Democracy, Political Participation and Women:

A Study of Sikkim

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In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Date: 05/03/2020

DECLARATION

I, **Susan Rai**, hereby declare that the research work embodied in the thesis titled **"Democracy, Political Participation and Women: A Study of Sikkim"** submitted to Sikkim University for the award degree of Doctor of Philosophy is my original work and it has not been submitted earlier to this or any other University for any degree.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that thesis titled **"Democracy, Political Participation and Women: A Study of Sikkim"** submitted to the Sikkim University for partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the department of Political Science, embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by Ms Susan Rai under my guidance and supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted earlier to this or any other university for any degree.

All the assistance and help received during the course of investigation have been duly acknowledge by her.

I recommend this thesis to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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"Democracy, Political Participation and Women: A Study of Sikkim"

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ABSTRACT

Democracy is well-grounded in the concept of participation in political activities. Indeed, citizen's participation is the very raison d'etre of liberal democracy. The majority of democratic theory and participatory democratic theory in particular either implicitly or explicitly assumes the requirement for widespread citizen participation. The concept of democracy implies that the ultimate authority of governance should rest with the people themselves. This idea of democracy could be realized when both men and women are equally involved in political decision making. It is argued that there should equal participation of men and women in public decision making - otherwise there is a 'democratic deficit'. However, many democratic countries today are faced with the challenge of increasing women's presence in public life and other key decision-making roles. This is despite the implementation of considerable gender-related protocols (like Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women, Beijing Conference and Platform of Actions, Millennium Development Goals and now Sustainable Development Goals) that aims to bring more women into decision-making roles.

In Sikkim, however, like many other democracies in the world, the participation and representation of women in decision making bodies become a prime concern. As elsewhere, women constituting approximately half the population hold only a fraction of both appointive and elective political offices within various levels of government. The political participation and representation of women in Sikkim represent somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand, the participation of women as, a voter has reached gender parity, while on the other the proportion of women playing a real part in political leadership is miserably low. There are no women in the highest decision making bodies who take political decisions and direct the state. In fact, there are very few women who actually seek and wield political power which differentiates their political behaviour from that of men. This crucial difference is the reality from which this inquiry begins. It is a bitter fact that these differences have been so little examined because the questions about women's participation in the power process

have been rarely raised. The issue of women in politics has not taken up seriously. Until recently, the assumed political actors were implicitly male. But today, when the success of politics and the quality of democracy is defined by its inclusiveness, the increasing number of women in politics becomes important. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to provide a range of possible answers to the question of the under-representation of women in politics. It explores various aspects of continuity and change in women's political participation and representation in Sikkim. It discusses women's political participation and representation at both the state and local levels of government in Sikkim. The present study is a sincere attempt to address the crucial questions like whether women have the capacity to participate in power politics, why women are rarely seek to participate in power politics, whether women differ from men in policy making and if or how the increasing number of women makes difference.

The search for insight into the various aspects of political participation and representation of women in the democratic context of Sikkim begins in Chapter 1 with a journey through the literature about women in politics in various democracies around the world as well as in India. Based on the literature, this chapter explains the research gap. This chapter outlines the statement of the research problems, the conceptual framework of democracy and political participation, introduces the research questions and elucidate the research methodology. Chapter 2 entitled 'Democracy and Political Participation: A Conceptual Discussion' explores the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of democracy and political participation. Contending theories see the underlying aspects of democracy in relation to participation. This chapter evaluates the western concepts of democracy and participation and highlighted the variation of democracy and focused specifically on participatory and inclusive democracy.

The exploration of positive discrimination as a measure of democratizing democracy is presented in Chapter 3. It addresses the question that how have positive discrimination strategies have been adopted, used, and implemented to reach gender equality in the political landscape in India in general and Sikkim in particular. This is a study of democratizing democracy in Sikkim through qualitative methods, with the purpose to understand the link between democratizing democracy and positive

discrimination strategies. In Chapter 4, the participation of women in various levels of government such as women as a voter, women in the party, women in cabinet, women representation in the legislature and local bodies have been explored. It chronicles women's ascent into the elective and appointive office at the state and local level and explores women's political participation and representation in the electoral processes in Sikkim.

The empirical exploration of deterrent or inhibiting factors of women's participation and representation is incorporated in Chapter 5 entitled 'Participation Representation and Barriers: Lessons from the field'. This chapter consists of detail analysis of data collected through survey schedules and in-depth interviews. It outlines the barriers that exists and enabling factors to enhance the scope of women's political participation. The concluding chapter summarizes the core findings and presents a recommendation for further research

The findings of the study suggest that the physical constraints i.e. traditionally assigned gender roles such as responsibilities relating to reproductive, child care, domestic roles, towards family and marriage have been the major problem of women seeking public office. Although women in Sikkim point towards the changing pattern in familial relationship and flexibility of roles (they expressed the help they are getting from husband and other family members to carry on domestic responsibilities), men and women see motherhood and marriage as the most important aspect of women's life. Hence, gender stereotypes about the roles limit women's freedom to effectively participate in politics.

The socio-cultural barriers have a bearing effect on women's participation in politics. The social ethos, cultural values, socialisation of girls and women has an impact on women's participation in politics. The people are still reluctant to give power to women as they are suspicious of the credibility of women in a leadership position. The ideological beliefs and argument against women's right to participate in politics have created a barrier to women's political participation. Because of which even after women are provided with equal legal rights at par with men, their ability to make decisions in politics continued to be questioned theoretically and practically. Economic factor has been a major challenge for women entering politics. The election expenses are very high despite ceilings imposed by the Election Commission on

election expenditure. Therefore, this creates harder situation for women to make an arrangement for election expenses. The present study clearly dictates the worrisome condition of women in making an arrangement for electoral expenses. The respondents expressed that their major source of election expenses is personal resources which are the funds raise from family and friends. It is observed that women do not possess any substantial resources required to be in power positions. Therefore, it appears the fact that without the help of the party, women cannot pursue their higher political goals.

Besides social, cultural and economic factors, the political factor is another deterrent for participation and representation of women in politics. The political parties can be an enabling as well as inhibiting factors for women's access to politics. The present study affirms that explanation to the absence of women in politics to a greater extent is to be found in the reluctance of political parties in fielding women candidates for the electoral competition. Whether national or state political parties, they have fielded significantly less number of women ranges from 0 to 10 percent, which is way below the 30 percent threshold mandate. The major parties of Sikkim are even more reluctant in fielding women party candidates than many national parties of India. They hardly make any sincere efforts to reach out to women or to give them a position of authority. Very few women have achieved the leadership position of the party. Hence, women are almost excluded from the file and position of party hierarchy.

Given the social, cultural, economic and political constraints, the reservation is seen as a viable solution. Without which women cannot make their route to politics due to prevailing socio-cultural-economic and political factors. This study helps dispel the myth that positive discrimination policies necessarily result in losses in women's access to power. The results lend support to the notion that the reservation of seats facilitates the promotion of women, which can, in turn, have tremendous symbolic and practical consequences. The findings of the study show that these policies can help women of Sikkim to attain political leadership positions. Another key finding that has emerged from the study is that internal party reform is critical to women's participation and representation. The absence of gender-sensitivity in candidate selection and outreach, as well as the failure of decentralize party decision-making processes all, inhibit women's opportunities to advance as leaders with parties and as

candidates for elected office. Removing the barriers to women's participation is, therefore, crucial for creating gender-friendly political parties and legislatures that respond to the needs and interests of both men and women. Some recommendations are suggested to overcome the barriers and enhance gender equality in politics. These include the adoption of measures to support women's political participation including party quotas and reservation of seats in legislatures, introduction by party leaders of measures to improve transparency, fairness, and equity in internal party rules, and institutionalisation of gender equality in party processes and policies. Effective implementation of these measures helps ensure that women's equal and meaningful participation in political office.

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ACRONYMS

AAP	Aam Aadmi Party
AICC	All India Congress Committee
AIWC	All India Women Council,
AITC	All Indian Trinamool Congress
AIWC	All India Women's Conference
BJP	Bharatya Janata Party
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CSWI	Commission on the Status of Women in India
ECI	Election Commission of India
EWUCS	Educated Women Unemployed Co-operative Society
FWCU	Fourth World Conference on Women
GMC	Gangtok Municipal Corporation
HSP	Hamro Sikkim Party
IDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IPU	Inter-parliamentary Union
INC	Indian National Congress
JNP	Janata Party
MP	Member of Parliament
NCW	National Council for Women
NCWI	National Council of Women in India
NFHS	National Family Health Survey
OBC	Other Backward Classes
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD	Positive Discrimination
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RIS	Rising Sun Party
RJD	Rashtriya Janata Dal
SCR	Sikkim Congress R
SC	Schedule Caste
SDF	Sikkim Democratic Front
SGPP	Sikkim Gorkha Prajatantric Party

SKM	Sikkim Krantikari Morcha
SHG	Self Help Group
SHRP	Sikkim Himali Rajya Parishad Party
SJEP	Sikkim Jan-Ekta Party
SLA	Sikkim Legislative Assembly
SP	Samajwadi Party
SPC	Sikkim Prajatantra Congress
ST	Schedule Tribe
SSC	Sikkim State Congress
SSP	Sikkim Sangram Parishad
HDR	Human Development Report
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
WIA	Women Indian Association
WRB	Women Reservation Bill

CHAPTER 1

DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Many democratic countries today are faced with the challenge of increasing women's presence in public life and other key decision-making roles. This is in spite of the implementation of considerable gender-related protocols (like Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discriminations against Women, Beijing Conference and Platform of Actions, Millennium Development Goals and now Sustainable Development Goals) that aims to bring more women into decision-making roles. In modern times, democratization of the public realm has been understood as the inclusion of the excluded in the political process (Bhattacharyya et al., 2012). Democracy ensures the citizens involves in the democratic process through debate, deliberation, and participation (Young, 2010). Democratic states encourage the people's participation in political institutions as the success of democracy relies on their extent of inclusiveness. It is problematic to comprehend democracy if it is not inclusionary. Democratic inclusion stressed on the participation of people, empowerment and initiating various measures to remove discrimination, marginalization, and deprivation (Young, 2010). Although scholars have lamented over the large-scale exclusion and encourage on the goal of political inclusion of people especially the weaker section, the societies remain exclusionary to a different degree (Bhattacharyya et al., 2012). The political exclusion become clearer when digs into the issue of political participation of women as they are limited in numbers who participate as compared to the male counterpart. Hence, the materialization of democracy in this aspect is still timid (Cornwall and Goetz 2005). The research on women and political participation reveals the gender gap (Axford, 2002) and therefore the issues of political participation and representation are a core focus of research on gender and politics. The previous studies show that the women's exclusion from political structures and processes is the result of various structural, cultural and

personal factors that vary in different social contexts across countries. Besides, there is a generic issue in women's political participation that relates to a wider context of national and international politics, liberal democracy and development. It is, therefore imperative to review these constructs and decode the gendered nature of democracy and its relationship with political participation.

Statement of the Research Problem

Democracy entails some form of political power is exercise by the people over their political leaders. The people are free to choose their leaders and overthrow if failed to reach their aspirations. Therefore, in a democratic state, the power is vested into the hands of people and hence their participation is the core of democracy. This concept of democracy arises the question of whether existing democracies are democratic as institutions have failed to incorporate the section of people affected by the decision and had no opportunity to influence the outcomes. Women which consist half the population are continuously marginalized in the political sphere. They belong to the marginalized groups of society and hence are not well represented in governance. The majority of them are excluded not only from citizenship and rights, but their interests and concerns in public decisions and services are not reflected in political decision-making.Numerous challenges confront women from entering politics.The inadequate representation of women in politics, however, is a problem in all of the democratic countries of the world today. In recent years, national and cross-national research into political participation has identified a gender gap. There are differences in rates of voting turnout, party identification, and political attitudes on a range of policy issues, and political values (Barrie, 2002). In India, the participation of women in politics is dismal even though they were provided with their political rights and freedom along with independence. Unlike SCs and STs, there is no provision for the reservation of seats for women in national and state legislatures. Therefore, the representation of women in parliament and the state legislature is very low. Women underrepresentation has been a feature of the Indian political system and Sikkim is no exception. Though, women gained constitutional and legal rights, their representation in the parliament, legislative assemblies, political parties, and other governmental bodies remained comparatively low. There are literature expounded the political participation of women. The common pattern found in previous literature is that political participation is narrowly subscribed as their assumption and explanation are

profoundly based on electoral data for example voting and contesting election for assembly seats. However, political participation does not only involve the study of the electoral process therefore, previous study is exclusionary in nature. Sikkim is a democratic state but also have experience of monarchy till 1975. Sikkim Government is adopting all means to make democracy successful by implementing the policies related to the increasing participation of women. In Sikkim, women constitute 47 percent of the total population (Census 2011) but their political participation and representation are inadequate. Hence, the present study on democracy, political participation and women provides a vast array of the understanding of nature of political participation, political socialization, political apathy, political efficacy and various other social variables which determine the extent of individual participation and non-participation in politics. This study examines how positive discrimination as major policy options helps in democratizing democracy and increases the political participation of women in decision-making processes. The study also outlines the barriers that exists and enabling factors to enhance the scope of women's participation.

Review of Literature

There are many scholars who have made their contribution in the field of democracy, political participation and representation. The data for the study has, therefore, been collected through an extensive review of the literature. Iris Marion Young (2010) in *Democracy and Inclusion* holds that democratic practice is a means of promoting justice and for widening and deepening democracy. The interest of a group, claims, and expression of experience is an important resource for democratic discussion and decision-making. She believes that the system of representation is inclusive in nature as they encourage the perspectives of relatively marginalized social groups. The mechanism for such representation of marginalized social groups can involve state institutions, such as voting schemes, electoral rules, etc. In this book, she holds strong belief in democracy and various mechanisms of the democratic process as a way to the inclusion of socially marginalized groups in mainstream debate and discussion to influence the policy outcomes. Hence, this assumption enriches the present research with a deeper understanding of democracy and how it leads to inclusion where all members of the given polity effectively influence over debate and decision making within that polity. In similar vein Andrea Cornwall and Anne Marie Goetz (2005) in

their article *Democratizing Democracy: Feminist Perspectives* argue getting more women into public office has always been connected to the wider project of deepening democracy. They further hold that increase in number of women in democratic process is necessary but not a sufficient condition to curb the historically and culturally rooted forms of discriminations. They point out the determinant of political effectiveness is women's political apprenticeship. They perceive political apprenticeship as women's experiences in civil society, associations, political parties and the other informal arenas in which political skills are learned. They suggest using these spaces to develop bridges into the political arena not just to articulate different identities and agendas but to instrumentalize those differences towards the formulation of new identities, new agendas, new alliances, and new political forms. By doing these they argue the challenges of democratizing democracy can perhaps begin to be addressed. This article helps to relate how the other spaces could be used as an advantage to the wider project of deepening democracy.

Kathleen M. Fallon et al. (2012) in their article *Resolving the Democracy Paradox: Democratization and Women's Legislative Representation in Developing Nations, 1975 to 2009*, investigate how variation in the democratization process including historical legacies, electoral experiences and quota measure impact women's representation in developing countries. They found that it is the democratization process, rather than a nation's level of democracy at a particular moment in time that matters for women's representation. Women's legislative representation initially drops with new democratic freedoms after a certain period of time it climbs again as democratic freedoms increase over time and across elections. They also found that an increase in women's representation, in turn, is dependent in part on the nation's democratic legacy, historical electoral experience, and quota implementation. This article is helpful as it provides an empirical understanding of how the democratization process matters for women's legislative representation.

Manon Tremblay (2007) in her article *Democracy, Representation and Women: A Comparative Analysis* explains the factors which help or hinder women in entering parliament in countries defined as democratic. She argues that factors which determines the women in entering parliament differs according to the length of the democratic experiment. In her study she founds that in countries where democracy has prevailed for only a short time, the voting system is the most important factor

explaining the proportion of women in parliament while in a well-established democracies the most powerful explanation is found in egalitarian conception of gender roles. This article provides an empirical investigation of different social, economic and political factors in relation to the length of democratic experiment.

Feminizing Politics by Lovenduski (2005) is an extensive work on political representation of women. She reflects on wide range of discussion ranging from the arguments for equality of political representation of women and men to the demonstration of continuing importance of institutions to the nature of and possibilities for political representation. She addressed the question of what changes would bring when the number of women is increasing exceptionally. She argues that when political recruitment processes were designed to select suitable man, in such process, when women are recruited, they have to display male qualifications; hence they will tend to have characters that are assumed to found in men. However, as the proportion of women nears parity, women are selected because of their gender and as a result they are more likely to reflect the social characteristics of women in the electorate. This book is helpful to my study as it provides elaborate discussion on importance of political representation of women and the process of feminizing politics. It is helpful as she explore on how positive discrimination policies as a process are proliferating in which few countries have experienced balanced political representation of women and men.

Nancy Burns et al. (2001) in *The private roots of public action: Gender, Equality and Political participation* provides explanation for the gender differences in political participation. They contend that men have higher rates of participation in politics as compared to women. The sources of these differences are well known in the participation literatures viz. education, socio-economic status, mobilization and sense of political efficacy. But the authors make a contrasting view point to instigate the gender differences. They demonstrate persuasively the differences in three factors-resources, recruitment, and psychological orientations to politics explain why men participate more than women. The participation difference in their data is not enormous but the authors argue that is large enough to matter in a struggle for scarce resources and equality in influencing and benefitting from government actions. Certainly, the book present rich data and analysis that undoubtedly would enrich present research work to explain the factors involved in influencing political

participation of women. The article *Women's Political Representation: The Importance of Ideology* by Paxton and Kunovich (2003) presents how gender ideology affects the number of women in national legislatures. They argues that ideological factors matters more than political factors in predicting differences in women's political representation. It is found to be and strongest predictor of differences. They hold that ideologies and argument against women's right to participate in politics have created substantial barriers to women's political participation. For centuries, exclusion of women from politics justified because of their assumed non rational nature. Even after women gain suffrage their ability to make rational decisions continued to be questioned theoretically and empirically. Paxton and Kunovich also highlighted the impact of ideological belief in both the supply and demand of women in politics. The article is helpful to have an in depth idea of ideological factor and its influence on both supply and demand of women in political.

Susan Moller Okin (1989) in *Justice, Gender and the Family* claims that contemporary theories of justice have ignored feminist views and that, as a result, they suffer in both coherence and relevance. According to her gender should be an important component of contemporary theories of justice. She defines gender as an institutionalized difference between the sexes. For instance, division of labour in family, in which women is homemaker while men have the role of breadwinner. This difference is not a biological but a result of socialisation. She holds that different roles filled by men and women result in an unequal distribution of power, prestige, opportunities for self-development etc. Further, she stressed on importance of family as an important component of inquiry as she argues that differences start from family. She lamented that independent human being as a subject is difficult to understand without considering the kind of environment in which human being develop. This article undoubtedly enriches the framework for broader understanding of political participation from resources perspective.

The book *Political Women* by Jeane J. Krikpatrick (1974) has brought her empathetic insight to produce the first major study of women in American public life. She offers an account for paucity of women in "high" politics. She presents four hypothetical constraints viz. physiological constraints, cultural constraints, role constraints and male conspiracy to explain the paucity of women in politics. Nonetheless these

constraints have it bearing on personality and role behaviour of the women in power. This book is helpful to my study in identifying the barriers or constraints of women participation in politics. Undeniably it is a major resource which shapes my course of study. Anne Stevens (2007) in her book *Women, Power and Politics* presents the account of women political participation and representation in 15 economically advanced liberal democracies primarily those who are members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). She provides an account of issues of women's political behaviour and position. Stevens extensively discuss on the ways in which women are expected to make a difference and the ways in which the conditions within which they operate constrain or facilitate their capacity to do so. She reflects on the differences women can bring in policy making. This book is helpful in my research to understand the interest of women in politics and make sense on analysing in the context of women in Sikkim.

The book *Engendering Democracy (1991)* written by Anne Phillips provides wide understanding of democracy from a feminist perspective. She had and explicit discussion on possibilities and limits of liberal democracy in the context of women. She argues that underrepresentation of women in politics has posed a serious question on the liberal democracy. She holds that the problem arose when women are being represented by men in politics. According to her striking homogeneity of the existing representative is the proof of wrong and which need to be tackled by giving space to the previously marginalised groups. This book gives an account of types of representation while reflecting on problems representing women interest in politics. This book is helpful to explore public private debate that the equation of the personal with the political has drawn attention to the details of how people relate and organize. Pamela Paxton et al. (2007) *Gender in Politics* focuses on women participation in formal politics including suffrage, voting, holding political office and political influence. The authors highlighted different factors which enable or hinder women participation in politics. Supply-side arguments acknowledge characteristics such as interest, ambition and knowledge as well as resources such as time, network, civic skills, education and economic resources are the requirement for supply of women in politics. In demand-side factors the feature of political systems shapes the rules and influence whether women can attain and how they attain political power. Electoral system and gender quotas have major role to play in inducting women in politics.

Besides, they respond on important questions such as whether women prioritized different political issues, whether introduce different types of bills and do they make any difference in politics. The study area of this article is mainly the United States, therefore, the situation in US and the developing country like us is not similar. Hence, this article does not directly relate to my research but helps to understand the condition of women and their involvement in politics in developed countries.

Kay Lehman Scholzman, Nancy Burns and Sidney Verba (1994) in *Gender and the pathway to participation: the role of resources*, explores the role of resources in political participation. The authors investigate whether differences in resources are responsible for the disparity between men and women in political activity. The resource discussed is money, time and civic skill. Considering the campaign costs, money has become an important political resource for citizens. The authors assume that women have less income than men and live household with smaller average income. As a result, when it comes to using income for political purposes women contribute less than men. Both men and women have equal amount of free time after obligatory activities have taken care of. Civic skills allow citizens to use time and money effectively in political life. Man accounts better in civic skills as compared to women. In terms of the extent of which disparities in resources explain the gender gap in political activity, substantial cumulative differences in resources translate into small differences in overall political participation and relatively large differences in contributions because men have their greatest relative advantage with respect to resources that have relatively modest influence on overall political participation, but a quite considerable impact on political contribution.

The article *Pathways to Power: The Role of Political Parties in Women's National Political Representation* by Kunovich and Paxton (2005) explore the role of political parties in women's political representation. Their central argument is that the effects of national level factors in producing outcomes for women are partially mediated through women's inclusion in political parties. Secondly they hold that presence of women in the party elites of political parties influences their selection and support of women as candidates. They also argue that higher average levels of women in elite party positions positively influence the countrywide representation of women as candidates. This work is helpful for the present study as it presents an empirical inquiry in which cross-national measures of women's inclusion in political parties are

developed and analyzed in a cross-national, path-analytic model of women in politics. This is no doubt an extensive research on political parties and its relation to women representation in political decision making.

Lane Kenworthy and Melissa Malami (1999) in their article *Gender Inequality in Political Representation: Worldwide Comparative Analysis* is an empirical inquiry of determinants of variation in women's representation in national legislature across 146 nations in 1998. The study inquires the influence of political, socio-economic and cultural factors on women's representation in national legislatures. The study found that political factors particularly the electoral system play a central role in determining the degree of gender inequality in representation. Party list/ multimember district systems are more favourable to the election of women to national legislature than are candidate-centred/single- member district system. The timing of women's suffrage is another significant factor which persistently influences the women representation, with earlier suffrage associated with larger women's shares in parliament. The same appears to be true of the seats held by leftist parties. The Marxist-Leninist government tend to boost women's legislative representation. Besides, they also found that women work in professional type jobs tend to make greater headway in political representation than women who are engage in informal labour particularly in agriculture. The findings of this article helps me to analyse the findings derives from the present study.

Gender and Authority: A Cross-National Study by Moore and Shackman (1996) is an empirical study of 110 nations to examine the impact of social structural factors on the extent of gender inequality in authority cross-nationally. They found that the higher rates of women's labor force participation increase their representation in parliament but not in administrative occupations. On the other hand, higher rates of women's secondary education enrolment lower the relative odds for men in administrative occupation while having no impact on the proportion of parliamentary seats held by women. It means that even where large numbers of women are enrolled in secondary or higher education does not imply that there will be similar progress in politics. They contend that national economic development, women's labour force participation rates and enrolment in higher secondary education are sometimes related to authority measure, but the size and direction of the relationship vary. Their study cannot be generalized in the context of Sikkim because of its different social,

economic, cultural factors. Nonetheless, it provides an empirical research of major countries.

The article *The Impact of Gender Stereotyped Evaluations on Support for Women Candidates* by Dolan, Kathleen (2009) examines the impact of attitude of people towards women's representation in government on descriptive representation of women. She provides an understanding of the determinants of public's desire to see more women in the political office. To explain these attitudes, the primary mechanism she proposed is gender stereotypes. She holds that gender stereotypes about the abilities of political men and women shapes their choice of candidates for political office. The key argument is that people who perceive women as possessing the appropriate competence and have the personality characteristics expected to be in a leader are more likely to support for increasing descriptive representation of women in elective office. On the contrary, those who perceive that men are more suited for elective office are less likely to support women candidate.

The article *Electoral Participation of Women in India: Key Determinants and Barriers* by Praveen Rai, (2014) is an intensive research on participation of women in elections as voters and as campaigners. He argues despite of underrepresentation of women in Lok Sabha since first general elections, exclusion in allotment of seats as candidates in national elections by political parties, there has been and increasing participation of women in electoral campaigns in the beginning of 20th century and electoral upsurge of women as voters in the 1990s. He highlighted that the socio-historic forces, gendered nature of government structures, elections, lack of reservation of seats for women in parliament and lack of national consensus and willingness among political parity to give more tickets to women in elections as the reasons for low representation of women in legislature. On the other, participation of women as campaigner and as voters increased significantly. He argues that one of the major reasons for increased women participation in election campaign is due to higher mobilisation of political parties by including more women in their campaign programmes. He further stated that political parties seem enthusiastic in treating women as constituencies and campaigners, but run shy of fielding adequate number of seats to them in elections and in sharing political power. Rai in his another article titled *Women's Participation in Electoral Participation in Electoral Politics in India: Silent Feminisation (2017)* further stress on analysis of women's voting patterns,

showing that there have never been concerted efforts by political parties to mobilise female voters on any issue concerning women in either national or state level elections. The promises of political parties in their manifestos on gender issues are conveniently forgotten after the hustings. In the context of role of parties in women representation the article *Miles to Go for a Fair Representation* by Hiranmay Karlekar (1996) is noteworthy. He observes that in a male dominated politics which began in the last quarter of the 19th century, women played a purely symbolic and marginal role until Mahatma Gandhi realised the importance of their active participation. During the freedom struggle, women began to participate actively in some of the political parties notably in the hierarchies of the Congress party. However, it does not lead to significant changes as if several women have made it to the top echelons, it was mainly because of their very considerable political abilities which were supplemented by the fact that they belonged to powerful political dynasties or had carved out bailiwicks for themselves under the patronage of influential male leaders. Indira Gandhi, J. Jayalalitha and Lakshmi Parvati are some of the examples in this regard. Besides, there are certain organisational skills and the abilities required in the field of politics which is a decisive in choosing a candidate for electoral competition. Karlekar stated that organisational skills, the ability to interact with muscle-men and keep under control and funds are some of the principal criterion in choosing a candidate. The other criterion includes a candidate's ability to capitalize caste, class and communal composition of electorate. Apart from these qualities the nomination often goes to the person who can press his or her candidature more forcefully. Karlekar noted most women are not very good at such methods of persuasion hence, nomination excludes them. These articles are helpful in the present study as it provides quantitative inquiry of determinants that lead to higher participation of women in the electoral process as voters and as campaigners. Further, helps in contextualizing the role of political parties in increasing number of women in electoral competition.

Ameer Sultana (2015) in his book '*Gender and Politics: Role Perception and Performance of Women Legislators'* seeks to validate hypothesis that women would change the nature of political power. The author aimed to examine the leadership patterns of women legislative elite from North-West India covering the States of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana. The book gives an account of social

economic background of women legislators and also their entry into the political and legislative field, their motivation and role performance. The book contends that women had different approach towards public issues and adopt different method to deal with it. Though, they are successful in entering and effectively participating in what was previously a 'males only' club and are taking up the gender issues to the national and state politics, women are not free from their traditional role culminating into work burden upon them. This book is informative in making sense of women and their inclusive role in politics.

D. Syamal Deviand G. Lakshmi (2005) in their article *Political empowerment of women in Indian Legislature: A study* presents political empowerment of women in Indian Legislature particularly in Lok Sabha. Their focus of study involves decision making process and under-representation in ministerial positions. The author briefly summaries different Lok Sabha elections till 2004 and give an account of women members in successive elections. Undoubtedly, women participation in political process has been increasing but the fact remains that they fail to hold the prominent position in decision making as they were been assigned the departments which is comparatively considered requires minimum attention. It ascertains that women are still in marginal in the principal area of politics. Though, this paper is limited to the study of women in Indian Legislature, helps in formulating the idea of women participation in Indian context.

Sue Thomas (1994) in his book *How Women Legislate* is an extensive research on how women in legislative office have made an impact on political process and whether the impact is similar to or different from the impact of men. In his study he found little difference between female and male state legislature on frequency of floor or committee speaking, bargaining, or meeting with lobbyists. Women are found to be equally successful in passing those bills deemed of the highest priority to individual legislators. Not only women participated at levels equal to those of their male colleagues, they also mastered the process to achieve goals. This book is helpful to my study to analyse the amount of impact (if any) women have made in the process of decision making. It is also helpful to understand the way women behave when they enter political office.

The book *Women in Politics* by Sumana Pandey (1990) is an exclusive research on the life and philosophy of urban middle class, educated working women. She alleges that the Indian women today have battered all storms of opposition and have emerged successful as politically aware career women. She also highlighted on double role of women and said women are riven between domestic duties and the demands of their profession, yet they have acquired a new assertiveness. This book is helpful in developing understanding on working women's problems in associating with political activities. This book is also helpful to enrich my discussion on the issue of dual responsibility of women at home and work place and its impact on effective participation in politics.

Snehalata Panda (1990) in her book *Determinants of Political Participation: Women and Public Activity* argues that the psychological characteristics like efficacy, trust and interest serve as motivations for participate. The skills requires to participate is learned through participation in democratic institutions. She contends that the environmental setting conforming to cultural norms has little impact on persons or groups as such the distinction between public or private spheres of activity is never internalised by women who have involved themselves in political discussion, campaigning or contesting elections. Rather, it is psychological orientation which creates interest for and involvement in politics. Person with intense psychological involvement in politics participate in political activities like campaigning, community activities and protest. Persons with lesser interest participate in voting and contact activities. Individuals lacking interest or with negative attitude to politics remain indifferent. This book undoubtedly a rich source to have an idea on participation and non- participation of people from psychological traits point of view.

Manuka Khanna's (2009) *Political Participation of Women in India* is an intensive research on the factors which have resulted in wide chasm between the 'dejure' and 'defecto' status of political participation of women in India. To have a deeper insight into it Khanna identified three factors viz. psychological variable, socio-economic variable and political variable which have far reaching impact on women participation in politics. In psychological perspective, women have been socialized to believe that politics in a 'male domain', a 'dirty game'. Therefore, women do not prefer to associate themselves with this field. Secondly, women participation is also determined by socio-economic factors such as sex, education, occupation, income, religion,

family background, residence etc. In India women are socialized to take up the role which is mainly confined to home. Another major hindrance is the cost of the elections. Majority of women lack control over financial resources, they lack legal control over property and on their income. Lastly, the political factors such as state of development, mode of production, overall political situation, type of electoral system etc. are the factors that control the participation of women. She vehemently argues that participation of women is essential as a demand of simple justice which can be achieved not just by increasing numbers but by ensuring that women understand the problems and effectively solve them. This article is helpful as it provides an insight into the major factors which hinders women political participation in Indian context.

Alka Saxena (2011) in her book *Role of Women in Reservation Politics* provides a detailed account of women's reservation in Indian politics and the issues associated with it. She analyses the current trends in Indian politics and emphasises the importance of women's participation in politics and the role of reservation policy for the empowerment of women. She argues that in spite of all hurdles, women in India are trying hard to make space for themselves in the political arena. Though large number of women are emerging regardless of social boundaries there are lot more to be discovered by them as a leader to establish herself in compliance with rural men. For this, she contends reservation is just means not an end. This book is helpful to explore reservation policy and its implication on women in India.

Nivedita Menon (2000) in her article *Elusive 'Women': Feminism and Women's Reservation Bill* discuss about the Women's Reservation Bill and its complexities. She contends that the responses that Women's Reservation Bill receives cannot be understood solely within the framework of women's rights, the two different sets of concerns- feminist and upper caste have tied in at this particular conjuncture. As an alternative, she suggest proportional representation, but she said to conceptualise proportional representation in the only of currently existing parties which would get seats in proportion to their votes is not sufficient. There should be a revisioned proportional representation system that would have room for newer kinds of political configuration. This article shed light on various debates going around on Women's Reservation Bill in the centre and highlighted the measures to be made in this direction.

Madhu Kishwar (1996) in her article *Women and Politics: Beyond Quotas* has given a detail account of quotas of for women in politics. She deplores women reservation mainly on the grounds that 33 percent reservation would permanently freeze women to reserved constituencies. In most states at the panchayats and zilla panchayats levels women are not being allowed to contest for general constituencies which are assumed to be reserved for men. She contends, for legislature, it will be much harder for women to secure tickets beyond the stipulated quota because of far more intense competition for the seats. She alleges the marginalization of women is integrally linked to the marginalisation of all decent people from the party politics. Therefore, need broad-based electoral reforms to make parties function in an accountable and transparent way. It will curb the role of muscle power and money power in politics and democratise decision making in the party by ensuring fair election at all levels. She suggests proportional representation system which facilitates reservation of marginalized group without mechanical reservation of quotas. This article contributes to understanding the different aspects of gender quota and its implication on Indian politics.

Meena Dhanda (2000) in *Representation for Women: Should Feminist Support Quotas?* rejects the Kishwar's consequentialist ground to discard the gender quotas. She contends that the issue of gender quotas is better grasped if reconceptualise what it means act politically in the interest of women. By saying this she puts forth the idea of identity concern which she believes is a more fruitful way to understanding opposition and support for the use of gender quota in ensuring representation of women in legislative bodies. She holds that a stronger requisition of representation would be that the person who represent embodies the aspiration and the hopes of the represented. Between the representatives and the represented there must be an absolute identity of interest. This article is helpful to explore the conflicting views on gender quota for increasing women representation in politics.

Engendering Local Democracy: The Impact of Quotas for Women in India's Panchayats by Niraja G. Jayal (2005) presents the survey of various research on gender quotas in panchayats conducted by Nirmala Buch in three states (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) and Susheela Kaushik in six states (Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and the Garhwal region of Uttaranchal). She holds that though the survey of a wide range of studies conducted in

different parts of India points to the constraints- institutional and social, that inhibit a fuller and effective participation by women, nevertheless there is evidence to suggest quota enabled women to address their gender needs and interests. For instance, with women taking on responsibility of panchayat work, there is a greater sharing of household responsibilities by husbands and other family members. These certainly transgressed the boundaries between the public and private.

Durga P Chhetri (2013) in his article *Politics of Inclusion and Women Empowerment: Case of Hill State of Sikkim (India),* examines the provision of reservation as a part of the inclusion policy and holds this provision paved way for women to exercise their political rights in local self-governance and created enabling environment for women participation in grass-root politics. He also argued that Sikkimese women enjoy more political freedom and legal equality and in his views these advantages are a product of government's strategy of inclusive politics in Sikkim. Similarly, Chhetri's (2015) another article *Women in Urban Governance: The impact of Affirmative action* is an exclusive study on women in urban governance. In this article the author strongly maintains the argument that women in better position as they are actively participating in urban governance through affirmative action and allocation of quotas for them in politics and decision making positions. He argues that women's access to power and decision making positions has improved and has been accomplished through the implementation of various strategies and measures. However, Chhetri remarks on importance of capacity building and training workshops for women which focus not only on power and responsibilities but also on confidence building and public speaking to make women more efficient in governing urban areas. These articles are helpful that it provides detail discussion on participation and representation of women in Sikkim. It further helps to have an idea on affirmative measures and its implications on women in Sikkim.

Durga P Chhetri (2013) in his article *Politics of Social Inclusion and Affirmative Action: Case of India* assesses the case for affirmative action and its implication in rectifying the past injustice. The author argued that affirmative action policies backed by constitutional provisions helped in correcting the past discrimination and also in increasing the representation of women and minorities in areas from which they have been excluded such as employment, education, and decision-making.

Durga P Chhetri (2019) in his book *Gender, Power and Democracy in South Asia* examines the relationship between gender and democracy in South Asia and discusses the challenges confronting women of negotiating and creating their spaces in the political discourse. The book addresses the problems faced by women in India and Nepal in negotiating space when managing multiple marginalised identities.

The review of literature shows that majority of previous empirical studies on democracy and political participation has been conducted in other states of India. Only the limited number of studies has so far examined the impact of democracy and measures of affirmative actions on women's participation and representation in the context of Sikkim. Moreover, the empirical findings in other states of India may not be generalised in Sikkim due to different cultural and political context. It would be therefore prudent for other researchers to make a contribution in this field by establishing the impact of democratisation and affirmative action on women's political participation. Hence, this study to bridge the knowledge gap by establishing the impact of democratic reforms on women's participation and by identifying the gaps in participation of women in political office in Sikkim context.

Democracy and Political Participation: Conceptual Framework

Democracy, political participation and women has been studied and analysed by various scholars, the prominent among them are Sidney Verba et al (1995), G. Parry et al (1992), Susan Mollar Okin (1989), Nancy Burns et al (2001) and Kay Lehman Schlozman et al (1994). Modern state offers high value to the concept of democracy as it appears as the most favoured among competing ideologies. There is certainly see the increasing evidence and examples of democratic forms of government. However, despite the familiarity of these concepts, they remain indescribable and quite difficult concept to define. There are number of different conception and models of democracy available to us. Some overlap, while others are radically different. David Held (1996) offers models of democracy such as classical, participatory, representative, republican etc. whereas Young (2010) elaborate on two models of democracy i.e. aggregative and deliberative. However, like most things in politics judgement and value will depend on one's world view, political culture, political socialisation and political values. Young (2010) holds that democracy is not an "all-or-nothing affair but a matter of degree; societies can vary in both the extent and the intensity of their commitment to democratic practice". She contends democracy as a means to promote

justice. She further states that democratic process is a necessary and proper vehicle to promote legal, administrative, and social changes toward greater justice. To explain the normative theoretical connection between democracy and justice she formulates the model of deliberative democracy that emphasizes the ideals of inclusion, political equality, reasonableness, and publicity and hence, serves as the means of discovering just policies (Young, 2010). Bhattacharyya, Partha and Angshuman (2012) underscore democratic inclusion is participatory, empowering, requiring various affirmative measures designed to remove discrimination, marginalization and deprivation. They hold that present day miseries that people facing are the consequence of social exclusion which was practiced throughout the history. That can be dealt with the affirmative measures and inclusionary practices within democracy.

The central to the notion of democracy is the concept of participation, which is both omnipresent (Axford, 2002). However, the explanation of political participation is far from straightforward. The political participation refers to the actions by which individuals take part in the array of political activities. Some individual are highly active in politics and make career in politics and some people abstain completely from political activity, refusing even to vote. Therefore, the study of political participation involves examination of both activity and non-activity and reason underlying both (Axford, 2002). Parry et al (1992) assert that political participation consists of taking part in the process of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies.

However, every society allows some means of participation for some citizens and no society is run on the basis of equal participation by all citizens (Verba, 1967). In the real world, some people and groups have significantly greater ability to use democratic process for their own ends while others are excluded and marginalized (Young, 2010).In this inclusion and exclusion, women are persistently excluded from resources benefit in economic, social and political sphere and have implication on political participation. Burns et al (2001) contends despite the strides women have made in work place and in higher education, men continue to participate in politics at higher rates than women. However, they observes that disparity is not universal, but is limited to particular acts, such as contributing to campaigns, belonging to a political organization and contacting government officials, while in other areas such as voting, working on campaign, attending protests, or serving on local boards, both men and women participate largely in equal numbers (Burns, et al., 2001). Regardless, as

authors argue, these small differences have larger consequences as women's voices continue to be muted in nation's political debates. The authors note private life i.e. domestic relations and power within home influences men's and women's participatory habits. They argue that private sphere is a location where socialization and inculcation of gender roles takes place and it impact on women's participation in the public sphere. Okin (1989) also makes a similar line of observation, as she recognizes gender as an institutionalized difference between the sexes. For instance, division of labour in family, in which women is homemaker while men have the role of breadwinner. This difference is not a biological but a result of socialisation. She holds that different roles filled by men and women result in an unequal distribution of power, prestige, opportunities for self-development etc. Further, she stressed on importance of family as an important component of inquiry as she argues that differences start from family. She lamented that independent human being as a subject is difficult to understand without considering the kind of environment in which human being develop. According to Wilcox (1994) understanding women's participation also means understanding issues of power. The participation facilitates women the power to decide on a preferred government system as well as a 'voice' in influencing decision and policies that affect their lives. Arnstein (1969) therefore argues that there is a critical difference between going through an empty ritual of participation and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process. She states that "participation without the redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless" (p.216). Following the UN declaration for human rights, the Platform of Action, MGDs, SDGs and the implementation of gender-related protocols, the concept "participation" has been synonymous with empowerment, power, and the need to include the "have-nots" in the decision-making processes, especially which affect their own lives (Arnstein 1969; Kabeer 2001).

Women constituting half of the population hold only a fraction of both appointive and elective political offices within various levels of government. In the recent years, women have consolidated their participation as voters but remained disenfranchised in terms of representing women in decision making bodies. According to Singh (1997) and Dhanda (2000) political representation is a chief means of participation in representative government. The process of understanding the components of political representation led to industry of taxonomy construction (Childs and Lovenduski,

2012). The most prominent is Hanna Pitkin's *The Concept of Representation* published in 1967. Her four types of representation are: formalistic, where a representatives is legally empowered to act for another; descriptive representation, where the representatives stand for the represented by virtue of sharing similar characteristics such as race, age, class, gender, occupation etc; symbolic representation, where the stands for national ideas; and substantive representation, where representatives seeks to advance a policy preferences and interest of represented (Childs and Lovenduski, 2012). Pitkin did not take up the issue of gender in her representation. The gender issue of representation however taken up towards the end of 20th century most importantly by Anne Phillip in her *Politics of Presence* published in 1995. Moreover, since the publication of these two influential books the two dimensions of representation: substantive and descriptive have extensively explored by feminists. In descriptive representation women should be present in decision in proportion to their membership of the population (Lovenduski, 2005). In this type of representation what representatives *are* is seen as crucial because it is argued that only those who actually belong to the groups will truly know what their key interests are. On the other hand, in substantive representation the focus is on the content of the decisions of the representatives. The importance is given to representatives *acting* to ensure that the key interest of any individual or group find a voice (Stevens, 2007). In substantive representation what representatives *do* is what matters.

The scholarship on women's political representation is turning their attention in finding out the relationship between two dimensions of representation- descriptive representation and substantive representation. Descriptive representation has been the central interest for gender and politics scholars for longer period of time. The low descriptive representation of women in parliament viewed as 'democratic deficit'. Since the 1990s the representation of women in parliament has become a focal point of gender studies. There are number of case studies undertaken to identify the reasons that foster women representation in parliament. The analyses link women's representation to variables such as gender quota, electoral system, party system, socio-cultural and economic indicators. Many studies such as Tremblay (2007), Bauer (2008) give primacy to gender quotas while some other studies reflects on changing socio-cultural norms (such as Moore and Shackman, 1996; Norris, 1986; Paxton,

1997, Rule, 1987) of society to increase women's representation. But, as the number of women increases it became important to ask other questions about what representatives will do once they enter into national legislatures. It claims that women's presence in politics will engender women's substantive representation. They had a greater tendency to act for the interest of women. The studies of Sarah Childs (2004), Lynne E. Ford (2001) and Hilary Footit (2002) argue from qualitative evidence that women would bring new concern to the political agenda and suggests that women politician have altered the political discourse. Nevertheless, over time empirical studies have become more sophisticated reflecting a change in the central question from when women make a difference to how the substantive representation of women occurs (Childs and Krook, 2008).

Rationale and Scope of the Study

Democracy gives highest value to people's participation in government making. How well established a democracy is depend on degree to which those affected by decision have been included in the decision making processes and have had the opportunity to influence the outcomes (Young, 2010). The present study has explored the debates revolves around the concept of democracy and discuss in details about the political participation of women in Sikkim. Sikkim, a small state within Indian sub-continent, has a history of monarchy as well as democracy. This study, therefore, focused on the political participation and representation of women specifically in post-merger political setting. It is also aim to discuss the concept of democratising democracy and positive discrimination directed towards the inclusion of women in political process through various affirmative measures, such as reservation of seats, encouraging membership in political parties and women group under party banner etc. It sought to discuss women participation in democratic process, and their motivating factors. It also seeks to explore the kinds of political participation women have in Sikkim.

The aim of the study is to examine the political participation and representation of women in Sikkim. The study is an exclusive study of the state of Sikkim and has not venture in to any comparative analysis. It seeks to explore political participation and representation of women in legislative assembly and local governmental bodies both rural and urban. It studies participation of women in political activities such as women involvement in voting, campaigning, attending political meetings, political discussion and working as an organised group under political party. The present study examines

the various obstacles and enabling factors of women entering politics. The focus of analysis is exclusively on political aspects within the parameters of socio-economic status, representation and participation in democratic setting of Sikkim.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of the study include:

- To contextualise women in democracy, political participation and representation.
- To find out major policy options that contribute to democracies working better for enhancing women's representation and participation.
- To identify gaps in participation of women, the areas where they are not participating and the reasons for their lack of participations.
- To examine the different barriers that exists in a patriarchal society and enabling factors to enhance the scope and depth of women's participation and representation.

Research Questions

Broadly, this research focuses on four questions in relation to democracy, political participation and women and therefore seeks an answer to the following broad questions.

Firstly, what is the conceptual relationship between democracy and political participation?

Secondly, what are the major policy options available to increase women's representation, in particular, how have positive discrimination strategies been used in Sikkim?

Thirdly, to what extent women are present in sufficient numbers to critically influence policy and decision making?

Lastly, what are the constraints/barriers and enabling factors on women's political effectiveness in Sikkim?

Methodology

The study employs the combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology. Quantitative method is used to get the empirical findings about impact of democratisation and positive discrimination measures on women's participation in

Sikkim. Quantitative research design helps to know what researcher intend to study, what settings to investigate, which actors to approach and what instruments to employ (Sarandakos 2005:113).Qualitative method is used to develop theoretical understanding of democracy and political participation of women with special emphasis on Sikkim. The qualitative data consists of interview transcripts, detailed descriptions, and excerpts from documents. Qualitative study is appropriate for this study because of the intended use of thick, rich descriptions, collaborations with the participants and the process of collecting and interpreting data to elicit meaning and gain understanding.

Research Design

Research design is the blue print for the collection, measurement, analysis of data and a plan to obtain answer to research questions (Cooper and Schindler 2006). This study used both explanatory and descriptive research designs. The explanatory research design describes in quantitative terms the degree to which variables are related. Descriptive survey design was used to allow for description of the concept of democracy and political participation.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they were selected (Cooper and Schindler 2006). The sample comprises the categories of respondents like common citizens, women elected representatives and politicians. The total sample size constituted 202 respondents. Of the total 202 sampled respondents, nine were politicians from state; eighty-four were local elected women representatives and 109 were common citizens comprising of both men and women.

This study employed combination of simple random sampling, convenience sampling and purposive sampling technique to select the respondents of the study. All sampling design has been followed to ensure objectivity of the research. A convenience sampling method (Fink 2006) has been applied in which participants were selected based on those respondents who are willing and available to be interviewed. And in purposive sampling, researcher use own judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representatives. Efforts have been made to obtain a cross-section of respondents from different levels of governmental units (rural and urban) and

individual participants (elected leaders and citizens). As such, the different categories of the respondents have been sampled in proportion to the total population of the districts.

Data Collection Instruments

The choice of data collection instrument is very important to the success of a research. The methods used to collect the data include the use of survey schedule and in-depth interview. Most of the data were collected from elected women representatives and politicians through in-depth interview. To further ascertain data collected through primary data collection methods, various documents pertaining to participation analysed. All categories of primary data collection have been conducted in English. In some cases, the Nepali version responses have been translated into English for analysis.

Secondary Sources

The secondary data is collected from books, journals, articles and various publications of central, state and local government. Before using the secondary data, reliability, suitability and accuracy of the sources was kept in mind.

Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of running various statistical procedures and tests on the data (Cooper and Schindler 2006). According to Sekaran (2009), there are three objectives in data analysis: (a) getting a feel for data; (b) testing the goodness of data; and (c) answering the research question. The data that was collected has been processed manually and as such the insight and judgement of the researcher has been used for the purpose. As for the data collected through the survey schedule method, data have been analysed through computer using the software of the Statistical Package for Social Science. For the purpose, inputs relating to the socio-economic status, participation, impacts of democratisation on participation, affirmative measures, hindrance and obstacles etc. have been fed to computer to get statistical significance of different variables. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics tabulated in percentages, and frequencies to describe the categories formed from the data. The data was tabulated to permit interpretation. Qualitative data collected through in-depth interview was also analysed in a narrative form.

Organisation of the study

The study is organised under six chapters. The first chapter outline the context of study, research problem, review of the existing literature on subject, conceptual framework, scope of the study, objectives, research questions and explicate the methodological premises.

Chapter 2: Democracy and Political Participation: A Conceptual Framework

Chapter two provides an overview of democracy and political participation. The meaning and concept of democracy changes over a period of time so is the concept of participation because they are inter-related and democracy cannot function without some minimum level of people's involvement. Therefore, this chapter examines the conceptual framework and outlines the relationship between democracy and political participation. This chapter evaluate the western concept of democracy and participation and highlighted the variation of democracy and focused specifically on participatory and inclusive democracy.

Chapter 3: Democratizing Democracy and Positive Discrimination: Some Reflections

This chapter discusses the meaning of democratising democracy and positive discrimination. The focus of the chapter is to explore how positive discrimination measures help in democratizing democracy and increases political participation of women. It discusses reservation policies as a part of positive discrimination to increase the political participation of women in Sikkim. The central argument of the chapter is that unless the issues of exclusion and gender parity are taken seriously, the wider question of democratizing democracy cannot be satisfactorily answered. In other words, this is a study of democratizing democracy in Sikkim through qualitative methods, with the purpose to understand the link between democratizing democracy and positive discrimination strategies.

Chapter 4: Participation and Representation of Women

Chapter four discuss the dynamics which stimulate political participation and identify the nature and kind of political participation. It also seeks to study the women's participation and representations at various levels of government and their influences in bringing about political change. This chapter is an attempt to provide a range of

possible answers to the question of women under-representation and explores the various aspects of continuity and change in women's participation and representation.

Chapter 5: Participation, Representation and Barriers: Lessons from the Field

This chapter examine and analyse political participation and representation of women on the basis of experiences derived from the field. This chapter consists of detail analysis of data collected from survey and interview. It outlines the barriers and enabling factors to enhance the scope of women's political participation.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The chapter six summarise all the chapters and concludes with summary of the key finding of the research. This chapter also provides some recommendations and suggestions for future research.

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CHAPTER 2

DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION:
A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

Participation is fundamental to the practice of democracy that it is impossible to conceive without it (Bevier, 2010). The majority of democratic theory and participatory democratic theory in particular either implicitly or explicitly assumes the requirement for widespread citizen participation. The concept of democracy implies that the ultimate authority of governance should rest with the people themselves. This idea of democracy could be realized when people are actively participate in political decision making. The meaning and concept of democracy have changed over a period of time so is the concept of participation because they are inter-related and democracy cannot function without some minimum level of political involvement. For Dalton (1988), the success of democracy is measured by the people's participation in the policy decision making process and openness of the system to popular demands. This chapter, therefore, discusses the concept and theories of democracy and political participation and analyse various aspects of the relationship between democracy and political participation. Contending theories see the underlying aspects of democracy in relation to participation. Whatever may be the types of democracy, it always demands a certain form of participation from citizens. The chapter evaluate the western concepts of democracy and participation and highlighted the variation of democracy and focused specifically on participatory and inclusive democracy.

Defining Democracy

Democracy is a complex, contested and multidimensional concept that presents serious challenges for conceptualisation and measurement (Chhetri 2019a). The word democracy is defined and described by many scholars differently. Scholars like Schumpeter (1943), Dahl (1971), Held (1996), Diamond (1999), Haggard and Kaufman (1995), and Remmer (1997) have written extensively on democracy.

Schumpeter (1943) has defined democracy, in a procedural term, as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote". His conclusion was that the classical conception should be replaced by one in line with the actual functioning of democracy in the modern world. Expanding on Schumpeter's definition of democracy, Robert Dahl (1971) identifies seven important criteria in defining democracy, or what he prefers to call as 'polyarchy'. The seven criteria include: (i) accountability of government to electors (ii) fair and free conduct of elections; (iii) universal adult suffrage; (iv) the right to run for public office; (v) right to freedom of expression (vi) existence of free access to alternative sources of information that are not monopolised by government and (vii) freedom of association (i.e. the right to form and join voluntary associations such as political parties, pressure groups, interest groups, etc.). According to these definitions, democracy appears as a decision-making method (Schumpeter, 1943), and as a set of political institutions that embody, to varying degrees, certain basic democratic principles (Dahl, 1989). David Held (1992) tried to extend the basic meaning to include new democratic identities and terminology through his liberalization postulation. He presented a modernized theoretical meaning of democracy by advancing the scope of the term from the ancient Athenian model to the present status defined and dominated by the western liberal political ideologies. Adam Przeworski (1991) defines democracy as a system in which parties lose elections. There are parties, divisions of interests, opinions and values. There is a competition organised by rules. And there are periodic winners and losers. Besides procedural definition, democracy can be defined in terms of its outcomes. Democracy emphasises freedom and liberty as its essential goals, with democratic institutions as the means to achieve them (Dalton et al 2007). A scholar like Larry Diamond (1999) lists political liberties, participation rights of citizens, equal justice before the law, and equal rights for women as four of the core democratic values. Apart from the procedural and freedom dimension of definition, there is a social dimension to public images of democracy. A social-democratic notion of democracy consists of such social rights as social services, providing for those in need, and ensuring the overall welfare of others. Some proponents of this view believed that unless individuals have sufficient resources to fulfil their basic social needs, the democratic principles, political equality and participation render useless. All these three broad dimensions viz. institutions and procedures, political dimensions

i.e. freedom and liberties, and social dimension i.e. social benefits, make up the primary substantive choices in defining democracy (Dalton et al 2007).

On Justifying Democracy

Democracy is valuable can be justified in terms of the outcome it produces. Political theorist believed that political institutions have to be evaluated on the basis of outcomes they produced. There are mainly two arguments in favour of democracy. They are instrumental arguments and intrinsic arguments. Democracy is defended on 'instrumental 'ground. John Stuart Mill and John Dewey thought that democratic decision making is considered as important because it forced decision makers to consider the interests of the many as opposed to the few (Bevir, 2010). Due to various democratic practices such as widespread suffrage, open elections, and free press, the stakeholders are forced to pay attention to the interest of majority as against narrow self serving interest. Therefore, Mill (1962) thought that democratic decision making benefits the society as a whole. He also believed that the greater the diversity of opinions expressed the more meaningful the values of liberal society would become for members (Bevir, 2010). Dewey also thought that the greater the diversity of opinion or input into the decision making process, the more likely the decision makers would be able to arrive at the right decision.

Similar in line is the views of contemporary political theorists. They view that democracy have advantage over authoritarian political systems and have tendency to be more stable and prosperous over longer period of time. They attempted to explain that democracies are best at organizing and mobilizing the disseminated knowledge of their societies in such a way that it make possible them to remain innovative, vibrant, dynamic and self-correcting. Since democracy encourages more people to participate in the process of decision making, it has the advantage of diverse opinion and information so that there would be a critical assessment of policies. Another argument in favour of democracy is that it has a positive benefit on the character of an individual. The democratic systems open up opportunities for political participation and help them to cultivate valuable capacities and skills. In democratic societies, individuals are encouraged to be autonomous and make them think carefully and rationally. Democracies have a propensity to develop the moral qualities of citizens (Charistiano, 2015). When they are involving in decision making, they have to listen to others, they are called upon to justify themselves to others and they are forced to

think in part in terms of the interest of others (Charistiano, 2015). In this kind of circumstance, they learned to think about themselves and others and thereby contributing towards social good and justice.

Democracy gives rise to a certain intrinsic value which is independent of the consequences of having them. Democracy on intrinsic ground believes in equality among people within political institutions. The argument here is that only democratic political arrangements can deliver equal respect and thus undemocratic systems are inherently unjust. This intrinsic view of democracy was emphasized by Jean Jacques Rousseau. For Rousseau when people assemble as a sovereign body, they do so as equals (Bevir, 2010). Similarly, liberty is another intrinsic value which justifies democracy. Democracy extends the idea that each individual has a right to liberty and ought to be master of his or her life to the domain of collective decision making. It is argued that each person's life is influenced by the larger social, legal and cultural environment in which they live. The individual can control this larger environment only when each person has an equal voice in collective decision making (Charistiano, 2015). Hence, in this intrinsic argument, democracy is valuable, not because of the outcome it produces, but because of the way it manifests a commitment to the basic freedom and equality of each citizen.

Apart from these two arguments, democracy is justified on account of the welfare of people. James Bryce (1921) one of the greatest champions of democracy finds the justification of democracy in the concept of relativity that is by comparing its merits and demerits with other forms of government. He viewed any form of government can be judged by the functions it performs in terms of protection of internal and external enemies, securing of justice, efficient administration and aid to individual citizens. Bryce holds that these functions are carried out by democracies as well as by other forms of government but democracy has additional merits because it stimulates people's participation by opening wider horizons for individuals which broaden their interest to participate in government activities.

Political Participation
Like ideals of rights, liberty, human equality, representation, mass parties and elections, political participation is significant to the practice of democracy that it is impossible to comprehend democracy without it. People's participation is the

fundamental principle of democracy. Political participation denotes the active involvement of people in the governmental process. There are differences in view of what proportion and what kind of participation is required so as for a democracy to sustain. However, regular and widespread political participation from its citizens is one in all the essential criteria that distinguish democracy from other types of government.

Defining Political Participation

There are attempts have been made to define but there is no single definition of political participation. Participation is usually considered as "taking part" (Barki and Hartwick, 1994). Vroom and Jago (1988) contend that participation takes place when an individual contributes to something. It could take many forms: direct (through one's action) or indirect (through others' representation); formal (formal mechanisms) or informal (informal discussions); performed alone (done by oneself) or shared (done with team). And political participation, in simple words, means taking part in politics. Politics is viewed as a process of political action and interaction. Political actions are those that are directly or indirectly associated with policy making and decision making. Thus, political participation simply means participation by the people in policy and decision making. People perform an act of participation in numerous ways. Some individuals are highly active therefore, make politics their career and stand for public office. Others may join pressure groups and advance their particular demands. Some others, in contrast, may appear to abstain completely from political activity, refusing even to vote. Scholars like Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (1972) state that 'political participation will refer to those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of rulers, and directly and indirectly in the formation and influencing of the public'. Political participation is viewed as an activity which aimed at influencing the selection of governmental personnel as well as the actions they take. Similarly, Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson (1976) defined political participation as the activity by private citizens designed to influence governmental decision making. Michael Rush (1992) has defined in broader perspectives, to him, 'political participation is the involvement of the individual at various levels of activity within the political system, starting from non-involvement to the holding of political office'.

All the above definitions intended to define political participation as an act or have the intention to influence decision making. The definition thus excludes those conditions where government officials act independently to make policy on the ides of their own rationality and beliefs (Verba, 1967). Second, it emphasised on voluntary participation by the people therefore, excludes the obligatory or coerced mass action from the purview of political participation. The definition also excludes other activities which do not directly influence decision making. According to Norman D. Palmer (1976) political participation refers to those political activities which are directly or indirectly related to the influencing the behaviours and actions of decision maker. Third, participation does not necessarily successful participation. According to Parry et al. (1992) those actions that fail to fulfil their desired goal are also regarded as political participation. There are other dimensions that need to be regarded as an act of political participation like public action in protest to governmental decisions, actions in support of public policy, etc. Fourth, political participation is not confined to the electoral process neither is it limited to any particular kind of political act like voting or political party activity (Verba, 1967). Some political scientists regard conversations about political issues with family, friends and colleagues together with the expression of clear political attitudes as important kinds of participation in their own right (Parry et al, 1992).

Participation as Good

Mark Bevier (2010) has identified five explanations for the value of participation. First, liberals like John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, Judith Shklar viewed that participation may be a protective mechanism against the real abuses carried out by the government or other citizens. The liberal model sees political participation from an economic point of view that understands politics in terms of markets, protecting property and maximizing social welfare. Second, there are civic humanists like Leonard Bruni, who viewed political life as a setting for realization of human virtues and as a practice that would bring glory to both humans and the city. In consistent with this view, Hanna Arendt (1958) says what makes political participation unique is that it occurs in a context of equality and non-domination. Further, she stated that the political space would offer and opportunities for self-disclosure as well as the chance to have interaction in history making. Third, political participation is validated in terms of an ideal of autonomy. The validation of

participation in terms of autonomy is found in Rousseau's participatory democracy, deliberative democracy of Jurgen Habermas and pragmatic tradition introduces by John Dewey. This view regards people's capacity to formulate laws under which it lives. On this account political participation enables citizens to direct and refashion the norms and conditions for public life. Therefore, it associates participation to freedom in the sense that people can control the destiny of polity, unfettered social forces, and other contingencies. Fourth, political participation is considered as good because it serves the purpose of developmental function for citizens who engage in it. Through participation people develop intellectually, morally, and therapeutically. Citizens develop intellectually as it increases the capacity to reason and to think for oneself. Morally citizens develop because it expands their ability to trust others and therapeutically because it allows citizens to overcome estrangement, deracination and anomie of modern life. Fifth, the value of political participation is elaborated because it contributes to numerous social benefits to the communities where it occurs. Robert Putnam sees it tends to enhance communal values like the quality of schools, the crime rate, corruption and tax evasion.

Why Participation Matters?

Sidney Verba (1967) examines the importance of participation. He contends participation deserves a special place for reasons that should be explicated. Verba sees participation represents a general value in our society. Participation is for an individual to have some autonomy and control over their own fate. Secondly, participation is assumed of as a way to some other end. For instance, people vote to choose political leaders to our likings, write a letter to a person in public office to induce him to act in some way we prefer. Thirdly, widespread participation in the decision making process increases the likelihood that decisions will be effectively carried out. It is because of the fact that participation gives decision-makers two vital resources: information and support. Verba pointed out that if an individual or group does not participate or does not try to influence the government, the decision makers end up in making a plan in ignorance. Similarly, participation is assumed to provide support for decisions: those who take part in the decision are more likely to support those decisions. Lastly, the reason why participation is important is associated with social goals. The more the government does in respect to better the life of citizens, the higher the likelihood of political participation. In recent years, governments are

actively involved in providing better life and opportunities to a larger number of people, like in terms of bettering their income, preserving their health and educating their children. The variety of types of activities entered into by the government means that a number of specific groups will find the stakes of political participation particularly high in relation to particular programs (Verba, 1967).

Typology of Political Participation

In the beginning, studies on political participation were equated with electoral participation. Later on, the scope of participation widened to include other kinds of activities in addition to electoral ones. Therefore, kinds of participation vary to the extent that it encompasses passivity to active participation. In a representative democracy, the electoral system assumes greater importance. It is through an electoral process that individuals choose their representatives who act on their behalf. Through their elected representatives that citizens indirectly take part in the process of policy-making. An individual can take part in the electoral process in a number of ways - as a voter, as candidate, campaigners, getting involved in the nomination of candidates, attending political meetings, etc. Such participation is considered greater importance in a democratic political system. Through the electoral process, public opinion gets reflected in the political process. It is also considered important in terms of an individual's political consciousness. A higher level of participation may lead to a higher degree of political consciousness and vice versa. The studies conducted by scholars (Paul Lazarsfeld et al 1944; Angus Campbell et al. 1960; Myron Weiner & Rajni Kothari 1965) revealed that the individual participation in electoral process depends on number of socio-economic and political factors such as education, caste, age, sex economic status, electoral system, political culture and so on.

Apart from electoral participation, there are other activities which later assume as a part of political participation. A number of political scientists have attempted to identify and classify different types of political participation. Michael Rush and P. Althoff (1971) while identifying forms of participation arrange them in the hierarchical order on the basis of the degree or extent of participation. They have arranged activities in descending order: (i) holding political or administrative office, (ii) seeking political or administrative office, (iii) active membership in a political organization, (iv) passive membership in political organization, (v) active membership of a quasi-political organization such as interest group and pressure

group, (vi) passive membership of a quasi-political organization, (vii) participation in public meeting and demonstrations, (viii) participation in informal political discussion, (ix) general interest in politics, (x) voting, and (xi) political apathy (Rush and Althoff, 1971). They have placed voting in lowest in political activity rank and justified that election is occasional and does not remain operative all the time and requires minimum involvement and labour on the part of the individual. While explaining the extent of political participation Rush and Althoff added apathy and said that it varies from system to system but remains important factor in examination of political participation.

J.L. Woodward and E. Roper (1950) considered five types of activity as political participation: (i) voting, (ii) supporting a pressure group through its membership, (iii) participation in the activities of political party, (iv) engaging in the dissemination of political opinion, (v) direct personal contact with elected representatives (Ashraf et al., 1983). Lester Milbrath (1965) classified the acts of participation into three categories: Gladiatoral activities, Transitional activities, and Spectator activities. Gladiatoral activities were meant those performed by activists of political parties such as holding party offices, contesting the elections as party candidates, raising party funds and so on. Transitional activities include activities such as making campaign contributions and attending a political meeting. Spectator activities include voting, influencing others to vote in favour of a particular political party, exposing oneself to political campaigns and joining political discussions (Milbrath, 1965).

Arnstein (1969), in a seminal paper, introduced a "ladder" of citizen participation consisting of eight rungs and describes citizen participation as citizens' power (Fig. 2.1). The bottom rung of the ladder are "manipulation" and "therapy", described as nonparticipation. On the contrary at the top of the ladder are "citizen control" and "delegated power" which are considered to be the highest level of citizen power.

Fig 2.1
Arnstein's Citizen participation ladder

| Citizen control |
| Delegated power | Citizen Power |
| Partnership |
| Placation | Tokenism |
| Consultation |
| Informing | Nonparticipation |
| Therapy |
| Manipulation |
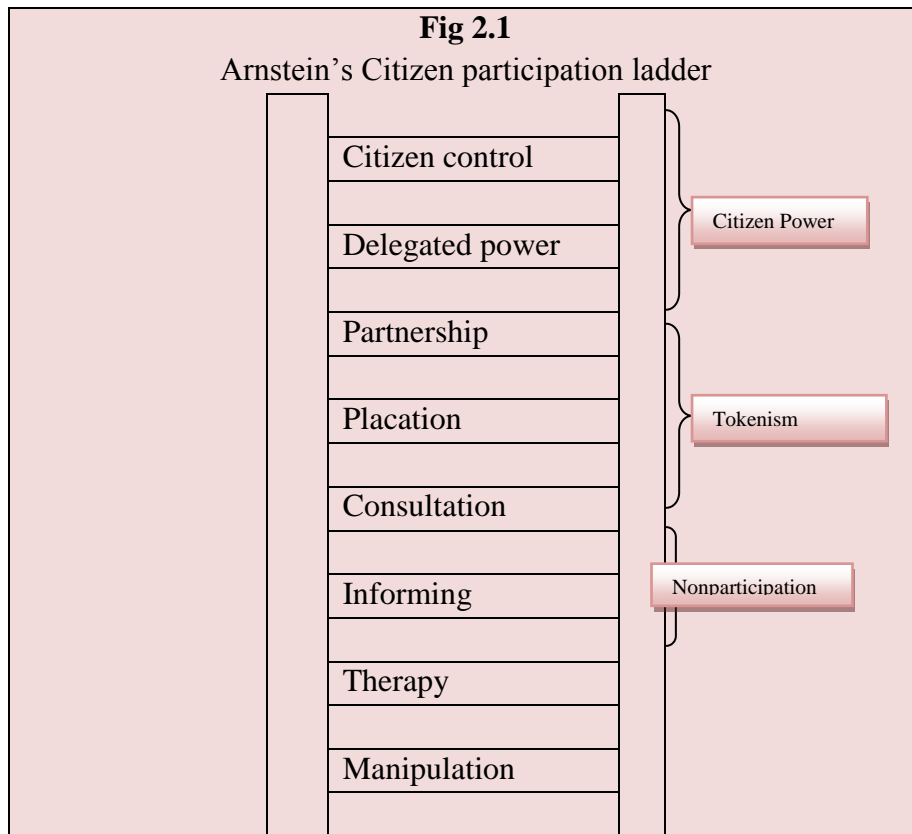
Source: Arnstein (1969)

 Sidney Verba (1967) while discussing a variation on types of participation considered successful and unsuccessful acts of participation. Successful acts of participation involve the initiation or veto of a government decision and unsuccessful acts are those that have no measurable effects on the officials. Further, in addition to successful and unsuccessful distinction, he distinguishes three broad aspects of participation; the goals of the acts, the social structures within which they take place and the distributional patterns of such acts. The goal or intention of an act is essential to understand participation. Firstly, individual or group may be interested in general goals that affect the entire society, or in specific goals that affect only a few within the society, or the goals that affect only the participants. Secondly, he contends participatory acts are intended to influence decision makers in a way desired by the participants, but not all acts convey enough information so that decision makers can know what the intentions of the participants are. Verba (1967) holds the opinion that the notion of intentionality is central to the concept of participation. But the problem is individuals do not always know what they want. Acts of participation often express a more diffuse discontent or through the act of participation goals of participation is set or changed.

Second, the social structures within which participation take place. There is some structure whereby an organized group through its leader speaks of the members. The individual form a group when there is some political need. Informal groups of friends, ad hoc committees to protest some government action and newly created organizations to deals with a particular problem are some of the prime actors in politics. The organized group as a part of the participatory act directed at any one of the numbers of targets: the President, Congressmen, party leaders or bureaucrats. Their target depends on whether they are centralized or dispersed. In other words, whether there is one central place where decisions are made or are there many such places. This eventually has a major effect on the kind of participation and the likelihood of success. Further, some participation merely informs governmental official or perhaps request some compliance. Other acts of participation carry more explicit sanctions or threats of sanctions. The borderline between the two types of participation is not clear. Third is the distribution of participatory acts. In order to understand the effectiveness of participatory act, one must look at the set of it going on at any moment. According to Verba (1967), it is crucial to know how many people are trying to influence the government and in what direction. One must take into account the direction of participation. Are all attempting to influence the government in the same way or are the intentions of some opposite to those of others. The likelihood of success of participatory is affected by this.

Democracy and Political Participation: Outlining the terms of the relationship

There are mainly two compartmental views regarding political participation. On the one hand, a group of theorists advocates for mass participation whereas, another emphasized on the minimal role of people in a democracy. These are categorized as a classical and contemporary theory of democracy. The contemporary theory of democracy argues that high levels of people participation tend to produce poor legislation designed by poorly informed citizens and regard that the apathy among citizens in modern states as highly desirable social phenomena (Christiano, 2015). This view is reinforced by scholars like Mosca, Michels, Schumpeter, Dahl and Sartori. Mosca (1896) and Michels (1911), for instance, cast doubt on the possibility of the attainment of democracy as that concept was usually understood. Though they believed in democracy as the rule of people by means of maximum participation as ideal but cast a doubt on the possibility of realising this ideal. They argue that a

democratic man postulated by the classical theory of democracy is unrealistic (Pateman, 1970). This doubt is validated when data from the large-scale empirical investigation into political attitudes and behaviour, undertaken in most western countries over the past twenty or thirty years revealed that most citizens especially from the lower socio-economic status group, is a lack of interest in politics or political activity (Pateman, 1970). Therefore, views that an increase in political participation by present non-participants could upset the stability of the democratic system.

Joseph Schumpeter, another pioneer in the contemporary theory of democracy, asserts that democracy is a theory un-associated with any particular ideals or ends. He argued that democracy is a political method, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political, legislative and administrative decisions. Schumpeter (1943) defined democratic method as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for people's vote". He emphasized on the responsible role of political leadership and expects them to make policy and law with little regard to diffuse demands made by ordinary citizens. He argues for the minimal role of citizens in the political process that is voting because they are less informed and therefore, not effectively the ruling part of society. The process of election, for him, is just a peaceful way of maintaining or changing those who rule (Christiano, 2015). In a similar vein, Berelson (1952) also argues for limited participation and sees apathy as a positive function for the whole system by cushioning the shock of disagreement, adjustment and change. He holds that the high levels of participation and interest are required from a minority of citizens only and moreover, the apathy and disinterest of the majority play a valuable role in maintaining the stability of the system as a whole (Berelson, 1952).

Like Schumpeter, Dahl (1956) also sees democracy as a political method. It is an institutional arrangements' that centres on the electoral process. He holds that elections are central to democratic method because they provide a mechanism through which the control of leaders by non-leaders can take place. Democratic theory is concerned with the processes by which ordinary citizen controls over leaders. According to him, in the electoral process there is a competition between leaders for the votes of the people and the control is exercised by the people by switching his support from one set of leaders to another ensures that leaders are relatively

responsive to non-leaders (Pateman, 1970). He comprehends competition of leaders for a vote is specifically democratic element in the method. Similar to other contemporary theorists, Dahl contends there is no use of stressing on a theory that requires maximum participation from ordinary people for control to take place as they tend to be disinterested and apathetic about politics. It is only a small section of an individual in any form of organisations will take up decision making (Pateman, 1970).

Giovanni Sartori (1962), an elitist, put forward an argument on democracy and participation. He argues that in a democracy it is not just minorities that rule but elites. He holds that apathy is not due to illiteracy, poverty or insufficient information, but it is due to lack of practice in a democracy. For instance, one does not learn to vote by voting. He suggests that the existing state of apathy should be kept as it is because trying to change them would endanger the maintenance of the democratic method. In a nutshell, democracy, in the modern democratic theory, refers to a political method or set of institutional arrangements at a national level. Pateman (1970) writes democratic element in the method is the competition of leaders for the votes of the people at periodic free elections. The election is important to the democratic method as it is through an election that the majority can exercise control over their leader. This modern theory of democracy gives certain conditions which are necessary if the democratic system is to remain stable. That is, the level of participation should not rise above the minimum necessary to keep the democratic method working and that any increase in participation by apathetic would weaken the norms of a democratic method. In contradiction to elite view, there is another group of theorists which advocates for wider people's participation in a democracy. Pateman (1970) argues that participation does not just have a protective function as suggested by Schumpeter and others; it has far wider functions and is central to the establishment and maintenance of a democratic polity. She characterizes the participatory model as one where maximum input/participation is required and where output includes not only polices but also the development of the social and political capacities of each individual. The participatory theory of democracy is reflected in the works of Rousseau, Mill, Dewey and Barelson.

The distinguishing feature of participatory thinkers from other democrats is their fundamental belief that the real benefits of democracy can only be appreciated and sustained by a society that is characterized by relatively high levels of citizen

intervention in the task of governing (Terchek & Conte, 2001). The core idea of the participatory theory of democracy is that the free and fair voting procedures are not sufficient to ensure the ideals of democratic practice. They emphasize going beyond voting and other conventional ways of formal democratic expression to make a room for other additional modes of political activity that can help to realise the true nature of democracy (Terchek & Conte, 2001). Therefore, the proponents of participatory democracy have expanded the idea and taken in to account other political activities like workplace, bureaucracies, the home and schools. Rousseau's political system in *Social Contract* is vital for understanding the theory of participatory democracy. His entire political theory centres on individual participation of each citizen in political decision making and his idea of participation has a wider connotation. Pateman (1970) sees Rousseau's "participation has a psychological effect on the participants, ensuring that there is a relationship between the working institutions and the psychological qualities and attitudes of individuals interacting within them". His idea of participation requires certain economic conditions and emphasis on a society of economic equality and economic dependence. Economic equality does not imply absolute equality, but rather that the differences that do exist should not lead to political inequality. Rousseau argued that there should be a situation where no citizens shall be rich enough to buy another and none so poor as to be forced to sell himself and the most important requirement is to own some property. Individual own property is most sacred of citizen's rights because it provides security and independence to the individual and the basis of political equality and political independence. According to Rousseau (1968) if these conditions are established the citizens can assemble as equal and independent individuals. He emphasized on interdependent citizens because the participatory situation is such where each citizen is powerless without the cooperation of all others. In this view, participation is understood by the logic that citizens themselves create political situations in which there is no possibility of the rule of individual men. In citizen created political situation, citizens are independent equals, not dependent on anyone else for their vote or opinion. It is a law that emerged from the participatory process, not men, that governs individual actions. According to Rousseau (1968) the ideal situation for decision making was one where no organized groups were present, just individuals because the former might be able to make their will prevail. He argues that if it was not possible to avoid organized group within the

community, then these should be numerous and equal in power as possible (Pateman, 1970).

Rousseau advocate for the educative role of participation. The ideal political system is designed to develop responsible individuals through a participatory process. In the participatory process individual learn to take into account the wider perspectives as against his own immediate self interest, gain cooperation from others and learn that private and public interest are interlinked (Pateman, 1970). He viewed that actual freedom of individual is augmented through participation in decision making because it gives him a real degree of control over the course of his life and structure of his environment. Freedom implies individual to exercise control over those who execute the laws. He sees participation as the increasing value of freedom to the individual by enabling him to be and remain his own master.

Rousseau's idea of participation reinforces by John Stuart Mill to understand it in a modern political system. John Stuart Mill (1962), argues it is only within a participatory institution that an individual character being fostered. He observed that there is a connection between individual character and the type of institutions. Individual political behaviour is determined by the sort of institution within which they lives. He believed that if an individual is concerned solely with his own private affairs and does not participate in public affairs then their capacities for responsible public action remain undeveloped. The situation changed when the individual participate in public affairs, as an individual in this participatory being forced to widen his horizon and to take the public interest into account.

John Dewey (1954) complains about the thing that Schumpeter sees as the essence of democracy. Schumpeter believed that decision making is conducted by a few people, he called it elite. In this matter, Dewey commented that the expert opinion has replaced public opinion as a source of authority in public life in ways that usurp the prerogative of citizen influence in key processes of decision-making. As against those who claim that many are not suited to such important deliberation, either because of weakness of intellect or of lack of moral capacity, Dewey argues that these disabilities can be overcome if ordinary people have opportunities to educate themselves on the findings of experts and then to act responsibly (Terchek & Conte, 2001). According to Dewey, the success of democracy depends upon the expanded opportunities of

participation. Benjamin Barber (1984) advocates "strong democracy" as an alternative to purely representative or weak models of democracy. He sees strong democracy promotes local self-determination which will transform isolated individuals to community-based participatory citizens. He argues participation does not take place in an isolated life of individuals rather he ties it to the processes of community building and the education of citizenship. According to him if participation is meant to guide governmental policies and to remain open to diverse voices, then decision making must begin at the bottom of the representative ladder instead at the top (Terchek & Conte 2001). Barber offers a strong democracy where politics is something done by citizens. This means strengthening local government, extending democratic practice into the institution of civil society, increasing opportunities for the use of national referendums and citizen-led-policy initiatives (Barber, 1984). This participation is not just the defence of interest but instead is a deliberative and public process. It extends the responsibility for decisions to everyone and it would develop individuals' political competence, thereby increasing the quality of the decision made (Faulk, 1999). His strong democracy is a form of government in which all of the people participate in decision making and implementation.

Both Dewey and Barber viewed that it is democratic deliberation and action that create democratic citizens. In this sense, democracy provides its own education, as participants are empowered to discharge their roles as citizens at the same time as they come to appreciate the heavy responsibilities of self-governance. They see participation brings people together in common projects where they develop not only new skills but more importantly construct a strong civic sense that they use both in local settings as well as in the larger world of national politics.

Inclusive Democracy and Expanding Democratic Spaces for Women
Though participatory democracy predates the rise of liberal democracies but it took off in the 1960s when political theorists such as Benjamin Barber and Carole Pateman made strong normative arguments for greater citizen involvement. Moreover, new social movements including American civil rights movements and women's right movements emerged during 1960s, championing the groups that were excluded from the representative bodies (Bevir, 2010). The ancient Greek notion of democracy understood as rules of many as opposed to the rule of few which does not necessitate universal franchise accorded equally to everyone. This notion of democracy continues

until recently when excluded groups demand full citizenships and the franchise were extended to them. Initially, calls for inclusion meant the political rights available to those who had been excluded in terms of voting, holding office etc. For women suffragettes, women deserve the same rights as men. They argue it is not good enough that women to be represented by their fathers, husbands and sons. They believed that with the vote, the condition of women will change positively.

In the late twentieth century, Anne Phillips (1991) sees inclusion beyond just political rights like voting and argues that it requires more. She contends democracy does not necessarily mean to provide an opportunity to vote in periodic elections and the equal right to stand as candidates, but it involves a more substantial degree of participation and openness regardless of sex, class or race. For a substantial degree of participation from excluded, she views that the gendered division of labour, as witnessed in the family, at home, at work, and elsewhere in the society, which has political consequences need to be corrected. She finds that there is an interrelationship between social practice and political participation, therefore, investigates on details of its implication. The social practice affects all kinds of outlooks, practices, opportunities and obstacles. Her argument is not just about equalizing men and women in political sphere (women in legislature or local or national government) but also about equalizing the distribution of responsibilities and time in each household. The matter of fact is democracy is important in the household like anywhere else, but the problem is in the household there is unequal power distribution. Men and women are supposed to be related through love but sexuality seemed to be distorting relations bringing vulnerability and pain. The family considered to be a safe haven but developed as a site of male power, in which women got to work excessively long hours for minimal reward, more often exposed to physical and sexual abuse. According to Philips, all these are results of subordination of women in the home, or of power relation. In relation to democracy, equality in the household is a condition for democracy in the state. Because it is not just about women prevented from participating in the external matter but it is a matter of women's impotence and subordination, submission and dependence. The personal was as political as anything else and considered destructive of human development.

For various reasons, Philips agrees on to the distinction between private and public rather than abandoning them, but argue that the emphasis should be on separating it

from the division between men and women. There are some decisions which an individual wants to reserve or keep it to themselves, no matter how thoroughly democratized public debate and decision making may become like a women's decision about continuing or terminating a pregnancy. And in some other areas, there will be requiring formal laws and regulations to make people obey. For instance, democracy requires everyone should have a vote and nobody more than one that it should be illegal to vote twice in an election. Certainly, feminism has brought the domestic sphere into the orbit of democratic debate. They viewed that women should be empowered so that they can insist on equality themselves.

Iris Marion Young notice the universal extension of equal legal and political rights but on the other hand, many find the universal standards is a set of oppressive representations and practices that serve to protect rather than diminish inequality by disguising the ways in which democratic societies unequally distribute privileges and burdens (Terchek and Conte, 2001). Such unjust features of political arrangement could be overcome by forming group representation. In *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, Young (1990) criticised an ideal of assimilation. This ideal gives importance to equal treatment as a primary principle of justice. She advocated emancipatory politics that affirms group differences. The assimilationist ideal assumes that equal social status for all persons necessitates treating everyone consistent with the identical principles, rules and standards. On the contrary, a politics of difference argues that equality as the participation and inclusion of all groups requires different treatment for oppressed or disadvantaged groups (Young, 1990). Young doubt that a society without group differences is possible. Despite increased urbanisation and the extension of equal formal rights groups have not declined in particularistic affiliations. Increasing interaction among groups and modernizing social processes tend to strengthen group solidarity and differentiation. People are attached to their specific traditions, practices, language and continue to value their differences. People don't tend to relinquish up their social group identification even when they are socially oppressed. Therefore, Young claims that insisting on equality and liberation entails ignoring differences has oppressive consequences.

Young argued that participatory democracy is an element and condition of social justice. However, contemporary participatory democracy tends to exclude or silence some groups. Since some groups are materially privileged, therefore their experiences

and perspective elevated by silencing those of oppressed. She proposes certain principles for bringing up some solutions. In a democracy, there should be a provision for recognition and representation of the divergent voices and perception of those groups that are marginalised and oppressed. Such group representation involves: (i) self-organization of group so as that they achieve empowerment and understanding of their group experience and interest within the context of the society, (ii) group generation of policy proposals in institutionalized contexts where decision makers are obliged to think about their group perspectives, and (iii) group veto power concerning specific policies which have direct impact on group such as reproductive rights policy for women. According to Young, this group representation undoubtedly has the potential to unravel the voices of oppressed and disadvantaged.

Conclusion

The majority of democratic theory and participatory democratic theory either implicitly or explicitly assumes the requirement for widespread citizen participation. The rapid expansion of the study of political participation in the last sixty years indicates the growing importance of citizens' involvement in democratic decision-making. As the scope of government activities and responsibilities increased in the last few decades, the scope of political participation also grew significantly. Liberalization and governance reforms have cut into old political institutions and fostered the growth of diverse new democratic spaces for participation in decision-making processes. This reconfiguration of the political landscape through various reforms is potentially significant for the participation and representation of traditionally marginalized social groups including women. Pateman stated that participation amplify a sense of political efficacy, reduces a sense of separation from power centres, develop a concern for collective problems and contributes to the development of an active and knowledgeable citizenry competent of taking a more acute interest in governmental affairs. Moreover, the democratization and governance reforms presented new opportunities for citizen engagement. New spaces offer a variety of sites for learning and networking that might serve to generate new leadership, and alternative entry routes into politics. These developments have led to various innovations in political participation. The most common reforms, from a worldwide perspective, are the measures for the increased representation of women in politics. Most of these provisions take the form of quota policies aimed toward

increasing the selection and election of female candidates to the public office. The affirmative action initiatives for democratizing democracy form the major part of the discussion in the subsequent chapter.

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CHAPTER 3

DEMOCRATIZING DEMOCRACY AND POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION:
SOME REFLECTIONS

Introduction

A lot of political change towards democratization has been stimulated in the Third World by international pressures in recent years. The international agencies like the World Bank in their notion of good governance also reflect an aspiration of citizens living in the southern part of the globe. The democracy to be promoted through good governance is to include high degrees of representation, transparency and government accountability. Within this discourse, there is a very rich debate taking place about democratizing liberal democracy. David Beetham (1992) stated that:

> From a democratic point of view, the problem with a representative democracy in practice is not so much that it restricts political activity to the vote, as that the opportunity for a more extensive involvement, and the degree of influence with government which it carries are dependent upon a variety of resources – of time, of money, of learned capacity – that are distributed unevenly between sections of the population. The freedoms of speech and association not only provide a guarantee of a more extensive political activity that the vote; they are also the means whereby the inequalities of civil society are transmitted to the political domain. (p. 48)

The demand by women for the franchise and removing gender bias from the male-dominated structures of western liberal democracies now seems to many to be a self-evident priority in making democracy meaningful to the majority of citizens, women being seen as the largest, most marginalized group in spite of its heterogeneity. There have been waves of feminism, the belief that 'women are a group that has not been treated equally in society and that women must work together to alter their roles and achieve equity' (Burrell 2004). The first wave of feminism, starting in the 1850s was centered on obtaining the suffrage. The second wave of feminism, which began in the

1960s, criticized inequalities from a wide range of perspectives and sought to change women's position in society. Women's rights groups have expanded the definition of the political. "The personal is political" became a motto of the second wave of feminism. In the second wave, feminists argued that women should have political, economic, and social rights equal to those of men (Bookman and Morgen 1988). Contemporary or third-wave feminism emerged in the 1980s and 1990s express more individualist attitudes towards their activism, as opposed to the more collectivist drive that defined the feminist movement during its second wave. Feminist scholars argue that a government is not fully democratic when there is inadequate representation of women (Phillips 1991, 1995; Eschle 2000; Moghadam 2004). The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) also states that "No government can claim to be democratic until women are guaranteed the right to equal representation". The BPFA talks about the discourse of exclusion, gender balance, and affirmative action. Besides, many scholars have offered theoretical justification and empirical explanation of the exclusion and inclusion from political power (see, for example, Young 1990; Williams 1998; Phillips 1995; Mansbridge 1999; Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Dahlerup 2008; Krook 2009; Reynolds 2005). While others have evaluated whether quotas and other institutional mechanisms actually improve the political presence of excluded groups (see Jones 2009; Schwindt-Bayer 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008).

It is in this backdrop, this chapter is an attempt to address the question that how have positive discrimination strategies have been adopted, used, and implemented to reach gender equality in the political landscape in India in general and Sikkim in particular. The central argument of the chapter is that unless the issues of exclusion and gender parity are taken seriously, the wider question of democratizing democracy cannot be satisfactorily answered. In other words, this is a study of democratizing democracy in Sikkim through qualitative methods, with the purpose to understand the link between democratizing democracy and positive discrimination strategies.

Democracy, Gender and Representation

Democracy is a concept that is highly contested, and therefore defining democracy is one of the most controversial methodological issues facing political scientists. The majority of scholars, however, have adopted a procedural definition based on the insights of Schumpeter (1943). Procedural definitions of democracy can be traced back to the influence of Schumpeter's seminal work, *Capitalism, Socialism and*

Democracy (1943), in which democracy is defined 'as an institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals obtain the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (Schumpeter 1943). The procedure that Schumpeter followed in formulating his theory of democracy was to set up a model of what he called the 'classical doctrine' of democracy (Schumpeter 1943). The procedural definition of democracy was refined later by Samuel Huntington (1971), for whom democracy is a political system where 'the most powerful collective decision-makers are selected through the fair, honest and periodic election in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote'. Dahl (1956), following Schumpeter's argument that democracy is a political method, offers a list of defining characteristics of democracy and these are a list of 'institutional arrangements' that centre on the electoral process. Making a difference between democracy as an ideal system and a set of institutional arrangements that imperfectly approximates that ideal (a system which he calls polyarchy) Dahl provides an operational definition of polyarchy in terms of eight institutional requirements that need to be in place (Dahl 1971). Pateman (1970) in *Participation and Democratic Theory* criticizes Schumpeter's claim that democracy is a method rather than an ideal and she argues that participation, both political and industrial, educates and empowers the participant and this is crucial to the robustness of democracy. Lipset (1959), however, describes the two major current alternative definitions of democracy as "minimalist" and "maximalist". The minimalist definition views democracy as a "political system of political rights that specifies how leadership should be designated at the highest national level in a policy". On the other hand, the maximalist definition specifies various rights and liberties that have to be associated with a competitive and inclusive system of governance. Diamond (1999) uses the maximalist definition of democracy that encompass "not only a civilian, constitutional, multiparty regime, with regular, free and fair elections and universal suffrage but organizational and informational pluralism; extensive civil liberties (freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations); effective power for elected officials; and functional autonomy for legislative, executive and judicial organs of government".

The procedural definitions of democracy have both merit and demerit. The main merit of procedural definitions of democracy is that they are easy to operationalize. The

demerit is that the mere presence of certain institutions and practices in a polity does not guarantee its democratic nature. For example, democracy assessments based on procedural definitions of democracy allow for the possibility that a political system from which women are to a large extent excluded nonetheless receives a high score on democratic performance. The gender of democracy matters, in this regard, in at least two ways. First, as Anne Phillips has explained, women have interests, experiences, values, and expertise that are different from those of men, due principally to their social positions. Thus women must be represented by women. Phillips (1995) uses the term parity to indicate 'a rough equality between the proportion of women and men elected. Second, if the "core of democracy" is about the regular redistribution of power through elections, then attention must be paid to the feminist argument that gender is itself a site and source of power, functioning to privilege men over women, and masculine traits, roles and values over feminine equivalents in most social domains (Mackinnon 1989; Connell 1987; Lober 1994). There is a broad feminist consensus that women's overt exclusion from democratic structures of representation and participation represents a 'gender democracy deficit'. There are two arguments on gender democratic deficits (Galligan and Clavero 2008). First, because formal democratic processes in liberal democracies take abstract individual interests and majority rules as the primary material for political decision-making, social groups who are either in numerical minority or have been marginalized due to a history of structural disadvantages (e.g., women) are rendered invisible. Second, because in liberal democratic practice political decisions are not in need of justification beyond the rationale of the voting procedure itself, the experience and interests of dominant groups in society (e.g. men) become universalized and established as a norm, resulting in a phenomenon which Iris M Young (1990) termed 'cultural imperialism' – a situation in which the dominant group(s) in society project their own experiences, interests and perspectives as representative of humanity, while those of marginalized groups are silenced or at best forced to be articulate in the languages of the dominant groups (Young 2000). Due to the gender democratic deficits, women remained a small proportion of those who enjoyed the benefits of democracy, such as political participation and representation. Moreover, despite political and civil rights, the gap between formal equality and substantive equality has been large for certain segments of the population, and especially women. This is why many feminists demand institutional changes and various reforms to expand women's public presence in

decision-making processes. The institutional and social reforms, according to feminist scholars, include child care centres, paid maternity leaves, and paternity leaves, and political reforms such as political party quotas (Eschle 2000; Lister 1997; Phillips 1995). Jane Jaquette (2001) observes:

> [F]eminist issues were positively associated with democratization, human rights, and expanded notions of citizenship that included indigenous rights as well as women's rights. This positive association opened the way for electoral quotas and increased the credibility of women candidates, who were considered more likely to care about welfare issues and less corrupt than their male counterparts.

Eric Hobsbawm (2005) has also stated that the conditions for effective democratic governance are rare: an existing state enjoying legitimacy consent and the ability to mediate conflicts between domestic groups. But the way to create those conditions – and to prevent "democracy without democrats" (Salame 1994), "autocracy with democrats" (Brumberg 2002), or "illiberal democracy" (Zakaria 2003) – is surely to promote programmes for women's empowerment, build institutions for gender equality, and implement policies to increase women's political participation in government, in political parties, in the judiciary, and in civil society.

Recognizing the key tenuousness of women's aims in the political process, feminist political theorists have attempted to find models of participation in the democratic process that achieve genuine inclusiveness. Many scholars like Phillips, Vogel-Polsky,and Fraser have suggested parity to bring political equality in the society. Phillips (1995) advocates for parity which indicates 'a rough equality between the proportion of women and men elected'. Vogel-Polsky (2000) considers parity democracy in terms of power-sharing between women and men rather than simply in terms of equal presence. In both arguments for parity, the main institutional mechanisms to achieve parity take the form of affirmative action strategies, such as gender quotas aimed at empowering women in the public sphere. Nancy Fraser (1998), on the other hand, defines 'participatory parity' in substantive terms, as an ideal of justice requiring social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life. Her formulation of parity participation is different from others due to its normative character, as it establishes a link between the concept of democracy with an

ideal of justice that has long been neglected both by theorists of justice and of democracy (Fraser 2005). Fraser distinguishes two broad approaches to remedying injustice that occurs across the recognition-redistribution divide. Firstly, she discusses the affirmation approach, which focuses on 'correcting inequitable outcomes of social arrangements without disturbing the underlying framework that generates them'. Secondly, she calls the transformative remedy, which focuses on 'correcting inequitable outcomes precisely by restructuring the underlying generative framework'.

Quotas, as a positive discrimination policy, were even endorsed by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, in Beijing, for achieving parity in women's representation in policy-making bodies. Positive discrimination in the form of quotas or reservations is seen as measures to address the under-representation of women. The 'feminization of legislatures' through positive discrimination is an important measure of democratizing democracy. Democratizing democracy is defined here as a democracy that is inclusive and participatory that extends beyond state-citizens interactions to encompass democratic engagement of all citizen including women. Democratizing and deepening of democracy helps in creating new democratic spaces for maximum participation and representation of women in public offices. Gender equality among political representatives is, therefore, important for many reasons. Today, only about 24.5 percent of the world's parliamentarians are women and according to feminist theory, this paucity of women in political institutions may have serious consequences for the expression of women's interest and for the legitimacy and effectiveness of democratic institutions (Phillips 1995, Norris 2004, Dalherup 2006). Hence, the empowerment of women and the establishment of gender equality are crucial for the proper functioning of democracy. Cornwell and Goetz (2005) are of the opinion that getting more women in public office has always been connected to the wider project of deepening democracy. They went further to argue that adding women is not sufficient to address the historically and culturally embedded forms of disadvantage. The disadvantaged position of women is addressed by becoming politically effective. The most important determinant of political effectiveness in women's political apprenticeship is - their experiences in political parties, civil society associations and the informal arenas in which political skills are learned. Enhancing the democratizing potential of women's political participation what they

called is democratizing democracy (Cornwell and Goetz 2005). Quotas, under positive discrimination policies, are widely seen as a legitimate means of countermeasure for women's under-representation as they acknowledge that women do not constitute a politically distinct group with interests limited to gender-related concerns (Cornwall and Goetz 2005). According to Stevens (2007) "positive discrimination is justified and promoted on that only strict and hard provisions enshrined either in internal party statutes or in national legislation will overcome the gender imbalance embedded in representative institutions". Dalherup (2006) wrote, "the demand for more women in politics has depend on arguments of justice, of women's interests that men cannot safeguard or on a wish to include women's experiences on the political agenda, gender balance in political decision-making is increasingly seen as a prerequisite for democracy itself". The equal participation of women and men in public sphere is needed to invigorate democracy and promote its proper functioning. The council of Inter-parliamentary Union (1994) stated: "the concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women in equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the populace".

Factors Accounting for Women's Poor Representation

The presence of women in assembly is the result of two interlocking factors or decisions: 'supply' decisions and 'demand' decisions (Paxton et al., 2007; Steven, 2007)). Supply decisions involve women's decision to undertake political activity, to associate herself with a political organisation, to offer her candidacy and undertake the necessary campaigning to achieve election and demand decisions on the other hand are the decisions of a political organisation to endorse women's activity and to select her as a candidate (Steven, 2007). According to Norris and Lovenduski (1995) the two key factors that shape the supply of aspirants are (i) resources, like time, money, and experience, and (ii) motivation, such as drive, ambition, and interest in politics. The factors which influence the supply and demand decisions have been categorised as socio-economic, political and cultural or ideological. The supply and demand factors operate within a broader institutional and political context (Lovenduski and Norris 1991). The supply-demand metaphor is perhaps most closely associated with Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski's (1995) pioneering study, Political Recruitment: Gender, Race, and Class in the British Parliament. The selection process

works differently within each party, under certain guidelines and procedures and the parties, in turn, operate within a broader political system, where opportunities to become a candidate are influenced by the legal, the electoral system, legislative turnover, and the wider political culture (see Fig. 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Factors Affecting Women's Representation

Outsider →	Supply/Structural	Demand/Political	← Insider
	Culture	Nature of the Regime	
	Religion	Political party hierarchy	
Push Factor	Socio-economic Conditions	Political Culture	**Pull Factor**
	Education	Electoral System	
	Employment	Quota	
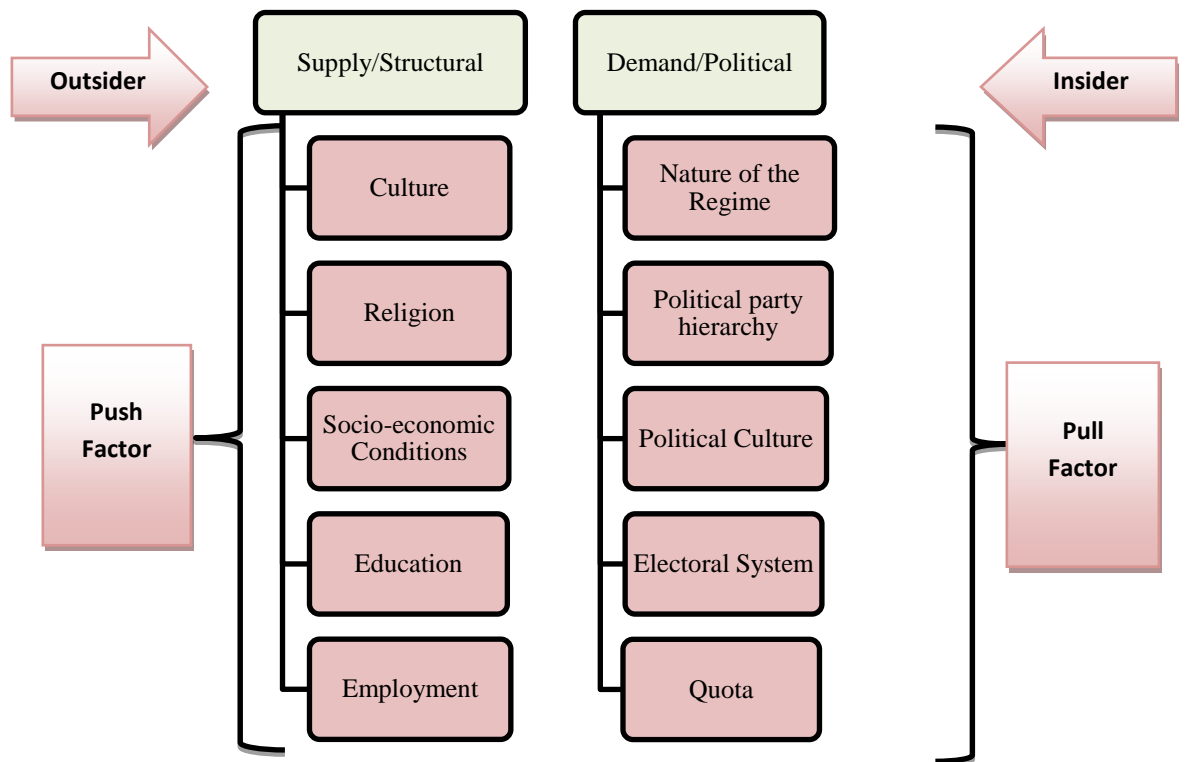
Sources: Adapted from Norris and Lovenduski (1995); Mamtaz (2019)

Socio-economic Factors

Paxton et al. (2007) contends not all types of people participate in politics. Political participation requires personal characteristics such as interest, knowledge, attitude and resources such as time, civic skills, education and economic resources. The women available for politics is therefore determine by gender socialization and social structure of a society. The gender socialization influences their interest, knowledge and ambition regarding politics while, social structure determines the level of women's political participation by enhancing or limiting the opportunities of education and employment.

The gender gap in political knowledge and interest is well established (Paxton et al. 2007). The studies conducted on developed and developing countries concluded that

men are more interested in politics and have more political knowledge than women (Burns et al. 2001; Chhibber 2002; Frazer and MacDonald 2003). The analysis of World Value Survey reveals clearly that there are significant differences among the interest shown by men and women in politics across the globe. It was found that 39 percent of the women had an interest in politics whereas 52 percent of the men did (Chhibber 2002).

The availability of women in politics is also determined by the political ambition set by them. The study conducted by Fox and Lawless reveals that women are less likely than men to aspire to political office (Paxton et al. 2007). Paxton et al (2007) asserts that this difference in aspiration is explained as women are less likely than men to view themselves as qualified to the field of politics. Apart from interest and attitude, resources such as time, civic skills, education and economic resources are the factors which have impact on level of women's political participation (Paxton et al. 2007; Schlozman et al. 1994). Most forms of political involvements like working in a campaign, attending protest etc. require investment of at least some time. However, around the world women have less time than men to participate in politics. Gendered division of work entrust women with lion's share of domestic task such as cooking, cleaning and many other household chorus left women deprive of free time to participate in politics. Schlozman et al. (1994) pointed out that once obligatory activities have been taken care of, women take disproportionate responsibility for caring for home and children. Thus, women who have fulltime jobs and preschool children at home have the fewest free hours to spare.

The level of women's participation in politics is attributed to civil skill. These skills are acquired throughout the life cycle beginning at home and in school. Education which not only produces such skills, but it also affects the likelihood that an adult will be in a position to acquire skills even further (Schlozman et al. 1994). Hence, the gender differences in the levels of formal education system may also lead to the differences in the level of participation as the civil skills are started to acquire in the early life of schools. It is argued that differences in women's level of education could explain differences in their levels of parliamentary representation. However, there has been little evidence to support the argument that the percentage of women education is predictor of parliamentary representation (Paxton et al. 2007).

Mossuz-Lavau and Sineau found that women work outside the home affects the supply of women representatives (Stevens 2007). Some types of employment provide women with financial resources, practical skills for organizing, expanded social networks and more opportunities to discuss and debate politics (Paxton et al. 2007). However, broad statistical analyses have failed to find a significant relationship between proportion of women in the assembly and women's participation in labour force (Stevens 2007).

Political Factors

The women's ability to take positions as representatives is structured by the nature of the political system. The nature of political regime, of the electoral system and of the party system and the presence of quotas for women may all be relevant to explain the representation of women.

Different political systems have different level of women's political participation. The rules of the political game in democracies should be transparent, well detailed and consistent, helping women to see how they can work within the system to attain power (Paxton, 1997). However, cross-national studies do not find that democratic countries have more women in parliament than less democratic countries. The research suggests that women are less well represented in democratic systems (Paxton, 1997). In contrast the countries with Marxist-Leninist regimes have had a relatively high proportion of women member (Stevens, 2007, Kenworthy and Malami, 1997). But in these countries or regimes assemblies are largely token and symbolic (Stevens, 2007). All the power rests with the party and the legislature has no scope for independent action. In these circumstances, though women present is high in number in assemblies but exercise less power and are symbolic. Therefore, women's presence in high numbers may be less meaningful if they are unable to truly affect policy (Paxton et al., 2007).

Within democratic political system, the electoral system may be a determining factor for women representation in politics. The electoral system found in most of the democracies may be plurality-majority system (or single member constituencies) and proportional representation (PR). In plurality-majority systems, the voters in an electoral district typically vote for only one person to represent them and the candidate with the most votes wins (Paxton et al., 2007). Anne Phillips (1991) holds

that in single member constituencies male candidates have advantage over female candidates to get selected for political office. For in sex divided patriarchal societies, woman is politically inexperience and less confident and the man has more political experience or man works in a job which have political links. Secondly, in this system limited opportunities are there for new representatives including women as many constituencies are 'safe seats' for male candidates. Usually male candidate is selected for the seat and normally replaced when he retires. On the other hand, in PR system voters are asked to vote for party with a designated list of candidates, and parties win legislative seats in proportion to the number of votes they receive (Paxton et al. 2007). The study reveals that women do better in gaining political office in countries that use PR electoral systems (Paxton, 1997; Paxton et al. 2007; Phillips, 1991). Anne Phillips contends that the scope for sexual composition is more where elections are organized through party lists (Phillips, 1991). Since, it requires multiple candidates it becomes possible to put both men and women in alternate order on the list.

The characteristics and strength of political parties within any political system is another factor which may influence the proportion of women in assembly. It acts as gatekeepers in selecting candidates for political office. A candidate aspiring for political office must be selected and supported by a political party. The characteristics of political parties therefore matter for women (Paxton et al. 2007). It is stated that left wing parties tend to be committed to an ideology of gender equality and are more likely to promote traditionally underrepresented groups such as women (Stevens, 2007; Paxton et al. 2007). Cross country empirical research reveals, left party prominence increases the percentage of women in legislative positions (Kenworthy and Malami, 1999). Mateo Diaz in her study found that if the government is largely drawn from left wing or centre parties, the proportion of women representatives increased significantly (Stevens, 2007).

Besides, structural features of different political parties have bearing on women's political representation. Firstly, political parties have rarely assigned priority to gender issues or promoted women as candidates for office without being formally obliged to do so. Of course they are assigned with tasks of campaigning and fundraising but ultimately appear hostile to women's engagement in decision making, especially at top leadership levels. Secondly, it is impossible to expect women leaders to be connected to gender equality concern where positions in parties are determined

by patronage. Such parties have highly personalized leadership system based on family dynasties, and decision making is not open to internal challenge (Cornwall and Goetz, 2005). Thirdly, Women's wings of political parties have rarely provided an incubating ground for women leaders. In fact, women's wings are commonly captured by spouses of male leaders.

Cultural and Ideological Factors

Traditional values and cultural attitudes can also serve as significant deterrent for achieving gender balance in any society, through debarring women from seeking political office (on the supply-side) or else discriminating against or not in favour of their adoption by gate-keepers (on the demand-side). The demand and supply decisions are conditioned by cultural and ideological assumptions. The beliefs that women did not have capability to participate in politics, or that women should belong in the private sphere are still strong across countries. These ideas or beliefs among both men and women affect levels of women participation and representation in politics. The people tend to see leadership is a masculine trait and women are less preferred in this field. Paxton et al held that even when countries are advance in terms of women's education and employment, they still find cultural barriers to participation in politics (Paxton et al. 2007). Both men and women may doubt women's suitability for political roles as women may be felt best suited to take care of their homes. The differences on views occurs across countries for example in Norway when asked whether men make better leaders than women do, the average answer between strongly disagree and disagree, whereas in Nigeria the average answer is between agree and strongly agree (Paxton and Kunovich, 2003). It is assumed that a difference in attitudes about women in politics is considered as an important indicator of level of women's political participation.

The cultural and ideological factors determine the level of political participation of women is again influence by various other factors. Firstly, women tend to be less knowledgeable about and interested in politics than men. Analysis of British Election Survey for the 1992 election showed 'striking and significant differences' in their scores for political knowledge (Steven, 2007). Secondly, less number of women nurtures political ambition than men. It is stated that women tend to believe that politics is not appropriate for them and men also consciously or unconsciously discriminate against women and may block possibilities for women.

Positive Discrimination

The term 'affirmative action' originated in the United States, refers to a variety of programmes directed towards targeted groups to redress their inequality. Broadly, it takes two forms: policies to alter the composition of the labour force, and/or policies to increase the representativeness of the public committees, political parties and educational institutions (Bacchi, 1996). Pippa Norris (2001) holds that affirmative action programmes aim to encourage individual candidates by providing financial assistance, training sessions, advisory group targets, as well as systematically monitoring the outcome. These policies aim to achieve fairness in the recruitment process by removing practical barriers that may disadvantage women. Gender quotas fall into this category if they are advisory rather than binding (Norris, 2001). On the other hand, positive discrimination strategies set mandatory group quotas for the selection of candidates from certain social or political groups. The quotas can be implemented in three important ways: firstly, it can be set at different levels, such as 20, 30, 40, or 50 percent; secondly, the quotas can be applied to different stages of the selection process, for instance- to shortlists of parliamentary candidates, internal party offices, electoral lists of parliamentary candidates, or to reserved parliamentary seats; lastly, binding quotas can be put into practice either by law or by internal party rules (Norris, 2001).

Positive discrimination aims to achieve equality. Most advocates concede that these PD strategies do not seem to be procedurally fair for individual applicants. Some groups are thereby ruled into the recruitment process, while many others are automatically ruled out, by virtue of certain ascriptive characteristics like race, gender, language, region, religion etc. (Norris, 2001). It is the process that discriminates positively in favour of certain individuals on the basis of characteristics seen as common to their group. Nevertheless, proponents argue that underrepresented political minorities need positive discrimination at least as a temporary stopgap measure, to overcome the historical disadvantages they face in winning elected offices (Norris, 2001).

Why Positive Discrimination?

In the post-World War era, the newly independent countries adopted a democratic political system which proclaimed equality for women in social, economic and political matters. However, the numbers of women in decision making remain dismal

even after years of independence. The women's role in politics takes backstage as both men and women seemed to assume that men are fit to act in public spaces and to govern, women to nurture in the privacy of the home (Tinker, 2004). From a justice point of view, this sexual division of labour within society is unjust. Anne Stevens (2007) argues that women have equal right to take part in public life and their absence from the democratic institutions damages the legitimacy of those institutions as well as depresses the aspirations and status of women as a whole. Anne Phillips (1991) sees affirmative action or positive discrimination as a temporary measure to counter the unjust situation. She argues that there should develop representative mechanisms that acknowledge gender difference and gender inequality to ensure new proportionality between sexes in those arenas within which political decisions are made. She emphasized sexual differentiation as necessary, but transitional, for she does not want a world in which women have to speak continuously as women and men are left to speak as men. In the views of Phillips (1991) those who have been previously marginalized, subordinated or silenced need the security of a guaranteed voice and, until the full and equal citizenship is guaranteed, democracies must act to redress the imbalance that centuries of oppression have produced. But I cannot see this as other than a version of affirmative action. This affirmative action is for a temporary basis until the distinction between public and private spheres would lose its gendered quality, when men and women both equally take the responsibilities of household and employment, share equally in bringing up children and caring parents, would vary as individuals rather than sexes in their priorities or experience and be equally attracted to a political life (Phillips, 1991). According to Norris Pippa (2001), there are three different types of recruitment policies to increase women's representation, viz. rhetorical, affirmative action and positive discrimination. Firstly, rhetorical strategies articulated in leadership speeches, party guidelines, or official party platform, aim to change the party ethos by affirming the need for social balance in the slate of candidates and encourage more women candidates to come forward. Secondly, affirmative action programmes aim to encourage candidates by providing training sessions, advisory group targets, financial assistance thereby aim to achieve 'fairness' in the recruitment process, removing practical barriers that may disadvantage women. Finally, positive discrimination strategies set mandatory group quotas for the selection of candidates. Quotas can be set at different levels (such as 20, 30, 40, or 50 percent) or it can be applied to different stages of the selection

process (like internal party offices, shortlists of parliamentary applicants, electoral list or reserved parliamentary seats or quotas can be implemented either by law or by internal party rules (see Fig. 3.2).

Fig. 3.2: Strategies for Gender Equality in Representation

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Strategies for Gender Equality │
                    └──────────────┬──────────────┘
         ┌─────────────────────────┼─────────────────────────┐
   ┌───────────┐           ┌──────────────────┐       ┌──────────────────────┐
   │ Rhetorical │           │ Affirmative action │       │ Positive Discrimination │
   └───────────┘           └──────────────────┘       └───────────┬──────────┘
                                              ┌────────────────────┴────────────┐
                                        ┌───────────┐                    ┌──────┐
                                        │ Party Rules │                    │ Laws │
                                        └─────┬─────┘                    └───┬──┘
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                        │  Party   │         │  Legislative │  │ Reserved Seats │
                        │ Offices  │         │  Candidates  │  │                │
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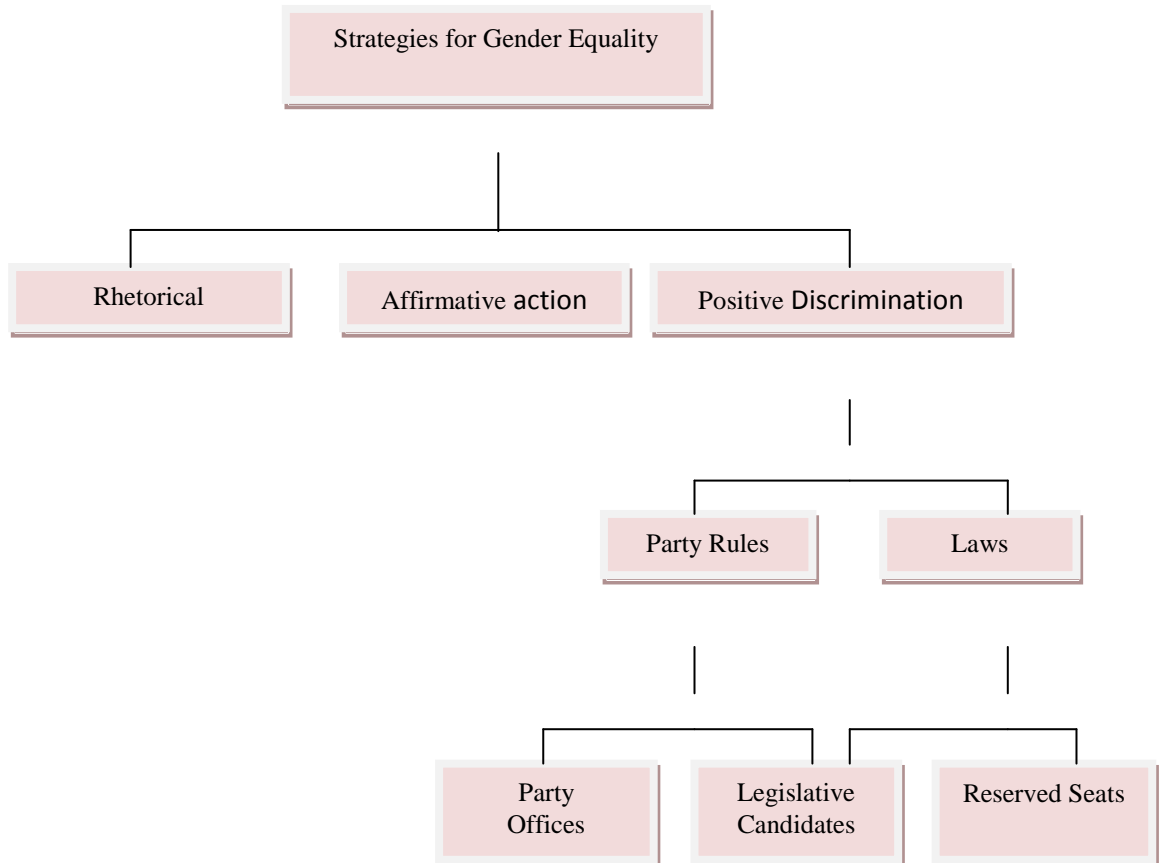
Source: Norris (2001)

Positive discrimination measures also appeal to the idea that women's experience is distinct, that women are different from men and bring to governing distinct attributes that encourage a more compassionate and less corrupt society (Tinker, 2004). Anne Steven asserts that in some areas women have deeper expertise and knowledge than most of the men. Therefore, their participation would introduce new and beneficial elements into political behaviour and policy-making policy. Anne Phillips (1995) sees increasing the proportion of women as a part of a wider project for increasing and enhancing democracy with the hope that women might bring a more consultative and participatory consultative style to the practice of politics.

Positive Discrimination in India

The promotion of equality between women and men is an overarching objective of any government around the globe. This goal could not be achieved if one half of the population is consistently excluded from taking part fully in decision-making processes. There is, therefore, a need for more inclusive processes of achieving representation. Comprehensive representation would be obtained if women constituting half the population find a proportionate number of seats in government (Chhetri 2012b). The Constitution of India provides the principles of equality and non-discrimination and the policies of affirmative action to overcome the gender imbalances. The purpose of affirmative action is to remedy the underrepresentation of women in the workplace, business ownership, and educational institutions. The original Constitution of India has incorporated some special provisions for women of the country in regard to gender equality under the chapter of Fundamental Rights and Duties and the Directive Principle of State Policy. Most important among them are equality before law and equal protection of law (Article14), prohibition of discrimination on sex (Article 15[1]), empowering the state to make special provision for women and child (Article 15[3]), prohibition of trafficking in human being (Article 23), equal pay for equal work for both men and women (Article 39[d]), to secure just and humane condition of work and maternity relief (Article 42) and a fundamental duty of every citizens to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51A[e]). The above provisions clearly show the country's concern in safeguarding the rights and privileges of women in the Constitution of India.

Positive discrimination in India has a long history and it dates back to the colonial period. The quota system has been in practice in India with the enactment of the Government of India Act, 1909 granting the due shares of all minority groups, including Anglo Indians, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, and depressed classes. The quota was particularly based on caste and religion, therefore, it was opposed by Mahatma Gandhi. The British government further extended and gave proper shape to quota in the Government of India Act 1935. It was, however, not before the Independence that a systematic positive discrimination measure was implemented across India. The Government of independent India sought to address the under-representation of women through certain forms of positive discrimination labelled 'reservation policies' in India. India has a quota-based positive discrimination policy, which is called the

reservation system. Reservation implies a separate quota which is reserved for a special category of persons. After independence, B.R Ambedkar stressed on the need of quotas for the lowest castes and tribe (Rai, 2008). Therefore, in the Constitution under Article 330 and 331 reservation came as an exception to the fundamental right to equality in favour of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. There are three aspects of the Indian experience of 'positive discrimination' that are distinctive and significant (Heyer and Jayal 2009). Firstly, positive discrimination (PD) in India precedes affirmative action in the United States by several decades: provisions for 'reservation' or quotas in education and employment were first made in the late 19th century. Secondly, there is a vital difference between the USA policy of preferential treatment and the Indian policy which relies primarily on reservations through quotas. Thirdly, the policies of PD in India are primarily located in educational, political and administrative domains, and have not yet been administered for the corporate sector (as in Malaysia) or for civil society organizations (Heyer and Jayal 2009). Unlike in the past, PD in the form of reserved seats has been extended to local bodies elections in India in 1992.

Just as affirmative action programmes in the United States encompasses minorities, such as Hispanics and Native Americans, the Constitution of India also includes other groups, such as the 'Scheduled Castes' 'Scheduled Tribes and 'Other Backward Classes'. Later on, the provisions of positive discrimination have been extended to women by reserving some seats in local bodies. The Constitution of India, unlike the US Constitution, expressly provides for positive discrimination or affirmative action or "compensatory discrimination" (Wasby 1986) and allows reservation or quotas. In India, like elsewhere, the need for affirmative action stems from the perceived underrepresentation or underutilization of certain groups in certain occupational categories and their over-representation among the unemployed and the socially and economically disadvantaged. The policy has been adopted by the makers of the Constitution and by the subsequent government to achieve the goals enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution. In pursuance of the constitutional provisions for the excluded and disadvantaged, both central and state governments have adopted a number of affirmative action measures for the socio-economic, political and educational development of these groups (Chhetri 2012b). Earlier it was believed that recognition of women as equal citizens by the Constitution would automatically lead

to equality in political life. However, these assumptions prove wrong as the number of women participating in politics remained insignificant even after seventy years of independence. Women are still under-represented in parliament and state legislative assemblies. The representation of women in parliament has never reached a critical mass. In recently held 17th Lok Sabha elections of 2019, 14.58 percent of women got elected in Lok Sabha, the Lower House of Parliament, the highest since Independence (see Fig. 3). In order to address the problem of underrepresentation of women in legislatures, the 81st amendment bill, commonly known as the Women Reservation Bill (WRB) was introduced in parliament in 1996 which seeks to reserve one-third of all seats for women in the national parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies. This was the first PD measures in the form of quota to minimize gender inequality in national and state legislative bodies. The bill, however, could not be passed because of a lack of political will among parties. Despite repeated delays, the BJP government sought to introduce the WRB for the fourth time on May 2003, but it was strongly opposed by Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and Samajwadi Party (SP) which continuously insist on the revision of bill to include sub-quotas for OBCs, Muslims and weaker sections. Menon (2000) opined that the concern among the upper castes caused by the growing presence of backward castes through successive elections is a major reason for the upper castes to support women's reservation and the backward castes to demand for a quota-within-quota system within the Women's Reservation Bill. The Congress-led UPA government introduced the bill in May 2008. The long-awaited WRB bill which gives a 33 percent reservation for women was tabled again in Rajya Sabha on 6 May 2008. The bill passed in Rajya Sabha on 9 March 2010 as 108th Amendment Bill, 2008 (Bill No. XXX-C of 2008) (see Appendix III) but the Lok Sabha never voted on the bill. It lapsed after the dissolution of the fifteenth Lok Sabha in 2014. As a result, the women's reservation bill has not yet been adopted at the national level because it has yet to be passed by the Lok Sabha and at least two-thirds of state assemblies before it can become law.

Many leaders of political parties (like RJD and SP) have opposed the bill but at the same time, some feminists have also opposed this move as 'tokenist' (Rai 1999). The feminist scholar like Kishwar (1996) opposed the focus on reserving constituencies which will force women to contest only against other women and will 'ghettoize' them. She wished to see a system of multi-seat constituencies where one out of three

candidates has to be a woman'. Menon (1997) on the other hand opined that 'the link between reservations in Parliament and "empowerment" of women is at best tenuous, and may even be a way of closing off possibilities of further radicalization of Indian politics… if we attempt to recover feminist politics as subversion, we would need to move away from politics as merely seeking space within already defined boundaries of power'. Many feminists in India oppose the provisions of reservation because they interpret them as an attempt to make electoral gains among female voters while promoting the selection of 'malleable' women who will not challenge the patriarchal status quo (Kishwar 1998; Rai 1999).

Figure 3.3
Growth in the proportion of women members in the Lok Sabha (1952-2019)
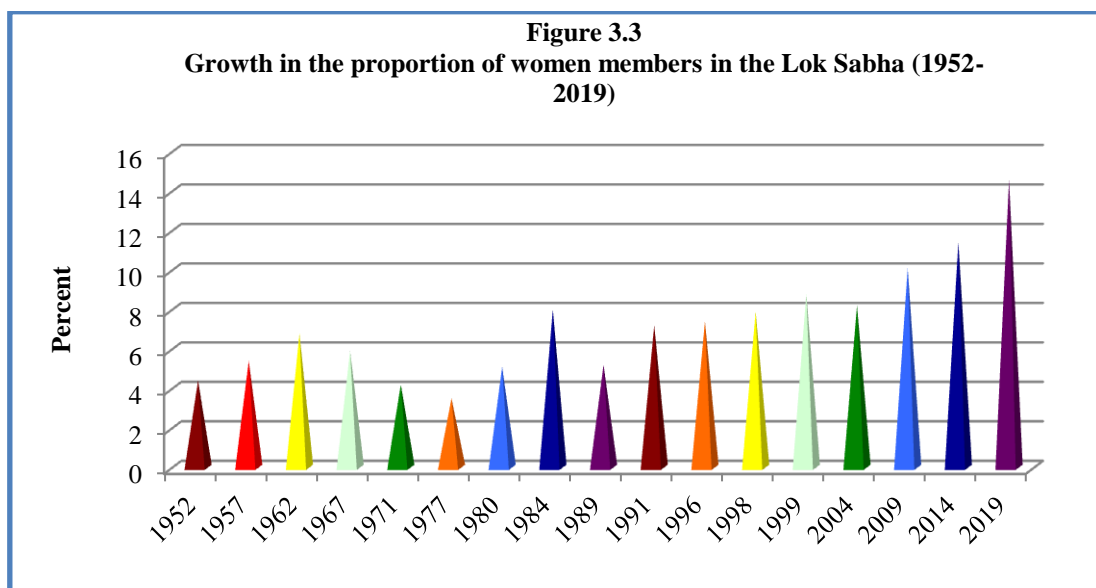
Source: Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi

The representation of women in Lok Sabha though increases from 4.4 percent in 1952 to 14.58 percent in 2019 (Fig. 3.3), this percentage is still very less as compared to the world average. At present, the women representation stands only 14.58 percent in Lok Sabha, 11.8 percent in Rajya Sabha and 8.4 percent in state legislative assemblies on average. Among the few women, most of them come from a higher caste, privileged class backgrounds and elite political families. The representations of women at the local level are comparatively good after the enactment of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts in 1992. These legislations guaranteed a 33 percent reservation in the elected representatives to local government. The credit for this goes to those who have advocated the cause of affirmative action for the inclusion of women in local government for almost a decade. The fruit of their labour was the 73rd

and 74th amendments to the Indian Constitution enacted unanimously by the parliament in 1992. The Acts which accord the constitutional status to PRIs and municipalities ensure equal access and increased participation of people of all categories including the women in the decentralized democratic decision-making processes. The Articles 243D(3) and 243T(3) of the Constitution states that "Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a panchayat and municipalities" (see Appendix IV & V). Similarly, clause (4) of Articles 243D and 243T further provides that 'Not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the panchayat and municipalities at all levels shall be reserved for women' (GoI 1992). This provision of the reservation of seats provided by the Constitutional Act has greatly contributed to the political empowerment of the women and other marginalized and disadvantaged communities in the society. Moreover, these legislative measures enable both rural and urban women to participate in decentralized governance, planning and development. As a result of this provision, nearly ten lakh women occupy positions as members and chairpersons of grassroots democratic institutions in India (Chhetri 2019b). It is evident from local government, where reservation has been placed for more than 25 years, suggested the pattern might change dramatically with one-third reservation for women in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies for influencing public policy (Krook, 2009).

The Impact of Positive Discrimination for Women

Since the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985) and the Beijing Conference of 1995, women issues have gained visibility in the international development agenda. Various international conferences and conventions facilitated the formulation of new transnational perspectives for political action, new organizational structure and new strategies for advancing women's issues. One such measure is positive discrimination or allocation of a quota of elective and appointive positions to women in order to redress systemic inequities and promote equity and balance. According to Dehlerup (2006) "quota in politics involves setting up a percentage or number for the representation of a specific group, here women, most often in the form of a minimum percentage, for instance, 20, 30 or 40 percent". Gender quota is constructed to the

required minimum representation of women in the parliament. Today quotas are introduced in the countries in which women constitute a small minority in parliament and witness a remarkable increase of women in politics. There is considerable variance in the type of quota measures implemented around the world. It has been classified into reserved seats, party quotas and legal quotas. Reserved seat measures specify certain reserved seats in parliaments for women (Norris 2001). These measures have become an increasingly prominent solution in countries with very low levels of women representation in parliament (Saxena, 2011). For instance, in India, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act 1992 requires one-third reservation of seats for women in all the levels of local bodies. Other countries with legal requirements of reserved seats for women in national parliaments include Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Philippines, Tanzania, Sudan, Morocco, Uganda, and Taiwan (see Table 3.1& Fig 3.4).

Party quotas are another quota measures. These measures adopted voluntarily by political parties to require a certain proportion of women among their parties' candidates. It was first adopted in the early 1970s by left-wing parties in Western Europe (Saxena, 2011). Party quotas are the most common type of gender quota adopted in countries like South Africa, Brazil, Australia, Mexico and Norway. Legal or Legislative quotas are measures passed by national parliaments that require all parties to nominate a certain proportion of female candidates. Unlike party quotas, they are mandatory provisions that apply to all political groupings (Saxena, 2011). These measures have increasing become popular in countries like Latin America, Africa, Middle East and South-eastern Europe. The use of the quota tool to increase women's representation is becoming a global trend. Gender quotas certainly make historical leaps in women representation in politics. Not all countries have reached the global top ranking in terms of women's representation in parliament with the help of quota provisions (Dahlerup, 2006). However, the gender quotas are no doubt a positive discrimination measure if properly implemented has the potential to increase women's representation rapidly. For instance, quotas have a remarkable impact on Rwandan politics. In the 1990s on average 18 percent parliamentary seats were occupied by women. The constitution mandated 30 percent elected seats for women in 2003. By 2008 women made up to more than half of Rwanda's parliament (Thornton, 2019). The most recent data published by IPU (2019) shows 61.3 percent of

Rwanda's parliament seats are filled by women thus, making the top rank in women representation in the national parliament in the world. Similarly, in Argentina, the houses passed a law in 1991 that specified parties to nominate at least 30 percent women in list positions where they were likely to be elected. As a result, the proportion of women in the lower house of parliament increased dramatically from 6 percent in 1991 to 14 percent in 1993, 22 percent in 1995, 27 percent in 1999, 35 percent in 2005 and most recent 38.8 percent in 2019. While in the upper house or Senate women representation jumped from 3 percent in 1991 to 35 percent in 2001, 43 percent in 2005 and 41.7 percent in 2019 (Saxena 2011, IPU 2019).

Figure 3.4
Reserved seats for women used in the lower house of parliaments worldwide
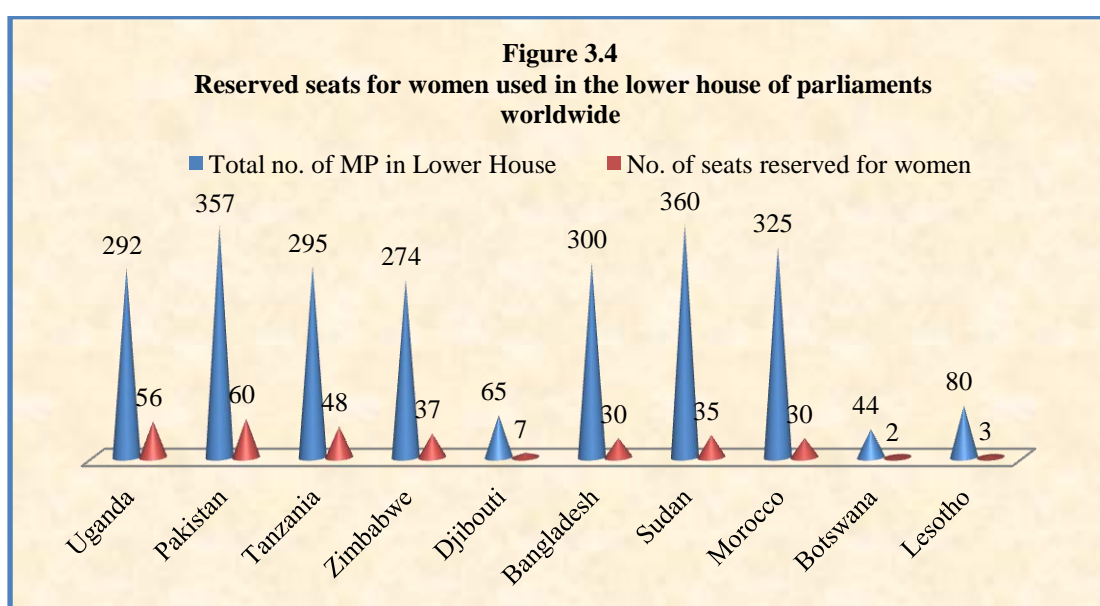
Source: www.electionworld.org

The gender quota has been successfully implemented in Sweden where women representation is 47.3 percent in the national parliament and ranking 5th on a list compiled by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU, 2019). There was a gradual strengthening of party quotas of at least one woman per list in the 1950s and 1960s to targets of at least 40 percent women in the 1970s and 1980s, to stricter 50 percent in the 1990s and 2000s. Similarly, Bolivian women remarkably improve their representation in the parliament after gaining the right to vote in 1956. The Election law in 2001 required 30 percent reservation for women and has increased to 50 percent in 2009. As a result, at present Bolivia listed in 3rd position in the list prepared by IPU in terms of women representation in the parliament. Furthermore, in Costa Rica, parliament adopted a 40 percent quota law in 1996. As a consequence, the proportion of women in parliament increased from 14 percent in 1994 to 35 percent in

2002 (Saxena, 2011). Today, women representation in Costa Rica increased to 45.6 percent and hold 8th position on a list of IPU. The quotas make political institutions accountable for ensuring the representation of women. These measures have become an increasingly popular solution to the problem of women's underrepresentation, appearing in more than 100 countries across the globe.

Table 3.1 Legal quotas in Asia-Pacific			
Country	Type	% women MPs before law	% women MPs after law
Afghanistan	Reserved seats	-	28
Bangladesh	Reserved seats	9	19
China	Legal quotas	22	21
Indonesia	Legal quotas	8	18
Mongolia	Legal quotas	4	-
Nepal	Reserved seats	6	33
Pakistan	Reserved seats	17	22
Philippines	Reserved seats	11	22
Republic of Korea	Legal quotas	4	15
Taiwan	Reserved seats	-	22
Timor-Leste	Legal quotas	-	29

Source: www.quotaproject.org

One of the important strategies adopted by the government in India is the politics of inclusion under which a certain percentage of seats are reserved for the historically disadvantages groups for their empowerment. The implementation of the reserved seats in India at the local level is greatly responsible for increasing women's presence in politics. The politics of inclusion ensures those who have been historically underrepresented have an opportunity to present their claims and interests specific to their group (Chhetri 2012b).The 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts were the first important legislation in this respect. Both Amendment Acts requires women to hold 33 percent of seats filled by direct election in local rural panchayats and municipal bodies. All state governments have amended their respective state Acts and incorporated all the mandatory provisions including the reservation of seats for SCs, STs and women in panchayats and municipalities. The reservations were introduced accordingly in all the three-tier panchayats (Gram, Intermediate & Zilla panchayats) and municipalities. The reservation for women in local bodies' election has made a significant beginning. Some of the states have raised the proportion of seats to 50 percent for both panchayats and municipalities (example Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh,

Kerala, Maharastra and Tripura), while others raised the proportion only for panchayats (example, Assam, Bihar, Chattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal). As a result, the representation of women increases considerably at local bodies and women councilors have become relatively common due to the provision of the positive discrimination policy. But at the national and state level, the representation of women and their participation is very low as there was no provision for positive discrimination like that of the local level. At the national level, despite frequent attempts to introduce a similar policy of reserved seats, these initiatives have repeatedly failed. In the 2019 elections, 78 women MPs got elected in the lower house of the Parliament. In the 2014 elections, 11.41 percent of women won whereas, in 2019, 14.4 percent of women won the parliamentary elections. India saw the highest number of women MPs elected in the 17th Lok Sabha elections held in 2019. The 2019 elections saw 8049 candidates of which 724 were women and out of which 78 women candidates won the elections. The Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) has the highest number of women MPs followed by Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Indian National Congress (see Fig. 3.5).

Fig. 3. 5
Party-wise Women Elected MPs in Lok Sabha
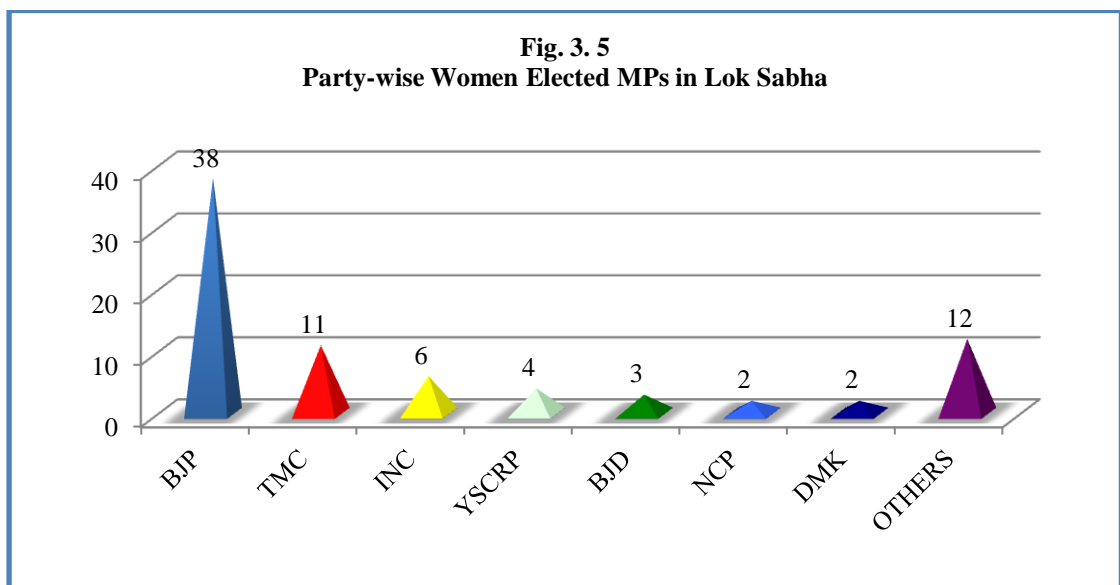
Source: Election Commission of India

State-wise analysis of successful women candidates in Assembly elections revealed that seven States have 10 percent and above women candidates in their respective Assemblies. Among them, Chhattisgarh and Haryana are in the top that is 14.4 percent each followed by Puducherry (13.3 percent), West Bengal (13.3 percent),

Bihar (11.5 percent), Uttar Pradesh (10.6 percent) and Madhya Pradesh (10 percent). On the lower side of representation, it falls down to zero women representation in the State Assemblies of Mizoram and Nagaland while Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka climb up to be around 3 percent.

Positive Discrimination and its impact on women in Local Governance

The Constitution (73rd/74th) Amendment Acts, 1992 has served as a major breakthrough towards ensuring women's equal access and increased participation in local government. The Amendment Acts aims at constitutional guarantees to safeguard the interests of local self-government to enable them to function as effective democratic and self-governing institutions at the grass root level. These Amendments provides for reservation of 33 per cent of elected seats for women at local government level in rural and urban area. There is also a one-third reservation for women of posts of chairpersons of these local bodies. The affirmative action in the form of reservation of seats has tremendously helps women in their participation in the decision making processes (Chhetri 2015).

The studies conducted in various Indian states suggest that positive discrimination in the form of reservation have made descriptive representation of women possible. The most significant impact of 33 percent seats reservation for women in local governing bodies have been the strengthening and widening the base of participatory democracy (Mohanty, 2005). Moreover, reservation have enabled women to address the need and interest of women even if the realization and articulation of interest is moving at a slower pace (Jayal, 2005). Most surveys have shown that women address the important needs of women. They work for bringing pipe water facilities into the village; focus on children's education; they also inspect various development works and nutrition centres under the Integrated Child Development Schemes (Jayal, 2005). In West Bengal and Rajasthan drinking water, roads and welfare programmes were the issues most frequently raised by women (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2008). These patterns of preferences are dependent on nature of activities of women. Activity-wise women are in charge of collecting drinking water and they are primarily the beneficiary of welfare programmes such as maternity pension, old age pension for the destitute etc. Datta (1998), on the basis of her study on women panchayats, asserts that women representatives were more inclined to the programmes which were need based and sustainable.

Various studies suggest that women are capable in bringing about qualitative change and can effectively use the new political space created for them (reservation). Nirmala Buch (1999) expressed that despite of the multiple challenges and constraints, women have initiated change and which they continue. The positive discrimination measures in the form of reservations have not only increased women's descriptive representation but also increased their participation in the process of decision making. According to various studies, about 80-90 percent women are regular in panchayat meetings (Mohanty 2005; Buch 2000). The six-state study of Kaushik (1998) also showed that the elected women were fairly regular in panchayat meetings. In conformity with these studies, Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2008) in their study in West Bengal found that participation of women in the gram sansad is notably higher when the pradhan is a woman. These studies point towards the changing pattern of decision making process. Firstly, increasing participation of women in panchayat meetings shattered the general claims or myths of proxy attendance by male members. Secondly, given the growing number of women's participation in the panchayat meetings, one might conclude that democracy has become more participatory than before at least at the grassroots level (Mohanty, 2005).

Initially, there was a wide perception that women are dis-interested in politics. However, the panchayat elections after the implementation of one-third reservation of seats for women in panchayats shattered the myth of women's passivity in politics. Many women contested elections on their own initiatives. 95 percent of women in three states (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradhesh) had contested elections for the first time (Buch, 1999). More importantly, women in Buch's study are increasingly showing their interest in contesting elections at higher level of panchayats as well as for state and national legislature. This self confidence and aspiration levels of women are the indicators of their empowering process.

The reservation system has positive impact on familial relationship. Traditionally, women are expected to perform the role within the household and domestic responsibilities are entirely shouldered on women. But in post the constitutional developments of 73rd and 74th Amendments Acts many women representatives reported sharing of their domestic responsibilities by husband and other members of the family (Buch 1999; Mohanty 2005). These developments breaks the gender

stereo-type and help women in effectively performing their public responsibilities and focus on political career.

The positive discrimination in the form of reserved seats has been a hallmark in bringing about qualitative change in Sikkim politics as number of women participation has increased remarkably at local levels. As a result of women's reservation in local bodies, women are sufficiently present in lowest level of government. Sikkim Panchayat Act 1993 and Sikkim Municipality Act in 2007 and Sikkim Municipality (Amendment) Act 2009 have the provisions for the reservation of seats for SCs, STs and women in different tier of panchayats and municipality. The Sikkim Panchayat Act 1993 has been amended further by Sikkim Panchayat Act 2011 which mandates not less than half of the total number of seats in Gram Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats shall be reserved for women. The reservation has been introduced accordingly in 176 Gram Panchayats and 4 Zilla Panchayats of Sikkim. The first election in accordance with this new act was held in 2012. At present, women occupied half of the total seats at panchayat level (Fig. 3.6). As far as urban governance in concerned, The Sikkim Municipality (Amendment) Act 2009 is significant as this Act has raised the percentage of reservation of seats for women from 33 to 40 per cent which is more than the reservation mandated by the Central Act of 1992. This is of great importance, since this grass-root level participation has considerably expanded the base of women's participation in politics at local level. The municipality Act was further amended in 2015. This particular amendment has raised the percentage of reservation from 40 to 50. Consequently, at present, over half of the elected positions in municipal bodies are occupied by women. The phenomenon of such a large number of women entering politics would not have been possible without reservation system. The reservation policy of government accompanied by growing interests of women in politics has made women an important player. It made possible for women to access political power and influence in policy decision making (Chhetri 2015).

Fig. 3.6
Growth in the Proportion of Women Members in Gram Panchayats after 73rd Amendment Act
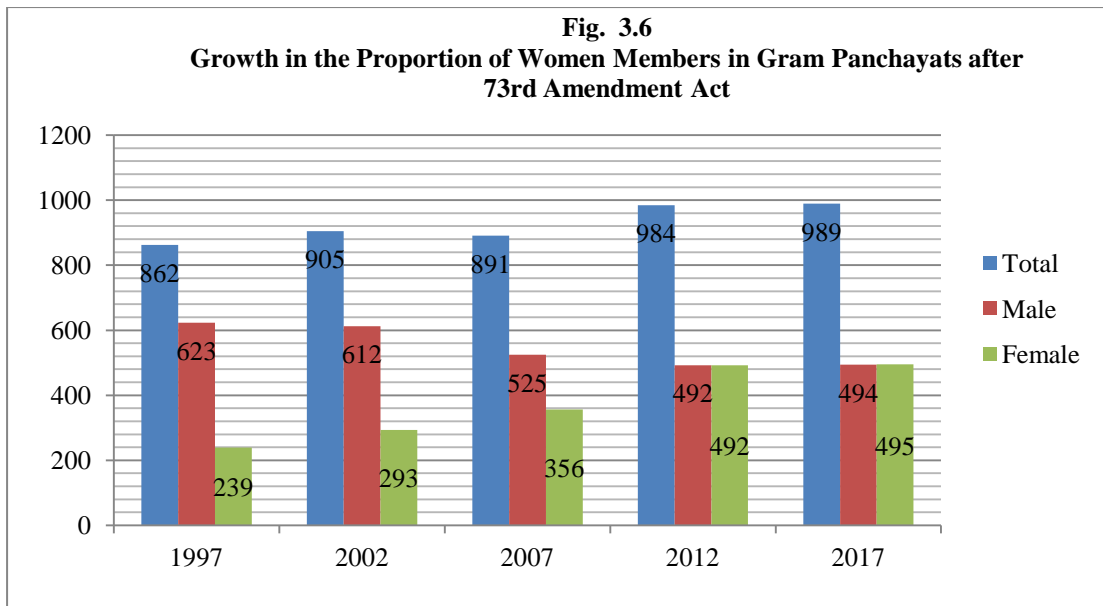
Source: Chhetri, 2019c

Conclusion

There has been a remarkable consistency in the figures for women representation in national politics regardless of the political system. With few exceptions of Scandinavian countries and the exception of Rwanda in southern Africa, women represent between two to 30 percent of National Assemblies. Though during the last three decades, quota as positive discrimination strategies have been introduced by the government of various countries – both democratic and undemocratic – to correct the gender imbalances in national legislatures, there is still an unequal distribution of political power in most contemporary democracies including India. More than 100 countries have during the past 30 years introduced electoral gender quotas to create a democratic space for women in politics. The measures are implemented in different nations through either reserved legislative seats filled by direct election, indirect election, or appointment, legal gender quotas, or through voluntary party gender quotas. As a result, the countries have experienced a decisive political breakthrough for women parliamentarians due to positive discrimination strategies implemented via electoral laws or party regulations. In India, the government has failed to introduce a measure to reserved seats for women in national and state legislatures despite frequent attempts since 1996. In 2019, India ranks 149out of 193 nations in the percentage of women in the lower house of the world parliaments. There are no quotas or reservation at the national level but quotas are used very effectively at the local level in India. Therefore, the proportion of women in the Indian legislature is not very

impressive even after 72 years of Independence. The women representation has not reached even 15 percent in Lok Sabha. In Rajya Sabha, 11.8 percent is the highest till now. The Indian Constitution, however, has implemented gender quotas for rural and urban local bodies elections via constitutional provisions. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, enacted in 1992, mandated India's state governments to reserved one-third of the seats in these local bodies for women. This has resulted in historic leaps in women's representation from a mere 10 percent to 33 percent after the introduction of gender quotas in local bodies after 1993. There is a remarkable improvement in the proportion of women representation in local bodies due to positive discrimination strategies in Sikkim. Similar initiatives or political reform such as political party quotas or reserved seats for women needs to be adopted at the national and state level to democratize democracy in India. Furthermore, such measures facilitate the creation of new democratic spaces to redress the issue of gendered inequities and inequalities. And above all, it has made democracy more inclusive, participatory and engendered.

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CHAPTER 4

PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

Introduction

The political equality is central to the theories of democracy. It is argued that women constitute half of the world's population are equal citizens and therefore should share equally with men in public decision-making. Democracy presented as an ideal includes women. Hence, ideal democracy stands for inclusive participation and representation of all citizens in decision making process irrespective of gender, class, ability, culture etc. It involves equality between citizens in the exercise of control over decision making. Women as a group have though consolidated enormous voting power in recent decades, but have been simultaneously disenfranchised with regard to political representation and participation.

Sikkim under monarchy till 1975 had very limited scope for people's participation in governing bodies. There were many limitations that denied free participation of people in the political process. The downfall of monarchy and setting up of democracy in the state of Sikkim in 1975 was historic as it paved the way for free participation of people in decision-making bodies. The emergence of liberal democracy as an alternative political model in Sikkim traced back to the democratic movements of early 1940s which later on gave birth to the institutions like party system, responsible government, local self-government and universal adult suffrage (Yasin and Chhetri 2012; Sinha 1975). The democratic states actually depend on institutional mechanisms of representation to the political process, people's consent, protest and demands in to state policies (Yasin and Chhetri 2012). In the process of democratic movement in Sikkim the presence of women as an active force of change is strongly felt. Since 1940s when political parties mushrooming for a demand of alternative political model in Sikkim on the other hand women also made their presence felt when Ruth Karthak Lepchani formed political party called Sikkim

Independent Front in 1966. However, political representation of women began only in 1974 when Hemlata Chettri became first women member of legislative assembly.

In Sikkim, like in other parts of the country, the women in politics represent somewhat of a paradox. As elsewhere, women constituting approximately half the population hold only a fraction of both appointive and elective political offices within various levels of government. This begs the question of why women are grossly under-represented at all levels of government in Sikkim. This chapter is an attempt to provide a range of possible answers to this question and explores the various aspects of continuity and change in women's political participation and representation in Sikkim. It also discusses women's political participation and representation at both the state and local levels of government in Sikkim. In this study, the term political participation is use in a narrower sense to refer the participation of women in political activities such as voting and participation as a party candidate in the elections. The term representation is use to refer the form of participation through representation in various levels of government.

Demographic Profile of Sikkim

Sikkim, a Himalayan kingdom became a twenty-second state of Indian republic in 1975. The hill state of Sikkim is located between 27° 00 46" to 28° 07 48" north latitude and 88° 00 58" to 88° 55 25" east longitudes. It has total area of 7096 sq.km. Sikkim is uniquely positioned mountainous state having international borders along three-fourths of its boundary therefore it has political and strategic importance. In the north and northeast it is bordered by vast stretches of Tibetan Plateau, Chumbi Valley of Tibet and Bhutan on the east, Nepal on the Western side and the Darjeeling district of West Bengal, India on the South. In keeping with census 2011, the total population of Sikkim is 610,577 in which 323,070 (53 percent) is male while 287,507 (47 percent) constitutes female population. Out of total population 74.85 percent of the state population lives in the rural areas while 25.15 percent of the state population lives in urban areas.

The state Sikkim has four districts they are: North District, West District, South District and the East District. According to Census 2011, North district is the largest (4,226 sq. km) in area but smallest in terms of population with 43,709 persons. West district is the second largest (1166 sq. km.) in area but in terms of population it is the

third highest (136,435). Area wise south district is the smallest among all districts (750 sq. km.) but in terms of population it is positioned the second highest (146,850). East district is highly populated among all districts with 283,583 persons but area wise it is smallest after south district and positioned third with 954 sq. km.

During the decades from 1901 to 2011, Sikkim shows increase of population from 59,014 to 610,577. Unlike population growth, the pattern of sex ratio in Sikkim shows a declining trend. According to 1971 census, the sex ratio of Sikkim is 863 as against national average 930. Even after four decades the sex ratio of Sikkim stays below national average as per 2011 census the sex ratio of India is 940 while Sikkim's sex ratio has been recorded 890 females per 1000 males. The census report of Sikkim from 1901 to 2011 reveals the declining trend of sex ratio. The high sex ratios recorded during first half of the last century drop down to 889 female per 1000 males in 2011 census. The state recorded highest sex ratio in the year 1921 is 970 female per 1000 males and lowest with 835 females per 1000 males in the year 1981.

In the field of education and literacy Sikkim has made notable progress. 1971 census noted the literacy rate of Sikkim as 17.74 percent as against 34.45 percent in the whole country. While after four decades in 2011 census the literacy rate of Sikkim records 82.91 percent which is higher than the country's average literacy rate of 74.04 percent. In India as well as in Sikkim the male literacy rate is higher than female literacy rate. According to 2011 census India's male literacy rate is 82.14 percent and female literacy rate is 65.46 percent the decadal difference is 9.21. Similarly, in Sikkim male literacy rate is 87.29 and female literacy rate is 76.43 percent the decadal difference is 14.97. However, the growth of female literacy rate is remarkable from 8.9 percent in 1971 to 76.43 percent in 2011.

According to Census 2011, the workforce participation rate for females is 25.51 percent against 53.26 percent for males. Rural sector has a better female workforce participation rate of 30.02 percent compared with 53.03 percent for males whereas for urban sector (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2018). 2011 census notes the female workforce participation rate of Sikkim as 39.57 as against 60.16 percent male. In Sikkim rural area has better female workforce participation than urban areas which is 44.6 percent and 24.8 percent respectively.

Participation and Representation

Sikkim is making significant progress towards gender parity in terms of social and economic aspects of life. However, like elsewhere participation and representation remains a major challenge. Broadly, political participation of women includes their involvement with public institutions, including voting, candidacy, campaigning, occupying political office and lobbying individually or through membership in group (Arora 1999; Gleason 2001; Praveen, 2017). Though women have consolidated their presence in some areas of participation such as voting, campaigning and political meetings but have simultaneously disenfranchised with regard to political representation. The situation led to a major challenge to democracy. The greatest of the challenges faced by democracy is the inequality of opportunity. Not all citizens of society have opportunity to participate and represented in policy discussions and many feel marginalized (IDEA, 2013). Women constitute half of the state's population hold only a fraction of both appointive and elective political offices within various levels of government.

Participation and representation are two fundamental elements and principles of democracy (IDEA, 2013). Democracy presented as an ideal includes women. Hence, ideal democracy stands for inclusive participation and representation of all citizens in decision making process irrespective of gender, class, ability, culture etc. It involves equality between citizens in the exercise of control over decision making. The world organisation of parliament affirmed that "the achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarily, drawing enrichment from their differences" (IPU, 2000). Trembly (2007) claims along the same lines that the value of political equality is central to theories of democracy: it is argued that women are equal citizens and therefore, share equally with men in decision making process - otherwise, there is a 'democratic deficit'. Thus, the representation debates mainly focus on issue of inadequate women representation in national legislatures around the world.

In Sikkim, like many other countries in the world, the increase in descriptive representation of women in decision making bodies becomes a prime concern. The fifty percent reservation of seats for women in the urban and rural local bodies has been the major effort to this direction. Due to which large number of women enters in

to local bodies which is the lowest level of political office within the levels of government. However, despite of efforts made by government at local level, growth remains tumultuous even after years of democracy in the state legislature. The growing body of literature that seeks to explain the increases in the number of women elected suggest that changes do not happen automatically, conscious attempts from the part of actors such as political parties, with the specific aim of getting more women elected to the political office are an important factor behind it. Many others(for instance Duverger, 1955) reflect on type of electoral system matters for the number of women elected.

Cross-country research in gender and politics found various factors which determine the representation of women in politics. The factors including social, political, economic and cultural variables impose limits on women and determine the amount of political opportunities available to them. Moore and Shackman (1996), Norris (1986), Paxton (1997) Rule (1987) have noted the relevance of cultural attitudes towards women representation in national legislature. Norris (1985, 1986) found that nations with more egalitarian culture tended to have larger proportions of legislative seats held by women. Several other studies have found the influence of political factors on women representation and stated that women are expected to make greater headway in electoral politics in nations where voter choose among party lists in multimember districts rather than among individual candidates in single-member districts (Rule 1987; Norris 1985, 1986; Matland 1998). The several previous studies have also found strong relationship between socio-economic factors and women in politics. It is established that higher educational attainment and higher rate of female labour force participation may lead to a larger number of women candidates willing to stand for office and to higher rates of female voting (Kenworthy and Malami, 1999). Nonetheless, the studies suggest that along with other variables country's social and economic factors has major role to play in recruitment of women in political office. Therefore, it is important to have brief overview of socio-economic status of women in Sikkim

Socio-economic status of Women in Sikkim
The social and economic factors enable or inhibit the participation of women in politics. Chhibber (2002) writes, since men and women have differential access to socio-economic resources and since socio-economic status influences political

participation women are less politically active than men. Similarly, Gleason (2001) also opines that women have lesser education than men and since they are also less likely to be in the workforce women may be less politically active than men. Therefore, to uplift women socially and economically as well as politically Sikkim has initiated different institutional measures. The affirmative developmental policies and programmes for development of women enable women to realise their full potential. Hence, the women in the state enjoy better position than the women of some other states of Indian union (Chhetri and Yasin 2012). Unlike in other parts of the country, women are not discriminated in terms of sex and have no records of dowry, sati and female infanticide in the state. The numbers of women in government jobs are fairly good. There are visible presence of women in public life and have participated in wide range of activities viz. social, economic, political, cultural etc. The government interventions in empowering women in the state have brought remarkable improvements in the status women which has its implication on overall participation of women in politics.

Education

The study conducted by American sociologists Burns, Scholzman and Verba (2001) found that education is an 'especially powerful predictor of political participation'. Education plays an important role in advancing women's freedom and enhancing their position in society and has greater implication on women political participation. However, in Sikkim prior to 1975 the system of education was meant only for affluent class of people. According to Singh (1985) the feudal rulers might have thought that they could rule the masses only so long as they succeeded in keeping the subjects steeped in the abyss of illiteracy, ignorance and innocence. Therefore, the education was confined within the children of the elitist section. However, SidkeongTulku gave new dimension to education in Sikkim. He established several schools such as Enchey School in Gangtok in 1909, Government Schools in Namchi, Rhenock, and Pathing in 1912 and encouraged common people to send their boys and girls to the newly established schools (Chhetri C., 2012). During his period female education got priority. He opened a girls' school, however it was only meant for the daughters of the kazis and the girls of the common people were not allowed to this school (Chhetri C., 2012). Hence, the education system in monarchical system was highly restricted to elite, the common citizens and women have no access to formal education.

Figure 4.1
Literacy rate in Sikkim (1951-2011)
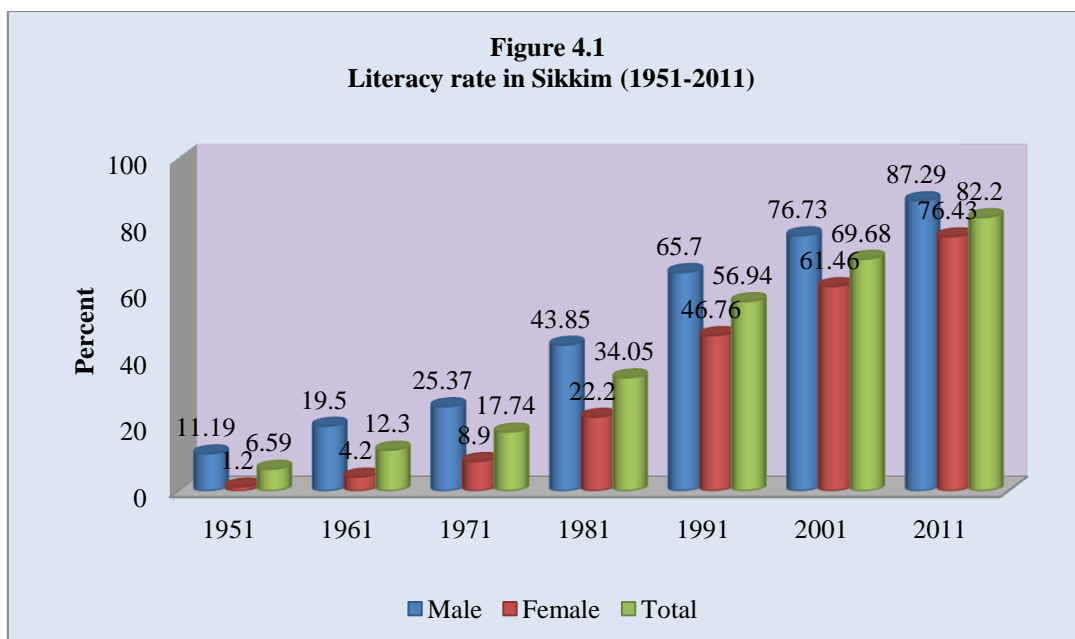
Source: Census of India (1951-2011)

Table 4.1
District wise Literacy Rate in Sikkim (2011)

District	Male	Female	Total
West	84.86	72.12	78.69
South	87.06	76.57	82.06
East	89.22	79.41	84.67
North	87.29	76.43	82.20
State	87.29	76.43	82.20

Source: Chhetri, 2019c

Since 1975 democratically elected government initiated various welfare programmes such as the establishment of schools in different part of the states, the implementation of the national programmes for education like Operation Black Board, National Literacy Mission, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and other non-formal education schemes. These initiatives have greatly improved the literacy rate in general and female literacy in particular (Chhetri and Yasin 2012). Figure 4.1 depicts that there has been a remarkable improvement in the literacy rate of women in last 30 years. According to Census 2011 the literacy rate of Sikkim has reached 82.20 percent which is higher than national rate i.e. 74.04 percent. The male literacy accounted 87.29 percent which is higher than female literacy recorded 76.43 percent. There is gender gap of 10.86 percent. The figure depicts that there is a remarkable improvement in female literacy rate from 1.2 percent in 1951 to 76.43 percent in 2011. The district wise female literacy rate in 2011 presented in table 4.1 reveals east district recorded the highest

literacy rate with 79.41 percent while west district with 72.12 percent is lowest among all districts.

Sex Ratio

The better position of women in the state however, not reflected in sex ratio. The sex ratio in Sikkim is always below the national average and lowest in relation to other north-eastern states. Fig. 4.2 shows the sex ratio in Sikkim and India since 1901. The figure indicates that there is continuous improvement in sex ratio from 1901 to 1921, thereafter, it is declining till 1981. There is certain improvement in sex ratio in 1991, however, it again decline in 2001. In 2011, the sex ratio recorded is 889 which is an improvement from previous 875 in 2001. The district wise sex ratio of the population presented in table 4.2 indicates that there is marked improvement in the sex ratio in all districts, except in South district where there is fall in the total sex ratio from 927 in 2001 to 914 in 2011. It is also to note that with exception of west districts, the sex ratio in all the districts is below national average in the Census year of 2011. The Fig. 4.2 also indicates that excepting the year 1921 and 1931 the sex ratio in Sikkim is always much below the national average in both pre-merger and post-merger period. The major decline in the sex ratio was recorded in 1971 and 1981 census. The adverse decline of ratio in the state is mainly due to the high death rate of rural women aged from 15 to 50 years (Chhetri and Yasin, 2012). Another cause of decline of sex ratio is high maternal mortality rate. Mostly in rural areas (53 percent) deliveries take place outside the health centres and carried out by relatives and untrained midwives. Furthermore, 41.24 percent of rural women and 22.91 percent of the urban women do not get antenatal care (Chhetri and Yasin, 2012).

Figure 4.2
Sex Ratio: Sikkim and India 1901-2011
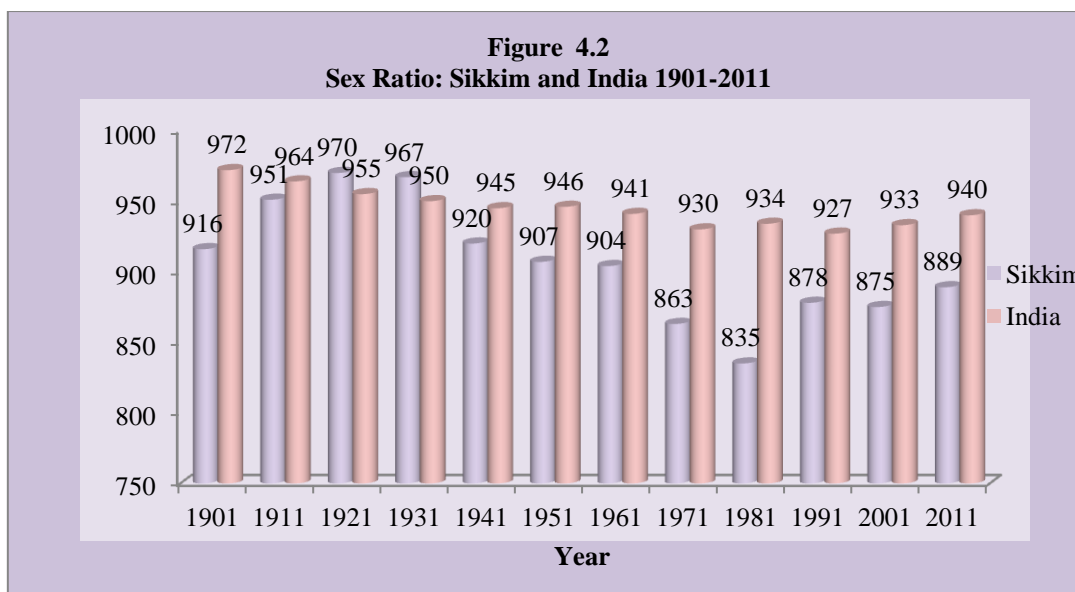
Source: Sikkim Human Development Report, 2014

Table 4.2
District wise sex ratios in Sikkim (2011)

Year	Unit	West	South	East	North	State
2011	Female per 1000 male	941	914	872	769	889

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report, 2014

Economic Status

The status of women is very much associated with their contribution towards the economic activities and access to it. Dixon-Mueller (1993) opines "women's gainful employment outside home exposes her to the outside world; delays age at marriage, provide a sense of financial independence and increase her bargaining power and autonomy within the household and society". Similarly, Andersen (1975) sees that the large percentage of women who were housewives in past decades as the reason for women's lower political participation and concomitantly attributes the increase in women's political participation in recent decades to the corresponding increase in the percentage of women employed in the labour force. The close association of employment to that of political participation indicates that employment is central to an explanation of the political behaviour of women. In Sikkim the state government has reserved 30 percent of seats for women in public employment (Sikkim HDR, 2015). As a result in most of the government departments, the 50 percent of employee are women in some departments, they outnumber the male counterpart (Chhetri and Yasin, 2012). As per Sikkim Human Development Report 2014, Sikkim's work participation rate is almost 51 percent in 2011. While 60 percent is male and 40

percent is female. Female work participation is much higher than the national average of around 26 percent. Table 4.3 shows that female main workers have declined from 29 percent in 1991 to 24 percent in 2011. However, the proportion of female marginal workers (total female population) has risen from 2 percent in 1991 to 15 percent in 2011. The female non-workers declined from 70 percent in 1991 to 60 percent in 2011.

Table 4.3 Distribution of Workers in Sikkim by percentage (1991, 2001, 2011)												
Persons	Total Workers			Main Workers			Marginal Workers			Non-workers		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011
Total	42	49	51	40	39	38	1	9	13	58	51	50
Male	51	58	60	58	51	50	0.43	7	10	49	42	40
Female	30	39	40	29	27	24	2	13	15	70	61	60

Source: Sikkim Human Development Report 2014

Women access to resources like money, land etc are key to their economic empowerment. Verba (1967) also pointed out that that likelihood that any individual will participate in politics is related to the resources he possesses. Traditionally, the women have enjoyed less control and access to these resources. They have been discriminated and denied to inherit parental property or possessing productive assets. In Sikkim much progress has been made in terms of women access to property. The state government enacted the Sikkim Succession Act 2008 under which both son and daughter is the equal beneficiary of parental property. Today, both sons and daughters of Sikkim enjoy equal inheritance rights. Besides, women's property rights, the emergence of developmental projects and the expansion of the private sector have opened up new employment avenues, with women benefiting from these opportunities. Recently, women of Sikkim are actively involved in taking the entrepreneurial roles (Sikkim Human Development Report 2014).

Besides, there are many other initiatives taken by government in the last past two decades which place women in the central of developmental schemes which directly or indirectly helps in bringing changes in traditional patriarchal thinking of society. Sikkim government introduced the rule of mentioning the mother's name along with the father's name in all government documents. It made mandatory the consent of both husband and wife for the sale and purchase of property. All the incentives come

from the government are given in the name of mother. The governmental benefits like Chief Minister's housing scheme, GCI sheets, LPG stove etc are issued in the name of mother.

The Government of Sikkim has launched scheme called Educated Women Unemployed Co-operative Society (EWUCS) under the department of Co-operative Society to help women venture into contract and construction. Another scheme named, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has been instrumental to economically empower women. The rural women of Sikkim have active participation in Self Help Groups (SHGs) under the Swarna Jyanti Grameen Swarozgar Yojana. Till 2012, out of all SHGs, 72 percent are all women SHGs (Sikkim HDR, 2014).

Though, immense progress has been made to empower women, there are certain areas of concern to be mentioned here. Sikkim HDR 2014 recorded that 59 percent of women workers are engaged in agriculture related work where earnings are typically low and uncertain. Secondly, Women continue to be under-represented in the highest levels of bureaucracy. In 2011, only 12 percent of women comprise the total departmental heads belonging to the IAS cadre within the state (Sikkim HDR 2014). Lastly, though women in Sikkim have no experience of evil practices like dowry, sati and female infanticide, but there is a presence of domestic violence or violence perpetrated against women. In 2009, there were forty-one reported cases of crime against women in Sikkim (Barnes & Rai, 2018). The National Family Health Survey (NFHS) records 3.5 percent women in the 15-49 age groups have experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their husband (NFHS 4, 2015-16).

Political Participation of Women: Pre Merger Scenario

Sikkim had been a monarchical state before its merger with Indian Union in 1975. Monarchy under Namgyal dynasty survived for 333 years from 1642 to 1975. During monarchical rule, Sikkim was governed by royal proclamation issued by Chogyal (King). There was no provision of elected people's representation in governing bodies. The administration was entirely ruled by Kazis and Thikedars. Not only administration but mass population of Sikkim was also under the subjugation of these feudal lords. The kingdom of Sikkim under Chogyal saw first election in 1953.

However, the electoral system had many limitations that denied free participation in the political process (Chhetri, 2019d). This election lacks a critical element common in democratic elections. Chhetri (2019d) argues that 'election under Chogyal rule was undemocratic and authoritarian as it simply excludes the majority of the population from participation in government. Furthermore, candidacy to the State Council was denied to those under 30, in this way large number of population debarred from contesting elections. Besides, the electorate required to be over 25 years of age and property tax payer'.

The emergence of political parties contributed to the mobilization of people in terms of political participation. As India earned its independence in 1947, the ideas of independence inspired the educated and intellectual mass of Sikkim to do away the yoke of feudalism and to establish democracy. Consequently, three political organizations 'The Praja Sudharak Samaj' at Gangtok, the 'Praja Sammelan' at Temi Tarku and the 'Praja Mandal' at Chakhung were formed. Later, in 1947 these organizations merged to form first political party called Sikkim State Congress intended to replace monarchy and to establish democracy in Sikkim. Political parties have been identified as crucial to the establishment of democratic institutions. Apart from presenting issues of political importance, the Sikkim State Congress played a very crucial role by educating the masses through campaigns and movements. These resulted into the Royal Proclamation of 1953 and the constitution of the Sikkim State Council. The Council consists of a President, twelve elected and five nominated members. The first general election in Sikkim was held in 1953. In the election, all the Bhutia- Lepcha seats were captured by the Sikkim National Party while all the Nepalese seats won by Sikkim State Congress. Nevertheless, this election marked the beginning of electoral experience of the people of Sikkim.

Table 4.4 Electoral result of the political parties in Sikkim from 1953-1974						
Political Parties	1953	1958	1967	1970	1973	1974
Sikkim State Congress	6	8	2	4	2	-
Sikkim National Party	6	6	5	7	9	1
Sikkim National Congress	-	-	8	5	5	-
Sikkim Congress	-	-	-	-	-	31
Independents	-	-	3	2	2	-
Total	12	14	18	18	18	32

Sources: Chhetri (2019d)

Until merger of Sikkim with Indian Union in 1975, Sikkim witnessed six elections to the Council (Table 4.4). However, election till 1975 was exclusionary in nature due to inherent complex electoral rules in the state. In the words of Chhetri (2019d) "elections have become the domain of a broad coalition of three strategic political groups: politicians, bureaucrats and local elites". Secondly, by controlling suffrage and nomination, king could eliminate challenges to their rule. Finally, limited enfranchisement in which poor, landless and not-tax payers were denied of suffrage (Chhetri, 2019d). On account of complex electoral rules, the institutionalization of electoral system since 1953 does not lead to popular participation in Sikkim. Moreover, the State Council was not only an elite body and denied popular participation but it was also exclusionary in terms of gender balance in the decision making process. The State Council till 1973 was composed of all male members. It was predominantly a 'male-club'. There was not even a single woman representative in the Council. It was only in general election 1974 a woman member enters into Council.

During monarchical period, the landlords (Kazis and Thikadars) were the active functionaries in the king's ministry. Women were nowhere found to be the holders of position of landlord, neither in king's ministry. The rights of women were further curtailed when Sikkim Durbar on 15 March 1969 initiated proclamation of scrapping Sikkimese citizenship of women who marries non-Sikkimese. Despite of odds created under monarchical system, some women were proved to be politically active. Indeed, formation of political party – Sikkim Independent Front Party by Ruth Karthak Lepchani in 1966 had set a major milestone in the history of political participation of women. Lepchani under the banner of party wanted to work for the upliftment of Lepcha community. However she loses her Sikkimese citizenship being married to an Indian Muslim. As per Sikkim Durbar Proclamation 1969 "A Sikkimese women marrying a non-Sikkimese shall automatically lose her Sikkim Subjects" (Basnet, 1974). It ruled that a women married to non-sikkimese was not considered as the citizen of Sikkim. Hence, the fight of Lepchani was based on equal right against discriminatory practices prevailed during monarchical system. In the process she was jailed and interned six times within 12 years and had to suffer the atrocities under monarchical rule (Roy, 2010). Thus, the undemocratic and authoritarian system under

monarchy undermined women participation. Their presence is negligible in almost every aspects of life.

Emergence of Democracy and Political Participation: Post Merger Scenario

Sikkim polity once governed by authoritarian rule, accepted liberal democracy as an alternative political model. Sikkim under authoritarian rule saw the absence of a competitive party system, less involvement of citizens in decision making process. The people were not allowed to organise themselves for their rights. According to Yasin and Chhetri (2012) Sikkim's progress towards democracy and stability is marked by two historic developments - first, the introduction of electoral system based on universal adult franchise and second, the abolition of the institution of monarchy in the 1970s. The democratic set up since 1975 has undermined the influence of the kazis and aristocrats and opened the opportunities for mass participation in the process of decision-making (Yasin and Chhetri 2012).

Yasin and Chhetri (2012) writes as the society start experiencing the process of modernisation, the profound changes take place in psychological, political and economic life of human beings. Politically, people start thinking about the new form of political organization, which gives maximum freedom and choice in decision making (Yasin and Chhetri 2012). It is only in democratic setup which provide vast array of opportunities to the people to participate in social, economic, political and cultural aspects of life. Similarly, the transition from feudal to liberal democratic system brought about many social and political changes in Sikkim. The special attention has been made to make its society modern and developed (Yasin and Chhetri 2012). The task would remain incomplete if women are not made partners in process of development. The equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to sustain democracy. Therefore, since the establishment of democracy, the state government has consciously worked to maintained gender balance by not discriminating on the basis of gender and giving due respect to both genders.

Participation of Women in Voting

Democractic experience in the post-merger period witness much concerted or unified effort to create inclusive participatory spaces for women. Women in Sikkim have made significant gains in the areas of their participation as voters in the post-merger period. Hence, the number of women voters is the largest and now almost at par with

that of men. The participation of women in Sikkim as voter in assembly elections has increased significantly over a period of time. The 65.71 percent women voter turnout in the year 1979 has reached 78.38 percent in 2019 (Fig. 4.3). The assembly elections 2019 recorded almost co-equal numbers of men and women participation as voter where men voters is more than women voters minimally by 0.48 percent. In fact, in 2014 assembly election the women voter turnout percentage is 81.31 which is higher than men 80.31 percent. The voting percentage of women of Sikkim in assembly elections is much higher than average voting percentage of women in general elections to Lok Sabha. There has been a remarkable growth in the average voting turnout of women in general elections to Lok Sabha from 46.6 percent in 1962 to around 67 percent in the year 2019 (table 4.5). The gender gap in voting turnout also decline from 15.4 percent in 1962 to 0.2 percent in 2019. The voter turnout is almost equal among men and women in 2019 general election. In fact, the general election 2019 had witnessed the highest women voter turnout among all the elections.

Figure 4.3
Voting Turnout for Assembly Elections (Sikkim)
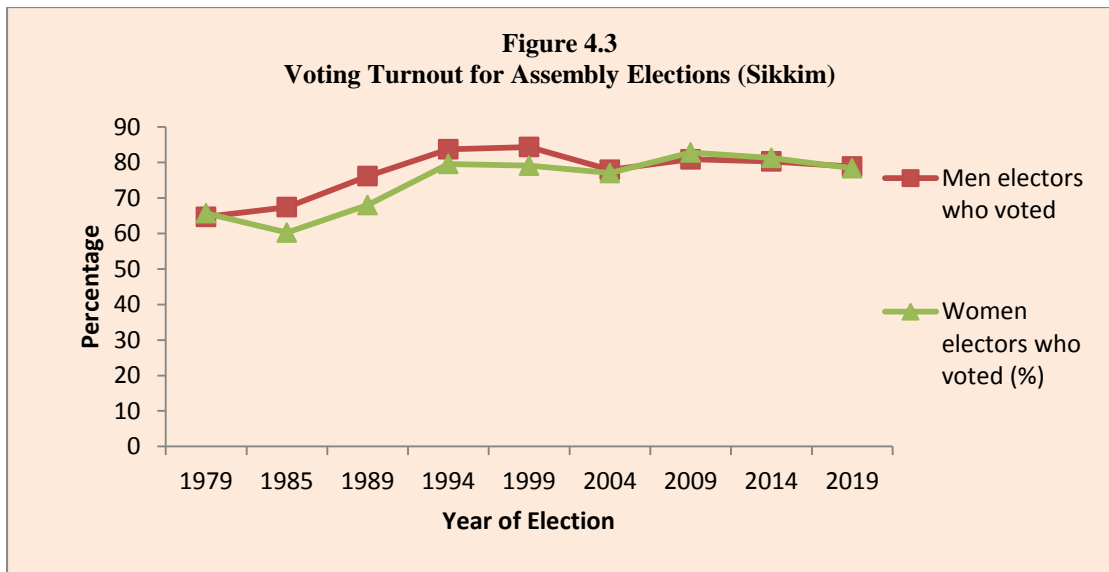
Source: Statistical Report on General Election to the Legislative Assembly of Sikkim, Election Commission of India

Table 4.5 Percentage of Voting in Various General Elections (1951-2019)				
Year of Election	Votes Polled by Women over Women Registered Electors (%)	Votes Polled by Men over Men Registered Electors (%)	Voter Turnout (%)	Difference in Turnout
1951	-	-	45.67	-
1957	-	-	47.74	-
1962	46.6	62	55.42	15.4
1967	55.5	66.7	61.33	11.2
1971	49.1	60.9	55.29	11.8
1977	54.9	65.6	60.49	10.9
1980	51.2	62.2	56.92	11.0
1984	59.2	68.4	64.01	9.2
1989	57.3	66.1	61.95	8.8
1991	50.6	61.6	55.88	11.0
1996	53.4	62.1	57.94	8.7
1998	57.7	65.7	61.97	8.0
1999	55.6	63.9	59.99	8.3
2004	53.6	62.2	57.98	8.6
2009	55.8	60.3	58.19	4.5
2014	65.5	67	66.44	1.5
2019	67.2	67	67.09	0.2

State-wise, three north-east states viz. Tripura (92.9%), Nagaland (91.3%) and Assam (90.38%) recorded highest percent of women voter turnout among all the states/UTs (Fig. 4.4). Among north-east states, Sikkim stand first in terms of women representation in assembly; as far as voter turnout of women is concerned it occupied 6th position. Nagaland with zero percent of women representation in state assembly has second highest percent of women voting turnout in election. Thus, north-east states including Sikkim have significant percent of women participate in voting. As per recent electoral data voting percent of women of Sikkim is higher than some of the states which have highest number of women representation in their respective assemblies such as Chattisgarh (77.3%), Haryana (71.1%), Uttar Pradesh (60.3%) and Madhya Pradesh (70.1%).

Figure 4.4
State-wise Women Voting Turnout in Assembly elections (as on 2018)

State/UTs	Percentage
Puducherry	85.44
NCT of Delhi	65.1
West Bengal	88.04
Uttar Pradesh	60.3
Uttarakhand	68.1
Tripura	92.9
Tamil Nadu	74.3
Sikkim	81.4
Rajasthan	75.4
Punjab	78.9
Odhisha	74.6
Nagaland	91.3
Mizoram	82.1
Meghalaya	88.4
Manipur	81.4
Maharashtra	62.2
Madhya Pradesh	70.1
Kerala	78.14
Karnataka	70.5
Jharkhand	67
Jammu & Kashmir	66.2
Himachal Pradesh	76.2
Haryana	71.1
Gujarat	69.5
Goa	84.6
Chhattisgarh	77.3
Assam	90.38
Arunachal Pradesh	78.9
Andhra Pradesh	74.1

Source: Women and Men in India (Statistical Compilation of Gender related Indicators in India 2018), Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.

Dagar (2011) observed that "women's presence in proclaiming the democratic process in India has been consistent, if their voting numbers are a criterion". According to data on Indian elections over 50 years, there has been an increasing significance of women voters in a democracy. It is observed that gender gap in voting being reduced over time and across all states of India (Kapoor & Ravi, 2014) including Sikkim. There has been a visible increase of women voters and achieved parity with men voters in elections. One of the key factors that determine their high level of participation and non participation in voting process is women's interest in politics. According to National Election Study 2004, eighty-nine percent of women who had an interest in politics also had high levels of voting participation in the 2004 general elections (Rai, 2011). Interest in politics coupled with "vote matters" factors played

very crucial role in determining proportion of women voting. This implies that women who consider that their vote matters in electing new government had the highest participation in voting (Rai, 2011) Another explanation to increase participation of women as voter may the widening of women's access of educational opportunities and their increased participation in the workforce (Norris, 2002). Chhibber (2002) found that educated employed women are more likely to be interested in politics. Thus, among others, interest in politics and educational opportunities are the determinant factors of women's voting in India.

In Sikkim the reason for increasing number of women as voter can be found on the mobilization efforts of political parties. The political parties and their working members in the state, districts and ward level have mobilize and educate the first-time voters in exercising franchise. The general awareness among the community is significant to increase participation. The social media has played a very important role to this direction. The large survey conducted by CSDS indicated some perceptible link between social media usage and voting behaviour (CSDS, 2019). Rao (2019) also highlighted on the extensive usage of social media in 2019 general elections and its implication on overall participation. Therefore, the explanation of increasing women voter turnout in Sikkim may be found in the extensive of use of social media by political parties, politicians, and supporters for reaching out general masses.

Women in Political Parties

Besides voting, contesting elections is very important dimensions of political participation. The task of recruitment and selection of political elites are entirely within the helm of political parties. Kunovich & Paxton (2005) argue that in order for an individual, man or women, to run for political office, he or she must be selected and supported by a political party. Indeed the selection of party candidates is viewed as most important function of political parties. Similarly, the International Institute for Democratic and Electoral Assistance (2013) also mentioned that "in almost all political systems, no matter what electoral regime, it is the political parties, not the voters that constitute the real gatekeepers to elected offices". Therefore, the role of political parties considered important- both in terms of the number of women that offered tickets for contesting elections and the women leaders with the internal party structure.

As far role of political parties of Sikkim is concerned, their claimed support for the reservation of women by political parties is little more than lip service. The data shows very few women gets party tickets to contest elections (table 4.6).In 1979 elections out of 11 women contestants only four were the party tickets holders and rest belonged to independents. Similar pattern follows in 1985 election where four women got tickets from national parties and two from state parties, while, while majority were independents candidates. In this two assembly elections, no women got elected. However, in 1989 number of women contestants fell down to four. Out of which, two were from state parties and two from national parties. A woman from state party won the election. In 1994 assembly elections, nine women were in the electoral fray, out of which four women contestants got tickets from state parties, one from national party remaining four were independents candidates. One woman state party ticket holder won the election. In 1999 and 2004, women contestant fell down to six. There was an absence of women independent candidates which also may be the possible reason to decline from nine in the previous elections to six in 1999 and 2004 assembly elections. In 2004, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) the only state party to filled three women contestants in the election. In this election all the three women state party ticket holders got elected. In 2009 assembly election, the number of women contestants increased to 15. Of total, six were filled by registered unrecognized parties, four belonged to state party, and another three were the national party ticket holders. Remaining two were independent candidates. All the four women fielded by SDF party won the election. In the subsequent elections, women contestants decline marginally. In 2014, out of 11 women contestants, six women belonged to national party, another three women fielded by SDF and one was from Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) party. All the three women fielded by SDF party won the election. Similar pattern can be seen in the recent 2019 assembly elections. Out of total 16 women contestants, four women were SDF party ticket holders, two belonged to SKM and three women fielded by Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP). Remaining five women were fielded by national parties. In this election, three women elected to Assembly in which two are the SDF party ticket holders and one from SKM party.

Table 4.6 Women Candidates by Party in Assembly Elections (1979-2019)										
Party Name	1979	1985	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019	Total
State Party										
Sikkim Congress R	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sikkim SangramParishad	-	1	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	6
Rising Sun Party	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sikkim Democratic Front	-	-	-	1	1	3	4	3	4	15
Sikkim Krantikari Morcha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
Sikkim Prajatantra Congress	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
National Party										
Indian National Congress	-	3	2	1	4	1	2	3	4	20
Janata Party	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Bharatya Janata Party	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	4
Nationalist Congress Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
All India Trinamool Congress	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Registered Unrecognized Party										
Sikkim Himali Rajya Parisad	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	3
Sikkim Jan-Ekta Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Sikkim Gorkha Prajatantric Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Hamro Sikkim Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Sikkim Republican Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Jai Maha Bharath Party	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Independents	7	5	-	4	-	-	2	1	-	19
Total	11	11	4	9	6	6	15	11	16	86

Source: Calculated on the basis of data available with Election Commission of India (1979-2014). eci.gov.in

It has been observed that from 1979 to 2019, the maximum numbers of women candidates fielded by the Indian National Congress Party from national parties. From the state parties Sikkim Democratic Front fielded highest number of women candidates in electoral fray. Surprisingly, large numbers of women are contesting as Independent candidates. Considering the number of women independent candidates failed to win the election, it is observed that their self participation in elections do not shows an encouraging trend. It also indicates the reluctance of political parties to put women as party candidates. An independent women stands on a weaker side because

political system here works through political parties. If women want to hold political office, they have to make place for themselves in political parties. Moreover, all the women contestants who won the elections belonged to state parties. Therefore, it is pertinent to field women candidate by state parties to increase women representation in the state assembly. However, the party-wise analysis of women clearly indicates that the parties are shy to give tickets to women.

This has also been the trend for national political parties while fielding women candidates in general elections (table 4.7). For instance, there is an increase in number of women candidates by national parties from 137 in 2009 to 171 in 2019 elections. However, party wise analysis of women candidates reveals no significant changes in a decade, that neither BJP nor any other political party is fielding enough women candidates. In 2009 the highest percent of women candidates is fielded by All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) with 18.5 percent of total candidates of AITC. Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) stood second with 10.2 percent women ticket holders. The Bharatya Janata Party (BJP) positioned third with 10.1 percent and Indian National Congress (INC) with 9.7 percent candidates being women ranked fourth. Similar pattern continues in 2019 Lok Sabha elections with not much change in percentage of women candidates fielded by parties. AITC again top the rank with 37 percent of women being party ticket holders. Communist Party of India Marxist (CPIM) with 14.4 percent occupied second position, Congress and BJP ranked third and fourth with 12.8 percent and 12.6 percent respectively. There are variations in percentage of women fielded by parties as highest is 37 and 2.9 percent is the lowest, but all the parties are fielding significantly less than the benchmark of 33 percent.

Table 4.7 Women Candidates by national political parties in 2009 and 2019 Lok Sabha Elections						
	2009			2019		
Party Name	No. of Total Candidates	No. of Women Candidates	Women as a percent of total candidates	No. of Total Candidates	No. of Women Candidates	Women as a percent of total candidates
AITC	27	5	18.5	62	23	37
BJP	433	44	10.1	435	55	12.6
BSP	500	28	5.6	383	24	6.2
CPI	56	4	7.1	48	4	8.3
CPIM	82	6	7.3	69	10	14.4
INC	440	43	9.7	420	54	12.8
NCP	68	7	10.2	34	1	2.9
INDEPENDENTS	3831	207	5.4	3443	226	6.5

Source: Calculated on the basis of data available with Election Commission of India (2009& 2019) eci.gov.in

In the recently held 17[th]Lok Sabha election, there were 724 (9 percent) women contestants out of total 8026. Surprisingly, only 24 percent of them were the ticket-holders of national party (Table 4.8). Another 8 percent were state party ticket holders while 37 percent of the women candidates belonged to Registered Unrecognised parties and 31 percent of them were independent candidates. The national and state parties continue to be hesitant in fielding women in electoral fray.

Table 4.8 Women Candidates by Party in 2019 elections		
Political Party	No. of Women Contestants	Percentage
Women in Registered (Unrecognised) Parties	270	37
Women as Independent Candidates	226	31
Women in National Parties	171	24
Women in State Parties	57	8
Total	724	100

Source: Election Commission of India 2019, https://eci.gov.in/statistical-report/statistical-reports/

All these parties whether national or state have fielded significantly less number of women than 30 percent threshold. The figure of women fielded by state parties of Sikkim is even more dismal than many national parties of India. There are commitments made by party to give equal position to women in social, economic and political aspects (SDF Election Manifesto, 1994). Undoubtedly, many commitments towards social and economic empowerment of women are fulfilled but their

commitments of political leadership of women are far from achieved. In every election, declarations are made for granting certain number of seats to women, however, no party has fulfilled their commitment. The election manifesto of SKM declares to pass 33 percent reservation of seats for women in Sikkim Legislative Assembly (SKM Election Manifesto, 2019). However, while fielding party candidates for election only two women candidates got tickets from SKM party. What more is, in the 10th Legislative Assembly no women are given minister position as all are filled by the male members. All the political parties have shown interest in women's problems and make agenda stressing on women's issues in their campaigns. However, they hardly make any sincere efforts to reach out to women or to give them position of authority. Very few women have achieved the leadership position of party. Bharati Sharma from SKM party is designated as first women leader of political party in Sikkim. She was elected as the working president of SKM in the year 2013. Later on in 2019, Bina Basnett becomes the president of Hamro Sikkim Party. Although they are successful in holding premier party positions, the main dictating force behind the party is male.

Not only state parties, the national parties are also failed to keep their commitment. The party constitutions of Indian National Congress (INC) and Trinamool Congress mandates 33 percent seats in different Committees of party are to be reserved for women. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has a ruling that seven of the 30 members in its executive body be women. However, these constitutional rules are hardly followed. In the case of the INC, out of 42 only five members of the executive body, are women (Ravi and Sandhu, 2014). Within the Trinamool Congress, there is not even a single woman among 30 Vice Presidents; and only two out of the eight General Secretaries, and one out of 14 Secretaries, are women (Ravi and Sadhu, 2014). Similarly, the AAP have 24 members in National Executive, of which only two are women (Ravi and Sandhu, 2014).

Moreover, every political party have their own women wings which could be incubation for increase women enrolment in decision making. However, their membership in these bodies hardly translates into actual women representation in decision making bodies. Kishwar (1996) argues that even the best of women parliamentarians feel sidelined and powerless within the party that few women leader

have not been able to facilitate the entry of larger number of women in electoral competition and party politics and so remain an ineffective minority.

Women in the Ministry

Till present day, women in Sikkim is yet to get chance to represent as Chief Minister and leader of opposition. In so far as membership in the cabinet ministers is concerned, women in Sikkim have never been adequately represented. Women are not represented in cabinet until 1994 that the first woman was appointed as a minister. RinzingOngmu was elected from Ranka Constituency became the first woman minister (also only women member in the Assembly) and served in the position from 1994 to 1999. The year 1999 marked a remarkable event in the history of Sikkim when Kalawati Subba the only woman in the Legislative Assembly elected from Yuksom Constituency became the first woman speaker of Sikkim. Although there was comparatively large number (3 women was elected as compared to earlier one woman) of women enters into assembly in 2004, no woman was given chance to serve in the minister position. In 2009,Neeru Sewa and Tilu Gurung inducted to the ministry. This period has the highest number of women in the ministry so far. In the following assembly election of 2014, Tulsi Devi Rai was taken into the cabinet. Although three women candidates are returned to the assembly, none of them are included in the cabinet formed in 2019.

Representation of women in Legislature

In democratic institutions, legislatures are the central through which individual voters affect policy outcomes. The electoral systems for choosing legislators vary dramatically by country but regardless of the electoral system, voters elect legislators to represent their interests in policy making (Thames and Williams, 2013).The legislature is the primary institution through which representation occurs. Representation is a major path to women's participation in the decision-making process or increased decision-making power will lead to women's empowerment in true sense of term. The decision-making power of women gives them greater ability to influence matters that affect day to day lives in the community and the society at large. Given the importance of legislature to representation, it is needless to say much attention is paid to women's legislative representation. However, when it comes to decision-making or ministerial positions within legislative bodies, women are a

distinct minority, their roles in public life is limited to casting votes during elections (Devi and Lakshmi, 2005). Similarly, in Sikkim also the major challenge facing women today, therefore, are to increase their representation in the highest decision-making bodies.

In Sikkim, the elections of 1974 marked as historic in terms of political representation of women as the first women member Hemlata Chettri was elected to State Assembly from Gyalshing constituency. From this period onwards, women are continuously motivating to take part in politics. Table 4.9 depicts the representation of women in Assembly from 1974 to 2019. In Assembly election 1979, nine women contested the election. This is the first time in the history of democratic system of the state of Sikkim, that large number of women contested for the election. The contestants are Ruth Karthak Lepchani, Manita Pradhan, Fulmaya Limbuni, Durga Lama Pradhan, Shova Kanti Lepcha, Dambar Kumari Pradhan, Diki Choden Bhutia, Santosh Nirash and Phutik Bhutia (ECI, 1979). Ruth Karthak contested from three constituencies therefore; there was presence of women in eleven constituencies. In this election no women candidate won the election. Nevertheless, it sets a milestone showing the way to other women for the participation in political decision making bodies. Similarly, in 1985 election, eleven women were in the fray, they were Manita Pradhan, Durga Lama Pradhan, DikiLhamu, Kamala Subba, Laden Bhutia, Ruth Karthak Lapchani, Rinzing Ongmo, Dil Kumari Bhandari, Kalawati Subba, Dhan Maya Chettri and Damber Kumari Pradhan (ECI, 1994). Again no one gets elected.

However, in 1989 the number of women contestant falls from eleven in the previous to four. The four women contestants were Ram Maya Chettri, Chong Lamu Bhuta, Mandodra Sharma and Dawa Lhamu. In this election, one woman comes out victorious making 3.1 percent women in Assembly. In the subsequent election of 1994, nine women were in the fray, it was an increase from four in preceding election. The women members contested for 1994 election were Kalawati Subba, Sunita Pradhan, Dil Kumari Bhandari, Budha Maya Subba, Manita Pradhan, Chung Chung Bhutia, Kesang Bhutia, Rinzing Ongmu and Dhan Maya (ECI, 1994).In this election only single woman member elected to 32 members Assembly thus making 3.1 percent women in assembly.

In 1999 assembly election, the number of women contestant declined from nine in the previous election to six. The six women contestants were Kalawati Subba, Durga Lama, Dil Kumari Bhandari, Reeta Karki, Dawa Lamu and Yanchen Doma Bhutia. Again only one woman wins the election consisting 3.1 percent women in assembly. In 2004 election there were six women in the fray. They were Kalawati Subba, Purna Kri. Rai, Shanti Chhetri, Manita Thapa, Dil Kumari Darnal and Nimthit Lepcha. It is interesting to note that for the first in election history three women win the election thus making 9.3 percent women in state assembly. The women representation has increased from 3.1 percent to 9.3 percent in 2004 election. Even more interesting is the assembly election of 2009 in which number of women contestant was fifteen. It was an increase from six in the previous election. The fifteen women in the fray were Chandra Maya Subba, Laden Lepcha, Nirmala Kami, Purna Kumari Rai, Bhim Shila Rai, Anjana Tamang, Sheela Rai, Dil Kri. Chhetri, Tulshi Devi Rai, Tilu Gurung, Snjukta Rai, Neeru Sewa, Tika Ghatani, Bindu Lepcha and Sumita Rai. In this election four women members were elected to state assembly. It was an increase from 9.3 in the previous election to 12.5 percent. This election records the highest percentage of women in assembly so far thus; create a new milestone in the history of women representation.

General Elections	Year	Total Number of Seats	Women Contestants	Number of elected Women in SLA	Percentage of Women in SLA
First	1974	32	-	1	3.1
Second	1979	32	11	0	0
Third	1985	32	11	0	0
Fourth	1989	32	4	1	3.1
Fifth	1994	32	9	1	3.1
Sixth	1999	32	6	1	3.1
Seventh	2004	32	6	3	9.3
Eighth	2009	32	15	4	12.5
Ninth	2014	32	11	3	9.3
Tenth	2019	32	16	3	9.3

Table 4.9
Representation of women in Sikkim Legislative Assembly (SLA)

Source: Calculated on the basis of data available with Election Commission of India, 1974-2019. eci.gov.in

In 2014 assembly election number of women contestant falls from fifteen to eleven. The eleven women in the fray were Chandra Maya Limboo, Man Maya Limbu, Laden Lepcha, Bharati Sharma, Tulshi Devi Rai, Yasodha Barakoti, Dik Maya Basnet, Tilu

Gurung, Tashi Rai, Eli Pal and Rajeney Gurung. Out of eleven contestants three women win the election consisting 9.3 percent women in assembly. In 2019 assembly election, the number of women contestant increased from eleven in the previous election to sixteen. Out of sixteen contestants only three women win the election consisting 9.3 percent women in the assembly.

The present 9.3 percent representation of women in Sikkim legislature is higher than several major states of India viz. Delhi (8.6%), Gujarat (7.1%), Himachal Pradesh (5.9%), Kerala (5.7%), Karnataka (3.1%), Odisha (7.5%), Punjab (5.1%) (table 4.10). State-wise analysis reveals that the proportion of women representation in Sikkim legislature is higher than all the north-east states- Arunachal Pradesh (3.3%), Assam (6.3%), Manipur (3.3%), Meghalaya (5%), Tripura (5%), Mizoram and Nagaland has no women representatives in their respective assemblies. The proportion of women in state assemblies varies from 0 percent (Nangaland and Mizoram) to 14 percent (Chhattisgarh and Haryana). The highest numbers of women contestants are in the states of Chhattisgarh (10.4 percent), West Bengal (10.2 percent), Jharkhand (10 percent) and Uttar Pradesh (10 percent). State wise analysis of successful women candidate in Assembly elections revealed that 7 States have 10 percent and above women candidate in their respective Assemblies. Among them Chhattisgarh and Haryana are in the top that is 14.4 percent each followed by Puducherry (13.3 percent), West Bengal (13.3 percent), Bihar (11.5 percent), Uttar Pradesh (10.6 percent) and Madhya Pradesh (10 percent). On the lower side of representation it falls down to zero women representation in the State Assemblies of Mizoram and Nagaland. Erstwhile Jammu & Kashmir records 2.3 percent, while Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Karnataka climb up to be around 3 percent.

Sl. No.	State Legislative Assemblies	Total no. of Assembly Seats	Number of Contestants				Elected			%age of women in SLA
			Women	Men	Total	Percentage of women contestants	Women	Men	Total	%
1	Andhra Pradesh (2014)	294	317	3591	3910	8	27	266	293	9.2
2	Arunachal Pradesh (2014)	60	6	149	155	3.9	2	58	60	3.3
3	Assam (2016)	126	91	973	1064	8.6	8	118	126	6.3
4	Bihar (2015)	243	273	3177	3450	8	28	215	243	11.5
5	Chhattisgarh (2018)	90	132	1133	1269	10.4	13	77	90	14.4

Table 4.10
Representation of Women in State Legislative Assemblies at the Recent Time

6	Delhi (2015)	70	66	606	673	10	6	64	70	8.6
7	Goa (2017)	40	19	232	251	7.5	2	38	40	5
8	Gujarat (2017)	182	126	1702	1828	7	13	169	182	7.1
9	Haryana (2014)	90	116	1235	1351	8.6	13	77	90	14.4
10	Himachal Pradesh (2017)	68	19	319	338	5.6	4	64	68	5.9
11	Jammu & Kashmir (2014)	87	28	803	831	3.4	2	85	87	2.3
12	Jharkhand (2014)	81	111	1025	1136	10	8	69	77	9.9
13	Karnataka (2018)	224	219	2417	2636	8.3	7	216	223	3.1
14	Kerala (2016)	140	110	1093	1203	9.1	8	132	140	5.7
15	Madhya Pradesh (2018)	230	250	2644	2899	8.6	21	209	230	10
16	Maharashtra (2014)	288	277	3842	4119	6.7	20	268	288	6.9
17	Manipur (2017)	60	11	255	266	4.1	2	58	60	3.3
18	Meghalaya (2018)	60	32	329	361	8.9	3	56	59	5
19	Mizoram (2018)	40	18	191	209	8.6	0	40	40	0
20	Nagaland (2018)	60	5	190	195	2.6	0	59	59	0
21	Odhisa (2014)	147	117	1303	1420	8.2	11	136	147	7.5
22	Punjab (2017)	117	81	1063	1145	7.1	6	111	117	5.1
23	Puduchery (2016)	30	21	322	344	6.1	4	26	30	13.3
24	Rajasthan (2018)	200	189	2105	2294	8.2	24	176	200	12
25	Sikkim (2019)	32	11	110	121	9.1	3	29	32	9.3
26	Tamil Nadu (2016)	234	320	3406	3728	8.6	21	204	225	9.3
27	Telangana (2018)	119	140	1680	1821	7.7	6	113	119	5
28	Tripura (2018)	60	24	273	297	8.1	3	57	60	5
29	Uttar Pradesh (2017)	403	482	4370	4853	10	42	356	398	10.6
30	Uttarakhand (2017)	70	62	573	637	9.7	5	65	70	7.1
31	West Bengal (2016)	294	200	1761	1961	10.2	39	241	280	13.3
	Total	4239	3873	42872	46765	8.3	351	3852	4203	8.4

Source: Calculated on the basis of data available with Election Commission of India. eci.gov.in

The women representation of Sikkim in Parliament is all the more dismal. Till date only one woman was elected to the Lok Sabha from Sikkim. The only woman parliamentarian from Sikkim has been Dil Kumari Bhandari, she was elected for two terms in 1984-89 and 1991-96. Since then, no women could make their way to the Parliament. Women of Sikkim are yet to get a chance to represent the state in Rajya Sabha.

On a national scale, representation of women is not impressive, as per the data of Election Commission of India (2019), women make up only 14.4 percent (78 MPs) of the 542 member Lok Sabha and 11.9 percent (29 MPs) of the 245 member Rajya Sabha. India ranks 149 globally in terms of representation of women in parliament

(IPU, 2019). In terms of women ministers, India ranks 79 with only seven ministers (23 percent) in the cabinet (IPU, 2019). There has been an increase of women representation from 4.9 in 1952 to 14.4 percent in 2019 Lok Sabha (table 4.11). Though, during sixth Lok Sabha, the representation of women reached the lowest point i.e. 3.3 percent, it increases thereafter. The Seventeenth Lok Sabha has the highest recorded elected women in the history of country. However, women in Lok Sabha and their presence in ministerial portfolio are still dismal to make any differences in decision-making.

Table 4.11 Women representation in Lok Sabha				
Year of Election	General Elections	Total Seats	No. of Women Elected	Percentage
1952	First	466	23	4.9
1957	Second	474	24	5.0
1962	Third	500	37	7.4
1967	Fourth	505	32	6.3
1971	Fifth	510	26	5.0
1977	Sixth	533	18	3.3
1980	Seventh	551	32	5.8
1984	Eighth	538	46	8.5
1989	Ninth	529	29	5.4
1991	Tenth	536	39	7.2
1996	Eleventh	545	40	7.3
1998	Twelfth	545	44	8.0
1999	Thirteenth	545	48	8.8
2004	Fourteenth	543	44	8.1
2009	Fifteenth	543	59	10.9
2014	Sixteenth	543	62	11.4
2019	Seventeenth	542	78	14.4

Source: Calculated on the basis of data available with Election Commission of India (1952-2019).

Surprisingly, dismal point of women representation in political bodies has no association with literacy rate and sex ratio. In terms of sex ratio and female literacy rate, Sikkim is in better position but it hardly reflects in representation of women in state legislative assembly. The claim of women representation has no association with literacy rate and sex ratio becomes clearer when look at the scenario of other Indian states. Kerala with the highest literacy rate has a low women representation at 5.7 percent, similarly Mizoram with the second highest literacy rate, have zero women representation in State Assembly and same is the case in Sikkim where literacy rate of female is fairly good (76.43 percent) but their representation in legislature is very poor and never cross 15 percent. However, the States with lowest

level of female literacy rate have higher women's representation for example Bihar with lowest literacy rate has 11.5 percent, similarly Rajasthan have 12 percent, Chhattisgarh have 14.4 percent and Haryana have 14.4 percent women representation in their respective Assemblies. Remarkably, Assemblies of Chhattisgarh and Haryana have recorded the highest percentage of women representation among all the State Assemblies. Likewise, there seems to be no relation of sex ratio with that of women representation in the State Legislative Assemblies. States with high sex ratio have low level of women representation and States with low sex ratio have high level of women representation. For instance Kerala has the highest sex ratio, followed by Tamil Nadu. However, these states have low percentage of women representation in their respective assemblies that is 5.7 and 9.3 percent respectively. On contrary, States with low sex ratio for instance Delhi and Haryana have higher women representation at 8.6 and 14.4 percent respectively.

The inadequate representation of women in the decision-making bodies is mainly emerged from political party competition. In every election, political parties champion the cause of women in their manifesto, but at the time of distribution of party tickets they give mostly to the men. Rai (2011) argues that Indian female marginalisation from electoral participation stems mainly from political party competition, as national political parties and regional parties in the states discriminate not only in terms of seat allotments in the electoral fray, but also in the rank and file of party and chain of command. The situation of women in Sikkim also same as all political parties champion the cause of women in their manifesto and promise them to give maximum opportunity but at the time of distribution of party tickets they give less importance to women candidates and denied tickets to women.

Representation of Women in Local Bodies

Unlike state legislature, the proportion of women in local governing bodies has reached gender parity. There is co-equal numbers of men and women present is these local bodies. These positive changes in the local bodies are the result of women reservation policy of government. In India, the issue of inadequate representation of women in politics has been put to systematic political deliberation when the Committee on the Status of Women in India (1974) submitted its report titled "towards equality" in 1976 (Kalita, 2016). The Committee was the first to mention quota for women in political institutions. Later on in 1988, The National Perspective

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Plan also highlighted the need for reservation of 30 percent seats for women at the grass root level. Consequently, consensus on the suggestion was built up around 1992 which resulted in the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts. These acts provided reservation of one third of seats for women in panchayats and municipalities. It has been a major step towards political representation of women as it has attracted a large number of women to contest election which was previously a male dominated sphere. This institutional set up has emerged as a powerful instrument for removal of gender imbalance in lower level of government. The one-third reservation of seats of women was made applicable at the level of members as well as in the posts of Presidents/Chairmen. Although 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act provides for only one third reservations for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), many Indian states have raise reservation to 50 percent (Sinha, 2018).

Sl. No.	States/UT's	Total	Total Elected Women Representatives	Women (%)
	Table 4.12 **State/UTs wise percentage of Elected Women Representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (as on 27.03.2018)**			
1	Andaman and Nicobar Island	858	302	35.2
2	Andhra Pradesh	156050	78025	50
3	Arunachal Pradesh	9383	3658	38.99
4	Assam	26820	13410	50
5	Bihar	127391	57887	45.44
6	Chandigarh	169	58	34.32
7	Chhattisgarh	170285	93287	54.78
8	Dadar Nagar Haveli	136	47	34.56
9	Daman and Diu	172	92	53.49
10	Goa	1564	516	32.99
11	Gujurat	144016	71988	49.99
12	Haryana	70035	29499	42.12
13	Himachal Pradesh	28723	14398	50.13
14	Jammu and Kashmir	33847	11169	33
15	Jharkhand	60782	30757	50.6
16	Karnataka	104967	50892	48.48
17	Kerala	18372	9630	52.42
18	Lakshadweep	110	41	37.27
19	Madhya Pradesh	392981	196490	50
20	Maharashtra	240122	121490	50.6
21	Manipur	1723	868	50.38
22	Mizoram	3502	828	23.64
23	Odisha	107487	53551	49.82
24	Puduchery	NA	NA	-

25	Punjab	97180	32393	33.33
26	Rajasthan	124854	70527	56.49
27	Sikkim	1096	548	50
28	Tamil Nadu	117599	39975	33.99
29	Telangana	103468	51735	50
30	Tripura	6646	3006	45.23
31	Uttar Pradesh	826458	272733	33
32	Uttarakhand	64606	35957	55.66
33	West Bengal	59402	30157	50.77
	Total	**3100804**	**1375914**	**44.37**

Source: Basic statistics of Panchayati Raj Institutions 2019, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.

Table 4.12 depicts the representation of women in PRIs in recent times. Sikkim along with 17 other Indian states/UTs have the provision of 50 percent reservation of seats for women in panchayats namely; Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattisgarh, Dadar Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Gujurat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Among states Rajasthan leads the way with 56.49 percent, closely followed by Uttarakhand (55.66 percent) and Chattisgarh (54.78 percent). Out of 3100804 elected representatives 1375914 (44.37 percent) were women representatives in PRIs in India (Basic Statistics of Panchayati Raj Institutions, 2019)

The 73rd Amendment Act which came into force on 24th April 1993 is a significant institutional step in promoting grassroots democracy in Sikkim where about 75 percent of the people lives in rural areas. Sikkim Panchayat Act 1993, reserves one-third of the seats for women in both tiers of panchayats in line with provision of 73rd Amendment Act 1992 and the Panchayat election 1997 was the first election held in accordance with the provision. After merger till now, Sikkim witnessed nine Panchayat elections (i.e. in 1976, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017). The Government enacted new Act in 1982, which changed the whole scenario, as for the first time introduced the system of universal adult franchise thereby giving all the eligible adult member the right to participate, vote and elect the representatives of their choice (Chhetri, 2012a). Later, in 2007 watershed decision was taken in the State of Sikkim by passing Sikkim Panchayat Act 2007. According to this Act the percentage of seats reserved for women raised to 40 percent from existing 33 percent. The Sikkim Panchayat Act 1993 has been amended further by Sikkim Panchayat Act 2011 which mandates not less than half of the total number of seats in Gram Panchayats and Zilla Panchayats shall be reserved for women. The reservation has

been introduced accordingly in 176 Gram Panchayats and 4 Zilla Panchayats of Sikkim. The first election in accordance with this new act was held in 2012.

Table 4.13 The women members in Gram Panchayats after 73rd Amendment Act in Sikkim				
Year	Total seats elected	Men	Women	Percentage of elected women
1997	862	623	239	28.93
2002	905	612	293	32.37
2007	891	525	356	40
2012	984	492	492	50
2017	989	494	495	50

Source: Chhetri, 2019c

This provision has been a hallmark in bringing about qualitative change in the field of politics as number of women participation has increased remarkably. Table 4.13 shows the representation of women in five Gram panchayats elections held after enactment of 73rd Amendment Act in the state of Sikkim. In the Gram Panchayat election of 1997, the first election held after 73rd Amendment Act, 239 women members were elected out of 862 that is making 28.93 percent. In the second Gram Panchayat election held in 2002 the percentage of women members went up to 32.37 percent. Thereafter in 2007 Panchayat election 356 women members elected out of total 891 thus making 40 percent. In 2012 Panchayat election out of total 984 seats, 492 seats were occupied by women which means 50 percent women makes up to local governing bodies. In the Gram Panchayat election of 2017, 495 women members were elected out of total 989 which accounted to more than 50 percent in Gram panchayat. Such a large number of women participation is encouraging in terms of political empowerment of women in Sikkim (Chhetri, 2019c).

The urban local government is very new in Sikkim. There was no urban local body until the enactment of Bazaar Committee Act in 1969 (Chhetri, 2019c). Consequently, participation of women in these bodies is also a recent phenomenon. In 2007, Government of Sikkim has enacted new legislation, the Sikkim Municipality Act 2007, for the creation of local urban bodies in consonance with the provision of 74th Amendment Act 1992. The Sikkim Municipality Act 2007 establishes the three-tier municipal board viz., Municipal Corporation in Gangtok, Municipal Council in Namchi, and Nagar Panchayat in five towns of state i.e. Singtam, Rangpo, Jorethang, Geyzing and Mangan (Chhetri 2015). This Act facilitates implementation of new measures in governing urban areas introduced by Government of India under 74th Amendment Act. The Sikkim Municipality Act 2007 has been amended in 2015. Two

important changes have been made, Nayabazaar Jorethang Nagar Panchayat and Gyalshing Nagar Panchayat were upgraded to Municipal Council, and secondly, the reservation for women has been raised to 50 percent from 40 percent (Chhetri 2015).

Year	Urban Local bodies	Total Seats Elected	Number of women elected
Table 4.14 The women in urban local bodies in Sikkim			
2010	Municipal Corporation	15	05
	Municipal Council	07	03
	Nagar Panchayat	25	11
2015	Municipal Corporation	17	08
	Municipal Council	21	12
	Nagar Panchayat	15	08

Source: Chhetri 2015

It is to note that though the urban local government is new to people of Sikkim, in a very short span of time there is a remarkable improvement in the representation of women in these local bodies. Table 4.14 depicts the representation of women in local bodies after the enactment of Sikkim Municipality Act 2007.The Sikkim Municipality Act 2007 has been amended in 2009. The Municipality (Amendment) Act of 2009 is important in terms of political representation of women as this particular Act has raised the percentage of reservation of seats for women from 33 to 40. In 2010 municipal election 19 (40 percent) women members were elected out of total 47 seats. The municipality Act further amended in 2015. This particular amendment has raised the percentage of reservation from 40 to 50. This is of great significance, as the increase in percentage of reservation of seats would increase the representation of women in politics at grass root level. Consequently, in municipal election which was held in 2015, 28 women members were elected out of total 53 seats, thus making 52 percent. The phenomenon of such a large number of women entering politics would not have been possible without reservation system. The reservation policy of government accompanied by growing interests of women in politics has made women an important player. It made possible for women to access political power and influence in policy decision making.

Conclusion

This chapter mainly dealt with the underlying factors which enables or inhibit the political participation of women. The analysis of women participation as voter, women in party, women in ministry, representation of women in legislature and

women representation in local bodies gives a paradoxical view of women participation. Firstly, the participatory upsurge among women voters has reached its crescendo with 78.38 percent in recently held 2019 assembly election. The voting percentage has almost reached gender parity with gap of 0.48 percent. The other major areas where women are exceedingly doing well is their representation in local bodies. The explanation to this is found in the positive discrimination measure in the form of reservation in the local bodies. It has proved to be an effective mechanism for achieving gender parity in representation. In contrast, the participation of women in higher level of political activities is dismally low. The representation of women in assembly and cabinet position is miserably low, ranges from 0 to 12 percent in assembly and 0 to 16 percent in cabinet.

Given the voting participation shown by women and their involvement in local bodies, however, positive discrimination measure- reservation for women in legislative bodies seems to be the need of the hour and would go a long way in removing many obstacles that inhibit women's participation and thus improve the political representation of women. Secondly, the political parties are central organization through which citizen contest elections. In order to bring out positive changes in women's political representation political parties have to be pro-active in inducting more women in legislature.

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CHAPTER 5

PARTICIPATION, REPRESENTATION AND BARRIERS: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Introduction

The participation of women on equal terms with that of men at all levels of decision making and political engagement is significant to the achievement of equality, democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the process of decision making. Despite their fundamental importance to democracy, ensuring inclusive participation and representation are still major challenges for today. The inequality of opportunities for participation and representation between men and women still exist world-wide. In the last several decades, the political representation of women has significantly improved partly due to the introduction of quotas/reservations in many countries. In Sikkim, the introduction of reservation policy in the local levels has greatly improved the proportion of women in these bodies. Whereas, in the Legislative Assembly where there is no provision of reservation, the number of women is miserably low.

Various studies offered different explanations as to why women have a lower rate of political participation in higher power positions as compared to men. Krickpatrick (1974) explains under-representation of women in terms of psychological constraints (women lack the psychological characteristics designed for political leadership), cultural constraints (politics is usually considered as man's work), role constraints (the gender roles in which women are socialized to be a mother/wife) and male conspiracy (men tend to preserve their power positions by imposing limitations or barring women from access to it). Another explanation for the under-representation of women in politics is the influential model of political recruitment (Norris, 1997). The women representation is determined by supply of aspirant and demand of gatekeepers (Norris 1997; Krook 2010; Paxton et al. 2007). In the supply side, there must be a sufficient supply of female aspirants, that is, there must be a sufficient number of

women who are willing and able to run for public office (Gilardi, 2015). Moreover, it is dependent on the resources available for women political aspirants such as money, time, skills and motivations (Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Some scholars view that reason for under-representation of women in politics is due to the limited willingness of women for power positions as compared to men (Lawless and Fox, 2010). There are mainly two explanations for this; firstly, female candidates tend to doubt their capabilities even when they are equally qualified as those of men. Secondly, even if women are confident of their abilities but are turned off by the electoral process (Kanthak and Woon, 2014). Though women do not doubt their abilities and qualification, however, fear that they will not make up in the electoral context and are afraid that they will get relatively less support.

In the demand side, the demand for women candidates determines the proportion of women in politics. First of all, the party elites must be willing to put women on their party list for electoral competition (Kittilson 2006; Caul 1999). Secondly, the structural factors such as the electoral system play a very important role in enhancing or inhibiting women's representation. The studies suggest that the electoral system with party lists and proportional representation create favourable conditions for women candidates (Wangnerud 2009; Paxton et al. 2007). Thirdly, the quotas/reservations for women have been an effective measure to ensure gender equality (Tripp and Kang 2008; Krook 2009).

Besides these, there is one area that has received less attention but have substantial impact on descriptive representation of women in politics is public opinion towards the question of representation of women in public office. The individual attitudes towards political representation of women and a desire for greater representation of women in politics may shape their choice when people are faced with a woman candidate (Dolan, 2010). The recent studies demonstrates the role that stereotype play in shaping individual attitudes towards women in politics. The argument is that people who view women as possessing the characteristics which is expected to be in leaders are more likely to support women candidature while, those who see men are more suited for office are less likely to support for women in public office. The studies has shown that many voters do prefer to support candidates on the basis of one's sex; that the women voters are more likely to support for women candidates (Sanbonmatsu 2002; Rosenthal 1995).

Given the various explanations for under-representation of women in politics, the present study is an attempt to explore the barriers as well as enabling factors of women's political participation and representation in Sikkim. The recent participation level of women in politics in Sikkim reveals two contrasting views. On the one hand, the participation of women as, a voter has reached gender parity, while on the other the proportion of women playing a real part in political leadership is ridiculously small. There are hardly any women in the highest decision making bodies who take political decisions and direct the state. However, even after 45 years of democracy, no women have been elected as Chief Minister of the state. There are very few women in the Legislative Assembly and very few women were given cabinet positions. There is an absence of women within the rank and file of political parties; there are no women in the top leadership of major state parties.

In fact, there are very few women who actually seek and wield political power which differentiate their political behaviour from that of men. This crucial difference is the reality from which this inquiry begins. It is a bitter fact that these differences have been so little examined because the questions about women's participation in the power process have been rarely raised. The issue of women in politics has not taken up seriously. Until recently the assumed political actors were implicitly male. But today, when the success of politics and the quality of democracy is defined by its inclusiveness, the increasing number of women in politics becomes important. Therefore, the present study is an empirical inquiry to address the crucial questions like whether women have the capacity to participate in power politics, why women are rarely seek to participate in power politics, whether women differ from men in policy making and if or how the increasing number of women makes difference.

This chapter consists of a detail analysis of data collected through survey schedules and in-depth interviews. It outline the barriers exists and enabling factors to enhance the scope of women's political participation. The surveys were undertaken with three categories of respondents. The first category of respondents was the common people residing in Sikkim. The second category is the elected women representatives; they are the women who are elected by the people to hold public office. Third category of respondent was the politicians of the state. The politicians are the person active in party politics or a person holding or seeking office in the government. Altogether 202 respondents were interviewed, of which 109 were common people, 84 respondents

were elected women representatives and 9 respondents were from the category of the politician. The selection of respondents from all four districts of Sikkim was based on simple random sampling and partially on judgement sampling given the availability of the respondents, access to the respondents and willingness to the respondents to be interviewed as well as gender consideration so that the sample could be well representative of the universe.

Socio-economic Profile of Respondents (Common People)

The socio-economic variables such as place of birth or residence, age, sex, social category, marital status, income etc. will have an impact upon the political participation (discussed in chapter 3). Therefore, before discussing the nature of participation, a brief overview of the socio-economic profile of respondents is inevitable. Table 5.1 depicts the socio-economic profile of the common people. In total 109 common people were interviewed. Among them 58 (53 percent) are male and 51 (47 percent) are female.

One of the significant factor which impact the behaviour and perception of individual towards politics is the place of birth where he/she has spent the formative years of his/her childhood. Table 5.1 reveals that among 109 respondents, a majority 85 percent of respondents are born in rural areas while 15 percent are born in urban areas. Sex-wise analysis reveals 90 percent of males and 80 percent of the female are born in rural areas whereas, 10 percent of male and 20 percent of female are born in urban areas.

In the present study, the age-group of common people was classified into five categories that are 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60 and 61 above years. Table 5.1 shows that among 109 respondents, majority (32 percent) of respondents were from the age-group of 41-50, another 27 percent respondents belong to the age-group of 31-40 years, 19 percent were in the age group of 51-60 and 18 percent were in the age group of 20-30, while only 4 percent belong to the age group of 61 above years. Sex-wise distribution of respondents shows the highest number of respondents from both male and female categories were in the age group of 41-50 years.

An analysis of the social category of the respondents reveals that the majority of respondents belong to the Scheduled Tribes (45 percent). Followed by Other Backward Classes consisting 28 percent, another 14 percent were from Schedule caste

category and 13 percent were General caste. Sex-wise analysis has also followed a similar trend that maximum respondents from both male and female category belong to Scheduled tribes consisting of 47 percent and 43 percent respectively.

The data analysis of the education background of respondents reveals that maximum numbers of respondents have education up to the primary level (29 percent) while 27 percent have secondary education. Another 17 percent of respondents could attain education up to senior secondary. 14 percent are graduation degree holders while only 3 percent are post-graduates. Remaining 11 percent are illiterate or have no formal education. Sex-wise analysis reveals that more females than males are illiterate or have no formal education. 16 percent of females have no formal education whereas among males, it was only 7 percent.

As per the occupational status of respondents, 27 percent were government employees, 22 percent farmer, 13 percent house maker, 11 percent have own business and 6 percent works in the private sector. Remaining 17 percent are not engaged in any kind of occupation or unemployed. Sex-wise analysis reveals that out of a total 29 government employee majority i.e. 20 respondents are male while only 9 respondents are female. Similarly, the table also indicates that the majority of unemployed respondents are female.

Table 5.1 Socio-economic profile of respondents (Common People)						
Category	**Male**		**Female**		**Total**	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sex	58	53	51	47	109	100
Place of Birth						
Urban	6	10	10	20	16	15
Rural	52	90	41	80	93	85
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Age						
20-30	11	19	9	18	20	18
31-40	13	22	16	31	29	27
41-50	18	31	17	33	35	32
51-60	14	24	7	14	21	19
61 Above	2	3	2	4	4	4
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Social Category						
General	7	12	7	14	14	13
SC	10	17	5	10	15	14
ST	27	47	22	43	49	45
OBC	14	24	17	33	31	28
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Education						
Illiterate/No formal	4	7	8	16	12	11

education						
Primary	17	29	15	29	32	29
Secondary	18	31	11	22	29	27
Sr. Secondary	9	16	9	18	18	17
Graduation	8	14	7	14	15	14
Post Graduation	2	3	1	2	3	3
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Occupation						
Unemployed	5	9	13	25	18	17
Govt. Employee	20	34	9	18	29	27
Private Sector	6	10	1	2	7	6
Own Business	5	9	7	14	12	11
Farmer	20	34	4	8	24	22
House Maker	0	0	14	27	14	13
Other	2	3	3	6	5	5
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Religion						
Hindu	31	53	27	53	58	53
Buddhist	22	38	16	31	38	35
Christian	5	9	8	16	13	12
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Monthly Income						
Below 20,000	41	71	42	82	83	76
20,001-40,000	7	12	4	8	11	10
40,001-60,000	7	12	3	6	10	9
60,001-80,000	3	5	2	4	5	5
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Marital Status						
Unmarried	10	17	11	22	21	19
Married	48	83	39	76	87	80
Widow	0	0	1	2	1	1
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100
Size of family						
Nuclear Family	39	67	36	71	75	69
Joint Family	19	33	15	29	34	31
Total	58	100	51	100	109	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The religion-wise composition of respondents depicts that majority (53 percent) of respondents belong to Hindu category while 35 percent profess Buddhist and the remaining 12 percent are Christians. There are almost co-equal numbers of respondents from both the sexes in all three categories of religion.

The respondents have been categorized into five income groups on the basis of their monthly income: those who have income below 20,000, 20,001-40,000, 40,001-60,000, 60,001-80,000, 80,001-1 Lakh and last category of those who have more than 1 Lakh monthly income. The table indicates that maximum that is 76 percent of respondents have below 20,000 monthly income, 10 percent have monthly income 20,001 to 40,000. Another 9 percent of respondents fall under the income group of

40,001-60,000 while only 5 percent have income between 60,001-80,000. There are no respondents in the income group of 80,001 and above. Sex-wise analysis reveals that the majority (82 percent) of female respondents fall under below 20,000 income category while from the male category it was only 71 percent. There were more females than males belong to lower income groups. The part of reason is to be found in the nature of occupation as many women were the homemakers who claimed to have income below 20,000. Secondly, Table 5.1 also suggests that more women than men falls under unemployed category, which is also reflected in the income level of women.

The marital status of respondents reveals 19 percent are unmarried while the majority that is 80 percent are married and the remaining 1 percent widow. Sex-wise analysis reveals that 76 percent of female respondents are married, 22 percent are unmarried and the remaining 1 percent widow. While from the male category 83 percent of them are married and 17 percent unmarried.

As far as the size of family is concerned the majority of respondents 69 percent belong to the nuclear family and 31 percent live in a joint family. Sex-wise analysis reveals that 75 percent of female respondents have a nuclear family and 34 percent have a joint family. While on the other hand, 67 percent of male respondents live in a nuclear family and 33 percent in a joint family.

Political Participation and People's Perceptions

With this socio-economic background of common people, an attempt is made to evaluate the nature of the political participation of respondents. Political participation includes an array of activities. The conventional political activities include voting, campaigning in elections, attending public/political meetings, joining the party, contesting elections and holding public or party office. In present times, the meaning of political participation broadened to include activities such as strikes, demonstrations, sit-ins, mass movements, marches, presentation of memorandum as well as violent acts designed to change the political systems and other unconventional political activities. In this section, an attempt has been made to inquire about the nature of people's participation in politics. The focus is to know people's political background, electoral participation, their involvement in politics as a member of a political party, involvement in political campaigns, political meetings and protest.

Participation in Election

The participation of women in the electoral system assumes greater importance in a democracy. Praveen (2011) contends the participation of women and their engagement in electoral process is a crucial indicator of the maturity and efficacy of democracy in any country. It cannot be defined only in terms of the equality and freedom with which they share political power with men but also in terms of the freedom and space provided for women within the democratic framework of electoral politics.

While the gross marginalization of women in state and national legislature is a much-debated issue, on the other the remarkable increase in women voting turnout makes theorists to claim Indian politics gender inclusive. Hence, remarkable improvement in the participation of women as voters (discussed in chapter 4) and have achieved parity with that of men voters in elections has become an important feature of Indian democracy. The analysis of field data also points towards the direction (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Participation in Election						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aware of Election						
Yes	51	60	34	40	85	78
No	7	29.2	17	70.8	24	22
Polled vote in the last election						
Yes	55	53	49	47	104	95
No	3	60.0	2	40.0	5	5
Reason for not polling votes						
Polling station was far away	1	100	0	0	1	20
Personal reasons	2	50	2	50	4	80
Agents influence in voting behaviour						
Self	52	54	44	46	96	92.3
Father	1	0	0	0	1	0.9
Mother	0	0	1	100	1	0.9
Husband	0	0	3	100	3	2.9
Brother	0	0	1	100	1	0.9
Other family members/relatives	2	100	0	0	2	1.9

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

It is found that the majority (95 percent) of respondents have participated in voting and the percentage of women voters is higher than the men voters, which is 96 percent of women voters against 94.8 percent of men. When the respondents were asked about the agents influence on voting behaviour, 92 percent voted in their own decisions in which women tend to vote less in their own decisions than men. Among

the respondents those who have not voted, most of them said they were busy with other personal activities while some others have not transferred their vote to the current address.

Surprisingly, the voting percentage is remarkably high despite the fact that substantial percent are not aware of the elections. It appears that the awareness of the electoral process has no impact on the voting behaviour of respondents. Although women are comparatively less aware of the elections, in contrast, their voting percent is higher than men. It is observed that men tend to vote more in their own decisions than women; women's decisions to vote have been influenced mostly by their husbands.

Interest in Politics

There are various explanations to the cause of people's participation in politics. According to Verba, Scholzman and Brandy (1995) people participate because they have- spare time to engage in politics, the money to spend on donations, the civil skills required to accomplish political acts. Some other sees interest in politics is one of the motivating factors for an individual to involve or participate in political activities (Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). They hold that some people engage in politics because they want to or they are interested in politics or concerned about political matters. In other words, the people who are interested in politics are more likely to engage in political activities. However, the data presented in Table 5.3 shows that over half of the respondents recorded their lack of interest in politics which suggests/indicates how people devote little attention to political matters. Political interest is the amount of attention an individual put in to political activities, ranging from political discussions to active participation in the political process such as political campaigns, voting, political violence, rallies etc (Tanjong et al, 2003).

Table 5.3 Interested in politics						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	27	67.5	13	32.5	40	36.7
No	30	44.8	37	55.2	67	61.5
Undecided	1	50	1	50	2	1.8

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table shows that only 36.7 percent are interested in politics while the majority that is 61.5 percent are not interested. Another 1.8 percent of respondents were undecided. The sex-wise analysis shows that out of 40 respondents who are interested in politics majority i.e. 67.5 percent are male and female consists only 32.5 percent. Out of 67 respondents who are not interested in politics female outnumbered males that former consisting of 55.2 percent while later 44.8 percent. It has been observed that male respondents are more interested in politics than females.

Membership in Political Party

Party membership is one of the modes of political participation. Poletti et al., (2019) argue that those individuals who feel themselves as politically competent they will have higher level of willingness to participate in politics and that the participation such as party membership is believed to be the case of high-level participation. With this view, the joining of a party is regarded as the high-level participation from the part of the individual.

Table 5.4 Party Membership						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Member of political party						
Yes	16	64	9	36	25	22.9
No	42	50	42	50	84	77.1
Reason for Joining Party						
Influence of Ideology	7	58	5	42	12	48
Family background	1	50	1	50	2	8
Influence of Party Leaders	2	67	1	33	3	12
Other	2	100	0	0	2	8
Undecided	4	60	2	40	6	24

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table 5.4 shows that only 23 percent of respondents have their membership in political parties, in which the majority is male. Another 77 percent are not a member of the party, surprisingly no gender gap is found in this regard. There are different narratives that members have developed about their reasons for joining the political party. The most prominent reason for joining the party was their support of ideology. This was also the findings of study conducted in Britain by Poletti et al. (2019) which states that those who actually join a political party are more likely to perceive that they are being motivated by principled attachments to its policies, values and leaders.

In the present study, party members hold that they are motivated by party policies and principles. Many others also narrated that their motivation to join party had come from the charismatic vision of party leader. Some of the party members also highlighted the reason as their family members being long time party member while some others have the expectations of the potential material or career benefits they hope to gain from party membership.

Participation in Political Meetings

Participation in political meetings is considered as significant ingredient for a healthy democracy. It is claimed that it fosters bonds and cooperation among members and hence influences the overall functioning of democracy. The participation in political meetings demonstrates their engagements and their commitments to the functioning of democratic system. The data presented in Table 5.5 indicates that more people tend to participate in political meetings. The majority of respondents i.e. 68.8 percent of respondents have participated in the political meeting and only 26.6 percent have never participated. It is found that both male and female respondents have enthusiastically participated in the meetings. The sex-wise analysis shows that 41.7 percent of males and 58.3 percent of the female are "regular" in political meetings while 57.1 percent of males and 42.9 percent of females participate "occasionally". 48.3 percent of male and 51.7 percent of female never attended political meetings. Remaining 4.6 percent are undecided. Interestingly, though male participates more in political meetings than female but in terms of regularity in meetings, female outnumber males.

Table 5.5 Participation in Political Meetings						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Attendance in political meetings						
Regular	5	41.7	7	58.3	12	11
Occasional	36	57.1	27	42.9	63	57.8
Never	14	48.3	15	51.7	29	26.6
Undecided	3	60	2	40	5	4.6
Speaks in the political meetings						
Regularly	2	40	3	60	5	4.6
Occasionally	14	73.7	5	26.3	19	17.4
Never got chance	3	50	3	50	6	5.5
Never spoke	32	47.8	35	52.2	67	61.5
Undecided	7	58.3	5	41.7	12	11

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The analysis of data reveals that the majority of respondents (61.5 percent)"never spoke" in the political meetings, while another 5.5 percent of respondents said that they "never got chance" to speak. Around 22 percent speak in the political meetings among them 5 percent speak regularly while 17 percent occasionally. Sex-wise analysis reveals that 27 percent of male and 16 percent of female speaks in the political meetings. Overall male speaks more than female, however, in terms of regularity female outshine male. It has been found that males participate more in political meetings than females. It is also found that more male than female respondents are actively participates in deliberations.

Participation in Political Campaign

Participation in the political campaign is another form of political participation. Both traditional and modern modes of campaigning are being adopted in the conduct of the election. Public meetings, election processions, person-to-person contact, posters, handbills and use of audio-visual means, etc. have been the popular traditional mode of election campaign while modern mode includes the use of electronic and print media such as political broadcasts on radio and television, and intensification of newspaper advertising, etc. (Sultana, 2015). In this backdrop, it became pertinent to inquire into people's perception on participation in political campaign.

Table 5.6 Participation in political campaign						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Participation in political campaign						
Yes	23	63.9	13	36.1	36	33
No	35	48.6	37	51.4	72	66.1
Undecided	0	0	1	100	1	0.9
Reason for non participation in political campaign						
Physical constraints	13	61.9	8	38.1	21	19.3
Socio-cultural	0	0	1	100	1	0.9
Not interested	17	39.5	26	60.5	43	39.4
Undecided	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	7.3
Not applicable	23	63.9	13	36.1	36	33

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table 5.6 reveals that 33 percent of respondents are involved in political campaign, during the election while the majority that is 66.1 percent never participated in campaigns. Sex-wise analysis reveals that more males than females participated in political campaigns. "Lack of interest" is the major reason for non-participation for

39.4 percent of respondents in which majority are females consisting 60 percent and 40 percent are male. Followed by "lack of interest" is "physical constraints" consisting of 19.3 percent in which the majority (61.9 percent) are male. 7.3 percent of respondents were undecided while 0.9 percent of respondents give "socio-cultural" as the reason for non participation in political campaigns.

Participation in Protest

Among different modes of political participation, protest as a mode of the political action is the recent addition and categorize as non conventional mode of participation. Several studies do not consider including protest as a mode of participatory act. Verba and Nie (1972) in their study of participation in America failed to break with the established tradition of not considering protests and demonstrations. There are mainly two pragmatic reasons for this neglect. First, only few people tend to participate in protest. Therefore, this limited number of participation renders statistical examination impossible. Second, the subject matter of participation is relatively large, so to make research more manageable in scope, some kinds of demonstration - support and illegal ones - are supposedly excludable by definition (Schonfeld, 1975). The exclusion of protest from the broader framework of political participation seems problematic as such behaviour seems designed to influence the choice of governmental person and/or actions they take falls under the rubric of political participation. Milbrath and Goel (1972) mentioned the act of protest relate individual to that of the polity. Therefore, the exclusion of protest from the rubric of participation results failure to study the direct political activity of people.

Table 5.7 Participation in Protest						
Category	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	16	64	9	36	25	22.9
No	38	49.4	39	50.6	77	70.6
Undecided	4	57.1	3	42.9	7	6.4

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Moreover, the participation of people in protest is considered important for democracy as it involves attempts by individuals or groups to address or stop perceived injustices within a political system. The growing number of people's involvement in protest in recent times indicates the need of serious examination of

this aspect of participation. Similarly, Table 5.7 also shows that substantial percent of people have participated in the protest. Out of total 109 respondents, 23 percent have participated in a protest in which the majority (64 percent) are male and female consist only 36 percent. 70.6 percent have never participated in protest in which 49 percent are male and 51 were female. In an extended response of respondents the reason for non-participation in the protest is mainly found in the lack of interest among them. Secondly, they stated the reason that the 'situation has not arrived yet' to take part in the protest. Remaining 6.4 percent were undecided. In the present study, it is found that the female participation in a protest is comparatively less than the male participation.

Elected Women Representatives: Participation, Constraints and Enabling Factors

Women are socialized into accepting the social construction of masculinity and femininity right from childhood. The male-dominated order of society is considered as natural. These results into internalization of the role given for women who are passive, docile, and emotional whereas politics demands initiative, persistence, boldness, and self-confidence, thereby making women unsuited to politics. This prevailing gender role limits the opportunity for exposure to political life. Apart from this, there are structural constraints embedded into political, social, cultural and institutional setup act as stumbling blocks which prevent women from climbing the political ladder. In this backdrop, it is important to analyse the socio-economic profile of respondents (Table 5.8).

Socio-Economic Profile

Place of birth is one of the determinant factors of political participation. It is claimed that the behaviour and perception of individual towards politics is influenced by place of birth where he/she has spent the formative years of his/her childhood. In the present study, the majority of respondents (88 percent) are from rural areas, another 12 percent are from urban areas. It is found that the majority of women representatives are basically from rural areas.

Along with other factors age is important in explaining the political participation and representation of women. In the present study the age-group of respondents is classified into five categories; 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60 and 61 above years. Among

84 respondents, majority 43 (51 percent) were from the age group of 31-40 years, another 24 (29 percent) belong to the age group of 41-50 years, 10 (12 percent) are in the age group of 20-30, 6 (7 percent) are in the age group of 51-60, while only 1 (1 percent) respondent is in the age group of 61 above years. It clearly shows that most of the women representatives are young within the age group of 31-40.

An analysis of the social category of the respondents reveals that the majority of respondents belong to the Scheduled Tribes consisting of 43 (51 percent) out of total 84. Followed by Other Backward Classes consisting 31 percent, another 11 percent were from the general category. Remaining 7 percent were from the Scheduled Caste category.

As far as education status is concerned the maximum numbers of respondents have education up to primary level. Of the total respondents, majority 44 percent have education up to primary level and 35 percent have secondary education. Another 8 percent of respondents have education up to senior secondary. 7 percent are graduates while only 5 percent are post-graduates. Remaining 1 percent is illiterate or had no formal education. Data clearly reflects that as the education level goes up the number of respondents decreases significantly.

Table 5.8 Socio-economic Status of Elected Women Representatives																
Category	Place of Birth		Age					Social Category				Education					
	Urban	Rural	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61>	Gen	SC	ST	OBC	Ill	P	S	SS	G	PG
Number	10	74	10	43	24	6	1	9	6	43	26	1	37	29	7	6	4
Percent	12	88	12	51	29	7	1	11	7	51	31	1	44	35	8	7	5

Socio-economic status of elected women representatives																
Occupation							Religion			Monthly income (in 1000)		Marital Status				Size of Family
UE	Govt. Emp	Pvt. Sec	Own Bus.	Far.	H Maker	Other	H	B	C	<20	20-40	Um	M	Div	W	N	JF
5	5	3	14	23	27	12	31	40	13	64	20	14	67	1	2	51	33
6	6	4	17	27	32	14	37	48	15	76	24	17	80	1	2	61	39

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The attempt has been made to inquire respondents' occupation before their entry into political office. For the present study, the past occupation of respondents is classified and tabulated in Table 5.8. The analysis of data reveals that most of the respondents (32 percent) were house makers, 27 percent were farmers, 17 percent have own

business, 6 percent mentioned that they served as a government employee prior to holding present position; another 4 percent respondents had been employed in private sector. 8 percent mentioned 'other' occupation in which most of them were students and party workers. Remaining 6 percent were not engaged in any kind of occupation or they were unemployed.

The religion-wise composition of respondents depicts that 48 percent of respondents belong to the Buddhist category while 37 percent are Hindu by religion and the remaining 15 percent are Christian. As far as the monthly income of respondents is concerned, majority (76 percent) of respondents have a monthly income below 20,000 and the remaining 24 percent have a monthly income 20,001- 40,000. No respondents have monthly income above 40,001.

Women after marriage occupied by an ultimate task of bearing and rearing child considered as an obstacle in the way to a successful political career. Similarly, it is also not easy for unmarried women to make a way to political ambition. Susheela Kaushik (1993) has rightly observed that "an unmarried status may increase the responsibilities, make women the object of political attention and scrutiny and limit the freedom". Therefore, in this context, it is important to reflect on marital status of women. In this study 80 percent of respondents are married, another 17 percent are unmarried and 1 percent divorcee. Remaining 2 percent are widow. As far as the family size of respondents is concerned the majority of respondents (61 percent) live in the nuclear family while 39 percent belong to a joint family.

Political Profile

With this socio-economic background of elected women representatives, an attempt is made to evaluate the political participation of elected women representatives. The focus is to know their political background, the nature of involvement in politics, the kind of political support they have received from their family members and the motivational factors to enter politics.

Family Background of Representatives

Family is the primary institution where people first learn the values, cooperation, authority, obedience, legitimacy, allegiance, etc. It is said that if some members of a family are involved in politics or social work, the younger generation will also follow a similar trend as established by the family. While this holds true for both men and

women. But in the case of women, they are generally motivated by male members of the family. In this context, in order to understand the influence of family members on the development of women's political personality, an attempt has been made to know the affiliation of family members in politics.

Table 5.9 Family Members in Politics		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Father	13	15.5
Mother	4	4.8
Brother	4	4.8
Husband	14	16.7
Father-in-law	2	2.4
Whole Family	11	13.1
Relatives	3	3.6
No one	33	39.3
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table 5.9 shows that family members of 39.3 percent of respondents have no political affiliation. While among those whose family members are politically associated 13.4 percent have whole family members in politics while 4.8 percent of respondents have mother and another 4.8 percent of respondents have brother in politics. Some around 2 percent of respondents have fathers-in-law while 4 percent of respondents have relatives in politics. Interestingly, the study found that most of the respondents have either husband or father politically active (17 percent and 16 percent respectively). As one of the senior women legislators (age, 68) said:

> "I was a student pursuing graduation but at the same time I was also involved in my father's political affairs. My father was a renowned politician during monarchy but at the time of fielding party candidate for election my father could not make it neither other members have dared to stand against the monarchy. In that situation, I was required to gather courage for candidacy without much knowing what it is all about".

Another respondent Chunkila Bhutia a Municipal Councilor from West Sikkim also shares similar experience and stated that "I have never thought of becoming a Councilor but in my ward, the seat was reserved for women so party considers me as one of the candidates because my father is an active member of the party for a long period of time".

It is observed that the majority of respondents (around 60 percent) have their family members (most of them have immediate relatives such as father and husband) politically associated. It suggests that politically active husband or father makes a route for women to enter politics.

Membership in Organisation/Association

One's route to political leadership has been that of social service. It is claimed that socially active persons or those who are affiliated with social groups tend to be active politically because they are more likely to be asked to participate. According to Verba and Nie (1972), voluntary organizations increase the propensity of the individual to be a participant because they provide him an opportunity for training in participation within the organisation that can be transmitted to the political sphere. What important is not mere membership but the opportunity that the organisations offers to involved in activities. They find that active memberships in voluntary organizations increase individual's overall participation level. With this view, the attempt has been made to know whether the respondents were the member of organisation/association prior to holding present position. The organisation/association may be classified into six categories namely religious, social, women, cultural, developmental and students/youth organisation.

Table 5.10 Membership in Organisation/Association		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Member of organisation/association		
Religious Organisation	5	6.0
Social Organisation	19	22.6
Women Organisation	3	3.6
Cultural Organisation	1	1.2
Development Organisation	38	45.2
Students/Youth Organisation	1	1.2
Not a member	17	20.2
Total	84	100.0
Period of membership in organisation		
Up to 5 Years	31	46
6-10 Years	24	36
11-15 Years	6	9
16-20 Years	4	6
21-25 Years	2	3
Total	67	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table 5.10 reveals that the majority of respondents were the member of development organisations. Around 45 percent of respondents said that they were the member of development organisations such as Self Help Group in the villages. A substantial percentage of respondents (22.6) claimed their membership in social organisations, another 6 percent were associated with religious organisations. Some around 4 percent of respondents were involved in women organisations. 1.2 percent was the member of cultural organisations (it seeks to promote and preserve their culture and mainly inspired by their identical culture, traditions, customs and belief) and another 1.2 percent was associated with students and youth organizations. Remaining 20.2 percent of respondents were not the member of any organizations.

As far as the duration of their membership in organisations is concerned, the majority of respondents (46 percent) have up to 5 years of experience in organisations. 36 percent of them have an affiliated period between 6-10 years. Another 9 percent of the respondents have been the member of the organisation for 11-15 years, 6 percent respondents have 16-20 years of experience in the organisation. While only 3 percent of respondents have a membership of 21-25 years.

The study found that membership in organisation or association has been the stepping stone on the way to politics. As many as 80 percents of women representatives were the member of one or the other associations and most of them have 5 to 10 years of experience. Their memberships in organisations prove to be one of the determinants of political effectiveness. The experiences and confidence built from their membership in civil society associations and other formal and informal arenas help women to built political skills which itself build a pathway into politics.

Membership in Political Party

In a democratic set-up, political party plays an important role, as they act a bridge between government and people. Political parties are the intermediaries which links the social forces and the governmental bodies. An attempt has been made to inquire the respondents experience as a member of a political party.

Table 5.11 Membership in Political Party		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Member of Political Party		
Yes	57	67.9
No	27	32.1
Total	84	100.0
Period of membership in political party		
Up to 5 Years	21	25.0
6-10 Years	20	23.8
11-15 Years	12	14.3
16-20 Years	10	11.9
21-25 Years	20	23.8
Not applicable	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0
Reason for joining political party		
Influence of ideology	46	54.8
Family background	15	17.9
Influence of party leaders	5	6.0
social service	4	4.7
Other	4	4.7
Undecided	10	11.9
Total	84	100.0
Position held by respondents in political parties		
Main office bearer	11	13.1
Executive Committee	14	16.7
Ordinary member	32	38.1
Not an active member/Not a member of party	27	32.1
Total	84	100.0
Nature of Involvement in party activities		
Planning	2	2.4
Executive	9	10.7
Organizer	2	2.4
Mobilize	51	60.7
All type of activities	17	20.2
Undecided	3	3.6
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

It is found that majority of the respondents (67.9 percent) have been a member of political parties. While only 32 percent of respondents said they were never affiliated to any political parties before contesting the election. As far as the period of membership is concerned, most of the respondents (25 percent) have up to 5 years of membership in political parties. As they highlighted that they have become a member of the party only during or just before the election to local bodies. 23.8 percent of respondents have a membership period between 6 to 10 years. It is observed that a

substantial percentage of respondents have a long duration membership in the political parties as 23.8 percent records their membership period 21-25 years. 14.3 percent were associated for a period of 11-15 years while 11.9 percent have membership periods between 16-20 years. The remaining 1.2 percent was not a member of any political parties.

There are various reasons to join political party ranging from the influence of ideology to family background. For women, reasons are numerous for not to join parties. Similarly, the reasons are numerous for women to be affiliated with political parties. The various reasons for joining a political party is classified and tabulated in Table 5.11. Table reveals that most of the respondents (54.8 percent) were motivated by party ideology. It is interesting to note that the family background of the respondents has been second most important reason for joining political parties. The data shows that for 17.9 percent of respondents family background was the reason. The influence of party leaders is another motivating factor for 6 percent of respondents. 4.7 percent recorded social service was their main motive to join a political party while another 4.7 percent specified other reasons in which most of them mentioned their reason for joining was to get benefit from the party.

It is claimed that the women are invisible in the top leadership of the party positions. Therefore, an attempt has been made to inquire about the position held by the respondents in the party hierarchy. The party position has been broadly classified into three categories; main office bearers, executive committee, and ordinary members. Main office bearers are top-most position holders in the party and look after the overall functions of party. Executive members look after the proper implementation of party programmes. Ordinary members are passive members of the party. Accordingly, data compiled in Table 5.11 reveals that most of the respondents (38 percent) were just an ordinary member of the party. 16.7 percent were executive committee members of the party while 13.1 percent were main office bearers. Out of the total, 32.1 percent were not an active member or not a member of a political party.

To examine the nature of involvement in party activities, the activities have been classified into five categories viz. 'planning', 'executive', 'organizers', 'mobilize' and 'all types of activities'. The 'planning' includes the task of policy formulations to be implemented at various levels of party structures. 'Executive' level activities involve

the implementations of party programmes. 'Organizers' have the responsibilities to see the organizational matters of the party and involved in managerial duties. 'Mobilizers' are the main ground level workers; they mobilize the people, new recruits, fund raisers etc. for the party. The data reveals that majority of respondents (60.7 percent) are mobilizers. 20 percent involved in 'all types of party activities'. Another 10.7 percent were executive level workers while 2.4 percent each involved in planning and organizing activities respectively. 3.6 percent were undecided.

Recruitment of Women

Political recruitment is the pathways whereby new members are recruited into government decision making bodies. It is influenced by various factors such as individual's social background, socialization, personal traits, political ambitions and the opportunity structures within which their career advances. Numerous studies have emphasized social, cultural and economic factors which impede women's recruitment process in politics. In the present study, the emphasis is made on to understand the recruitment of women by focusing on the types of women recruits. Further, it also tries to explore the problems that women have to undergo in the overall process. Therefore, the respondents were asked the attitude of male party members and the general public towards them in politics.

Category of Recruits

Krickpatrick (1974) has categorized the recruits into two categories namely, office seekers and the ready recruits. She holds that office-seekers are those individuals who took the initiative to run a political office and ready recruits are those individuals who waited to be asked. With this background, an attempt has been made to identify the category of recruitment in the present study. Table 5.12 reflects that the majority (84.5 percent) falls under the ready recruit category while only 15.5 percent were office seekers. In other words, the majority of respondents maintained that they took no initiatives to run the office or they waited to be asked for the position.

Table 5.12 Category of recruits		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Office seekers (took own initiative)	13	15.5
Ready recruits (waited to be asked)	71	84.5
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

It is observed that the majority of respondents took no initiatives for the position in public office but recruited mainly due to the reservation policy. Besides, they and their family members were affiliated with the political parties. And those who were not the member of any party but recruited were the active social worker (see Table 5.10). While among the office seekers women were either from strong political backgrounds or herself were long term party workers who wanted to be represented in the political office.

Attitude of male Members in Politics

It is stated the men consciously and deliberately tries to keep women in subordinate positions and seek to protect their privileged position by all effective means. They put their effort to keep women in the margin or resist sharing power with women. Men hesitate to accepting women as legislative colleague or admitting them to leadership positions. Epstein (1970) holds that since men relatively have more power, they fear encroachment on that power position. Similarly, Krickpatrick (1974) stated, men stand at all the gateways to political power; therefore, women could get into power position only if they are assisted by some men. She affirms that women can perform their legislative roles only with the cooperation of male. Given the preponderance of men in power politics, the present study is an attempt to explore the attitude of male members towards women in politics (Table 5.13). Surprisingly, the majority (94 percent) of respondents recorded a positive attitude of male party members. Among them 52.4 percent mentioned "supportive" and 41.7 percent "very supportive". While 3.6 percent of respondents felt that male party members are "indifferent" towards them and another 2.4 percent mentioned unsupportive behaviour of male members in the party.

Table 5.13		
Attitude of Male Members in Politics		
Category	Number	Percent
Very Supportive	35	41.7
Supportive	44	52.4
Indifferent	3	3.6
Not Supportive	2	2.4
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The data indicates that male members are supportive of women members. However, the opinion of some politicians recorded during field interview changes the whole perspective to the different direction. Senior woman politician (age, 62) said "Men are supportive but hesitate to give privilege position to women". In addition to this, the opinion of a male politician (age, 60) is worth mentioning. When asked his opinion on the attitude of male members towards women in politics, he expressed "Politics is all about competition, capability, and ability, there is no question of favour and support. What matters is one's own ability". He mentioned that politics is about competition, one must stand out regardless of gender.

The different opinions derive from in-depth interview is analogous to Krickpartick's (1974) observation that "men tend to behave like any other group with a vested interest in status quo, that men seek to preserve their positions of power and privilege by barring women from access to positions of influence". It is observed that an increasing number of women are accepted by almost everybody but not accepted as a holder of power positions in politics.

Attitude of People towards Women Representatives

The scholarly research on women's under-representation and the recruitment of women to political office demonstrated that this situation cannot be explained by poor quality of candidates (Lawless and Fox 2010; Fulton et al. 2006) or the biasness of voters towards women (Dolan, 2004). Instead, the current studies have recorded the importance of the influential role of institutional factors (Palmer and Simon 2006; Lawless and Pearson, 2008), political recruitment efforts (Sanbonmatsu 2006) and more recently the attention is shifted towards the influential role of public opinion towards women's representation in political office (Dolan, 2010). Dolan (2010) argues that individual attitude towards women's representation in governmental bodies and a desire of the people for increasing representation of women may shape

the voting choice of people. For instance, a voter who desire for a greater descriptive representation of women in government may have greater chance to vote for women candidate as against men. In contrary, people who do not consider the value of increasing women's representation or those who holds negative attitude towards such an increase may tend to support male candidates. Conventionally, people are less likely to prefer women candidates as they considered them liabilities, resource-less and inexperienced. They are not considered for electoral politics unless they are supported by some godfather or party bigwig and have the patronage of political families. Therefore, those women with courageous determination overcome the physical constraints of domestic and other work and the restrictive patriarchal notion (Menon, 2008) and make their entry in-to politics often encountered uneasy situations to effectively participate in politics.

Table 5.14		
Attitude of People towards Women in Politics		
Category	Number	Percent
Supportive	66	78.6
Do not support	2	2.4
Suspicious of credibility of women in politics	14	16.7
Character assassination	2	2.4
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Even after entering politics women consistently remain vulnerable and they have to keep disproving rumours of affairs, secret marriages or relationships. These charges of character assassination to destroy the political image of women disqualify them from electoral politics. Similarly, in the present study around 2.4 percent respondents record the problem of character assassination (Table 5.14). While another 16.7 percent of respondents maintained that people are suspicious of the credibility of the women in politics. One respondent, who is the panchayat president, Tashi Doma Bhutia stated:

"Initially, as a newly elected women panchayat member we faced many difficulties. Many times we had to work extra time till evening. But people used to see us suspiciously about our character and capabilities. As a woman, we had to put extra efforts to prove our capabilities. After lots of hardship, we are now able to prove our capabilities and successful in gaining people's trust.

There is a common claim that women cannot do public work has been proved as wrong".

Similarly, a male politician (age, 69) also highlighted the issue of character assassination. In his words; "There are cases of character assassination like anonymous writings with an intention to defame the image of politically active women". The narratives of interviewees indicate the prevalence of gender stereotype public attitude towards women. It has been observed that, despite equal legal rights provided by the Constitution to men and women, the gender stereotype mindset prevalent in society act as the barriers in the way of women entering politics. The attitude of men and women who hold traditional and cultural ideas became a major stumbling block for women entering politics.

Contesting the Elections

Contesting an election is one of the most difficult tasks; it requires great effort, motivation and courage from the part of the contestant. It is more challenging particularly for women as they encountered various social and cultural barriers, due to which women are said to be less motivated to enter politics. Despite odds, a large number of women are successful in holding the positions in the highest political echelons. Various studies found that women's motivation to join the political realm mainly comes from family members, friends, and political leaders. However, in the present study, the motivation from family members scored the lowest. When asked the reasons for contesting elections, 41.7 percent of respondents gave women seat "reservation" as the reason. While for another 38 percent of respondents the main motivation to become a candidate comes from their desire to do something for the society i.e. social service. 13.1 percent revealed interest in politics as the reason for contesting the election, while only 4.8 percent mentioned family as a motivation factor.

Hence, it has been observed that the major push factor for women entering politics has come from "reservation" a positive discrimination measure. Besides reservation, another strongest motivation for women to contest the election was that they wanted to serve the people and community. There are very few women who recorded family as their motivation factor. This finding is consistent with the report of IPU (2008) on

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Table 5.15 Contesting the Election		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Reasons to contest election		
Family background	4	4.8
Own interest	11	13.1
Social service	32	38.1
Reservation	35	41.7
Other	2	2.4
Total	84	100.0
Number of terms contested		
1st Term	49	58.3
2nd Term	24	28.6
3rd Term	10	11.9
4th Term	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0
Source of money		
Party Contribution	2	2.4
Personal	44	52.4
Personal and Supporters contributions	38	45.2
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Contesting an election is hard for every person but it is harder when it is a woman. Contesting an election demands greater strength, courage, time and energy. Therefore, there are very few women who contest the elections. In the present study, it is found that the increasing number of women participation is a recent phenomenon as many as 58.3 percent of respondents are new to politics and contested for the first time. 28.6 percent have completed their first five-year tenure and presently working for the second term. It clearly reflects that there is a small number of experienced women who have been in the position for ten years and above.

The election expenses are very high despite ceilings imposed by the Election Commission on election expenditure. Therefore, this creates a harder situation for women to make an arrangement for election expenses. Archana Ghosh (2003) writes that it is very difficult for women to raise funds; they spend their own personal resources raised from family and friends and public donation or a combination of all the three sources. According to Table 5.15, the observation made by Ghosh stands true as the majority of respondents (52.2 percent) pointed out that their major source

of election expenses was personal contributions. 45.2 percent said that the money spends during election was personal money and money contributed by supporters while 2.4 percent received help from party funds.

Role and Performance

The role of political leaders is important for bringing social, economic and political changes. In order to bring changes, the representatives must be acquainted with their duties and responsibilities. With this view, the attempt has been made to know the opinion of respondents regarding their significant functions or duties as a representative of people (Table 5.16). 35.7 percent of respondents mentioned all-round development has been their major concern or responsibility. 9.5 percent stressed on maintaining harmony among all the members of society. Another 3.6 percent each stressed on monitoring implementation of various plans and policies and maintenance of peace respectively. 1.2 percent maintained that they are the links between government and people. The majority of respondents (43 percent) recorded 'other' functions of the representatives. In this category, most of the respondents perceived that their main duty is to solve the problems of their constituents and make work easier for them.

Table 5.16 Functions of Representatives		
Category	**Number**	**Percent**
Functions of representatives		
Link between government and people	1	1.2
To monitor implementation of various plans and policies	3	3.6
To maintain harmony	8	9.5
Maintain peace	3	3.6
Work for overall development	30	35.7
Other	36	42.9
Undecided	3	3.6
Total	84	100.0
Major problems faced by people		
Health	7	8.3
Development	22	26.2
Unemployment	13	15.5
Atrocities on Women	2	2.4
Land issues	1	1.2
Alcoholism and drug addiction	1	1.2
No Problem	29	34.5
Undecided	9	10.7
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

To record the respondents' awareness of constituents' problems the responses have been categorized and tabulated in Table 5.16. According to data, the most important problem highlighted by the respondents is a development issue consisting of 26.2 percent. Unemployment has emerged as the second most urgent issue of constituents as mentioned by 15.5 percent of respondents. 8.3 percent also reflected on health issue while 2.4 percent mentioned about atrocities on women remained a serious issue among people. Another 1.2 percent each mentioned land-related issues and alcoholism and drug addiction respectively. While substantial percent (34.5 percent) of respondents said people in their area have no difficulties or problems. Remaining 10.7 percent were undecided as many of them were not aware of constituents' problems.

Table 5.17 Problem Solving		
Category	Number	Percent
Approached by people		
Sometimes	55	65.5
Frequently	28	33.3
Never	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0
Grievances of people		
Related to Job	15	17.9
Property dispute	8	9.5
Developmental work	9	10.7
Gender-based violence	5	6.0
Water issue	6	7.1
Other	41	48.8
Total	84	100.0
Solving problems		
Yes able to solve their problems by self	40	47.6
Depend on male members	9	10.7
Self+help	35	41.7
Total	84	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

An attempt has been made to analyse the women representatives as problem solvers. The respondents were asked how often their constituents approach them for seeking help. Table 5.17 reveals that 65.5 percent of respondents were visited by people only occasionally while 33.3 percent of respondents were visited frequently by the people. 17.9 percent of respondents stated that the grievances of people are mostly related to the job. 10.7 percent of respondents were contacted by their constituents for

development related works. Another 9.5 percent of respondents were visited by people to solve property disputes. 7.1 percent were approached for water-related problems while 6.0 percent of respondents were visited by people for gender-based violence. Remaining 48.8 percent respondents said that often people visited them to get grants from government schemes.

When asked about the way they solve problems brought before them by their constituents' 47.6 percent of respondents were fully confident of their ability to solve problems by themselves. While 41.7 percent find the remedy for problems by taking help from others like their fellow mates and higher officials. 10.7 percent respondents explained about their dependency on male members.

Problems in Performing Duties

Many women are successful in making their way to politics. However, they face many difficulties in performing duties at individual levels. Therefore, respondents were asked about their problems which act as an impediment to effective participation.

Table 5.18 Main Problems in Performing Duties		
Category	Number	Percent
Physical constraints	11	13.1
Lack of Knowledge	22	26.2
Suspicious of credibility of women	6	7.1
No problem	40	47.6
Other	3	3.6
Undecided	2	2.4
Total	84	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Table 5.18 depicts respondents' problems in performing their duties. One of the major the problems mentioned by most of the respondents (26.2 percent) is the 'lack of knowledge'. As one of the panchayat member from North Sikkim Kipu Bhutia lamented; "Though men are casual in public dealing, but they are knowledgeable and efficient in decision making, whereas women lack in knowledge and expertise in politics". It is observed that women's level of education has an overall impact on their performance of duties. This is consistent with the findings that most of the respondents (44 percent) have education only up to the primary level (Table 5.8).

There is around 13 percent who have mentioned about physical constraints. In physical constraints, they mentioned their primary role and duty as a wife and mother restrict their active political participation. This problem is clearly highlighted by Kamala Rai (Panchayat, Vice-President) from East Sikkim: "physical constraint is the major problem in performing duties as women have more responsibilities towards family and children from which we cannot escape. Another respondent from West Sikkim also shares a similar experiences being a member of Panchayat. The respondent Munu Hangma Limboo expressed: "performing my public duties along with my responsibility of child care has become a major challenge for me. My responsibility towards public duties leaves me with limited time to spend for my child's upbringing".

Some around 7.1 percent recorded people are "suspicious of credibility" of women in politics and has been the impediment of women's effective participation. The gravity of the problem sounds clear when a woman legislator (age, 37) narrated her experience and said: "Being women we have faced more difficulties in performing duties as compared to men because we are the first generation women in entering politics. People have not much faith in us and doubt that women can best perform. It is really very difficult to gain trust from people, therefore, we have to go extra miles to prove our capabilities".

In contrast, one of the male politicians reflects on the nature of women as a hurdle for effective political participation of women. A senior male politician (age, 60) expressed the problem of women in performing duties in following lines; "Women in politics face difficulty because politics demands force and men are more preferred to this activity. Women on the other hand are rule bound and system bound; they do not prefer to go beyond system and rule".

However, 48 percent respondents have recorded "no problem" in performing duties. The respondents highlighted that women do not have problems rather they are vocal in raising issues and actively perform their duties.

It has been observed "lack of knowledge" and expertise has been a major impediment in performing duties. Therefore, it suggests that the knowledge which gains from the formal institutions and training programmes will have an overall impact on their

performance. Besides, the physical constraint is another strongest deterrent as perceived by potential respondents.

Political Participation of Women: Perception and Performance of Women's role in Political Activity

In this section, the efforts have been made to discover the constraints by asking important questions like their perception or opinion regarding women's participation in politics and their opinion on the performance of women.

Difference between Men and Women Representatives

Numerous studies on women's political participation found that the way women work or deal with the situation is different from men. It is argued that women have different interest, therefore would bring distinctive interests to legislative debate because of their gendered life experience (Mansbridge 1999; Thomas 1994; Gilligan 1982). Anne Phillips (1991) also noted women would bring to politics a distinct set of experiences, values and expertise, that they would enrich political system usually in the direction of a more caring, and compassionate society. Similarly, a large scale survey of members of parliament undertaken by the Inter-Parliamentary Union found that more than 90 percent of respondents agreed that women bring different views, perspectives and talents to politics by introducing new perspectives into policy areas (IPU, 2008). With this view, an attempt has been made to draw the respondents' view on the difference between men and women representatives (Table 5.19).

Table 5.19 Difference between Men and Women Representatives					
Category	Women Representative	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Women are honest and dedicated	11	21	5	37	18
More receptive to solve people's problems	31	17	0	48	24
Difference in physical capabilities	3	3	1	7	3
Men are efficient and ambitious than women	6	0	0	6	3
Women are incapable	0	7	0	7	3
No difference	32	48	1	81	40
Others	0	7	2	9	4
Undecided	1	6	0	7	3
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Interestingly, around 60 percent of respondents recorded the differences which imply that there is a difference in interests, perspectives and styles between men and women representatives. Most (24 percent) of the respondents said that women are more receptive to solve people's problems. Another 18 percent of respondents viewed that women are honest and dedicated to their works. Respondents consistently reiterated that women are honest and dedicated to their work; often prompt to deal with the problems brought up by the people while men representatives keep it pending for other days. One of the respondents a panchayat president Januka Dhakal from East Sikkim states "Women members are receptive to the people's problems and try to solve it without wasting time while men keep it for pending". Some of the respondents (around 4 percent) also viewed that women are sincere and less involve in dirty politics. In this regard a woman parliamentarian (age, 70) opines "Women are sincere and less involved in dirty politics; if more women come to politics, then the incidence of violence can be reduced. The political sphere would be more peaceful and violence-free".

It has been observed that women are honest towards their duties, therefore, whatever task assigned to them they try to solve it efficiently without wasting any time. This approach of women makes a huge difference in the process of policy decision making. Further, some respondents highlighted women are less involved in "dirty politics" and believed that if more women come to politics the incidence of violence would decline, the political sphere would be peaceful and non-violent. Thus the values, expertise and approach of women towards politics would enrich the political system in the direction of a more caring and compassionate society as observed by Phillips (1991).

The reason for differences between men and women in politics can be explained by virtue of their own lived experiences. Men and women have different life experiences which are basically rooted in socialisation process and their upbringing. Women experience of being wife and mother and taking care of children and elderly, managing household activities is different from men's experience of fatherhood and husband and looking after matters related to public sphere. Therefore, the life experience of men and women respondents reflects in performing their duties.

Women Representatives are more Concerned with Women Issues

The notion that women make a difference by 'acting for' women is based on the idea that they have concerns and interests that are different from those of men (Stevens,

2007). It is believed that women representatives will raise the women issue in the assemblies and thereby helps in decision making from women's perspectives. The issues related to welfare, health and upbringing of children: issues include reproductive rights, violence against women, rape, sexual exploitation and prostitution. With this background, the attempt has been made to explore respondents' view on this (Table 5.20).

Table 5.20 Women Members are more Concerned about Women Issues than Men					
Category	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Strongly Agree	30	32	0	62	31
Agree	23	37	3	63	31
Disagree	26	23	0	49	24
Strongly Disagree	3	5	6	14	7
Undecided	2	12	0	14	7
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Interestingly, 62 percent of the respondents "strongly agreed" and 'agreed" on the statement that women are more concerned about women issue. Meena Subba (panchayat, vice president, East Sikkim) states: "women members are more concerned of raising issues related to women like sexual exploitation, violence against women etc. than men members". In the contrary, many respondents (particularly politicians) "disagreed" (around 31 percent) with the view and said that both men and women representatives are equally concerned about women issues. In this regard, a woman legislator (age, 46) expressed: "As a people's representative we cannot focus on one specific issue (referring women issue) rather should focus on overall development. A representative concentrates his/her work on single issue cannot function as a good leader". Similar views is also shared by a senior woman politician (age, 62): "There is no difference between men and women politicians in dealing with the issues related to women and when the time comes they equally raise women issues in the Assembly'.

In this perspective, the view presented by a woman parliamentarian (age, 70) is partially different as she states that "by nature women are more concerned of women issues as there is a saying that only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches. Similarly, the pain and sufferings a woman experience are best understood by women only. But in terms of rising women issues in the Parliament both men and women are

equally concerned". According to her, it becomes clear that though women know women issues better but there is no gender discrimination in raising the problem of women in the legislature.

The study reveals that in the lower level of government i.e. at the panchayats and municipalities women representatives are more concerned and vocal in rising women issues such as domestic violence, child sexual abuse, maternal health etc. While in the higher decision making bodies (State Assembly) the differences between and men and women representatives gets hazy. The reason for this is to be found in the number of women. The number of women representatives is equal to that of men at the lower level of governing bodies while in the higher decision-making bodies the number of women is substantially low. Therefore, in order to make a difference, there is a need to build up a critical mass of perspectives from women (IPU, 2008). Many researchers also argue that it is difficult to assess the impact of women in policy making until women move from small minority to a large one in legislative assemblies (Dahlerup 1998; Kanter 1977; Thomas 1994). Only the substantial number of women in parliament can influence politics and can improve the standards of political behaviour, if, on the contrary, the number of women politician is small; the politics may change women because to survive politically, women may copy the men in their methods and behaviour (IPU, 2000). Therefore, a substantial number of women in assembly is must reflect on policy based on women's issues and give proper shape to women's perspective in decision making bodies.

Do Women's Opinions Matter?
Phillips (1995) sees that increasing the proportion of females as part of a wider 'project for increasing and enhancing democracy' with the hope that women might bring a more consultative and participatory consultative practice of politics. She also believed that women representatives will introduce new and beneficial elements into political behaviour and policy making. Women in some areas have deeper expertise and knowledge than do most men, which will enrich the policy making process. Janine Mossuz-Lavau argues vehemently that the presence of a higher proportion of women would transform the misogynistic male chauvinist atmosphere of the assembly (cited in Phillips, 1991). She further alleged that policy would become more practical; more grounded and may be less militarily assertive. Therefore, an increasing number of women in decision making is crucial for the larger project of democracy. More

important is the balanced participation of women and men in political decision making. Women's participation in public affairs is important to the functioning and strengthening of democracy (IPU, 2000). It is stated that the decision taken without women's perspective lack credibility in a democratic context (IPU, 2000). With this view, an attempt has been made to draw the opinion of respondents.

Category	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Strongly Agree	8	17	1	26	13
Agree	9	25	0	34	17
Disagree	43	43	2	88	44
Strongly Disagree	23	10	5	38	19
Undecided	1	14	1	16	8
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Table 5.21
Men's Opinion has Preference Over Women's Opinion in Political Decision Making

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

When respondents are asked to give an opinion on the statement "whether men's opinion has preference over women's opinion in decision making", as many as 63 percent of respondents 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' (Table 5.21). In other words, most of the respondents perceived that there is equality between men and women in the process of political decision making. In this regard, a senior woman politician (age, 81) said that "men accept our (women) leadership position, so while decision making the opinion of all the members are given equal importance regardless of gender". Similarly, Deputy Mayor Lashey Doma Bhutia from Gangtok Municipal Corporation also expressed "there is no gender discrimination in policy decision making provided that the opinion raised by the members is mindful and practical". Their narrations give a picture of gender equality in policy decision making.

However, a substantial percent (around 30 percent) of respondents recorded gender discrimination. They revealed the dominant position of men is prevalent in decision making process and said that in the decision making men's point of view is more preferred than women's. A panchayat president Diki Doma Bhutia from North Sikkim says: "Men panchayat members are not very supportive. Their attitude is indifferent and many times they don't even consider our opinion while taking decisions on important matters. Our (women) opinions are eclipsed and sidelined as men are authoritative, knowledgeable and experienced than us". According to woman

legislator (age, 37), the problem of gender discrimination is found at the grassroots level. She commented

> "At higher level politics both men and women politicians are treated equally, men respect and support the opinion of women, whereas at local governmental bodies the situation is different where men are more prominent and dominant in major areas of decision making".

It has been observed that most of the respondents recorded importance given to their opinion in decision making. On the contrary many feels discriminated and insignificant in policy decisions. It shows that the increasing number of women does not indicate that the power relations in decision making have changed. The patriarch is still dominant in the public sphere.

Problems faced by Women in getting into Politics

Entry into politics by contesting in the elections is not easy for any person, whether man or woman. It requires profound skills, time and energy. Though it is equally difficult for a man to seek public office but for women, it is more problematic due to gender roles ascribed by the society and socio-cultural ethos. In this context, an attempt is made to record the respondent's opinion on women's problems in getting into politics. The reasons are classified into six categories. They are physical constraints which cover the barriers which prevent women's way to politics includes responsibilities relating to reproductive, child care, domestic roles, towards family, marriage, etc. The second category of problems is socio-cultural constraints, which include social ethos, socialisation of girls and women cultural values, and religious restriction. The third category of problems is related to economic factors. This includes women's limited access to financial power. This factor forces women to keep away from contesting elections even if they are interested. The fourth category of problem is the incapability of women in comparison to male counterpart.

Table 5.22					
Problems faced by Women in getting into Politics					
Category	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Physical Constraints	14	21	3	38	19
Socio-cultural constraints	6	27	2	35	17
Economic reasons	7	14	1	22	11
Cannot compete at par with men	3	13	0	16	8
No constraints	51	11	1	63	31
Undecided	3	23	2	28	14
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The analysis of data reveals that around 31 percent of respondents saw no difficulty for women entering politics, however, around 55 percent of respondents mentioned of various deterrent factors (table 5.22). Among them 19 percent respondents mentioned "physical barrier" as the major problem of women seeking public office. The traditionally assigned gender roles inhibit women in entering politics. Practices such as the relative rigidity of the division of labour, and the notion of the naturalness of males' and females' work and the perceived gender relations all contribute to the shaping of political behavior. The paucity of women's role in politics is due to social and familial impediments. It becomes clearer when a woman legislator (age, 37) expressed: "Traditionally assigned domestic roles are the major impediment of women entering politics". According to her, gender roles acts as disincentives for the participation of women in Sikkim. While many others also viewed that the political environment created during election time is not ideal for women. The statement of panchayat vice president from North Sikkim, Chungsa Bhutia clearly points towards the direction: "As a woman, we do not feel safe to go for campaigning for elections during night time due to fear of physical harm whereas for men such constraints have little impact on them".

Cultural factors and the social construction of women were consistent factors as pointed out by respondents which made women feel hesitant about political candidacy. The socio-cultural factors have been the prominent deterrent factor in entering politics for 17 percent of respondents. The enduring impact of a socio-cultural factor on women is extensively highlighted by a male politician (age, 60): "The major problem of women in getting into politics is patriarchy. Women are restricted by family responsibilities and obliged to the husband. Women cannot go against the wishes of the husband and have to take his approval in anything she

wanted to do". The remark made by another male politician (age, 63) corroborates this statement. He said, "The major problem of women entering politics emerged from the patriarchal nature of our society. Our society is male-dominated society and patriarchy is deeply rooted in the minds of people. The problem of women continues as long as the patriarchy exists".

For 11 percent of respondents, economic aspect is the major deterrent and stated that the resources required to contest election have been the major cause of less women representation in politics. The elections in the present time becoming very expensive therefore, for women who since antiquity are dependent on male members of a family for resources finds difficult to get assess into politics. The economic factor as a major impediment for women entering politics has been clearly highlighted by a woman parliamentarian (age, 70). She states:

> "It is simply because of economic reasons women hesitate to make carrier in politics. In our society, traditionally men have control over economic resources; therefore, women are economically dependent on male family members. Secondly, the election expenses are enormous therefore, unless and until women get the support (financial) of political party women cannot come to power".

It is observed that gender roles, socio-cultural and economic factors have been a significant deterrent for women seeking public office.

Additional burden of women

The women legislators or representatives are also homemakers. An average working woman have to bear the double burden of work at home and at the workplace and women legislators are not exception to this double burden. Often this role conflict has been a major reason to keep women away from politics. Menon (2008) asserts that most often women are bearing double burden of work within the household and in the work place, the political activity would become a 'triple burden'. Similarly, Phillips (1991) also noted that in societies where the division of labour is ordered by sex, time becomes a crucial constraint on women and meetings an additional burden.

Category	Table 5.23 Women leaders have to deal with Additional Responsibilities/Burden				
	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Strongly Agree	11	30	1	42	21
Agree	33	41	2	76	38
Disagree	35	26	3	64	32
Strongly Disagree	5	4	1	10	5
Undecided	0	8	2	10	5
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

The findings derived from the present study corroborate the observation of Menon and Phillips. 21 percent of respondents "strongly agree" and another 38 percent "agree" with the view that women leaders have to deals with an additional burden (Table 5.23). The respondents stated that with traditional roles of domestic responsibilities, political activities are an additional burden for women.

While around 37 percent of respondents 'disagreed' and viewed that women can manage political commitments without hampering domestic responsibilities. This view is clearly expressed in the opinion of a woman legislator (age, 46) when she narrates:

> "I don't consider it as a burden, as a woman we must be able to balance our roles at home and workplace and these roles must not contradict. A politician woman must be able to balance and should not abstain from her roles in the kitchen. They are good in kitchen works and must take it as God's gift".

Many respondents also expressed that their domestic workload is shared by their husbands and other family members in support of their careers. Diki Lhamu Bhutia (Vice Chairperson, Namchi Municipal Council) for instance, states: "For me, politics is not a burden because my husband and family are very supportive. I can step out anytime to deal with public work. I can leave all my domestic responsibilities upon my family members to attend my public duties". Similarly, Krishna Maya Poudyal (panchayat member from East Sikkim) also expressed about the help she is getting from husband and family members: "I don't feel like a burden, as my husband is very supportive to my work. Sometimes when I have to stay out till late night my husband will take care of household activities".

However, Tashi Doma Bhutia sees politics as a challenge not as a burden. She said

"I don't take politics as a burden, rather a challenge. For women, politics is a challenge but feasible if managed properly. As a women representative we cannot ignore our domestic responsibilities therefore, we have to start our day little early to manage all the activities on time".

Many changes have been observed in recent times as many respondents stated that their domestic responsibilities are taken care of by the husband and other family members. However, a gender role factor is consistent among many respondents. Despite women's active participation in politics, both men and women see motherhood and marriage as the most important aspect of women's life. It has become an established notion that "politics is a man's business". The reason for this is to be found in the stereotyped role assigned to the women in a patriarchal society.

Opinion on Reservation of Seats for Women

The reservation policy is a measure to overcome the under-representation of women in decision making bodies. The 33 percent reservation of seats for women in local bodies served as a major breakthrough towards ensuring women's equal access and increased participation. Consequently, it enabled a large number of women to occupy positions as members and chairpersons of grassroots democratic institution, in Sikkim. However, the bill which proposes to reserve 33 percent seats in the national and state legislative assemblies is still under consideration of the Indian Parliament (Ojha, 2009). There has been nationwide debate on merits and demerits of the reservation of seats for women in the central and state assemblies of India. Therefore, an attempt has been made to draw the opinion of respondents on reservation (Table 5.24).

Table 5.24 Reservation of Seats for Women					
Category	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Opinion on reservation of seats for women					
Support	67	73	9	149	74
Do not Support	1	5	0	6	3
Undecided	16	31	0	47	23
Total	84	109	9	202	100
Reason for supporting reservation					
Otherwise it is difficult for women to contest due to socio-cultural barriers	24	19	6	49	33
It is their rights	9	35	0	44	30
Gender equality is must for clean politics	13	17	1	31	21
Women not dared to come out for electoral competition due to use of money and muscles power.	12	2	2	16	11
Undecided	9	0	0	9	6
Total	67	73	9	149	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

Interestingly, the majority of respondents (74 percent) "support" the reservation of seats for women in all the levels of governmental bodies. The attempt is also to reflect on the reasons for supporting "reservation" policies. However, varied responses were given by the respondents in which 33 percent said women cannot come forward for public office in the absence of reservation due to gender roles and socio-cultural barriers. The response clearly indicates that the socio-cultural practice of our society is the deterrent factor for women who aspire for public office. In this context, senior woman politician (age, 62) views: "without reservation women cannot compete at par with men due to privilege position of men in politics". The opinion of a woman parliamentarian (age, 70) substantiates above argument when she states "The social and cultural baggage carries up to this day prevents women from entering politics". Both the statements point towards the social and cultural factors as the impediment of women in politics.

For 30 percent of respondents "reservation" is the rights of women. For them, reservation is an important right for women to prove their political capabilities. Another 21 percent maintained that reservation of seats for women is a must to break the gender stereotype prevailing leading to gender inequality at all levels of governmental bodies. A senior male politician (age, 60) observes: "Women tend to involve less in 'dirty politics' because they are honest and sincere. Therefore, reservation is must for increasing more women to have a cleaner politics". Another 11

percent of respondents stated women do not dare to come out for the electoral competition due to existing use of money and muscle power in politics. Remaining 6 percent of respondents are undecided.

It is observed that most of the respondents consider a reservation is the means to increase the participation of women in politics. Among them many believe that women who aspire for public office cannot do so without reservation due to socio-cultural barriers prevalent in our society. This is consistent with Nirmala Buch (2009) finding which states that given the continued patriarchal culture of our society most of the women who contest the panchayat elections would not be able to do so in the absence of reservation.

Do Numbers Matter to bring Changes in Political Scenario?

The increase in numbers of women in decision-making bodies is expected to bring changes in the existing norms of the political systems. It would increase the likelihood that women's perspectives will be represented and improves policy responsiveness and institutional culture and practice (IPU, 2008). The worldwide IPU survey finds most of the respondents agreed that an increase in a number of women in parliament change politics; they will have a greater influence on political priorities and policy (IPU 2000 & IPU 2008).

Table 5.25 **Increase in Women Representation would bring about Changes in Political Scenario**					
Category	**Women Representatives**	**Common People**	**Politician**	**Total**	**%**
Strongly agree	20	26	2	48	24
Agree	30	45	4	79	39
Disagree	0	12	0	12	6
Strongly Disagree	0	2	0	2	1
Undecided	34	24	3	61	30
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Field Survey, 2018-19

The respondents in the present study were asked if they agreed with the statement: "increase in women representation would bring changes in the political scenario". Over half of the respondents agreed with the statement. 24 percent "strongly agreed" and 39 percent "agreed". The opinion of respondents points towards three important changes that women can infuse into politics. Firstly, it leads to peaceful and violence free politics. This anticipation is reflected in the opinion of a woman parliamentarian (age, 70) when she states: "If more women are inducted into politics the incidence of

violence could be reduced significantly which in turn creates a peaceful and violence free political environment"

Secondly, it is important for cleaner politics. Many respondents believe that an increase in a number of women in central and state assemblies leads to cleaner politics. Lastly, the reason for increasing women representation demands addressing women issues. In this regard, a woman legislator (age, 37) narrates: "The presence of women in assembly brings about change especially in the areas which are related to women issues. They can be instrumental in addressing women's concerns and to tackle women related issues".

Surprisingly, most of the respondents (30 percent) were "undecided". In this category many respondents were not aware of reservation policies therefore they could not record their opinion. However, many other respondents were "undecided" because they are not certain of changes that are expected to bring with an increase in women's political representation They said that nothing could be perceived so early because in order to bring changes in political scenario the whole perception about women in politics need to be changed and changes in perception takes a generation or more. Several other respondents also stated that the change does not depend on men or women but on the capacity and desire of the person.

Suggestion to Enhance Women Participation in Politics

In the present study, an attempt is made not only to find out the obstacles towards women's political participation but also tries to lay down some of the measures to enhance women's participation in politics. When respondents asked to give suggestion to enhance women's participation in politics, varied responses have been recorded. 23 percent of respondents said to increase women's political participation in a true sense requires women's "self realization" about their importance in politics. Senior male politician's (age, 60) opinion clearly points towards it as he states: "There will be no improvements in women political participation unless confidence and capabilities are inculcated among women. Therefore, it takes time and generation to develop such qualities and to inculcate personality effective to politics".

Many women are still very reluctant to make their career in politics due to socio-cultural stigma rooted in the minds of people. As it is clearly reflected that 18 percent of respondents maintain that only by changing the "mindset" of people women's

participation could be increased. Kamala Rai (vice president, panchayat, West Sikkim) expressed: "There is a need to change the mentality of people towards women. People must understand what women can do if they are given chance instead of discouraging and pulling down politically active women".

Further, 11 percent of respondents also highlighted "political awareness" among women while some around 3 percent reflected on "reservation" of seats for women to increase women's participation in politics. As far as reservation of seats for women is concerned one of the interviewees (woman parliamentarian, age 70) sees that the institutional approach is the most effective measure to encourage more women to enter politics. She clearly stressed on the initiation of 33 percent seats reservation for women, which she believes should starts from within party by fielding more women candidates in the electoral competition. Remaining 17 percent of respondents have given multiple responses; some favoured present representation system and suggested to continue without any changes while others emphasize on proper training facilities to the elected women members. Most of them also suggested women's education to enhance women's participation in politics.

Table 5.26 Suggestion to Enhance Women Participation in Politics					
Category	Women Representatives	Common People	Politician	Total	%
Political Awareness	3	18	2	23	11
Reservation	2	4	1	7	3
Women should realize their importance in politics	20	22	4	46	23
By changing the mindset of people regarding women's political participation	18	17	2	37	18
Undecided	27	27	0	54	27
Other	14	21	0	35	17
Total	84	109	9	202	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018-19

A senior woman politician (age, 81) suggests: "To increase political participation of women, first and foremost women should be educated, empowered and competent. The knowledge is the most powerful weapon a woman can have to be politically effective". She strongly advocates for increasing the capabilities of women through education and expanding their knowledge of politics and governance which she believes is the strongest weapons to increase politically.

Although, reservation is an important positive discrimination policy measures to increase women representation in the politics, the respondents and interviewees do not regard the same. Only three percent of respondents thought that the reservation of seats is an important policy measure to increase women's representation in public sphere. The respondents consistently reiterated on the importance of "self-realization" that women must realize value of their role in politics.

Conclusion

Women in many societies are restricted to the roles inside the house as wife and mother. The positive discrimination measures in the form of reservation offered them new opportunities to take part in politics. The increasing number of women contributes to the process of deepening democracy by providing policy options from women's perspectives. The increasing number of women is based on the assumption that women have different interests, therefore would bring distinctive interests to legislative debate because of their gendered life experience. It is believed that women would enrich out political life in the direction of a more caring and compassionate society. However, several factors act as a deterrent on the way to women entering politics.

The socio-cultural barriers have a bearing effect on her interest in politics. The social ethos, cultural values, socialisation of girls and women, religious restriction and gender roles has an impact on women's participation in politics. The people are still reluctant to give power to women as they are suspicious of the credibility of women in a leadership position. The ideological beliefs and argument against women's right to participate in politics have created a barrier to women's political participation. Because of which even after women are provided with equal legal rights at par with men, their ability to make decisions in politics continued to be questioned theoretically and practically. Therefore, ideas about women's role and position in society can be an impediment or enabling factors for women seeking political power (Paxton and Kunovich, 2003).

The impact of women's role in domestic activities has been another major obstacle in their active political participation. Despite women's active participation in politics, both men and women see motherhood and marriage as the most important aspect of women's life. It has become an established notion that "politics is a man's business".

The reason for this is to be found in the stereotyped role assigned to the women in a patriarchal society. In order to bring change, it is necessary to overcome patriarchal orientation. According to Khanna (2009), patriarchy should not be regarded as "insurmountable ghost" but must be fought back by strengthening women's leadership, building up confidence and morale and equipping them with information that situation can change.

Economic factor has been a major challenge for women entering politics. It is found that the major source of election expenses of women representatives is personal resources which are the funds raise from family and friends. Therefore, it is observed that without the help of party women cannot pursue their higher political goals. It is therefore, recommended to field more and more women candidates by parties for the electoral competitions and help them to win the elections.

To tackle the woe women are facing in politics, the reservation is seen as a viable solution. Without which women cannot make their route to politics due to prevailing socio-cultural and economic factors. The reservation alone cannot be an effective mechanism without the initiative and courage from the part of individual women. As most of respondents and interviewees highlighted women should realize their importance and capacity to bring change. The general population also needs to be convinced that women can be effective politicians as that of men and the ideas about the role of women in societies and politics need to be changed. For this to happen, sensitisation, campaign, civic education and public awareness raising programme need to be initiated. Further, different support mechanisms may be initiated like child care facilities in their workplace to ease the workload for women.

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CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Participation is central to the establishment and maintenance of a democratic polity. Democratic states encourage people's participation in political institutions as the success of democracy relies on their extent of inclusiveness. It is problematic to comprehend democracy if it is not inclusionary. The participation of women in the political process and the decision making institutions is central to the proper functioning of democracy. However, women's representation was for a long time not seen as equally important to address (Phillips, 1995). As Dahlerup (2006) observes outside feminist circles, all male political assemblies were previously not considered undemocratic. This realization has led to the efforts to include women in the political process. As a result, at the international level, the United Nations has been instrumental in taking initiatives by organizing various conferences by focusing on women's issues. The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995 may be seen as important in bringing discursive shifts in relation to women in politics. It stresses that equality of women in decision making is not only a question of democracy but also a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken in to account. Similarly, Trembly (2007) also notes that women share equally with men in the decision-making process, otherwise, there is a democratic deficit.

Sikkim was governed by authoritarian rule for more than 300 years and accepted liberal democracy as an alternative political model in 1975. Sikkim under authoritarian rule saw the absence of a competitive party system, less involvement of citizens in the decision-making process. The people were not allowed to organise themselves for their rights. The establishment of democracy since 1975 opened the avenues for mass participation of citizens in public policy making. It is claimed that only in the democratic setup which provide a vast array of opportunities to the people to participate in socio, economic, cultural and political aspects of life. Similarly, the

transition from feudal to democracy brought about many changes. Realizing the importance of inclusion of women in democratic progress, the state government consciously worked towards gender parity. For instance, Sikkim endorsed the positive discrimination policy at the local level as a measure towards an inclusive democracy. The Sikkim Panchayat Raj Act was enacted in 1993 in pursuance with the Central Act of 1992 which gave effect to 33 percent reservation of seats for women in all levels of rural local bodies in Sikkim. Later on, Sikkim Panchayat Amendment Act 2011 mandates not less than half of the total number of seats for women. Similarly, for urban local bodies Sikkim Municipality Act 2007 was enacted in consonance with the provision of the 74th Amendment Act 1992 which gives effect to 33 percent reservation of seats for women in urban local bodies. The reservation for women in urban local bodies increased further to 50 percent by Sikkim Municipality Act 2015. As a result, women representation in both rural and urban local bodies has reached gender parity.

Like many other democracies, participation and representation of women in Sikkim in higher politics however remain a major challenge even after 45 years of democracy. Though women have consolidated their presence in some areas of participation such as voting, campaigning, political meetings and representation in local governmental bodies but have simultaneously disenfranchised with regard to political representation in higher decision making bodies. Women representation has always been less than 15 percent in the Legislative Assembly, which is far from 30 percent target endorsed by the Beijing Platform. The ministerial positions and the influential portfolio have always been occupied by men. Political parties are also reluctant to give tickets to women. Women constitute half of the state's population but their representation is far from satisfactory in the legislature. The problem of political representation of women is rarely examined because the question of women representation in the power process has been minimally raised. It is seen as self-evident. But today, when the success of politics and quality of democracy is defined by its inclusiveness, the problem of women representation in the legislature cannot be seen as self-evident but as a matter of concern, from which this inquiry begins.

In this chapter, the central conclusions of this study are discussed. It begins by presenting the summary of the study and then the key findings of this study. The findings are presented based on the specific issues which were analysed in chapter

five. Next, some corrective measures are suggested to increase the political participation and representation of women in Sikkim. Final section of the chapter provides direction for future research most likely to overcome these.

Summary of the Study

Participation is fundamental to the practice of democracy that it is impossible to conceive without it. The meaning and concept of democracy have changed over a period of time so is the concept of participation because they are inter-related. In the present study, the conceptual framework of democracy and political participation is presented in Chapter 2. While exploring participation in connection with democratic theories there are mainly two views; one group advocates for mass participation, another emphasised on the minimal role of people in a democracy. Minimalist views reinforced by scholars like Mosca, Michels, Schumpeter, Dahl and Sartori. They cast doubt on the possibility of the attainment of democracy through the mass participation of people. Mosca and Pareto observed that most of the citizens especially from the lower socio-economic status groups have no interest in politics therefore an increase in political participation by present non-participants could upset the stability of the democratic system. Similarly, Schumpeter emphasised on the responsible role of political leadership and expects them to make policy and law with little regard to diffuse demands made by citizens. He advocates the minimal role of citizens in the political process that is voting because they are less informed. Like Schumpeter, Dahl also contends that there is no use of stressing on a theory that requires maximum participation from ordinary people for control to take place as they tend to be disinterested and apathetic about politics. An elitist, Sartori views that apathy is not due to illiteracy, poverty or insufficient information, but it is due to lack of practice in a democracy. Therefore, he suggests that the existing state of apathy should be kept as it is and trying to change them would endanger the maintenance of the democratic method.

Another group of theorists which advocates for wider people's participation in a democracy are Rousseau, Mill, Dewey and Barber. Rousseau views that actual freedom of individual increased through participation in decision making because it gives him a real degree of control over the course of his life and structure of his environment. He sees participation as the increasing value of freedom to the individual by enabling him to be and remain his own master. Like Rousseau, Mill

also observed that it is only within a participatory institution that an individual character being fostered. He views that if an individual is concerned solely with his own private affairs and does not participate in public affairs then their capacities for responsible public action remain undeveloped. Dewey reinforced that the success of democracy depends upon the expanded opportunities for participation. Like Dewey, Barber also views that politics is something done by citizens in a strong democracy. It extended the responsibility for decisions to everyone and it would develop individuals' political competence, thereby increasing the quality of decision making.

The debate on democracy and participation reached its pinnacle during the 1960s when theorists like Benjamin Barber and Carole Pateman made strong normative arguments for greater citizen involvement. The new social movements arose during the 1960s including the American civil rights movement and the women's movement, championing groups that were excluded from the representative institutions. Initially, women suffragettes argue it is not good enough that women to be represented by their fathers, husbands and sons. They believed that with the vote, the condition of women will change positively. However, in the late twentieth century, Anne Phillips (1991) sees inclusion beyond just political rights like voting and argues that it requires more. She contends democracy does not necessarily mean to provide an opportunity to vote in periodic elections and the equal right to stand as candidates, but it involves a more substantial degree of participation and openness regardless of sex, class or race.

However, a substantial degree of women's participation would impossible unless certain measures are positively taken in this direction. The initiative of positive discrimination measures taken to correct the under-representation of women in politics is seen as democratizing space for democratizing democracy. The study on positive discrimination measures as a wider project of democratizing democracy is incorporated in Chapter 3. This chapter is an attempt to address the question that how have positive discrimination strategies have been adopted, used, and implemented to reach gender equality in the political landscape in India in general and Sikkim in particular. The central argument of the chapter is that unless the issues of exclusion and gender parity are taken seriously, the wider question of democratizing democracy cannot be satisfactorily answered. Quotas, as a positive discrimination policy, endorsed by the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 for achieving parity in women's representation in policy-making bodies. Positive discrimination in the form

of quotas or reservations is seen as measures to address the under-representation of women. The 'feminization of legislatures' through positive discrimination is an important measure of democratizing democracy. Democratizing and deepening of democracy helps in creating new democratic spaces for maximum participation and representation of women in public offices.

The factors that influence the presence of women in politics is categorised as socio-economic, political and cultural or ideological factors. Besides, political parties have rarely assigned priority to gender issues or promoted women as candidates for without being formally obliged to do so. Moreover, where positions in parties are determined by patronage there will be little scope for women to speak for gender equality. On account of the under-representation of women in decision-making bodies, nations sought to address through certain forms of positive discrimination labelled 'reservation policies' in India. In India, there are no quotas or reservations at national and state levels but quotas are used very effectively at the local level. Therefore, the proportion of women in the Indian legislature is not very impressive even after 72 years of Independence. The women representation has not reached even 15 percent in Lok Sabha. In Rajya Sabha, 11.8 percent is the highest to date. The Indian Constitution, however, has implemented gender quotas for rural and urban local bodies via constitutional provisions. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, enacted in 1992, mandated India's state governments to reserved one-third of the seats in these local bodies for women. This has resulted in historic leaps in women's representation from a mere 10 percent to 33 percent after the introduction of gender quotas in local bodies. There is a remarkable improvement in the proportion of women representation in local bodies due to positive discrimination strategies in Sikkim. Similar initiatives or political reform such as political party quotas or reserved seats for women needs to be adopted at the national and state level to democratize democracy in India. Furthermore, such measures facilitate the creation of new democratic spaces to redress the issue of gendered inequities and inequalities. And above all, it has made democracy more inclusive, participatory and engendered.

Chapter 4 focuses on the study of political participation and representation of women in Sikkim. This chapter is an attempt to identify a gap in participation of women, the areas where they are not participating and the reasons for their lack of participation. The recent level of political participation of women in Sikkim reveals two contrasting

views. The participation of women as a voter and their participation in local bodies have achieved gender parity. The 65.71 percent women voter turnout in the year 1979 has reached 78.38 percent in 2019. The Sikkim Legislative Assembly elections 2019 recorded almost co-equal numbers of men and women participation as voter where men voters are more than women voters minimally by 0.48 percent. Secondly, the participation and representation of women are comparatively good in local governmental bodies. The reason for this is to be found in affirmative action of the government in the form of reservation of seats for women in local bodies. However, on the other hand, the proportion of women playing real political leadership is dismal. In fact, there are very few women who actually seek and wield political power which distinguishes their political behaviour from that of men. Very few women have achieved the highest positions in the government while the majority of women have been marginalised from participation in mainstream politics. The representation of women in Assembly and cabinet position is miserably low, ranges from 0 to 12 percent in Legislative Assembly and 0 to 16 percent in the cabinet. The glass ceiling appears to remain intact for the vast majority of women in politics despite the fact that Sikkim as a whole has been undergoing a period of rapid socio-economic changes.

The aim of Chapter 5 is to enquire about the constraints as well as the enabling factors of women in politics. When the participation of women has reached gender parity where the power is relatively less and in higher power politics they are almost absent, leads to an empirical investigation to address the questions like whether women have capacity to participate in power politics, why women are rarely seek to participate in power politics, whether women differ from men in policy making and if or how the increasing number of women makes difference. Hence, this chapter incorporates findings derived from a field study conducted in four districts of Sikkim addressing the crucial questions. The women's pathways into politics have never been easy. It has been influenced by various social, economic, cultural and political factors. Therefore, this chapter is an examination of various factors and its linkages to participation and representation of women in politics. In doing so, the data from the field together with people's perception is thoroughly analyzed.

Key Findings of the Study

The comprehensive study of the issue under examination led to certain major observations. In trying to analyze the participation of women in politics, the present

study examines the respondent's electoral participation, their involvement as a member of a political party, involvement in political meetings, campaigns and protest. It has been found that women in Sikkim have made significant gains in the areas of their participation as voters. The number of women voters is the largest and now almost at par with that of men. The Assembly elections 2019 recorded almost co-equal numbers of men and women participation as voter where men voters are more than women voters minimally by 0.48 percent. In fact, in the 2014 elections, the women voter turnout percentage was 81.31 which was higher than men i.e. 80.31 percent. The voting percentage of women in the 2019 Assembly elections is much higher than the average voting percentage of women in elections to Lok Sabha, 2019. As per recent electoral data, voting percent of women of Sikkim is higher than some of the states which have the highest number of women representation in their respective assemblies such as Chattisgarh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The key to the better position of women as a voter appears to be contained in the mobilization effort of political parties. The political parties and their working members in the state, districts and ward levels have mobilized and educate the first-time voters in exercising the franchise. The general awareness among the community is significant to increase participation. Secondly, the use of social media by different groups has been instrumental in mobilizing people to exercise their rights. The social media has been popularly used by political parties, politicians and supporters for reaching out general public in the recently held assembly election. Therefore, the growing use of social media is becoming a popular trend in sensitizing people to vote in a particular direction.

Besides voting, the participation and representation of women are comparatively good in local governmental bodies. The reason for this is to be found in the positive discrimination policy of government in the form of reservation of seats for women in local bodies. This institutional set up has emerged as a powerful instrument for the removal of gender imbalance in the lower level of government. The one-third reservation of seats of women was made applicable at the level of members as well as in the posts of Presidents/Chairmen. Although 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Act provide for only one-third reservations for women in local governmental bodies, Sikkim raises reservation to 50 percent in both rural and urban local bodies. As a result, gender parity has been achieved at all levels of local bodies.

This study helps dispel the myth that positive discrimination policies necessarily result in losses in women's access to power. On the contrary, the reservation of seats facilitates the promotion of women, which can, in turn, have tremendous symbolic and practical consequences. The findings of the study show that these policies can help women of Sikkim attain political leadership positions.

Women have though consolidated their presence as a voter, but have simultaneously disenfranchised with regard to political representation in higher decision-making bodies. Very few women are able to reach the top echelon of party positions. It is claimed that as the power goes up the number of women decreases substantially. The claim has been proved true as the present study found that women are invisible in the top leadership of the party positions. When women respondents were asked about their position held in the party hierarchy, only 13 percent is found to be the main office-bearer of the party. Moreover, the major state parties seem to be reluctant to give power positions to women. This is clearly reflected in the fielding of party candidates for the electoral competition. In the 2019 Assembly elections, the SDF party had fielded four women candidates which is the highest number as compared to other political parties. The representation of women in Assembly is dismally low, ranges from 0 to 12 percent. There are no women cabinet ministers in the present government formed in May 2019.

In trying to analyse the motivating factor of women entering politics, the study makes certain remarkable observations. It is claimed that women are generally motivated by male members of the family to enter politics. The claim is partly right when the women of elected bodies express the presence of close family members - most of them have husbands/fathers in politics. It suggests that politically active husband or father makes a route for women to enter politics. However, the expanded response is drawn from respondents indicates, they cannot assume proxies - the housewives of the male politicians without any real power - as also found in the study of Nanivadekar, 1997. But they are the women who actually are motivated to contribute for social welfare (see Table 5.15). The women in elected bodies are found to be active and making difference by focusing on issues like water, roads, poverty alleviation and addressing various problems related to women. In this regard, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Mohanty 1999; Jayal and Nussbaum 2003. Their studies suggest that women are bringing about change in decision making

process by shifting the focus of development policy by highlighting the need of people like water, roads, footpaths, poverty alleviation and also become effective to address women's interest.

This study reaffirms that membership in organization or association has been the stepping stone on the way to politics. As many as 80 percents of women elected to local bodies was the member of one or the other associations and most of them have 5 to 10 years of experience. Their memberships in organizations prove to be one of the determinants of political effectiveness. The experiences and confidence built from their membership in civil society associations and other formal and informal arenas help women to built political skills which itself build a pathway into politics. The findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of Verba and Nie (1972) that voluntary organizations increase the propensity of the individual to be a participant because they provide him an opportunity for training in participation within the organization that can be transmitted to the sphere of political activities.

The previous research suggests that increasing women's representation in politics would have a substantive impact on politics and policies. Enhancing women's participation in electoral competition improves the quality of policy making by increasing competition and by highlighting different views and experiences (Darcy et al. 1994; Kahn 1996). The attempt to analyze the impact of women on policy making process and the underlying factors that hinder their effective participation lead to certain interesting observations. Numerous studies on women and politics found that the way women works or deal with the situation is different from men. Phillips (1991), Mansbridge (1999), Thomas (1994) and Gilligan, (1982), Burrell (1994) and Thomas 1994 observed that women bring different interests, values, experiences, perspectives and talents into policy areas. Similarly, the present study on Sikkim corroborates the finding of the previous studies. It has been observed that women are honest towards their duties, therefore, whatever task assigned to them they try to solve it efficiently without wasting any time. This approach of women makes a huge difference in the process of policy decision making. Furthermore, some respondents and interviewees have highlighted that women are less involved in 'dirty politics' and believed that if more women come to politics the incidence of violence would decline, the political sphere would be peaceful and less corruption. Therefore, the values, expertise and approach of women towards politics would enrich public policy in

direction of more caring and compassionate society. Moreover, the differences between men and women in politics can be explained by virtue of their own lived experiences. Men and women have different life experiences which are basically rooted in socialisation process and their upbringing. Women experience of being wife and mother and taking care of children and elderly, managing household activities is different from men's experience of fatherhood and husband and looking after matters related to not private sphere. Therefore, the life experience of men and women respondents reflects in performing their duties.

The presence of women in the legislature is important as they represent and act for the interest of women. The 89 percent of respondents of the Inter-parliamentary Union survey also mentioned how conscious they were of their mandate to represent the interests of women, men and children alike (IPU, 2000). Contrary to previous studies, the findings of this study present conflicting views. The study reveals that in the lower level of government i.e. at the panchayats and municipalities, women representatives are more concerned and vocal in raising women issues such as domestic violence, child sexual abuse, maternal health, etc. While in the higher decision making bodies (State and National legislatures) the differences between and men and women representatives get blurred. The reason for this appears to be contained in the number of the position held by women. The number of women representatives is equal to that of men at the lower level of governing bodies while in the higher decision-making bodies, the number of women is substantially low. Hence, it is observed that in order to make a difference, a certain number of women or 'critical mass' of 30 percent is important. Only the substantial number of women in the legislature can reflect on the interest of women and thereby they can improve the standards of political behaviour.

The increasing proportion of women is seen as the wider project of enhancing democracy with the hope that women would bring new and consultative practices in public decision making bodies. It is also believed that in some areas women have deeper expertise and knowledge than do most men, which will enrich the policy making. Therefore, the increasing number of women in decision making is crucial for the larger project of democracy. The women's participation in public affairs is important to the functioning and strengthening of democracy. It is claimed that the decision taken without women's perspective lack credibility in a democratic context. In the present study, although most of the respondents 'agreed' that women's

perspective is given importance in decision-making process, many women feel discriminated and insignificant. Nevertheless, women respondents remarks upon the manifest discrimination against them like the attempt by an elected male colleague to dominate, the suggestions and opinions of elected women are overlooked and prevalence of negative attitude of male members in elected office. It is evident that an increasing number of women does not mean that power relations in decision-making have changed. The response of respondents and interviewees reveals that patriarch is dominant in the public sphere.

The present study corroborates findings of a world-wide study conducted by Inter-Parliamentary Union. Most of the survey respondents agreed that the increase in a number of women in legislature change politics and they will have a greater influence on political priorities and politics (IPU 2000 & IPU 2008). The present study on Sikkim echo this finding as around 60 percent of respondents replied affirmatively to the statement that "increase in women representation would bring changes in the political scenario". Respondents expressed that the increase in the proportion of women in politics would change the political environment to more peaceful and violence free politics. Many respondents also point towards the possibility of cleaner politics and some other highlighted on addressing women issues.

Despite moves towards gender parity in many spheres, barriers to the entry of women into elected office still persist. Drawing from the field survey based on a quantitative and qualitative study, various factors have emerged as significant deterrent renders women to the marginal political existence. In developing countries, women may find difficult to break into the electoral office as they are generally disadvantaged by poverty, poor childcare, low level of education, and inadequate health care. A state's level of socio-economic development is therefore significantly related to its proportion of women legislators. The socio-cultural factors such as social ethos, cultural values, socialization of girls and women, etc. inhibit women in politics. Women are socialized into accepting the role assigned to her right from childhood. The dominant role of the male in family and society is considered as natural. The socially constructed masculinity and femininity result in internalization of the role: women are associated with passive, docile, irrational and emotional whereas men are associated with masculinity, boldness, rational and persistence. Politics is something which is associated with men as it demands initiative, persistence, boldness and self-

confidence thereby making women unsuited to politics. Consequently, people are still reluctant to give power to women as they are suspicious of the credibility of women in leadership positions. Besides, it is found that the traditional attitudes towards the role of women in the home and family, many women are reluctant to run and if they seek office, may fail to attract sufficient support to win. The ideological beliefs and argument against women's right to participate in politics have created a barrier to women's political participation. Because of which even after women are provided with equal legal rights at par with men, their ability to make decisions in politics continued to be questioned theoretically and practically.

The low level of education has been a deterrent factor of the effective participation of women in decision making bodies. The parliament and state legislatures as well as local bodies are designed primarily for the planning of programmes of economic and social justice and the implementation of schemes (Jayal, 2006). To perform such task requires knowledge and expertise from the part of elected bodies. The low level of education makes difficult if not impossible for women to effectively participate in decision-making that is greatly dependent on the paper works, the legal language of agenda and minutes. In the present study, it is found that many women elected to these bodies have no expertise to be able to perform these tasks. The study also reveals that most of the elected women to these bodies have education only up to the primary level. They perceive 'lack of knowledge' as a major deterrent that hampers their effective participation in policy decision-making bodies. The women themselves recognize of having less knowledge and expertise as compared to men counterparts. Their inadequacy of knowledge has also made them dependent on males and other officials in performing their duties. When asked about the way they solve problems of their constituents, over 50 percent of respondents and some interviewees said they find the remedy for problems by taking help from father/husband/brother, fellow mates or higher officials of the institution. They also stated that women cannot take decisions in many aspects as men do.

Economic factor has been a major challenge for women entering politics. Since antiquity, women are economically dependent on men members of the family which has become a root cause of their stunted individual growth in every aspect including the political sphere of life. Whatever may be the economic progress in general, women are not able to escape from the inconvenience of being dependent. Their

economic dependency inhibits them to enter politics as politics is all about spending an enormous amount of money. For women contesting an election is hard but it is harder when the election expenses are high. The election expenses are very high despite ceilings imposed by the Election Commission on election expenditure. Therefore, this creates harder situation for women to make an arrangement for election expenses. The present study demonstrates the worrisome condition of women in making an arrangement for electoral expenses. The respondents and interviewees expressed that their major source of election expenses is personal resources which are the funds raise from family and friends. It is observed that women do not possess any substantial resources required to be in power positions. Insufficient resources as a result of societal inequalities experienced by women are evidenced from this study. It is found that many women candidates needed to engage in the election campaign on a full-time basis and required financial support to cover the costs of running a successful campaign which made women less likely to be successful in winning the elections. Therefore, it appears the fact that without the help of the party, women cannot pursue their higher political goals as women were much less likely than men to have access to family finances.

Political parties are the gatekeepers to widening political representation and can be crucial factors in allowing women access in equal numbers. The various empirical studies find that political parties and electoral systems can enhance or limit the flow of candidates to power politics (Kunovich & Paxton 2005; Norris 1985; Rule 1987). The recruitment and selection of political elites occur entirely within political parties. Therefore, it is stated that in order for an individual to run a political office, he or she must be selected by political parties. In compliance with previous research, the present study claims that explanation to the paucity of women in politics to a greater extent to be found in the reluctance of political parties in fielding women candidates for electoral competition. Whether national or state political parties, they have fielded significantly less number of women ranges from 0 to 10 percent, which is way below the 30 percent threshold mandate. The major state political parties of Sikkim (like SKM, SDF) are even more reluctant in fielding women party candidates than many national parties of India. In every election, declarations are made for granting a certain number of seats to women, however, no party has fulfilled their commitment. All the political parties have shown interest in women's problems and make agenda

stressing on women's issues in their campaigns. However, they hardly make any sincere efforts to reach out to women or to give them a position of authority. Very few women have achieved the leadership position of party. Hence, women are almost excluded from the file and position of the party hierarchy. This study shows that it is not the voters but the political leaders are not in favour of supporting women candidatures. Moreover, the lack of transparency and openness in selection and recruitment processes and procedures is also important factors for underrepresentation of women. Even the findings of the study by Norris and Lovenduski (1995) concluded that it is the shortage of women incumbents and strong challengers, not voter discrimination, which accounts for the under-representation of women.

Physical constraints are the major problem of women seeking public office. The traditionally assigned gender roles such as responsibilities relating to reproductive, child care, domestic roles, towards family and marriage prevent women from entering politics. Practices of rigidity of the division of labour, and the notion of the naturalness of males' and females' work and the perceived gender relations all contribute to the shaping of political behavior. The paucity of women's role in politics is due to social and familial impediments. Similarly, the prevalence of gender roles is found to be rooted in Sikkimese society, however, women also point towards the changing pattern in familial relationship and flexibility of roles. Women expressed the help they are getting from husbands and other family members to carry on domestic responsibilities so that they can focus on public responsibilities. Although transformation is seen in the practices of the rigidity of males' and females' work, both men and women see motherhood and marriage as the most important aspect of women's life.

Conclusion

Democracy and political participation are inter-related. The meaning and concept of democracy have changed over a period of time so is the concept of participation. Inclusive democracy demands participation from previously excluded groups such as women. The under-representation of women requires certain measures to correct. The positive discrimination measures in the form of reservation or quotas are seen as a means to correct the historically under-represented women. It also appeals to the idea that women's experience is distinct, that women are different from men and bring to governing distinct attributes that encourage a more compassionate and less corrupt

society. Today quotas are introduced in the countries in which women constitute a small minority in parliament and witness a remarkable increase of women in politics. In Sikkim, democratic government was established in 1975 and this shift from authoritarianism to liberal democracy in a way provided women, for the first time, with the prospect of moving to the public arena which otherwise is the domain of men. The Sikkim Panchayati Act 1993 and Sikkim Municipality Act 2007 mandate reservation of women in local bodies. It has served as a major breakthrough towards ensuring women's equal access and increased participation in local government. Today fifty percent and more seats in local government bodies are occupied by women. The inclusion of women in decision making bodies has brought major changes in the policy making process. They are more concerned with women related issues, therefore makes difference by 'acting for' women in decision making bodies. The increasing number of women certainly brings changes in politics as they are comparatively more honest and dedicated to their duties and receptive to people's problems than men. This would contribute to mainstreaming a gendered perspective in political institutions. However, there are certain crucial factors which hold back women's effective participation. Physical constraints include responsibilities relating to reproductive, child care, domestic roles, towards family, marriage etc. limit their effective roles as representatives in governmental bodies. Secondly, socio-cultural barriers have a bearing effect on her interest in politics. The social ethoses, cultural values, socialization of girls and women, religious restriction and gender roles have an impact on women's participation in politics. The people are still reluctant to give power to women as they were suspicious of the credibility of women in leadership positions.

Suggestions

The exclusion of women from public policy making bodies impoverishes the democratic values and principles and inhibits the overall development of the society. The male-centric governing institutions further the interest of men barring women from the political sphere. There range of factors which render women an inferior political status and enjoy only marginalised political existence. The gender roles and socio-cultural practices are still predominant factors which prevent women from participating fully in politics. Traditional gender roles, patriarchal norms based upon inherent belief in male superiority which expounds male domination by vesting

decision making power in the male member of the family and the view of women's role is inside house coupled with lack of education, training and resources for women, all these factors contributes under-representation of women in decision making bodies. These problems lead to outline suggestions which may go a long way in promoting women's political participation.

- Women's political participation cannot be understood in isolation from their overall socio-economic status. Women usually do not have equal access with men to the means for participation such as the enabling skills acquired through education and training. Even more, there is no equality in terms of possessing property such as land. The land is legally the property of their husbands, fathers or sons. In order to increase women's political participation, the legal measure must be undertaken to bring equality between men and women in terms of accessing the means of participation. In order to raise the social status of women, a sustained campaign against social evils like sexual harassment, violence against women etc. need to be carried on. The efforts should be made to educate the girl child and taught leadership skills and qualities in the schools and colleges.

- The women representatives should act as role models and mentor the new entrants to politics. If more women undertake visible and leading roles in politics, this will encourage other women aspirants. The women incumbent should encourage and educate other women to participate in political decision making from the very grass-roots levels.

- There are expectations that women politicians would advance the gender issues while in office, however, they do not do so. Usually, they cannot do so due to their number is very few, have not reached the 'critical mass'. Even if their number is reached for instance in local governing bodies, their alliance must be strong. Therefore, it is suggested that women representatives at all levels must be sought to form women's caucus so as to build pressure and to lobby for women's issues collectively. This would definitely facilitate the women's effective participation to bring changes in existing patriarchal norms of procedure in governing bodies.

- Given the voting participation shown by women and their involvement in local bodies a time-bound goals for achieving gender equality must be formulated.

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Without timeframe governments, political parties and women's groups cannot be held accountable. Positive discrimination measure - reservation for women in legislative bodies seems to be the need of the hour and would go a long way in removing many obstacles that inhibit women's participation and thus improve the political representation of women. By looking at the cheering outcome of positive discrimination measures in the local bodies, the same measure is also suggested in the state and national legislatures.

- The party system has long been an impediment to women's political leadership. Women are considered as a liability in the electoral competitions; therefore, political parties prefer to give tickets to the male candidates. The parties are found to be against taking a risk of putting women candidates for electoral battle, part of the reason appears to be contained in social attitude which disfavour women's entry into politics. Hence unless there is a reserved seat party usually seek women to be in a political campaign not as the party candidate. Political paries can make a way for women's entry into politics by ensuring 33 percent reservations for women in the party leadership position at all levels and one- third party tickets should be given to women at the time of the election. The executive positions of political parties should be gender-sensitive to provide fair quota positions to women.

- In the present study, it has been observed that most of the women representatives were newcomers or they are new to policy decision making bodies. It is suggested that the orientation programme need to be initiated on a big scale to fully equip women in power politics. The programme should focus on information and training in electoral procedures, public speaking, resource management, campaign strategies, decision making, etc.

- The alliance between the various actors in the local government, national government, the private sector and civil society is recommended to improve the political participation of women. The function of the state is to enhance policies such as affirmative action for reaching gender balance. The civil society plays an important role in providing measures that will ensure the effective participation of women in politics such as training, lobby, and outreach.

- Political violence and the use of money and muscle power have been an inhibiting factor of women entering politics. The violence that is associated with politics puts a lot of fear in women who are interested in politics. Women tend to prefer less the use of money and muscle power and other forms of influence in the public sphere. The criminalisation of politics and the rampant use of violence have further discouraged women. In this context, it is suggested to make the political environment more conducive for women to contest the elections. The absence of political violence would be a sufficient ground to motivate women who are interested in politics to participate fairly as their men counterparts. It is important to impose restriction on the use of money and muscle power during election times. Wide-spectrum electoral reform both at national and state levels that will curb the role of muscles and money power in politics is needed to create a conducive environment for the effective participation of women in politics. It is important for democratizing decision making by ensuring regular and fair elections at all levels, make easy for weaker sections of the society to fight an election without seeking the patronage of party chief.

- The socio-cultural norms and patriarchal order of power structure would be dealt with by strengthening women's leadership position and building their confidence towards the effective political entity. The people's perception of women's political participation can be changed through public awareness-raising programmes, sensitization campaigns, and civic education. The general public needs to be convinced that women make as effective legislators as men.

- The physical constraints, particularly women's responsibilities towards children would be mitigated through different support mechanism such as introducing child care facilities to ease the workload for women or by building crèche adjoining office for nursing mothers as around 50 percent of women in elected bodies are in the reproductive age of 31-40 years (see Table 5.8). Secondly, the politics and family life of women can be reconciled through partnership in sharing the burden. The partnership demands the active and equal involvement of men, in politics as well as in the home.

- An egalitarian culture needs to be developed as it renders the environment more favourable for women's political representation. It has been proved that

nations with more egalitarian scores on the index are more likely to have a larger proportion of legislative seats occupied by women.

- The position of women in politics would strengthen by building up their self-confidence and morale and equipping them with information. The implementation of various central schemes or policies would be difficult unless the women are aware of them. The most important change needed is in the perception of women about their role in politics. They should realize that they are equal at par with men and should build up their confidence in their ability that their views can be an effective means to bring qualitative change in the political scenario. The perception that politics a 'dirty game' barred women's confidence in their ability to confront the political process. Women are already very good campaigners, party organizers and effective mobilizers, therefore, certain cultures of fear should not prevent women contesting elections and moving forward for the highest political goals.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

The present study provides the detail of political participation and representation of women in Sikkim. It draws on positive discrimination measures in the form of reservation as a means of democratizing democracy. It explores the constraints of women's political participation and outlined suggestions. The study, however, gets limited when it comes to details and a wider discussion on some major aspects. There are some major areas that are beyond the scope of present research in which more studies could be made separately. A future research could investigate women's poor performance in the 2019 elections and examine in detail the reasons for such a dismal showing. Secondly, the role of political parties is immense in the party-based election system. Therefore, more research is needed to examine the role the political parties and how the representation and participation of women get affected by these party-based election systems. Thirdly, separate wide research needed to be conducted to examine and analyse the electoral system and its effect on women representation in politics. Various studies endorsed that proportional representation favours the elections of women and majority voting discourages it. This relationship must be investigated. This study has opened up directions for future research which are beyond the scope of the current study. Research needs to be undertaken to expose other factors that have been identified as integral to women's ability to enter the

public space. Thus, the story of women in Sikkim offers further opportunities for national and other researchers from Sikkim to engaged in gender and politics scholarship.

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APPENDIX I

**DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN:
A STUDY OF SIKKIM**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
(FOR COMMON PEOPLE)**

The interview schedule is designed to collect data for my research on the topic "Democracy, Political Participation and Women: A Study of Sikkim". The study is therefore strictly for academic purpose, and nothing beyond that. I wish you assure that any information provided for the purpose of the study will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. I appreciate in advance your considering participation in this study. Thank you.

Place:_____ **Time:**_____ **Date:**_____

Section A: Background Information of the Respondents

1.	Sex	1	Male	
		2	Female	
2.	Place of Birth	1	Urban	
		2	Rural	
3.	Age	1	20-30	
		2	31-40	
		3	41-50	
		4	51-60	
		5	61 Above	
4.	Social Category	1	General	
		2	SC	
		3	ST	
		4	OBC	
		5	Other	

5.	Education	1	Illiterate/No formal education	
		2	Primary	
		3	Secondary	
		4	Sr. Secondary	
		5	Graduation	
		6	Post-Graduation	
		7	Other	
6.	Occupation	1	Unemployed	
		2	Government Employee	
		3	Private Sector	
		4	Own Business	
		5	Farmer	
		6	House maker	
		7	Others	
7.	Religion	1	Hindu	
		2	Buddhist	
		3	Christian	
		4	Islam	
		5	Others	
8.	Monthly Income	1	Below 20,000	
		2	20,001- 40,000	
		3	40,001- 60,000	
		4	60,001- 80,000	
		5	80,001- 1 Lakh	
		6	1 Lakh above	
9.	Marital Status	1	Unmarried	
		2	Married	
		3	Divorced	
		4	Separated	
		5	Widow	
10.	Size of Family	1	Nuclear Family	
		2	Joint Family	

Section B: Participation and People's Perception

11.	Are you aware of election?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

12.	Had you polled vote in the last election?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

13.	Reason for not polling vote	1	Physical constraints	
		2	Socio-cultural	
		3	Patriarchy	
		4	Polling station was far away	
		5	Personal reasons	
		6	Not Applicable	

14.	Agents influence on voting behaviour	1	Self	
		2	Father	
		3	Mother	
		4	Husband	
		5	Brother	
		6	Other family member	
		7	Party member	
		8	Not Applicable	

15.	Are you interested in Politics?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

16.	Are you a member of political party?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

17.	Reason for joining political party	1	Influence of ideology	
		2	Family background	
		3	Influence of party leaders	
		4	Other	
		5	Undecided	
		6	Not Applicable	

18.	Attendance in party meeting	1	Regular	
		2	Occasional	
		3	Never	
		4	Undecided	

19.	Whether speaks in the meetings?	1	Regularly	
		2	Occasionally	
		3	Never got chance	
		4	Never spoke	
		5	Undecided	

20.	Have you participated in the political campaign?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

21.	Reason for non-participation in political campaign	1	Physical constraints	
		2	Socio-cultural	
		3	Not allowed by family member/members	
		4	Not Interested	
		5	Undecided	
		6	Not Applicable	

22.	Have you participated to protest some government action/policy?	1	Yes	
		2	No	
		3	Undecided	

23.	Reason for non-participation in protest.	1	Physical constraints	
		2	Socio-cultural	
		3	Not allowed by family member/members	
		4	Not interested	
		5	Lack of opportunity	
		6	Undecided	
		7	Other	
		8	Not Applicable	

24. Whether women representatives are different from male representatives. What is your opinion?

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25.	Women members are more concerned about women issues than men. What is your opinion?	1	Strongly Agree	
		2	Agree	
		3	Disagree	
		4	Strongly Disagree	
		5	Undecided	

26.	Whether men's opinion has more preference in political decision making than women?	1	Strongly Agree	
		2	Agree	
		3	Disagree	
		4	Strongly Disagree	
		5	Undecided	

27. What are the problems faced by women in getting into politics?

....
....

28.	Do you agree that increase in representation of women would bring about change in political scenario?	1	Strongly Agree	
		2	Agree	
		3	Disagree	
		4	Strongly Disagree	
		5	Undecided	

29.	Women leaders have to deal with additional responsibilities. What is your opinion?	1	Strongly Agree	
		2	Agree	
		3	Disagree	
		4	Strongly Disagree	
		5	Undecided	

30.	What is your opinion regarding reservation of seats for women?	1	Support	
		2	Do not support	
		3	Undecided	

31. Reason   for   supporting
reservation...

32. What suggestions can you provide to enhance women's participation in politics?

....
....

Thank you very much for your kind participation in this study.

APPENDIX II

DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN:
A STUDY OF SIKKIM

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
(FOR ELECTED WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES)

The interview schedule is designed to collect data for my research on the topic "Democracy, Political Participation and Women: A Study of Sikkim". The study is therefore strictly for academic purpose, and nothing beyond that. I wish you assure that any information provided for the purpose of the study will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. I appreciate in advance your considering participation in this study. Thank you.

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Section A: Background Information of the Respondents

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		2	Female	
2.	Place of Birth	1	Urban	
		2	Rural	
3.	Age	1	20-30	
		2	31-40	
		3	41-50	
		4	51-60	
		5	61 Above	
4.	Social Category	1	General	
		2	SC	
		3	ST	
		4	OBC	
		5	Other	

5.	Education	1	Illiterate/No formal education	
		2	Primary	
		3	Secondary	
		4	Sr. Secondary	
		5	Graduation	
		6	Post-Graduation	
		7	Other	

6.	Occupation	1	Unemployed	
		2	Government Employee	
		3	Private Sector	
		4	Own Business	
		5	Farmer	
		6	House maker	
		7	Others	

7.	Religion	1	Hindu	
		2	Buddhist	
		3	Christian	
		4	Islam	
		5	Others	

8.	Monthly Income	1	Below 20,000	
		2	20,001- 40,000	
		3	40,001- 60,000	
		4	60,001- 80,000	
		5	80,001- 1 Lakh	
		6	1 Lakh above	

9.	Marital Status	1	Unmarried	
		2	Married	
		3	Divorced	
		4	Separated	
		5	Widow	

| 10. | Size of Family | 1 | Nuclear Family | |
| | | 2 | Joint Family | |

Section B: Political Participation

11.	Whether member of any political party before contesting for election?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Undecided	☐ ☐ ☐
	Position held (If any)	1. Main office bearer 2. Executive committee 3. Ordinary member 4. Not an active member	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
12.	Present position	1. Main office bearer 2. Executive committee 3. Ordinary member	☐ ☐ ☐
13.	Period of membership	1. Up to 5 Years 2. 6- 10 years 3. 11-15 years 4. 16-20 years 5. 21-25 years 6. 26 years above	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
14.	What is the major reason for joining political party?	1. Influence of ideology 2. Family background 3. Influence of party leaders 4. Undecided 5. Other	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
15	Nature of involvement in party activities	1. Planning 2. Executive 3. Organizer 4. Mobilize 5. All type of activities 6. Undecided	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
16.	Whether member of any organizations/associations?	1. Religious organization 2. Social organization 3. Women's organization 4. Cultural organization 5. Sports organization 6. Development organization 7. Students/Youth organisation 8. Not a member 9. Undecided 10. Other	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
17.	Period of Membership in organizations/associations	1. Up to 5 years 2. 6-10 years 3. 11-15 years 4. 16-20 years	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

| | | 5. 21-25 years | |
| | | 6. 26 years above | |

18.	Whether any family member/s in politics?	1. Father	
		2. Mother	
		3. Brother	
		4. Sister	
		5. Husband	
		6. Father-in-law	
		7. Mother-in-law	
		8. Whole family	
		9. Other relatives like Uncle/Nephew	
		10. No one	

19.	Office Held/Holding by your family member	1. Main office bearer	
		2. Executive member	
		3. Ordinary member	
		4. Not applicable/not an active member	

20.	What was your profession prior to holding present position?	1. Party worker	
		2. Social worker	
		3. Business	
		4. House maker	
		5. Government employee	
		6. Private employee	
		7. Other	

21.	What is the attitude of family members towards you in politics?	1. Strongly Approve	
		2. Approve	
		3. Indifference	
		4. Disapprove	
		5. Undecided	

22.	What is the attitude of people towards you in politics?	1. Supportive	
		2. Do not support women member	
		3. Suspicious of credibility of women in politics	
		4. Character assassination	
		5. Undecided	
		6. Other	

23.	What propelled you to contest election?	1. Family background	
		2. Own interest	
		3. Political party	
		4. Desire to have popularity/power position	
		5. Social serving consideration	
		6. Reservation system	

		7. Undecided	
		8. Other	
24.	Category of recruit	1. Office seekers (took own initiative)	
		2. Ready recruits (waited to be asked)	
25.	What is the attitude of male party members towards women members in politics?	1. Very Supportive	
		2. Supportive	
		3. Indifferent	
		4. Not supportive	
		5. Undecided	
26.	What are the problems faced by women members in contesting election?	1. Physical Constraints	
		2. Socio-cultural constraints	
		3. Patriarchy	
		4. Lack of resources	
		5. Cannot compete at par with men	
		6. No constraints	
		7. Undecided	
27.	Number of terms contested for election	1. 1 term	
		2. 2 term	
		3. 3 term	
		4. 4 term	
		5. 5 term	
		6. More than 5 term	
28.	Source of money spend for election	1. Party contribution	
		2. Personal contribution	
		3. Individuals and supporters contributions	
		4. Undecided	
		5. Other	
29.	What is/are the major function/s of representative?	1. Link between govt. and people	
		2. To monitor implementation of various plans and policies	
		3. To maintain communal harmony	
		4. Maintain peace	
		5. Work for the overall development of the area	
		6. Undecided	
		7. Other	
30.	What are the major problems faced by the	1. Education	
		2. Health	

	people of your area?	3. Developmental problems	
		4. Unemployment	
		5. Atrocities on Women	
		6. Land related problems	
		7. Corruption, Red-tapism	
		8. Undecided	

31.	Approached by people with various problems	1. Sometime 2. Frequently 3. Never	

32.	What are the major grievances of people in your area?	1. Relating to Job 2. Property dispute 3. Developmental work 4. Gender based violence 5. Water problems 6. Environmental problems 7. Other	

33.	Successful in solving people's problems	1. Yes, able to solve their problems by self 2. Have to depend on male members 3. Self+ help	

34. Whether women representatives are different from male representatives. What is your opinion?

....

....

35.	Women members are more concerned about women issues than men. What is your opinion?	1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5 Undecided	

36.	Whether men's opinion has more preference in political decision making than women?	1 Strongly Agree 2 Agree 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5 Undecided	

37. What are the problems faced by women in getting in to politics?

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38.	Women leaders have to deal with additional responsibilities. What is your opinion?	1 2 3 4 5	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree Undecided	
39.	What is your opinion regarding reservation of seats for women?	1 2 3	Support Do not support Undecided	

40. Reason for supporting reservation..

41.	Do you agree that increase in representation of women would bring about change in political scenario?	1 2 3 4 5	Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree Undecided	

42. What suggestions can you provide to enhance women's participation in politics?
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Thank you very much for your kind cooperation for this study.

THE CONSTITUTION (ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHT AMENDMENT) BILL, 2008 (Bill No. XXX-C of 2008)

AS PASSED BY THE RAJYA SABHA

ON 9TH MARCH, 2010

THE CONSTITUTION (ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTH AMENDMENT) BILL,

2008

A BILL

further to amend the Constitution of India.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Sixty-first Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (*1*) This Act may be called the Constitution (Ninety-Sixth Amendment) Act, 2010.

(*2*) It shall come into force on such date, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

2. In article 239AA of the Constitution, in clause (2), in sub-clause (*b*), for the words "Scheduled Castes", the words "the Scheduled Castes and the women" shall be substituted.

3. After article 330 of the Constitution, the following article shall be inserted, namely:— "330A. (*1*) Seats shall be reserved for women in the House of the People.

(*2*) As nearly as may be, one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (*2*) of article 330 shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be:

Provided that where the seat reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be, in relation to a State or Union territory is one, then, in every block comprising of three general elections to the House of the People, the seat in the first general elections shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes and no seat shall be so reserved in the other two general elections: Provided further that where the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be, in relation to a State or Union

territory are two, then, in every block comprising of three general elections to the House of the People,—

(*a*) one seat shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the first two general elections in such a manner that the same constituency is not reserved for women in both the aforesaid elections; and

(*b*) no seat shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the third general elections.

(*3*) As nearly as may be, one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election to the House of the People in a State or Union territory shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in that State or Union territory in such manner, as Parliament may by law determine:

Provided that where the seat, not being a seat reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, in relation to a State or Union territory is one, then, in every block comprising of three general elections to the House of the People, the seat in the first general elections shall be reserved for women and no seat shall be so reserved for women in the other two general elections: Provided further that where the seats, not being seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, in relation to a State or Union territory are two, then in every block comprising of three general elections to the House of the People,—

(*a*) one seat shall be reserved for women in the first two general elections in such a manner that the same constituency is not reserved for women in both the aforesaid elections; and

(*b*) no seat shall be reserved for women in the third general elections.". **4.** In article 331 of the Constitution, the following proviso shall be inserted at the end, namely:—

"Provided that where such nominations are made, in relation to every block comprising of three general elections to the House, one seat shall be reserved for nomination of a woman of Anglo-Indian community to every House constituted after first two general elections and no seat shall be reserved for the women of that community in the House constituted after the third general elections.".

5. After article 332 of the Constitution, the following article shall be inserted, namely:—

"332A. (*1*) Seats shall be reserved for women in the Legislative Assembly of every State. (*2*) As nearly as may be, one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (*3*) of article 332 shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be: Provided that where the seat reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be, in relation to a State is one, then, in every block comprising of three general elections to the Legislative Assembly of that State, the seat in the first general elections shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be: Provided further that where the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes, as the case may be, in relation to a State are two, then, in every block comprising of three general elections to the Legislative Assembly of that State,—

(*a*) one seat shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the first two general elections in such a manner that the same constituency is not reserved for women in both the aforesaid elections; and

(*b*) no seat shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes in the third general elections.

(*3*) As nearly as may be, one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in the Legislative Assembly of every State shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in that State in such manner, as Parliament may by law determine.".

6. In article 333 of the Constitution, the following proviso shall be inserted at the end, namely:— "Provided that where such nomination is made, in relation to every block comprising of three general elections to the Assembly, the seat in the Assembly constituted after the first general elections shall be reserved for nomination of a woman of the Anglo-Indian community and no seat shall be reserved for the women of that community in the Assembly constituted after the second and the third general elections.".

7. After article 334 of the Constitution, the following article shall be inserted, namely:—

"334A. Notwithstanding anything in the foregoing provisions of this Part or Part VIII, the provisions of the Constitution relating to the reservation of seats for women in the House of the People, the Legislative Assembly of a State and the Legislative

Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi shall cease to have effect on the expiration of a period of fifteen years from the commencement of the Constitution (Ninety-sixth Amendment) Act, 2010:

Provided that nothing in this article shall affect any representation in the House of the People, the Legislative Assembly of a State or the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi until the dissolution of the then existing House, Legislative Assembly of a State or the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, as the case may be.".

8. The amendments made to the Constitution by the Constitution (Ninety-sixth Amendment) Act, 2010 shall not affect any representation in the House of the People, the Legislative Assembly of a State or the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi until the dissolution of the House, the Legislative Assembly of a State or the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, as the case may be, in existence at the commencement of the said Act.

APPENDIX IV

THE CONSTITUTION (SEVENTY-THIRD AMENDMENT) ACT, 1992
(Article 243D)

243D. Reservation of seats.- (1) Seats shall be reserved for- (a) the Scheduled Castes; and (b) the Scheduled Tribes, in every Panchayat and the number of seats of reserved shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in that Panchayat as the population of the Scheduled Castes in that Panchayat area or of the Scheduled Tribes in that Panchayat area bears to the total population of that area and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat.

(2) Not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or, as the case may be, the Scheduled Tribes.

(3) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat.

(4) The offices of the Chairpersons in the Panchayats at the village or any other level shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide: Provided that the number of offices of Chairpersons reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the Panchayats at each level in any State shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of such offices in the Panchayats at each level as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the State or of the Scheduled Tribes in the State bears to the total population of the State: Provided further that not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women: Provided also that the number of offices reserved under this clause shall be allotted by rotation to different Panchayats at each level.

(5) The reservation of seats under clauses (1) and (2) and the reservation of offices of Chairpersons (other than the reservation for women) under clause (4) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period specified in article 334.

(6) Nothing in this Part shall prevent the Legislature of a State from making any provision for reservation of seats in any Panchayat or offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at any level in favour of backward class of citizens.

APPENDIX V

THE CONSTITUTION (SEVENTY-FOURTH AMENDMENT) ACT, 1992
(Article 243T)

243T. Reservation of seats.-(1) Seats shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in every Municipally and the number of seats so reserved shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in that Municipality as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the Municipal area or of the Scheduled Tribes in the Municipal area bears to the total population of that area and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality.

(2) Not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or, as the case may be, the Scheduled Tribes.

(3) Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Municipality shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Municipality.

(4) The officers of Chairpersons in the Municipalities shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide.

(5) The reservation of seats under clauses (1) and (2) and the reservation of offices of Chairpersons (other than the reservation for women) under clause (4) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period specified in article 334.

(6) Nothing in this Part shall prevent the Legislature of a State from making any provision for reservation of seats in any Municipality or offices of Chairpersons in the Municipalities in favour of backward class of citizens.