CHAPTER: 1

INTRODUCTION:

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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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