Chapter One
Introduction - research design
Chapter 1:

Introduction: The Research Design

1.1 Background and Rationale of the Problem:

The last two decades have been marked by critical activity both of women and by women. The growing body of literature and evidence on women's integral involvement in varied structures and processes of society have brought gender to the center-stage of all the developmental efforts. "It is now widely recognized that seemingly well worked out plans and programmes being both gender-biased and gender blind can have disastrous consequences for women" (Kumari, 1994:33). Efforts are, therefore, being made to develop alternate strategies and discourses that are both gender-sensitive and gender just. Such attempts are however, yet to be satisfactorily incorporated into the political processes and decision-making bodies. Although the post-independence era in India has witnessed overall development and progress in varied arena and sectors, women's involvement and role in public life has not made much headway. "The number, extent, nature and levels of women participating in politics and playing politically active roles are far from being satisfactory", (ibid: 33).

Politics is one field where the evidence of increasing participation by women is still not very impressive in most of the
countries” (Atal, 1993:17). “While substantial gains have been made by the women’s movement over the decades in India, this has not been adequately reflected in the representation of women in position of power” (Kumari, 1996:1). Today it is widely recognized that a precondition for any developmental effort which is environmentally harmonious and that safeguards human rights, is the participation and involvement of women in this process. In fact, “the crux of the present world order is the issue of ecology, development and gender, and therefore, need specific attention” (Mohanty, 2000:1). Gender inequalities are pervasive in various layers of social existence as its tentacles are spread across various segments of society. Women, who constitute approximately half of the population, have been subjected to the tyranny and oppression of a patriarchal order for centuries and in fact most of them, both in elite and in non-elite societies, are suffering from in one form or the other even today. Although, several provisions for empowering them have been made in the constitution of our country, they are not given equal status that they legitimately deserve in the society. It is this aspect that needs to be closely examined with a view to identifying the desired reforms to shape up the future of our posterity. It is therefore extremely essential to identify and understand
the ground realities to eradicate the menace of gender inequality from
the society.

Women are poorly represented in the rank of power, policy and
decision-making. "Women make up less than five per cent of the
world's heads of the State, head of major cooperation and top position
in international organizations" (Mohanty, 2000:1). Women are not just
remit in politics and managerial equity; they are a long way behind in
other sphere of life as well. This is in spite of the fact that women are
found in large numbers in low-level political parties, trade unions and
business. This situation prevails all over the globe. "In Britain, where
women were granted franchise way back in 1918, the first women
member took her seat in 1919. In 1970 election, only 26 were returned
to the House of Commons, which constituted only 4.1 per cent of the
total membership. In US, where women got franchise as far back as
August 1920, there were only 10 members, 2.03 per cent only, in House
of Representatives, which was comprised 435 members in the early
1970's" (Kimani, 1996:5).

In India, there is a great hiatus between constitutional guarantees
and the active representation of women. The right to constitutional
equalities was supplemented by legal equality by the passage of a
number of Acts through which traditional inequalities in respect of
marriage, divorce and property rights were eliminated. Notwithstanding these constitutional and legal provisions, women representation is all but negligible even at the lowest rung of political hierarchy. This is the scenario of all the political parties regardless of their size and function. Lest we talk about their representation in the parliament and the legislative assemblies, the better it is “In fact, the highest representation that women have ever enjoyed was 9.0 per cent in Parliament in 1999 election (Rana, 2000:74), 9.11 per cent in State Assemblies and about 12.96 per cent in the Council of Ministers” (Kumar, 1996:2). It is well known that while women constitute about 50 per cent of the total electorate, they have never been able to get adequate representation in any Lok Sabha as well as in the State Assemblies and what is worse is that their representation has an incremental decline.

“Many women today are coming forward to join the decision-making process by joining the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Police Service, Judiciary, political parties, local self-government bodies. But at each and every step, they face ‘Laxman Rekha’. In spite of their readiness to take up challenges, they get limited political opportunity” (Patel, 1996: 28). Women politicians have to face a lot of harassment from vested interests. With the criminalisation of politics,
women not only face character assassination and threats, but at times they also become soft target of violence. In fact, in the past, there has been a number of incidents of physical assaults, rape and murder of such women folks. "In Bengal, female officer of the UNICEF were brutally raped and murdered. A women activist in Maharashtra was kidnapped, confined and repeatedly raped by the activist of a political party. Similar cases have been reported in Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Punjab and Assam" (Patel, 1996:32).

With the increasing demand to bring women forward into the political processes and decision-making bodies their involvement at the grass-roots level acquires special significance, not merely in terms of political training but also to ensure that those who are at the helm of affairs are the true representatives of people's interests. "More increase in the number of women officials will not ensure empowerment of women but the goals and attitude of these women politicians towards women specific dimensions must be in the women's interest" (Patel, 1996:26). The existing discrepancy of women's majority status as voters (and also participants in other political processes) and minority status as decision makers, and to ensure and enhance the involvement and participation of women in decision making bodies calls for
immediate attention for analysis of women’s participation and activities at grassroots level and State level politics as well.

In such instance, a critical analysis of both “Gender in Politics” as also “Politics of Gender” is essential to seek answers to some of the questions raised in the present study. The historical under-representation of women in decision-making bodies is inextricably linked with the low and inferior status of women in the society and therefore, calls for an analysis of different relationships and the constant conjunction of varied forces and elements: economic, social, cultural as also political which hinder women’s meaningful participation in political processes and decision-making bodies. Therefore, the purpose of the present investigation is to study the socio-economic background of the women legislators of the State of Uttar Pradesh and their involvement in politics.

The earlier studies attempted so far on the participation of women in politics are mainly confined to their voting behaviour or at the best partaking of position as candidates, member of legislatures and ministers. The present study, however, focuses on the participation of women as legislators in UP Assembly. It is believed that such participation will be the springboard for positions, which are vital in contributing to the decision-making in the public sphere, as women can
then reach such positions gracefully and easily, without having to struggle.

The question of women's participation in political process and decision-making bodies forms a key concern of the women's movement in India. An analysis of the democratic system and representation of various sections of the population therein reveals that women are far behind than their counterparts. Their under-representation 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.

Meanwhile, there are certain basic questions which women's movement has to ask of itself and caution itself against. This will relate to the definition of the concept of political participation itself. Will the participation of women on a vast scale in voting change the nature of democratic functioning from that of patriarchal model to one of gender-based egalitarianism? If the power of voting has to make the citizens the sovereigns, the majority of the poor and rural voters would be the sovereigns of India, and the State would have emerged as that of the poor, but the fact until now remains that it is just the reverse. If holding positions is the indication of the means of women's development, then there should be correlation between the extent of development in the
region and electoral results. In reality, Kerala, the most developed State from the point of view of women's development holds also highest percentage of women voting. But it has a very low percentage of women contesting the elections to enter into the law making bodies.

Equally pertinent is the question as to whether the women who have had made to the legislative and executive positions have been able and exerted themselves to promote the interest of women. It is one thing for them to hold political positions and power and other thing for them to use such positions for the empowerment of their own tribe. "Women legislators are not taken seriously or given responsible tasks like introducing motions" (Kashish, 1996:40). This may not be totally correct and there also may be a trend for the better in recent times. But the general picture is still true that the women executives and legislators have to put up a difficult and sustained struggle in order to bring about the steps needed to sensitize colleagues and others and to promote women's interests. This aspect, therefore, need to be further studied. It is hence, necessary to undertake studies to find out whose benefits is women participation in politics is directed? What impact has this participation made on the policies and the system over a period?

For effective this impact, it is equally necessary to assess the level at which this participation is taking place. Mere numbers are not
enough; it has to be situated at levels, which are significant and effective. "Impressive participation in the political process, formal and informal, is not goals in themselves, they are means and strategy for achieving something more fundamental, which the group can do, only when its participation touches upon the structure of politics itself" (Kaushik, 1996:40). Therefore, one has to identify the broader process of the political structure and the way power is arranged in a particular society. The ideology of State, the interrelationship between the important components in its structure, like class, caste and gender, and its basic developmental goals are essential in understanding the repercussions of participation. Often a vastly expanded participation and wide mobilization of a socially weak community, in this context women, has led to the strengthening of the present pattern of development rather than directing this pattern to their own development. Even values like equality (constitutional, political, economic) or right (property, access to resources) may be meaningful only when women possess and exercise them for bringing about a change in their own position as well as of the society; otherwise they will merely add up to strengthening reinforcing the existing social system by operating within the framework of patriarchy. Values like
equality and rights, concept like participation and mobilization need to be constantly kept before them the objectives of the client group.

Any assessment of political participation of women in a State like Uttar Pradesh has to start by asking the questions like whether such participation has led bringing about or moving towards improvement of the equalities of life of women or whether it simply makes life more livable for women? Whether such participation by women either as individuals or as a group has meant working out alternate strategies for development as well as structure of power? Whether the political intentions which women seek to make start with women as points of departure or merely help women infiltrate systematically in the existing hierarchies of power, thereby lending themselves to becoming women performers or even worse? If increasing participation has to have any meaning for women, such participation should be based on the widespread and well-orchestrated mobilization of women on the central issue of women’ oppression and subordinate status in society and family. The outcome of such study may suggest that where the assembly and the political parties may reach with such interventions as reservations for women in decision making bodies, especially at the State levels.
The analysis of political participation of women in UP would have to be combined with few components like (a) the extent, level and nature of women's participation in the political process of State, by way of both formal and non-formal institutions, (b) the impact and significance of such participation for women's rights and living conditions, and (c) the type of feminist issues that were raised in the course of this participation.

Keeping in view the above three criteria, one can assess the nature and extent of women's participation in some of the significant formal and informal process of any State politics. The freedom struggle, peasant and trade union movements, the electoral and legislative institutions, the local government (Panchayat Raj systems), the administrative and judicial functioning are some of these formal process wherein the participation of women can be evaluated. There are also institution like political parties, interest and lobby group, religious and caste movement, where the women are participating increasingly. The present study has focused only on the women legislators of UP Assembly to assess their position because it was not possible to cover all above areas in one volume.

There have been some studies to understand the roles of women in Indian politics. Ranjana Kumari (1996) in her study on women has
found that the social and cultural barriers have stood in the way of women coming out of the traditional way of life to participate in the political process. Shanta Bhatt (1995) in her study has examined the constraints of Indian women politicians. Pravin N. Seth (1979) has studied social background of women member of Parliament and has found that most of women MPs belong to well off and highly educated families.

Parvathamma and Jongem (1969) have studied 53 scheduled caste Members of Parliament (MPs) to study their educational background including caste and sub-caste difference among them. Satish Sabherwal (1971) has studied social mobility and change among some scheduled caste at individual as well as at group level from closed status group caste to open status group. He finds that in recent times, economic and political systems have increased their autonomy in relation to the caste structure.

Many studies show that the women politicians face peculiar problems in their political life, which are totally unknown to their male counterparts. These inhibit their performance in the legislative assembly. "The reasons for women's diminished role in political arena include traditions, physiology, lack of vertical mobility, concern for home and family, psychology and lack of patronage, particularly, from
senior women politicians" (Bhatt, 1995: 90). There may be many more reasons, which hinder women's active involvement in politics. In fact, studies on such issues have been very rare and no systematic and comprehensive study appears to have been done on this issue.

It is, indeed, this reason that necessitates an analysis of issues that are responsible for limiting women's participation in the political process. Thus, the present study has made an attempt to analyse the background, role and involvement of women in politics and the constraints thereof, if any. The study has been undertaken to focus only on the women legislators in Uttar Pradesh Assembly.

1.2 The Statement of problem - Research Questions:

To illustrate the main arguments, the present study focuses upon the following five specific 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?

The first question "who are the women leaders in UP" implies that what is the socio-economic, educational and other background of
women leaders in this State. Leaders, in the present study mean the elected women legislators to UP Assembly. There are many other leaders identifiable through positional approach like Member of Parliament (MP), Member of Legislative Council, Members of Municipal Committees, Members of Block Samitis, Members of Village Panchayats, Sarpanchs, etc. The present study is limited to understand the background of the women legislators, their caste, marital status, age, family profile, occupation and their education, etc.

The second question takes note of the process through which they have emerged as leaders. This indicates the contributing factors and the processes through which women legislators have achieved their position of leadership. The process means whether through election, selection, and nomination. Contributing factors include previous participation in socio-political activities, socialization, chance factors, situation which forces them to get involved in some struggle, or any other political training and participation. All these factors have been studied with reference to those women legislators who are identified as respondents.

The third question is “what role do they play?” This question means their performance in public life. As leaders, they are expected to play some roles, which are different from the roles of common women.
By virtue of occupying a position, i.e., status of a leader at certain level what has been their contribution in the upliftment and empowerment of the women in particular and society, in general. This also involves their role for the welfare and upliftment of their community people, for the youths and indirectly their role for strengthening the position and support of other male leaders.

This question has been searching answer for the roles of women legislators in their party organizations and forums, the share of responsibilities and leadership roles women have taken during elections etc.

The fourth question is related to their performance in the legislative assembly. This was to examine the range and depth of women's participation and their involvement in the assembly proceedings, particularly in raising issues, moving resolutions, proposing motions, etc. This question has also involved an analysis of 'women' as a group in the assembly, the occasions and issues on which they may cut across party lines and join hands together.

The fifth question was to examine the hindrance mainly due to social and cultural barriers that the legislators face while entering into active politics and performing their role as leader. Besides, some of the
major issues, which either facilitate or limit women's participation in the political process, have also been examined in this question.

1.3 Area of Study:

The study has been undertaken in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh (UP) is politically a very sensitive and an important State in a number of ways. UP which is socially more backward than a number of other states have sent more women into the Central and State Legislatures. It has the largest legislative assembly, sends largest number of MPs in the Parliament and thus, it has always played a significant role in national politics by dominating on the national scene. UP sends as many as 85 MPs in the Lok Sabha and has 425 seats in the State Legislative assembly. The important leaders have always focussed attention on this State. The State of UP has produced many men and women leaders of National and International repute. In fact, the first women Prime Minister of India belonged to UP. Out of thirteen Prime Ministers of India elected so far, eight Prime Ministers were from Uttar Pradesh. More women members of the UP had become members in the Central Cabinet than women from any other state. Both formal and informal leadership can be observed in this state. That is why UP has been selected for the present study. UP has the highest population in the
country. In fact one might say that it is the seventh largest country in
the World in terms of population. This State provides a specific
situation, by its location, general reputation, social composition,
having large women voters, socio-cultural history and important
centre of political activities. The demographic and other important
salient features of UP, position of women in State, their political
activities and organisations and political parties they belong to have
been dealt in one of the subsequent chapters.

1.4 Universe, Sample, Identification and Selection of
Respondents:

The UP Legislatures consist of the Governor and the two houses
known as the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. At
present, the Council has 108 members whilst the Assembly has 425
members excluding one member of Anglo-Indian community. The
prime unit of the analysis has been women legislators in UP Assembly.
The women leaders, in the context of the study consist of all women
legislators elected till thirteenth assembly elections held in UP so far
and therefore, constitutes the universe of the present study. A profile of
all women legislators including all former women legislators of UP
assembly was prepared and it was observed that about fifty-two women
were elected as legislators more than once. Many of them represented
continuously their constituencies as many times as seven. Main concerns are specific to the women legislators. The study has also tried to find out the attitude of their male colleagues toward them to a limited extent.

The first Assembly election in UP was held in the year 1952 after Independence wherein eleven women legislators were elected to the assembly. The last Assembly election in UP was held in 1996 and 20 women were elected. However, two had resigned on some pretext, which reduced the present strength of women legislators to eighteen only. Since 1952, 13 assembly elections have been conducted in UP and a total of 223 women were elected in all. Out of 223 women legislators, 52 were elected more than once. A list was prepared of all and it was observed that 52 women have been repeatedly appearing at 149 places in the list. If 52 are excluded from 149, the total numbers of women legislators were reduced to 126. Out of these 126 legislators, 5 legislators have expired and 10 could not reply queries properly due to their poor health conditions coupled with old age etc. Fifteen have not sent filled in questionnaires despite repeated reminders and persuasion. Also, there was no information available about them regarding their age, education, family background, income, profession, etc. in the literature like Who's Who published by the UP Vidhan Sabha.
secretarial. There were also legislators who have expired besides other who could not be contacted despite all efforts. Such cases have been deleted as the case of "sample mortality". Eventually, it left the total respondents as 95.

The election-wise numbers of women legislators and the year in which elections were held are given in Table-1.1. The name-wise, constituency-wise detailed list of women legislators and the respondents are placed in Appendix 1 and 2. The research has primarily been analytical in content and nature. Of course, some comparison between some ex-women legislators and present women members in terms of their age, educational qualifications, and legislative experience has been undertaken.
### TABLE 1.1 Number of Women Legislators in the UP Assembly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Assembly</th>
<th>No. Of elected Women</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>24*</td>
<td>5.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Seventh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Eighth</td>
<td>20**</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Eleventh</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>11****</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Thirteenth</td>
<td>18*****</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total = 223 Avg. 4.0%

Source: Who’s Who published by Secretariat of UP Assembly
2nd Election Commission’s Reports (1952-61)
- * Figure in Election Commission Report 1952 is 20
- ** Figure in Election Commission Report 1980 is 24
- *** Figure in Election Commission Report 1993 is 16
- **** Figure in Election Commission Report 1996 is 20

There is some inconsistency in the figures given in the Report of the Election Commission and figures provided by the Assembly Secretariat. The difference in the figures may be because the Election Commission reports contain the names of all the contestants who have been declared elected in a particular election. However, one may resigned soon after her/his election and some would not be appearing in the list provided by the Assembly Secretariat as it keeps records of sitting legislators only.

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1.5 Method of data collection: No single method appears to be useful to collect data on such a problem. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources and by (a) structured questionnaire and (b) interview schedule. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to seek information. The bulk of information was generated through the structured questionnaires. This was supplemented by the personal interviews in some cases. Relevant information for the present study was collected in three stages.

At the initial stage, a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the existing literature on the political processes and decision-making bodies in particular, was made. Both the formal and informal available sources were explored to collect required information.

In the second stage, a structured questionnaire was formulated to extract information from women legislators on specific areas and issues. The questionnaire was designed to obtain information on:

(I) Personal information.

(II) Information on involvement in politics.

(III) Association with political party/parties.

(IV) Involvement in electoral politics.

(V) Role and legislature politics and proceedings.

(VI) Role as a minister/Legislator.
(VII) Response to certain general and women specific issues.

(VIII) Suggestions on an increased and qualitatively better participation for / of women in political process and decision making bodies.

The questionnaires formulated, were mailed to the women legislators. As only three women legislators sent back the first round of questionnaire (although majority of them confirmed having received questionnaires), another round of questionnaires were sent to them. After persistent reminders only 40 women legislators responded with filled in questionnaires.

In the third stage, simultaneously efforts had to be made to contact them in person for interviews. With the selected women legislators both sitting and Ex-women legislators (40), personal interviews were held.

Few ex-women legislators are now Members of Parliament (MP's), who due to their extremely busy schedule spent only about 20-25 minutes; the rest had long conversations with the researcher, approximately of two hours. The selected group of men legislators too, had concerns and responded to the questionnaire. Although, by and large, slower in their responses but willing to share information, views and experiences, they were not categorical on certain issues, especially those concerning their respective political parties. Therefore, beyond a
point, in a conversation the gender element (i.e. specific reactions arising out of the respondent being a 'woman' or 'men') got disclosed and responses were merely those of a politician per se.

Seven cases of women legislators have been described in detail as the case studies. These were selected taking into account the representation of different castes among the women legislators and different leadership positions held by them. One of the important criteria for selection of the case studies was their experience as legislators, the number of times they had represented their constituencies and their position as minister. Legislators belonging to the scheduled castes and OBCs and the legislators from the different parts of the state have been considered while taking up the case studies. While describing the case studies, interviews of the legislators, observations, supplementary information through knowledgeable persons and available in their life history in various records have been used. With the co-operation of the legislators as also our own perceptions and preparations it could be possible to collect required information for this study.

4.6 Analysis of the Data:

The information furnished by the respondents and collected from various other sources was transferred from the notes, diaries, and the
interview schedules questionnaires on to the data sheets prior to its analysis. The huge data on various aspects have been analyzed and arranged in tables for interpretation. The data were subjected to chi-square and correlation analysis. Case materials, however, were qualitatively analyzed. On the background variables a quantitative method has been used as a device of analysis. The relationship of various factors has been indicated on the basis of numerical distribution presented in the tables. Thus, the data of 95 respondents have been analyzed qualitatively and also to some extent quantitatively.

1.7 Concepts/Terms: There are some concepts, which have been frequently used for understanding of the empirical materials on the women legislators. The following concepts as technical terms and tools for precision and abstraction have repeatedly been used:

1.7.1 Politics and Political Participation: "Politics refers to the functioning of a whole array of public institutions and forces which are involved in moulding the lives of people by way of decisions and policies that impinge upon their relations with one another" (Kamshik, 1996:35). "Politics" is often defined in a very narrow term as the electoral participation in democracy. The varied activities that are performed by a person in an elected position or as part of the voter's duty, defined as political participation. This is because such
participation is expected to be the springboard of decision making in the public sphere that in turn is denoted as power.

"The concept of politics has by and large been defined either in terms of "process" or in terms of the "place" or "place" where it happens i.e. in terms of the 'arena' or the institutional forms (i.e. parliament, assemblies, etc.)" (Kumari, 1994:34). However, there does exist an overlapping between the two. Thus for instance, those who subscribe to the 'arena' concept may regard it as a process but confine this process of politics to certain kind of institutions and organizations. Broadly defined politics refers to a whole gamut of structures and forces that affect people's lives by way of decisions and policies. It involves not merely the availability of Opportunities, Rights, liberties and Justice to both individuals and the groups but also the extent to which they are availied of and exercised.

1.7.2 Leader: 'Leader' literally means a person who leads or has the capacity to lead. He/she can understand the complexities of the social structures, which are the base of politics, education, economy and social status. Leader has been understood in two different senses: (a) "to excel, to be in advance, to be prominent", and (b) "to guide others, to be head of organization, to hold command". In the first sense, the leadership is identified with individual pre-eminence and in the later
sense it is identified with organizational talent. The leader exercises the power of a society, of a group, the government or an institution for a common cause. The power also indicates authority. The leader is one who has power and authority (Majumdar, 1967: 278). In any group these powers have to be activated for the accomplishment of certain ends. The leadership act represents a choice of these instruments of power. The leader cannot and will not always rely on these instruments of power. "He should effect the behaviour of the followers in a situation", (Terry, 1972). He has to energize and influence the people, in a common effort, to achieve the purpose of an enterprise.

Leader, operationally, defined as one who occupies power position in any organization or association in the government or otherwise. In the present study, the women legislators who have been occupying position in the most important decision-making body, namely, the State Legislature have been considered as leaders.

It is an accepted phenomenon that the upbringing of the depressed or women depends largely upon the quality of organized leadership made available to the people. The characteristics have been tried with respect to the performance of the women leaders at National level involved in the process of social, political and economic changes.
in general, and women legislators in the State Assembly of Uttar Pradesh, in particular.

1.7.3 Power: "Power is defined as the capacity to influence the decisions of others - groups as well as the individuals. Power is derived from the economic, political, social status of an individual or a group" (Pore Kumud, 1993: 59). The politically powerful makes important policy decisions through popularly elected bodies at various levels. Power has been used here to denote the capacity to influence decisions, particularly in the assembly and other group forums.

1.7.4 Elite: Pareto suggests that - "Let us assume that in every branch in human activities, each individual is given an index which stands as a sign of his capacity in every much the same way as grades are given in the various subjects in examinations in school. So let us make a class of the people who have the highest indices in their branch of activity and to that class give the name of elite". Mosca defines the elite, " as an organized minority, obeying a simple impulse, which holds dominion over the un-organized majority".

For Laswell (1950) the elite are, "the holders of the high positions in a given society". Conley refers to the elite as, "group that emerge to the position of leadership and influence at every social level". Nodal has defined the elite as a, "body of persons enjoying a
position of pre-eminence over all others”. According to Korn Houser, the term elite is used in respect of “those positions in a social structures which are upper-ordinate such that the incumbent claims and are granted social superiority”. The term is also used to refer to the functions attach to such positions, especially the special responsibility to form and define value standard in a certain social sphere. T.B. Bottomore has defined the term as “the elite is now generally applied in fact to functional, mainly occupational groups, which have high status (for whatever reason) in a society”.

An analysis of the above mentioned definitions bring out the fact that such elements as superiority, power and organizations are important in defining the term elite. Thus, we may think of the elite as those who are regarded as superior, influential and are held in high esteem by the people. They may or may not have formal positions in politics and the government but they are in a position to influence the decision-making process, set values and uphold them.

1.7.5 Role: First of all, it was systematically used by Linton and later, based on the meaning given by Linton, R.K. Merton had developed a theory of role in the context of social structure. Status means a position in a social system occupied by the designated individuals; by role, the behavioral enacting of the patterned
expectations attributed to that position, (Merton, 1968: 422). Thus role in this sense incorporates behaviour patterns of the social position in accordance with the expectations by others from that position. These expectations are culturally defined and indicate relationship of the position holders and other participants in social structure. Thus, in the present context the concept of role has been used to understand the behaviour pattern of the women leaders and women legislators in particular, that has followed from their positions as a legislator and is expected by others in the respective fields of their activities as leaders.

1.7.6 Influential - the Local and the Cosmopolitan: The persons to whom the other people turn up for help or advice regarding various types of personal decisions (e.g. choice of a job, educational plan, selection of books and furniture, etc.) are known as influential. Of course, this influential exercises influence indirectly through major political matters and other administrative decisions, which affect large number of people (Merton, 1968: 443-445).

There are two types of influential, the local and the cosmopolitan. Both differ in orientation. Local is largely confined to his local community and this is essentially his world. He devotes little thought or energy to the larger society. He is preoccupied with local problems to the virtual exclusion of national and international scene. He
is strictly, parochial. Contrary to this, is the cosmopolitan type. He has some interest in the local community and maintains a minimum of relations within the community since he too exerts influence there. He is also oriented significantly to the world outside the local community and regards himself as an integral part of that world. He resides in the local community but lives in the larger society. Thus the local type is parochial, the cosmopolitan is acculturated.

The concept of local and cosmopolitan influential thus formulated by Merton would be used in examining and classifying the women leaders whether they have local cosmopolitan in orientation as described above. As used by Merton, participation in a number of organizations at various levels and getting leadership positions by them such as the Chief Minister of the State and Ministers in the Centre is an indicator of cosmopolitan type.

1.7.7 Reference groups (Models): Merton (1968) states, “That man acts in a social frame of reference fielded by groups of which they are a part”, and has summarized the sociological aspect of reference group theory. Men frequently orient themselves to groups other than their own in shaping their behaviour and evaluation. In general, reference group theory aims to systematize the determinants and consequences of those process of evaluation and self-appraisal in which
the individual takes the values and standards of other individuals and groups as a comparative frame of reference” (Merton, 1968: 234).

The reference group may be of (a) imitation type, (b) identification type, and (c) negative reference; in the case of imitation type of reference group, the ways of behaviour are accepted as right and proper or as useful and therefore is imitated by the other group making the reference. Merton (1968) says that non-membership groups are likely to be adopted as reference groups in those social systems, which have high rates of social mobility and open than those which are relatively closed. Thus non-membership groups are not likely to be adopted as positive reference groups in relatively closed societies. As a result of this members of the lower stratum are not likely to adopt higher stratum as a reference group and cannot be a source of mobility in such societies (Fishbein, 1973: 271-286). Thus, India becomes such a case in point. Logically, in the closed society, non-membership groups should not be adopted as positive reference groups i.e., to say that members of the lower social stratum are not likely to adopt higher stratum as their positive reference group. But according to Alexander (1968:3-9), non-membership groups have different kinds of orientations towards groups depending upon their closed or open character. Alexander condemns Merton by stating that in closed societies
reference groups' behaviour or anticipatory socialization may take place and such behaviour may have functional consequence. A member may take members of his own group as his ideal or role model, as they have made greater achievements. In such a situation, the reference group becomes one's own membership group.

The process of imitation on the part of lower groups has become more complex in contemporary India. There are multiple reference groups and there is further compact neutralization that occurs in reference groups (Patvathanam, 1973: 6). Thus there is a possibility of understanding the behaviour patterns of the women leaders by the concept of reference groups in the sense to whom they consider as their role models.

The women leaders have considered some persons of their groups and also from among other social groups as their models in becoming leaders. To whom within their own group or outside in non-membership group, they consider as their positive reference models (groups). In the process of becoming leaders, they might have discarded some persons or groups to whom they dislike; would be understood as their negative reference models. In the first category leader like late Dr. Ambedkar is likely to be the positive reference models for his own caste people. The other higher caste persons may
also be their positive reference groups (models). The same positive reference models may be followed in performing their roles as leaders.

1.7.8 Development: Development is here used to mean both the improved material well being (welfare) of people and the process by which this improved well being is achieved. The concept of development also includes an element of equality - that material benefits from the development process should be fairly distributed, especially benefit to those most in need – the disadvantaged and the most vulnerable. Therefore, the special interest in women’s development arises because women are a majority amongst the most disadvantaged (Longwe, 1996:3).

1.7.9 Empowerment: Empowerment is an important element of development, being the process by which people take control and action in order to overcome obstacles. Empowerment especially means the collective action by the oppressed and deprived to overcome the obstacles of structural inequality which have previously put them in a disadvantaged position. The women’s empowerment framework sees empowerment as the goal and the essential process for women’s advancement. It is the process by which women mobilize to understand, identify and overcome gender discrimination, so as to achieve equality of welfare, and equal access to resources. Empowerment may be
analytically distinguished from "self-reliance"; which may be defined as people's ability to advance themselves within the existing social system (ibid: 1996).

1.7.10 Gender awareness: Gender awareness means the ability to identify problems arising from gender inequality and discrimination, even if these are not very evident on the surface, or are "hidden" - i.e., are not part of the general or commonly accepted explanation of what and where the problem lies. In other words, gender awareness means a high level of gender consciousness. (ibid: 1996).

1.7.11 Gender Discrimination: Gender discrimination means to give differential treatment to individuals on the grounds of their gender. In a patriarchal society, this involves systematic and structural discrimination against women in the distribution of income, access to resources, and participation in decision-making. (ibid: 1996).

1.7.12 Gender equality: Gender equality means that there is no discrimination on grounds of a person's sex in the allocation of resources or benefits, or in the access to services. Gender equality may be measured in terms of whether there is equality of opportunity, or equality of results. The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women can be understood as a statement on what the principle of gender equality of opportunity
should mean in practice for all aspects of life, and all sectors of the economy. (Ibid: 3).

1.7.13 Gender equity: It means fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between the two genders. Gender equality does not have such a well-defined meaning as gender equal opportunity, because it’s meaning depends on the definition of fairness and justice. In addition, in its legal sense the term equity suggests a limited notion of the concept of justice, since equity refers to justice within the existing law, rather than justice by changing the law. By contrast, the women’s empowerment framework follows the 1979 Women’s Convention in defining justice for women in terms of gender equality. The lack of definition in terms of equity has led to the word being used in quite different ways. It can be used as a “stronger” word than equality, by those who recognize that women must demand more than equality with men in a man’s world, and that gender equality must also entail the transformation to be a different and more just society. On the other hand, those who wish to avoid awkward issues can sometimes use equity as a weak euphemism for equality. (Ibid: 3).