has opened up directions for future research which may include all women political leaders from state to grassroots levels in the state of West Bengal and should draw the comparison of women leaders with male leaders and their roles, performance and the quality of their participation on the floor of the Assembly and the Parliament.

7.10. INFERENCES

We can draw the following inferences, based on the findings of the present study:

I. Since 1990 there has been a sizeable increase in the number of women leaders throughout India.

II. The number of women increases in the decision making processeswith the growing importance of state level regional parties and the active and continuous efforts of political parties' women wings.

III. The enhanced number of women in politics of the grassroots levels influences the number of women's participation in the state and national level politics.

IV. A wide gap is therebetween the percentage of primary members and elected women leaders of all parties to the West Bengal state legislature. Also the difference found between the percentages of women contested elections and women who have stood elected at the state (West Bengal) and national level and day by day the difference becomes wider.

V. Political parties are utilized the strength of women primary party members during the election but not promoted them in the important positions after won the election.

VI. Proper education, family's encouragement and support, changing perception of society, positive attitudes of political parties, co-operation of male political leaders, and Government schemes, e.g. quota reservation, are important factor behind the active participation of women leaders in the elections.

VII. Affection, care, sensitivity, politeness, sincerity, morality, co-operation, hard work, ability to build relationship all these characteristics of women leaders make them different from male political leaders. While different opinion also there that gendered characteristics are not associated with a good leader.

VIII.   Women interests are less promoted by the women leaders in the legislature rather they are more concerned with common welfare/good.

IX.   In West Bengalwomen leaders are neither exhibit the principles of feminist leadership nor feminine leadership in their way of functioning rather West Bengal follows the hierarchical power structure, and women leaders grappled within the dominant mainstream discourse of leadership.

X.   There are several obstacles during the electoral participation of women leaders and with their intelligence, courage, and confidence they are able to overcome such obstacles.Also, with their self-confidence, self-determination and patience they handle more complex problems peacefully.

7.11. RECOMMENDATION

In order to bring change to develop leadership, conscious efforts must be taken to instil self-confidence and to nurture self-esteem in women who have the potential for political leadership. Also change require in some context that may fill the gap between women and political leadership. For bringing change certain measures should be followed.

> Gender implies the differences of men and women political leaders which effects leadership role vehemently. Similarly, the intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, class, caste also influence the context of leadership, while women leaders are less concern to bridge those differences in pursuit of common goals. More women need to be convinces that we cannot adequately improve the lot of women without challenging all the sources of subordination with which gender interacts (Rhode, 2014, p.158). As Audre Lorde noted, "It is not our differences which separate women, but our reluctance to recognize those differences and deal effectively with the distortions which have resulted...." (Lorde, 1984, p.122).

> Lack of social consensus confronted with the women political leadership. Most of the women leaders do not think that there are more advantages in being a man than a woman in today's society. They also thought that the presence of women in the political positions and the enactment of laws against sex discrimination etc are the evidence that the woman problems have been solved. This type of thoughts creates the sense of complacency which becomes obstacles to broader change (Rhode, 2014).

➤ There is a huge gap between legal rights and practice in reality. Equal opportunity in law is necessary but not sufficient to guarantee equal opportunity in fact. Women need not just equal rights but equal respect and equal recognition of values traditionally associated with women, e.g. motherhood. Women need an expanded set of rights like equal pay for jobs, bans on discrimination based on sexual orientation. They also need a change in funding priorities like more resources should be available for childcare, shelters or financial assistance for divorcee women or homeless women and reproductive assistance that meets basic subsistence needs. In addition, states need more effective prevention and treatment programs for sexual violence (Rhode, 2014).

➤ Changes require in workplace structures which is equally important. Women need not only equal treatment in existing mainstream institutions but also require fundamental changes in those institutions they are working. Employers need to do better in policies and practices concerning family and medical leave, and flexible and part-time schedules. To make this agenda possible, more women must see personal difficulties as social problems calling for collective actions (Rhode, 2014, p.159).

➤ Gender based stereotypes culture devalued the competence of women that generates assertive behaviour in women leaders. We need to change this stereotype culture, also need to address the ways through which society practising sex based discrimination and inculcating sex-based aggression. To end these practice elected women leaders in the states should connect themselves to elected women in local bodies and they should connect themselves to common women. This pyramid of women representatives can become a political network that would work to increase political consciousness of common women.

➤ In democratic set up, the political road to decision making usually leads to the system via the political parties. But, this agent of democratic government gives only lip service to the ideal of women in politics.Political parties and other organizations should encourage women's participation in politics and in the exercise of political responsibilities. The strategy should be to encourage a greater number of women in decision-making power. The women's wings of political parties as well as elected women leaders have to take immediate and necessary efforts to unite and incorporate ordinary women and should encourage them to participate in political affairs (Roy, 2017, p.54).

> ➢ Additionally, elected women leaders of the state should be aware about their style of functioning and the common goal of social transformation. They have much responsibility to inculcate the values like collectivity, tolerance, sensitivity, integrity, morality etc within the political process and structures throughout the entire leadership role. The values would sensitize people, both men and women and the change the political scenario.

All these agenda should not be considered as modest agenda rather we should perceive it as essential. The majority of women leaders believe that women and men are entitled to equal opportunities. Just society cannot afford inequalities that women still facing in power, status and income. The gender roles and expectations transformed from one to another through family and society. So our society and families should give importance to women's issue and support them mentally and morally. So, the other agents of society as well as Governments will take this issue seriously. In this perspective, the State has to take some corrective actions to ensure that women participate equally in the political sphere (Roy, 2017, p. 54). The elected women leaders should fight not just for a space in the legislature, they should fight for social transformation.

7.12. CONCLUSION

After shedding light on different perspectives, issues, concerns and facts on women's leadership pattern in politics in our research study, we have come to some observation on women's political leadership in West Bengal. By observing the recent trends of women leadership in West Bengal we can suggest an alternative style of women leadership for the state that must be different and should have unique characteristics than the existing style.

In the pre-independence period, Gandhi encouraged women by saying that India needed women leaders who were "*pure, firm and self-controlled*" like the ancient heroines: Sita, Damayanti and Draupadi (Forbes, 1998, p.124). While, for the public role of women in post-independence India Gandhi chose Sita, as his ideal woman and not Draupadi (Mies, 1975, p.57). To Gandhi, 'Sita' is the "Indian Ideal of Womanhood". He recognised the importance of women's participation in the freedom struggle because he understood very well that social progress is impossible without the feminine ferment. Gandhi believed that women have some special qualities; he appraised women's natural tolerance, kindness,

moral courage, spiritual determination, selflessness, voluntary service, self-sacrifice, dedication, non-violent nature and the potential for social reconstruction as higher than that of men. Gandhi advocated equality for women because they are as powerful as men and have various qualities and have equal power in the management of the brain (Dasgupta, 2018, p. 248).

He said: "Woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in every minute detail in the activities of man and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him. She is entitled to a supreme place in her own sphere of activity as man is in his. This ought to be the natural condition of things and not as a result only of learning to read and write. By sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority and worthless men have been enjoying a superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have. Many of our movements stop half way because of the conditions of our women. Much of our works done dose not yield appropriate results; our lot is like that of the penny-wise and pound-foolish trader who does not employ enough capital in his business" (Prabhu, 1960, p. 59). But he did not think that imitating men was the norm for women. Women and men have equal rights, but the same kind of work, feeling, behaviour and tendency is not of them and cannot be of them, one is complement to other. He and Tolstoy were agreed on this point (Dasgupta, 2018, p.248). However, imitating men or being masculine does not mean women's emancipation; it is just a disorder of women's emancipation. Moreover, in terms of ideals, are men or are they showing that they should be followed? (Prabhu, 1960, p. 60). Gandhiji said: "I believe in the proper education of women. But I do believe that women will not make her contribution to the world by mimicking or running a race with man. She can run the race, but she will not rise to the great heights she is capable of by mimicking man. She has to be a complement of man" (Harijan, 27-2-'37).

Also, we quote Gandhi regarding the matter of equality of sexes:

"Equity of sexes does not mean equity of occupations. There may be no legal bar against woman hunting or wielding a lance. But she instinctively recoils form a function that belongs to man. Nature has created sexes as complements of each other. Their functions are defined as are their forms" -Harijan, 2-12-'39.

Along with Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose also believed in equality of sexes. In this regard Bose's idea of the potential of women was differed markedly from other Indian politicians, except Gandhi. Bose was advocating 'a society in which the woman will be free and will enjoy equal rights with man and take upon her all civic and political responsibilities' (Bose, 1982, p. 231-32). He argued that the first important step was for women to become engaged in the political process with the goal of changing women's position in society to full emancipation and genuine equality (Gordon, 1997, p. 160).

In spite of proponent of gender equity, Subhas Chandra Bose often responded with traditional paternalistic Indian prejudices. Apparently, Bose's intellectual and political commitment to equality of the sexes clashed with his more conventional Indian male outlook (Hildebrand, 2017, p.84). However, Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose both urged women to join the freedom movement and believed in that way women will liberate themselves. Also, both statesmen believed in the potentiality of women and said that after independence, they expected women to take an active role in politics. But Gandhi never made a serious effort to include women as political leaders. On the other hand, Subhas Chandra favoured to include capable women to fill upper-level political positions. Here, only this thought of Subhas Chandra Bose we have pursued.

By idealizing Gandhi with regard to leadership and collaborating Subhas Chandra Bose's thought to include capable women in the upper-level political positions (for political leadership women are equal to men), we framed an alternative style/model of leadership for women that we call **'Womanist Leadership'**. The new concept of leadership is very close to Gandhi and Bose's concept of equality of sexes and framed on mutual co-operation and consultation between men and women. We cannot deny the fact that man and women are naturally entitled with unique potentiality and qualities. So, in respect of leadership we must accept such fact and follow the concept of complement not imitation or competition. Men and women should work with mutual co-operation and consultation as Gandhi believed both the sexes complements to each other. But we are socialized to give importance on societal norms that is gendered and ignoring the natural potentiality and qualities of the both sexes. In the patriarchal or gendered society men have considered themselves to be lords and masters of women instead of considering them as their friends and co-workers. Also, women considered that they must imitate men to be a leader or to remain in leading position instead of exercising own natural qualities as Gandhi defined. The Womanist leadership strongly believed in the recruitment of leaders

who would deviate from politics as *samaj seva* only to politics as a profession. Women political leaders who would be imbued with the values to work for the progress of their constituency and also contribute to policy making.

The entire study has examined several perspectives of women's political leadership. Though, such a study cannot draw a general conclusion on the problem rather it may be hoped that such a research study will contribute, at least to some extent, to the establishment of a theory on women'spolitical leadership which may have extensive application.This study, it may be further hoped that will fill the gap in the existing academic literature on women's political leadership. Thus, the study of women's political leadership in West Bengal opens up further opportunities toresearchon gender and politics.

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APPENDIX-A
WEST BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS-ELECTED WOMEN LEGISLATORS- FROM 1991 TO 2021

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
1	Minati Ghosh	CPM	Gangarampur	1991
2	Mamtaz Begum	CPM	Ratua	1991
3	Sabitri Mitra	INC	Araidanga	1991
4	Rubi Noor	INC	Suzapur	1991
5	Chhaya Ghosh	FBL	Murshidabad	1991
6	Kamal Sengupta (Bose)	CPI	Habra	1991
7	Kum-Kum Chakraborti	CPM	Behala East	1991
8	Arati Das Gupta	CPM	Falta	1991
9	Anuradha Putatunda	CPM	Magrahat West	1991
10	Tania Chakrabarty	CPM	Panihati	1991
11	Nirupama Chattopadhayay	CPM	Bagnan	1991
12	Chatterjee Sandhya	CPM	Chandernagore	1991
13	Santi Chatterjee	INC	Tarakeswar	1991
14	Chhaya Bera	CPM	Nandanpur	1991
15	Dal Nanda Rani	CPM	Keshpur (SC)	1991
16	Mamata Mukherjee	CPM	Purulia	1991
17	Bilasi Bala Sahis	CPM	Para (SC)	1991
18	Arati Bembram	CPM	Ranibandh (ST)	1991
19	Jayasri Mitra	CPM	Barjora	1991
20	Konar Maharani	CPM	Memari	1991
21	Anju Kar	CPM	Kalna	1991
22	**Shanta Chhetri**	**GNLF**	**Kurseong**	**1996**
23	Minati Ghosh	CPM	Gangarampur	1996
24	Sabitri Mitra	INC	Araidanga	1996
25	Rubi Noor	INC	Suzapur	1996
26	Maya Rani Paul	INC	Berhampore	1996
27	Mili Hira	CPM	Haringhata	1996
28	Kumkum Chakraborti	CPM	Behala East	1996
29	Sakuntala Paik	CPM	Kulpi (SC)	1996
30	Kamal Sengupta Basu	CPM	Bijpur	1996
31	Tapati Saha	CPM	Taltola (SC)	1996
32	Kanika Ganguly	CPM	Bally	1996
33	Ibha Dey	CPM	Jangipara	1996
34	Chhaya Bera	CPM	Nandanpur	1996
35	Dal Nanda Rani	CPM	Keshpur (SC)	1996
36	Mamata Mukherjee	CPM	Purulia	1996

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
37	Bilasi Bala Sahis	CPM	Para (SC)	1996
38	Deblina Hembram	CPM	Ranibandh (ST)	1996
39	Susmita Biswas	CPM	Barjora	1996
40	Anju Kar	CPM	Kalna	1996
41	Sadhana Mallik,	CPM	Mangalkot	1996
42	**Kumari Kujur**	**RSP**	**Madarihat (ST)**	**2001**
43	Shanta Chettri	GNLF	Kurseong	2001
44	Khatun Mafuja	CPM	Kumarganj	2001
45	Sabitri Mitra	INC	Araidanga	2001
46	Asima Chowdhuri	CPM	Manikchak	2001
47	Rubi Noor	INC	Suzapur	2001
48	Chhaya Ghosh	FBL	Murshidabad	2001
49	Maya Rani Paul	INC	Berhampore	2001
50	Tapati Dutta	AITC	Habra	2001
51	Sarmista Dutta	CPM	Ashokenagar	2001
52	Sonali Guha	AITC	Satgachia	2001
53	Manju Basu	AITC	Noapara	2001
54	Nayna Bandyopadhyay	AITC	Bow Bazar	2001
55	Kanika Ganguly	CPM	Bally	2001
56	Nirupama Chatterjee	CPM	Bagnan	2001
57	Ibha Dey	CPM	Jangipara	2001
58	Ratna De (Nag)	AITC	Serampore	2001
59	Nanda Rani Dal	CPM	Keshpur (SC)	2001
60	Mina Sanatani	CPM	Jhargram	2001
61	Shamyapyari Mahata	CPM	Manbazar	2001
62	Bilasibala Sahis	CPM	Para (SC)	2001
63	Uma Rani Bouri	CPM	Raghunathpur (SC)	2001
64	Susmita Biswas	CPM	Barjora	2001
65	Ghose Manasi	CPM	Kotulpur	2001
66	Jyotsna Singh	CPM	Khandaghosh (SC)	2001
67	Anju Kar	CPM	Kalna	2001
68	Sadhana Mallik	CPM	Mangalkot	2001
69	Nabanita Mukherjee	CPM	Labhpur	2001
70	**Alaka Barman**	**CPI(M)**	**Tufanganj (SC)**	**2006**
71	Kumari Kujur	RSP	Madarihat (ST)	2006
72	Sukhmoith (Piting) Oraon	CPI(M)	Nagrakata (ST)	2006
73	Shanta Chhetri	GNLF	Kurseong	2006
74	Deepa Dasmunsi	INC	Goalpokhar	2006
75	Mafuja Khatun	CPI(M)	Kumarganj	2006
76	Sabitri Mitra	INC	Araidanga	2006

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
77	Asima Chaudhuri	CPI(M)	Manikchak	2006
78	Rubi Noor	INC	Suzapur	2006
79	Dr. Bithika Mondal	AIFB	Barasat	2006
80	Kumkum Chakraborti	CPI(M)	Behala East	2006
81	Chandana Ghoshdostidar	CPI(M)	Falta	2006
82	Dr. Tapati Saha	CPI(M)	Mandirbazar (SC)	2006
83	Sakuntala Paik	CPI(M)	Kulpi (SC)	2006
84	Dr. Nirjharini Chakrabarty	CPI(M)	Bijpur	2006
85	Rekha Goswami	CPI(M)	Dum Dum	2006
86	Rupa Bagchi	CPI(M)	Manicktola	2006
87	Mala Saha	AITC	Belgachia West	2006
88	Kanika Ganguly	CPI(M)	Bally	2006
89	Doli Roy	AIFB	Panchla	2006
90	Chandra Lekha Bag	CPI(M)	Udaynarayanpur	2006
91	Dr. Ratna De (Nag)	AITC	Serampore	2006
92	Bharati Mukherjee	CPI(M)	Haripal	2006
93	Chowdhury Chakraborty Bula	CPI(M)	Nandanpur	2006
94	Tamalika Panda Seth	CPI(M)	Mahishadal	2006
95	Chunibala Hansda	JKP(N)	Binpur (ST)	2006
96	Samya Pyari Mahato	CPI(M)	Manbazar	2006
97	Bilasibala Sahis .	CPI(M)	Para (SC)	2006
98	Uma Rani Bouri	CPI(M)	Raghunathpur (SC)	2006
99	Deblina Hembram	CPI(M)	Ranibandh (ST)	2006
100	Susmita Biswas	CPI(M)	Barjora	2006
101	Kalpana Koley	CPI(M)	Kotulpur	2006
102	Sandhya Bhattacharya	CPI(M)	Memari	2006
103	Anjali Mondal	CPI(M)	Kalna	2006
104	Sadhana Mallik	CPI(M)	Mangalkot	2006
105	Nabanita Mukherjee	CPI(M)	Labhpur	2006
106	**Mamtaj Begam**	**AITC**	**Metiaburuz**	**2011**
107	Usha Rani Mondal	AITC	Minakhan (SC)	2011
108	Namita Saha	AITC	Magrahat Purba (SC)	2011
109	Manju Basu	AITC	Noapara	2011
110	Debasree Roy	AITC	Raidighi	2011
111	Debalina Hembram	CPM	Ranibandh (ST)	2011
112	Sabitri Mitra	AITC	Manikchak	2011
113	Firoza Begam	INC	Raninagar	2011
114	Kumari Kujur	RSP	1 Madarihat (ST)	2011
115	Kasturi Das	AITC	Maheshtala	2011

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
116	Sikha Chowdhury(Mitra)	AITC	Chowrangee	2011
117	Aparna Saha	CPM	Burdwan Uttar (SC)	2011
118	Begam Mahamuda	AITC	Kumarganj	2011
119	Shaoni Singha Roy	INC	Murshidabad	2011
120	Banasri Maity	AITC	Kanthi Uttar	2011
121	Sabina Yeasmin	INC	Mothabari	2011
122	Firdousi Begum	AITC	Sonarpur Uttar	2011
123	Protima Rajak	INC	Burwan (SC)	2011
124	Mala Saha	AITC	Kashipur-Belgachhia	2011
125	Mamata Roy	CPM	Dhupguri (SC)	2011
126	Jahanara Khan	CPM	Jamuria	2011
127	Nilima Nag (Mallick)	AITC	Haringhata (SC)	2011
128	Chandrima Bhattacharya	AITC	Dum Dum Uttar	2011
129	Bina Mondal	AITC	Swarupnagar (SC)	2011
130	Sonali Guha (Bose)	AITC	Satgachhia	2011
131	Dipali Saha	AITC	Sonamukhi (SC)	2011
132	Asima Patra	AITC	Dhanekhali (SC)	2011
133	Smita Bakshi	AITC	Jorasanko	2011
134	Dr. Shashi Panja	AITC	Shyampukur	2011
135	Phiroja Bibi	AITC	Nandigram	2011
136	Seuli Saha	AITC	Haldia (SC)	2011
137	Swati Khandoker	AITC	Chanditala	2011
138	Chhaya Dolai	CPM	Chandrakona (SC)	2011
139	Sandhyarani Tudu	AITC	8 Manbazar (ST)	2011
140	Mamata Bhunia	AITC	Daspur, West Medinipur	2011
141	**Mitali Roy**	**AITC**	**Dhupguri (SC)**	**2016**
142	Sarita Rai	GOJAM	Kalimpong	2016
143	Dipali Biswas	CPM	Gazole (SC)	2016
144	Yeasmin Sabina	INC	Mothabari	2016
145	Shaoni Singha Roy	INC	Murshidabad	2016
146	Protima Rajak	INC	Burwan (SC)	2016
147	Mahua Moitra	AITC	Karimpur	2016
148	Rama Biswas	CPM	Ranaghat Dakshin (Se)	2016
149	Kar Ratna Ghosh	AITC	Chakdaha	2016
150	Nilima Nag (Mallick)	AITC	Haringhata (SC)	2016
151	Bina Mandal	AITC	Swarupnagar (SC)	2016
152	Rahima Mondal	AITC	Deganga	2016

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
153	Usha Rani Mondal	AITC	Minakhan (SC)	2016
154	Debasree Roy	AITC	Raidighi	2016
155	Sonali Guha (Bose)	AITC	Satgachia	2016
156	Firdousi Begum	AITC	Sonarpur Uttar	2016
157	Kasturi Das	AITC	Maheshtala	2016
158	Mamata Banerjee	AITC	Bhabanipur	2016
159	Nayna Bandyopadhyay	AITC	Chowrangee	2016
160	Smita Bakshi	AITC	Jorasanko	2016
161	Shashi Panja	AITC	Shyampukur	2016
162	Mala Saha	AITC	Kashipur-Belgachia	2016
163	Baishali Dalmiya	AITC	Bally	2016
164	Swati Khandoker	AITC	Chanditala	2016
165	Asima Patra	AITC	Dhanekhali (SC)	2016
166	Phiroja Bibi	AITC	Panskura Paschim	2016
167	Tapasi Mondal	CPM	Haldia (SC)	2016
168	Banasri Maity	AITC	Kanthi Uttar	2016
169	Selima Khatun (Bibi)	AITC	Debra	2016
170	Mamata Bhunia	AITC	Daspur	2016
171	Chhaya Dolai	AITC	Chandrakona (SC)	2016
172	Seuli Saha	AITC	Keshpur (SC)	2016
173	Sandhya Rani Tudu	AITC	Manbazar (ST)	2016
174	Jyotsna Mandi	AITC	Ranibandh (ST)	2016
175	Daripa Shampa	AITC	Bankura	2016
176	Begum Nargis	AITC	Memar	2016
177	Jahanara Khan	CPM	Jamuria	2016
178	Shyamali Pradhan	CPM	Nanoor (SC)	2016
179	Nilabati Saha	AITC	Sainthia (SC)	2016
180	Chandrima Bhattacharya(Bye Election)	AITC	Kanthi South, Purba Medinipur	2016
181	Namita Saha	AITC	Magrahut Purba, South 24 Parganas	2016
182	Firoza Begum	INC	Raninagar, Mursidabad	2016
183	Malati Rava Roy	BJP	Tufanganj	2021
184	Sikha Chatterjee	BJP	Dabgram-Fulbari	2021
185	Rekha Roy	AITC	Kushmandi	2021
186	Sabitri Mitra	AITC	Manikchak	2021
187	Sreerupa Mitra Chaudhury	BJP	Englishbazar	2021
188	Yeasmin Sabina	AITC	Mothabari	2021
189	Chandana Sarkar	AITC	Baisnabnagar	2021
190	Sahina Momtaz Khan	AITC	Naoda	2021
191	Bina Mondal	AITC	Swarupnagar	2021

SL. No	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	YEAR
192	Manju Basu	AITC	Noapara	2021
193	Chandrima Bhattacharya	AITC	Dum Dum Uttar	2021
194	Aditi Munshi	AITC	Rajarhat Gopalpur	2021
195	Rahima Mondal	AITC	Deganga	2021
196	Usha Rani Mondal	AITC	Minakhan	2021
197	Namita Saha	AITC	Magrahat Purba	2021
198	Arundhuti Maitra	AITC	Sonarpur Dakshin	2021
199	Firdousi Begum	AITC	Sonarpur Uttar	2021
200	Ratna Chatterjee	AITC	Behala Purba	2021
201	Bandyopadhyay Nayna	AITC	Chowrangee	2021
202	Dr. SHASHI PANJA	AITC	Shyampukur	2021
203	Nandita Chowdhury	AITC	Howrah Dakshin	2021
204	Priya Paul	AITC	Sankrail	2021
205	Dr. Ratna De Nag	AITC	Pandua	2021
206	Swati Khandoker	AITC	Chanditala	2021
207	Dr. Karabi Manna	AITC	Haripal	2021
208	Asima Patra	AITC	Dhanekhali	2021
209	Phiroja Bibi	AITC	Panskura Paschim	2021
210	Sumita Sinha	BJP	Kanthi Uttar	2021
211	Birbaha Hansda	AITC	Jhargram	2021
212	Mamata Bhunia	AITC	Daspur	2021
213	Uttara Singha (Hazra)	AITC	Garbeta	2021
214	Seuli Saha	AITC	Keshpur	2021
215	June Maliah	AITC	Medinipur	2021
216	Sandhyarani Tudu	AITC	Manbazar	2021
217	Bauri Chandana	BJP	Saltora	2021
218	Jyotsna Mandi	AITC	Ranibandh	2021
219	Shampa Dhara	AITC	Raina	2021
220	Agnimitra Paul	BJP	Asnsol Dakshin	2021
221	Nilabati Saha	AITC	Sainthia	2021

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APPENDIX-B

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS-ELECTED WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM WEST BENGAL- 10TH LOK SABHA -17TH LOK SABHA (1991-2019)

SL. NO.	NAME	PARTY	CONSTITUENCY	ELECTED
1	Mamata Banerjee	INC	Calcutta South	1984 & 1991(Congress-I)/ 1996(INC) /1998 (WBTC) / 1999 to 2014(AITC)
2	Prof. Malini Bhattacharya	CPI-M	Jadavpur	1989, 1991
3	Geeta Mukherjee	CPI-M	Panskura	1984, 1989, 1991, 1996, 1998, 1999
4	Sandhya Bauri	CPI-M	Vishnupur	1996, 1998, 1999
5	Prof Krishna Bose.	AITC	Jadavpur	1996, 1998, 1999
6	Minati Sen	CPI-M	Jalpaiguri	1998, 1999, 2004
7	Susmita Bauri	CPI-M	Vishnupur	2004, 2009
8	Joytirmoyee Sikdar	CPI-M	Krishnanagar	2004
9	Dr. Ratna De(Nag)	AITC	Hooghly	2009, 2014 (2001-2009-MLA)
10	Deepa Dasmunsi	INC	Raiganj	2009
11	Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar	AITC	Barasat	2009, 2014, 2019
12	Mausam Noor	INC	Maldaha Uttar	2009, 2014
13	Satabdi Roy (Banerjee)	AITC	Birbhum	2009, 2014, 2019
14	Sajda Ahmed	AITC	Uluberia	2018 (Bye Election), 2019
15	Arpita Ghosh	AITC	Balurghat	2014
16	Pratima Mondal	AITC	Jaynagar	2014, 2019
17	Aparupa Poddar	AITC	Arambagh	2014, 2019
18	Sandhya Roy	AITC	Medinipur	2014
19	Prof (Dr) Mamtaz Sanghamita	AITC	Bardhaman-Durgapur	2014
20	Dr. Uma Saren	AITC	Jhargram	2014
21	Mamata Thakur	AITC	Bangaon	2014
22	Dev (Moon Moon Sen) Verma	AITC	Bankura	2014
23	Nusrat Jahan Ruhi	AITC	BASIRHAT	2019
24	Locket Chatterjee	BJP	Hooghly	2019
25	Mimi Chakraborty	AITC	Jadavpur	2019
26	Mala Roy	AITC	Kolkata Dakshin	2019
27	Mahua Moitra	AITC	Krishnanagar	2019 (MLA elected in 2016)
28	Debasree Chaudhuri	BJP	Raiganj	2019

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APPENDIX-C

RE-ELECTED WOMEN LEGISTORS IN WEST BENGAL FROM 1991-2021

1991-2016	1991-2021
➢ 1 Woman Legislator elected for 5 times.	➢ 1 Woman Legislator elected for 6 times.
➢ 2 Women Legislators elected for 4 times.	➢ 2 Women Legislators elected for 4 times.
➢ 10 Women Legislators elected for 3 times.	➢ 21 Women Legislators elected for 3 times.
➢ 38 Women Legislators elected for 2 times	➢ 27 Women Legislators elected for 2 times.

SL NO.	NAME	PARTY	CONSTIUENCY	ELECTED
1	Minati Ghosh	CPM	Gangarampur	1991,1996
2	Sabitri Mitra	INC	Araidanga & Manikchak	1991,1996,2001,2006, 2011(Manikchak),2021
3	Rubi Noor	INC	Suzapur	1991,1996,2001,2006
4	Chhaya Ghosh	FBL	Murshidabad	1991,2001
5	Kamal Sengupta (Bose)	CPI, CPM	Habra & Bijpur	1991, 1996 (CPM, BIJPUR)
6	Kumkum Chakraborti	CPM	Behala East	1991,1996, 2006
7	Nirupama Chattopadhayay	CPM	Bagnan	1991,2001
8	Chhaya Bera	CPM	Nandanpur	1991,1996
9	Mamata Mukherjee	CPM	Purulia	1991,1996
10	Bilasi Bala Sahis	CPM	Para (SC)	1991,1996,2001,2006
11	Anju Kar	CPM	Kalna	1991,1996,2001
12	Shanta Chhetri	GNLF	Kurseong	1996,2001,2006
13	Maya Rani Paul	INC	Berhampur	1996,2001
14	Sakuntala Paik	CPM	Kulpi	1996,2006
15	Dr. Tapati Saha	CPM	Taltola (SC) & Mandirbazar (SC)	1996,2006 (Mandirbazar -SC)
16	Kanika Ganguly	CPM	Bally	1996,2001,2006
17	Ibha Dey	CPM	Jangipara	1996,2001
18	Deblina Hembram	CPM	Ranibandh	1996,2006,2011
19	Susmita Biswas	CPM	Barjora	1996,2001,2006
20	Sadhana Mallik	CPM	Mangalkote	1996,2001,2006
21	Kumari Kujur	RSP	Madarihat	2001,2006,2011
22	Khatun Mafuja	CPM	Kumarganj	2001,2006
23	Asima Chaudhuri	CPM	Manikchak	2001,2006
24	Sonali Guha (Bose)	AITC	Satgachia	2001,2011,2016
25	Manju Basu	AITC	Noapara	2001,2011,2021
26	Nayna Bandyopadhyay	AITC	Bowbazar, Chowrangee	2001,2016 (Chowrangee)
27	Dr. Ratna De (Nag)	AITC	Serampore	2001,2006
28	Smita Bakshi	AITC	Jorashako	2011,2016

SL NO.	NAME	PARTY	CONSTIUENCY	ELECTED
29	Dr. Shashi Panja	AITC	Shyampukur	2011,2016,2021
30	Nabanita Mukherjee	CPM	Labhpur	2001,2006
31	Usha Rani Mondal	AITC	Minakhan	2011,2016,2021
32	Debasree Roy	AITC	Raidighi	2011,2016
33	Kasturi Das	AITC	Mahestala	2011,2016
34	Shaoni Singha Roy	INC	Murshidabad	2011,2016
35	Banasri Maity	AITC	Kathi Uttar	2011,2016
36	Sabina Yeasmin	AITC	Mothabari	2011,2016
37	Firdousi Begum	AITC	Sonarpur Uttar	2011,2016,2021
38	Protima Rajak	INC	Burwan Sc	2011,2016
39	Jahanara Khan	CPM	Jamuria	2011,2016
40	Nilima Nag (Mallick)	AITC	Haringhata (SC)	2011,2016
41	Chandrima Bhattacharya	AITC	Dumdumuttar & Kathi South	2011,2016,2021
42	Asima Patra	AITC	Dhanekhali (SC)	2011,2016,2021
43	Mala Saha	AITC	Belgachia West & Kashipur-Belgachia	2006 (Belgachia West),2011,2016
44	Uma Rani Bouri	CPM	Raghunathpur (SC)	2001,2006
45	Phiroja Bibi	AITC	Nandigram &Panskura Paschim	2011,2016,2021
46	Seuli Saha	AITC	Haldia & Keshpur	2011,2016,2021
47	Swati Khandoker	AITC	Chanditala	2011,2016,2021
48	Chhaya Dolai	CPM	Chandrakona (SC)	2011,2016
49	Mamata Bhunia	AITC	Daspur	2011,2016,2021
50	Firoza Begum	INC	Raninagar	2011,2016
51	Sandhya Rani Tudu	AITC	Manbazar	2011,2016,2021

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APPENDIX-D

EDUCATIONAL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EMERGENCE OF WOMEN AS LEADERS

Sl. No	Name	Age	Marital Status	Education	Religion	Occupation	Factor for Emergence as Leader
1	Smt. Mitali Roy	47	Married	Under-Graduate	Hindu	Others (Business)	Family Linkages
2	Smt. Sonali Guha (Bose)	53	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Others	Family Linkages
3	Smt. Mala Saha	62	Married	Post-Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Family Linkages
4	Smt. Seuli Saha	51	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Others (Social & Political Worker)	Family Linkages
5	Smt. Swati Khandokar	53	Widow	Under-Graduate	Islam	Others (Social & Political Worker)	Dynastic Succession (Widow Of Leaders)
6	Smt. Protima Rajak	36	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Service	Personal Interest
7	Smt. Smita Bakshi	61	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Others	Family Linkages
8	Smt. Firdoushi Begum	42	Married	Under-Graduate	Islam	House Wife	Family Linkages
9	Prof. Malini Bhattacharya	77	Married	Post-Graduate	Atheist	Retired Professor	Personal Interest
10	Smt. Chandrima Bhattacharya	68	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Advocate	Family Linkages
11	Dr. Tapati Saha	69	Widow	MBBS	Hindu	Doctor	Personal Interest
12	Smt. Anjali Mondal	66	Married	Under-Graduate	Hindu	House Wife	Family Linkages
13	Smt. Sadhana Mallick	64	Married	Secondary Level	Hindu	Others	Family Linkages
134	Smt. Kumkum Chakraborty	68	Married	Post-Graduate	Hindu	Service	Family Linkages
15	Smt. Kanika Ganguly	64	Married	Post-Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Family Linkages
16	Smt. Sabitri Mitra	60	Married	Under-Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Personal Interest
17	Smt. Bilashi Bala Sahis	60	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Personal Interest

Sl. No	Name	Age	Marital Status	Education	Religion	Occupation	Emergence as Leader
18	Smt. Minati Sen	77	Widow	Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Family Linkages
19	Smt. Manju Basu	69	Widow	Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Dynastic Succession (Widow Of Leaders)
20	Smt. Asima Choudhury	77	Widow	Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Dynastic Succession (Widow Of Leaders)
21	Smt. Anju Kar	66	Widow	Graduate	Hindu	Others (Social & Political Worker)	Family Linkages
22	Smt. Sakuntala Paik	57	Married	Graduate	Hindu	Teacher	Family Linkages
23	Ms.Rupa Bagchi	55	Unmarried	Post-Graduate	Hindu	Others (Social & Political Worker)	Family Linkages
24	Smt. Shanta Chhetri	63	Widow	Post-Graduate	Hindu	Service	Personal Interest
25	Smt. Mamata Bhunia	59	Widow	Secondary Level	Hindu	House Wife	Dynastic Succession (Widow Of Leaders)

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APPENDIX-E
PHOTOGRAPHS OF INTERVIEWS

- Smt. MITALI ROY, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 15th June, 2019, Venue: Dhupguri, West Bengal.

- Smt. KUMKUM CHAKRABORTY, Ex–Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 12th August, 2019, Venue: Behala, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. SONALI GUHA (BOSE), Member of Legislative Assembly &in 2011 Deputy Speaker, First Woman Deputy Speaker in West Bengal Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 18th August, 2019, Venue: College Square, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. KANIKA GANGULY, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview, 19th August, 2019, Vanue, Uttarpara,Hooghly, West Bengal.

- Smt. Mala Saha, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview, 22nd August, 2019, Venue-Bealgachia, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. MINATI SEN, Ex-Member of Parliament, Date of Interview, 25th August, 2019, Venue, New Town, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal.

- Smt. SHANTA CHHETRI, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Date of Interview: 28th August, 2019, Venue:MLA Hostel, Kyd Street,Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Dr. Tapati Saha, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 30th August, 2019, Venue: Bagbazar,Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. SMITA BAKSHI, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 31th August, 2019, Venue:C.R. Avenue, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Prof. MALINI BHATTACHARYA, Ex–Member of Parliament, Date of Interview: 1st September, 2019, Venue: Lake Garden, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. MANJU BASU, Ex–Member of Legislative Assembly, Presently Elected Member, Date of Interview: 14th November, 2019, Venue: Ichapur,North 24 Parganas, West Bengal.

- Smt. ANJALI MONDAL, Ex–Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 16th November, 2019, Venue: CPI-M District Party Office, Burdwan, West Bengal.

- Smt. SADHANA MALLICK, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 16th November, 2019, Venue: CPI-M District Party Office, Burdwan, West Bengal.

- Smt. ASIMA CHOUDHURI, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 26th November, 2019, Venue: Malda, West Bengal.

- Smt. SABITRI MITRA, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Minister of Women and Child Development Department & Minister of Social Welfare from 2011–2016. Date of Interview: 26th November, 2019, Venue: Malda, West Bengal.

- Smt. BILASHI BALA SAHIS, State Minister of Forest department in 1996 & 2006 and Minister of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare department in 2001; Minister Of State Of Backward Classes Welfare Department, 2001. Date of Interview. 5th January, 2020, in online mode.

- Smt. CHANDRIMA BHATTACHARYA, Cabinet Minister of Judicial and Law Department in 2012, from 2011–2021 Minister of Housing; Minister in–charge of Health and Family Welfare, Land and Land Reforms and Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation, Panchayats and Rural Development. Date of Interview. 9th January, 2020, in online mode.

- Smt. PROTIMA RAJAK, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview. 11th January, 2020, Venue. MLA Hostel, Kyd Street,Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. SWATI KHANDOKAR, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview, 14th January, 2020, Venue, West Bengal Legislative Assembly, Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. SEULI SAHA, Member of Legislative Assembly, Presently Minister,Date of Interview, 15th January, 2020, Venue, Tollygunge,Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Smt. MAMATA BHUNIA, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview, 16th January, 2020, in online mode.

- Smt. FIRDOUSHI BEGUM, Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 18th January, 2020, Venue: Sonarpur AITC Party Office, Kolkata.

- Smt. SAKUNTALA PAIK, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 19th January, 2020, in online mode.

- Ms. RUPA BAGCHI, Ex-Member of Legislative Assembly, Date of Interview: 20th January, 2020,in online mode.

- Smt. ANJU KAR, Minister of State For Adult Education, Non-formal Education, Audio Visual Education, Social Welfare Homes, Education Of The Handicapped (Excluding Integrated Education For Disabled Children), Library Services And Social Education Extension and All Matters Relating To District social Education offices and Extension offices (Social Education) in the department of Education from 1991-2001; Minister of State of Municipal Affairs from 2001-2006. Date of Interview, 20th January, 2020. Venue, Beniapukur CPI-M Party Office, Kolkata, West Bengal

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Editor
Manas Chakrabarty
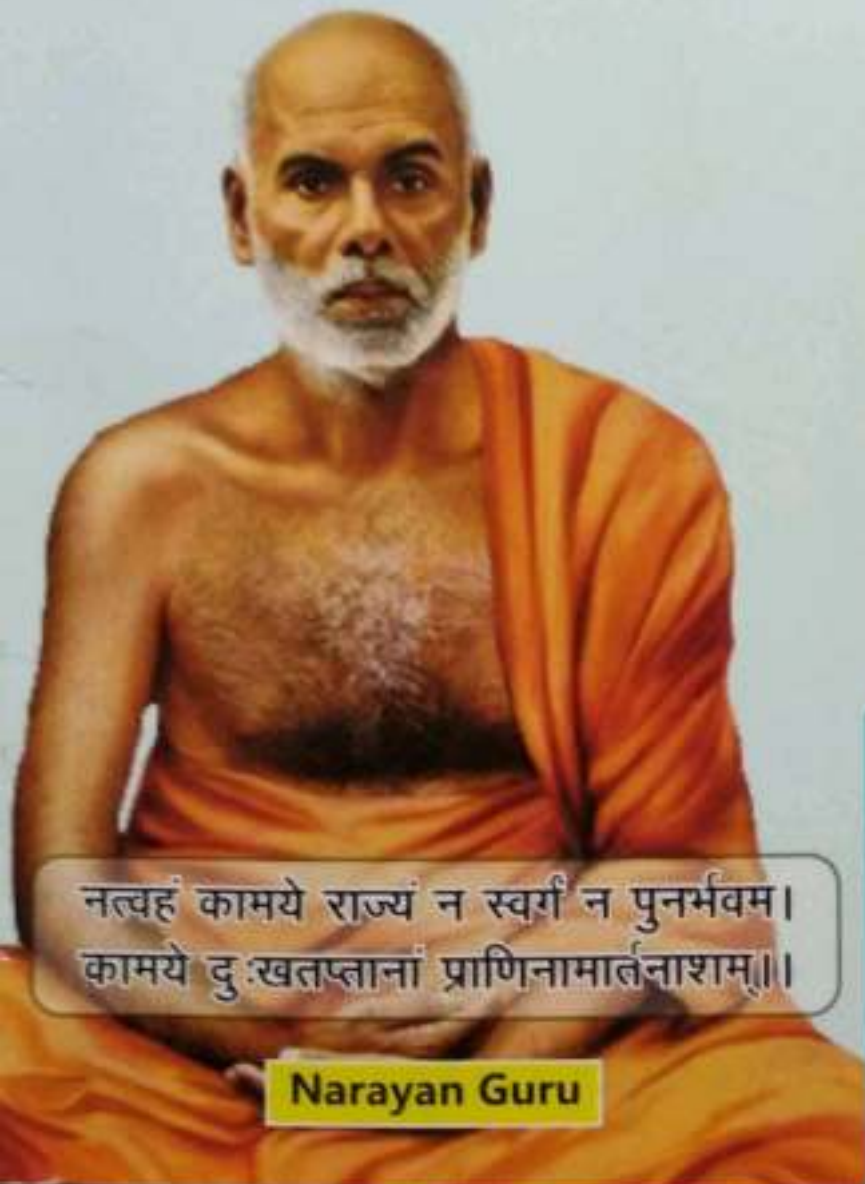
नत्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं न पुनर्भवम।
कामये दु:खतप्तानां प्राणिनामार्तनाशम्।।

Narayan Guru

**The Quarterly Journal
of Indian Political
Science Association**

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WOMEN IN ELECTORAL POLITICS: INDIAN EXPERIENCE

Aloka Roy

Indian Constitution with the inclusion of universal adult franchise and all other political rights granted women's participation in political activities. With all these constitutional provisions today we can see women's political activities has increased and improved and women are playing active role in politics by holding high positions in offices. But the overall picture of women's political participation, particularly in electoral politics is not very satisfactory. A gap is visible between the constitutional rights and the rights enjoyed in reality by women. Seventy-three years of independence have made very little impact on women's active participation in politics. Their performance quantitatively increased but remains insignificant. The fact is women have remained outside the domain of power and political authority. While we had raised our voice for gender equality in all aspects of human life but the reality is men and women are not equal we still have to face long battles to get equality. In this perspective, the present paper is an attempt to examine the Indian experience in regard to women's participation in the electoral fray and women's representation in the formal political structures of India.

Key Words: Electoral Politics, Gender Equality, Political Participation, Political Parties, Political Representation, Women and Politics.

Introduction:

If we do not draw women into public activity,.... into political life,...then it is impossible to secure real freedom, it is impossible even to build democracy, let alone socialism." **Lenin, 1943.**

The definitions of democracy indicate that there must be people's participation. Without the participation of its citizens, democracy becomes meaningless. Political participation is the hall mark of a democratic setup. Participation in politics is a pre-requisite and minimal requirement for a successful democratic political system. A democratic society is a participant society in which power is shared and authoritative decisions concerning the society are made by the representative of the citizens. Another general point which is the part of the definition of democracy, and fundamental to all democratic theories, is that citizens should have the opportunity to vote in elections, to organize political parties and pressure groups and to give public expression to their views on political issues without fear of reprisals. Democracy finds its meaning only when the politically conscious people participate in choosing the rule-makers of the nation. Therefore, it is clear that participation of politically conscious people can make a democracy effective. As women comprise about half of the population, this section of society requires due attention in the system and a due share in process.

After Independence in 1947, Indian women were guaranteed political equality with men. The Article 16(1) of the constitution guarantees "equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state." Article 325 makes no special electoral rolls on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex. Article 326 emphasises that elections to the legislative assemblies of state are to be held on the basis of adult franchise[1]. In spite of such constitutional provisions a gap is visible in India between the constitutional rights and the rights enjoyed by women in reality and here lays the rationality of this study.

Objectives of the Study:

The aims of the study are to investigate the level of women's representation in the formal political

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structures and also to develop understanding of the electoral trends considering women in the Parliament and at the local level (PRIs) of Indian states with special reference to the political parties through illustrations and discussion. In addition with these it tries to find out whether Indian electoral politics indicates any interesting new trend in regard to women's participation in politics or not.

Methodology and Sources of Data:

The study is based on electoral records of the election commission of India. Tables are drawn based on various secondary data sources to assist discussion on the level of women representatives in the country. The trend is also revealed through these elicitations. The secondary sources cover books, journals, periodicals, government notifications, gazette publications, petitions, memoranda, research articles and newspaper articles from local newspaper, websites etc.

Women's Political Participation in India:

While, with the introduction of democracy Indian women have obtained rights of participation and representation in parliaments and state legislatures but their percentage has remained extremely low. Indian women can vote and stand for election to all provincial and central bodies though the extent of their involvement falls far short to the equality promised by the Constitution. Considering the issue of women's reservation, the attitude of the national leaders and the makers of independent India are well reflected in the composition of the national and state legislatures in India. In 1973, All India Panchayat Parishad in its Sixth National Conference recommended reservation for women in at least one third of the seats. This resolution was followed by a report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) in 1974. Though, the Committee rejected the demands for women's reservation in legislative bodies of the states and the Centre but recommended statutory women's Panchayats at the village level because of the neglect of women in rural development programmes. Two members of the Committee disagreed with the decision of not recommending reservation for women in legislative bodies and argued that greater representation of women at national and state level legislatures would build up a number of spokespersons for women's rights and opportunities. Hence, the recommendations of the Sixth National

Conference of the All India Panchayat Parishad were largely ignored for a period of more than fifteen years. Later, the National Perspective Plan, 1988, urged all political parties to ensure at least 30% women among the candidates put up for election. However, none of the parties came anywhere near the promised 30% in any of their decision-making bodies, nor have fielded a comparable number of women contestants. In 1989, Rajiv Gandhi announced that 30 per cent of seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions would be reserved for women. The issue of women's reservation in Panchayati Raj Institutions became an election issue and when Congress returned to power in 1991, the 73rd and 74th Amendment Bill providing for one-third reservation or 33% quota for women in local self-government institutions were passed in December 1992, and were ratified by all states by April 1993. These Amendments created 1,000,000 slots for elected women representatives. These reservations or quota brought quantitative changes, facilitated women to be represented in local governments only but not in State or Central Governments[2].

In 1996, the Constitution (81st) Amendment Bill, proposing 33 per cent reservation for women in Parliament was introduced. Though the major political parties supported the demand, but they themselves gave less than 15% of their total number of tickets to women. The political parties raise the issue of reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures just to earn the support of women organizations and activists for election purposes. Thus Reservation of seats for women is just an electoral plank. Over the last 14 years, the Women's Reservation Bill has crossed a very controversial journey. However, after a long debatical journey finally in the Rajya Sabha the historic women Reservation Bill was passed on 9th March 2010 and yet it is pending in the Lok Sabha.

There are several socio-economic constraints by which women have been marginalised. The number of women in the leadership positions at the local, village, district, state and national level is still not commensurate with their numbers in society. In India, limited adult franchise was granted to women in 1937. Since then, women have been participating in political process, as voters, as candidates contesting the elections, involved in deliberations both in State Assemblies and Parliament and also through holding public office at different levels in the Judiciary.

Voting is the basic activity by which the citizens get assimilated in the political process. Women's participation in formal elections is to a great extent dependent on the mobilization efforts of the political parties, general awareness among the community of the importance of exercising franchise and overall political culture[1]. Hence, over the years, women's participation by way of voting is clearly visible in the Table no 1.1.

Table No: 1.1
Percentage of Female Vote in General Elections (1952-2019)

Year Of Lok Sabha Elections	VOTING PERCENTAGE		Gap Between Male And Female Voting Percentage
	MALE	FEMALE	
1952	53.0	37.1	-15.9
1957	56.0	39.6	-16.4
1962	62.1	46.6	-15.5
1967	66.7	55.5	-11.2
1971	60.8	49.11	-11.69
1977	65.62	54.91	-10.71
1980	62.17	51.2	-10.97
1984	68.17	58.59	-9.58
1989	66.13	57.31	-8.82
1991	61.58	51.34	-10.24
1996	62.06	53.41	-8.65
1998	65.86	57.69	-8.17
1999	63.96	55.63	-8.33
2004	61.98	53.63	-8.35
2009	60.24	55.81	-4.43
2014	67.00	65.53	-1.47
2019	67.00	67.17	+0.17

Source: 1st to 4th (1952 to 1967) General Elections from Susheela Kaushik, "Women, Women's Issues, and Ninth General Elections,"Teaching Politics, Vol. XV, Nos. 3 & 4, 1989, pp.113.

Statistical Reports on the 5th to 17th General Elections (1971-2019) to the House of the People in India, Election Commission of India, New Delhi, available at eci.gov.in

The above table shows that over the years women's participation by way of voting has been growing but not steadily. While in 2019 women turn out in greater numbers than in previous elections. For the first time the turnout of women exceeded that of men, it is 67. 17%, it is the highest ever percentage and the men voting turnout is same as it was in 2014 (67%). The difference between male and female voting percentage shows that, except in 2019, women always lagged behind of men in voting turnout. Hence, the 17th Lok Sabha (2019) is the ray of hope for women that are showing the gender equality in political participation is no longer away from them.

If we have a look at the past history of the

women's political participation we find that no serious efforts appear to have been made to mobilize women as political pressure groups by any political party. Caste, personality, and families of candidates appear to be more important to voters than party ideology. Some other facts like education, religion, class and tradition also seem to affect women's participations. However, voting an indication of political participation for women in India has its own strength and weakness. Voting has a tremendous impact for equalizing and mobilizing women. Yet, it has to be noted that voting requires the least initiative and internal motivation. Very often the women citizen treats the day of voting as a welcome break from her dull and tiring routine and does not appear to have a notion of why she should vote for a particular candidate[4].

Representation of Women in the Elected Bodies of India:

The right to vote can be said to be the starting point in the struggle for women political equality. The participation of women in the electoral process is an indicator of their political consciousness. In the pre-independence period, there were thousands of outstanding women all over the country with the experience of the freedom movement behind them. Their involvement for long years in social and political work, running educational institutions, and so on, would have given them the requisite training and experience to be an effective parliamentarian. But they were systematically ignored and bypassed. The marginalization of women in Indian politics is that it is happening despite widespread social opinion in favour of women's active political participation[5].

Women in the Lok Sabha:

In India, the major national political parties voiced their support for women's representation in parliament, although they themselves gave less than 15% of their total number of tickets to women. Their election manifestoes sometimes contain declarations relating to women's empowerment, but a close scrutiny of the lists of contesting candidates of different political parties do not justify their claim. Political parties seem uniformly reluctant to field women candidates. Table no 1.2 shows party-wise representation of women in the Lok Sabha elections from 1957 to 2019.

Table No: 1.2
Party-wise Women Representation in the Lok Sabha, 1957-2019

Year	INC	Left Front*	BJS/ BLD/ BJP/ BJD	JNP/ JD	SWA/ BSP	IND	OTH	No. of Women Contestants	No. of Women Elected
1957	19	1	0	-	-	-	2	45	22
1962	26	1	0	-	4(SWA)	-	-	66	31
1967	19	1	1(BJS)	-	3(SWA)	2	3	67	29
1977	6	3	8(BLD)	-	-	-	2	70	19
1980	20	3	-	4 (JNP)	-	-	1	143	28
1984	37	2	-	-	-	-	3	162	42
1989	15	4	5	2	-	-	3	198	29
1991	20	3	10	2	-	-	2	326	37
1996	16	2	14	4	-	-	4	599	40
1998	10	5	15	-	1	1	11	274	43
1999	14	4	15	1	1	1	13	284	49
2004	12	5	10	-	1	-	17	355	45

2009	23	1	13	2	4	-	16	556	59
2014	4	1	30	-	-	-	27	668	62
2019	6	0	46 (41-BJP 5-BJD)	1 (JD-U)	1 (BSP)	2	22*	724	78

*Left Front- CPI/CPM

*AITC-9, YSRCP-4, DMK-2 & from other various political parties-7

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

The above table reveals that till 1996 elections Congress was the leading party of giving more representation to the women in the Parliament. A majority of women contest from the Congress Party even while the overall percentage of party tickets given to women remains shamefully low. In the next two elections the situation has been changed slightly, the BJP took the lead in respect of women representatives in the Lok Sabha. In the 16⁰ (2014) and 17ᵗʰ (2019) Lok Sabha, the performance of Congress party concerning women is very much poor and while BJP's performance (30 & 41) is noteworthy. Now-a-days the BJP attracts far more women workers than the Congress but the BJP and other parties also use their women's fronts as mere auxiliaries mobilised into action for demonstrations, mass protests and campaign work during elections. In recent years, the BJP is overtaking the Congress Party in fielding relatively larger number of women and giving them a certain visibility. However, apart from two major national political parties (INC, BJP), the other national and state-level political parties put up some women candidates for elections, but their representation to the women in the Parliament is very much poor, never cross the limit of 5, except AITC (All India Trinamool Congress). Hence, over the years, the number of women contestants for election has increased but the number of women representatives to the Parliament has not increased in order of women contestants. Therefore, the overall representation of women in Parliament is too low compare to men representatives[6].

Though the women voting participation is not very poor in comparison to men, but their participation and representation in law-making and law implementing bodies is very deplorable (see Tables 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5).

Table No: 1.3
Women Members in the Lok Sabha (1952-2019)

Year of Lok Sabha Elections	Total No of Seats	No. Of Women Contestants	No. Of Women Member Elected	Percentage of Elected Women
1952	499	51	22	4.4
1957	500	45	22	4.4
1962	503	66	31	6.1
1967	523	67	29	5.5
1971	521	86	22	4.2
1977	544	70	19	3.4
1980	544	143	28	5.1
1984	544	162	42	7.7

1989	529	198	29	5.4
1991	544	326	37	6.8
1996	541	599	40	7.3
1998	545	274	43	7.8
1999	543	284	49	9.02
2004	543	355	45	8.2
2009	543	556	59	10.8
2014	543	631	62	11.4
2019	542	724	78	14.3

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

The table 1.3 shows that there were 51 women contestants in the first general election held in 1952. Their number increased to 724 in 2019. However, in 15th and 16th Lok Sabha the overall representation of women is too low barely 10 or 11% in comparison to their about 50% share in voting population[7]. While, 78 women members are elected in 2019, which makes 14.3% and this is the highest number ever.

Women's Representation in the Rajya Sabha:

The representation of women in Rajya Sabha (Council of States) is also not encouraging. The following table (No.1.4) gives us a clear picture of the women strength in the Rajya Sabha. Presently (as per available data till 17th November, 2020) we have 25 women members in the Rajya Sabha which makes the percentage of 10.33% but it is very much deplorable. From the below tabulation it is clear that yet women have to walk a long way for equal representation in the governing bodies. This trend indicates that various ruling political parties in the respective states of the country are biased against women in nominating them to the upper house also while the situation of Rajya Sabha in case of women representatives is better compare to Lok Sabha[8].

Table No: 1.4
Women Members in the Rajya Sabha

Years	Total No. of Seats	No. of Women Members	Percentage of Women
1952-54	219	15	6.85
1954-56	232	16	6.90
1956-58	236	20	8.47
1958-60	236	22	9.32
1960-62	236	24	10.17
1962-64	238	17	7.14
1964-66	238	21	8.82
1966-68	240	23	9.58
1968-70	240	22	9.17
1970-72	243	14	5.76
1972-74	243	18	7.41

1974-76	244	17	6.97
1976-78	244	24	9.84
1978-80	244	25	10.25
1980-82	244	29	11.89
1982-84	244	24	9.84
1984-86	244	24	9.84
1986-88	245	28	11.43
1988-90	245	25	10.20
1990-92	245	24	9.80
1992-94	245	17	6.94
1994-96	245	20	8.16
1996-98	245	19	7.76
1998-2000	245	19	7.76
2000-2002	245	22	8.98
2002-2004	245	25	10.20
2004-2006	245	28	11.43
2006-2008	245	25	10.20
2008-2010	245	24	9.80
2010-2012	245	27	11.02
2012-2014	245	24	9.80
2014-2016	245	30	12.24
2016-2018	245	28	11.43
2018-2020	245	28	11.43
2020- Till 17th Nov 2020	242	25	10.33

Sources: Rajya Sabha Who's Who 2016 at: https://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/member_site/women.aspx

Women in the Decision-Making Bodies:

Despite general acceptance of the need for a gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality has persisted. Notwithstanding substantial improvements of de jure equality between men and women, the actual participation of women at the highest levels of decision-making has not significantly changed and under representation of women in decision-making bodies present in all areas. Women continue to be underrepresented at the ministerial level; the following table reveals the reality in this regard[6].

Table No: 1.5
Women in the Council of Ministers (1952-2019)

Year of Lok Sabha Elections	Total No. of Ministers	No. of Women Ministers	Percentage
1952	26	2	7.6
1957	38	3	7.8

1962	52	8	15.3
1967	51	5	9.8
1971	53	4	7.5
1977	44	4	9.09
1980	51	6	11.7
1985	40	4	10
1989	39	2	5.12
1991	39	9	23.07
1995	49	5	10.20
1996	39	4	10.25
1998	42	4	9.52
2002	80	7	8.75
2004	67	7	10.4
2009	79	7	8.8
2014	46	7	15.2
2019	58	6	10.34

Source: www.parliamentofindia.nic.in

The table 1.5 shows that a clear picture of the number of women ministers in the Council of Ministers since 1952. Their numerical strength is also marginal in decision making bodies. Only a few women have succeeded in getting into the council of ministers. As is clear from the below table, the maximum number of women ministers has been only 9, in the year 1991. Women membership in the Council of Ministers, which is the apex policy making body in India, has never gone beyond 10 percent mark. There had never been more than one woman cabinet minister; most of the women ministers had been of the rank of the state ministers or deputy ministers. The table shows that in 1962 and 1991, comparatively more women were in the Council of Ministers. In 2019, though the number of women voters (67.17%) is larger than men voters (67.00%) but still their presence in the council of ministers remains very disappointing, again it decreased to 10.34% from 15.2% in 2014. However, from the above tables it is clear to us that the representation of women in the national level political institutions is very deplorable. The results of 1st to 17th General Elections reflect low level of women's participation in Lok Sabha. Women comprises nearly 50 per cent of the total population, but their share in the highest decision making body is always less than 15 per cent. In the first general election their representation in Lok Sabha was only 4.4 per cent and it became only 14.3 per cent in the recent 17th Lok Sabha election (2019). Though women's representation in the Lok Sabha is not of course a barometer of their representation in the political process, but it is a marker of sorts. This shows that the actual power is male monopoly with just a few exceptions. Women are not only rare in decision-making positions, even if they are elected they have to struggle within the formal structure heavily weighted against them. In independent India, pervasive gender discrimination has resulted in sidelining even veteran women politicians. It is difficult for women to establish a foothold without patronage from powerful men in the party. This is indeed a matter for serious concern because the level of political participation among women acts as a reliable barometer of the health of its democracy[iii].

Post 1990's Trend in Indian Politics:

Since 1984, there has been also noticed an important shift in the perception of the society towards women's participation in politics and women leaders and post 1990 indicates a trend that the number of women participating in the electoral fray

have increased. One interesting fact is noticed that more and more women are contesting the polls under the banner of the state and regional political parties or independently rather than the national political parties. In 1984 and 1989, there was marginal difference between women contestants of national parties and state or regional parties but post 1990 the difference becomes wider. In this regard, the following table 1.6 is showing the evidence.

Table No: 1.6
Performance of Women in National Parties vis-a-vis Others

Year of Lok Sabha Election	Political Parties	Women Contestants	Elected Women Members
1984	National	63	39
	State/ Regional/ Independents	99	3
	Total	**162**	**42**
1989	National	87	26
	State/ Regional/ Independents	111	3
	Total	**198**	**29**
1991	National	119	35
	State/ Regional/ Independents	207	2
	Total	**326**	**37**
1996	National	125	36
	State/ Regional/ Independents	474	4
	Total	**599**	**40**
1998	National	107	31
	State/ Regional/ Independents	167	12
	Total	**274**	**43**
1999	National	104	35
	State/ Regional/ Independents	180	14
	Total	**284**	**49**
2004	National	110	30
	State/ Regional/ Independents	245	15
	Total	**355**	**45**
2009	National	134	43
	State/ Regional/ Independents	422	16
	Total	**556**	**59**
2014	National	146	36
	State/ Regional/ Independents	522	26
	Total	**668**	**62**
2019	National	171	58
	State/ Regional/ Independents	553	20
	Total	**724**	**78**

Source: Statistical Report on General Elections, Election Commission of India, New Delhi.

Since 1980s, the increase in the electoral participation women in India has the visibility of women in the legislative politics. But, this has not happened in the exercise of executive and judicial power due to their lack of presence in the decision making structures. While a large enough proportion of women turn out to vote and the gender gap in turnout has dropped to the single digit in the 1990s from almost 20 percent in 1971 and presently sometimes it crossed men's turnout but women still are not well represented in political life that requires them to be active in the public sphere – such as membership in Parliament and in State Legislative Assemblies. To redress the low level of participation by women in deliberative bodies the Government of India, in 1992, amended the constitution (73rd and 74th amendments) that would reserve a third of the seats in the *Panchayats* (local governments) including the chairpersonship of these local bodies for women[11]. This constitutional amendment has indeed brought women into local bodies[12].

Women's Representation in the PRI's Across Indian States:

At the local level, women participation as an elected representative is high (see Table No. 1.7) primarily because of the reservation introduced for women as per the 73rd amendment in the Indian constitution. The 73rd amendment to the Indian constitution was introduced in 1992 with the ostensible purpose of giving women a larger voice in the political process. The amendment reserve, not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat for women and it would also ensure that a third of the chairmanships of the Panchayats would be reserved for women. Insofar as the 73rd amendment also required that states hold elections to the Panchayats, and as the amendment was adopted in 1992, the amendment could influence the extent of political participation

by women almost instantaneously.[13] With the Constitutional amendment of 50% reservation for women at grassroots level political empowerment of women is increased. The enhanced reservation is applicable to the total number of seats to be filled by direct elections, the offices of Chairpersons, and the seats and offices of Chairpersons reserved for scheduled castes and tribes. Providing reservation for women in panchayats is under the jurisdiction of states and so many states have exercised their rights to give such reservation. While states like Bihar, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have already implemented 50 per cent quota for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. As per the information available with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 20 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal made provisions of 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. A statement showing the number of elected women representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the country, State/Union Territory-wise is given at Table 3.8. Half of the Indian states ensured 50% (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim & Telengana) even in some cases more than 50% women's participation and representation in PRIs such as Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, & West Bengal. But, concerns have been raised over the genuine participation of women as an elected representative. It has been reported that the men have been ruling with their women as a proxy. However, it is remarkable presence of women in the PRIs of Chhattisgarh, Assam and Uttarakhand, 54.78%, 54.60% and 56.01% respectively.

Table No: 1.7

States/UTs Wise Percentage of Elected Women Representatives in PRI's Elections

Sl. No	States/ UTs	Total PRI Representatives	Total Elected Women Representatives	Percentage of Elected Women Representatives
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	858	306	35.66

2	Andhra Pradesh	156050	78,025	50
3	Arunachal Pradesh	9383	3,658	38.98
4	Assam	26754	14,609	54.60
5	Bihar	136573	71,046	52.02
6	Chhattisgarh	170465	93,392	54.78
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	147	47	31.97
8	Daman & Diu	192	92	47.91
9	Goa	1555	571	36.72
10	Gujarat	144080	71,988	49.96
11	Haryana	70035	29,499	42.12
12	Himachal Pradesh	28723	14,398	50.12
13	Jammu & Kashmir	39850	13,224	33.18
14	Jharkhand	59638	30,757	51.57
15	Karnataka	101954	51,030	50.05
16	Kerala	18372	9,630	52.41
17	Ladakh	NA	NA	NA
18	Lakshadweep	110	41	37.27
19	Madhya Pradesh	392981	196490	49.99
20	Maharashtra	240635	128677	53.47
21	Manipur	1736	880	50.69
22	Odisha	107487	56,627	52.68
23	Puducherry	NA	NA	NA
24	Punjab	100312	41,922	41.79
25	Rajasthan	126271	64,802	51.31
26	Sikkim	1153	580	50.30
27	Tamil Nadu	106450	56,407	52.98
28	Telangana	103468	52,096	50.34
29	Tripura	6646	3,006	45.23
30	Uttar Pradesh	913417	304538	33.34
31	Uttarakhand	62796	35,177	56.01
32	West Bengal	59229	30,458	51.42
		3187320	1453973	44.03

* NA- Not Available

Source: Press Information Bureau, Govt. of India www.pib.gov.in as on 23rd September, 2020.

Therefore, in India electoral participation and quotas through affirmative action alone are not enough to result in gender equity. Although, we have raised our voice for women's reservation as the means of women's political empowerment, but at the same time it is also true that, the large number of women in legislature will not be the appropriate solution to the problem. It is foolishness to think that it will solve the entire problems faced by women and bring equality immediately. But it is just a step to mobilize women into the political arena. Therefore, women's involvement in politics requires special consideration,

and cannot be left to the forces that presently dominate our parties and Government.

Conclusion:

Women's right to equal political participation, including their right to vote, was accepted very gracefully in India much earlier than most western societies conceded to this. Indian women did not even have to fight for this right, unlike their western counterparts. Since 1980's, the increase in the electoral participation women in India has the visibility of women in the legislative politics. But, this has not happened in the exercise of executive and judicial power due to their lack of presence in the decision making structures.

In the present scenario, it is important to note here that the struggle of women to prove themselves as equal to men, in the political arena, is found more difficult work. When a woman has been able to prove herself as an active parliamentarian for the one time then she has been elected repeatedly in the Parliament or Panchayats and that time political party does not matter from which party she belongs. In this regard, women leaders such as Vijaya Raje Scindia, Dr. Sushila Nayar, Maneka Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee who were/are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men, so they don't need the reference of any political party. But, for one time, if she has been failed to prove herself then she may never be choose by the same political party for the election. Though, this trend we have seen rarely in case of male candidates. In case of men members, they don't need to prove themselves again and again but this is necessary for women all the time. In this respect, one thing is need to mention here that male party leaders have shown little willingness to include women in party decision making bodies or help to create a suitable atmosphere for women's participation in their own organizations. This attitude of male party leaders is not a healthy sign towards women participation in politics as well as in decision-making bodies and also for democracy. In India, all these tendencies towards women participation in the political process makes the journey of women towards politics harder literally. Therefore, women are unable to get an equal share in organizations that require decision making.

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CONTENTS

Women Representation in Electoral Politics In West Bengal

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Abstract: *"As long as women of India do not take part in public life, there can be no salvation for the country".* He further declared, *"As long as . . . ...Women do not come to public life and purify.. .. We are not likely to attain swaraj". "Ever if we did",* he added, *"It would have no use for that kind of swaraj to which women have not made their full contribution."* -Gandhiji, 1925.

The definitions of democracy indicate that there must be people's participation. Without the participation of its citizens, democracy becomes meaningless. Political participation is the hall mark of a democratic setup. Nature, success and effectiveness of democracy largely depend on the extent to which equal, effective and actual participation is provided by the system to all its citizens. As women comprise about half of the population, this section of society requires due attention in the system and a due share in process. Citizens' active participation in political affairs in a democracy is crucial and necessary because it provides legitimacy to the system and also strengthens the democratic fabric (Palmer, 1976, p.50-57). Democracy will fail in its objectives if women citizens lack equal opportunity to participate in the governmental decision-making process. They are to be equal partners in the nation-building and political development.

In this perspective, the present paper is an attempt to examine the extent of women's participation in the electoral fray and representation of women in the formal political structures of West Bengal as well as it also focuses on the statements of selected women legislators of West Bengal regarding women's political participation.

Key Words: Electoral Politics, Women Participation in Politics, Representation in Electoral Process.

If we do not draw women into public activity,.... into political life,...then it is impossible to secure real freedom, it is impossible even to build democracy, let alone socialism." **Lenin**, 1943.

1. INTRODUCTION:

As we all know that today more and more voluntary organizations and national agencies have been more concerned about women questions, their activities expanding new areas of action and they are also seeking to reach out to women in the rural and remote areas. The approach to women's issues is also gradually changing from one of protection and welfare, to that of participation and empowerment. With independence Indian women were guaranteed political equality with men. Indian Constitution ensures equality into various articles. With such initiatives the number of women participating in the electoral fray has increased but the number of women representatives in the formal political structures has never exceeded 15 percent of all seats. At the state level, their membership in the legislature is abysmally low, lower than their numbers in the parliament, with the highest being 13.26% in the state of West Bengal. With the introduction of democratic governance Indian women have obtained right to vote, right to participation, right to stand for elections and right to representation in the parliaments and state legislatures but their percentage has remained extremely low. Though, in 2011 Government of India approved 50% reservation for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions but the 33% women's reservation in the Parliament is still a matter of uncertainty.

2. METHODOLOGY & OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The aims of the study are:

> ➢ Firstly it examines the extent of women's participation in the electoral fray and representation of women in the formal political structures of West Bengal.

> ➢ Secondly analyses the statements of selected women legislators of West Bengal regarding women's political participation.

> ➢ Finally some recommendations were made for the promotion of women's participation in politics.

The study is based on electoral records of the election commission of India. Tables are drawn based on various secondary data sources to assist discussion on the level of women representatives of West Bengal. The secondary sources cover books, journals, periodicals, government notifications, gazette publications, petitions, memoranda, research articles and websites etc.

3. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS OF WEST BENGAL:

Right to vote can be said to be the starting point in the struggle for women's political equality. The participation of women in the electoral process is an indicator of their political consciousness. In India, limited adult franchise was granted to women in 1937. Since then, women have been participating in political process, as voters, as candidates contesting the elections, involved in deliberations both in State Assemblies and Parliament and also through holding public office at different levels in the Judiciary. Women's participation in formal elections is to a great extent dependent on the mobilization efforts of the political parties, general awareness among the community of the importance of exercising franchise and overall political culture. The representation of women in the Legislative Assembly of West Bengal, as reflected in Table 1, shows that there were 6 women elected out of 238 total seats in 1952 and the number of women MLAs has reached to 39 out of 294 seats in 2016. The percentage of women MLAs has increased from 2.52% to 13.26% in 2016 and this is the highest ever percentage. The number and percentage of women members in the assembly always fluctuated and never crossed the limit of 14%.

TABLE: 1
WOMEN MLAs OF WEST BENGAL, 1952-2016

Years of Assembly Elections	Total No. Of Seats	Total No. Of Women Contestants	Total No. Of Women MLAs	Percentage of Women MLAs
1952	238	-	6	2.52
1957	252	17	11	4.36
1962	252	17	14	5.55
1967	280	20	9	3.21
1969	280	19	7	2.50
1971	280	-	6	2.14
1972	280	-	5	1.78
1977	294	27	4	1.36
1982	294	23	7	2.38
1987	294	35	12	4.08
1991	294	74	23	7.82
1996	294	114	22	7.40
2001	294	114	29	9.86
2006	294	139	37	12.58
2011	294	334	37	12.58
2016	294	194	39	13.26

Source: Compiled from the data available with the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library.

Very few women have been able to reach the high level of power and authority. This is true not only in India but in other countries of the world also. Though West Bengal had a woman Governor for a full decade, from 1957 to 1966, poor representation of women in the state legislature and Ministries has been reflected from 1952 to 2011. Poor representation of women in the legislature is held to be the main reason for the small number of women in the ministries (Sen Choudhury, 1995, pp.115).

TABLE: 2
WOMEN MINISTERS IN WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT

Year of Assembly Elections	Total no of Ministers	Total no of Women Ministers	Percentage of Women Ministers
1952	30	2	6.66
1957	30	2	6.66
1962	37	5	13.51
1967	19	-	-

Year of Assembly Elections	Total no of Ministers	Total no of Women Ministers	Percentage of Women Ministers
1969	31	2	6.45
1971	26	-	-
1972	28	1	3.57
1977	30	1	3.33
1982	45	2	4.44
1987	32	1	3.12
1991	44	4	9.09
1996	48	4	8.33
2001	N.A*	-	-
2006	N.A	-	-
2011	45	4	8.88
2016	33	3	9.09

* N.A-Not available.

Source: http://wbicc.in/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Council-of-Minister-of-the-WB3.pdf.

The Congress Government as well as United Front and Left Front Government, was allotted comparatively marginal portfolios to women. Even, recently under the woman Chief Minister of West Bengal, the position of women ministers has not changed; still the important portfolios like Home, Finance, Foreign, or Defence remain in the hands of male and have never been held by a woman. Hence, it is found that the women ministers are very negligible in West Bengal, there are only 3 women ministers out of total 33 ministers. The setback to women's participation is even more severe at the state level than in the Lok Sabha (11.4%) and Rajya Sabha (12.24%).

TABLE: 3
PARTY-WISE WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN WEST BENGAL VIDHAN SABHA, 1952-2016

Year of Assembly Elections	INC	*Left Front	AIFB	Others	IND*	AITC	Total
1952	3	1	0	2	0	0	6
1957	8	1	0	1	1	0	11
1962	13	0	0	1	0	0	14
1967	6	2	0	1	0	0	9
1969	2	2	0	3	0	0	7
1971	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1972	4	2	0	1	0	0	7
1977	0	0	2	1	1	0	4
1982	0	3	2	2	0	0	7
1987	0	10	2	1	0	0	13
1991	3	15	2	3	0	0	23
1996	3	17	0	2	0	0	22
2001	4	16	1	3	0	5	29
2006	3	26	2	3	0	3	37
2011	5	6	0	0	0	26	37
2016	4	5	0	1	0	29	39

Source: Compiled from the data available with the West Bengal Legislative Assembly Library.

*IND =Independent, *Left Front= CPM & CPI (M)

The above table shows that there were only 6 women representatives in the first assembly in 1952. Their number increased to 39 in 2016. In the present Vidhan Sabha we have 4 out of 39 women MLAs from the Congress, 5 from the Left Front, and 29 from AITC. However, the overall representation of women in the Vidhan Sabha is too low compare to men representatives. Women's participation in the elections to the State legislations shows that only a few women avail the opportunity of representing in the assembly. Thus, the above table indicates a clear picture that the political parties do not usually nominate women as candidates in the Assembly elections.

4. THE STATEMENTS OF WOMEN LEGISLATORS OF WEST BENGAL ON THE TREND OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS:

The study has undertaken an attempt to reach in the real status of women's political participation, few selected Women ex-legislators of West Bengal were interviewed through a questionnaire. The legislators interviewed were Mamata Roy, Aloka Barman, Renu Leena Subba, Shanta Chettri, Asima Choudhury and Sayeda Farhat Afroz. In answer to a question on the trend of women's participation in politics, almost all the interviewees seemed to agree that, on the whole, many more women are participating today than they were in the early periods of Indian democracy.

- *Mrs. Renu Leena Subba*, an ex-member of WBLA (West Bengal Legislative Assembly) from the Gorkha League, related to politics more than fifty years; she thought that women are not active as we expect but there is a drawback within us, very few effort has made to involve women into the political parties and politics also. Besides, family and social obligations prove to be a major hindrance for women and women also think politics is not good for them rather they interested in self-centric activities. According to Mrs. Subba, to make women politically active, it is need to organize them. She said, though some women organizations has been established and regular classes are held there, but we should take these initiatives more seriously.

- *Mrs. Sayeda Farhat Afroz*, an ex-member of WBLA form the CPI-M, is hopeful about women's participation in politics, which shows a healthy trend according to her. Women are represented in the elected committees at both the district and town levels and they are also being members of

the mass organizations. Party conventions and classes are held to educate women members regularly. Now-a-day, a fair number of women participate from the rural areas in the party's educational programmes. The party (CPI-M) focuses on women rights in its general propaganda and does not leave it to the women's wing only. The party also undertakes door-to-door campaign to educate women politically. Mrs. Afroz also stated that poor educational infrastructure and a lack of women's awareness of their rights are the main reasons of women's apathy towards political participation.

- *Ms. Mamata Roy*, an ex-member of WBLA from the CPI-M, said that participation of women in politics is not active enough, day by day the percentage of women members is decreasing; in that situation more women political activists are definitely require. Party conventions and conferences are held regularly to improve this condition and to make women politically conscious. She stated, women are very sincere than their male counterparts in participating in such programmes. But, the low level self confidence of women and family or social obligations are the general problems faced by women in the matter of participation in politics. She stated, the status of women's participation in politics is very much low compare to its counterparts.

- *Mrs. Aloka Barman*, an ex-member of WBLA from the CPI-M party, thought that today 95% women are politically active. The party (CPI-M) is organizing meetings, programmes to make women politically conscious and it is also campaigning door to door to involve more and more women in the political affairs. Though, in the present days women are suffering some problems in respect of participation in politics, namely insecurity, lack of political awareness and also conservative attitudes of the family etc. She said, despite of such problems women are trying to their level best to fulfill all the political responsibilities which have given to them.

- *Mrs. Shanta Chettri*, associated with politics since 20 years. She was elected from the GNLF party to the WBLA for three terms in 1996, 2001 & in 2006, presently she is an ex-member of WBLA,

presently she has joined to the ruling party of West Bengal (AITC) and now she is working president of District (Darjeeling) Committee of Hill. She said from her experience that limited numbers of women were coming forward to join political activities and also there were few women in the elected bodies but now-a-days women are participating in politics in a large number. She felt that societal and family obligations as well as general apathy towards politics are the causes keeping away women from politics. Political uncertainties in the country are also discouraging women from political participation. She stated, in spite of all political parties' efforts to recruit more women in political structures and matters, practically women are passively active in politics.

- *Mrs. Asima Choudhury*, related to politics more than thirty years. She is a CPI-M party worker and she was elected to the WBLA for two terms in 2001 & in 2006. She stated that to strengthen women participation in politics we have to work for increasing education level of women and also should organize awareness camp in everywhere. The party (CPI-M) is organizing meetings, conventions regularly for involving more and more women workers in politics. She said, now-a-days women are trying to being more active than they were earlier. While women faced some problems in the matter of participation in politics from their family but they are able to handle these obstructions very consciously. Though, the women participation in politics is not good enough, but Mrs. Choudhury is hopeful about the future of women's involvement in the political affairs.

Thus, from the statements of women legislators, it is clear to us that women's political participation and their presence in politics have increased a little bit in West Bengal but their role as organizers and leaders in politics has remained negligible, except in rare instances.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The study highlighted certain recommendations for the promotion of women's participation in politics. In order to raise the level of women's participation in politics certain measures should be followed. Women's problems should be classified as problems common to all women and problems which are area-specific. Illiteracy is a global problem and one of the reasons for the deterioration in the status of women. Ignorance of their rights-political, social, and economic- leads to the exploitation of women and their inability to converge to form a pressure group. The interface between the grassroots women and the activists must be used to build awareness and sensitize people, both men and women. Involving men who are sensitive to women's issues is a healthy practice. It would benefit the cause of women if their struggle is seen as a fight for human rights, which it is, and not merely as a gender-based movement. One of the primary problems, women face is lack of information. Therefore, the most urgent need is to establish an information network to gather information from the innumerable studies made and surveys conducted by various women's study centers and groups. Gathering and disseminating information will have to be the first stage. The agenda for action on this front must include a cell to collect and provide information for women who want to pursue a career in politics (EPW 1991, vol-26, issue no-48. pp. 2736-2737). Conscious effort must be made to develop leadership, to instill self-confidence and to nurture self-esteem in women who have the potential for political leadership.

In democratic set up, the political road to decision making usually leads to the system via the political parties. But, this agent of democratic government gives only lip service to the ideal of women in politics. Though, the major political parties supported the demand of women's quotas in state legislatures and parliament, but they themselves gave less than 15% of their total number of tickets to women. The political parties raise this issue just to earn the support of women organizations and activists for election purposes. Given this situation of political parties must remove immediately. Political parties and other organizations should encourage women's participation in politics and in the exercise of political responsibilities. The strategy should be to encourage a greater number of women in decision-making power. The women's wings of political parties as well as elected women leaders have to take immediate and necessary efforts to unite and incorporate ordinary women and should encourage them to participate in political affairs.

To increase the level of participation of women in politics our society and families should give importance to women's issue and support them mentally and morally. So, the other agents of society as well as Governments will take this issue seriously. In this perspective, the State has to take some corrective actions to ensure that women participate equally in the political sphere. Also, it is imperative to adopt certain affirmative action to

eliminate the existing discrimination to ensure political equality as guaranteed in the Constitution. While we know, in order to bring gender-equality, constitutional provisions and legal steps are not enough, there is most important requirement is to change the mind-set of society and its members. Therefore, it can be stated that with these special measures the pictures of less participation and under-representation of women might be altered. But, we must pay more attention to the quality of representation rather than the quantity.

6. CONCLUSIONS:

It is very true that women with same educational background, same opportunities and rights behave equally with men and in some cases more actively than men. It is important to note that if a woman has been able to prove herself as an active parliamentarian for the one time then she has been elected again and again in the Parliament and that time political party does not matter from which party she belongs. In this regard, women leaders such as Vijaya Raje Scindia, Dr. Sushila Nayar, Maneka Gandhi, Mamata Banerjee who were/are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men, so they don't need the reference of any political party. But if once she has been failed to prove herself then she may be never choose by the same political party for the election. Though, this trend we have seen rarely in case of male candidates. In this respect, one thing is need to mention here that male party leaders have shown little willingness to include women in party decision making bodies or help to create a suitable atmosphere for women's participation in their own organizations. This attitude of male party leaders is not a healthy sign towards women participation in politics and also for democracy. Hence, these tendencies of participation and attitudes towards women participation in the political process should be removed or changed in order to establish gender equality in decision-making otherwise democracy will be meaningless literally.

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