Chapter-I

INTRODUCTION
Conventionally, women and politics do not seem to go together. Politics has been understood as a public activity dominated by men calling for typically masculine characteristics. Women are identified with the private world of the family and domestic life. It has been assumed that there is a distinctive 'public' political arena. Politics is understood as the process by which the members of a community in the sense of a relatively self-sufficient group of people decide on necessary matters of public concern. This public political sphere is contrasted with a 'private' realm, which by definition lies beyond politics. So, conventionally an a-political private sphere exists. This private sphere centres on family life which still defines and limits women's public role.

In recent years the conventional idea of politics has been redefined. The radical thinkers in the 1960's have rejected the conventional definition of politics as an "activity". The pioneer in this respect was Kate Millet. In "Sexual Politics", she refers to politics as "power-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another." The idea

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of a distinctive political arena and the public-private split is attacked. The reasons for such an attack are easy to see. It reflects the lessons women learned as student-radicals in the 1960's which they applied to their political education in particular to the civil rights campaign. It was here that they learned, 'the personal is political'. As Mc Williams wrote: "Women in... radical organisations were expected to see the political nature of private things in relation to blacks but not in relation to themselves. Not surprisingly, they soon made the transfer."

Influenced by radical feminists, many women political scientists have elaborated this critique of the public-private divide, condemning it both on ideological and on factual grounds. Elshtain, for instance, traces the way in which it has been used in successive eras to legitimise women's exclusion from public politics. Aristotle who was one of the earliest political thinkers, upheld the public-political sphere as one in which the highest good was or should be realised. Since he believed


\[3\text{J.B. Elshtain, Public Man, Private Women, Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1981.}\]
that women, along with slaves and children, possessed only a limited capacity for good and reason, he concluded that they were not fit for participation in politics. Much later, political thinkers came to contrast the immorality of the public-political sphere with the purity of the private. However, they insisted that this purity could only be preserved if women were protected from the corrupting world of politics. Whether politics was viewed as moral or immoral, an argument was always at hand to support women's confinement to a private world that kept them away from politics. At the same time, governments have cited the privacy of the family as grounds for not interfering with a man's treatment of his wife, even when he beats or rapes her. Dahl and Snare describe this as 'coercion of privacy'.

In the meanwhile, social anthropologists have shown that in many primitive societies private-public division is scarcely in evidence. In advanced industrial societies and traditional societies as well, the public and private spheres are increasingly fused.

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A commonly accepted assumption emerges from the kind of situation that gives rise to politics. As a social process, it tends to arise in situations where the resources are limited and there is a potential conflict about their distribution. Briefly put, "Politics is about how people influence the distribution of resources." While there is no exact agreement on this subject, there is a general consensus that the political dimension of social life is associated with power and authority. Governments are generally the most important of these agencies specialized in power processes. Authority is also associated with power processes and helps distinguish political power from brute force. Authority involves leadership and legitimacy as well as force. Together, authority and legitimate force constitute the major components of political power.

The size, scope and effectiveness of modern government makes power a central value in modern society and the distribution of power a central focus of contention. Political power, that is, the right to make

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6Most social institutions in a society involve power relations and the exercise of influence by superordinates over subordinates. Government is distinguished from other institutions such as family or economy, because of its scope.
policy for the society, is the major stake in every
election. The notion that power should be shared by
those affected by it proved so compelling that it became
the basis of a new conception of legitimacy, a new
doctrine of rulers. Popular sovereignty, representative
government, republicanism, democracy are the names we
give to political systems that found legitimacy on the
broad sharing of political power, and competitive elections
are the institutional practice that permit masses a voice
in decisions about who should rule and to what broad ends.

Women and Political Power

By the middle of this century, universal adult
suffrage had been achieved in virtually all democratic
nations. Everywhere the right to vote symbolized access
to political power. The franchise constituted a kind of
certificate of eligibility for political leadership.
Novely enfranchised groups, classes, regions, races, used
the vote to move their representatives into positions of
political leadership. But unlike the enfranchisement of
other categories of people, e.g. Blacks, Irish, Italian,

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3 There are only nine countries today where
women are by law excluded from political
process open to men. They comprise not
quite one-half of one percent of the world's
female population — Bahrain, Kuwait,
Liechtenstein, Nigeria (six northern states
only), Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab
Emirates and Yemen Arab Republic.
women's suffrage did not conspicuously affect the social composition of government.

The near-universal recognition of women's political right and the strength of their voting number in many countries are nowhere reflected in their direct role in government. An enormous disparity exists between women's formal political equality and their actual exercise of political power. Though 99.5 percent of the women in the world are legally entitled to participate in the political process, the number of women in public office remains in most countries very low. The feminine half of our population is seldom represented by more than five to ten percent of the members of any state legislature.7

Incidentally with 5.0 percent of women members in the present Lok Sabha, India is ahead of the most advanced countries like U.K. (3.6 percent), U.S.A. (4.4 percent), France (4.3 percent) and Russia (3.3 percent).8 This generates an impression that women occupy a better place in Indian politics. This is highlighted and made more conspicuous by the fact that the most important position in the country is held by a woman. Though she is not the only one/

7Vicky-Randall, Women and Politics, pp.72-73.
8Ibid., pp.72-73.
world scene.\footnote{In more recent times a succession of women have emerged at the helm of politics: (a) Sirimavo Bandaranaike, P.M. Sri Lanka, 1960-65 and 1970-77; (b) Golda Meir, P.M. Israel, 1969-74; (c) Sonora Isabella, President, Argentina, 1974-76; (d) Margaret Thatcher, P.M. of United Kingdom since 1979 won the election with massive majority in June, 1983 for the second term; (e) Elizabeth Dombition, P.M. of Central Africa Republic; (f) Grottiya Brundtland, P.M. of Norway, Feb-Sept, 1981; (g) Indira Gandhi, P.M. of India, 1966-77, got elected in 1980 and continuing since then; (h) Milka Planinić, Yugoslavia; (i) Vigdís Finnbogadóttir has been recently elected as the first woman President of Iceland.} Indira Gandhi as the P.M. of the world's largest democracy provides a "show case" of women's participation in the government. But the outstanding position of Mrs Gandhi, along with other 5 percent women representing the national government, should not tempt us to forget the near-absence of the women community from the political firmament.

Various studies done in different provinces have also come out with the conclusion that women are by and large ineffective in politics. It is generally believed that a woman's willingness to engage herself in active politics is likely to be related to her economic, social and domestic status. But it has been found that women's growing presence in the employment market, greater access to modern education, and a developing awareness of the political system have not brought them forward into the public domain on a large scale. Hence, it is misleading to assume that socio-economic indicators such as literacy,
Urbanization and industrialization are more conducive to greater participation of women in politics. However, these indicators may be related to structures and values. In several states, women are politically more active than others. On the whole, investigations have shown that women form a tiny minority among the political elites. The reasons for this must not be attributed to a single set of factors. Sometimes, it is argued that even where women have similar social and economic resources as men, they will participate less at the elite level. 10

In regard to the constraints on women's participation in political process, we may think in terms of "supply" and "demand". 11 This division would refer to the distinction between characteristics of women themselves on the one hand and characteristics of politics and political institutions on the other. On the supply-side reside the principal factors such as domestic responsibility, lack of motivation etc., which determine the availability of women politicians. We are interested not


only in the women who come forward but also in those who do not. On the demand-side there are the political and institutional factors which govern the recruitment and role assignment of political elites in general, and female politicians in particular. Of course, supply and demand are not mutually independent. Women may, for instance, anticipate either practical difficulties in combining domestic roles with political office or outright discrimination.

Hence, in the present study an attempt will be made to distinguish broadly between relevant characteristics of women (supply-side) on the one hand and of politics (demand-side) on the other, although they are inter-dependent. The first set of factors emphasizes on the implications of socialisation and social constraints (situational and structural). Socialisation includes childhood and adulthood experiences. Situational constraints refer to domestic burdens on women who are housewives or mothers. Structural constraints correspond to educational and occupational constraints which affect women's access to the realm of political elites. The second set of factors rests on the 'demand' side of the
interaction. This would include the roles played by the political institutions which/the recruitment of women in the political life. It is in this context that we are going to study the socio-political background of women in Orissa politics.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The study of political role or behaviour in relation to the socio-economic condition of women in Orissa state would require a detailed discussion of some concepts. These concepts are "political participation", "political socialization" and " politicization". The concept of "political socialization" is also patent in expressing in shaping the political participation and thereby forming political behaviour. "Political participation" may be broadly defined as the activities by which members of the society participate in the decision-making and policy-making process directly or indirectly. In the process, people select their representatives and participate in the formulation of public policy.\(^{12}\) Political participation thus includes voting, membership

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in various legislative bodies, participation in political meetings and campaigns, membership of interest groups, and so on. It also refers to people's involvement in protest politics or social movements aiming for reform or revolution.

'Political participation' can best be explained through two other concepts, namely, political socialization and politicization. Political socialisation has been defined as the "interaction between the social system and an individual, whereby both predisposition for and skills relating to participation in the political sphere are internalised." It is a process by which a person acquires his views of the political world — its processes, events and phenomena of knowing. Viewed from another perspective, political socialization is the way in which a generation passes on political standards and beliefs to the succeeding generation. It is through such a process that society ensures intergenerational continuity in political attitudes and values. So, this process operates at both individual and the community level.

In our study we have sought to relate the implications of women's political socialisation based on the following social factors:

(i) childhood experience;
(ii) specific events like social or political movements forming the adult political attitude;
(iii) influence of interactions with other individuals, ideology and regional culture.

A reference has already been made to situational and structural constraints. Situational factor emphasises the immediate environment that constrains and shapes women's political behaviour. That presupposes inevitable domestication of women vis-a-vis their interest and actual involvement in politics. Political scientists have acknowledged these constraints along with socialisation. Lipset writes, "The sheer demands on a housewife and mother mean that she has little opportunity or need to gain politically relevant experience." 14 The present study has explored the situational constraints impeding political participation which are identified in

many research findings. For the sake of brevity, I have included only a few concepts in the present section. However, while analysing my field data I have used a number of related concepts. Our study analyses the socio-political background of women which highlights the familial, situational and structural constraints that prevent women from joining politics in Orissa.

15 For instance, situational constraints like motherhood deterring women from routine forms of political participation such as voting, in turn impeding their access to political office, are stressed by M.E. Lee, "Why Few Women Hold Public Office: Democracy and Sex Roles", Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1976. Lee is of the view that "The crucial factor is time and not so much the amount of time available as women's inability to control when they will be available for political work." This view is echoed in other studies like H.M. Hermes and K. Voje, "Women in the Corporate Channel in Norway: A Process of Natural Exclusion?", Scandinavian Political Studies, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1980. Domestic responsibility is again stressed by S. Wolchik, "Eastern Europe", in Lavendiski and Hilles (eds), The Politics of the Second Electorate, London Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981. Here the author observes that while the children were young, the women confined their political activities to a much narrower sphere.

Further, women who came to state and national level politics are older in comparison to their male counterparts owing to children's responsibilities. This is pointed out by M. Githins, "Spectators, Agitators or Law Makers: Women in State Legislatures" in Githins and Prestage (eds), A Portrait of Matriarchy: The Political Behaviour of the American Women, New York, David Mackey, 1977.
Universe of Study

An enquiry into the reasons for women's involvement in politics calls for an interview with some "public women". The term, "public women" refers to those who devote a significant portion of their time to public life. The study examines women drawn from various parts of the state. Within the limits set for the study it includes women from the widest possible range of public activities in Orissa from 1930 to-date. The history of women's political participation in India coincides with their interest and involvement in the freedom struggle. This is why we date our study to 1930.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to analyse the socio-political factors which impinge upon women's participation in politics. The objectives may, therefore, be spelt out in order:

(1) to study the socio-economic and political background of political women as contrasted with apolitical women;

(2) to find out the pattern of childhood experience and political socialisation inherited by the political women;
(3) to assess the scope and extent of women's participation in formal politics and in community development activity;
(4) to examine the social outlook and awareness of women members on their role in society, in the areas of education, employment, marriage, family and politics; and
(5) to identify factors which may help or prevent women from playing a more effective role through political participation.

Assumptions

With the above objectives, the following assumptions are considered to be important for the present study:

(i) More women from the higher socio-economic status participate in political activities.

(ii) The political attitude of the Oriya woman is the logical outcome of their familial and professional role.

(iii) Women from coastal Orissa take more interest in politics than those from the hill or tribal areas.

(iv) Education does not determine the level of women's participation in politics.
(v) Family and the influence of certain individuals play a crucial role in determining women's political activities.

(vi) Married women who join politics outnumber the unmarried ones.

Sample

In this study, I have taken what may be broadly called a purposive sample of women in public and political life of Orissa. In this selection process, I consulted the official records available with the Central and State Governments, Central and State Legislatures, Local Self-Government Bodies and professional associations. Besides, I was able to select many women respondents through personal contacts. The respondents shared certain common characteristics such as an urban upbringing, some educational attainment, and an upper or middle caste background. In a very broad sense of the term, we may call these women "elitists". The sample chosen for the study has not included rural women excepting the members and office-bearers of the panchayat bodies.

The total sample of the study included 200 women. This sample has been divided into three sub-types. They
are "political women" (50), "women activists" (50) and "indifferent women" (100).\textsuperscript{16}

The names of the FW were obtained from the Election Reports published from time to time by the Home (Election) Department of the State Government, the list of freedom fighters, "Grise Legislative Assembly Who's Who from 1862 to 1950" and other published and unpublished journals of the State Government Reports of Panchayat as well as Municipality elections were also examined.

The WA were contacted from different party offices, politically based women's associations and State Social Welfare Board. Student leaders and the social workers were also included in this list. IV, hundred in number, were chosen from different fields of professionals and public activity.

I may now define the categories chosen for the study. The level of women's political involvement varies widely. The first category of respondents is

\textsuperscript{16}In the rest of the thesis, "Political Women", "Women Activists" and "Indifferent Women" are abbreviated as FW, WA and IV respectively.
termed "political women", a term which is similar to "political man". "Political women" are those who are involved in active politics, sometimes elected to different local, state and national political bodies. These women generally have taken leadership in political activities. They are also in the hierarchy of different political parties, in a position to influence other women. Fifty members were proposed to be taken from the category.

In public participation, the second category of women, "political activists" are not totally free from formal politics. They have a strong zone of influence. They are responsible, committed and action-oriented people. Some of them play an intermediary role through active participation in campaigning, protesting, political party and organizational activities. Some of them even refuse to consider involvement in political activities or membership in political parties. They believe in serving people outside a political platform.

17 The term "Political Women" has gained currency as a result of Jean Kirkpatrick's use-'Political Women' (New York, 1974) referring to women who are politically active whatever their level of involvement. However, "Political Man" stands for a human being who shares in the political experience and political values of a universalistic kind. See S.M. Lipset, Political Man, New York, 1960.
in various other ways. Fifty members were proposed from this category.

"Indifferent women" form the last category in my sample. They are mostly the educated women. Most of them are professionals who are active in bureaucracy, education, judiciary, mass media and business. Even with their wide involvement in public life, they are indifferent to politics, and thus, called "indifferent women."

Out of a total 200 respondents proposed for the study, I was able to interview a total of 190 respondents, namely, PW (44), W (46) and I (100) during the course of my field work. In other words, the response from the women was very high and encouraging. In a way, it reflects the high level of public and political awareness among the women chosen in my study. It may be mentioned that these three categories of respondents are interlinked to each other in a number of ways. For example, most of them are actively engaged in public life, which often serves as a stepping stone to a constructive political career.

The respondents chosen for the study have varied experience in public and political life. For example,
some of them who participated in the freedom struggle were exposed to protest politics. A majority of the women in the sample have been engaged in party and legislative politics. Quite a few of the respondents have participated in activities of women's associations directed against the price rise and women's exploitation. In fact, the sample has a broad spectrum which has enabled me to develop a comprehensive picture of women in public and political life of the state.

Some limitations of the sample may be mentioned here. The non-inclusion of men in public and political life is a limiting factor. Further, the emphasis on an urban sample has somehow narrowed our scope of enquiry. Want of time and resources were responsible for these limitations. In this respect, the sample of the study is exploratory. It is hoped that future researches will be able to focus on these related areas.

Methods of Data Collection

The present study is an empirical inquiry into the socio-political background of women in Orissa, who participate directly or indirectly in different public/political activities. Response was elicited through an open and close-ended structured schedule, followed by
some in-depth interviews.

The schedule contains mainly four parts. Part-I includes background information of the respondents and their family. Part-II elicits response on their political socialization and influence of media. Part-III deals with the political socialization, politicization of women and political participation of those who are involved in formal politics. Part-IV includes women's attitude to and awareness of political problems confronting women.

Much before the actual study, a pilot study was conducted with one-tenth of the sample size. The information was collected and accordingly, the interview schedule was modified. The schedule was so designed as to get the maximum response from the candidates, without taking much of their time. The final schedule was prepared thereafter.

The field work began during the mid-week of November 1981 and continued up to the last week of May 1982, covering a six-month period. After six months of data collection in the principal districts of Orissa,
the researcher was able to interview 190 out of the proposed samples of 200 members. The interviews were arranged at the residences of the members in most cases but due to limited time and inadequate transport facilities, some of the respondents were interviewed at more accessible places like Local Houses, Legislative Assembly and seminars.

The majority of the respondents unhesitatingly cooperated with the scholar and helped her obtain the necessary information. But sometimes the researcher had to face difficulties in contacting the respondents. Because of a busy schedule and other unforeseen preoccupations, some respondents were not available at convenient hours. The researcher had to maintain composure in the midst of such difficulties.

The interview schedule was the main tool of data collections. The schedule mostly contained open-ended questions. Some parts of the schedule contained questions with pre-coded responses. This applies specially to the section on the socio-economic background of the respondents. But the sections exploring social outlook and awareness as well as the participation of respondents were open-ended.
't the outset, the researcher had tried to devise a four-point scale to explore the respondents' attitudes to certain issues but the very first interview in the Cuttack district exposed the wide disparity that exists among the respondents in terms of social class, caste, education and political training. It was difficult to frame questions to suit illiterate tribal women, the graduate housewife and a thorough professional. The administration of scales was not helpful in indicating the responses of the members, hence the question-answer form.

**Statistical Analysis**

The data was processed mostly through cross-tabulations. They have been used frequently to observe possibly significant relations among variables like age, education, caste, class, political influence and dependent variables like social outlook and social participation. Qualitative analysis proved to be more effective in explaining the opinions/attitudes maintained on social issues as contained in chapters 8 and 9.

**Limitations of the Study**

Although due care was taken to collect data as
scientifically as possible, there may be some errors of judgement while interviewing the respondents. The respondents did not always give an accurate picture of their background and achievements. Against the close-ended questions their response was accurate, but in the case of open-ended questions, the responses were not always satisfactory.

A pioneering study on the political women of a state may need more time for participant observation and in this sense the present study has limitations. For reasons of personal security, the researcher curtailed the period of visits which often reduced contacts with the respondents to a quick-one-hour question-answer session. In some places depending on the times fixed by the authorities one had to follow their schedule. As a result, some interviews did not yield the desired results.

For further studies on women in state politics, it may be better to limit the scope of the study to a more circumscribed area and include women from rural areas as well. With the inclusion of rural based, politically active women, a wider spectrum of levels of social participation among women would possibly emerge
and thus permit more valid generalisations.

The researcher limited the investigation mainly to the urban based elite women. In regard to political women and activists, there was no objective verification of the informations on their social participation. It may be of help to observe the role participation of political women/activists at party/Assembly meetings.

The present study has focussed attention only on the elite women, their background, social outlook and social participation. The objective of the study is to compare and contrast the socio-political background, perception and performance of PW, WA and IW.

Chapter Scheme

Chapter-1 has included a discussion of concepts, assumptions and methodology. Chapter-2 has undertaken a review of relevant literature on women in politics. This review includes writings and reports on women. Chapter-3 has referred to the socio-demographic background of women in state politics. Chapter-4 has extended the theme of the above chapter by the use of statistical informations on women in political life, both during pre-Independence and post-Independence period.
Chapter-5 has enquired into women's participation in the local self-government, women's association, trade unions etc. Chapter-6 has investigated the socio-economic background of the respondents on personal and familial level. Cross-tabulation between various socio-economic variables has been taken up. Chapter-7 has analysed the political socialization and political mobilization and political motivation which have facilitated women's entry into politics. Chapter-8 has looked into the extent of socio-political participation of the respondents. Chapter-9 has studied the social outlook and awareness of the political as well as apolitical respondents. Lastly, Chapter-10 has provided an overview of the theoretical and empirical dimensions of the study.
The studies done in India and abroad that directly or indirectly deal with women in politics, could be roughly divided into two types: (a) studies about women and (b) studies on women in particular.¹

The first type of study is concerned with social problems, i.e. social evils, injustice and negligence in relation to women in politics. Most of these have been written by eminent authors of either sex, scholars but not sociologists. The second type is concerned with the role, status and participation of women in politics, with a perspective of historical sociology. This is the most common perspective with the studies on women.

Differentiating between social and sociological problem, Jesse² has viewed that a social problem receives attention when a number of usually significant people within a particular social system becomes conscious of it as a problem that affronts them morally and demands urgent solution. Defined within the perspective of science, sociological problem is "a problem,


worthy of investigation with a purpose of classifying, refuting, or augmenting a body of knowledge in its theoretical organization which helps in predicting and explaining regularities of behaviour.\textsuperscript{3} And because of this difference, the studies of social scientists on women's participation in politics are different from the studies about women by the social reformers. While the latter is action-oriented, the former seeks to "ask questions, the answers to which will fructify knowledge that is sought primarily for prediction and explanations."\textsuperscript{4}

But in practice, these distinctions between the social and sociological perspectives are not possible. Indeed, they are interrelated and they interact with each other. The studies of social problems and of social evils made by social reformers (not necessarily sociologists), eminent literary men and women, historians and politicians — provide useful significant baselines. These certainly enable the sociologist gain some scientific knowledge.

But the available literature seems grossly inadequate and it is not an exaggeration to view that

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., p.246.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., p.247.
the political behaviour and preoccupation of over half the population has been inadequately documented.

However, the available literature which deals directly or indirectly on the issue of women's status in politics in the international, national and local levels can be broadly divided into three categories:

1. Literature that deals with the women's status and role in general and politics in particular in different countries, sometimes including a broad historical analysis.

2. Literature that directly or indirectly refers to political women elites; representatives in the Parliament, State Legislatures and other party functionaries.

3. Literature concerned with the analysis of social-economic and political background which influences women and shapes their perception and attitude to politics.

Studies on Women's Status and Role in Politics

The overwhelming evidence so far goes to establish that no society in the world provides women equal status with men. Although anthropologists and sociologists have found that women are given considerable social
recognition and power in some societies, there exists no society in which their publicly recognised power exceeds men's. Elise Boulding and Jean Betke Elshtain affirm this kind of situation in their books. Beverly Lindsey in her edited work says that not only the women of the third world but the women world over are confronted with a similar situation. But the case of the third world countries is distinctive because they have been subjected to colonial exploitation. Colonialism has also hindered their progress. She examines various dynamic variables, e.g. economic, socio-political and educational, that have oppressed the third world women. The chapter on Indian women, entitled "Up from the Harem?: The effects of class and sex in political life in Northern India" by Tonbak Devon is an important contribution to the volume. According to the author, women's poor participation in politics is mainly due to the attitude and norms of the family and society. The lack of education and limited exposure among women, figure next in order of priority as reasons for such a low participation.


7 Beverly Lindsey (ed), Comparative Perspectives of Third World Women - The Impact of Race, Sex and Class.
studies on "women as Political Elites"

On the studies of women as political elites available literature is meagre. We can classify them as: (a) the category of women entering into politics, their role and attitude to women's general problems, and (b) differences made by the presence of women holding political power. J.J. Kirkpatrick has made a study of women who had the fortitude to come out of the grip of oppression and traditionalism and play a role in the power game. Her work entitled Political Women analyses the background and career of a sample of women legislators (43) in the U.S.A. Kirkpatrick maintains that like their male counterparts, women politicians vary greatly. She develops four-fold typology consisting of 'leaders', 'moralizers', 'personalizers' and 'problem-solvers'. All the four types have their own personal predispositions which can be detected in their style, role and self-esteem. The author observes that even those who assume the leader's role and have a passion for politics reveal a culturally induced orientation.

Although Kirkpatrick's legislators claim no incompatibility between the roles of family and citizenship,

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most of them followed the traditional career pattern of waiting until their children were grown up, before they sought for public office. Two-thirds of them had no more than two children. This is in contrast to Kirkpatrick's sample of male legislators, 60 percent of whom have larger families and ran for the office before they were forty. In the study, the women assumed the major responsibility for housekeeping and childcare and expected little help from their husbands. These social constraints limited their participation in politics.

Irene Diamond's study\(^9\) deals with women legislators in four New England states in the U.S. In this study, she focusses on state legislators as the group of women who have achieved the highest proportion of elective office by resolving the conflict between political and ideal feminine role. Diamond's study relates the electoral success of women to the structure of politics. Thus, she views that the probability of women being elected to the legislature under conditions of intense political competition is low, but the probability that a woman who is elected under such conditions will

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resemble a man in her career pattern and her legislative behaviour will be of a high order. Finally, she deduces that a political strategy based principally on electoral incrementalisation, that is, electing greater numbers of women to the office, does influence the issues involved in changing women's status.

Joan Fagot Avil's study of political participation of women in Latin America\(^\text{10}\) briefly examines variables like education and economic participation as factors contributing to the nature and type of political participation of women. She maintains that women's lack of participation in politics is affected by their relative lack of socialisation and mobilization. The author views women's role in child-rearing more important than her political role irrespective of cultural differences among various countries of the world. Women's lives centre around the family. When family issues are politicised, women tend to acquire political mobility as in the United States. So a change in the basic social system involving the family is relevant to activate women politically.

Anthony Orum, et. al.\textsuperscript{11} in their study on women's political socialization arrive at three perspectives to explain differences in political beliefs and behaviour of men and women: political socialization, structural and situational factors. This paper reveals that socialization may not be the only factor in explaining differences in political beliefs on the basis of sex. But both political socialization and situational theories coalesce to cause this difference.

It is necessary to refer to the literature on the personality characteristics of women in political life. In this connection, E.R.Kruschke,\textsuperscript{12} in a comparison of female political and apoliticals, attempted to trace a relationship between political personality and political participation. He compared 45 women active in politics (who participated in a movement for the construction of a civil centre, a school board referendum, and the 1960 presidential election) with 58 elite women who were not active in politics. He found significant differences in


favour of political women on the following dimensions: sociability, optimism, willingness to risk, liberalism, and a sense of political characteristics that resemble our findings of greater assertiveness, adventure-someness, imagination, and liberal attitudes among the women in the state legislatures.

Inborn and Jansen's study coupled with Krushke makes it clear that women in politics fit into the "high score" description. Their intelligence, assertiveness, chivalry, imagination and liberal attitudes were the major assets for their success of a powerful political role, albeit, contradictory to sex-role expectations.

The only other study on political women and their personality characteristics is made by Emry E. Werner and Laise M. Bachtold. It is based on 103 women who served in the 1970-71 state legislatures. It compares the women legislators and elected male leaders with their respective reference groups, i.e. adult men and women in the general population. Sampling on a wider universe of

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legislature, 37 in number, representing all geographical regions in the country, this study is concerned with the salient personality characteristics that set women legislators into a role normally defined as masculine (apart from adult women in the general population, and elected male leaders). The study of personality pattern of the female politicians tallies with the male legislators' in "inborn and Jansen's study mentioned earlier.

Vijay Agnew's book on "Elite Women in Indian Politics" provides some relevance specifically to the Indian context. Agnew's historical perspective on the rise of elite women in Indian politics begins with a social background of the 19th century. The author perceives a continuity between the conventional and traditional role played by women in the Hindu society and the political women emerging in the 20th century. With this insight, the author looks at the enlightened women who fought for the freedom movement, and maintains that the women coming to power so far are influenced by the male political leaders with the ties of blood and marriage. Admitting

the role of Gandhi for women's emancipation the author points out that the influence of Gandhi and Nehru brought about changes in the role and status of only a few women, symbolizing a free spirit and close interaction. Some other books also deal with women and politics. But they are mainly historical in context, and refer to the overall status of women in India and abroad.  

In relevance to our study Gail Minault in her study on women's political participation and the impact of the family analyses in great detail, three major points regarding women's political position in our country: (i) identification of the extent to which women occupy elite position in Indian politics, (ii) evaluation of possible explanations of women's prominence in elite position, and (iii) explanation of the impact of women's participations in politics on the social and economic position of women in the national context.

The explanation provided for political participation of a meagre number of elite women is based on two


sets of factors. The first set examines socio-cultural, explaining the level of women's political involvement. The second identifies the political institutions, the process of political succession, the nature of the party structure, etc. as supporting or opposing the recruitment of women to positions of political leadership.

Studies on Socio-Political Background of "Women"

The findings of some studies on socio-political background of women are relevant to examine certain hypothesis in our study. Edmond Constantani\(^\text{18}\) discusses the interplay among personality, sex-role typing and political career of women vis-a-vis men. She finds that political women are often over-represented in the higher socio-economic group. The difference between female politicians and their male counterparts is found in the ascribed social attributes. According to her, for a woman to assume elite status in the party, what is required is a longer period of apprenticeship than that of the similarly motivated male.

Lynnes B. Iglitzin\(^\text{19}\) focused on the socialization

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of women in relation to their political participation. The author maintains that the primary agents of socialisation are particularly family and school combined to channelise young women into lower occupational expectations and a willingness to play a marginal role in the economic and political aspects of society. This study explores some of the consequences of the traditional female values of young girls. The study demonstrated in the attitudes of a group of 11-year olds the wide extent of sex-role stereotyping and its damaging effects on girls. The study was inadequate in the sense that it failed to analyse the source of sex-role stereotyping over a period of time.

"Studying women in local politics in Norway, Ingunn Norderval Means found that broadly the women councillors must be said to conform to the most general criteria associated with political position. Typically their childhood environments were politicized. Their education, though modest, was never less significant than that of the average male or female in the state. Their family status was middle class. But occupation-wise, most of them were housewives. The triple commitment to home,

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career and politics causes a great strain, and as a result women hesitate to take to politics as a career. The author argues that the responsibilities of women, unless shared by men, would not help women achieve equality in education, occupation and political power. As long as women are burdened with multiple roles, they cannot help remaining "ordinary".

Enumerating the structural barriers limiting women's institutional participation, Gail L. Zellman\(^\text{21}\) says that structural barriers are related to organizational and institutional patterns, practices, roles and norms which obstruct women in their efforts to enter and develop themselves in political institutions. Some barriers are there to keep women out of the political system. Others permit a woman's entry but hinder her advancement, thus precluding equal participation. Those factors include family roles, sex segregation, inadequate facilities for training, the female culture and different life experiences. Women's participation can be put on an even keel if a change takes place in masculine

values and attitudes, political overview, and positive planning for women's development.

Charles S. Bullock and Heys in their research on women's recruitment to American Congress maintains that the background which prepares women to participate in politics is also the same for the recruitment of women into American Congress, but differs in that the latter requires a superior legislative career with political experience. According to them, higher education and frequent involvement in political activities prior to entering formal politics facilitate a woman's election. Identical opinion is expressed by Susan Welch who goes to highlight the rural, semi-urban and politically familial background of the female legislators.

Rita Mae Kelly, et.al. in their study on political socialization of women arrive at similar results. With biographical data on 36 elite women, the conjugal parental influence is examined against its impact upon the respondent's "political" development. Their


findings suggest that women in politics are mostly influenced by their mothers who are independent inside the family and outside. The non-political woman elites lack this influence. So a positive correlation can be traced to mother-daughter participation. Secondly, fathers of political women tend to show more respect and love for their wives, unlike non-political women. Thirdly, there is a more favourable attitude of fathers towards the mothers of political women. This finding suggests that the female involvement in politics is not necessarily derived from cross-sex-role preferences. In terms of political socialization, the father's behaviour and achievements are not as crucial for the daughter as they are for the son. More than the father's political achievement, equal sharing of the parent's familial and public role contributes to the daughter's success in politics.

In a slightly different shade, Maurice Fiedler examines the election studies of 1972 in America: "Men and women participate to an equal degree in all major modes of political activity, that is, as voters,

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campaigners and communicators. None of the factors affecting male participation (i.e. socio-economic or socio-psychological factors) affects female participation in fundamentally different ways, although there are variations. Women's participation is facilitated somewhat more than that of men by high levels of political interest, information and efficacy and by socialization that included a member with political interest. Fiedler concludes that employment outside the home, particularly in managerial or professional capacities is most important. She suggests that women with career experience will already have shed "role constraints" in their own lives, and will have the potential to be successful in the political arena.

Paula J. Dubock's study on women's recruitment to political office is in tune with the above findings by Fiedler. Kristi Anderson in her study on profession and its impact on women's political participation also emphasizes on the white collar jobs motivating women to

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participate in politics. She relates economic independence of women to the increase in their number in political participation.

Thus, the above studies made in different countries in the west indicate that socio-political background characteristics play an important role in influencing political women. Sometimes the findings of the studies are so contextual that their generalizations may not be applicable to political women in countries such as India. Indian situation differs fundamentally from the western; it is, therefore, worthwhile to undertake the studies that are made in Indian contexts only.

**Studies on Women in India: Writings and Reports**

Vina Mazumdar's book on the status of women in Indian politics presents the position of women in Indian political sphere in recent years. In this book, papers have been arranged in three parts regarding women's participation in Indian politics. These are, firstly, women in national politics; second, the politicisation of women in India, three-state-study, and lastly, profile

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of women in different state politics in India. The papers vary greatly in their focus and scope. The book in general shows a close link between women's participation in politics and their social status. Although it was difficult to draw generalisations on all the three surveys, adequate material was available to provide the following conclusions: That, women's politicization in India depended considerably on (1) Gandhi's emphasis on the socio-political emancipation of women, (2) the level of modernization in a particular region or state, and (3) families with political exposure. This suggests that family tradition and influence of individuals act as significant agents of political socialization.

Besides the general descriptions on women's position in politics, a report has been brought out by the All India Women's Committee\(^\text{29}\) on behalf of Government of India to assess the status of women. The Committee included politicians, social workers, academicians, trade union leaders and writers. Their report submitted in 1975 showed a downward trend in women's participation

\(^{29}\text{Towards Equality, New Delhi: Govt. of India Publication, 1975.}\)