Chapter - I

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK
The Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences defines leadership as the relation between an individual and a group built around some common interest.¹

According to J.M. Burns leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilise in competition or conflict with other institutional, political and psychological and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers.²

'The study of leadership' says Emory S. Bogardus 'is bifocal'. One part of the picture is found in the leader and personality traits. The other in the social group. Leadership is found in the group demands for direction in crisis.³

Ralph M. Stogdill treats leadership as a relation that exists between persons in a social situation.⁴

Herbert G. Hicks and C.R. Gullet identify leadership as the "ability to influence the behaviour of others in a particular direction".⁵

According to Robert C. Tucker "The central function of leadership is the defining of situations for the group and the devising of policy responses designed to resolve the problem in accordance with the group's interest as perceived by the leaders and others."⁶

Leadership is a nexus of need fulfilments that binds situational demands and group membership. Thus during crisis situations groups are likely to select leaders who diagnose problems quickly and act decisively.⁷ Thus a leader has not only to make the right decision he has to choose the right timing. The speed of decision making might impress followers for a time but the quality
of the decision and the timing is what reveals a balanced leader. The ability to tolerate, doubt and hold back a quick decision needs strong nerves. A leader may or may not be successful in attaining his objectives but to be recognised he has got to make an impact. People may or may not accept his personal beliefs but if he has to command sufficient respect of his colleagues it is imperative that they follow him in his political programmes. The world cannot do without leaders because delegation is necessary for the governance of men. While some show leadership in governance others can equally give leadership, though less spectacularly in the fields of industry, education science, commerce and the like.⁸

Kimball Young considers leadership as the relative dominance by one person over others in a given situation. Dominance in human societies takes different forms:

1) Dominance due to class or caste system which may be called status dominance.

2) Dominance due to institutional arrangements which may be called leadership.

3) Dominance which is voluntarily accepted by others. This is called leadership proper. This is an original form of leadership in which the followers willingly accept the direction of their leader.⁹

Katz and Kahn observe that there are three major meanings of leadership phenomenon viz the attribute of a position, the characteristics of a person and a category of behaviour. Lasswell and Kaplan are of the opinion that "the leaders of a group are its most active power holders."¹⁰
J. Ronald Pennock equates leadership with the incidence of "influencing and guiding of the conduct of others where the followers act willingly not automatically, and with some consciousness that the leader in pursuit of purposes hold in common."  

People often confuse leadership with authority. Authority is bestowed or attained by election, selection or appropriation. Leadership is taken in any situation presumes the acceptance of responsibility.

For the study of leadership as far as legitimacy is concerned it would appear that one has to follow Max Weber's typological distinctions between charismatic, traditional and legal-rational norms. But Bryman finds the Weberian distinction too exclusive. In this rational-legal age Bryman values overlapping streams of analysis joining institutional and charismatic perceptions. For Blondel national leaders unify traditional, charismatic and legal-rational attributes.

Leadership can be best defined as the process of stimulating the activities of an individual or a group towards the achievement of specific objectives in particular environments. To achieve specific objectives a leader must shoulder certain responsibilities.

(a) He must be active in the recognition and analysis of situation that will be encountered by his group.

(b) He must be keenly aware and sensitive to the attitudes, opinions and feelings present in his group.

(c) He must play an active role in the development or formation of activities within the group that are directed at solving group problems.
Thus leadership can be regarded as an integrated function of the following variables -

(a) Leader (L)
(b) Environment (E)
(c) Goals (G)
(d) Subordinates (S)

\[ L = F (L,E,G,S). \]

It is from the interaction of these variables that the style and effectiveness of leadership emerge. The leaders operate within a framework of complex institutional structures, historical forces and societal demands. They comprise leadership environment. Institutional structures are affected by the ways in which leaders both assume and leave office — whether there is security of tenure. The leadership question is partly dependent on the international position of the country in question. Political leaders operate within an environment which will both structure their behaviour and constrain their freedom of action. The effectiveness of a leader depends upon his relationship with his subordinates and a desire to attain certain goals.

**POLITICAL LEADERSHIP**

Among the various aspects of leadership, political leadership occupies a special position. Political leadership is manifestly and essentially a phenomenon of power, it is power because it consists of the ability of the one or few who are at the top to make others do a number of things.

According to Glenn D. Paige political leadership comprises of decisional initiative, pacific and coercive persuasion, the exacerbation or reduction of
conflict, follower-need satisfaction as related to task accomplishment and action within an influencing but influenceable situational context.\textsuperscript{17}

Lasswell defines leadership in clear terms with reference to "formal and effective power". He analyses leadership in a relational context. The political leader "exercises power and that he does so accords the identifications, demands and expectations of the group". In explanation Lasswell says that "the differentiation between leaders and rank and file depends on personal characteristics as well as on the structure of interpersonal relationships".\textsuperscript{18}

The types and forms of political leadership correspond to the manner in which leaders exercise leadership. How far the individuals who occupy the most prominent positions of authority in the state structure are able to determine the outcome of the decision making process? Are they able to shape this process or it is shaped by forces above and beyond their control. Can they innovate? Can they exercise individual leadership?\textsuperscript{19} Considering these there are different levels of leadership. There is leadership based on great causes, pragmatic leadership, heroic leadership, leadership emanating from the barrel of a gun, leadership based on principles a leader adhere to. Bottomore uses Mosca's term the political class to refer to all those groups which exercise political power or influence and are directly engaged in struggles for political leadership. He distinguishes within a political class, a smaller group — the political elite which comprises of those individuals who actually exercise political power in a society at a given time. Included in this class are members of the government and of the high administration, military leaders and in some cases politically influential families of an aristocracy or royal house and leaders of powerful economic enterprises. The political class, therefore, is composed of members
of these group which may be engaged in varying degrees of cooperation, competition or conflict with each other.\textsuperscript{20}

C. Wright Mills maintains that 'elite' is composed of men who are in command of the major hierarchies and institutions of modern organisations and have the most of what is there to have — money, power and prestige, who are able to realise their will even if others resist it and their positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary people and who are in positions to make decisions having major consequences.\textsuperscript{21}

The core of the elitist theory is that there may exist in any society a minority of population which takes the majority decisions in the society. The view of elitism as the concentration of power, wealth and status in one single group or a closely integrated groups is criticised by the pluralists who believe that there is not just one elite but different elites in a pluralistic society.

As for Mosca and Pareto closer scrutiny reveals that their thesis also fails to provide a meaningful theory of society. Mosca's finding that those who rule are less numerous than those who are ruled is hardly more than a reality. It is obvious that rulers do rule their subjects and that a ruler is unlikely to bake his own bread or be a member of his own police force.\textsuperscript{22}

The elitist thinking is contrary to Marxist position. Marx perceived society as divided into antagonistic classes whose mutual conflict was essence of the historical process. He related leadership to property ownership. The leadership formation came from the propertied class. The ruling class was invariably the one that owned the means of production. In the modern that is post feudal
era, ownership of land was replaced by that of industry as the principal economic base of wealth and hence of political power. This situation however was expected to change. When the industrial proletariat along with other exploited classes constituted a majority, it would seize control of the means of production, inevitably by revolution and would put an end to the rule of the minority over the masses once and for all. The elitists attack Marxism on two points. Firstly they reject Marx's prediction of a future class less egalitarian society. Secondly they challenge the view that economics rather than politics is the determining force in history and the bond that holds societies together.

In view of the difficulty of adopting the elitist theory to a pluralistic society and the Marxist theory as well recent writers have concentrated on the study of leadership as such. Academic research into political leadership has encompassed a disparate array of interests. There is no set definition of what political leadership comprises of. Leadership studies have been concentrated in several spheres. The most important concerns have been the formal institutional positions occupied by leaders, their personal characteristics, the influence of the political environment as a constraint or resource for leaders, the political discourse of leaders or some combination of these.

Political leaders are individuals and as such each leader is unique. Despite uniqueness of each individual it is still possible to generalise about the impact of the personality of different political leaders upon the decision making process. There are sufficient similarities between individuals to identify some of the various ways in which they behave. There are differences in the extent of the policy change that political leaders wish to bring about both within and between different leadership arenas. There are great leaders who aspire to leave mark
on all aspects of domestic political system and even on world system. They have a particular vision they wish to fulfill. The leaders operate within a framework of complex institutional structures, historical forces and societal demands. J.M. Burns proposes two categories of leaders:

Transactional leaders who propose a bargain to prospective supporters a set of private or public goods — jobs, schools, clinics etc. - in return for votes. The exchange may be repeated periodically. The relationship between transactional leader and his followers remains limited once the two sides have delivered the promised goods they may go their separate ways. They were operative on the basis of reciprocity - if votes are not delivered - schools, clinics, jobs would not be forth coming.

On the other hand transformational leaders teach their followers new aspirations and values which may be political, psychological and moral as well as economic. They elaborate their followers to a higher level of aspiration and at times bring about social change.²⁵

According to Carl J. Friedrich if function and operation are made the focal point there are three primary types of leadership: initiating, maintaining and protecting. The initiator or innovator can be conqueror, entrepreneur or law giver. He thereby inspires his following into imitating his action, associating themselves with him. Maintaining leadership upholds the established order of things. Protecting leadership provides security for the followers more particularly security for a particular way of life, a culture and its values, beliefs and interests.²⁶
F.C. Bartlett has classified leaders into

1) The institutional leader where the authority rests upon traditions, customs, creeds, class or economic order.

2) The dominant leader is described as aggressive, coercive and given to vigorous action.

3) The persuasive leader exercises his control chiefly by words and other symbols.

It has to be admitted that there are differences between different types of leaders. A leader can be a political boss who is born of conflict and is developed in an atmosphere of struggle for political power. A leader can be a democratic leader whose main assets are tolerance, compromise and accommodation or can be a reformer who is very emotional in respect to his convictions about changes and reforms.27

As there are different types of leaders so there can be different ways in which they function. Depending upon the differences in their way of functioning political leadership can be broadly divided into two patterns.

(a) **Liberal Democratic Pattern**: Democratic leadership seeks to establish a responsible government which ensures freedom and equal opportunities of political participation to every citizen. Ultimately sovereignty lies with the people who control a democratic system by "determining who shall govern and broadly to what ends."28 People control their leaders through periodic elections and other constitutional measures.

(b) **Communist Pattern** : Within this system leadership is analysed within the basic framework of the Marxist Leninist ideology. In his major work
Das Capital Marx propounded the thesis that economic or material factors determine the dynamics of socio-politico-cultural variables. The Marxist-Leninist approach implies that the class that holds the dominant position in a given economic structure naturally establishes its political domination. Marxist-Leninist ideology emphasizes upon proletarian and revolutionary aspects of political leadership for the realization of communist ideals. The leading and directing role of the proletariat in the class struggle belongs to the revolutionary party.

The aforesaid patterns of political leadership are alternatives available to developing societies to choose from. Any comprehensive study of political leadership in these systems is a challenging proposition owing to the unique and diverse situational realities. An important variable in this regard has been that these systems are faced with the two-fold task of systematic survival and nation building. Keeping in view the context of cultural pluralism and socio-political diversity and economic discrepancies it is not possible to formulate identical patterns of political leadership in the developing countries.

In developing system political leadership is generally identified in terms of ascriptive factors such as personality traits, socio-economic background rather than in terms of political capacity, performance and operational output. In developing system political leaders tend to idealize the western democratic liberal traditions in the sphere of politics and socialism in the sphere of economy.

Leaders in all spheres whether religious, social, economic or political can be classified under three broad heads (1) those who are born leaders by their
superior skill or ability (ii) those who acquire leadership by consent of their followers or by the use of force (iii) those who have leadership thrust upon them.\textsuperscript{30}

The styles of the leaders may be identified from empirical observations about a person's behaviour in office or they may be constructed on the basis of an individual's total life history using an explicit theory of personality — which ever methodology is adopted a leader's style may have an impact upon the decision making process. A leadership style may be positive or negative in nature depending upon the type of motivation used by the leader. The 'positive' style uses positive motivation. The emphasis will be on the satisfaction of needs, rewards etc. The 'negative' style uses negative motivation. The stress will be on punishment and fear. A competent leader will have to use both styles depending upon the environment in which he functions. It should be remembered that power has its principal effect in its potential use rather than its actual use.\textsuperscript{31}

In its most rudimentary form the leadership styles involve distinguishing between for example uncompromising leaders and malleable leaders. That is to say between those leaders who are habitually willing to fight their corner and those who are willing to cede. In a similar manner Dennis Kavanagh in his article 'From Gentlemen to Players : Changes in Political leadership' (Politics and Personality, Macmillan London, 1990, Pg-246-71) distinguishes between mobilising and expressive leaders. The former are said to emphasise decision making and task perfomance even at the risk of alienating colleagues. The latter emphasise cohesion and the maintenance of the status quo representing and responding to diverse interests. The ability to generalise about leadership sytles does not imply that there is a single style of leadership that is bound to be successful in any place at any time.\textsuperscript{32} For example assertive leaders may mobilise
followers at certain times and then alienate them of others. Responsive leaders may sometimes appear weak and lose support but at other times they may be able to construct wide ranging coalitions of support. Generalising about leadership styles does not imply that leaders exhibit a single leadership style across the many different arenas of political leadership. For instance leaders may find it necessary to adopt a more uncompromising style in their relations with party activists than with cabinet members. Instead the ability to generalise about leadership styles simply implies that regular patterns of leadership behaviour are identifiable.33 There can be leader who is interested in the institutions or who is interested in himself. The first will attempt to bring as many good men as possible to strengthen the institution, even if there should be reasons for apprehension that he will have to recede to the background. The other kind of leader is one who is terribly afraid of losing his own position and who sacrifices the institution for keeping himself in the limelight and thus avoids creating other leaders.34

For those stressing institutional positions leadership is equated with formal control over the political institutions but exclusive concentration on institutions is an imperfect manner of appraising political leadership. Those concerned primarily with personal characteristics have tended to emphasize the distinctive personality traits of leaders without always demonstrating how these affect their capacity for political leadership. For those such as Blondel who asserts that 'leadership is a behavioural concept', a distinction must be drawn between formal institutional hierarchies and the exercise of real or 'behavioural' leadership, the real leader of a constituted organization may well be someone who does not occupy a formal position in the group. And those emphasising the political environment have tended to underplay or reject altogether the notion
of political leadership. But the point is that the study of political leadership should attempt to incorporate the best elements of all these approaches and reject the temptation for a unidimensional explanation.\textsuperscript{35}

A very pertinent point as noted by Robert Dahl is that people are not equally concerned with political life. Some people are deeply involved. Even among those who are heavily involved in politics only some actively seek power. And among the power seekers some gain more power than others. Thus there are four groups: the apolitical stratum, the political stratum, the power seekers and the powerful.\textsuperscript{36}

In the last two groups the number of women is negligible though in South Asia the number of women PM/President is highly astonishing who can be regarded as the powerful. This study is basically a comparative study of the six 'powerful' women of South Asia.

Comparison is one of the oldest forms of study of politics. Since the time of Aristotle the first task of comparison has been to observe the extent to which differences and similarities exist between the subjects of comparison. The second
task is to ask the circumstances within which differences occur? The studies that involve the comparative analysis of political leadership deal with certain basic issues. One is the question of defining the phenomenon, a second the level of analysis. It is difficult to arrive at a universally accepted definition of political leadership because it continues to be associated with concepts like power, influence, command, authority, legitimacy etc. The level of analysis issue concerns with the question of how much importance should be attached to individual leadership in the interpretation of political developments.

Contemporary analysis of political leadership either seek to generalize from particular cases or to particular cases. And for both the inductive and deductive approaches, studies of particular individuals provide material for universal or partial propositions about successful, flawed and failed leadership. A multinational study is explicitly comparative if it employs concepts. For example in the study of female political leaders of South Asia different concepts can be used like testing the relation between the socio-economic background and the political offices hold by the women leaders in four different South Asian countries or the factors of emergence and performance of different women Prime Minister / President of South Asia.

Systematic comparison makes use of comparable or at least functionally equivalent units of analysis. For example the Prime Minister of India may be treated as functional equivalent of the President of Srilanka because both are governmental heads of their respective countries. This is not to say that they are identical but that they are similar in terms of specified attributes. Even if it is argued that there is no equivalence between for example, Indira Gandhi or Begum Khaleda Zia or Benazir Bhutto or Sirimavo Bandanaike still this does not prevent comparison. It merely changes terms raising the question as
why there is no similarity or differences existing as all of them ruled or are ruling the neighbouring countries which remained under British imperialism for a long time and have a patriarchal society and agrarian economy. The political systems within which the political leaders operate can be differentiated in terms of the degree of "modernity" found in them. For the four countries in South Asia (India, Srilanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh) this process is more or less same. In such a situation the study of Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Sirimavo Bandarnaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga, Khaleda Zia, and Sheikh Hasina will take into account the patterns of recruitment and socialization, the question of durability and stability, position occupied by the leader in the political hierarchy, response of the followers to the objectives and strategies pursued by the leader. The study will more precisely find out the importance of the background of these women leaders in their emergence, and how far they are microcosm of society in its social composition to know more about the society. If in a society woman occupies the highest political office it can be indicative of high status or equal opportunities available to women or otherwise that woman has some reasons to reach the top.

The study proposes to analyse major similarities and differences among these leaders who tried to make significant contribution in the field of politics which is generally regarded as a 'male-dominated' area. Through this comparative study it will be possible to find out the profile of the female leaders, how they emerge, in what context they operate and what they achieve. Linda K. Richter states that main factors which have affected the emergence of top women political leaders in South Asia are patriarchal famalies, matyrdom, female life style, electoral experience. (L.K. Richter, Pacific Affairs, Vol-63, No.4, 1990-91, Pg. 533-40).
The leadership of Indira Gandhi, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Benazir Bhutto, Chandrika Kumaratunga Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina will be evaluated on the basis of their personal characteristics, positional resources and environmental constraints within which they perform. For this a framework is needed which is as follows:

**Frame Work**
- Age pattern
- Educational background
- Occupation - Any profession other than politics
- Family identification - By Birth
  - By Marriage
- Religion
- Caste structure - Higher / Lower
- Route to political hierarchy
- Stability of rule
- Length of political experience
- Capacity for mobilization
- Personal attributes (e.g. - courage, ruthlessness, stamina)
- Multiple role play
- Interactions within executive
- Mode of election
- Implementation of policies.
- Appointments and dismissals.
- Tendencies in foreign policy making.
- Leader as Decision taker / Policy coordinator.
- Cultural traditions and societal parameters within which the leaders operate.

This framework enables one to understand the profile of each women leaders and their positional situations which will help in comparing. The narrowing down of focus of analysis to women Prime Minister / President in South Asia maximizes manageability and comparability, the framework helps in cross national study and can be applied to political decision makers overtime.
OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

There are many issues regarding leadership which assail our mind. But the major objectives which I have attempted to resolve through my study are as follows: to review the literature concerning leadership in general and political leadership in particular. The importance of the wealth, family connections within the patriarchal social structure included a miniscule proportion of women to potential access to power. My objective will be to trace the factors of emergence of the six women leaders of South Asia who come from such type of social structures, to analyse whether their emergence is gender related that is they are seen as wailing widows or tortured daughters. How far these women leaders adhere to the role of homemakers? Last but not the least the objective of the study is to focus on the types of challenges that are confronted by Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister of a large democracy as well as of a secular state, by Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina as the Prime Ministers of Islamic states devastated by military coups in the past and by Sirimavo Bandarnaike and Chandrika Kumaratunga heading a nominally secular state which retained a special place for Buddhism.

HYPOTHESES

The major hypotheses coming up from the stated objectives are as follows:

(a) Kinship plays an important role in the emergence of the women political leaders.

(b) Gender never plays any important part in the selection or election of the women political leaders.

(c) The developing countries like India, Pakistan, Srilanka and Bangladesh conform a homogeneous social background of the women leaders.
(d) The women leaders generally come from the political first families of their respective countries in South Asia.

(e) In most cases personal tragedies thrust important political positions upon the women political leaders in South Asia.

(f) Women leaders of South Asia became Prime Minister / President only after the death of their fathers or husbands.

(g) Women leaders of South Asia are likely to follow the path followed by their fathers / husbands.

(h) In most cases the women leaders of south Asia acted as a saviour of a disorganised party and in the process led the party to electoral victory.

(i) The female leaders in South Asia are mostly the only woman at the top of the political ladder and they do not encourage other women to participate in national level politics and acquire powerful positions.

THE CHOICE OF AREA

Studies on leadership are generally restricted to single country institutional and biographical framework. The data on women's participation in politics is sparse. While the U.N. decade for women (1975-85) has generated some studies and data on women's economic contributions and comparable data on women's participation are lacking. What is more disappointing is that works on female governmental heads are almost rare as politics is still regarded as a male dominated sphere. Limited comparative studies are undertaken comparing the military leaders and revolutionary leaders. So arises the need for the comparative study of the female political leaders - how they emerge, in what context they operate and what they achieve. My effort will be to find out why certain women become involved in politics and what constraints they face. In this respect two
aspects of gender role socialization process are important to analyse. First the ‘permissive’ family atmosphere and second the women leaders under study generally have a father, brother or husband generally a male who serves as a model to them for learning the behaviour associated with the political role. The study will draw patterns of similarities and differences to the general political and social environment within which they operate. The basic thrust of the study will be on the socialization process, recruitment of the women political leaders. Since only a limited number of women contest for election and hold public offices and become governmental heads, it is useful to take an analytical look at those few women who have succeeded in achieving a leadership position in politics. The main thrust of the study is to study the rise and functioning of six prominent leaders of four South Asian countries. The choice of South Asia is very relevant because it represents the stereotype of masculine supremacy and social cleavages but at the same time suprisingly there is concentration of women Prime Ministers and Presidents in South Asia. They are Indira Gandhi of India, Sirimavo Bandaraike and Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka, Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Begum Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh. The reason behind such a choice is that role of these leaders who were or are Prime Minister/President of their respective countries is of enormous importance as they represent democratic countries and comparison can take place only within a common analytical framework which is not possible of women leaders in different strata of power structure. I am using the word leader instead of governmental head because the former is more wider in connotation and all comprehensive in meaning while it will be wrong to term the six aforesaid leaders as governmental heads because Sirimavo is now the P.M. of Sri Lanka whereas her daughter is the President who is the head of the state as well as of the government.
There is a common thread connecting Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Sirimavo Bandarnaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga, Sheikh Hasina, Begum Khaleda Zia. All of them inherited the political legacy of the politically "first families" of their respective countries. But at the same time some differences are also perceptible. The political cultures spawning them are different. British rule brought the countries of South Asia together under a common imperial umbrella and it also laid the seeds of differences between India and Pakistan over the "two-nation" theory, between Pakistan and Bangladesh over linguistic majority, between Sri Lanka and India over the nationality of Tamil plantation workers. India has evolved as a widely accepted mass democracy. Elections have been properly and peacefully conducted and here Westminster model of government has survived with little change. Pakistan in contrast has had alternating periods of parliamentary governments and military dictatorships. The picture is somewhat similar for Bangladesh. Sri Lankan experience is different yet again. There was no nationalist struggle to match India's and thus no party with real roots (Times, London, Feb, 1978). This study takes into account these similarities and asymmetries.

**RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

The term politics is very wide. The scope of politics extends from the family to the national and international arena. Men and women both are involved with politics in their day to day activities. Generally women are excluded from decision making process. In a traditional society they play a secondary role. Mac Cormak said that there are three reasons for non-participation of women in politics —

(a) Difference in socialization
(b) Less education
(c) Low self esteem resulting from traditional thought and superstition.

Women cannot or donot participate in politics because they are family centred, vote as their husbands/relatives desire and their activities are limited only in family matters and child welfare.

The factors of non-participation of women in politics can be discussed under three heads — socio-economic, cultural and political.

(a) Political activities and strategy cannot be formulated in a vacuum. They are formulated in existing socio-economic conditions. The women's situation in politics is a peculiar kind of isolation. It is observed that politics means expenditure and because of that reason only affluent can involve themselves in political activities. The phenomenon of income earning and saving in case of women is a recent one. They donot want to expend their earnings for politics.

(b) The patriarchal social system limits women to become active in politics. That is why they are tolerated but not included in the party positions. As a result male political leaders do not want to help them but they want to use women at times of needs. Change in the attitude of sociocultural system can only help women to be active in politics. Traditional values and norms keep them in a place where they have limited access to politics. Even their primary role as mothers have not been recognised in some cases. Women are pictured as dependent, sacrificing and docile.
(c) The political factors affecting women's participation is also due to the shortage of full-time activists. Consequently women's issues have not received adequate public attention. In a way women have greater endurance, lesser susceptibility to corruption and greater distrust of charity stemmed from the fact that women have been less touched by political parties and have withstood greater hardships than men.41

In such a situation when social, economic circumstances are hesitant to make room for women as political leaders it is surprising to note the presence of a host of women P.Ms / Presidents in South Asia which makes prominent the role of third world women in politics. Of the seven countries of South Asia, four of them (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka) had or are having women political leaders though the general trend suggests that in most cases family and male political linkages, political crises serve as enabling environment for the political entry and rise of these leaders.

Studies of Chief Executives have been limited to old fashioned legal studies of the constitutional framework within which executives function or are biographical in character. Beyond the legalistic, single country institutional and biographical studies works on political executives are still relatively rare. Limited comparisons have been recently undertaken in the fields of military government, the social background and psychological ‘traits’ or personal characteristics of executives. Hence arises the need to design a study based on the comparison of women Prime Minister / President of South Asia.
METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the study has been considerably influenced by the nature of source material available. The study will be pursued in a descriptive and analytical frame work. The issue of political emergence and functioning of Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia, Sheikh Hasina, Sirimavo Bandarnaike, Chandrika Kumaratunga would be studied on the basis of available empirical studies in this field. Apart from this, secondary sources like books, articles and newspaper reports in the related areas will be referred to wherever necessary.

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