PREFACE:

The participation of women in the political process and decision-making bodies forms a key concern of the women's movements in India. An analysis of democratic system and representation of various sections of the population therein reveals that women are far behind. Their low representation in the political process becomes critical especially in the context of declining sex ratio, increasing violence and crimes against women and their marginalized status in employment, education and health sectors.

The present study of women legislators in UP assembly attempts to analyze their role and involvement in two different but related arenas of political process: namely the assembly and the political party. A socio-economic profile of women legislators is drawn up essentially to explore who the women legislators are and impediments and support systems that either hinder or facilitate their entry into politics. Women's involvement in the UP politics both during the pre-independence and post-independence period forms an integral part of this study.

The study attempts to analyze how the women legislators of UP assembly have emerged as leaders, their responsibilities and leadership
roles, their role in their respective party organizations and forums, their involvement in election campaigns, the opportunities they get to articulate and integrate their views in party functioning and policy formulations, etc. A corollary of this women’s ability to influence legislative decision making process is observed not only in terms of being seen but being effective in raising their issues, moving resolutions, proposing motions, etc.

The study has also attempted to draw up seven case studies to understand the question of gender discrimination whether it is necessary to adapt a male role model to be successful in politics or can women legislators carve out a distinct identity of their own. What impediments women suffer in male dominated arena? And what are implications of staying in politics with increasing communalization and criminalization of politics?

The study has been conducted in the State of Uttar Pradesh (UP), which is, by any indicator, a very politically sensitive State and has always been on National scene. It has an important role in deciding leadership at the Centre. Being largest in terms of population, it has largest electorates, biggest assembly (425 seats) and sends highest representative to the parliament. UP has produced many leaders of
National and International repite. The first man and woman Prime Minister was from this State. The State also had the first woman Chief Minister and first scheduled caste woman Chief Minister as well. The State provides a specific situation by virtue of its location, general reputation, large size of population, largest electorates, complex social composition, socio-cultural history and an important Center of political activities. That is why UP has been selected to undertake the present work.

The study has been divided into seven chapters. The first chapter covers the introductory part- “The Research Design”. This has been further subdivided into seven sub sections, i.e. background and rationale of the problem, the statement of problem- research questions, area of study, universe sample, method of collection of data, analysis of the data, and concepts/terms.

The representation of women in various political institutions has been studied by many researchers like, Pravin Seth (1979), D' Lama Hazel (1983), Ranjana Kumar (1994). Shanta Bhatt (1995), Susheela Kaushik (1996) and they have observed that majority of women in politics belonged to the upper middle class families and they are economically well off. Many researchers have emphasized the need of
further study on women political participation at various levels i.e. the local, State and Center level. This has become the background and rationale of the present work. The present study focuses upon the following questions:

i. Who are the women leaders in UP?

ii. How have they emerged as leaders?

iii. What role do they play?

iv. What kind of issues do they raise in the Assembly? And

v. Whether their social and cultural barriers have stood in their way to participate in politics?

These questions have been raised in the statement of the problem narrated in the chapter-1, sub part 1.2. Part 1.3 of chapter-1, introduces some of the salient features of state of UP briefly wherein the present study has been conducted. The detailed description of the area of study has been given in chapter-3. Some salient features of universe, sample and selection of the respondents (women legislators) have been described in sub part 1.4. of chapter-1. The data of 95 women legislators (respondents) have been analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The chapter-1 in its sub sections further deals with the
method of the data collection, analysis of the data and some important concepts/terms.

Chapter-2 provides a brief survey of select literature that is divided into two parts. The first part takes note of the conditions of women in a historical perspective and the second part presents the trend of studies on leadership in general and women leaders in particular. Part 2.1 'Women Through Ages' covers the women position in society during the different periods starting from Vedic period to the present. Part 2.2 gives the detail account of the 'Constitutional Provisions' for women empowerment provided in the Indian Constitution. In the sub sections (2.2-2.5), the position of women in employment, women in politics, women participation in electoral politics, women participation in grass-root democracy, women in trade union movement in India and women in peasant movement in India have been described in detail. In the second part of the chapter-2, the trend of various studies on women participation in active politics has been given.

Chapter-3 gives a detail account of 'Area of Study' i.e. its location, demography and some development indicators, economy, political history, election scene, electoral scene, etc.
Chapter-4 'Women legislators in Uttar Pradesh' deals with women's position in various political parties in general, at State and National scene, and women's position in UP Assembly (1952-96) in particular. The account of women's representation in both UP Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council in pre and post independence era, representation of women from SC, ST and minority community in the assembly and women representation in ministerial berths have also been given in this chapter.

Chapter-5 deals with the five main questions in relation with the women legislators in UP assembly. The details of these questions have been given in sub sections (5.1-5.5). Some tables related to socio-economic background of women legislators, age distribution, marital status, age at marriage, number of children, educational level, occupation and their caste distribution have been enumerated in above mentioned sub sections. The tables of some inter-relationship bi-variable have also been given. The emergence and exhaustive factors of emergence of women leadership and their roles as leaders, their participation in assembly proceedings, the issues they raised and hindrance faced by women leaders in their entry to politics have also been discussed in detail in this chapter.
In chapter-6, case studies of seven women legislators are described mainly focusing on the aspects proposed in the main questions. An effort is made to arrive at the findings and relationships on the questions in each case study and then lastly summing up of the findings of case studies that has been arrived at, is presented.

Chapter-7 gives summary of the study, findings, problems faced during the research and some suggestions to enhance the women political participation in the State Assemblies and in Parliament. This chapter also contains the findings of seven case studies, bearings on and examination of concepts/terms and also bearings on the earlier findings. The last part of this chapter shows a comparison between the findings on women leaders in the literature and the findings of the present study.

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