

**“Women’s Participation in the Union Parishad Election –
2003 : A Case Study of Sri -Nagar Union Parishad ”**



M. Phil. Dissertation

By

Israt Jabin

University of Dhaka , Bangladesh

July 2008

**“Women’s Participation in the Union Parishad Election –
2003 : A Case Study of Sri-Nagar Union Parishad ”**



M. Phil. Dissertation

**This Dissertation is presented for partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree**

449655

of

Master of Philosophy

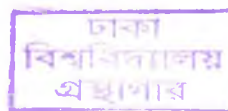
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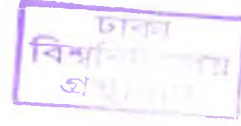
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**Israt Jabin
M. Phil. Fellow
University of Dhaka**



**University of Dhaka, Bangladesh
July 2006**

“ Women’s Participation in the Union Parishad Election - 2003 : A Case Study of Sri -Nagar Union Parishad ”



M. Phil Dissertation

This Dissertation is presented for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M . Phil in Political Science, University of Dhaka , Bangladesh.

449855

Researcher

Israt Jabin
M. Phil. Fellow
Department of Political Science
University of Dhaka
Registration No. # 124
Session : 2002 – 2003



Supervisor

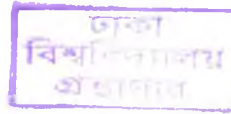
Dr. Hasanuzzaman Choudhury
Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Dhaka

University of Dhaka , Bangladesh
July 2008

449855.

Dedication -----

To my dearest Ma





Department of Political Science
University of Dhaka
Dhaka – 1000 , Bangladesh
Phone : 9661920-73 / 6490,4460

Certificate

This is to certify that Israt Jabin undertook research work under my supervision and guidance titled as “Women’s Participation in the Union Parishad Election -2003 : A Case Study of Sri – Nagar Union Parishad ”. She has submitted her thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Political Science from the University of Dhaka. She conducted fieldwork in the study area in order to have fundamental research work on women’s participation in Union Parishad election. This is an original work of her own and I certify that this thesis or a part of it has not been presented or published for any degree elsewhere previously. Her work has been satisfactory and I am confident that it will work as a basis for further research on women’s participation in union level election. I recommend this thesis for the award of the M.Phil,degree.

Hasanuzzaman Choudhury 29/7/10
(Dr. Hasanuzzaman Choudhury)
Professor
Department of Political Science
University of Dhaka
&
Supervisor

Declaration

I do hereby declare that the dissertation titled is “**Women’s Participation in the Union Parishad Election – 2003: A Case Study of Sri - Nagar Union Parishad**” submitted to the Department of Political Science, University of Dhaka for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Political Science, is an original work carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hasanuzzaman Choudhury, Department of Political Science , University of Dhaka. The dissertation contains materials not published elsewhere or written by anyone except by duly acknowledged citations. This has not been submitted in any form to any other University or Institution for any degree, diploma or for other similar purposes.

Israt Jabin
29/07/10
(Israt Jabin)
M. Phil. Fellow
Department of Political Science
University of Dhaka,
Dhaka , Bangladesh,
July 2010

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Israt Jabin
M. Phil. Fellow

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AF	The Asia Foundation
ASB	Asiatic Society of Bangladesh
ASK	Ain Shalish Kendra
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BISS	Bangladesh Institute of International & Strategic Studies
CAFEMA	Centre for Alternative Fair Election Monitoring Alliance
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DU	University of Dhaka
DW	Democracy Watch
ECO	Election Commission Office
FEMA	Fair Election Movement Association
FFYP	Fifth Five Year Plan
FLS	The Forward Looking Strategies
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GP	Gram Panchayats
IED	Institute For Environment and Development
IFFD	Integrated Food for Development
LGDF	Local Government and Development Forum
LGEG	Local Government Election Gazette
LGI	Local Government Institute

MoP	Ministry of Planning
NAP	National Action Plan
NEG	National Election Gazette
NGOs	Non Government Organizations
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
NPAW	National Policy for Advancement for Women
NPE	National Parliamentary Election
PFA	Platform for Action
PLAGE	Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equity
SC	Scheduled Castes
SEHD	Society for Environment and Human Development
SGUPAG	Self – Governing Union Parishad Advocacy Group
SIPRD	State Institute of Panchayats and Rural Development , [Government of West Bengal]
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
ST	Scheduled Tribes
TNO	Thana Nirbahi Officers
UN	United Nations
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	Union Parishad
WID	Women for Development
WW	Women for Women

Abstract of Research

This study seeks to unveil the role of women participation in union level election. This work has been prepared and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the M. Phil degree Dept. of Political Science under the faculty of Social Sciences University of Dhaka for the academic session 2002 to 2003 . Bangladesh is a developing country. Election is all about participation – of voters ,of candidates, of political parties. It is all about what facilitates that participation and what does not. Citizen’s participation in election or electoral system are common but women are less likely to participate in politics than men. I has engrossed and examine the women participant’s and further considered the candidates. Lack of education , violence, irregularities and a strong cultural bias against female political participation. In the following study an attempt is made to outline the women’s participation in the Union Parishad election .The study is limited within the 2003 Sri- Nagar Union Parishad . It seeks to find out the causes and consequences of dysfunctional dilemma of union level election. The population of the study are carefully chosen, clearly defined and delimited. Hypothesis of the research testified and make prediction . It has been tried to justify primary hypotheses on the basis of survey work on Sri- Nagar Union Parishad. The study has explore that in UP election women faced different discrimination , women participation in election and power base of the elected women are comparatively low and finally discharging different responsibility, there are so many constraints for women .

For convenience and proper understanding , the study has extensively and intensively reviewed the women’s participation in the union level election .The study has employed both primary and secondary sources of data. Finding its relevance, the study has included descriptive , critical and evaluative analysis. However, the study is primarily based on contents analyses.

Although the study occupies multifarious features of Political Science , Law and Public Administration , it has concentrated on the Political Science Approach .Having involved with the instruments and issues of Political Science the study partially employed the tools of Political Science as well. The dissertation has seven chapters .The first chapter encloses introduction statement of the problem , objectives of the study , review of relevant literature importance of the study, hypothesis and research methodology of key terms. Discussion is made about the status of women in Bangladesh in the second chapter. Next chapter third highlight’s on the women political participation and theoretical analysis. Chapter fourth includes women position in Union Parishad election . While analysis the exact women position in UP’s , the chapter has sought out the nature , characteristics , functions , problems of local govt. as well as Union Parishad, barriers of women participation in UP and UP election and extent of women’s employment. Chapter fifth aims at disclosing the scenario of 2003 Union Parishad Election. Chapter sixth analysis the participations in the assesses a futile effort of case study in 2003 election. The final chapter seventh recapitulates summery of the study.

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Map- 1 : Munshigonj in Bangladesh



Map – 2 : Sri-Nagar in Munshigonj



Map – 3 : Map of Sri - Nagar



First Chapter -----
Introduction and Outline of the Study

First Chapter

Introduction and Outline of the Study

1.1 Introduction

Many countries in South Asia are led by women, namely Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and woman like –Aung Sue Chi, the fiery Burmese political leader and winner of Nobel Prize is still forcibly put out of power, though her very powerful existence is felt everyday throughout Myanmar Ms. Chandika Kumaratunga was in the Presidency for the second consecutive term.¹ Bangladesh former Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda Zia both of them completed their five years term in the office etc. Eventhen ironically women in general do not exhibit significant political participation in these countries. Women constitute about 48 % of the total population of Bangladesh, 90% of them live in rural areas. The rate of women participation in politics or in an election is too low, while men tend to monopolize. A great female vacuum nevertheless appears to exist in the political system of the country. Both in electoral and representative arena of politics, women's participation is meager, less than 9%.

The government power structures throughout the region are still overwhelmingly in the hands of men and women remain severely under - represented. They find their influence and ability to contribute often hindered by gender bias and power struggles. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, parliament, military establishment, judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc. So, a female head of the govt. can not do so much.² As a result, a Bangladeshi woman's path to full participation in representative democracy is difficult. Nevertheless, the constitution of Bangladesh supports and emphasizes the role of women in the country's govt. and over the years steps have been taken to encourage and improve their participation. These steps include the former establishment of reserved seats for women in Parliament, a provision which is currently in effect revised up to 45 in member and the continuing existence of reserved positions for women on local elected councils called Union Parishad (UPs). It's UP is the second lowest local government structure in rural Bangladesh. The 2003 Union Parishad Election has demonstrated significant increase of women's participation in decision making. This thesis tries to give a complete picture of women's participation in women's participation in the UP Election 2003 within a comparative analysis.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

In the following study, an attempt is made to outline the real or exact picture of women participation in Union Parishad Election., specially in Sri-Nagar Union Parishad which has long been felt needed. This research has following purposes also ---

- i. To collect detailed factual information that describes existing phenomena ;

- ii. To identify the problems of women candidates ;
- iii. To make comparison and evaluation ;
- iv. To find out the barrier of women's participation in pre-election and post- election ;
- v. To review the power bases of the elected women of the UP .

It is hypothesized that women 's role in participation and decision – making of local government has not attained a satisfactory level yet. Keeping in mind this , to be more specific , the study would like to investigate into the following issues -----

- i. Investigate the impact of women's participation in decision –making in the functioning of local government ;
- ii. Assess general role of women ward commissioners as public representatives in local government ;
- iii. Examine the degree and extents of women's participation in major decision – making ;
- iv. Identification of constraints of their effective involvement in discharging their different responsibilities ;
- v. Analyze present situation of women who play role in participation and decision – making of local government ;
- vi. Find out any kind of gender discrimination in local government ;
- vii. Suggest recommendations to ensure women's participation in local government .

1.3 Importance of the Research

A social research encompasses scientific investigations conducted in the field of social sciences and also in behavioral sciences. A social research entails scientific investigation conducted in the field of social sciences using theories, models, concepts, tools, techniques processes drawn from the various disciplines of social and behavioral sciences to explain interpret, understand and improve the social issues , problems and institutions . The study is a pioneer research work concerning women's participation cause women's political participation is a key factor or most powerful indicators in attaining equality in all fields.³ The study seeks to investigate the formal and informal role of women in the grass root level . Without sustained action to address the glaring absence of women from democratic chambers , women's advancement in all other areas will remain an impossibility. For this , the theme of women's political participation

runs through the three UN Conferences on women and is affirmed and noted in the major strategy documents produced by these conferences that is the- Plan of Action(Mexico,1975),“The Programme of Action” (Copenhagen , 1980) and The Forward Looking Strategies (FLS) for The Advancement of Women (Nairobi , 1985).⁴

In a representative democracy , women’s political participation in UP Election which is the grass root level of the country , play the most significant role in the political process since it’s the organizational instrument through which the options and demands of the women are formally transmitted to the legitimate authority and in this way provide the link between the mass .Thus, it becomes mandatory, to know the real picture of women which may further help us to understand the women’s position of political development and democratization in Bangladesh . The study has systematically explored status of women in Bangladesh. It seeks to find out the causes and consequences dysfunctional dilemma of leadership pattern of women in grass root level. The study is first of its kind in conducting a detailed as well as comparative survey of the Union Election Parishad - 2003 and extent of women employment . The intended study has manifold utilities . In Bangladesh perspective , the research may give some valuable inputs in covering up some key information and elected panels about Sri – Nagar UP Election -2003. The research has located the untapped areas on which further research needs to be carried out considering the importance of this topic, it has taken as research area.

1.4 Review of Literature

The main objective of this study is a means to examine the real picture of women participation at the grass root level of Union Parishad Election. Women’s participation is insignificant in election. However, few literature, scholarly or scientific research work have been published related to this topic like – politics, election, political participation, politics in Bangladesh, political beliefs, voter behavior, voter’s rights , related books , article and research work etc. Analyzing women’s participation in UP election few of the work have been particularly reviewed.

Gabriel Almond and **Sidney Verba** in their pioneering work titled “The Civic Culture”(1972)⁵ explained how the political socialization happened in the UK , USA , Italy, German, Mexico through a survey . A Comparative analysis have been done by them through the agent of political socialization among the people’s of this five countries . Political beliefs, values, ideology are created through the political socialization .They have suggested a “Model” of the political participation ;

A survey on the political participation of the American’s have been stated in “ Participation in America : Political Democracy and Social Equality”(1972)⁶ by **Sidney Verba** and **Norman H. Nie**. They have shown that 22% of American’s are completely inactive in political activities. Only 11% of the people are active in politics. They participate in all kinds of political activities. However , 50% of the American’s take part in President Election . The writers here tried to highlight the nature of political behavior of the American’s ;

Lester W. Milbrath and **M. L. Goal** have outlined essential feature / factors of political participation in their book “Political Participation : How and Why Do People Get Involved in Politics” (1976).⁷ Here they have mentioned about some unconventional participation. These are- Protests, Demonstrations, Political Violence etc. The writers have analyzed the nature of political involvement / participation after a careful observation on many countries of Asia and Africa, Some of the important factors of political participation are as follows – Age, Sex, Education, Income, Marital Status, Religion, Place of Residence , Occupation , Organizational Involvement, Community Identification etc.;

Sidney Verba, **Norman H. Nie** and **Jae-on-Kim** in their book titled “Political Participation and Political Equality” (1978)⁸ have comparatively analyzed the political activity in the Austria, India, Nizaria, Netherlands, Japan etc. They have suggested a “ Model ” of Political Participation and Political Equality after a comparative analysis. They find out four Mode of Participation which are -----

- i. Voting Activity
- ii. Campaigning Activity
- iii. Communal Activity
- iv. Particularized Contact in their research work, they show that some socio- economic factors influence the politics like – Age , Education , Gender , Income , Experience etc;

Smith David Horton in his book titled “Political Participation” (1980)⁹ has explained the nature of political participation . He stated his opinion about the political participation on the basis of different elections activities or election involvement.

Analyzing the key issues involving participation and knowledge , **Robert A. Dhal** in his book “Modern Political Analysis” (1976)¹⁰ has mentioned some of the factors which may make an individual involvement in politics . Such as -----

- i. If he thinks his participation in politics really worth
- ii. If he thinks that alternation is more important
- iii. If he confident to help bring change
- iv. If he beliefs that he’s inactivity or inactiveness might not bring a satisfactory result
- v. If he quite powerful and knowledgeable about the considerate matter.

Joseph Lapa Lombara in his study titled “ Politics Within Nations ” (1974)¹¹ has mentioned that religion is the best variable’s of political participation ;

Heinz Eulau and his fervent followers in their book titled “ Political Behavior : A Reader in Theory and Research ” (1956)¹² have mentioned different type of political behavior of people and have explained a theoretical analysis on it ;

M. Salimullah Khan and **Kazi Saleh Ahmed**, “Crisis of Rule Choice Among Rural Citizens:A

Case Study of Four Villages”, in **Al Masud Hassanuzzaman**,(ed.), “Bangladesh :Crisis of Political Development”(1988)¹³ in their research work ,the researchers have explained the religions influence on politics in rural people or rural villagers. They also tried to analyze the religions influence on elections matter ;

Gafura Nasrin has analyzed – belief of women in Research Work, Political Affair or Political Party, Leaders, Mass – Media , Political Participation, Socio- Economical Status of women and their political belief and awareness about these in her book “Political Awareness of Rural Women: A Case Study of Pandhowa Village ” ;

Kirsten Wastergard in his book titled – “ State and Rural Society in Bangladesh :A Study in Relationship”.¹⁴ He analyzed the Bureaucracy , the Political Development Theory , Theory of Pre – Colonialism, National Integration and Social Movement etc. Besides this he also discussed about Liberation War, Rule of AL Govt., the Downfall of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman , Zia’s Army Rule , total socio – economic and political part of the Pakistan Administration, Rural Infrastructures etc. Moreover, he talked about local politics 1977’s UP Election , the relation between urban and rural society but nothing has been discussed or mentioned about the political participation of the rural people ;

“ Political Culture, Political Parties and Democratic Transition in Bangladesh ”¹⁵ is one of the most popular book written by **Shamsul I. Khan, S. Aminul Islam** and **M. Imdadul Haque** about Political Culture, Political Parties and Democracy in Bangladesh . In this book overall political picture since Pakistan period to Bangladesh today has been focused . The writers tried to relate cultural background of Bangladesh with politics through a vigorous or careful study. Besides this , they have also stated a very effective discussion about the formation of political parties, their activities , socio – economical status of the politicians, the activity of political organization, the importance of election in 1991 and political socialization and it’s influence on the mass during the period of pre – liberation and post- liberation war ;

To promote the participation and representation of women in local government , the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)** has been implementing the multi – phase ‘Advancement of Women in Urban Local Government ’ project since 1999. The first phase of the project culminated in the first ever ‘Asia -Pacific Summit of Women Mayors and Councilors’¹⁶ , which was held at Phitsanulok , Thailand . The discussions at the Summit were based on a comparative analysis of the reports on the “ State of Women in Local Government ” prepared in the 13 participating countries ;

From Bangladesh, **Ms. Farzana Islam** , presented a paper titled “ Bangladesh State of Women in Local Government ”¹⁷ in this paper Farzana Islam identified the women’s role in participation and decision – making in Dhaka City Corporation .The study provided a picture of women ward commissioners in Cities in Bangladesh and Dhaka City Corporation in particular . She indicated that women ward commissioners in Dhaka City Corporation were very vulnerable i making decision and playing proper role ;

Women's participation in decision – making of local government [specifically in Union Parishad] was briefly mentioned in “ Women in Politics and Bureaucracy ”¹⁸ edited by **Jahanara Huq, Najma Chowdhury, Ishrat Shamim** and **Hamida Akhtar Begum** in 1995. But the information and recommendations seem backdated at the present context ;

Jahan (2006) in her study on “ Political Empowerment of Women : Bangladesh Perspective ” profoundly stated that women's participation at the local government level has created a space for women to make decision , however women is facing a lot of difficulties to act effectively in Local Government Institutions ;

A recent study (2007) on “The Nature of Political Empowerment and Gender in Local Governance : A Comparative Study of Dhaka City Corporation and Narayanganj Municipality”¹⁹ indicates that the role of women participation in local government is undervalued , though women ward commissioners come to power through a proper process and commitment , their working environment is highly influenced by “ Patriarchal ” nature of politics and social behavior (Zaman , 2007) ;

The above review shows that most of the works do not cover the issues raised in this study. Moreover, the reliability of some of the works is questionable because some scholars have raised the issues and answered questions very much hypothetically . These works do not cover the objectives set for this research .

1.5 Hypothesis of this Dissertation

It is essential to formulate the hypothesis which will be helpful for the collection and analysis of data .Hypothesis has done in this thesis is that , an Union Parishad can make empowerment of the women . But it is expected or to predict get a holistic picture of women's participation in Union Parishad .

□ Hypothesis

Hypothesis regarded the heart of any research. It's a tentative justification, the validity of which remains to be tested. It has definite utility and it play a vital role in the social science research. According to Goode and Hatt ,“ It is a proposition which can be put to a test to determine it's validity . It may seem contrary to , or in accord with , commonsense ”.²⁰ Cohen has said that “ There is - no genuine progress is scientific insight through the Baconian method of accumulating compirical facts without hypothesis ” .²¹

□ Origin of the Hypothesis

There are various sources of the origin of hypothesis which are -----

- i. The General Culture ;
- ii. Race ;
- iii. New Thought;
- iv. As well as itself ;
- v. Socialization ;
- vi. Analogies ;
- vii. Idiosyncratic Experience ;
- viii. Folk Wisdom .²²

□ Definition

Kerlinger has said that - A hypothesis is a conjectural statement of the relation between two or more variable.²³ Werkmeister has said that , “The guesses researcher makes are the hypothesis which either solve the problem or guide him for further investigation”.²⁴

□ Characteristics of Hypothesis

The characteristics of usable hypothesis are as below -----

- i. A usable hypothesis must be conceptually clear ;
- ii. A usable hypothesis should have empirical referents ;
- iii. Another characteristics is that the hypothesis must be specified ;
- iv. A usable hypothesis can be one which is related to available techniques ;
- v. It should be related to body of theory ;
- vi. Of a usable hypothesis it is expected that it should be closest to the things observable ;
- vii. A good and usable hypothesis, should be simple and brief .

□ Role of Hypothesis in Research

Role of hypothesis in research are -----

Firstly

It is with the help of hypothesis, that it becomes easy to decides as to what type of data is to be collected and what type of data is simply to be ignored ;

Secondly

Hypothesis is makes it clear as to what is to be accepted , proved or disproved and that what is the main focus of study ;

Thirdly

It helps the investigator in knowing the direction in which he is to move. Without hypothesis it will be just duping in the dark and not moving in the right direction ;

Fourthly

A clear idea about hypothesis means saving of time , money and energy which otherwise will be wasted, thereby botheration of trial and error will be saved ;

Fifthly

It helps in concentrating only on relevant factors and dropping irrelevant ones .Many irrelevant factors which otherwise get in to the study can easily sixthly be ignored ;

Sixthly

A properly formulated hypothesis is always essential for the drawing proper and reasonable conclusion .

1.6 Area of the Research

Munshigonj is the headquarters town of Munshigonj , sub – division . It is lies in 23°- 33 'N and 90°-32 'on the bank of the river Dhaleswari. It has got an area of 954,96 sq. km. Literacy rate of Munshigonj district is– 35.8%. In 1961 it had 20,996 population of whom 10,948 were male and 10,048 were female. At present , the total population of Munshigonj district is about 12,93,536. In Parliament it has 4 seats. From Dhaka its only 30 km. Munshigonj district has 6 Thana and Sri – Nagar is the most important Upazila in this district . Sri - Nagar Upazila has 14 Unions . These unions of Sri- Nagar Upazila ²⁵ are -----

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baraikhali | <input type="checkbox"/> Hasara |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birtara | <input type="checkbox"/> Sholaghar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baghra | <input type="checkbox"/> Shyamsid |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sri - Nagar | <input type="checkbox"/> Atpara |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tantar | <input type="checkbox"/> Rarikhhal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patabhog | <input type="checkbox"/> Bhagyakul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kolapara | <input type="checkbox"/> Kukutia |

Sri - Nagar UP is one of them. Data collected from this Union Parishad for the comparative analysis of this case study from 2007's August to November. General description of this Union Parishad is given below as a area of the research ---

1.6.1 Location

Sri-Nagar Union Parishad is in the Munshigonj district .With an area of 202.98 q. km. is bounded by Keraniganj and Nawabganj (Dhaka) Upazillas on the north , Lohajang and Shibehar Upazila on the south, Serajdikhan and Lohajang Upazila on the east, Nawabganj, Dohar and Sadarpur Upazila on the west . Main rivers are Padma and Ichamati . Arial Beel is notable .

1.6.2 Population

Total population of Sri –Nagar Union Parishad are 2,057,97. Percentage of population of Sri –Nagar UP can be shown within a table which are ----

Table 1.1

Population Growth of Sri –Nagar Union Parishad

Sl. No.	Gender	Total Population	(%) of the Population
01.	Male	205797	49.87
02.	Female	205797	50.13

Table- 1.1 shows that within the total population male is 49.87%, female is 50 .13%. Number of Hindu , Muslim and others religious people in this UP are shown in the following table -----

Table – 1.2

On the basis of Religion , Population Growth of Sri –Nagar Union Parishad

Sl. No.	Religion	(%) of People
01.	Muslim	87.61
02.	Hindu	12.34
03.	Others	0.05

Table–1.2 shows that Muslim of this area is 87.61%, Hindu is 12.34%, Others religious people is 0.05 %.²⁶

1.6.3 Infrastructure

Sri –Nagar town consists of two mouzas .The area of the town is 1.99 sq. km. It has population of 9244 ; male 56.51 female 43.49% .Literacy rate among the tow people is 49.5 % . Sri -Nagar Thana was turned in to an Upazila in 1983 .Table 1.3 shows that --

Table – 1.3

Sri – Nagar Union Parishad Contains -

Union Parishads	14
Mouzas	102
Villages	147

It consists of 14 Union Parishad, 102 Mouzas and 147 Villages . Land control of this UP can be shown within a table -----

Table – 1.4

Land Control of Sri – Nagar Union Parishad

Sl. No	Land Distribution	(%) of Land	
01.	Peasants (%)	82	
	Landless		19
	Small		35
	Intermediate		28
02.	Rich	18	

Table-1.4 shows that among the peasants in Sri –Nagar Union Parishad 19% is landless, 35% small landholder, 28% intermediate landholder and 18% rich in their economic position. Cultivable land per head 0.074 hectare. The market value of the first grade arable land is Tk.6000 per 0.01²⁷ hectare.

1. 6.4 Educational Institute

Literacy and Educational Institute of this Union Parishad are -----

Table – 1.5

Literacy Rate of Sri – Nagar UP

Average Literate (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
38.56	42.04	35.09

Table -1.5 shows that average literacy rate 38.56%. Among this male are 42.0 4% and female are 35.09%.

Table -1.6

Educational Institution of Sri – Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Educational Institution	Number of Institution
01.	College	4
02.	High School	22
03.	Government Primary School	92
04.	Non – Government Prima School	11
05.	Madrasas	31
06.	Orphanage	01
Total =		161

Table– 1.6 focus the Educational Institutions of Sri– Nagar UP are like College - 4, High School- 22, Government Primary School - 92, Non- Government Primary School – 11, Madrasas- 31 and Orphanage -1²⁸ etc.

1.6.5 Other Institute

There are other institutes of this Union. It is religious institutions, cultural organizations and non – governmental organizations. Religious Institutions of this Union Parishad are --

Table – 1.7

Religious Organization of Sri – Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Religious Organizations	Number of Organizations
01.	Mosque	247
02.	Temple	53
Total Number of Organization =		300

Table – 1.7 shows that the religious organization of this UP are , Mosque- 247 ; Temple - 53 etc. Cultural Organizations of this Union Parishad are ---

Table – 1.8

Cultural Organizations of Sri – Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Cultural Organization	Number of Cultural Organization
01.	Public Library	01
02.	Cinema Hall	03
03.	Society and Other Organizations	303
04.	Stadium	01
Total Organizations		= 308

Table- 1.8 shows that the Cultural Organizations of this UP are like , Public Library -1; Cinema Hall-3; Society and Other Organizations- 303; Stadium-1. NGO activities, operationally important NGOs are- CARITAS, BRAC, ASA, Grameen Bank[Grameen Bank, today is a well-known credit institution for the poor in Bangladesh . It cares for women and hence 75% of its borrowers are women] ²⁹etc.

1.6.6 Communication System

In communication facilities, it has pucca, semi- pucca road, water way, traditional transport which can shown in a table ----

Table - 1.9

Communication Facilities of Sri – Nagar UP

	Communication Facilities		Number of Communicator
01.	Roads	(Km)	164 (Km)
	Pucca	98 (Km)	
	Semi -Pucca	11 (Km)	
	Mud Road	155 (Km)	
02.	Water Ways		09 (Nautical Mile)

Table-1.9 focus the communication system of this Union Parishad. Among this, Pucca roads are 98 km. , Semi – Pucca Roads are 11 km. and Mud Roads are 155 km. Water ways 9 nautical mile. Traditional additional transport use here like - Boat, Bullock Cart (extinct) etc.

1.6.7 Hats , Bazars and Fairs

Hats and Bazars are-19, Fair 3, noted of which are - Sri- Nagar, Bhagyakul, Kumargaon, Kederpur, Baraikhali Bazar , Hasara Bazar, Sholaghar Bazar etc. Sri- Nagar Union full with archaeological heritage like - Shyamsiddhir Math , Sholaghar Math , Bhagyakul Rajbari etc.

1.6.8 Economy

Economic system of Sri- Nagar Union Parishad basically based on agriculture. Economic based on Sri- Nagar Union Parishad can shown within a table which are -----

Table – 1.10

Economical Based of Sri – Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Occupations	(%)	
01.	Agriculture (%)	24,66	
	Agricultural Labor		18.97
	Wage Labor		2.03
02.	Weaving	1.35	
03.	Construction	1.86	
04.	Fishing	2.34	
05.	Commerce	22.66	
06.	Service	10.61	
07.	Others	15.52	

Table– 1.10 focus that 24.66% in this UP lived on agriculture. Among them agricultural labors are 18.97 %, wage labors are 2.03% , weavers are 1.35% , doing construction 1.86%, fishermen are 2.34 % , commerce base 22.66% , service holders are 10.61 % and others 15.52%.³⁰ Land distribution of Sri – Nagar UP shows here within a table which are as follows -----

Table – 1.11

Land Distribution of Sri – Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Land of Sri - Nagar	Hectares	
01.	Cultivable Land	15,2,85	
	Crop Land (%)		
	Single		52.74
	Double		38.74
	Triple	8.52	
02.	Fallow Land	5,9,85	
Total Land Numbers = 21, 270			

Table-1.11 focus that the use cultivable land are 15,285 hectares, fallow land 5,985 hectares, single crop 52.74%, double crop 38.74% and triple crop land 8.52%, main crop of this Union are – paddy,

potato, wheat, mustard ,sweet pumpkin ; main fruits of this Ups are – mango, guava, wood apple (bel), etc. Another economic support of Sri – Nagar UP are as follows within a table -----

Table – 1.12

Other Economic Support of Sri –Nagar UP

Sl. No.	Farms	Number
01.	Fisheries	683
02.	Poultres	135
03.	Dairies	192
04.	Hatchery	01
Total Number = 1011		

Table- 1.12 focus that the Fisheries , Poultries and dairies are usually 683,135 and 192, hatchery 1 etc. Table- 1.13 will show commercial institutions of Sri – Nagar UP.

Table - 1.13

Commerce Distribution of Sri – Nagar UP

	Commercial Institutions	Number of Commercial Institutions
1	Manufactories	Number of
	Dairy	02
	Rice Mill	19
	Saw Mill	27
	Cold Storage	02
	Brick-Field	04
2	Cottage Industries	Exists
3	Welding Workshop	28
4	Carpenter	250
5	Goldsmith	225
	Potteries	

6		115
7	Blacksmith	100

There are manufactories also. Dairy 2, Rice mill 19 , Saw mill 27 , Cold storage 2, Brick field 4 etc. Cottage Industries also exists here . Welding workshop 28, Carpenter 250, Goldsmith 225 , Potteries 115 , Blacksmith 100. Main export from this UP – paddy, potato, sweet pumpkin , etc.

1.6.9 Health Centre

People in Sri- Nagar UP have so many facility to check up themselves. There are so many Health Centers in this UPs which are – Upazila Health Complex , Satellite Clinic , Pathological Laboratory , Family Planning Centre, Veterinary Hospital etc.

Table – 1.14

Health Centre in Sri-Nagar UP

	Health Centers	Numbers Centers
01.	Upazila Health Complex	01
02.	Satellite Clinic	03
03.	Pathological Laboratory	03
04.	Family Planning Centre	10
05.	Veterinary Hospital	01

Table- 1.14 shows that there are 1 Upazila Health Complex , 3 Satellite Clinic , 3 Pathological Laboratory ,10 Family Planning Centre and Veterinary Hospital in this UP.

1.7 Methodology

1.7.1 Literature Search

The related books may through sufficient light not only on the theoretical aspect of the problem, but also on the empirical evidence . A survey has been done within the existing literature . Review of literature give an insight into the problem so that the problem be more familiar . Survey or search of literature help to develop a meaningful hypothesis with the help of stimulating clues. To get idea about the topic search was made from the “Annotated Bibliography ”and “ Abstracts of Article ” being published by different journals .At the time of compiling this work a literature search was made .Data and the lists of all the literature collected on women participation in election from different Research Institute , Election Commission Office , TNO Office , Libraries

etc. Different institutions publish data regularly on some socio – economic aspects which become very important source for social research . Having valuable academic papers and articles some other web sites were helpful to.

1.7.2 Visit Research Areas

A visit was made from 2007 August to November . Spot observation was made for the studies collecting information with close scrutiny on the topic. Bounded by the research parameter. The holdings was physically examined and checked .

1.7.3 Collection of Information

In conducting the research required data and information concerning women’s participation in up election from various sources . Data need to be conscientiously identified , carefully selected and methodically collected . Validity and objectivity of research to a great extent , depend on as to how the data have been gathered . In actual practice there are different methods of data collection The methodology followed in the study is that survey method . Before conducting a social survey, it has to pass through varies steps without which the result of so – called survey can not be come significant and reliable . Social survey method is most widely used in social sciences research . Surveys are widely used to collect information and observation over time . In Social Science Research, it refers to the techniques of collection of data through interview, questionnaire, secondary sources .

Through the Preliminary Survey Sheet , first find out the union’s women’s age , marital status, name , address , income , family , education , occupation , husband’s position and thought etc. Personally interview or informal discussion are made, for the collection of data .In social research, qualitative phenomena are not amenable to statistical analysis . The interview is a very useful to gain insight .An interview is a means of getting direct knowledge personally .Question was closed/ structured but some was unstructured or informal discussion are made, these discussions can not be termed as interviews since no structured questionnaire is followed. But it provide valuable information’s. (which was pre- test before finalized the questionnaire).

A questionnaire is a very effective instrument that facilities in collecting data from large , diverse and widely scattered groups of the people . Observation method is also applies for checked out person’s / women’s political communication , political cautiousness , knowledge about political party , different barrier , election etc. Observation method has been applied in this research cause observation method consists of collecting the facts . It is also applicable in case where the population or subject groups have a low rate of literacy or more or less are illiterate . Further more, some occasional informal discussions are made with the villagers . Lastly , objectivity of the study are followed and always tried to remain unbiased while collecting and processing information.

1.7.4 Source of the Data

There are two kind of sources of data for Social Research .Documentary / Secondary Data and

Field Investigation / Primary Data .

Primary Source

This data collected from the personal interviews , completed questionnaires , surveys , direct information , observations and experiments . Basically data collected from field investigate .

Secondary Source

Secondary sources have been used extensively and intensively in the study relevant books of eminent political and social scientists, concerned published and unpublished research work , study reports published by Bangladesh Govt., different agencies commissions , committees, journals, periodicals and newspapers of home and abroad have been included as secondary sources. Concerned internet web sites have been used as valuable secondary sources.

1.7.5 Sampling

This research is largely based on stratified sampling technique in the event of vast data and for obtaining better results representative sampling technique is also adopted. Cause in this techniques picked up a small unit out of the whole study. Such a unit is expected to be representative of the whole population . It is felt that when this unit is studies, the population will be studied .

1.7.6 Presentation and Analysis of the Data

In the study relevant literatures have been studied thoroughly .Verifying the hypothesis , data needs and sources have been identified . Collected data and information gathered from primary and secondary sources have been analyzed and interpreted within the frame work of the research design [that's mean collected data presented through – Statistical Programme for Social Science (SPSS), MS – Word and MS - Excel etc.] .To analyze information and data , contradictions have been handled carefully. By the way , necessary data comparison and objectivity of data or information have been maintained strictly. Logical arguments have been raised to make points and clarify confusions.

The study has meticulously exploited both primary and secondary sources of data and also used descriptive , critical and evaluative method of analysis . While using both primary and secondary sources data of the study has chiefly relied on the analyses of contents . Even with embracing multi-disciplinary aspects of Political Science , Law and Public Administration , the study has occupied with the Political Science perspective .Whilst dealing with law and legislative process, it has in some measure used the tools of legal study.

1.8 Chapter Scheme

This study consists of seven chapters.

□ First Chapter : Introduction and Outline of the study

The first chapter contains introduction , objective of the research , importance of the research, literature review, hypothesis, area of the research, methodology, source of the data ;

□ Second Chapter : Status of Women in Bangladesh

In second chapter sketches out a frame work of understanding towards status of women, women's socio- economic position, NGO's roll , women empowerment, women rights, education of women , women in political party women leadership etc.;

□ Third Chapter : Political Participation and Theoretical Analysis

The third chapter idea has been given out the political participation and it's theory base analysis. The chapter encompasses different states and political thinker's thought and mode of political participation ;

□ Fourth Chapter : Women in Union Parishad Election

The chapter fourth has summarized on the women's participation in the Union Parishad Election. A description has been given about the local govt.(it's functions and composition)Union Parishad, Participation of Women in Election at the grass root level, barrier of women to participate in UP'S election , a comparative analysis with Bangladesh's local govt. with Gram Panchayats of West Bengal etc. ;

□ Fifth Chapter : Scenario of 2003 Union Parishad Election

Chapter fifth consists of two independent parts : part- i. The Electoral Frame work and part- ii. Election – 2003 in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad ;

□ Sixth Chapter : A Case Study of Sri-Nagar Union Parishad

Chapter sixth attempts to interview and investigates the elected women member in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad 2003 election.

□ Seven Chapter : Summary and Conclusions

The final chapter seventh summarizes major findings of the study. The chapter also considered some recommendation to improve the women empowerment at the grass root level and offer some policy direction for the future along with concluding commands . In addition , the chapter has located untapped areas in which further research may be carried on .

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**Second Chapter -----
Status of Women in Bangladesh**

Second Chapter

Status of Women in Bangladesh

2.1 Introduction

Bangladesh is a low-lying country with a total area of 1,47,570 sq. km. or 56,977 sq. miles. It stretches latitudinal between 20°34' and 26°38' north, longitudinally between 88°01' and 92°41' east. It is mostly surrounded by Indian territory except for a small strip of Myanmar in the south-east. It is the most densely populated rural habitat in the world, excepting the Island of Java. In Bangladesh, as elsewhere in the region, gender inequality is deeply embedded in the overall structure. Social controls at all levels deprive their subservience to patriarchal control. In Bangladesh, traditionally the role of women has been that of daughter, wife and mother. Their activities in the socio-cultural milieu of Bangladesh are primarily domestic in nature confined to the four walls of home. Women are vulnerable in every sector in Bangladesh. They have also lack access to justice on human rights, because of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, social, and economic class distributions. In a word, women are discriminated against from home to parliament in Bangladesh. According to the Gender Development Index of UNDP in 2002, Bangladesh ranked 110 with an estimated earned income of PPP US \$ 1150 for females and PPP US \$ 2035 for males (PPP or Purchasing Power Parity means, \$ 1 has the same purchasing power in the domestic economy as \$ 1 has in the United States). This means, women are the poorest of the poor.

The traditional society of Bangladesh is permeated with patriarchal values and norms of female subordination, subservience, subjugation and segregation. These consequences result in discrimination of women at birth leading to deprivation of and access to all opportunities and benefits in family and societal life, thus putting women in the most disadvantageous position. The population of the country is about 140 millions (2004 SURS). Out of them, about 72 millions are male population and about 69 millions are female population. Bangladesh is one of the high-density countries of the world. According to the UN Gender Development Index, Bangladesh is ranked 121st out of a total of 146 countries worldwide. Out of the total population, 48.9¹ per cent is women, of whom nearly 86 per cent live in rural areas. The female population of reproductive age was 29.8 million in 1996. This number is likely to reach 37 million in 2010. The fertility rate has dramatically fallen from 6.34 per women in 1997 to 3.8 in 1996. Fertility is higher in rural (2.76) than in urban areas (2.48). In rural areas the fertility rate is higher for women aged between 20 to 35 years.² The average age of marriage for girls in Bangladesh is between 13-16 years and almost all the girls are married before they are 25 years of age.³

As married life commonly starts at the age of 15 for most, a woman experiences 10-11 pregnancies in her lifetime. Sex ratio male per 100 female in the country is 104. Average age of male is 68.60 years and female 67.80 years. Population growth per thousand is 18.90 and death per thousand is 4.80, child mortality is 56 per thousand, rural population is 79.90% and urban population is

20.10%.

Bangladesh is still an overwhelmingly rural country. Rapid Growth Rate and Male - Biased Sex Ratio, Bangladesh is one of the biggest contributors to world's rapid population growth rates and to the average global " Masculinity Ratio" [The normal sex ratio contains more number of females than males, but the situation of more number of males is termed masculinity ration by Ashley J. Coale⁴].The average growth rate of world population is 1.5%, where as group rate of Bangladesh population is 2.2% ; the average number of women per 100 men in the world is 99 in Bangladesh, it is 94 females for every100 males. In many countries of the world the numbers of females are higher than that of males, of course , this is not true in South Asian countries including Bangladesh. It can be observed from Table -2.1 that in world context density of population of Bangladesh is very high and number of men is also higher than the number of women.

Table – 2.1

Bangladesh population, rate of growth of population, women per 100 men in world⁵

Country	Population (Million)	Rate of Growth	Density [per] Sq. Km.	Women per 100 Men	
				Urban	Rural
Bangladesh	121.25	2.2	836	79	99
Canada	28.54	1.0	-	106	94
USA	263.14	0.9	28	107	98
Nigeria	56.59	2.8	-	95	106
India	931.04	1.8	285	88	96
China	1234.30	1.0	-	93	95
Hong Kong	59.32	0.3	6277	94	88
Pakistan	137.97	2.8	168	88	95
Sri Lanka	18.35	1.2	279	96	102

The fertile land in the country has been providing easy living for the people since the onset of Industrial Revolution in Europe in the mid eighteenth century. In the era of traditional agriculture, the land area now called “Bangladesh” was one of the most prosperous countries in the world. As such, foreigners, lusting after her stores of grain, repeatedly invaded this soil. But Bangladesh is now one of the poorest countries in the world. GDP, at current market price stood at Tk. 33, 29,731 millions in 2003-2004. During this period, Bangladesh’s current position can be shown within a table which are as follows---

Table - 2.2

Bangladesh’s Current GDP , 2003 - 2004

Sl. No.	Total GDP	Tk.
01.	Gross Domestic Saving	4,96,053 (Millions)
02.	Gross National Saving	6,40,380 (Millions)
03.	Investment	6,32,392 (Millions)
04.	Consumption	22,35.957 (Millions)
05.	Bank Deposit	10,65,738 (Millions)
06.	Bank Advance	7,90,404 (Millions)

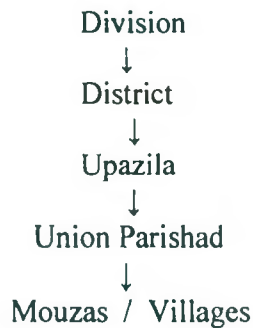
Gross domestic saving stood at Tk 4, 96,053 millions, gross national saving stood at Tk.6, 40,380 millions, investment stood at Tk. 6, 32,392 millions & consumption stood at Tk. 22, 35,957 millions. Bank deposit stood at Tk.10, 65,738 millions & Bank advance stood at Tk. 7,90,404 millions. Besides, in current value, per head national income is Tk. 25,944.00 & per head GDP Asian is Tk. 24,598.00. Bangladesh was remarkably free from extreme forms of rural inequity until the British rulers introduced the system of permanent settlement in 1793. In Bangladesh there are -----

Table – 2.3

Administrative Units of Bangladesh

Sl. No.	Administrative Units	Number’s of the Units
01.	Division	06
02.	District	64
03.	Upazila	507
04.	Union Parishad	6,888
05.	Mouzas	67, 095
06.	Village	87,928

There are 507 Upazillas in Bangladesh. Several Upazila form a district. The total number of such Districts in 64. Several Districts again form a Division. The total number of such Division is 6. The country has 6,888 unions, 67,095 Mouzas & 87,928 villages. It has 6 City Corporations and 1,277 Municipal Corporations;



2.2 Status of Women in Bangladesh

The status of women is an important factor affecting the overall development of a country. The total development of Bangladesh will undoubtedly be hampered if the status of women, constituting about fifty percent of the country's population, remains as low as it is today. In Bangladesh the women feel deprived in every sphere of their lives. Right from their birth, women are neglected in food sharing, education, work, independent thinking, right to property, choice and matters of decision making. They face discriminations in both their "Public" and "Private" lives. Despite of the equality of man-women ratio in Bangladesh, the importance and potentialities of women have been disregarded in socio-economic development till today. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, the parliament, military establishments, Judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc. Gender-gaps still exist in every sphere of women's lives and women are deprived of their fundamental rights. Women's development is a global concern in this new millennium. In most of the developing countries and obviously, in Bangladesh also, today, women issues are in the forefront and the government of Bangladesh has taken many initiatives as well as the constitution of Bangladesh guarantees the equal rights of men and women, but what is the real situation of women in our country? ⁶. Here, an attempt has been taken to focus light on the status of women in Bangladesh.

2.2.1 Socio - Economic Status of Women in Bangladesh

Socio - Economic position of women in Bangladesh not good. A woman in Bangladesh enjoys lesser importance. "She is little more than a free servant and a child bearing machine." The "good" women stayed at home and looked after her husband and her children. Whereas the working woman was portrayed as morally lax and the cause of disintegration of the family, of social values and of society in general Economically they are not solvent enough. Their socio-economic position is poor so that they can't make their own decision. Women's participation in economic activities

remains unvalued at the national level because of patriarchal social structure tradition and norms⁷. Economically, women have always been involved in production although their share in consumption as well as control over capital and cash has always been nominal and neglected. Land is the major asset in rural Bangladesh. There exists a high inequality in land ownership. Agriculture sector is overwhelmed by unpaid family workers who are disproportionately represented by women. Self-employed and allied activities like – fishers, livestock, forestry are the dominant sector / sub-sectors in the economy which all are dominated by the male.

2.2.2 Development Indicators

Development is the structural attainment in the growth of process. In Economics, it is told that, if economic growth rate goes at par with the population growth rate, there will be seldom any development in the economy. The essential of 'Development' are some pre-conditions without fulfilling which, development will remain to be a misnomer. Development indicators show that in many respects - social, economic, political, cultural and psychological- women are at the lowest level of development. The Patriarchal social system and institutions of purdah, marriage and religious bindings place them in unequal & disadvantaged position. The negative attitude towards women by the society along with other socio-cultural factors lead them to a cyclical dependence and subjugation.

Politics as a way of life touches every aspect of state, economy and society. Women's participation in the political process is essential for their advancement; their voice has to be heard at the decision-making level. The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees the following rights under Articles 27, 28 and 29: "Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life"⁸. Women politicians are relatively new in politics;

2.2.3 Gender Discrimination of Bangladesh

Before knowing about gender discrimination of Bangladesh, we have to know what "Gender" means. Gender is about being a man or a woman. Being man or woman has two aspects:

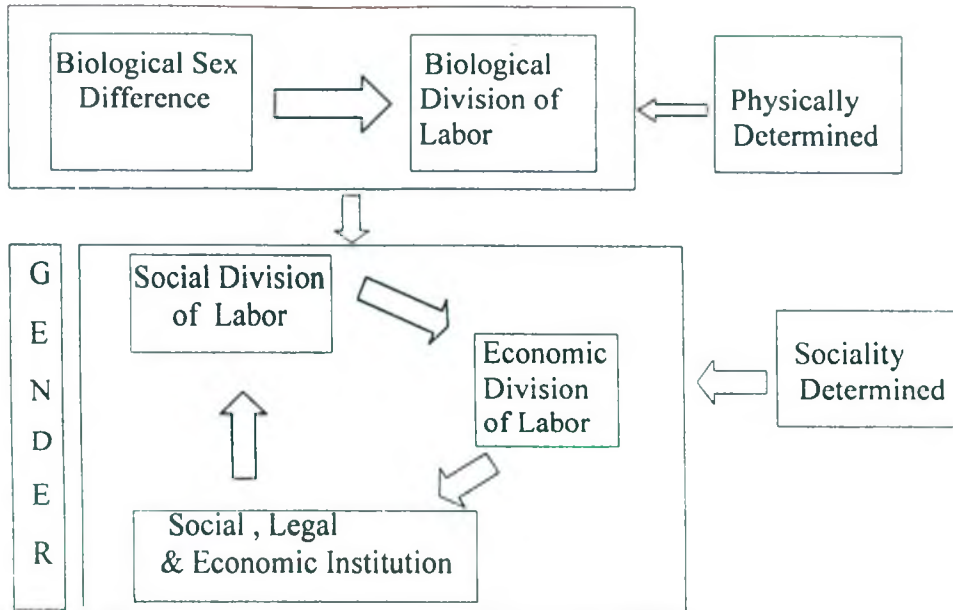


The physiological aspects of being a man or a woman are rather clear. This addresses the fact that we are either man or woman in the biological sense. But the social aspects of being men or women are more complex. These social aspects (socially determined rules and stipulations of men and women and also relationship between men and women) of being men and women are called gender. Gender is basically a category of classification to distinguish how society and institutions treat men and women in terms of their rules and responsibilities, norms of behaviors, codes of conduct, legal, social, political and economic rights etc. Gender classification is based on the distinct biological rules of men and women in human reproduction. Gender can thus be conceptualized as

the social construction of men and women based on their biological rules. Therefore , gender should not be understood as the socially constituted relationship between men and women .⁹

Flowchart - 1

Conceptualizing Gender



Bangladesh has the historical background of the gender discrimination. Particularly , gender discrimination had been wide and deep rooted. A pervasive gender differential in entitlement of food, nutrition, and care leads to a higher death rate of girl children than boy children.¹⁰ But , with the advent of govt. policy formulation and international pressure strategy, including social awareness among people and economic crisis among large segment of people of the society, the scope for gender discrimination has been narrowing down and it is expected that , with in another decade or so , gender discrimination will be largely removed from the society ;

2.2.4 NGO's Roll for Women in Bangladesh

There are thousands of NGO's working in the rural sector. The term Non - Government Organization (NGO) first appeared in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) Resolution 288 (X) of 27 February, 1950 . It stated that , any international organization , which is not established by inter-governmental agreement is an international non-governmental organization. By popular usage , the terms has come to mean any organization not established by the Govt. In Bangladesh , this terminology is used to refer to all such organizations and institutions that are registered with the Govt. under the voluntary Social Welfare Agencies (Registration and Control) Ordinance of 1961 and the Foreign Donation (Voluntary

Activities) Regulation Ordinance of 1978.

Prior to independence in 1971 only a few NGO's operated in erstwhile East Pakistan . After the Liberation War, the NGO's emerged on a large scale in Bangladesh to undertake relief and rehabilitation activities to mitigate the sufferings of the war-torn people. This charity and welfare orientation in NGO's continued till 1974. For social welfare-oriented purpose especially for the village women – most of the NGO's provide micro-credit. Some other service like – handicapped people ; most of the women leaders in the UP were involved in NGO's and other development organizations. Women's organisations strengthened their movement on the one hand, to press home the demands they had been putting up since the birth of Bangladesh and on the other, to seek fairness and justice to the incidents of oppression and discrimination . Involvement in NGO's helped them improve their knowledge, confidence and socio- economic and cultural profile that contributed immensely to become leaders at the grassroots .

2.2.5 Education of Women

Lord Brougham said, " Education makes a people easy to lead , but difficult to drive, easy to govern, but impossible to enslave". The women of Bangladesh have been subjected to discrimination in all respects. Female life expectancy is 49 years. One in three school aged girls is in school. Female University enrollment is less than 2 % of women aged 20.24. One in 10 secondary school teachers are women. Some 24 more women are illiterate than men.¹¹

Education is a social phenomenon that strongly influences on women's control of their own future but low level of female education have been frequently cited in Bangladesh. Only about 16 per cent women are literate compared to a 30 percent rate of literate men.¹² Lack of education is one of the main factors, which deters women from equal participation in socio-economic activities with her male counterparts and helps to perpetuate the inequality between sexes. The common belief among many villagers that educated girls are rude, less affectionate and disobedient also acts as a contributory factor against female education ¹³. In 1990, Bangladesh signed the declaration on "Education for All". But the country is still far behind the desired literacy level. The overall literacy rate is 58 per cent, for males it is 67 per cent and for females 49.5 per cent.

The ratio of male-female teachers in primary schools in 1990 was 79:21, this increased to 72:28 by 1996, registering an increase in favor of females .¹⁴ But the girl student drop out rate at both primary and secondary levels is comparatively higher than that of boy-students. Consequently, the completion rate for girls is lower in both primary and secondary levels. The situation is worse for women in higher and technical education, this is due to the fact that education for girls is still considered economically less useful as investment .¹⁵ Poor parents consider any expenses for educating a girl unproductive as she leaves their family after marriage. A survey conducted in 1986 showed most men in rural Bangladesh considered educated women responsible for unhappy conjugal lives. Consequently, boys , not girls, get preference when it comes to the question of educational investment ¹⁶. That is why very few women continue their education up to the overall rate of return from education and women's labor market entitlements.

Table - 2.4

Educational Status of Women

Indicator	National		Rural		Urban	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Adult literacy rate 15+, 1998	42.5	59.4	36.2	56.1	60.0	75.4
Net enrollment, primary school, 1997	80.8	82.9	82.8	96.8	83.8	82.1
Net enrollment, secondary school 1995	19.0	23.0	na	na	na	na
Dropout rate at secondary level 1996	48.4	37.8	na	na	na	na

Source : Sample Vital Registration, BBS; Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, BBS; Statistical Year Book, 1997, BBS; UNESCO Paris, BANBEIS 1998

Table - 2.5

No of Primary and Secondary Schools and Students by Sex 1984-1985

Type of Institutes	Number of Institutes	No of Students		No of Teachers	
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Primary	43.863	5725000	3218000	159594	24199
Secondary	9.853	1853000	755000	84995	10280

Source: Compiled on the basis of Statistical Year Book 1984-85 and Planning Commission data

Female's low educational levels affect the service program not only in terms of vacancies, but also in terms of the women who are recruited, since they are likely to represent a highly selected group. Different reasons are found in Bangladesh for not sending their daughters to school. One of the tendencies of the schools in Bangladesh is to reinforce prevailing attitudes than to transcend them. Some subjects (for example home Economics) are seen as appropriate or useful for girls and other for boys (e.g. Agricultural Science).

2.2.6 Women in the Family

Women in Bangladesh are generally economically exploited, socially disparaged and politically neglected. They are discriminated in the eyes of law too. This inheritance and family law degrades women's status and deprives them of equal rights with the member. But empirical evidence shows that women leaders grow through family background and political linkage. Most of the women members in UP, kinship relationship is found. In fact women leaders have more or less family link with UP as any of their family members are somehow found currently or were previously engaged in UP or Political Parties [which is indispensable in democracy. Political parties are organizations that seek political power by electing people to political offices so that their positions and philosophy become public policy], where include their father, grandfather, father-in-law, maternal uncle, uncle, brother and sister etc. Kinship relationship and political linkage helped to develop women leadership at the grassroots.

2.2.7 Health and Nutrition

For women, in Bangladesh, generally life consists of high mortality, malnutrition and ill health. Women's general health care is greatly ignored and they face special health hazards due to severe anemic condition, poor health, inadequate nutrition, multiple pregnancies, abortion etc. Although a housewife has to take care of the health of all members of the family, there is hardly anyone to take care of hers. The daily per capita calorie intake of women (1599 kcal) is lower than that of a man (1927 kcal). The life expectancy of females (60.5) is lower than that of males (60.7 years)¹⁷ Women's low social status and poverty are in turn lead to their poor health, high fertility and lack of access to essential health care. The ultimate outcome of these latter three factors is a high maternal mortality rate.

The average weight of a Bangladeshi woman is about 40.9 kg, which is less than the mean weight of women in most third world countries. The low weight is a reflection of food deprivation. Poor environmental sanitation and lower food intake of female give them lower resistance capacity, thereby rendering them more vulnerable to diarrhea and communicable diseases, which cause the highest mortality and morbidity in this country. Though it is said that women are biologically more resistant to adverse health situation than men, women in Bangladesh have a lower life expectancy at birth (53.4) than men (54.2)¹⁸ Now the death rate of girl children is higher than boy children. Women are also gravely exposed to the dangers of child birth. The maternal mortality rate of 444 per 100,000 live births is one of the highest in world.¹⁹ A pervasive gender differential in entitlement of food nutrition and care leads to a higher death rate of girl children than boy children.²⁰

In effective use of indigenous abortion related methods yearly cause about 10,000 women's death in the country. In Bangladesh is still high though compared to previous years it has sharply come down. Infant mortality rate per 100 live births among male children is higher than females. But child death rate (1-4) among female is higher.²¹ According to UNICEF, about 23000 women die in pregnancy and childbirth every year, while 600000 others suffer from various neo-natal complications in Bangladesh. Malnutrition, environmental insanitation and shortage of

medical services and above all a negative attitude towards female health have been the main causes of poor health of Bangladeshi women. The National Health Service has been too inadequate for the purpose and is traditionally curative in a nature and it is basically urban based.²² The above factors such as ill health, maternal mortality, women's unnatural deaths have all made women more vulnerable than man.

2.2.8 Women Empowerment

The concept of empowerment is built around the various ramifications of the notion of power, such as – power over, power to, power with etc. each having a particular relational connotation. Foucault maintains that where there is power, there is resistance and that power relations are “Multiple” and “Rooted in systems of social networks”.²³ Empowerment of women in the context of gender relations is primarily seen as corresponding diminution of power of men. It has been pointed out, that women's empowerment also “Liberates and empowerment's men”.²⁴ The concept of empowerment imply transformation of structures of subordination through radical changes in law, properly rights and other institutions that rein force and perpetuate male domination.²⁵ Woman's equality is “a basic precondition for (the) social, economic and political development of a nation”.²⁶

Since the second UN Development Decade (1970 - 79), when women and development issues conceptually were linked for the first time, the policy approaches towards women shifted from welfare to empowerment approach. The political empowerment of women is even more elusive than their social empowerment. Education, employment and active participation in the social and even in the political stage are not enough to assure empowerment. This situation is very crucial in the context of Bangladesh. The country is a patriarchal state and its patriarchal society, which is permeated with patriarchal values and norms of female subordination, subservience and segregation.²⁷ It prevents women from having equal access to informal and formal structure of the governance of the country.

Leader of the opposition are women. Moreover, the Constitution of Bangladesh has granted equal rights to men and women both in matters relating to state and public life²⁸. The Provisions of the Constitution clearly state that steps should be taken to ensure participation of women in all sphere of national life²⁹. The span of responsibilities for elected women members have been well defined in the government gazette. However, there is no definite responsibility narrated in such a gazette for elected women members and thus the status of elected women members (reserve seats) has been undermined. Still there is some confusion and misunderstanding between members and women members. Furthermore, elected women members have reportedly been prejudiced against by their male counter parts³⁰. The decision to allocate reserve seats for the women had been taken to promote women's participation in decision – making process as a part of women empowerment and development.

2.2.9 Economical Status of Women in Bangladesh

First

In Bangladesh, women's participation in economic activities shows great variations by gender, nature of activity and place of residence. For example, more than three quarters of employed women of 15 years and above are found to be unpaid family labour as opposed to less than a tenth who are self employed and a few (6 per cent) contract workers.³¹

Second

Women's household work remains unrecognized, uncounted and invisible. National Labour Force Survey also reflects the bias. Non-recognition of household work shows almost half the population as unemployed and inactive.³²

Third

Economically, women have always been involved in production although their share in consumption as well as control over capital and cash has always been nominal and neglected. The agriculture sector is overwhelmed by unpaid family workers who are disproportionately represented by women. Self-employed or own account workers are predominantly found in the trade, hotel and restaurant, transport, storage, and communications sectors where men's involvement is sizeable (nearly a quarter) and women's is negligible.

Forth

Every four out of five workers in the construction sector are day or contract laborers, although this sector is represented by only 3 percent of the employed men and less than 1 percent of women.

Fifth

For women in the rural areas, the number working in the construction sector is likely to be higher. However, a sizeable chunk (nearly one fifth) of unpaid family helpers is found both in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors and they are disproportionately represented by women. Hence, even in the informal sector, women are not only concentrated in a few sectors, but also their labor is largely consumed without any remuneration. By way of contrast, although men are also overwhelmingly found in the informal sector, they are mostly involved as self-employed or own account workers, suggesting their greater access to resources and economic opportunities³³.

Table - 2.6

Employed Persons 15 Years and Above by Employment Status, Hours Worked, Sex, and Residence (Per cent)

Status	Bangladesh			Urban			Rural		
	Male	Female	Ratio	Male	Female	Ratio	Male	Female	Ratio
Total	48	26	54.2	51	34	66.7	47	24	51.1
Self-employer	48	31	64.5	52	29	55.8	47	31	66.0
Employer	48	06	33.3	58	14	24.1	35	17	48.6
Employee	53	49	92.5	53	51	96.2	53	46	86.8
Unpaid family helper	39	22	56.4	39	22	56.4	39	22	56.4
Day laborer	50	37	74.0	49	39	79.6	50	37	74.0
Average daily wage of day laborers (TK)	46	26	56.5	60	36	60.0	44	25	56.8
Average monthly income of self-employed	2,240	827	36.1	2,899	847	29.2	2,073	821	39.6

Source: BBS, 1996. *Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 1(1), p.- 61, 2006

Sixth

According to a UNICEF report the average age of female marriage is 14 years, on the average, the men work at home 12 minutes a day while a woman is engaged in daily domestic work of 5 hours. The report also notes that women have a minimum say in terms of childbearing and her pastimes in hours of leisure.

Seventh

Economic exploitation of girls includes many of the same issues as it does for women inherited rights, social security, unequal wages and job opportunities and they also exploited by unvalued, of ten unpaid and harmful labour.

Table - 2.7

Participation Rate of Women in Economic Activities : Evidence from Some Recent Micro Studies (in Per cent of Women of 10 Years and Above)

Source	Year	Rate	Remarks
Socio-Economic Impact of roads in Rural Areas (Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, Dhaka). Study Upazillas	1984	8.9	Average for three
A Socio-Economic Evaluation of Chandpur II Irrigation	-	-	-
Project, p. 2 - 48 , Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad, Dhaka	1982	14.3	Average for four project villages
-	-	18.3	Average for two control villages
Rural Industries Study Project Final Report, p.-31	1981	10.0	Average for all
Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Dhaka	-	-	Average for all study areas (10 Thanas).

Source: Situation of Women in Bangladesh, Ministry of Social Welfare and Women's Affairs, 1985.

Eight

Labour in Bangladesh is cheap, female labour is cheaper. The number of women workers is greater in the garments industries. A unit having capacity to produce 200 pieces of garments require 185 to 225 workers. Labour costs in the garments industry is less compared to other large and heavy industries. A garments factory can run with 50 per cent unskilled labour. So a large number of rural and urban destitute women can get jobs in these factories. Wages for the positions of supervisor, machine operator, iron man (now women), packing man helper are very low. Among the helpers women do the unskilled work. There are males in most of the senior positions including manager, cutting master, cutting assistant. In addition to cheaper wages, one of the major causes behind the acceptance whatever is doled out to them. They are expected to work from more than eight hours and often they are not entitled for overtime payments and bonus .³⁴

Table - 2.8

Women Victimized by 'Fatwa' (Yearly)

Years	Number of Women
1998	30
1999	28
2000	22
2001	39

Source : Daily Jugantor, Manob Jamin, Bhorer Kagoj, Prothom Alo, Ittefaq , Shangbad

Economic position of women in Bangladesh is not so good. Now a day's some NGO's , Private Organization and Govt. also done some or give some opportunity to the women or try to ensure the economic security of their families to enhance their status³⁵ .In other wards, we can say that effective efforts have been made from financial institutional source also including the NGO's in the country to effectively empower women, both in side the house and the outside house particularly through providing credit for undertaking income generating activities.

2.2.10 Women Politicians

Participating in politics or lection is an important instrument to facilitate democracy in the society. But women are still fighting for their just and equitable participation in political processes. In Bangladesh women's participation in the political and national movement has been very negligible³⁶. Statistics show that women lag behind men substantially in indicators of economic participation and political participation.

Bangladesh is now completing a decade under the leadership of two women prime ministers. This is a reality. But there is a 'Mythical' and ironical reality concealed in it. The society has not moved in anyway from its patriarchal centre and so in the periphery some ripples even could not be created .Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, the parliament, military establishments, judiciary, education and benevolent organisations etc. So a female head of the government cannot do much. In fact, these two leaders enjoy their topmost positions, harshly speaking, only as beneficiaries of the patriarchal notions of the society.

In fact, facilitated the entry of two women in the highest position of the respective political parties. But the general scenario is that, women politicians are relatively new in politics. They generally hold office in a sub- committee of a party. Though Political Parties usually play a stronger role in a parliamentary system in a country like Bangladesh but still women's branch rather than in the central body or the executive committee of these party. Some women leaders believe that women participation would have been more effective, if they contested elections directly rather than receiving the protection of reserved seats. Women suffer politically due to financial problem and accessibility to media. Women also face difficulty because of their political rule perception in the

society as politics is regarded as tough and full time occupation. Other causes are low literacy, immobility, economic dependence and discrimination against women candidates.³⁷

2.2.11 Political Parties and Women Issues

Women's issues or rather gender concerns do not feature in the discourse of mainstream politics. Over the past decades, women's issues have been projected as integral to the development needs and priorities of the nation. As such, they have formed part of the development discourse and have been basically viewed in terms of practical gender needs rather than strategic gender needs. The questions of female education, family planning, income generation, mother and child care, quotas, for example – are addressed primarily from national development perspectives as well as from considerations of women's participation in the development process.

The past development plans of the govt. the successive five years plans in particular demonstrate a gradual shift from invisibility and marginality of women toward a more pronounced women in development bias, what is absent from the development dialogues is the concern for women's empowerment and gender equality and the strategies for restructuring of gender relations in society through appropriate intervention measures. Political parties are indispensable in democracy.

As E.E. Schattschneider, a noted Political Scientist, once said , “ The political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties”. Political parties operate in the field of mainstream politics³⁸. They are the vehicles to political power. They perform four basic functions to ensure continues of democracy as a govt. of the people, by the people, for the people. Their constitution and manifestoes are indicative of their ideology, commitments and programmers of action. Though their manifestoes, political parties can raise those issues and talked about strategies .

2.2.12 Women and their right to Vote

About hundred and twenty three years have passed since the creation of local govt. at the union level. Autonomous, democratic local governance is an integral part of the Bangladesh constitutional system. Article 59 of the Constitution mandates the creation of elected local bodies at each administrative unit - District, Upazila and Union. These bodies are for " The management of local affairs by locally elected persons ." (Kudrat – E -Elahi Panir Vs Bangladesh) Local Government by definition, is democratic self-governance that must be accountable to the people. A strong local government system can ensure good governance through transparency, accountability, effective participation and equal opportunities for all. It can also lay the foundation for a vibrant democratic system. The functionaries of local govts. were always in the hands of males. For a long time, right to vote in local bodies dependent on educational qualification, possession of property and tax payment etc. Women having been usually devoid of property and educational opportunities were automatically, left out which amounted to discrimination. Women were not eligible to cast votes in elections to rural local bodies till 1956, when for the first

time election was held on the basis of universal adult franchise. After Liberation, in the last 22 years five local govt. elections were held in Bangladesh (1973 , 1977, 1983-84, 1988 and 1992). It may be mentioned that it was for the first time (1993) in the history of the land that statutory representation of women has been provided in the local government at the lower tier , the Union Parishad .

2.2.13 Administration

Administration is also not so satisfactory . It is found that in most cases women get more opportunities for low grade jobs. A survey conducted in 1987 shows that out of 55 posts of secretary and additional secretary not a single was held by women. There was only one woman out of 88 joint secretaries and one woman out of 268 deputy secretaries. Out of 562 posts of assistant secretaries only 14 were held by women. Up to 1990 none of the key posts in the 4 Divisions of the country, 64 Districts and 460 Than as were held by women. The scenario did change a little in subsequent years ; and in the year 2000, there were two women secretaries, three Diplomats and five joint secretaries. By 2001 one high court judge and four district commissioners were women. Among the ministers in Sheikh Hasina's cabinet three were women. Moreover, only 18.1 percent (10 years to onwards) of the total labour force is constituted by women³⁹. Like political and civil administration women are also non-existent at the top management level in the private sectors.

Table - 2.9

Male-female Distribution in the Duty Posts in Administration of Government (1987)

Category of Posts	No. of Male	No. of Female
Secretary and Additional Secretary	55	Nil
Joint Secretary	88	01
Deputy Secretary	268	01
Section Officer (Assistant Secretary)	562	15

Source : Calculated on the basis of information obtained from the Establishment Ministry, Government of Bangladesh

2.2.14 Women's Electoral Status

According to Election Commission source the total number of voters were 61,515,806 out of this

women were 3,01,71,698, which is the small part of total voter population. The total male voter population was 52 % or 3,13,44,168, from the total voter population 70 % votes were cast. Total number women contesting candidate are 39,419. Of this 39 % were by women and 61 % were by men⁴⁰. This means that 57 % of the total female voter population and 82 % of the male voter population participated in casting votes. The turn out women, during these election, was low in spite of the fact that the majority of the Union Parishad was free from incidents of violence against women .Table 2.4 shows that the total number of voters rate of Bangladesh.

Table – 2.10

Bangladesh Voters, Rate of Male and Female Voters

Sl. No.	Gender	Total Number of Voters	Segregation of Votes
01.	Female	61,515,806	3,01,71,698
02.	Male	61,515,806	3,13,44,168

2.2.15 Legal Status of Women in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh women have inadequate access to the law due to illiteracy, lack of legal literacy, information and resources , insensitivity and gender bias. They also lack awareness of women’s human rights in general. The law-enforcement officers and the judiciary do not really know how to make law more gender sensitive. Women may also lack access to justice or human rights because of race, ethnicity, culture, and religion. In Bangladesh the most important events in a woman’s life, e.g. marriage, divorce, custody of children inheritance etc. for example, are governed by the personal laws, which in case of Muslims is the “Shari abased on the Quran and Hadith (Sayings of Prophet Mohammad)”. But civil laws are also exercised in some areas relating to these issues and it is hard to establish the logic regarding the jurisdiction of each. This question is more pertinent to Muslim women because , two most important things of women’s life are affected critically by the exercise of discriminatory person allows , firstly, the sanction of co-wives and secondly, unequal inheritance right in father’s property. Occasionally, proposals for revising these in the right of modern civil laws have been raised but they subsided for different reasons .⁴¹

Section 27 of the constitutions of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh reads, “All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law”. On the other hand section 28(1) reads, “the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth”. But in our statute book there are many discriminative laws intermeshed directly and indirectly in our laws. We have not much information regarding the number of women rendered largely disadvantaged on account of it. Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid of Pakistan cited, it give me a new experience when from gender point of view I scrutinized those laws that I had studied as a lawyer for the last few decades and administered justice. The discrimination, which is clear , is easy to identify , but it is very hard to identify what we approve as rights in our subconscious mind the foundation of inequality in term shed within our social manners and

customs. As for example , some labor acts to keep women as workers and get some disapproving women’s rights for abortion, and snatching their fundamental rights”⁴².

In Bangladesh , we can see the same thing. Provisions of some preferential treatment regarding women’s employment in the labour force is also there for example, no deduction could be made from women’s wage for breach of contract and there is a prohibition of employing women for night works. All these no doubt, show great concern of the law regarding women’s vulnerable position in the society but they also limit their opportunities and scope to be treated as equals in spheres of life.

2.2.16 Constitution Parameters of Women’s Political Participation

In the past and present, women of Bangladesh played a vital role in politics particularly in the progressive political movement of the country. In the nine months liberation war, women played a very significant role. But in 1973 general election, no woman was directly elected to the parliament. Only two women candidates were elected through by-election in the vacant seats. Though “ The Constitution of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh”- enumerates equal rights for all citizens, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.⁴³

Thus women are entitled to the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and expression association and assembly which form this basis of political activity in a civil society. As for this political representation of women , this Constitution provides for representation in terms of equality with men to political and public representative institutions .⁴⁴ Such as - the Parliament and the Local Govt. Bodies. At the same time , in order to ensure a minimum representation of women in these institutions, the Constitution provides the “ Protection of Reservation of Seats”.

Under Article 65 of the Constitution, the Parliament of Jatiyo Sangsad consists of 300 members, elected in accordance with the law from single territorial constituencies by direct election in addition 30 seats are reserved for women to be elected according to law by the directly elected members of the Parliament .⁴⁵ The reservation provision ceased to be operative in December, 1987. But was reenacted in to the Constitution in June, 1990 by the Tenth Amendment. Parliament seats, which is double the number in 1986.⁴⁶

Table - 2.11

SL. No	Years	Numbers of Candidate	(%) of Seats
01.	1991	8	2.7
02.	1988	-	1.3
03.	1986	-	1.7

2.2.17 Women Leadership in the Local Govt.

Most of the women leaders in the UP were involved in NGO’s and other development

organizations which improve their confidence & knowledge and that contributed immensely to become leaders at the grass roots. Kinship relationship and political linkage helped develop women leadership at the grass roots. Better socio – economic background also helps develop leaders⁴⁷. However, there is no deny the fact that among all the above factors, the major factors for emerging women leadership at the grass roots level local govt. in Bangladesh are legal which implies that govt. affirmative policies that is reservation of women in the Union Parishad were the pivotal factors for the growth of women leadership in the local govt. in Bangladesh .

2.3 Conclusion

From the above discussion it becomes clear from various data and information of different sectors that women in Bangladesh⁴⁸ are victims of inequality, abuse, suppression and exploitation , social customs and traditions , illiteracy and employment opportunities have hampered the total integration of women in the mainstream of development activities in Bangladesh.

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Third Chapter -----
Political Participation and Theoretical Analysis

Third Chapter

Political Participation and Theoretical Analysis

3.1 Introduction

Until very recent times the right to participation in political decision making, the right to vote, or the right to hold public office has been confined to small groups- the powerful, the rich and the well born, even during the flowering of 'Athenian Democracy' only a minority of the total adult population was actually permitted to attend the assembly. And participate in decisions governing the city state. And although there was modest increase in the number of political decision makers during the middle ages as land owning barons acquired political power, the overwhelming majority of the population was regularly excluded from political participation. And became involved in politics only intermittently through peasant rebellions in the countryside or riots in the towns and cities. These uprisings, however, rarely challenged the legitimacy of existing political structures or sought to expand political rights for the population at large.¹

Instead, they invariably arose out of a wish to replace one set of rulers with another, or to redress specific grievances. A trend toward broader popular political participation began during the Renaissance and Reformation of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries and gained momentum during the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.² The eighteenth century stands out as something of a major turning point in the shift toward mass participation in the political process. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, recognition of participatory rights spread, as voting franchise shows England provides the best example of this general trend³. Its reform measures of 1832 and 1867. In 1884, nearly all adult British males attained the right to vote and in 1928 women were fully enfranchised⁴. In Norway, for example, the sequence of enfranchisement paralleled that of England quite closely, though women won the vote a bit earlier in 1913.

In France, a principle of broad enfranchisement was instituted in the 1790s under the first Republic, only to be revoked upon restoration of the 'Bourbon Monarchy' in 1814. Then 1848, Universal Adult Suffrage was declared a principle of the Second Republic, only to be set aside again in 1852 under the Second Empire. Although in many of the countries in northwestern Europe the new waves of middle and lower – class urban, commercial and industrial workers were peacefully drawn in to the structure of political decision making in many other countries demands for increased access to political participation were either silently ignored for long periods or forcefully repressed. The Spanish ruling classes in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, successfully resisted any genuine expansion of the rights to political participation. The situation has not changed much since General Franco seized control of the Spanish political system in the late 1930s.⁵

3.2 Theoretical Analysis

Scholars has suggested five different explanations toward greater participation in the Political Process.⁶ Though Larry and Richard reveals interesting facts about the trends of political parties in the global context.⁷ There are some variables of political instability⁸ -----

- i. Direct taxes as a percentages of general government revenue ;
- ii. Age in decades of the present national institutional forms ;
- iii. Union membership as a percentage of the labor force ;
- iv. General government expenditures as a percentage of GDP ;
- v. Number of seats of largest political party / numbers of other political parties ;
- vi. Age of largest political party.

Modernization

Modernization means the commercialization of agriculture , industrialization , increased urbanization , the spread of mass literacy and improved education and the development of mass media of communication⁹. As the new urban population-workers , merchants and professional men – acquire a new sense of being able to influence their own destinies , they increasingly demand a share of political power ;¹⁰

Changes in Social Class Structure

As a new working class and expanded, transformed middle class take form during the process of industrialization and modernization , the issue of who has a right to participate in political decision - making becomes prominent and may lead to changes in the pattern of political participation ;¹¹

The Influence of Intellectuals and Modern Mass Communication

Intellectuals , scientists , philosophers , writers and journalists have frequently introduced ideas such as egalitarianism and nationalism to the general public , generating a demand for broader mass participation in political decision - making . Modern transportation and communication system facilitate and accelerate the diffusion of new ideas.¹² Through intellectuals and modern communications media , the idea of participatory democracy has spread to the new nations long before modernization or industrialization prepared the way ;

Conflict Among Groups of Political Leaders

Where there is competition for power, one strategy available to opposing factions is make an appeal for public support . Such appeals grant a legitimate to the notion of mass participation and may lead to movements demanding that these “ Rights ” be fulfilled.¹³ Thus the middle classes

in their struggles against the aristocracy appealed to the working classes and helped to expand the voting franchise;¹⁴

□ Greater Governmental Involvement in Social , Economic and Cultural Affairs

The expansion of governmental activities into new policy areas generally means that the consequences of governmental actions become more and more pervasive in a citizen's daily life. Without legal rights of political participation, the individual is essentially left defenseless against and potentially vulnerable to, governmental action that may harm his interests. The increased range of government activity therefore frequently stimulates organized demands for access to political decision-making. Governmental actions may also spur interest in and demand for greater political participation through a spillover effect¹⁵. The granting of certain participatory rights by a government may encourage an interest in the attainment of further rights. It makes little difference whether rights granted were the product of spontaneous governmental action or of a concerted public campaign. In either case, the fact of increased participatory opportunities may lead to "Rising Participatory Expectations". The right to vote, for example, is often of little significance unless there is some opportunity to help determine what matters are to be voted upon and how the vote is to be carried out.

3.3 Modes

According to scholars political participation is multi-dimensional. Scholars have suggested different explanations of movements toward greater participation in the political process. In 1971 Verba, Nic and Kim used the word "Modes".¹⁶

□ Verba, Nic and Kim in 1971 divided Modes of Political Participation into four parts which are as follows-----

- i. Voting ;
- ii. Campaign Activity ;
- iii. Citizen Initiated Contacts ;
- iv. Co-operative Activities .

□ Milbrath and Goel divided the Modes of the Political Participation into six parts which are given below¹⁷ --

- i. Voting ;
- ii. Party and Campaign Workers ;
- iii. Communities Activities ;
- iv. Contracting Officials ;
- v. Protestors ;
- vi. Communicators .

Ronald Inglehart explain two kinds of 'Modes of Political Participation'.¹⁸ Ronald's Modes are given bellow ----

Ronald's Modes of Political Participation



Conventional / Elite Directed Modes

Unconventional

□ Conventional / Elite Directed Modes

“Conventional” or “Elite Directed Modes”– political acts are the “Normal ” forms of Political Participation in Modern Democracies ;

□ Unconventional

Unconventional Forms of Political Participation include some that may be legal (such as - Petitioning) as well as those that are illegal, violent and revolutionary .Varieties of Political Participation are ---

Table – 3.1

Conventional Modes		Unconventional Modes
01.	Voting	Petitioning
02.	Discussing Politics	Demonstrating
03.	Campaign Activity	Confrontation
04.	Forming and Joining Groups	Civil Disobedience
05.	Individual Communication with Political and Administrative Officials	Political Violence Against Property (Trashing, Bombing, Arson)
06.	----	Political Violence Against Persons (Kidnapping , Assassination)
07.	--	Guerrilla Warfare and Revolution

Varieties of Political Participation that occur in different countries and times. Different kinds of modes which relates with Political Participation has shown in a figure bellow --

Chart - 2

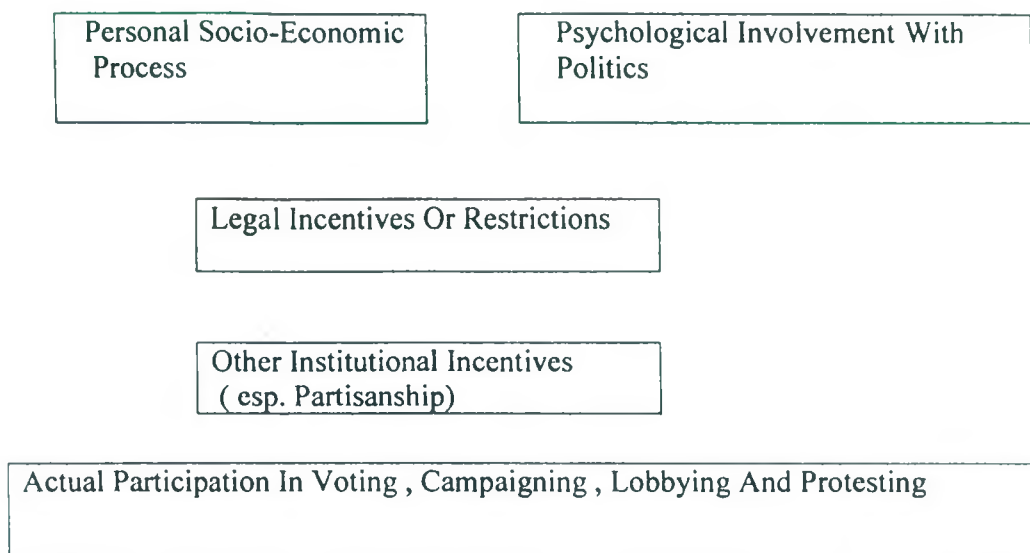


Figure : A Model of Political Participation

Source : M . Hawkes Worth And Maurice Kogan ed. Encyclopedia of Govt. and Politics. Rutledge , New York , 1992 , Page – 431

3.4 Modes of Political Participation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a democratic country¹⁹. Govt. of Bangladesh formed through the direct election of mass. But like another third world country, Bangladesh has also some characteristics of political participation.²⁰ The forms and frequencies of political participation tell us a great deal about the stability of political system , the integrity of public life , and the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their citizenry . All kinds of Modes of Political Participation are two kinds. Like --

Modes of Political Participation



- i. Conventional ;
- ii. Unconventional .

An important recent discovery about political participation is that distinctive participatory styles are distributed in different parts of populations . Verba and Nie have shown that there are six distinctive kinds of participators :

First

In actives , that is citizens who do not even vote ;

Second

Those who vote but engage in no other form of political activity ;

Third

Parochial , whose political activity chiefly involves attention to personal problems through personal contacts with govt. officials ;

Fourth

Communalists , who involve themselves in politics for social goals and through group activities;

Fifth

Campaigners , who are involved in partisan and election activities ;

Sixth

Complete activists , who engage in all the varieties of participation .

3.4.1 Conventional Form / Modes

Good governance requires , effective people's participation as well as transparency and accountability in the process of governance²¹ . Conventional Modes / Forms are normal act. Conventional Modes are ---

- i . Voting ;
- ii . Political Campaign ;
- iii . Discussing Politics ;
- iv . Individual Communication ;
- v . Correspondence ;
- vi . Political Communication ;
- vii . Involvement with the Political Party ;
- viii . Adjudication with Govt. Officials ;
- ix . Adjudication with Different Organizations .

Voting

Voting is by far the most wide spread form of active political participation. It is found today in almost all political system , whether democratic or authoritarian . In the Soviet Union , for example, all citizens are expected to participate in elections , even though there is only one political party [a political party is a politically organized group united to promote some

common interests and presents candidates in the elections and campaigns for the purpose of winning public offices and controlling governmental policies] and all candidates for office have to be acceptable to that party. The vote is thus an act of general support for the political system and the ruling elite. Refusal to vote may even be taken as a silent statement of protest. The frequency of elections also seems to affect voting rates. Partisan feeling and party competition may also influence voting levels. A country's political culture may also affect voter turnout ;

Taking part in Political Campaigns

Political campaign was used as a modes in political participation long before but after 1870 it was termed.²² Candidates perform this function by communicating political information, issues and ideas to the people. Political campaign are undertaken by the campaigners or candidates applies for vote before the election time to link with the social forces. Citizens participation in local government depends on -----

Two Factors



The Degree of Local Autonomy

The Degree to which Local Governments Encourage Citizen Participation

Discussing Politics

Political Party serve more to propandize and mobilize the masses through political discussion and influence the masses about to know the party's policy's out comes²³. Discussing politics play significant role especially for the political participation. Through a discussion, the general people can know the agendas, programs their behavior and mode of competition of a participant or a party which the most focal point of the democratization process of the country ;

Individual Communication

Those who are concerned with the control of governmental power before election that candidates individually communicates with the common candidates with particularly strong personal appeal can bring many political people in to political activity. Dwight Eisenhower was able to capitalize on the American peoples great fondness for him as a hero of World War II in his Presidential victories in the 1950s. Julius Nyerere in Tanzania and Fidel Castro in Cuba are two charismatic leaders of developing countries who have mobilized masses of people in to at least intermittent and sometimes sustained political activity. In Bangladesh, local election are usually perceived more important. Candidates help aware people about the norms and behavior to a well - running political system. They educate people by the furnishing facts, figures and comments on various matters. A far-sighted candidate makes a constructive approach and clearly tells the electoral about it's attitude towards the various problems confronting the country This indirectly educate the people and enables them to develop a particular type of opinion ;

Correspondence

Democratic Governance is vital for development .Strong & effective democratic govt. especially participatory govt. can made by the mass participation in the election²⁴ . In a democratic country, an educated citizen can easily participate in the election to be the representative of the general people. They also serve as the motive force in crystallizing public opinion and on the unifying . Agency which makes democracy workable . To participate in the election, this modes play vital role . Before election, participant correspondence with the common ;

Political Communication

Citizen place some of their members in govt. via electoral process . Political Communicant is one of the most vital modes of the Political Participation .Citizens participation in Local Government depends on -----

Two Factors



The Degree of Local Autonomy

The Degree to which Local Governments Encourage Citizen Participation

To know about the local political system, to let know other about one's own area's political culture, aware the government office, institutional arrangements etc. most important example of political participation . Candidates perform this function by communicating political information, issues and ideas to the people . In Bangladesh, this type of modes used more²⁵ ;

Involvement with the Political Party

Political parties are one of the major developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. They are the invention of modern political system . In Bangladesh political party in a body of men united . Political parties have an important influence on participation²⁶ . People with party affiliations vote more often than those who lack them and those who are strongly attached to their parties are even more active .Lower - status persons, working- class middle class people etc. are thereby encouraged to participate .Political party in possession of an official label and of a formal organization that links centre and locality , that presents at elections and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office . Participating in politics or election is an important instrument to facilitate democracy in the society. But women are still fighting for their just and equitable participation in political processes;

Contacting Public Officials

In democracies , the candidate can not avoid the judicial process or the govt. official cause they provides procedural protection²⁷ . Members links with the public servant officials making it possible to work together in harmony .

Adjudication with different Organization

There are different kinds of organization or institution build up in a country like – social, cultural at national level and also in local level. Adjunct with a organization ,a major modes of political participation . It's the most social integration force ;

Local Development Work

People's participation at the grass root level can transition from the representative type to a participatory variety , reflecting greater participation in the politics . Strong and effective democratic government²⁸, especially participatory government at the local level is important for the socio – economic resurgence of a country like Bangladesh .People in Bangladesh, can solve their problem locally at their roots , by awakening and mobilizing people ,utilizing local resources and local leadership²⁹ .Local leadership transformed elected representatives of local democratic institutions .

3.4.2 Unconventional Modes

Violence is universal and cuts across all boundaries of age, class, location, ethnicity and religion. It takes many forms .³⁰ Political violence is episodic in the history of most organized political communities and chronic in many.³¹ The surge of protest, demonstrations , strikes , the assassinations of PM/ President or the attempted assassination of Govt. Officials, devastating riots so on³² and other protest activities against the govt. or any of the govt. policy generally known as the Unconventional Modes of Political Participation .Unconventional Modes are –

- i. Demonstration ;
- ii. Marching and Sitting in ;
- iii. Engaging in Civil Disobedience ;
- iv. Holding Political Strikes “ Hortal ” ;
- v. Riot.

Demonstration

Political violence like – demonstration has been etched in the mind of most people by events. Political unrest has become such a recurring affair as a regular feature of our society, which defies all kinds of prohibitive measures. The basically conservative nature of our society has made our task much more difficult. The basically conservative nature of our society has made our task much more difficult. Though we have no reasons to be complacent , still we can enthusiastically greet the onward move towards the up liftmen of the status of women. . This is certainly recognition of the position of women in Bangladesh³³. The surge of protest demonstration like- by university students , by minority groups concerned with civil rights issues by persons opposed to school integration, by groups opposing govt .unethical involvement with the any world organizations so on. Confrontations between demonstrations and the police

not only the major metropolitan areas but the other. One kind of unconventional modes of political participation. Bruce L.R. Smith provides an insight into the function of demonstration, protest & acts of violence as forms/ modes of political participation;³⁴

Marching and Sitting In

Violence has always been part of the political process. Politics does not merely encompass the actions of legislative assemblies, political parties, electoral contests and the other formal trappings of modern government. Protest activities like – marching or sitting in of one form or another, efforts to dramatize grievances in a fashion that will attract attention and ultimately the destruction or threatened destruction of life and property appear as expressions of political grievances even in stable consensual societies. In Bangladesh where as in many instances these acts (marching and sitting in) are infrequent and sporadic so long as the system is responsive to the needs and demands of the population. Sometimes, such acts become a more common, routinized ;

Engaging in Civil Disobedience

Engaging in civil disobedience, these forms of political participation are thus employed by individuals in their efforts to influence politics and public policy, generally when other forms of political activity are either unavailable or appear to be ineffectual. The frequency with which disruption violence are employed as a means of political participation varies from situation to situation and from society to society³⁵. In Bangladesh, whereas in many instances of demonstrations, marching, sitting in, strikes, hortal, riot so on popular form of political participation to fulfill the demand of the population but engaging in civil disobedience in present days comparatively unpopular / unfamiliar ;

Riot

Political riot institutionalized as a mode of political behavior / participation. Reinhard Bendix has spoken of collective “ Bargaining by riot ” in discussing the period of English Political History when labor unions and others forms of combinations among laborers were prohibited by law. Such tactics are popular unconventional modes of political participation. Public protest or protest demonstrations under the free regimes fully a normal behavior, not merely distasteful, peripheral incidents.³⁶ Such tactics were crucial to their very survival under prevailing conditions ;

Holding Political Strikes and Hortal

The word “Hortal” derives from the “ Guzrati” word. “Hortal ” which is similar within the words of strikes. During the last two decades, has been one of the most political violent of all countries. People are most strongly disposed to act violently on their discontent if they believed that violence is just fixable and likely of success. They are likely to take violent political action like strikes and hortal to the extent that they regard their government as illegitimate and responsible for their frustrations. Hortal is noticeable in Bangladesh political culture³⁷ ;

□ Collective Violence

Acts of protest and collective violence are closely associated with the character of a society and the circumstances that prevail there. Civil strife, Ted Robert Gurr has developed the concept of "Relative Deprivation" to explain the frustration or discontent that motivates men to act aggressively. Gurr defines relative deprivation as "A Discrepancy between people's expectations about the goods and conditions of life to which they are entitled on the one hand and on the other, their value capabilities – the degree to which they think they can attain these goods and conditions".³⁸ But feeling of the relative deprivation does not by themselves lead to outbreaks of the violence or disruptive acts of protest. Relative deprivation is only a source of frustration and discontent. Of course, the more such discontent persists in a population, the greater the chance of collective violence. But whether or not this discontent leads to acts of protest and violence is usually dependent upon several other conditions. The incidence and Forms / Modes of violence are ultimately linked to attitudes shaped by social conditions and to the social conditions themselves. Successful violence increases the likelihood of its reoccurrences and the greater the extent of historical violence and more likely it is that some groups have found it effective.³⁹ Thus, acts of civil strike frequently stimulate cries for better means of social control and alternative channels for the expression of grievances or demands for changes – even though these reactions normally do not bring results until long after the disorderly acts have occurred. This type of political violence occurred in Bangladesh usually ;

□ Civil Disturbance

Political Participation occasionally takes the form of civil disturbance in communist regimes⁴⁰, but the absence of civil rights or other protective cover and the freer use of police suppression explain the lower frequency of such disturbances. The Berlin riots of 1953, the Hungarian and Polish Revolts of 1956 and the Polish work protest of 1970 illustrate, nonetheless, the persistence of violent forms of political participation even under highly centralized authoritarian regimes. Bangladeshi citizens are familiar with this mode.

3.5 Conclusion

Scholars have suggested different explanations toward greater political participation in the political process⁴¹. According to the scholars, the frequency which they employed as a means of political participation varies from situation to situation and from society to society. Modes of political participation are usually also dependent upon several conditions. So, in case of Bangladesh, modes – according to the scholars are not applicable. Women's participation in election analysis next.

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Fourth Chapter -----

Women in Union Parishad Election

Fourth Chapter

Women in Union Parishad Election

4.1 Introduction

The promulgation of the local government acts are seen by some observers as a practical demonstrations and fulfillment of the present's government's policy of giving "Power to the People". Therefore, the Bangladesh local decentralization and autonomy system begun the recommendations of the- Local Govt. Structure Review Commission in 1992 under the auspices of the present govt. (GOB, 1992);

Although , it was originally planned to be reinstated by Lord Ripon, the then viceroy of British India under his famous resolution on Local Govt. in 1882¹ .The article provides an academic basis for reinstating local decentralization and autonomy by a kind of systemic review on local Govt. experience and by analyzing needs and potentials for the local autonomy system in Bangladesh. Women were not eligible to cast votes in election to rural local bodies till 1956, when for the first time election was held on the basis of universal adult franchise ;

4.2 Local Government

Although a new country , Bangladesh has a long recorded history . In the recent past , it came under British rule, which lasted for nearly two centuries, from 1757 to 1947 . During that period Bangladesh was a part of the British Indian provinces² of Bengal & Assam. At the end of British rule in August 1947, the sub – continent was partitioned in to India and Pakistan . Bangladesh became a part of Pakistan³ and came to be known as East Pakistan. It remained so till 1971 . It appeared on the world map as an independent and sovereign state on December 16, 1971 after a nine – month long war of Liberation against Pakistan .

Bangladesh is governed by a unitary form of govt. and until recently of the Presidential type⁴. In August , 1991 Parliamentary form of govt. was introduced . The Prime Minister is now the Chief Executive of the country. Each Division is further sub- divided in to Zila. Each Zila , consists of several Thana .Below Thana are unions , which consists of several villages . Two types of local govt. institutions exists in Bangladesh –

Local Govt. Institutions



The Rural Local Govt.- bodies until recently have been -

i. Union Parishads ;

- ii. Upazila Parishads ;
- iii. Zila Parishads .

Article 59 of the Constitution⁵ mandates the creation of the above elected local bodies .

Definition of Local Govt.

In some centuries, the deconcentrated local extensions of the central govt. and in some others, traditional local power structures utilized for supporting field administration , have been misconstrued as been equivalent to local govt. Local govt. by definition is democratic self-governance that must be accountable to the people. Local govt. is only a part of the existing over all politico administrative system of a country and hence it is bound to assume many of it's characteristics besides being manipulated by it⁶.According to Duance Lockard – “ Local Govt . as a public organization authorized to decide and to decide and administer a limited range of public policies ”.

Characteristics of Local Govt.

A strong local government system ensure good governance through transparency, accountability, effective participation and equal opportunities for all . It can also lay the foundation for a vibrant democratic system . The Local Govt. System in Bangladesh characterized as follows –

First

Domination by and complete dependence on national govt.;

Second

Highly inadequate mobilization of local resources;

Third

Total exclusion of and lance of participation in local govt. bodies by the rural poor ;

Fourth

Marginal commitment to devolution / decentralization in practice.

Functions of Local Govt.

Administratively local govts. Allowance distribution of work on a territorial basis, prevent the central bureaucracy from forcing an unhealthy administrative uniformity on the country and facilitate use of knowledge of local conditions in tackling problems. Functions of the local govt. are given bellow -----

facilitate use of knowledge of local conditions in tackling problems. Functions of the local govt. are given bellow -----

First

Local Govt. can help speed up the decisions making process and provide prompt service to the people because of better use of local knowledge ;

Second

Direct contact with citizens and greater ability to overcome communication problems. It can also better achieve effective co- ordination and cheap administration ;

Third

In democratic control , decentralizations of administration, local-level participation in planning and “Bottom – Up” development ;

Fourth

The importance of local govt. need hardly be over emphasized .William A Robson comments – “Local authorities have greater opportunities today than ever before. If the powers of the central govt. are increasing, so are the power of the local govt.”;

Fifth

At the local level that national policies are implemented and various govt. services and delivered;

Sixth

Local communities are , furthermore, important arenas in which a nation’s political process are actually experienced ⁷;

Seventh

Citizens demands are mainly articulated through local channels, particularly, because these offer opportunities for direct and regular contact with citizens;

Eighth

Local govts. facilitate a two-way communications between higher and lower levels of govt. ;

Ninth

Local govts. contribute to diffusion of power, national solidarity and democracy by promoting diversification and deconcentration of political activity;

Tenth

Setting up as additional centre of political experience of political experience by affording excellent opportunities for the common people to participate in the management of public affairs, and by acting as a safety valve , letting off steam at the local level ;

Eleventh

Local govt. efficiently not takes up some of the functions but can also play a supporting role during the national / regional govts. formulating and implementation of over- all national / regional plans and policies .

□ Problems of Local Govt.

Local govts. are not without its weakness or problems. Geographical conditions favor centralization. The national integration argument added dimension against the decentralization process. Similarly, the growth of large political parties, demand for a national minimum of services and are said to have all militated against local govt. particularly, in countries with little democratic tradition, local govt. bodies can easily become dominated by unrepresentative oligarchies. Problems of local govt. are given bellow -----

First

Given it's small size, it may not attract talented and committed people and so it may become sluggish , inefficient and costly compared to the central state govt. ;

Second

Local Govt. has especially be prone to corruption and malfeasance, much more than the central;

Third

Modern technology with vast economics of scale spilling across regions in sectors like power and communications also have rein forced the trend towards centralization at the express of local govt.;

Fourth

Central action s are sometimes justified on the argument that they remove inequity and promote

the development of backward areas;

Fifth

The fact is that recently most developing countries had opted for planning as a strategy of development, with considerable involvement of the public sector;

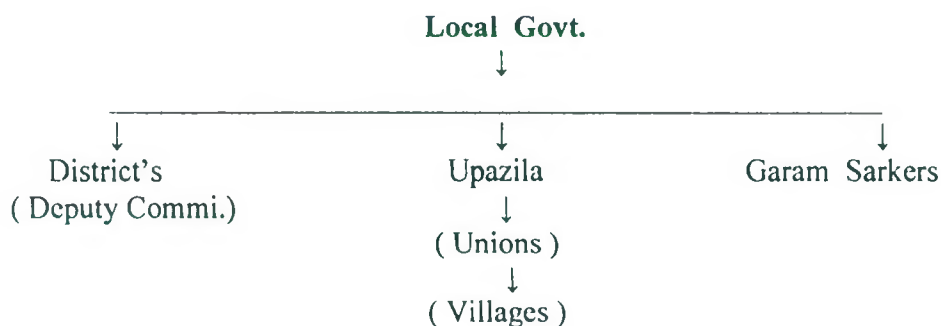
Sixth

A lack of expertise in and familiarity with modern techniques . There are gaps in technology resources and skills at the local level .

4.2.1 Local Government in Bangladesh

Since the inception of the local govt. during the post independence period of Bangladesh changes occurred in the spheres of local government in 1976 , which assigned more functions and enlarged representation style in Union Parishad . Again in 1983 a number of reform measures came in to being in the structure of local govt. system of Bangladesh by the military govt. Lt. Gen. Hussain Muhammad Earshad that included increasing the number of districts by abolishing the sub-division , creation of Upazila System and changes in the activities of Union Parishad through the Local Government Ordinance of 1983.⁸

Following that provisions of nine wards instead of previous three wards and reservation of women seats in the Union Parishad were subsequently enacted in 1993 and 1997 respectively. According to the present system there prevails a three tier local govt. for rural area in Bangladesh.



At the first tier there are districts, headed by a Deputy Commissioner and assisted by other officials. In the second tier there are Upazila. Below Upazila there are Unions, which consists of several villages⁹. There are about 4484 Unions in the country and 40347 Gram Sarkers. According to the Constitutional Provision all tiers of rural local government should be composed of people's representatives but except the Union Parishad other two tiers do not have the representative's character;

4.2.2 Constitutional Arrangements of Local Government in Bangladesh

Constitutional arrangement of Local Govt. are ---

Article 11

Article 11 of the Fundamental Principles of State Policy states that : “ The Republic shall be a democracy in which fundamental human rights and freedoms and respect for dignity and worth of the human person shall be guaranteed : [xxx and in which effective participation by the public through their elective representatives in administration at all levels shall be ensured].”

Article 9

Article 9 of the state policy unequivocally states that : “ The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible, to peasants, workers and women”.

Article 10

Article 10 provides that : “ Steps shall be taken to ensure participation of women in all spheres of national life”¹⁰.

Article 59

Chapter III of the Constitution incorporates provisions for constituting Local Government as follows----

□ 59 (1) Local Government in every administrative unit of the Republic shall be entrusted to bodies, composed of persons elected in accordance with law .

□ 59 (2) everybody such as is referred to in clause (1) shall, subject to this constitution and any other law, perform within the appropriate administrative unit such functions as shall be prescribe by Act of Parliament , which may include functions relating to --

- i. Administration and the work of public officers ;
- ii. The maintenance of public order ;
- iii. The preparation and implementation of plans relating to public services and economic development .

Article 60

For the purpose of giving full effect to the provision of Article 59 Parliament shall ,by law, confer powers on the local government bodies referred to in that article including power to

impose taxes for local purposes, to prepare their budgets and maintain funds. The first ever comprehensive reform commission (ASRC) 1972, constituted under the chairmanship of M.A. Chaudhury, the then vice – Chancellor of Dhaka University and the planning minister of the government of Bangladesh in – exile strongly argued for the democratization of administration at all levels. But unfortunately the recommendations of the Commission were not implemented. Despite relentless efforts of all successive regimes in Bangladesh to revamp local government units at different tiers, only Union Parishads survived amid political turbulence and doldrums.

The President Order No. 7 of 1972 changed the name of Union Parishad to Union Panchayet. Again the letter was renamed as Union Parishad by the President Order No. 22 of 1973. Three years later, the Local Government Ordinance, 1976 was promulgated. It defined all aspects of local government in a comprehensive manner.¹¹ The UPs were entrusted with a board range of activities subject to rules and directions of the government, and the limits of funds as its disposal. Previously BD system entrusted UP with responsibilities in 37 areas. The Ordinance added three more responsibilities ----

- i. Promotion of Family Planning ;
- ii. Environment ;
- iii. Maintenance of Ponds.¹²

In addition to the above mentioned functions the UP also performed judicial functions under the Village Court Ordinance Act. 1976. Under the Local Government Union Parishad Ordinance 1976 certain changes were made in the composition of the Parishad. The post of Vice – Chairman was abolished. One Chairman and 9 members were directly elected on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise. Under the UP Ordinance 1983, the female representation was increased to three. Introduction of the Upazila scheme in 1982 - 83 diminished the importance of UPs in the formulation and implementation of FYP and Annual Development Plan. But after the abolition of UP scheme following the ascendancy of BNP to the helm of state authority in 1991, the UPs regained their importance. UPs were designated as the focal point of rural development and mandated to prepare FYP and ADP.¹³

4.3 Union Parishad

Local Govt. in Bangladesh are created and changed with the administration of the policies and programs initiated by the govt. There are two categories of local govt. operating in urban and rural areas.



The units of local govt. working for rural areas comprise Zila Parishad (Districts Council) at the district level and Union Parishad at the gram roots village's level. A union is the smallest administrative unit in Bangladesh. On an average, a union comprises 10-15 villages and contains

15-20 thousand people .The unit of local govt. which operates in the union is called Union Parishad¹⁴ . Among the rural local govt. bodies, Union Parishad is the lowest and nearest to the people.

The Union Parishad in our society is occupying a dominant place in the activities of national development. It possesses a good amount of power which creates the sense of self-reliance. As the development is policy is rural oriented and Thana administration is closely related to the development of rural areas. The Thana level administration is also getting increasing attention of the govt .

4.3.1 Composition of Union Parishad

A union consists of several villages. Every union is divided in to nine small areas, which is called a ward. Each ward is represented by a member elected on the basis of adult franchise by the voters. Nine members for nine wards are grouped to form three larger wards .These three larger wards are represented by three women for the inadequate representation of women in the Union Parishad, 3 seats are reserved for women, which are called reserved seats for women. Election for these three reserved seats is also direct.

□ Executive Member of the UP

Each Union Parishad is headed by a Chairperson who is elected directly by the voters living in that Union¹⁵ . Then there are 9 members for nine wards . Further there are 3 women members elected from the reserved seats . So , in total , there are 13 members for one Union Parishad. Together they take all the necessary decisions, make policies and shoulder the responsibilities to run the local administration of the Union Parishad . A part from the elected representatives there are few other salaried employees that is Secretary, Dafader and Chowkidar who are appointed by the government.

□ Characteristics of Union Parishad

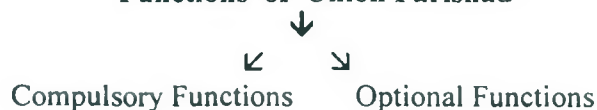
Characteristics of Union Parishad are as follows ---

- i. It is a political system constituted by law ;
- ii. Under this system , Thana / Union Parishad are organized for specific areas;
- iii. It is an elected body. It is composed of the members elected by the people ;
- iv. Such institutions are vested with substantial power of administration and taxation over the local area;
- v. Such institutions are ultimate subordinate to the national government .

4.3.2 Role And Functions of Union Parishad

Every Union Parishad discharge two types of functions which are as follows --

Functions of Union Parishad



□ Compulsory Functions

The Union Parishad shall have to perform the following compulsory functions ---

First

Maintenance of Law and Order and assistance to administration in the maintenance of Law and Order ;

Second

Adoption of measures for preventing crime , disorder and finally the smuggling ;

Third

Adoption and implementation of development schemes in the field of agriculture-forestry, fisheries, live stocks, education , health , cottage industries , communication , irrigation and flood protection with a view to increasing economic and social enlistment of the people;

Forth

Promotion of family planning ;

Fifth

Development of local resources and their use ;

Sixth

Protections and maintenance of public propenkments , telephone and electric lines ;

Seventh

Review of the development activities of all agencies working at the Union level and to make recommendations to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer [TNO] , in regard to their activities ;

Eighth

Motivation and persuasion of the people to install sanitary latrine ;

Ninth

Registration of birds , deaths , blinds , beggars and destitute;

Tenth

Conducting of census of all kinds.

□ Optional Functions

UP has 38 optional functions which are described bellow ----

First

Provision and maintenance of public ways and public streets ;

Second

Provision and maintenance of public places , public open spaces , public gardens and public playgrounds ;

Third

Lighting of public ways , public streets and public places ;

Fourth

Plantation and prevention of trees in general and plantation and preservation of trees on public ways , public streets and public place in particular ;

Fifth

Management and maintenance of burning and burial grounds , common meeting places and other common property ;

Sixth

Provision and maintenance of accommodation for travelers ;

Seventh

Prevention and regulation of encroachments on public ways , public streets and public places ;

Eighth

Prevention and abatement of nuisances in public ways , publics streets and publics places ;

Ninth

Sanitation , conservancy and the adoption of other measures for the cleanliness of the Union ;

Tenth

Regulation of the collection , removal and disposal of manure and streets sweeping ;

Eleventh

Regulation of offensive and dangerous trades ;

Twelfth

Regulation of the disposal of carcasses of dead animals ;

Thirteenth

Regulation of the slaughter of animals ;

Fourteenth

Regulation of the erection and re-erection of building of the Union ;

Fifteenth

Regulation of dangerous buildings and structure ;

Sixteenth

Provision and maintenance of well , water pumps , tanks , ponds and other works for the supply of water ;

Seventeenth

Prohibition of the use of the water of the wells , ponds and others sources of water supply, suspected to be dangerous to public health ;

Eighteenth

Adaptation of measures for prevention the contamination of the sources of the water-supply for drinking ;

Nineteenth

Regulation of provision of the watering cattle, bathing or washing at or near wells, ponds or other sources of water reserved for drinking purpose ;

Twentieth

Regulation or prohibition of the steeping of hemp , jute or other plants in a near ponds or other sources of water supply ;

Twenty - one

Regulation or prohibition of dyeing or tanning of skins within residential areas ;

Twenty -two

Prohibition of the excavation of earth stones or other materials within residential areas ;

Twenty - three

Regulation or prohibition of the establishment of brick kilns, potteries and other kilns within residential areas ;

Twenty - four

Voluntary registration of the sale of cattle and other animals ;

Twenty - five

Holding of fairs and other ;

Twenty - six

Celebration of public festivals ;

Twenty - seven

Provision of relief measures in the event of any fire , flood ,hailstorm, earthquake or other natural calamity ;

Twenty - eight

Relief for the widows and orphans, the poor person in distress ;

Twenty - nine

Promotion of public games and sports ;

Thirty

Industrial and community development , promotion and development of co-operative movement and village industries ;

Thirty - one

Application of measures for increased food production ;

Thirty -two

Provision for management of environment ;

Thirty - three

Provision for maintenance and regulation of cattle pounds ;

Thirty –four

Provision of first aid centers ;

Thirty - five

Provision of libraries and reading rooms ;

Thirty - six

Co-operation with the other organization engaged in activities similar to those of the Union Parishad ;

Thirty - seven

Aid in the promotion of the education under the direction of the Upazila Parishad ;

Thirty - eight

Any other measures likely to promote the welfare , health , safety , comfort or convenience of the

inhabitants of the Union or of the visitors.

□ Other Activities

The role and functions of the Union Parishad can broadly be categorized in six types, namely ---

- i. Civic Responsibilities ;
- ii. Police and Defense Functions;
- iii. Revenue and Administration Function ;
- iv. Transferred Function ;
- v. Judicial Responsibilities ;
- vi. Development Functions .

Summarized other activities of the Union Parishad

First

In addition to its compulsory and optional functions the govt. may from time to time direct that any institution or service maintained by a Union Parishad shall be transferred to the management and control of the govt. and any institution or service maintained by the govt. shall be transferred to the management and control of a Union Parishad ¹⁶ ;

Second

Union Parishad have to perform various food assisted development projects that is rural Development , Vulnerable Group Development Program, Rural Maintenance Program Integrated Food for Development [IFFD] , VGF, Food For Works etc. Generally this food assistance is used for undertaking development activities and meeting emergency situation during natural calamities and disastrous moment ;¹⁷

Third

Union Parishad are involved in implementing rural development projects. Which are being carried out in four sectors. These are ----

- i. Water Sector ;
- ii. Road Sector Project ;
- iii. Fisheries Sector Project ;
- iv. Forestry Sector Projector .

4.3.3 Authority of the Union Parishad

Union Parishad has the following authority ---

First

Through article 60 of the Bangladesh Constitution UP has been given power to impose taxes for local purpose , to prepare their budgets and to maintain funds ;

Second

Each Union Parishad shall be an autonomous institution and has powers to make Acts , required for proper discharging of it's functions under this ordinance ;

Third

A Union Parishad may grant level of absence to it's Chairman for any period not exceeding three months in one year ;

Fourth

For smooth functioning and discharging of the assigned duties and responsibilities Union Parishad can form the following standing committees as per Local Government [Union Parishad] ordinance of 1993 ;¹⁸

- i. Finance and Establishment ;
- ii. Education ;
- iii. Health , Family Planning , Controlling of epidemic and sewerage ;
- iv. Audit and Accounts ;
- v. Agriculture and other development activities ;
- vi . Social Welfare and Community Centre ;
- vii. Cottage Industry and Co-operatives ;
- viii. Women and Child Welfare ;
- ix. Fisheries and Livestock ;
- x. Tree Plantation ;
- xi. Union Works –Activities and
- xii. Mass Education .

▶ Apart from the above committees Union Parishad for carrying out special purpose can form additional standing committees as per prescribed regulation of law taking prior permission from the Deputy Commissioner .

▶ According to present legal provision Upazila Nirbahi Officer [UNO] is the de facto Controlling Officer of Union Parishad and above the UNO Deputy Commissioner controls some aspects of the Union Parishads affairs.¹⁹

4.3.4 Major Institutional Issues in UP

The present local government system is more or less the embodiment of the Local Self Government Act of 1885. Local Govt. has come to this stage through an evolutionary process. Different rulers brought or adopted different changes in its functions, duties & responsibilities, its nomenclatures, its tiers, structure²⁰. Autonomy & naming of the position of the office bearers. But still there are some unresolved institutional issues in the spheres of local govt. especially in Union Parishad.

4.4 Women Participation In UP Election

Political participation of women is low because of illiteracy and little involvement in public life and politics. The female members of the Union Parishad, the lowest tier of the Local Government, though elected in direct election, literally they have fewer powers, lots of women voters at villages and women in the hill tracts are deprived of their voting rights also. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, the parliament, military establishments, judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc²¹. In Bangladesh, nominating a few women candidates "Has been merely a ritual to (some) political parties"²² whether they win or lose.

Table - 4.1

Women's Political Electoral Participation : 1979 -1996

Years	Number of Candidates			Number of Contesting Parties	Number of Contesting Parties with Women Candidates
	Total	Male	Female		
1986	1429	1409	20 (1.4%)	20	5 (18%)
1988	978	971	7(0.7%)	07	3 (30%)
1991	2774	2727	47(1.7%)	47	16 (21%)
1996	2569	2532	37(1.44%)	37	16 (13.45%)

Source: BBS, 1994 ; Men and Women in Bangladesh, 1970-1990; Bhorer Kagoj, Bengali daily, Dhaka, 5 June, 1996; Janakantha, Bengali daily , Dhaka, 28 May, 1996

Table 4.1 gives us the idea that through compared to previous years the number of women candidate as competitor in the general elections has increased yet their number is not at all significant²³. On the other side, women's participation in electoral race is very frustrating. Although the participation of female voters have increased greatly so as exercising voting is concerned but such increase was less in fighting election as a candidate, which can be seen in the Table 4.2.

Table - 4.2
Participation in Election

Year	No. of Seats	No of Women Candidates
1991	46	39
1996	48	36
2001	47	37

Source: Unnayan Podokkhep, 2001

Out of 300 seats only 37 women candidates contested for 48 seats including Khaleda Zia²⁴ and Sheikh Hasina, among them only 6 candidates won in the National Assembly in the 8th parliament. In the parliament, the total number of elected representatives is 300. Since 1972, the number of women contestants in general election is negligible²⁵. Women's participation in local government system remained very minimal. The number of women in elective positions of chairmen and members in the Union and Upazila Parishads and in municipalities is abysmally low. In the 1990 election at the Upazila level²⁶, only 7 women contested for the chairmanship of 423 Upazillas, of them only 1 was elected.

In the Union Parishad election of 1988, 18,566 contestants contested for the chairmanship of 4401 Union Parishads²⁷. There were only 79 women contestants constituting only .4 percent. Again in 1992, available data indicate that for the position of chairman of 3899 out of the 4398 Union Parishads, women constituted only .6 percent of the contesting candidates, i.e. 115 out of a total 17,444. For the elective position of members, the figures for the respective elections in 1988 and 1992 were 863 women out of 114,699 (constituting .7 percent) and 1135 women among 169,643 (comprising again some .7 percent) contestants.²⁸

These statistics show that women's participation is increasing day by day in local government system which creates a strong political ground for the women in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh before 1997 there was provision for nomination of women member in UP. But in 1997 a special provision of 33.33%²⁹ reservation for women in UP was made with a view to enhancing the women's participation in UP.

4.4.1 Women's Participation in Decision – Making of Local Government

From the beginning of Bangladesh. As member of the house hold women have only the right of work and not to decide, like wise in the national level women's absence in decision making bodies is noticeable³⁰. Women's participation in decision – making of local government is highly needed to strengthen social democracy. The Article 9 of the Bangladesh Constitution states ----

“ The state shall encourage local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given as per possible to peasants, workers and women”.

The Constitution has also emphasized the participation of women in national life in The Article 10.³¹ It declares -----

“ Steps shall be taken to ensure participation of women in all spheres of national life ”

In spite of the Constitutional Mandate , the participation of women in institutional development and decision – making is negligible . However, the government has already under taken several noteworthy efforts to ensure the agenda of women’s participation and decision – making . These include ----

- i. Formation of the Fifth Five Year Plan [FFYP] , 1997 – 2002 ;
- ii. Declaration of the National Policy for Advancement of Women [NPAW] ;
- iii. Adoption of National Action Plan [NAP] for Advancement of Women : Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action [PA] .

The common goals to all of planning and policies are to eradicate gender disparities from the society and to provide better options to women to ensure their participation in public and private life.³² In the Fifth Five Year Plan [FFYP] ,the following goals and objectives have clearly indicated the women’s participation in decision – making of the local government (GOB, 1997)

- i. Promote equality between women and men in the sharing of power and decision – making at all levels ;
- ii. Enhance the participation of women in political , civil , economic, social and cultural life ;
- iii. Increase women’s representation in governance and administration including in all tiers of local government .

4.4.2 Nature of Representation of Women in UP

The Constitution of Bangladesh explicitly guarantees the fundamental human rights and equality of all it’s citizen. Article 28 [2] stressed – “Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state and public life” [GOB, 2000]. The same article also emphasized, nothing in this article shall prevent the state from king special provision in favor of women .The Constitution of Bangladesh [1972] provided for local govt. units at each three of administration.

Through ordinance provision was made for special representation of women in local govt. The statutorily representation of women was for the first time provisioned in the lowest tiers of local govt.³³ As per provision two women members were nominated by the Sub- divisional Officer in the Union Parishad, in addition to, elected male members and one Chairperson. The provision of nomination of three women members was introduced besides the nine elected members and Chairman³⁴ .In 1993 , the system of nomination of women members in Union Parishad was changed to indirect election .

Under the changed system three women members were elected by the 9 elected members and the elected Chairman. A major break through regarding the process of representation of women members in Union Parishad was made per suggestion of the Local Government Reform Commission³⁵ in 1997. In this system in direct election for women members was withdrawn. In each Union three seats are reserved for women dividing nine wards into three units. One third of the total membership was reserved for women members. One woman is elected from three wards through direct adult franchise in Union Parishad. In Union Parishad representation of women members has been made in different Standing Committees³⁶. Now the numbers of Standing Committees in UP has been raised from 7 to 12 so that all three women members can be Chairman of at least one Standing Committee. One third of the members of all the Standing Committees will be filled in by women members. One third of the local Standing Committees will be chaired by the women members will act. But the Chairmen of Union Parishad will also act as the Chairman of the Standing Committee on finance and establishment³⁷. Accordingly, women members get one third of the total ADP project in a financial year.

Moreover, women members will act as Chairman of one third of the Project Committees of Union Parishad [Provision no.15]. Women members are playing role as Chairman in some Committees that is Committee on Selection of Women for VGD Program, Committee for Distribution of Old Age Allowance, Primary Education Committee, Committee for Selection of Women in RMP, Social Development Committee. A part from these women members will be made Chairmen of one fourth of the Project Committees for understanding various development projects by the Ministry of Relief & Disaster Management.

□ In the following Standing Committees at least one women members will have to be included -----

- i. Women and Children Welfare ;
- ii. Fisheries and Livestock ;
- iii. Tree Plantation ;
- iv. Union Works Activities ;
- v. Mass Education .

At least one women membership is ensured in the following Committees-----

- i. VGF Program ;
- ii. Food For Works Program ;
- iii. Teat Relief Program ;
- iv. Old Age Allowance Program ;
- v. Committee for Selection of Place for setting up tube well all the Union level ;
- vi. Union Family Welfare Center Management Committee ;
- vii. Union Population Control Committee ;
- viii. Union Disaster Management Committee ;
- ix. Union Committee for Checking of oppression on women ;
- x. Union Tender Committee ;

- xi. Union Hut-Bazar Management ;
- xii . Upazila Development and Co-ordination Committee – a women member in nominated by the Upazila Nirbahi Officer [UNO] as member of that Committee .

The women members are advised to take necessary action regarding women and children oppression and case against dowry and acid throwing , controlling of child marriage and ensure registration of marriage³⁸. They will act Chairman of such committee and they will take necessary measures regarding the welfare of women and children (Provision no.13 of that circular – paripatra).

4.4.3 Women Candidates and their Campaign

Women candidates and their campaign are as follow ----

- ⇒ The women candidates and their supporters while campaigning were found remarkably self-confident ;
- ⇒ All women were cognizant of three reserved seats for them on the Union Parishad ;
- ⇒ Women candidates welcomed the provision for direction election as well . This provision gives them an opportunity to get close to the electorate. This candidate-voter interacting gives the latter a chance to raise voice about their expectation ;
- ⇒ Throughout the election days , like their male counterparts, women were also found busy gossiping about election . But unlike the male counterparts women voter did not expect any entertainment with snakes by their candidates³⁹ . It appeared that they were excited by the simple fact that women candidates would represent them on the Union Parishad .It is also remarkable that most women perceived this election as an instrument for their empowerment against male domination and repression. They openly stated that the Union Parishad would provide a forum for seeking redress against dowry, divorce on whim etc.

4.4.4 Barrier of Women in Participation of UP Election

Though the changed law, the consequent favorable circumstance and reservation system lot of women leaders emerged at the grassroots level but still women leaders have to face many problems in UP ⁴⁰. At the initial stage women can not play effective role in the overall decision – making process due to lake of sufficient knowledge and suitable legal provisions in the Union Parishad .

Women leadership has to encounter some problems in the Union Parishad that are described below ----

- i. Male – domination ;
- ii. By religious fanatics ;

- iii. Violence is almost integral to our politics and election, which acts as a deterrent to women's spontaneous participation in electioneering activities ;
- iv. Inequality in the mode of representation ;
- v. Physically assaulted or sex discrimination ;
- vi. Underdevelopment of women leadership ;
- vii. Lack of unity among the women member ;
- viii. Ruling party domination ;
- ix. Low level of education ;
- x. Low level of knowledge ;
- xi. Low experience ;
- xii. Lack of consciousness ;
- xiii. Cultural problems ;
- xiv. There is the problem of proxy leadership too ;
- xv. Generally, when confusion or dispute arises women members try to get remedy from the Upazila administration . But it is notified that they don't get enough support from the administration . Whenever, women members want to know their legal rights they don't get any help from any quarter.

4.4.5 Women Candidates at the Local Level Election

In the local level govt. elections of 1959 and 1969, no female candidate was elected. In the 1973 elections, out of 4352 Union Parishads⁴¹, only one woman from Rang was elected as Union Parishad Chairman .

Table - 4.3

Election of Local Govt. in the Beginning

SL. No	Years	Female Candidate	Elected Women
01.	1959	-	-
02.	1969	-	-
03.	1973	-	01

In the 1977 election, four women were elected as Chairman. In the 1984 election, held in 4400 Unions, only four candidates won in the elections as Chairman. In 1988, the total number of candidates for Chairman in 4401 Union Parishad was 18,566 and the number of members was 14,699⁴². Out of them the number of women candidates for Chairmanship was 79 and the number of female candidates for members was 863. Only one woman was elected as Union Parishad Chairman. In the Union Parishad election of 1992, the number of candidates for Chairmanship was 17,444 and for membership was 1, 69,683. Out of them, 115 women contested for Chairmanship and 1135 contested for membership. Only four women candidates were Chairman⁴³. It is to be noted that the number of female candidates for Chairmanship and membership has been increasing.

Table - 4.4

Election of Local Govt. Next

SL.NO.	Years	Elected Women	Position Hold
01.	1977	04	Chairman
02.	1984	04	Chairman
03.	1988	01	Chairman
04.	1992	04	Chairman

In the 1992 election, the number of female voters increased substantially. The candidates went to the women voters soliciting their support.

4.4.6 Leadership Pattern of Women in Union Parishad of Bangladesh

Leadership position occupied by women leaders. In Union Parishad is presented in Table-4.5. It is found from the table that both women Chairman and members have little access to the UP. In 1997 a total of 12,826 woman representatives got access to UP as members under the reservation system against the total membership position of 13,437 for women⁴⁴. It is observed from Table-4.5 that some women representatives were also contested and elected in the Chairman position in all UP's election before and after the reservation system.

Great enthusiasm was observed when a large number of elected women came to the UP for the first time after the legislation of 1997. Provision of reservation in Chairmanship position may also help women overcoming their marginalized position in UP. Due to lack of enabling legislation experience and training, women representative can not play an effective role in the UP and the number of women candidates and elected members has slightly reduced from 1997 to 2003⁴⁵. A detailed scenario of women leaders contested and elected as Chairman and members during the UP election from 1977 to 2003 can be obtained in the following Table- 4.5

Table – 4.5
Leadership Pattern of Women Leaders in Union Parishad [1977 – 2003]

Year	Number of Union Parishads	Total Women Seats	Number of Women Candidates		Women Leaders Elected	
			Chairman	Members	Chairman	Members
1977	4352	13056	19	19	02	07
1984	4300	12900	-	-	06	-
1988	4401	13203	79	863	01	-

1992	4450	13350	115	1135	12	20
1997	4479	13437	102	43969(456)*	20	12828[110] *
2003	4488	13464	232	43764(617)*	22	12684[79] *

Note: * Women contested and elected to the general seats

Source: Ahmed, Tofail et.al.2003, Zarina R. Khan , Undated and GOB, 1995

□ Leadership Pattern of Women in Gram Panchayats of West Bengal

Leadership pattern of women leaders in GP of West Bengal is shown in Table- 4.5 & 4.6. Due to non-availability of sufficient data regarding the pattern of women leaders of GP, data of two years [1993 & 1998] are presented here. From Table-4.6, it is observed that in all types of representations of women such as women seats reserved for general; Scheduled Castes [SC] and Scheduled Tribes [ST], the extent of representations are high than stipulated reservations of 33.33 % ⁴⁶. In total including general, SC and ST seats women representatives elected in membership position were 48.08 % and 35.63 % in 1993 and 1998 respectively.

Table – 4.6

Women Leadership Pattern in GP of West Bengal [1993 – 1998]

Year	General Seats		Seats Reserved for Scheduled Caste		Seats Reserved for Scheduled Tribe		Total Seats in Gram Panchayats [GP]	
	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women	Total	Women
1993	43352 (100.00)	21676 (50.00)	15413 (100.00)	6476 (42.02)	3395 (100.00)	1732 (50.02)	62160 (100.00)	29884 (48.08)
1998	32656 (100.00)	10990 (33.65)	13380 (100.00)	5156 (38.54)	3189 (100.00)	1391 (43.62)	49225 (100.00)	17537 (35.63)

[Figure given in the parenthesis indicates percentage]

Distribution of reservation pattern of women leaders as Prodhan , Upa- prodhan and General Members of GP is given in Table - 4.6. It is revealed from the table that out of a total of 49225 seats in GP, general members comprise 17537 seats which is 35.63% of the total seats whereas 1081 (33.51 %) and 673 (20.86%)⁴⁷ seats were occurred by Prodhan and Upa- prodhan out of their total seats reserved for Prodhan and Upa-prodhan in GP . Presence of the huge number of women leaders as Members, Prodhan and Upa-prodhan in the GP of West Bengal has helped women ensure their rights and play an effective role in GP with the support of the women leaders of the other two higher office of the PRIs in West Bengal.

Table - 4.7

Reservation Pattern of Women Prodhan , Upa-prodhan and General Member in GP of West Bengal (19998) ★

Total Seats in GP	Total Seats Occupied by Women Members	Total Seats for Prodhan	Seats Occupied by Women Prodhan	Total Seats for Upa-prodhan	Seats Occupied by Women Upa-prodhan
49235(100.0)	17537(35.3)	3226(100.00)	1081(33.51)	3226(100.00)	673(20.86)

[Figure given in the parenthesis indicates percentage]

□ Dissimilarities of Problems Faced by the Women Leaders in Bangladesh and West Bengal

In West Bengal women leaders are getting enough support from the political parties and being members of women wings of political party's women leaders have become a part of a national network of women's movement but in Bangladesh it is yet to happen so. Due to some in-built mechanism in Panchayats , corruption is less prevalent in West Bengal's Local Govt. that that of Bangladesh. In West Bengal rural women do not have any adequate means for taking out living through employment. They are forced to employ themselves and agricultural laborers but the rural women of Bangladesh have opportunity to employ themselves in NGO activities.

4.5 The Union Parishad Election and Extent of Women's Employment

The recently held UP elections have created an unprecedented consciousness among the rural women folk vis a vis elections. The extent of this consciousness was seen in the large number of committed women standing as candidates or working for candidates in the electioneering. In both quantity and quality is an unprecedented phenomenon. In rural Bangladesh, women are identified not by her name but by the relationship with the male members of the family. In this tradition

bound society of Bangladesh⁴⁸. Women previously were valued only for their silent service in the domestic sector. Women's employment was a myth even 20 or 25 years ago.

They have had voting rights on paper but had little opportunity to exercise it freely or frequently. The year 1997 gave women the opportunity both for casting votes as well as to be candidates in the elections. Women could contest not only for the reserved but general seats also. It gave them some empowerment. For the first time in the election campaign, issue of women's concern was raised⁴⁹. The women candidates focused on the problems of violence, access to resources, family planning, second marriage of husband, dowry, divorce etc.

Women's empowerment⁵⁰ is extremely important because it has far-reaching consequence for accountability, transparency, and reduction of corruption, choice of developmental activities, general local resources mobilization & better delivery of services in the rural areas. Strengthening local administration means participation of women in the decision making process of local government bodies. Women participations in the electoral process, however, satisfactory, does not mean in a complete sense and for which, they need access to the vital decision making process.

4.6 Conclusion

The origin of local government in Bangladesh can be traced back to more than hundred twenty years when the Chowkidari Panchayet Act, 1874, was passed by the British Government in India. It's a democratic self-governance. Local govt. in Bangladesh are created and changed with the administration of the policies and programs initiated by the government. The unit of local govt. working for rural areas are comprising Zila Parishad at the district level and Union Parishad at the grass root village level. Among the rural govt. bodies, Union Parishad is the lowest and nears to the people. In Bangladesh position of women or participation rate of women in UP is short. Through Bangladesh govt. explicitly guarantees the fundamental human rights and equality of all its citizens.

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Fifth Chapter -----
Scenario of 2003 Union Parishad Election

Fifth Chapter

Scenario of 2003 Union Parishad Election

5.1 Introduction

Bangladesh, since its independence, has had a long history of elections. At the national level the Caretaker Government eased transfer of power but has not sufficiently improved the quality of the electoral process itself but local level election are not over seen by a Caretaker Government. At the front line of representative, local government¹ institutions are very crucial in a democratic set up.

One of the most important tier of the recently (1997) introduced four tier local government structure is the Union Parishad which has undergone significant changes in its composition, powers and functions.² These changes include demarcating the erstwhile three multi-member wards to nine single member ward and provision for directly electing three / women members from reserved seats made out of these nine wards. Further, the new local government formation also made decentralization of powers and functions reportedly backed by resources.³ The new local government structure will be put to test . It is in this backdrop that the elections to the Union Parishad assumed great significance.⁴ Elections to the Union Parishads are to be held within the period of one hundred and eighty days preceding the date of expiration of its five years term . Upon expiry of the term of most of the Union Parishads, elections were announced to 4,298 out of 4,468 Union Parishads . Elections were not held in 170 Unions due to various reasons . Further , Elections to another 26 Unions could not be held due to court orders .

The Election Commission through circular no. 4 dated October 14, 1997 announced the election schedule.⁵ The elections were held in staggered manner spreading throughout the month of December 1997 on all working days except on government holidays. Earlier, the District Election Officer appointed the Returning Officers for all the Unions of his district to administer the polls. Union Parishad Election 2003 was 7th and the largest local government election in countries history. The election started on January 25 and ends on March 16, 2003 consecutively in 4,234 unions out of 4,492 unions⁶. A number of 6,15,15,806 (six core fifteen lakh fifteen thousand and eight hundred six) voters have made this election a history for Bangladesh. In these UP elections a number of 21,376 Chairman candidates contested for 4,223 seats.

Table - 5.1

Sl No.	Years	Participation of the UP	Voters No.
01.	1997 [Decm.]	4, 298	-
02.	2003 [16 March]	4, 234	6,15,15,806

Table- 5.1 shows that the number of candidates were 1,37,909 for 38,052 posts of ward member and for 12,684 reserved seats for women, a number of 39,419 women candidates contested. It is also mentionable that a number of 6,15,15,806⁷ (six core fifteen lakh fifteen thousand and eight hundred six) voters were registered to cast their votes at 39,372 polling centers and 1,55,749 polling booths were prepared of UP Election 2003. Total number of male voters were 3,13,44,168 and total number of female voters were 3,01,71,698. Number of returning officers were 1,868, number of presiding officers were 39,372; number of assistant presiding officers were 1,55,749; number of divisions 6, number of districts 64⁸ etc.

5. 2 The Electoral Framework

Election is all about participation - of voters, of candidates, of political parties etc. It is all about what facilitates that participation⁹ and what does not. And electoral framework means - the election commission, election administration, election law, electoral rolls, voting system, election schedule, nomination process, candidates and eligibility, campaigning etc.

5.2.1 Election Commission

The election to the Union Parishad is organized and conducted by the Election Commission. This is a body constituted under article 118 of the Constitution and derives its authority to perform the aforesaid functions.¹⁰

□ Composition

The Election Commission consists of a Chief Election Commissioner and as many Elect Commissioners as may be deemed necessary by the President¹¹. Their term of appointment is five years and they can not be removed from office except on similar grounds as would warrant removal of a Judge of the Supreme Court. The Commissioners, however, are appointed by the President of the Republic at his discretion.

□ Functions

The Commission functions independently¹² as a subject only to the Constitution and any other law of the country. The Commission has a secretariat which assists it in performing its functions. The secretariat is a division of the government and is headed by a Secretary deputed by the Government¹³. To assist this secretariat, there are small offices at divisional, district and thana levels, each headed by a Class -1 Officer.

□ Staff

The total manpower strength of the Election Commission is 1900. The Secretariat base in Dhaka comprises 36 officers¹⁴ and 133 staff, while the divisional and district election officers are manned by 92 officers and 178 staff. At the Thana level the Election Commission officers are run by 487 officers and 974 staff. In addition the Election Commission is empowered to enlist

the services of any citizen of Bangladesh for discharging its responsibilities .

5.2.2 Election Administration

The administrative set up for Union Parishad elections is different from that of the parliamentary elections¹⁵. Union Parishad election administration consists of ----

- i. Election Commission with its Secretariat ;
- ii. Deputy Election Commissioner (stationed at Divisional Headquarters) ;
- iii. District Election Officers (stationed at District Headquarters) ;
- iv. Thana Election Officers (stationed at Thana Headquarters) ;
- v. Returning Officers ;
- vi. Presiding Officers and Assistant Presiding Officers ;
- vii. Polling Officers.

Election Commission

The administration structure is headed by the Election Commission¹⁶. The other functionaries perform their jobs in accordance with the provisions of the law and rules and directions given by the Election Commission .

The Deputy Election Commissioner

The Deputy Election Commissioner is the second point of authority after the Election Commission¹⁷. His major job is to supervise the work of the District Election Officers posted within his Division . He also acts as a link between the Election Commission and the District Election Officers in his Division .

The District Election Officer

The District Election Officer occupies the third position in the election administration . His functions in the Union Parishad elections are as follows-----

- i. Arranging electoral rolls of male and female voters in a ward separately for use at the polling station ;
- ii. Appointing Returning and Assistant Returning Officers for each Union ;
- iii. Fixing the election schedule and notifying this in the official gazette.

The Thana Election Officer

The Thana Election Officer occupies the fourth position in the election administration. He assists the District Election Officer in the performance of his duties .

□ The Returning Officer

The Returning Officer occupies the fifth position in the election administration hierarchy. His functions are numerous and important. Subject to the directions of the Commission he sets up polling stations in each ward and appoints Presiding Officers and Polling Officers for all the polling stations under his jurisdiction¹⁸. In addition he supplies voters lists to Presiding Officers, gives public notices inviting nomination for each ward, receives and scrutinizes nomination papers, publishes the list of nominated candidates as well as contesting candidates, allocates symbols, provides ballot boxes and other election materials to the Presiding Officers, consolidates the results received from the Presiding Officers and declares election results and sends them to the Election Commission for publication in the official gazette.

□ The Presiding Officer

The next person in the hierarchy is the Presiding Officer. He is the key person at each voting station and is assisted by the Assistant Presiding Officer and Polling Officers in the process of taking poll. He regulates the entry of voters in to the polling stations, maintains orders within the polling station and has the legal authority to order the Police Officer¹⁹ on duty to remove any person who is guilty of misconduct. In addition, he issues ballot papers to voters, enforces discipline, counts votes after the close of polls, prepares result – sheets and ballot paper accounts. He supplies copies of those documents to the candidates, election agents, or polling agents as may be present at the polling station. After completion of the count, he sends the used and unused materials duly sealed in respective packets with the result sheets to the Returning Officers.

□ The Assistant Presiding Officer

The Assistant Presiding Officer is also a Presiding Officer as per definition of the law²⁰. He is in charge of a polling booth or compartment of a polling station and performs his functions under the supervision of the Presiding Officer. He is usually assisted by two Polling Officers in performing his duties.

□ Others

Election is all about participation - of voters, of candidates, of political parties etc. The administration of the last Union Parishad directly involved 4,12,556 persons which can be shown within a table -

Table - 5.2

The Directly Involved Persons of the Administration

SL No	Attended Officer of the Administration	No.
01.	Chief Coordinators [DC]	64
02.	Coordinators [TNO]	485
03.	Returning Officers	1803
04.	Presiding Officers	39,728
05.	Assistant Presiding Officers	123,675
06.	Polling Officers	247,350
07.	Observers [Joint Secretaries]	06
08.	Election Monitors	02
Total Administrative Person		4,12,556

Table- 5.2 show that Sixty four Deputy Commissioners were appointed as Chief Coordinators and 485 Thana Nirbahi Officers were made Coordinators , 1803 persons were deployed as Returning Officers ; 39,728 as Presiding Officers , 123,675 as Assistant Presiding Officers and 247,350 as Polling Officers²¹. Furthermore , the Election Commission appointed six Joint Secretaries as Observers for six divisions , with the two more assigned to Monitor election activities in Bhola and Feni districts.

5.2.3 Election Laws

Two legal instruments regulate elections to Union Parishad . One is the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance , 1983 . The other is the Union Parishad (Election) Rules, 1983 which has been framed by the government (Local Government Ministry) under the said Ordinance . The Ordinance provides for the demarcation of the Union boundary, constitution and composition of the Union Parishad. It provides for fixation of term of the Parishad , registration and removal of elected officials of the Parishad , filling up of vacancies, delimitation of ward boundary, and qualifications and disqualification of the candidates. It does not, however, account for the actual conduct of elections . This discrepancy was ultimately addressed by Union Parishads (Election) Rules, 1983 . The rules elaborately detail the process for the appointment of Returning , Presiding and Polling Officers. This provides for the setting up of polling stations, fixing of different stages of election , procedures of nomination of candidates, security deposit, allocation of symbol, scrutiny of nomination papers, appeal against the rejection of nomination, withdrawal of candidates , appointment of election agent and polling agent along with their functions, adjournment of poll, regulating the entry of voters to the polling stations, maintenance of order at the polling station , methods of poll taking , counting of votes and declaration of results. It should be pointed out that the Ordinance relating to Union Parishad is imperfect, as it has left out important provisions that form a part of the ruled made under it . From a legal point of view the rule should not include anything which has not been provided for in its mother law. In other words, it should only prescribe the procedures for implementation of the provisions made in the law under which it has been framed . Anything beyond that appears to be ultravires .The Ordinance , therefore, suffers from serious defects and should be rectified as early a possible.

5.2.4 Delimitation of Union Parishad Wards

A Union is a part of the rural area of a Thana . It is created through a declaration made by the relevant Deputy Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner has authority to extend, curtail and alter the limits of any Union under his jurisdiction. He has also the authority to close an Union. Each Union is headed by a Chairman who is elected on the basis of adult franchise by the voters living in that Union. The Unions are divided into nine Wards each of which is represented by a Member elected by the voters in that Ward. Furthermore, these nine Wards, known as “ General” seats, are grouped to form three larger Wards known as “ Reserved Seats” for women.

Each such grouping is filled by a women representative elected directly by the voters of that larger Ward or seat . To elect Members , other than in reserved seats, the Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO) appoints Thana level officers as Delimitation officers and Assistant Delimitation officers. Assistant Delimitation Officers help the Delimitation Officers in performing their functions. For electing Members to reserved seats , the Thana Nirbahi Officer groups the nine general Wards into three reserved Wards and notifies these changes in the official gazette . The Wards are delimited by the Delimitation officers with regard to territorial unity, distribution of population and administrative conveniences . To delimit the Wards , the Delimitation Officer makes inquiries and examines any records as necessary. He also considers recommendations he may receive and publishes a preliminary list of Wards.

This list specifies the areas to be included in each Ward along with a notice inviting objections and suggestions within fifteen days from the date of publication of the notice. The Thana Nirbahi Officer after due consideration gives his decision within a period of fifteen days from the date of receipt of the objections or suggestions. Thereafter, the Delimitation Officer in accordance with the decision given by the Thana Nirbahi Officer amends or modifies the preliminary list . He also makes modifications in the list or correcting any errors or omissions . He then posts the final list of Wards, specifying their geographical composition .He also forwards a copy to the Thana Nirbahi Officer who is required under the law to publish it in the official gazette . The election to the Wards are held on the basis of this final list.

5.2.5 Reserved Seats for Women

Previous three women in each Union were nominated by the government as Members to the Union Parishad. In order to democratize the Union Parishad , an amendment was made²². This provided for the reservation of three seats exclusively for women members in each Union Parishad . Each woman has to be elected through an election college consisting of the Chairman and nine members elected directly to the Union Parishad by the voters of that Union. The Local Government Commission in 1996 recommended that reserved seats for women in all tiers of the Local Government be filled in by direct elections . In pursuance of this recommendation, the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance , 1983 was amended by Act No. 20 of 1997 providing for the direct election of women members to reserved seats. Consequently, direct elections were held to the reserved seats of the Union Parishad in December, 1997.

5.2.6 Electoral Rolls

The electoral roll is an indispensable document for any election. Elections are, therefore, held on the basis of substandard rolls prepared by the registration authority. The preparation of electoral rolls are regulated by the provisions contained in the Electoral Rolls Ordinance, 1982. Under this law, the electoral roll should be prepared according to electoral areas. These rolls are re-arranged by the Registration Officer as per requirement of an election. The Electoral rolls²³, as per provision of the law, should be updated. Consequently, the electoral rolls are prepared afresh after every 5 to 6 years. The electoral rolls are prepared by the Registration Officers as per directions of the Election Commission and relevant laws. The qualifications necessary to include a person's name in the electoral roll are –

- i. Must be a citizen of Bangladesh ;
- ii. Is not less than 18 years of age on the qualifying date ;
- iii. Does not stand declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind ;
- iv. Is or is deemed to be a resident of that electoral area.

The law also gives meaning to the word “ Resident ”

5.2.7 Voting System

Elections to all offices of the Union Parishad take place through secret ballot. These offices are that of Chairman, Member from general seats, and Member from reserved seats. Polling is conducted to these three offices simultaneously by three separate ballot papers of different colors. The ballot paper used for taking poll for a particular office contains only the election symbols and not the names of the contestants. The time for voting is fixed and announced by the Returning Officer through public notice. The hours of poll during the last Union Parishad elections were from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. People who were in queue within the enclosure of the polling station at the closing hour were as per provision of the law permitted to cast their votes. Entry of the voters into the booths are regulated by the Presiding officer with the aid of members of the law enforcing agencies²⁴. The Assistant Presiding Officer, after satisfying himself about the eligibility of each voter, provides him with the three ballots with different colors. However, prior to issuing the ballot papers, the Assistant Presiding Officer with the help of the polling officers completes the following formalities ----

- i. Applies indelible ink on the thumb or any other finger of either hand of the voter ;
- ii. Calls out loudly the name and serial number of a voter applied for the ballot papers ;
- iii. Places a mark normally the tick mark against the name and serial number of the voter in the electoral roll to record the fact that he has already voted ;
- iv. Stamps the official seal on the back of the ballot paper and also on the face of the counterfoil;
- v. Writes the serial number of the voter on the counterfoil ;
- vi. Obtains the signature or thumb impression of the voter on the counterfoil of the ballot paper issued.

Anyone who refuses to receive the personal mark with indelible ink or already bears such a mark

is refused ballot paper by the Presiding Officer. The voter upon receiving the ballot papers proceeds to the secret compartment or marking place with a marking seal from the Assistant Presiding Officer. He marks the three ballot papers, folds them, drops the marked papers into the ballot box, returns the marking seal to the polling staff and leaves the polling station.

5.2.8 Election Schedule

For Union Parishad elections, the District Election Officer, sets the following schedule by notification in the official gazette ----

- i. One day, at least five days after the date of such notification, for filing nomination papers candidate with the Returning Officer ;
- ii. One day for the scrutiny of nomination papers by the Returning Officer ;
- iii. One day on or before which candidature may be withdrawn ;
- iv. One day, at least fifteen days after the withdrawal day, for taking poll.

After being notified of the election schedule the Returning Officer issues public notices inviting nominations along with relevant deadlines and address. Out of the total of 4,468 unions, elections were ordered to be held in 4,298 Union Parishads. Elections were postponed in 170 Unions due to various reasons. Subsequently another 26 were postponed due to court injunction. Elections were, therefore, finally held to 4,276 Union Parishads .²⁵

Nomination Process

Nomination must be made in prescribed form. The law further stipulates that no voter may subscribe to more than one nomination paper. Every nomination paper as per provision of the law should be accompanied by a certificate signed by the candidate. The nomination paper must be accompanied with a Treasury Challan, Bank Receipt, or a receipt from the Returning Officer showing deposit of Tk. two thousand for the office of Chairman and Tk. seven hundred and fifty for the office of Member. No nomination paper is accepted unless the candidate makes the deposit prior to filing the nomination paper.

5.2.9 Candidates and Eligibility

Candidates and their eligibility for the election are given below ----

Qualification

A person, under the law is qualified for election as Chairman or Member if ----

- i. He is a citizen of Bangladesh ;
- ii. He is not less than 25 years of age ;
- iii. His name appears on the electoral roll in any Ward of the Union for election to office of Chairman ;

- iv. His name appears on the electoral roll of the concerned Ward for election to the post of a Member of Reserved or non – Reserved Seat .

Disqualification

A person under the law is disqualified for election to the post of Chairman or Member, if he or she ²⁶ -----

- i. Is declared by a competent court to be of unsound mind ;
- ii. Is an undischarged insolvent ;
- iii. Has ceased to be a citizen of Bangladesh ;
- iv. Has been convicted for a criminal offense ;
- v. He or she holds any full-time office of profit in the service of the Republic, of the Union Parishad, or of any other local authority ;
- vi. He or she is a party to a contract for work or is a dealer in essential commodities appointed by the government ;
- vii. Has defaulted in repaying any loan taken from any bank specified in the law ;
- viii. Is a Member of Parliament .

5.2.10 Campaigning

The campaign period for the Union Parishad election has neither been prescribed in the law nor in the rules . The campaign begins the day after allocation of symbol and ends forty eight hours before the midnight following the conclusion of the poll. The contesting candidates distributed posters , leaflets and pamphlets stating their messages and pledges. The candidates preferred door to door campaigning. There are no legal prescriptions for regulating the election campaign by the candidates. For the first time the Election Commission has formulated a Code of Conduct for the contesting candidates and their supporters . The Code is aimed at preserving law and order during the election campaign.

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5.3 Election – 2003 in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad

The local government elections , such as the Union elections , illustrate clearly how the pre-election environment determines Election Day and the Election Day determines post - election environment and the post - election environment and the post - election environment determines the pre-election environment . In fact , in the Union Election , post-election environment is, in fact, the pre-election environment of its neighboring Union , which is yet to hold its elections. Because of the close intensity with which the local govt. elections are held one after another , this phenomenon becomes even more evident . Union Parishad Election 2003 was 7th and the largest local government election in countries history. The election started on January 25 and ends on March 16, 2003 consecutively in 4,234 unions out of 4492 unions. A number of 61,515,806 (six core fifteen lakh fifteen thousand and eight hundred six) voters have made this election a history for Bangladesh. It should be mentioned , that analysis of

finding from Union Election 2003 , shows that administration was pleased to monitor the Sri-Nagar Union Election 2003 ²⁷. And there were no question on about that election. There were no-

In Case of Administration

- i. Administrative acquiescence to false voting ;
- ii. Thrown out after giving indelible ink on the thumb and no ballot papers ;
- iii. Some voters, especially women could not enter centers ;
- iv. Role of security forces and police ;
- v. Harassment by police ;
- vi. Harassment of police etc.

Pre – Election Violence

- i. Pre- election threat on voters discouraged participation ;
- ii. Humki, mardhor [assault] on families women .

Post – Election Revenge

- i Organized attack on communities ;
- ii. Candidates attack vulnerable communities ;
- iii. Women assaulted by candidates and their supporters .

Vote Trading

- i. Buying votes ;
- ii. Paying for false votes .

Role of Political Parties

- i. Intimidating role of MPs ;
- ii. Role of local political leaders / cadres with their supporters ;
- iii. Forced occupation of booths .

5. 3.1 Some Key Information on UP Election - 2003 : At a Glance

Some key information about the 2003 Election of Union Parishad can be shown within some tables where the total number of Unions were 4,223 .

Table - 5.3

According to the Voters

Sl. No.	Voters	Numbers
01.	Male Voters	3,13,44,168
02.	Female Voters	3,01,71,698
Total Numbers of Voters = 61,515,866		

Table – 5.3 shows that total number of voters 61,515,866 where the total number of male voters were 3,13, 44,168 and the total number of female voters were 3,01,71,698 .²⁸

Table - 5.4

Status of the Poll

Sl. No.	About Poll	Numbers
01.	Polling Stations	39,372
02.	Polling Booths	155,749

Table – 5.4 shows that the total number of the polling stations of the 2003 UP Election's were 39,372 ; number of the polling booths were 155,749 . Except this the number of returning officers in that UP were 1,868 ; number of presiding officers were 39,372 ; number of assistant presiding officers were 155,749 ; number of divisions 6 etc.

Table – 5.5

According to the Contesting Candidates

Sl. No.	Contestant	Numbers
01.	Women Contesting Candidate	39,419
02.	Chairman Contesting Candidates	21,376
Total Number of Member Contesting Candidates = 137,909		

Table- 5.5 shows that total number of the women contesting candidate were 39,419 ; total number of Chairman contesting candidates were 21,376 and the total number of member contesting candidates were 137,909²⁹ etc.

5.3.2 Some Key Information on Sri -Nagar UP Election - 2003 : At a Glance

Some key information about the 2003 Election of Sri- Nagar Union Parishad are given bellow in which every kind of election related information are included like – date of the election, selection and declaration , about the candidates [male and female] , voters , ward name, ward number, elected Chairman , elected members , their nearest candidates with their vote etc.

- Election Day : 20-2-2003
- Vote Centers : 9
- Submission Day of Nomination Papers to the Returning Officers : 1st January , 2003 [14th Pawsh ,1409]
- Last Selection Day of Nomination Papers by the Returning Officers : 2nd January, 2003
- Last Withdrawn Date of Candidature : 9th January , 2003
- Vote Collection Day : 20-2-2003
- Declaration Day : 20-2-2003 [At 4pm]
- Returning Officer of 2003 Election : Ebadur Rahman [TNO of that time]
- Assistant Returning Officer : Emdadul Haque

Table - 5.6

Villages of the Sri- Nagar UP's

Sl. No.	Wards	Village Number	Name of the Villages
01.	1, 2 ,3	02	Ardipara , Doyahati
02.	4, 5 6	01	Sri-Nagar
03.	7, 8, 9	02	Delbhugh , Horpara

Table 5.6 shows that in ward 1, 2 ,3 there are 2 villages which named Ardipara and Doyahati. In ward 4, 5, 6 there is only 1 village which named by Sri-Nagar . And finally , in ward 7, 8, 9 there are 2 villages which named by Delbhugh and Horpara .

Table - 5.7

Voters of the Ward 1, 2, 3

Ward No.	Ward Name	Male Voters	Female Voters	Total Voters
01	Ardipara	788	814	1602
02	Ardipara	714	734	1448
03	Doyahati	914	918	1832

Table 5.7 shows that in Ardipara [ward number 1] where the male voters – 788 and the female

voters – 814 [total voters -1602] . Ardipara [ward number 2] where the voters specially, male voters – 714 and the female voters – 734 [total voters -1448] .Doyahati [ward number 3] where the voters specially male voters – 914 and female voters - 918 [total voters - 1832] .³⁰

Table - 5.8

Voters of the Ward 4, 5, 6

Ward No.	Ward Name	Male Voters	Female Voters	Total Voters
04	Sri-Nagar	977	697	1674
05	Sri-Nagar	603	571	1174
06	Sri-Nagar	657	639	1296

Table 5.8 shows that Sri-Nagar [ward number 4] where the voters, male 977 and female voters 697 [total voters - 1674] . Sri-Nagar [ward number 5] where the voters , male 603 and the female voters 571 [total voters -1174] . Sri – Nagar [ward number 6] voters , male 657 and the female voters 639 [total voters -1296] .

Table - 5.9

Voters of the Ward 7, 8, 9

Ward Number	Ward Name	Male Voters	Female Voters	Total Voters
07	Horpara	640	585	1225
08	Delbhough	1005	897	1902
09	Delbhough	356	362	718

Table 5.9 shows that Horpara [ward number 7] voters , male 640 and the female voters 585 [total voters -1225] . Delbhough [ward number 8] voters, male 1005 and the female voters 897 [total voters – 1902] . Delbhough [ward number 9] voters , male 356 and female voters 362 [total voters – 718] .

Table - 5. 10

Voters of the Sri- Nagar Union Parishad

Ward 1 to 9	Total Male Voters	6654
Ward 1 to 9	Total Female Voters	6217
Total		= 12,871

From ward 1 to 9 total male voters 6654. From ward 1 to 9 total female voters 6217 which is including 12,871 .³¹

5.3.3 Elected Panels of Sri-Nagar Union Parishad [2003]

Nine members for nine wards are grouped to form three larger wards. These three larger wards are represented by 3 women members. Election for these seats is also direct. 2003 Elected Panels of Sri - Nagar Union Parishad are -----

- Chairman - Abdul Barek
- Member - Emarot Hossain
- Member - Abdul Aziz
- Member - Hasan Morol
- Member - Fatema Akter [Usha]
- Member - Skeikh Forhad
- Member - Nironzon Chandra Ghosh
- Member - Joynal Abedin
- Member - Asia Akter [Rumu]
- Member - Md. Giassuddin [Dulal]
- Member - Md. Delower Hossain
- Member - Shirajul Islam
- Member - Shajeda Begum

Details result of the elected panels -----

Table – 5.11

Ward Number	Members Name [Male]	Members Name [Female]	Total Votes	Symbols
01	Emarot Hossain	-	540	Fish
01	-	Fatema Akter [Usha]	-	-
02	Abdul Aziz	-	350	Fish
03	Hasan Morol	-	984	Cock

In table 5.11 , ward number 1 – Emarot Hossain whose total votes 540 and his symbol – Fish ; ward number 2 – Abdul Aziz whose total votes 350 and symbol – Fish ; ward number 3 – Hasan Morol whose total votes 984 and symbol – Cock ; and finally , First Elected Woman Member from these 3 Ward – Fatema Akter [Usha] .

Table - 5.12

Ward Numbers	Members Name [Male]	Members Name [Female]	Total Votes	Symbols
04	Skeikh Forhad	-	611	Cock
05	-	Asia Akter [Rumu]	2124	Wall Clock
05	Nironzon Chandra Ghosh	-	476	Mango
06	Joynal Abedin	-	514	Cock

In table 5.12 , ward number 4 – Skeikh Forhad whose total votes 611 and symbol – Cock ; ward number 5 – Nironzon Chandra Ghosh whose total votes 476 and symbol – Mango; ward number 6 – Joynal Abedin whose total votes 514 and symbol – Cock ; and finally , Second Elected Women Member from these 3 Ward – Asia Akter [Rumu] whose total votes 2124 and her symbol - Wall Clock . Her nearest competitor - Khodeja Begum whose total votes 770 and symbol - Cart .

Table - 5.13

Ward Numbers	Members Name [Male]	Member Name [Female]	Total Votes	Symbols
07	Md. Giassuddin [Dulal]	-	474	Jar
07	-	Shajeda Begum	1911	Ink Pot
08	Md. Delower Hossain	-	559	Fish
09	Shirajul Islam	-	320	Cock

In table 5.13 , ward number 7- Md. Giassuddin [Dulal] whose total votes 474 and symbol – Jar; ward number 8 - Md. Delower Hossain whose total votes 559 and his symbol – Fish ; ward number 9 – Shirajul Islam whose total votes 320 and symbol – Cock ; and finally , the Third Elected Women Member from these 3 Ward – Shajeda Begum whose total votes 1911 and her symbol - Ink Pot . Her nearest competitor – Jhahanara Begum who got total votes 843 which was less than 1068 from Shajeda Begum and her symbol – Rose .

5.4 Conclusion

Elections are a technical exercise as well as a political process. The Union Parishad elections are generally more enthusiastically participated than general elections because of the strong presence of primordial ties. Moreover, the new structure of local government extending provisions for direct elections to three seats , exclusively reserved for women members, enhanced voter participation, particularly among females.³² Voter interest and participation was demonstrated by enthusiastic and high turn out. Traditionally, local government elections generate greater interest and higher turn out than parliamentary elections.³³ Female voters turned up in large numbers.

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Six Chapter -----
A Case Study of Sri – Nagar Union Parishad

Six Chapter

A Case Study of Sri – Nagar Union Parishad

6.1 Introduction

Bangladesh emerged as an independent and sovereign country in 1971. Since then 14 general elections at the national level (parliament, presidential and referendum) and 15 local level elections were held. Most of the elections held prior to 1991 January, 2003 – June, 2003 Election is a democratic process to ensure the effective participation of the grass roots people in the decision making, a free, fair and impartial election is the initial pre-condition to construct a reliable, accountable and democratic atmosphere in the country. The Election Commission has the main responsibility but there is an important role of mass people also.

Table – 6.1

The Local Bodies Elections

Election	Years	Durations
First	1973	19 – 30 December
Second	1977	13 -31 January
Third	1983 (1983- 1984)	27 December
Fourth	1988	10 February
Fifth	1992	22 January – 6 February
Sixth	1997	1- 31 December
Seventh	2003	25 January – 16 March

Source : Local Government Election Gazette 2003 , Bangladesh Election Commission

The seventh Union Parishad Election was held in the country as per schedule from 25 January to 16 March 2003. Previously in the year of 1973, 1977, 1983 – 84, 1988, 1992 and in 1997, the other six UP election was executed in the country. This year, the UP election was held in 38,834 Centers of 4,223 Unions of 470 Upazila of 64 Districts of the country. However, the Election Commission administrates elections and it is not fully independent as well as the instructions are not currently strong enough to take on the role of safeguarding the electoral process and being fully acceptable to the mass people in the country.

6.2 Participation in The Electoral Process

Election is all about Participation - of voters, of candidates, of women of political parties etc. Participation - was operationalized by specifying it to the decision-making and implementation

levels of the Union Parishad. Since, participation is the result of the interplay of a variety of social, cultural, political and economic factors, a three dimensional that is institutional, cultural and modernization etc. It's argued that an appropriate institutional design is a necessary precondition for achieving the goals. A design is appropriate if it embeds itself in the norms and values of the society in which it works. Social and political culture prevailing in the environment of the institution influences the behavior of its members. And finally, stage of socio-economic modernity may also impact upon the level of participation. It is all about what facilities that participation and what does not. Post-election discrimination against women and increasingly common phenomenon in Bangladesh electoral reality. The disenfranchisement of voters or biasness against women is often a political objective which is unhealthy for democracy and the process of the election.

6.2.1 Electoral Participation

The quality of "Participation" is central in the assessment of democracy and electoral Processes. Degree of "Participation" explains the level, quality and status of democracy at a given time. "Participation in Electoral Process" evolved over the past years through process monitoring and analysis of data on elections and its environment. "Participation" based on primary data, which it can apply in process analysis. Effective participation in the electoral process is subject to an environment that is conducive and free from violence and irregularities, political control and manipulation. Participation is discussed under two major categories voter and candidate participation. And voter participation is divided into general participation, women's participation and the participation of vulnerable (Non-Muslim and Tribal) communities. Violence on women or discrimination against women overlap in that, violence and discrimination is committed against women who are often from this vulnerable category. However, due to the specific nature of the socio-political relationship to women this categories need separate discussion. Participation in the electoral process may be define as the freedom of every adult citizen to exercise his or her constitutional right to seek nomination (as-candidate) to represents its community in local government and to franchise (as-voter).

□ Voter Participation

Pre-election conditions clearly determine voter turn out and in the long run, the post election environment also becomes the pre-election environment of the next electoral event determining the quality of participation of voters in those areas / communities. For example, the experiences of a community during 1997 UP Elections or 2001. National Elections may determine whether that community will participate or not in this next elections. In the context of local government elections, this becomes even more vivid. The post-election conditions of one Union determine the quality of participation in the elections of the neighboring Unions. For example, during union elections in Khagrachhori, when a political leader threatened one union, fear spilled over the voters of other areas as well. It is therefore important to look at both the short and long-term indicators of participation and assess trends. The operational meaning of voter participation, as derived from the field finding, and some practices that facilitated and obstructed participation. It demands both extensive and intensive analysis. A vital

element of a well – managed election is voter participation. A good electoral process naturally ensures good the participation of all the voters – including women . From 1997 Union to For example, during union elections in Khagrachhori , when a political leader threatened one union, fear spilled over the voters of other areas as well. It is therefore important to look at both the short and long – term indicators of participation and assess trends. The operational meaning of voter participation, as derived from the field finding, and some practices that facilitated and obstructed participation. It demands both extensive and intensive analysis. A vital element of a well – managed election is voter participation. A good electoral process naturally ensures good the participation of all the voters – including women . From 1997 Union to Pourashava elections 2004 , voter participation shows that a downward trend. In 1997 voter participation was 84% according to the Election Commission. This dropped to 76% during the National Parliamentary Elections. In 2002 Dhaka City Corporation had a voter participation of only 26%. In 2003, voter participation in Union Elections went up to 79%. This dropped to 70% during this Pourashava elections in. In the 2003 Union Elections voter participation according to Election Commission was 80 %.

⇒ Indicators

Indicators of voter “ Participation ” at three levels -----

- i. Physical presence of voters in queue ;
- ii. Total number of vote officially declared cast as against the total registered to vote ;
- iii. And total number of voters who were actually able to cast vote in accordance to their preference. The first two indicators are necessary but not sufficient factors in assessing participation. The last indicator gives a full picture of participation in the electoral process.

⇒ Factors

The factors of voter participation are as follows -----

- i. Successful participation implies unhindered franchise by an individual ;
- ii. An apparently peaceful election does not necessarily reflect a “Free or Fair” electoral process;
- iii. Participation can be affected through actions taken even before elections are held. Pre-conditions strongly influence voter and candidate participation ;
- iv. Different forms of violence stand out as a major deterrent to participation ;
- v. Administrative irregularity is a major cause of obstruction ;
- vi. Administrative efficiency central cause of electoral obstructions.

□ Women Voter Participation

It's found that in the new design of the Union Parishad, the role of women members is not specified which is why women members are confused about their role. Prevalent masculine culture still impedes the participation of women members to some extent , but hierarchical politics dominated by males impairs the participation of women members more than the general

masculine trends. There is no positive relationship between the differences in the stages of socio-economic modernity and the differences in the rates of participation of the women members across regions. At the micro level, individual socio-biographic factors also were found to have not affected participation of the respondents. One positive finding in this study is that participation of women in the electoral activities as well as in the UP activities has increased to a considerable extent. The differences found in the rates of participation. According to Election Commission source the total number of voters were 61,515,806 have made this election a history for Bangladesh. Out of this, women were 3,01,71,698. Nearly 50% of the total population in the country are women. The Union Parishad elections are generally more enthusiastically participated than general elections because of the strong presence of primordial ties. Most polling station were set up in pre-designated places and the officials approached their tasks seriously. In the most cases they appeared to perform their responsibilities with pride. The turnout of women during this election was low in spite of the fact that the majority of the UP were free from incidents of violence against women.

□ Candidate Participation

Candidates seeking nomination to stand for elections face both technical as well as political problems, which either makes their submission unacceptable or forces candidates to withdraw from contesting. In the first case, cancellation of nomination refers to an official act by the Election Commission and withdrawal for Election Commission refers to candidates withdrawing their submission while withdrawal of submission under external or political force. There are serious problems in the free participation of candidates. Several cases of forced withdrawal of candidates from contesting during union elections made phenomenon.

6.3 Women Member in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad

The participation of women in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad Election – 2003 is the particular interest to this researcher. It is fact that degrees of unfairness and lack of freedom have always been a part of the electoral environment in Bangladesh. Specially women are always in vulnerable position during and after the elections. In view what has already been said, this study begin it's cognitive journey with doubt. Question has been asked to the candidates, elected women member and their male collogue, chairman, voter of that Union Parishad, competitor of that women elected members (about the elections participation). Elected women members about pre-election time, submission their nomination paper process, pre-election activity, during the election days and post-elected activities etc. And there is a downward curve in women participation and post-election responsibilities. Some examples and cases demonstrate bellow -----

Case Study 1: First Elected Women Member in Sri – Nagar UP (2003)

Fatima Akter [Usha] is the first elected woman member at Sri –Nagar Union Parishad in Sri –Nagar Upazila in Munshigonj district (2003 Election). She was elected from ward no. 1 (which is consisted with ward nos.1, 2 and 3). Ardipara is a village which is comparatively

big in size. This Ardi para Village consisted with two wards – ward no.1 and ward no. 2. With Doyahati village, ward number 3 is consisted. She is 35 years old . She is a married woman. She is economically solvent. She just completed her H.S.C. On her interview time, she informed that she had been elected without any competition. Her male colleagues in this three wards were- Emarot Hossain whose symbol was fish in election time. He's from ward no.1, Abdul Aziz from ward no.2 whose symbol was fish also in election time and Hasan Morol from ward no.3 whose symbol was cock in election time. The turnout of women during these election , was low in spite of the fact that the majority of the union's were free from incidents of violence against the women. Overall , finding show that there were no sign of little irregularities against women in that election though rate of participation was low cause in 2003 election there was no women candidate against Fatima Akter [Usha].

Case Study 2 : Second Elected Women Member in Sri – Nagar UP (2003)

Asia Akter [Rumu] is the second elected woman member at Sri –Nagar Union Parishad in Sri –Nagar Upazila in Munshigonj district (2003 Election). She was elected as a Woman Member from ward no.5 (which is consisted with ward nos. 4,5 and 6). Sri-Nagar is the most big size village in this union which cover the whole three wards. She is 35 years old. She is a married women . Her husband Kazi Nurul Amin [who works as a manager for a private cinema hall] encouraged her a lot . She passed the S.S.C. In election time, her symbol was wall -clock. She got total 2124 votes which was the highest vote counted by the election commission office. Her nearest contestant was Khodeja Begum whose symbol was cart in the election time, who got 770 vote. Her male colleagues are – Sheikh Forhad ,ward no. 4, Nironzon Chandra Ghosh in ward no.5 and lastly Joynal Abedin in 6 no ward.

Case Study 3 : Third Elected Woman Member in Sri – Nagar UP (2003)

Shazade Begum is the third elected woman member at Sri –Nagar Union Parishad in Sri –Nagar Upazila in Munshigonj district (2003 Election) who was elected from this Union Parishad two times. She was elected from ward no.7 (which is consisted with ward nos.7, 8 and 9. Delbhough- a village which is large in size. 2 ward [namely ward no.8 and ward no. 9] consists with the large village Delbhugh. ward no.7 is consisted with only one village, named –Horpara .She is 42 years old. She is a married woman. Her husband's name is Md. Yunus Mia . He was a tailor. According to her, he helps her a lot and support her from up to bottom. Her economic position is good. She can't complete her S.S.C. Village Horpara, is her own home. From the beginning she was a social worker as she elected two times she has hues fan following. She also belongs a political zone. When interviewed she informed that politics is not a new thing for her cause she has the indirect affiliation with a renowned political party . Her nearest woman competitor in this election time was Zahanara Begum , whose symbol was – rose and she got 843 votes . In the election time her symbol was – ink pot , she got total 1911 votes from ward 7 ,8 and 9 which was the majority of votes [she got more vote from her own village] . Her male colleagues are - from ward no.7 Md. Giassuddin [Dulal] who got 474 votes and his election symbol was – jar. Md. Delower Hossain from ward no. 8 who got

559 vote and his election symbol was – fish . And lastly Shirajul Islam who got 320 votes and his election symbol was - cock in ward no. 9. Her main interest to work for govt. or involves with politics as she has a political back up.

Summery of the above Case Studies

Participation of women in this election was low in spite of the fact that the majority of this Union Parishads voting centre was free from any kinds of violence against women .The administration played a facilitating role in encouraging women to come out and vote. To improve the backward and in awareness situation, government of Bangladesh takes many other initiatives. Various laws have been enacted and amended to protect women’s rights. It had enacted several legislative measures, which have proven to be successful in reducing the incidences of violence. Such laws include the Dowry Prohibition Act, Cruelty to Women(Deterrent punishment) Ordinance, Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Ordinance , and the very recent Family Court Ordinance. Moreover in the Constitution of Bangladesh especially in the sessions of fundamental rights, it has been noted that no discrimination should prevail against women irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex and place of birth.

Women are supposed to enjoy equal opportunity in public employment, right to protection of law, protection of right to life and personal liberty, prohibition of forced labour and right to property. Women who participate in this UP election perceived this election as an instrument for their empowerment against male domination , repression , dowry, divorce on whim etc. Although, generally all segments of women specially from middle and higher class are found subjected to domination and also subject to discourage participation in election. It can therefore be said that the real extent of participation of women in election is low. Field findings show that the following manifestation of obstruction to women after their election period . These are summed up as follows ----

First

The traditional male-dominated society has not yet accepted this sudden rise of women in the political field which is the major finding in this study on Sri- Nagar Union Parishad elected women’s member ;

Second

The aggressiveness of the patriarchal attitudes of the society has been strengthened and ratified by leaders of religions organisations and teachers of the Islamic studies of the primary educational institutions concentrating on the teachings of Islam. The increase in the number of such institutions, popularly known as “ Madrasas ” has morally and practically contributed to the vulnerability of the state of women throughout the country. And religion has acquired such an important position in our political process that the excesses done by these religious institutions cannot be taken to task in order to achieve some other goals. This has been the practice in the

eighties and now in the decade when we have our woman prime minister along with a female leader of opposition, nothing radical can be initiated again on the same unfortunate excuses. Beside the religion organization , the religious fanatics with a highly male chauvinistic bias-dubbed “Fatwabaj” – created the most serious opposition to women’s electioneering activities. They went to extent of declaring that voting for women candidates would be a sinful act and if women voted in the election God’s scourge would befall them ; “ The Fatwabaj” fanatics were found to have organized the strongest front against women in the UP Election ;

Third

There is inequality in the mode of representation between male and female members. Male members are being elected from one ward but women members are being elected from three wards;

Fourth

There is no this kind of evident found in this Sri- Nagar UPs women members suffer from physically assaulted or massive sex discrimination which are found generally in the behavior, attitudes and treatment of the UP functionaries, that is Chairman, male members, sectaries and government officials ;

Fifth

There is a provision to conduct at least one regular meeting a month and the date of the meeting should be fixed prior to start the Parishads activities according to the law .But the male colleague preferred to conduct this meeting without the presence or little presence of women members. As soon as the Chairman need to pass a resolution for undertaking any project he called by the influence of his male fellow the meeting , as per their convenience. Although women members always tried to join the meeting but it is observed that the meeting at such a time that is not suitable for women members. It is arranged in such a way when it is time for cooking or maintaining household work for women or at night ;

Sixth

To get a project approved by the project committee, it needs eight members to be present or fulfilling the quorum. The total Committee is composed of 13 members including the Chairman. Here there is a provision that at least one women member needs to sign for passing the resolution. Among the three women members in the Parishad , the Chairman maintains good relationship with one of the women for the convenience of the project approval sometime, elected women also prefer it means to affiliated with the Chairman . In this case party play an important role cause all kinds of UP member directly or indirectly related with party though they tried to hide. In this UP’s members also found the same specially the women. All the year round all the projects are being approved with the signature of that very women ;

Seventh

Most of the women members informed that for bring or getting a project in their respective constituency the Chairman or their ward colleague in every case demanded a share to get a project though they have good relation with the Chairman. All the women members said that they had no objection to their Chairman. Sometimes, if it requires any signature of women members in any legal document, male members try to give false signature to have the work done properly. In some case UP Chairman or male colleague forced women members to give signature to some documents. In case of obtaining signatures from the women members their fellow also offers facilities or monetary benefits to the women members in order to pass the resolution ;

Eighth

Field findings show that the following manifestations of obstruction to women participation in electoral period are other limitations behind the underdevelopment of women leadership at the grassroots. All the efforts or movements for developing women leadership are basically urban based. These elitist women movements failed to contribute much to the development of local leadership;

Ninth

It's found that there is a unity among the elected women members in Sri - Nagar UP. They become united for their common cause. They safeguard many illegal activities. Women member sign any kind of document with consulting of other women members;

Tenth

There are some basic problems in our society which also find through interviewed to the elected women member about- low level of education, knowledge and lack of consciousness. Most of them are hardly H.S.C pass. These are causing problems for natural growth of the women leadership at the grassroots level ;

Eleventh

Male domination and cultural problem hinder the potential of women leadership in UP. Though major elected women member said that they got support from their husband and neighbor but it's true most of them are from the lower class of the society. Not even in the middle class. They are not the total picture of women representation. In our society, women also under – dominated by the family. In this study on Sri – Nagar 2003 election, it also found that there are no really educated women here. Most of the elected women are local and before election they involved with party work and with the help of the party leader they submitted the nomination paper and elected with the affiliation of the Chairman. They got the chance to do some work which is related with social, little economical, family base like – on dowry, divorce, marriage, pre – motherhood , family planning etc. In our society, there is no that kind of culture that educated

women participate in election or electoral process which also has been proved in this finding. As a result, this type of uneducated or semi – educated elected women can't help to change the scenario ;

Twelfth

The women member disclosed that the Chairman not in all case and male members tried to exert domination on women in every affair of the UP. Actually in a patriarchal society it is not so easy to accept women leadership by the male partners. The total control is still in the hands of male leadership. In the macro level where patriarchy prevails in the society , natural, real, automatic and effective women leadership can not grow easily .

6.4 Conclusion

Devolution is an important step towards effective and accountable government. Most countries of the world , developed or developing, have some kind of local government, structured according to the needs and philosophy of the state. The local government institution in a country serve as a tool for centralization or decentralization .The origin of local government in Bangladesh traced back to more than hundred twenty years when the Chowkidari Panchayet Act. 1874, was passed by the British Government in India .The system was handed down to Pakistan and India at their independence in 1947. Since then consistent efforts have been made to purge the colonial legacies of the British India local government system .After independence in 1971 BD institutions were dissolved by the government of Bangladesh vide President Order on the Dissolution and Administration of Local Bodies (1972) . Union Parishad is the third tier which consists of several village. Union Parishad is an important part of the local bodies and it's election or election related things also so important for the grass root levels. Local's (both male and female) participate in this electoral bodies .Under the UP Ordinance 1983 , the female representation was increased to three. Though Bangladesh led by women leaders but ironically women in general do not exhibit significant political participation . In this chapter, a complete picture of women's participation in the Union Parishad Election 2003 has been focused through the case study of the three elected women .

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**Seven Chapter -----
Summary and Conclusions**

Seventh Chapter

Summary and Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

Bangladesh is a democratic country. Government of Bangladesh formed through the direct election of mass. But like another third world country, Bangladesh has also some characteristics of political participation. The forms and frequencies of political participation tell us a great deal about the stability of political system, the integrity of public life of their citizenry. And election is a democratic process to ensure the effective participation of the grass roots people in the decision making, a free, fair and impartial election is the initial pre – condition to construct a reliable, accountable and democratic atmosphere in the country. Election is all about participation of voters, of candidates, of women of political parties etc. Participation`- was operationalized by specifying it to the decision-making and implementation. Since, participation is the result of the interplay of a variety of social, cultural , political and economic factors, a three dimensional that is institutional, cultural and modernization etc .It's argued that an appropriate institutional design is a necessary precondition for achieving the goals. A design is appropriate if it embeds itself in the norms and values of the society in which it works. Social and political culture prevailing in the environment of the institution influences the behavior of its members. And finally , stage of socio-economic modernity may also impact upon the level of participation. It is all about what facilities that participation and what does not . Women's participation in the political process is essential for their advancement ; their voice has to be heard at the decision-making level . In the past and present, women of Bangladesh played a vital role in politics particularly in the progressive political movement of the country. In the nine months liberation war, women played a very significant role. But in 1973 general election , no woman was directly elected to the parliament. Only two women candidates were elected through by election in the vacant seats. Though "The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh" enumerates equal rights for all citizens, irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Thus women are entitled to the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and expression association and assembly under Articles 27 , 28 and 29 which form this basis of political activity in a civil society. As for this political representation of women , this Constitution provides for representation in terms of equality with men to political and public representative institutions. Such as - the Parliament and the Local Govt. Bodies . At the same time , in order to ensure a minimum representation of women in these institutions, the Constitution provides the "Protection of Reservation of Seats".

The origin of local government in Bangladesh can be traced back to more than hundred twenty years when the Chowkidari Panchayet Act , 1874 , was passed by the British Government in India . It's a democratic self – governance . Local govt. in Bangladesh are created and changed with the administration of the policies. It's found that in the new design of the Union Parishad , the role of women members is not specified or women participation in local

government system remained very minimal which is why women members are confused about their role. Prevalent masculine culture still impedes the participation of women members to some extent, but hierarchical politics dominated by males impairs the participation of women members more than the general masculine trends. But in West Bengal women leaders are getting enough support from the political parties and being members of women wings of political party's women leaders have become a part of a national network of women's movement but in Bangladesh it is yet to happen so. Bangladesh emerged as an independent and sovereign country in 1971. Since then 14 general elections at the national level (parliament, presidential and referendum) and 15 local level elections were held. Most of the elections held prior 1991 January to 2003 June. The number of women in elective positions of chairmen and members in the Union and Upazila Parishads and in Municipalities is abysmally low. In the 1990 election at the Upazila level, only 7 women contested for the chairmanship of 423 Upazillas, of them only 1 was elected.

Effective participation in the electoral process is subject to an environment that is conducive and free from irregularities, political control and manipulation. Like many countries in South Asia, Bangladesh also led by women leaders. But ironically women in general do not exhibit significant political participation in this country. As a developing country citizen's participation in election or electoral system are common but women are less likely to participate in politics than men. As nearly 50% of the total population in the country are women, it is, therefore, essential that they participate in large numbers in the electoral process. Women participation in the electoral process has been found to be discouraged by a number of factors. Conservative women feel hesitant to meet male registration personnel due to social and religious restrictions. Potential violence and absence of convenient transportation system, especially in the rural areas, also discourage women from participate in the electoral process. Except these, lack of education and a strong cultural bias against female In Bangladesh political party in a body of men united. Bangladesh has the historical background of the gender discrimination. Women suffer politically due to financial problem and accessibility to media. Women also face difficulty because of their political rule perception in the society as politics is regarded as tough and full time occupation. Other causes are low literacy, immobility, economic dependence and discrimination against women candidates and in Union Parishad election and post-election women faced discrimination from their male colleague. A great female vacuum nevertheless appears to exist in the political system of the country. Both electoral and representative arena of politics women's participation is major which need research work or requires utmost importance.

7.2 Methodology

The study titled, "Women's Participation in the Union Parishad Election - 2003 : A Case Study of Sri -Nagar Union Parishad" has outlined six specific objectives. Seven chapters has been devised for purporting the objectives set down to assess the role of women's participation in the Union Parishad election at Sri- Nagar, 2003. The study engrosses five measuring standards. These standards include the examination of status of women in Bangladesh, modes of political participation in Bangladesh, women in Union Parishad election and extent of women's

empowerment, scenario of 2003 Union Parishad election, a case study of Sri - Nagar Union Parishad and participation in the electoral process. Mapping of the reasons behind the male domination nature or discrimination against women has been another standard of measure for the study. To explore the objectives laid down, each of the standards of measure has been comprehensively examined through individual chapter scheme. While verifying the nature of women participation in UP election, constitutional arrangements of local government in Bangladesh and the leadership pattern of women in Gram Panchayats of West Bengal have been incorporated under a distinct chapter.

In this study, a complete picture of women's participation in the Union Parishad Election 2003 has been focused within a comparative analysis. A survey has been done within the existing literature. Survey or search of literature help to develop a meaningful hypothesis with the help of stimulating clues. A visit was made from 2007 August to November. Spot observation was made for the studies collecting information with close scrutiny on the topic bounded by the research parameter. The holdings was physically examined and checked. Primary data collected from the personal interviews, completed questionnaires, surveys, direct information, observations and experiments which means that data collected from field investigation. Secondary sources have been used extensively and intensively in the study relevant books of eminent political and social scientists, concerned published and unpublished research work, study reports published by Bangladesh Govt., different agencies commissions, committees, journals, periodicals and newspapers of home and abroad have been included as secondary sources. Concerned internet web sites have been used as valuable secondary sources.

This research is largely based on stratified sampling technique in the event of vast data and for obtaining better results representative sampling technique is also adopted. Cause in this techniques picked up a small unit out of the whole study. Such a unit is expected to be representative of the whole population. It is felt that when this unit is studied, the population will be studied. In the study relevant literatures have been studied thoroughly. Verifying the hypothesis, data needs and sources have been identified. Collected data and information gathered from primary and secondary sources have been analyzed and interpreted within the frame work of the research design [that's mean collected data presented through – Statistical Programme for Social Science (SPSS), MS – Word and MS - Excel etc.]. To analyze information and data, contradictions have been handled carefully. Necessary data comparison and objectivity of data or information have been maintained strictly. Logical arguments have been raised to make points and clarify confusions.

7.3 Summary of the Study

Having analyzed the issues and methods, chapter – wise brief summery of the study has been presented below ----

□ First Chapter : Introduction and Outline of the Study

First chapter of this study, set the objectives for investigating into the problem and importance

of it . To re-assess the set objectives it has extensively reviewed scholarly works on national and international perspectives .The chapter has elucidated the methodology of the study. Through, hypothesis, it is expected or predict to get a holistic picture about women participation at the grass root level. Sri – Nagar Union Parishad has been taken as the research area of this study which is in Munshigonj District. For pursuing the study objectives it has devised seven individual chapter schemes.

□ **Second Chapter : Status of Women in Bangladesh**

In second chapter sketches out a frame work of understanding towards status of women, women's socio-economic position, NGO's roll , women empowerment, women rights, education of women , women in political party women leadership etc. In second chapter, it has been shown the overall status of women . women 's socio - economic and political position , empowerment in the society, constitutional parameters of women's political participation , what kind of roll play by political party for women in this country, women's right, education, income everything has been analyzed in this chapter .Participation is central in the assessment of democracy. Scholars has suggested different explanations toward greater participation in the political process.

□ **Third Chapter : Political Participation and Theoretical Analysis**

The third chapter idea has been given out the political participation and it's theory base analysis. The chapter encompasses different states and political thinker's thought and mode of political participation. According to scholars political participation is multi - dimensional. Scholars have suggested different explanations of movements toward greater participation in the political process. According to the scholars, the frequency which they employed as a means of political participation varies from situation to situation and from society to society. Modes of political participation is usually also dependent upon several conditions. So, in case of Bangladesh, modes – according to the scholars are not applicable. Women's participation in election analysis next .

□ **Fourth Chapter : Women in Union Parishad Election**

The chapter fourth has summarized on the women's participation in the Union Parishad Election. A description has been given about the local govt. (it's functions and composition) Union Parishad, Participation of Women in Election at the grass root level, barrier of women to participate in UP'S election, a comparative analysis with Bangladesh's local govt. with Gram Panchayats of west Bengal etc. ; Local govt. in Bangladesh is a democratic self – governance which were created and changed with the administration of the policies and programs initiated by the government .The unit of local govt. working for rural areas are comprising Zila Parishad at the district level and Union Parishad at the grass root village level. Among the rural govt. bodies ,Union Parishad is the lowest and nears to the people. In Bangladesh position of women or participation rate of women in UP is short . Through Bangladesh govt. explicitly guarantees the fundamental human rights and equality of all it's citizens .

□ Fifth Chapter : Scenario of 2003 Union Parishad Election

The dominant feature of chapter fifth consists of two independent parts : part- i. The electoral frame work and part - ii. Election – 2003 in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad . Elections are a technical exercise as well as a political process. The Union Parishad elections are generally more enthusiastically participated than general elections because of the strong presence of primordial ties. Moreover, the new structure of local government extending provisions for direct elections to three seats, exclusively reserved for women members, enhanced voter participation, particularly among females. Voter interest and participation was demonstrated by enthusiastic and high turn out. Traditionally, local government elections generate greater interest and higher turn out than parliamentary elections. Female voters turned up in large numbers.

□ Sixth Chapter : A Case Study of Sri-Nagar Union Parishad

Chapter sixth attempts to interview and investigates the elected women member in Sri – Nagar Union Parishad 2003 election. Through the chapter, considered some recommendation to improve the women empowerment at the grass root level. Devolution is an important step towards effective and accountable government . Most countries of the world , developed or developing , have some kind of local government , structured according to the needs and philosophy of the state . The local government institution in a country serve as a tool for centralization or decentralization .The origin of local government in Bangladesh traced back to more than hundred twenty years when the Chowkidari Panchayet Act. 1874, was passed by the British Government in India .The system was handed down to Pakistan and India at their independence in 1947. Since then consistent efforts have been made to purge the colonial legacies of the British India local government system . After independence in 1971 BD institutions were dissolved by the government of Bangladesh vide President Order on the Dissolution and Administration of Local Bodies (1972) . Union Parishad is the third tier which consists of several village. Union Parishad is an important part of the local bodies and it's election or election related things also so important for the grass root levels. Local's (both male and female) participate in this electoral bodies .Under the UP Ordinance 1983 , the female representation was increased to three. Though Bangladesh led by women leaders but ironically women in general do not exhibit significant political participation . In this chapter, a complete picture of women's participation in the Union Parishad Election 2003 has been focused through the case study of the three elected women .

□ Seven Chapter : Summary and Conclusions

The final chapter seventh summarizes major findings of the study and offer some recommendations along with the concluding commands. In addition, the chapter has located untapped areas in which further research may be carried on .

7.4 Major Findings of the Study

7.4.1 Findings of the Survey

- i. The level of education of the elected women members were H.S.C ;
- ii. Local people and husbands of elected women members encouraged them to take part in election ;
- iii. Most (80%) of elected women members were directly involved with political parties. Some of them held important position in the women wing of the political parties ;
- iv. Majority portion of elected women members were previously involved in private social welfare organizations at local level ;
- v. All elected women members view that was no improvement of their living condition being an elected women member ;
- vi. It is surprising that there was no influence of local terrorists on elected women members work ;
- vii. Most of the elected women members felt that their knowledge and awareness was increased for the reason of being a ward member ;
- viii. Gender discrimination was highly observed in every aspect.

7.4.2 General Observation

Though the “ Reserve Seat ” for women have helped to promote participation and women’s access to the decision-making process in Local Government of Bangladesh, the elected women members of the Union Parishad are regarded as “ Show Pieces ”. They are suffering from defined status , specific function and due power. They are not even getting their due facilities, which have been declared . All decisions of the Union Parishad depend on Chairman and the male members. Some women members are very conscious about their rights. NGO’s ,Women Organizations, Civil Society Organizations are playing vital role in this regard . The women members are now fighting against various types of discriminations in the Union Parishad level. Some are interested to be elected directly. They think that the concept of ‘Reserve Seats ’ is itself a technique of gender discrimination . They intend to compete directly with male candidates . In contrast , a number of male members have said that women members are highly dependent on them in pursuing their duties and development works . ‘ Inter – Personal Conflict ’ is observed among the male and women members. Male members do not help the women members in some cases . Their conflicts hinder the progress of development works. The amount which a elected women member gets is not sufficient for her to work , as people representative in a ward . There is no transport facility for the women members . Most of the women members think that they have lost their popularity in their own areas as they are hardly allowed to take part in decision- making process or local development work .

7.5 Recommendations

In reforming the participation process of election congruent to the needs and values of democracy, in particularly parliamentary democracy some recommendations for reforming may be considered cause some candidates who lost the election and some elected women members talked with complaints of various nature when interviewed. This analysis, thus for points out which may be considered ---

7.5.1 Law

Firstly

Due to the absence of any provision in the law fixing the limit of election expenses, Money plays a pernicious role in the elections of the Union Parishad. Fair competition is difficult as a consequence ;

Secondly

Under the existing penal provisions, the punishment for serious offenses in UP election is limited to six months imprisonment or a fine of Tk. 500 or both. Even for breaches of officials duty in connection with the election, the fine is up to Tk.100 only. In case of election to Parliament, however, similar offenses are punishable by imprisonment up to one year or a fine up to Tk. 5,000 or both. Similarly, the punishment under the parliamentary election law for bribery, personating or undue influence is from 2 to 7 years. The light punishment prescribed for offenders in the elections to Union Parishad is one of the greatest impediments to holding free, fair and impartial elections. It is necessary to look in to the matter on a basis of priority ;

Thirdly

Introduction of a system of direct elections to reserved seats of the Union Parishad is a step in the right direction. This step has met the popular and persuasive demand of women. However, while taking the step due regard has not been paid to the principles of justice and equity. For example, for election of women Members, a reserved seat has been created comprising the areas of three general seats meant for their male counterparts. The sheer size of the areas covered by these seats places its contestants in very difficult situation.

- i. Their campaign expenditure is bound to be three times that of a candidate contesting a general seat .
- ii. It becomes very difficult for the women candidates to carry out their election campaigns effectively through out the whole region. The problems can easily be eliminated by demarcating the Union in to three multi - Member Wards represented by three male and one female Member. Such an arrangement will provide equal opportunity to all candidates and minimize the

possibilities of winning elections by vote buying, as the entire Union has been reduced in size through demarcation in to nine wards instead of three. It is, therefore, recommended that three multi - member wards be created in place of nine single – wards to provide equal opportunities for men and women .

Fourthly

During the last UP election it was alleged that supporters of influential candidates turned out the polling agents of rival candidates and replaced them by their own men. In order to prevent such occurrences in the future , all election agents should be asked to carry identity cards, duly signed and authenticated with the seal of the concerned candidates ;

Fifthly

Rules and responsibilities of the women members should be clearly defined in the local govt. legal procedures . Work should be fairly distributed ;

Sixthly

There should be a clear statement indicating the codes of conducts , obligations and responsibilities for female members. Particular to the women’s participations in the Standing Committees and food assisted development projects ;

Seventhly

Gender based violence is universal and cuts across all boundaries of age , class , location, ethnicity and religion . Different kinds of violence done against the women in Bangladesh. Sometimes even their survival . Women feel insecure even at the disposal of the police. Everywhere women are denied of justice. Recently, violence against women has reached another dimension with the rise in the number of trials through the “*fatwa*” (religious judgment) in the rural areas. The High Court, in one of its recent verdict, has declared all ‘Fatwa’s’ as illegal. This verdict will always be regarded as a milestone in the process of emancipation of women. Such noble act still offers us the stimulation to look head (Unnayan Podokkep : 2001).

7.5.2 Increasing Social Awareness

Firstly

There need to be some organizations at the Thana level for elected women to under take collective action ;

Secondly

Regular training for female members should be arranged at the Thana level to full-fill their

lacking and ready to give legal and moral support to the elected women in times of crisis ;

Thirdly

Frequent meetings between the male and female members should be arranged at the local level with presence of govt. officials and informed citizens of the local community, to identify the local needs and to distribute responsibilities between all members;

Fourthly

Without sustaining action to address the glaring absence of women from democratic chambers, women's advancement in all other areas will remain an impossibility ;

Fifthly

Civic education can play an important role in improving the quality of elections. The Commission should therefore encourage different non- government organizations to undertake civic education programs all over the country;

Sixthly

Since the proposed local government has different tiers. Both direct and in direct mode of participation should be encouraged. Accountability will be automatically ensured if the decisions taken reflect the hopes and aspirations and the felt needs of the local people. In strengthening the local government ratio of women participation need to increase, the principles of participation and accountability should receive priority consideration .

7.5.3 Others

Following recommendation can be drawn to increase women's role in participation and decision – making of local government in Bangladesh-----

- i. Education , proper training and congenial working atmosphere are key pre – requisite to increasing women's participation in decision –making of local government ;
- ii. Keeping in mind ‘ Development could not be achieved without women's co-operation’ Government should extend needful support to ensure welfare of the elected women members ;
- iii. The allowance of elected women member should be increased and regularity in payment should be ensured ;
- iv. Rules and Responsibilities of elected women members need to specified ;

- v. The 'Status', 'Power' and 'Function' of elected women members should be specific and effective in practice ;
- vi. It is very difficult for the government alone to aware the backward women in a short period of time. So the government helps and supports various non government organizations to works for these vulnerable women . Instances of co-operation between government and NGOs should be increased to enhance the right of elected women members ;
- vii. Male members of the Union Parishad should be trained on 'Gender Issues'. It may reduce the 'Male Dominant Attitudes' in the Local Government decision – making process ;
- viii. Budget for the women members should be clearly allocated and distributed ;
- ix. NGOs are working with the government to establish the rights and overall development of women. NGOs enable their clients and beneficiaries to graduate into higher standards of living . To uphold the rights of women members , workshops, studies and seminars roundtables by Women's Organization, NGOs and Civil Society can be encouraged ;
- x. In addition to their poverty alleviation programs, they set many motivational programs for the women at grassroots level. These programs have made women aware of their rights and the women have their platform to raise their voices. Though the Constitution of Bangladesh grants equal rights to women and men in all spheres of public life and even various laws have been enacted and amended to protect women's rights but women are not conscious of their rights and that is the main barrier to serve the purpose of government . For these reasons, women hold a marginal position in the sharing of decision making at all levels ;
- xi. Although government is taking initiatives to ensure the political rights, increase awareness, participation and empowerment but government have to be more sincere, active and give proper attention to increase the real awareness of the vulnerable and disadvantaged women by fully implementing the initiatives. Especially cooperation between government and NGOs can expedite the process of women development ;
- xii. Opportunities are growing for the NGOs through out developing world to work with government in helping the poor women to improve the quality of their lives . The institutional capacity of the government is weak and there is a gap in service delivery system especially at local level . On the other hand, some NGOs have higher-level management capabilities to organize and manage development programs at the grassroots level specially for the elected member ;
- xiii. The participation of women members in development projects of the UP should be increased without any reservation ;
- xiv. It is highly needed to create opportunities for women members to participate in foreign training and workshops ;

- xv. Removing the discrimination among the women members in terms of opportunities , the concerned ministries and departments of GOB should take proper steps ;
- xvi. Women members can deal with women’s issues, particularly for poor women, such as - micro credit programs, handicrafts and professional training programs attracting women to join such programs ;
- xvii. The Union Parishad can introduce transport facilities for the women members. It will help them to work actively ;
- xviii. Positive work environment is essential for women members. Social mobilization program can be an appropriate ‘ Tool ’ to create this environment ;
- xix. Chairman should take various motivational steps to remove the interpersonal conflicts among the male and the female members ;
- xx. A high – powered ‘National Monitoring Team ’ can be established to guide and advise the women members in the Union Parishad level of Bangladesh .

7.6 Policy Direction for the Future

The findings and general observation suggest that a number of things should be done to improve the gloomy situation of the women members. The following are suggestions for future steps or strategies in this direction. These include -----

Firstly

Effort should be taken in identification of causes of gender discrimination in local government power structure .The Research Institutes [National Institute of Local Government (NILG) , and Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD)] of Government, Research Activists and Donor Agencies can participate in such exercise ;

Secondly

Problems and needs of the women members of the Union Parishad should be pointed out through consultation and discussions with them for initiating remedial policy measures. Consultation with both male and female ward members, including the Chairmen in a group could provide better insights and also this process itself could create better understandings among the members ;

Thirdly

The GOB officials particularly those associated with local bodies like Union Parishad should also be trained on gender issues with emphasis on women’s role in governance to facilitate the

effective functioning of women members ;

Fourthly

The GOB should initiate and implement the concern programs of WID, GAD, Beijing Plus 5 etc. It requires a ' National Level Plan ' with a high – powered executive body constituted by the national and international experts in field of the women empowerment .

7. 7 Conclusion

The govt. power structures throughout the region are still overwhelmingly in the hands of men and women remain severely under - represented .They find their influence and ability to contribute are often hindered by gender bias and power struggles. Patriarchy still controls all institutions of the society, parliament military establishment, judiciary, education and benevolent organizations etc. So, a female head of the govt. can not do so much . As a result, a Bangladeshi woman's path to full participation in representatives democracy is difficult and women's employment was a myth even 20 or 25 years ago. They have had voting rights on paper but had little opportunity to exercise it freely or frequently. The year 1997 gave women the opportunity both for casting votes as well as to be candidates in the elections. Women could contest not only for the reserved but general seats also. It gave them some empowerment. For the first time in the election campaign, issue of women's concern was raised. The women candidates focused on the problems of violence, access to resources, family planning, lack of education, dowry, divorce etc. Women's empowerment is extremely important because it has far-reaching consequence for accountability, transparence, and reduction of corruption, choice of developmental activities, general local resources mobilization & better delivery of services in the rural areas.. It's UP, the second lowest local govt. structure in rural Bangladesh. Post -election discrimination against women and increasingly common phenomenon in Bangladesh electoral reality. The disenfranchisement of voters or biasness against women is often a political objective which is unhealthy for democracy and the process of the election. Finally, an uninterrupted and effective participation of women in Union Parishad election along with their decision-making process can be committed to strengthening the local administration can guarantee the participation of women in the decision- making process of local government bodies. To ensure more women's participations in the local government bodies harmonious with the spirit of democracy requires more effective role of the law, political parties, NGOs workers, civil society and Women's Organization as well.

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Women Representative

“At the Union Level As Change Agent of Development”

--- Women for Women .

জর্নাল

স্বশাসন - স্বশাসিত ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ এডভোকেসি গ্রুপ বাংলাদেশ

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ নির্দেশিকা ও চেয়ারম্যান পরিচিতি--
পরিকল্পনা ও সম্পাদনায়
মোঃ আনোয়ারুজ্জামান তালুকদার (নাদিম)
সাবেক ইউ, পি চেয়ারম্যান

সুসংহত গণতন্ত্রের পথে :
২০০১ নির্বাচনের সমন্বিত কার্যক্রম

২০০১ নির্বাচনের দিন ----
দেশব্যাপী পর্যবেক্ষণ
- The Asia Foundation

বাংলাদেশের ----
স্থানীয় সরকার ও ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ
-- Governance Coalition

গণতন্ত্র নির্বাচনী ব্যবস্থা ও নাগরিকদের ভূমিকা
--- Monower Mosotafa

ক্ষমতায়নে নারী -মানচিত্রে স্থানীয় পর্যায়ে নির্বাচিত নারী
[পলিসি গিডারশীপ অ্যান্ড এডভোকেসী ফর জেন্ডার ইকুয়ালিটি] (পলাজ)

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ ও জনউদ্যোগের সংস্কৃতি---
ইনস্টিটিউট ফর এনভারনমেন্ট অ্যান্ড ডেভেলপমেন্ট (আই ই ডি)

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ - সুশাসন বিধিমালা - সমতা

বাংলাদেশের স্থানীয় সরকার ও ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ ---
Governance Coalition ;

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদে নারী --
পরিবর্তনশীল ধারা - মোজাম্মেল হক কে .এম. মহিউদ্দিন

Fair Election Monitoring Alliance----
নির্বাচনী আইন সংস্থার প্রাথমিক সুপারিশমালা [

বাংলাদেশে নির্বাচন পর্যবেক্ষণ পরিচালনা সহায়িকা-----
The Asia Foundation

সংসদ নির্বাচনে নারী প্রার্থীর প্রচারাভিযান সহায়িকা ----- The Asia Foundation

নারী ও সংসদ - সম্পাদনায়

ইমতিয়াজ আহমেদ ,

মাহফুজ আনাম

(সেন্টার ফর অলটারনেটিভ ফেয়ার ইলেকশন মনিটরিং এলায়েন্স)

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Appendices

Appendix – 2

গবেষণায় ব্যবহৃত প্রশ্নপত্র নমুনা নং

সাধারণ পরিচিতি

০১. উত্তরদাতার নাম
০২. স্বামীর নাম
০৩. ইউনিয়ন
০৪. নির্বাচিত ওয়ার্ড
০৫. থানা
০৬. শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা
০৭. বৈবাহিকতা অবস্থা
০৮. স্বামীর নাম
০৯. সন্তানের সংখ্যা
১০. পরিবারের সদস্য সংখ্যা
১১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নির্বাচনের অংশগ্রহণের পূর্বে আপনি অন্য কোন পেশায় নিয়োজিত ছিলেন কি?
১২. বর্তমান ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সদস্য ছাড়াও অন্য কোন পেশায় নিয়োজিত আছেন কি?
১৩. আপনি পরিবারের বিভিন্ন কাজে প্রতিদিন কত ঘন্টা সময় দেন?
১৪. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের কাজে সপ্তাহে কত ঘন্টা সময় দেন?
১৫. উপজেলা পরিষদ থেকে আপনি কি কোন ভাতা/মাসোহারা পান ?
১৬. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ সদস্য হিসাবে আপনি কি কোন ভাতা/মাসোহারা পান?
১৭. আপনি কি কোন রাজনৈতিক দলের সদস্য ?
১৮. উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে রাজনৈতিক দলের সাথে সংযোগ কিরূপ?
১৯. আপনি কি উক্ত দলের আদর্শ ও কর্মসূচী সম্পর্কে জানেন?
২০. নির্বাচিত হওয়ার পর আপনি নিজ দলের প্রভাবমুক্ত থাকতে পারেন কি?

নির্বাচনকালীন অবস্থা

০১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নির্বাচনে অংশগ্রহণ করেছেন কার ইচ্ছায়?
০২. নির্বাচনের আর্থিক ব্যয় কে বা কারা বহন করেছেন?
০৩. নির্বাচনে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কত টাকা খরচ হয়েছে (আনুমানিক)?

০৪. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নির্বাচনে আপনি কি বিনা প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতায় নির্বাচিত হয়েছেন?
০৫. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নির্বাচনের সময় আপনাকে নির্বাচন প্রচারসহ অন্যান্য কাজে কারা সহযোগিতা করেছেন?

নির্বাচনী প্রতিশ্রুতি ও বাস্তবায়ন

০১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নির্বাচনী প্রচারণা সময় এলাকাবাসীর কাছে কি কোন প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছিলেন?
০২. যে সমস্ত প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়েছিলেন সেগুলো বাস্তবায়িত করতে পেরেছেন কি?
০৩. নির্বাচন পূর্ব প্রতিশ্রুতি পূরণের ব্যর্থতার কারণে আপনার পরিবারের কোন সমস্যা হয় কি?
০৪. আপনার পরিবার আপনার কাজে সাহায্য করে কি?
০৫. রাজনৈতিক বিষয় নিয়ে পরিবারের সদস্যদের সাথে আলোচনা করেন কি?
০৬. এলাকায় কাজ করতে গিয়ে আপনাকে কোন বাধা/ছমকি মোকাবিলা করতে হয় কি?
০৭. আপনার কাজের ক্ষেত্রে প্রভাবশালীদের আচরণ কেমন?
০৮. কোন সমস্যা নিয়ে এলাকার নির্বাচিত চেয়ারম্যানের সাথে ব্যক্তিগত যোগাযোগ হয় কি?
০৯. আপনি আপনার দায়িত্ব পালন করতে গিয়ে কোন নির্ধাতনের শিকার হয়েছেন কি?
১০. আপনার জানা মতে এলাকা বা আশেপাশের পরিচিত অন্য কোন নারী সদস্যদের উপর কোন নির্ধাতন হয়েছে কি?

প্রশিক্ষণ ও অন্যান্য ক্ষেত্রে অংশগ্রহণ

০১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সদস্যদের দায়িত্ব পালনের নিয়মাবলী সম্পর্কে আপনার জানা আছে কি?
০২. আপনাকে আপনার দায়িত্ব সম্পর্কে কোন প্রশিক্ষণ দেওয়া হয়েছে কি?
০৩. আপনার প্রশিক্ষণের প্রয়োজন আছে কি?
০৪. সরকার, ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের নারী সদস্যরা কি কি কাজ করবেন তার একটি তালিকা তৈরী করেছে, সেটা কি জানেন?
০৫. আপনার এলাকায় সামাজিক উন্নয়ন কাজে ইউপি নারী সদস্যদের অংশগ্রহণ বৃদ্ধির জন্য কি কোন কমিটি গঠন করা হয়েছে?

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সভা/কর্মকাণ্ডে অংশগ্রহণ

০১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সভায় নিয়মিত উপস্থিত থাকেন কি?
০২. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সভা মাসে কয়টা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়?
০৩. সভাগুলো সাধারণত দিনের কোন সময় অনুষ্ঠিত হয়?
০৪. সভাগুলোর পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও শান্তিপূর্ণ থাকে কি?
০৫. সভাগুলোতে সকল সদস্যের জন্য পর্যাপ্ত বসার স্থান থাকে কি?
০৬. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সভার তারিখ কিভাবে জানানো হয়?

০৭. আপনার বাড়ি থেকে পরিষদের অফিসের দূরত্ব কতটুকু?
০৮. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের কতগুলো সভায় এ পর্যন্ত অংশ নিয়েছেন?
০৯. সভাগুলোতে কি আপনি একা যান?
১০. আপনার পরিবর্তে আপনার পরিবারের অন্য কোন সদস্য কি সভায় অংশ নেয়?
১১. সভার উপস্থিতি খাতায় স্বাক্ষর কিভাবে করেন?
১২. সভায় আপনার এলাকার সমস্যাগুলো কি আপনি তুলে ধরতে পারেন?
১৩. এই পর্যন্ত কতগুলো সমস্যা তুলে ধরেছেন?
১৪. এলাকার সমস্যা গুলো সভায় কার অগ্রহে তুলে ধরেছেন?
১৫. আপনার উত্থাপিত সমস্যাগুলো শুধু কি শোনা হয় নাকি বাস্তবায়নের পদক্ষেপ নেয়া হয়?
১৬. আপনার উত্থাপিত কোন সমাধান না হওয়ায় এলাকায় বিব্রতকর অবস্থায় পড়েছেন কি?
১৭. সভায় কাদের সিদ্ধান্তকে বেশি গুরুত্ব দেওয়া হয়?
১৮. আপনার ইউনিয়নের নারী সদস্যদের উত্থাপিত কয়টি সমস্যা সমাধান হয়েছে?
১৯. আপনার ইউনিয়নের অন্যান্য নারী সদস্যদের সঙ্গে আপনার সম্পর্ক কেমন?
২০. আপনার প্রতি চেয়ারম্যান ও অন্যান্য পুরুষ সদস্যদের আচরণ কি রকম?
২১. আপনি ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ ও উপজেলা পরিষদের কোন কোন কমিটি ও উপকমিটির সঙ্গে যুক্ত আছেন, উল্লেখ করুন?
২২. এসব কমিটিতে আপনার অবস্থা কি?
২৩. এসব কমিটিতে আপনার অংশগ্রহণের ভূমিকা কিরূপ?
২৪. সভায় উপস্থিত থাকা কিংবা সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণের ক্ষেত্রে আপনার স্বামী আপনাকে প্রভাবিত করেন কি?
২৫. অনেক জায়গায় সভায় স্ত্রীর অনুপস্থিতিতে স্বামী সভায় উপস্থিত থাকেন, এটা আপনার ক্ষেত্রে হয়েছে কি?

ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের বাজেট সম্পর্কে ধারণা

০১. আপনার ইউনিয়নের জন্য সরকার কোন টাকা বরাদ্দ করেছে কি?
০২. টাকার বদলে গম/চাল/মালামাল বরাদ্দ করেছে কি?
০৩. এই টাকা গম/চাল/মালামাল খরচ করার সময় কোন ক্ষেত্রে আপনার অংশগ্রহণ থাকে?
০৪. উন্নয়নমূলক কর্মকাণ্ডে গম/চাল/মালামাল/অর্থ ব্যয় করার ক্ষেত্রে আপনার অংশগ্রহণ থাকে কি?

ভূমিকা পালনে ক্ষেত্রে পারিবারিক, সামাজিক ও রাজনৈতিক বাধা

০১. ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের সদস্য নিয়মিত এলাকাবাসীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করার ক্ষেত্রে আপনাকে পারিবারিক বাধার সম্মুখীন হতে হয় কি?
০২. আপনি কি মনে করেন আপনার এলাকার জনগণ ভবিষ্যতে আপনাকে পুণরায় ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ সদস্য হিসাবে চাইবে?
০৩. যদি ভবিষ্যতে নির্বাচনে অংশ নেন, তাহলে কোন পদে প্রার্থী হবেন?
০৪. আপনার কাজ/দায়িত্ব/সমস্যা/দাবি ইত্যাদি সম্পর্কে কোন মন্তব্য করতে চান কি?