

TOWARDS UNLOCKING PATRIARCHY:
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL POLITICS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation is a qualitative case study of women's political participation in local government in District Hyderabad, Pakistan from a feminist perspective. There is a longstanding patriarchal trend of elite women's selective political participation in Pakistan. But recently introduced local government system with increased quota (33%) for women brought a large mass of non-elite women in local politics. This research explores the social dynamics behind this changing pattern through semi-structured interviews with 53 elected women local councilors in the district. It argues that there is a dialectical relationship between patriarchy and women's political participation. It shows how patriarchal structures have reconfigured to enhance their interest by bringing non-elite women into politics for their power interest. The women, who entered politics, do not challenge the patriarchal structures; rather they use them as resources to facilitate their entry and survival in politics. This process has rendered somewhat of a compatible co-existence between these two antagonistic forces. Patriarchy has gained more modernized outlook while still retaining male domination. The non-elite women, although still controlled by and submissive to male domination, have gained ever broader legitimate space for their autonomous action. The research contributes to the debates concerning patriarchal transformation, arguing that certain features of patriarchy, when responding to accommodate new socio-political developments, gives rise to its own contradictions, thus potentially creating the conditions for overall societal change.

Keywords: Women, Political Participation, Local Government, Pakistan, Patriarchy.

ÖZ

ATAERKİNİN KİLİDİNİ AÇMAYA DOĞRU: PAKİSTAN'DA KADINLARIN YEREL SİYASETE KATILIMI

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Bu doktora tezi Pakistan'ın Haydarabad bölgesindeki kadınların yerel yönetim düzeyinde siyasi katılımını feminist bir çerçeveden inceleyen niteliksel bir örnek olay çalışmasıdır. Pakistan'da, elit kadınlar patriarkal yapıya bağlı olarak siyasal alana seçici bir şekilde katılabilmişlerdir. Ancak, yakın geçmişte değiştirilen yerel yönetim sistemi kapsamında getirilen kota artışı (%33) elit olmayan kadınların yerel siyasete katılımlarının artmasına neden olmuştur. Bu araştırma, değişen bu durumun ardındaki toplumsal dinamikleri, bölgedeki yerel meclise seçilmiş olan 53 kadınla gerçekleştirilen yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelere dayanarak incelemektedir. Çalışmanın temel iddiası ataerkillik ile kadınların siyasi katılımı arasında diyalektik bir ilişki olduğudur. Çalışma, ataerkil yapıların, elit olmayan kadınları siyasetin içine çekerek devamlılıklarını nasıl sağladıklarını göstermektedir. Siyasete katılan kadınlar ataerkil yapılara meydan okumak yerine, bu yapıları siyasete katılımlarını ve siyasette kalmalarını kolaylaştıran kaynaklar olarak kullanmaktadırlar. Bu süreç, bu iki karşıt güç arasında birbirini besleyen bir yapının oluşmasına neden olmuştur. Böylelikle ataerki modernleşmiş bir görünüm kazanırken, erkek egemenliği de korunmuştur. Elit olmayan kadınlar, erkek egemenliği güdümünde olmalarına ve bu egemenliğe itaat etmelerine rağmen, bağımsız hareket etmelerini mümkün ve meşru kılan daha geniş ve bir alan elde etmişlerdir. Araştırma, ataerkinin belirli özelliklerinin yeni sosyo-politik gelişmelere karşılık verirken kendi çelişkilerini yarattığını, dolayısıyla potansiyel olarak genel bir toplumsal değişime yol açabilecek koşulları yarattığını iddia ederek, ataerkilliğin dönüşümü tartışmalarına da katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Kadınlar, siyasi katılım, yerel yönetim, Pakistan, ataerkillik.





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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AF	Aurat Foundation
ANP	Awami National Party
CEDAW	Convention for Elimination of all Kinds of Discrimination against Women
Coord. Secr.	Coordination Secretary
DC	District Council
D. Gen. Secr.	Deputy General Secretary
D. President	Deputy President
GDI	Gender and Development Index
GEM	Gender Empowerment Index
Gen. Secr.	General Secretary
GOP	Government of Pakistan
HDI	Human Development Index
HSSC	Higher Secondary School Certificate
Indep.	Independent Candidate
Inf. Secr.	Information Secretary
IJI	Islami Jamhuri Itehad (Islamic Democratic Alliance)
JI	Jamat-e-Islami
LFO	Legal Framework Order
LHW	Lady Health Worker
MMA	Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (Alliance of religious parties)
MNA	Member of Provincial Assembly
MPA	Member of Provincial Assembly
MQM	Mutahida Qaumi Movement
NF	National Front
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
Office Secr.	Office Secretary
PML	Pakistan Muslim League
PML(N)	Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz
PML(Q)	Pakistan Muslim League-Qaid-e-Azam

PML(F)	Pakistan Muslim League-Functional
PNA	Pakistan National Alliance
PPP	Pakistan People's Party
PPPP	Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian
PTCL	Pakistan Tele-Communication Limited
Sector mem.	Sector Member (Member of party Sector Office)
SPDC	Social Policy and Development Center
Trad.	Traditional
TC	Taluka Council
UC	Union Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nation's Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization
Unit mem.	Unit Member (Member of Party Unit Office)
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority
Zone mem.	Zone Member (Member of party Zonal Office)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Focus of the Dissertation

How do politically inexperienced and initially less inclined women increasingly enter and maintain their presence in formal politics in classic patriarchal societies of South Asia? This is certainly a major question frequently asked by feminists and political theorists (Jahan 1987; Johnson 1997; Khan 1994; Kumar 1995; Richter 1991; Samarasinghe 2000; Wijekoon 2005). Most of the deliberations to explore this puzzling phenomenon are usually done at national level politics, as local level of formal politics is relatively a new area for academic studies. This dissertation is an attempt to contribute in this regard by focusing on the social dynamics of non-elite women's massive entry and political participation, stimulated through recently introduced political quotas, in local government¹ in district Hyderabad², Pakistan.

Feminist perspectives, respectively emphasizing on different social, economic and psychological aspects, converge on patriarchy as the root cause of women's exclusion from public and political spheres. Attempting to contribute a new dimension to this theoretical explanation, this dissertation basically argues that patriarchy has the potential to give rise to its own contradictions that may lead to subverting patriarchy from within. The potential challenge to patriarchy emerges when certain patriarchal

¹ The local government system in Pakistan is the third tier of political institutions; National Assembly, Provincial Assembly and Local Governments. Local governments are the administrative setups based on elected local councils at district level. It, in turn, has three tiers in each district. The highest tier is based on one District Council. Then each district is divided into a certain number of Talukas (sub districts). Each Taluka has its respective Taluka council that is the middle tier of local government. At the lowest tier each Taluka is further divided into a certain number of Union Councils comprises of few villages in rural areas and a small quarter of urban area.

² Hyderabad is a district in southern province of Sindh in Pakistan. The socio-political conditions of the district are discussed in detail in chapter 5 of the dissertation. The rationale to select this district as the main research site is also discussed later in this chapter and also in chapter 6.

features respond to new socio-political developments in a unique way by making some reconfigurations to their traditional form. In this way patriarchy, while not losing its main core of male domination, accommodates with these new developments by changing its traditional rigid structure and providing an ever broader space and resources to women for their autonomous actions and future claims to power within the system. This research shows that the inherent patriarchal contradiction, that emerges as a latent function out of competition among men and masculine interests for power and women's submission to patriarchal structures for maintaining the existing social order, have the potential to challenge and transform the traditional nature of both patriarchy and women's participation in local politics in the district.

Electoral quotas for women, a newly emerging socio-political phenomenon but rapidly spreading all over the world, has the potential to stimulate such unique responses from within the patriarchal systems. Although, electoral quotas are still controversial as the right mode for women's equal participation and representations in politics but they have certainly opened new opportunities for women at different levels of formal politics. It entails a series of social dynamics³ effecting existing patriarchal structure of society by adding a new dimension to the traditional competition among masculine interests for capture of maximum power in the political system. The masculine interest groups respond to this new social situation by partially changing their traditional strategy of women's exclusion from politics by providing them a limited and controlled inclusion in order to consolidate their power base through capture of this quota. But the women thus entered, while still submitting to existing social order, gain an ever broader space and increased resources. They also strategize to maximize their gains from this limited opportunity offered to them. In this way, these social dynamics entailing quotas potentially reconfigure not only the particular nature of women's political participation but also the broader patriarchal structure, as well.

³ Social dynamics like initial decision making, selection, motivation, support and entry of women in electoral politics. These dynamics will be discussed in detail in chapters 8.

1.2. Background of the Research Problem

Pakistan is one such country in South Asia simultaneously experiencing “classic patriarchy”⁴ and women’s increased political participation through recently introduced enhanced electoral quotas for women. Majority of the women in the country, that is mainly lower class rural women, has been ascribed a lower status than men within patriarchal structures of their family, extra-kin network and in overall society. The private sphere is the center of their activities while their public space appearance is limited and patriarchally conditioned. This social order has grave implications for the development of their capabilities (Sen 1993: 30), access to material resources and services, and the nature of their social relations in human resource networks. Consequently, this lack of required resources and experience historically excludes women from the public political sphere (Bari 2005).

Since the independence movement for and the creation of Pakistan, women were almost absent from political forums. The historically persistent struggle for state power between competing masculinities; military, bureaucracy and civilian elites including big landowners and feudal lord (Kukreja 1985; Hashmi 1980; Shafqat 1989; La Porte 1975; Hussain 1979) provided little opportunity for women to enter politics. Till the year 2002, the reservation of electoral quota for women also remained between 1.2% to 8.4% at National Assembly, 5% at Provincial Assemblies, 10 % in different times at local government but none at the Senate. Apart from the reserved seats under quota, there were very few women who could get general seats⁵ in these forums. This nominal presence of women at formal political forums was not sufficient for them to influence the legislative and political decision making process. Therefore, this situation did not contribute to enhance women’s interests, especially by constraining the enforcement of discriminatory laws⁶ (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997; GOP 1979, 1984a, 1984b).

⁴ Deniz Kandiyoti (1988: 278) called South Asian societies as “classic patriarchy” characterized by women’s accommodation to the existing system, rather than protest or resistance. See Chapter 2.

⁵ General seats mean the seats in the political institution, e.g. National and Provincial Assemblies, Senate and local councils, which are not especially reserved for a particular group (e.g. women, minority, or technocrats) under quota and are open for contestation by all on merit.

⁶ Pakistan has experienced enforcement of discriminatory laws like *Hudood Ordinances*, *Qanoon-e-Sahadat* (Law of Evidence), Muslim Family Law, etc. which reduce women’s status as lower to that of men. See Chapter 3.

The few women entered and participated in formal political forums were urban upper or upper middle class educated elite women, having previous experience of social work or political activism, belonging to highly influential families of established feudals, landlords, high ranking military and civil bureaucrats, thus, more accountable to the male familial or party patrons (Saif 1993; Shahid 1994; Farooq 2003; Yazdani 2004; ADB 2000; Shaheed 2008; UNDP 2005). They entered politics as mothers, wives or daughters of influential men (Bari 2005). They adopted politics as extension of their family responsibility (Saif 1993); therefore, they served as proxy to their family male patronage and male party leaderships, rather than acting as independent political actors. Socially they are allowed as exceptional women who are not challenging the broader patriarchal structural configuration for bringing any change to affect the deprived conditions of the majority of women in the country (Shaheed 2008). The particular form of patriarchy emerging from a historical combination of Islam and Hindu culture with conflicting forces of modernization and religion in the post colonial context of Pakistan was explained as a reason for this selective acceptability of elite women on nominally available political opportunities in Pakistan (Saif 1993).

This nominal political opportunity for women broadened when the last military regime in the year 1999 showed its commitment to women's issues. This was part of an effort to legitimize military rule, very much similar to the previous two military regimes in the country⁷, although this time through maintaining its 'soft', modernizing and democratic face⁸ (Kennedy 2006: 129; Zaidi 2005: 30; SPDC 2007). Accepting the

⁷ Prior to the 1999 military coup, there had been two military interventions in Pakistan; First by General Ayub Khan in 1958 and second by General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977. Both generals became presidents of the country by seizing power from previously elected governments. Thus, they were in need to and took efforts to legitimize their rule. General Ayub Khan, in his efforts to legitimize his rule, focused on industrialization, he introduced a local government system of 'Basic Democracies' in order to undermine already established politician and to consolidate his power by bringing in local elites and bureaucrats in these local bodies. Similarly, General Zia-ul-Haq exploited the so-called ideology of Islam for this purpose. He elected his Majlis-e-Shura (Islamic Parliament) giving 20 reserved seats to women, and promulgated so called Islamic discriminatory laws that were adversely affecting women's social status, rights, and autonomy. He also revived local governments (for details see chapter 4).

⁸ Due to the same need of legitimization of his seizure of state rule, unlike General Ayub's industrialization and basic democracies system and General Zia's so-called Islamization, General Musharaf's legitimization efforts were more focused on his philosophy of 'Enlightened Moderation'. He again introduced a new formula of local government with promulgation of

long standing demand of women's groups, it introduced enhanced quota for women at all political levels in the year 2002. The improved quotas include 17.5% seats reserved for women in the National Assembly (i.e. 60 seats out of 342) and Provincial Assemblies (128 seats out of 728), for the first time in Pakistani history in the Senate 17% (i.e. 17 seats out of 100) and above all, the highest 33% (more than 40,000 seats) quota for women at all tiers of the local government in the country. This measure enlarged common women's prospects to participate in state decision making at all political levels, in general, and in local government, in particular due to the highest quota reservation for women at this level.

Although, women's participation in the local governments in all four provinces was enthusiastic but the situations in each province slightly vary due to social and cultural diversities. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa⁹ and Baluchistan provinces having more conservative environment are still relatively resistant to women's political participation in local government; having filled 70.6% and 77.4% women reserved seats in the year 2002 and 85% and 97% in 2005, respectively (AF 2005a). There were also reports of the incidences of gross violations to stop women from casting votes and contesting elections (AF 2001). Punjab has performed very well by filling its 96.7% in 2001 and 98.7% in 2005 women reserved seats and getting several women elected as Nazims¹⁰ at the Union Council¹¹ (the lowest tier of local government) but none at district level. But the province of Sindh has taken lead in bringing forth women in local government at all levels. It has an unprecedented historical incident in the country for having four women District Nazims (Mayor) and one district Naib Nazim (Deputy Mayor) elected in local government (Hussain 2006; AF 2005b) and by filling 99.05% of its reserved seats for women at all tiers of local government in rural and urban areas during the last local government elections in 2005 (AF 2005a). The district Hyderabad is an exception

Local Government Ordinance 2002. He enhanced the quota reservation for women at all political levels.

⁹ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the north- western province previously known as *Sarhad* or NWFP (North West Frontier Province).

¹⁰ Nazim means Head of the council.

¹¹ The current local government in Pakistan is comprised of three hierarchical tiers; District, Taluka (Sub-District), and Union Council. District is the highest tier of local government, Taluka is the middle level and Union Council is the lowest tier of local government, comprised of a few villages in rural areas and a small quarter of urban area.

within the province of Sindh by virtue of having the only women Union Council Nazim elected in the province belonging to this district.

The characteristics of persons contested for and elected in local governments have been studied, in general, but scarcely of women, in particular¹². These studies indicate that the increased quota (i.e. 33%) for women's reserved seats at local government has brought a huge mass of young first time elected illiterate or less educated non professional non-elite local women without any previous political experience, coming from villages and small quarter of urban area of the country, in both tenures of the local governments in the years 2001 and 2005 (Bari and Khan 2001; Khan and Bari 2006). Such findings indicate a break in the long standing patriarchal trend of elite women's selective political participation in Pakistan.

The past trend of elite women's selective political participation still seems valid at the high echelons of political forums; such as National and Provincial Assemblies, Senate and central executive committees of political parties. Even it is still applicable to the very few women who could achieve the highest offices of District Nazims (Mayor) and District Naib Nazims (Deputy Mayor) in local government. But it seems insufficient to explain unusual massive entry of local non-elite women in local government. This challenge posed by newly emerging trend of non-elite local women's political participation, although at the lower tiers. It demands a reconsideration of past long standing trend of elite women's selective political participation and a new explanation for emerging pattern of non-elite women's entry and survival in local government. It needs a comprehensive study of this enthusiastic entry and participation of non-elite women at local government for its social, economic, political and personal dynamics and implications in the country, that has rarely been done till now.

¹² Very few, quantitative and qualitative, studies are done on local government election results and processes, in general. Pattan Development Organization has published few books as a series of publication on the assessment of local government elections in 2001 and 2002. Besides that it also has produced a collection of autobiographical sketches of some women councilors of local government. Similarly, Aurat Foundation also has produced a series of 6 volumes titled as 'From Home to House' comprising 72 biographical sketches of women councilors.

1.3. Research Problem

The main research question addressed in this dissertation is ‘How does women’s increased political participation in local government, stimulated through quotas, challenge the patriarchal structure of Pakistani society, especially focusing on the long standing trend of elite women’s selective political participation?’ It explores whether the long observed patriarchal trend of elite women’s selective political participation in Pakistan also applies to the large mass of women who entered the newly introduced local governments in the country recently? Do all women elected in local government satisfy the conditions of being educated, urban, elite women with previous political experience and coming from influential families? If not, then how did they manage to enter the public political sphere which was not traditionally open to them? How do they survive in politics without the support and resources elite women receive from social status of the influential family? How is traditional patriarchy accommodating this new trend of non-elite women’s increased entry and participation in public political sphere?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

The basic argument of this dissertation is that women’s increased political participation and patriarchy are two contradictory/antagonistic social forces mutually altering and accommodating each other, thus representing a distinct stage in the process of social change in Pakistan. This dialectical relationship between patriarchy and women’s political participation shows that while common women’s increased political participation, stimulated through quotas, increases and diversifies their social role and material and non-material resources, it is also constrained by the broader structures of patriarchy in Pakistani society. On the one hand, it is claimed that patriarchal structure, with reconfigurations in its traditional form has enabled women from non-elite background to enter politics for its own interest and has given them limited autonomy in political institutions. On the other hand, however, this recent participation has enhanced women’s active agency in bringing a silent revolution, without directly challenging the broader patriarchal structure of society (rather using it as a resource). Women are increasingly claiming an ever wider space for their autonomous action within the limited and conditional opportunity made available to them. In this way, when patriarchy reconfigures itself to accommodate new socio-political developments,

it has the potential to give rise to its own contradictions that may potentially subvert the patriarchy from within by giving rise to new power centers from within the previously marginalized groups.

This argument is based on three following claims: First, the non-elite women present in local government in Hyderabad, by no means, satisfy the elitist criteria of past trend of women's presence in Pakistani politics¹³, thus posing a challenge to the patriarchal nature of politics and social relations in Pakistan.

Second, traditional patriarchy has reconfigured itself to accommodate this new socio-political development of quota introduction by bringing non-elite women to public arena for its interests¹⁴. Non-elite women's initial entry from private sphere to public political sphere can be explained as the result of historically persistent struggle among competing masculinities for the consolidation of their power base. Introduction of quota by military government is part of this struggle, at the state level. Efforts taken by political parties, landlords and male members of families for launching and supporting non-elite women is also the part of the same competition among men, at local level. In this process, non-elite women are certainly provided with an ever broader public and political space, while patriarchal structures are seen reconfiguring from more rigid and classic private patriarchy to more accommodating and modern public patriarchy.

Third, women in local government, without openly challenging the patriarchal setup, have used this setup within family, party and council as a resource to cope with their lack of information, skill, financial and educational resources and limited power, in order to facilitate their entry and survival in these forums. Therefore, while actively strategizing to maintain the existing social order women also contribute to the enlargement of public and political space for them.

¹³ Most of the women present in local government are illiterate or less educated, mostly housewife, having no previous social work or political experience and belonging to non-elite families relaying on small jobs, agricultural work or home bases work, coming from small villages or urban quarters.

¹⁴ This reconfiguration can be seen in broader acceptance to common women's political participation, family and party male motivating women for entering political sphere and supporting them in nomination, campaign and elections and also in day to day maintenance of their political activity.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its attempt to explain how a rigidly male-dominated society allows for large mass of common women to take part in politics. The feminist explanation of patriarchy is evaluated in Pakistani context of competition among individual men and masculine elite groups and consequently emerging broader space for women's political participation. While exploring and enlarging an already emerging theoretical dimension of competing masculinities for broadening of space for women's autonomous action, the dissertation contributes to the understanding of a different type of patriarchal power structure that gives rise to new power centers out of the previously marginalized groups, thus showing an inherent contradiction within patriarchy that may lead to its subversion from within. This way, it adds a new dimension to existing explanations of patriarchal transformation. Through its discussion regarding women councilors' strategies to facilitate their entry and survival in politics, the dissertation also contributes a real life example for Kandiyoti's (1988) concept of "patriarchal bargains". Besides that it also sheds light on the contextually specific manifestation patriarchy takes in redefining, reorienting and restructuring its premises but retaining its hard core male domination in Pakistan.

The dissertation also reviews the existing explanation regarding the long observed trend of elite women's selective political participation in Pakistan. It shows a potential challenge to this past trend emerging at the lowest tier of local government by increased participation of non-elite women in local councils. Therefore, it argues for the revision to this existing explanation in the light of an analysis of the newly emerging trend of non-elite women's political participation through recently introduced quota at the lowest political tier.

At present, very little is known about the women politicians in Pakistan, in general, and about the social dynamics of women's recently increased political participation at local government, in particular. Empirical data about their social background, motivation, initial entrance, participation, performance, problems, perceptions and future in Pakistani politics would no doubt contribute to a greater understanding of these rarely explored areas. This dissertation argues a dialectical relationship between patriarchal

structures and women's political participation, thus adding a new explanation for women's political participation in patriarchal societies. It further adds a new dimension to existing debates regarding political quota. This would not only shed light on theory and cross-cultural comparisons but also provide sound knowledge not only for policy makers and implementing agencies but also for women's empowerment, in general. It also contributes to identifying areas for future research on women's political participation in local governments which lies at the grassroots level of society and have a potential to effect positive change from individual to the state level.

The particularly pioneering contribution of this dissertation is the exploration of geographical, social, economic, political and personal dynamics of women's political participation at local government (which is a rarely explored area due to its recent emergence in Pakistan) in the specific context of the district of Hyderabad that has been selected due to being the only district having a woman union council Nazim in the province of Sindh which has taken a lead in bringing highest number of women in local government among all provinces in the country, as discussed above.

1.6. Scope and Procedure of the Research

The scope of this research is drawn in terms of spatial, temporal, theoretical and methodological boundaries around the above mentioned research problem. This study is spatially limited to the geographical boundaries of the District Hyderabad¹⁵ in Sindh province of Pakistan. It includes all the electoral constituencies of one District Council, four Taluka (Sub-district) Councils and 52 Union Councils (UC) of the local government in the district. Temporally, it is spread over the last tenure of local governments i.e. from the year 2005 to 2010. The universe of the study is comprised of all the women councilors (i.e. 245 women)¹⁶ present, either on general and reserved seats, at different tiers of local government (District, Taluka and UCs) in District Hyderabad during its last tenure. Theoretically the study aims at exploring the explanatory potential of feminist explanations of patriarchy for non-elite women's

¹⁵ The rationale of particular focus on Hyderabad District has later been discussed in this chapter.

¹⁶ Total 244 seats were reserved for women at all tiers of local government and 1 woman won on general seat as Union Council Nazim in Taluka Latifabad.

increasing political participation in Pakistani society, in general, and in District Hyderabad, in particular.

Addressing the above mentioned scope, this dissertation is a qualitative case study based on feminist perspective. The data has been gathered through tape recorded semi-structured in-depth interviews with 53 women councilors from different tiers of local government in Hyderabad district. The data as fully transcribed interviews were manually and thematically analyzed through comprehensive data treatment and constant within case and inter-case comparisons. The excerpts from the interview transcripts are used as supporting evidences to the arguments made in this dissertation.

The ontological focus of the research was on women's experiences as a significant part of social reality thus resulting in an epistemological stance that if women's practical everyday experiences are explained in detailed accounts, it can produce significant body of justifiable knowledge of gender relations. The qualitative approach is adopted for its inherent flexibility and its emphasis on detail, context, multi-dimensionality, and complexity (Mason 2003: 1) which provided sufficient opportunity to capture the holistic picture of women's political experiences and their deep understanding in a particular context of political institution i.e. the case of local government in Hyderabad.

Stake defines case study as an "interest in an individual case" (2005: 443). The case study strategy helped this dissertation in delimiting a particular case of women politicians in local government of Hyderabad district as a specific "bounded system" (Creswell 1998: 61) to be studied, rather than grapple with the multi cultural and lingual plural contextual milieus of different regions in the country. The case study combined with qualitative approach enlarged the possibilities of capturing the holistic picture of the geographical, social, economic, political and personal factors affecting women's political participation in local government in Hyderabad district.

The selection of the case of women councilors in local government of Hyderabad district was done on the basis of following considerations. First, the women politicians were selected as a study group because the unique social dynamics of sudden entry of a large mass of local non-elite women, especially at the level of local government in

Pakistan, has rarely been studied so far. Therefore, it is needed to be studied for desirable policy suggestion to retain women's long term presence in these forums. Second, the political tier of local government was selected because it has the highest quota (33%) reservation for women as compared to other political forums; National and Provincial Assemblies and the Senate. Thus, it provided the grounds for the entrance of the highest number of women into public offices. Beside that local government level is also chosen because it is closer to local rural/ urban common non-elite women.

Third, as also discussed earlier, the district of Hyderabad within the province of Sindh is selected as the case because out of all four provinces the province of Sindh has taken a lead in bringing the highest number of women (99.05%) on reserved seats for women at all tiers of local government. The only women Union Council Nazim (Head of Union council-the third highest office hold by women in local government) in the province is from District Hyderabad and she, unlike the four women District Nazims (Mayors) and one District Naib Nazim (deputy Mayor) in the province, is not apparently known for her feudal or political elite family background. Therefore, District Hyderabad provides a sufficient ground for the investigation of local non-elite women coming at different tiers of local government, and also on one of the high posts (Union council head, which very few women hold in the country) exceptionally hold by non-elite women in the province. In short, the districts of Hyderabad, was selected as a comprehensive unit of local government; theoretically satisfying the criteria of the presence of the phenomena under study and practically satisfying the issues of limited resources, access and qualitative data collection and its processing.

According to the feminist methodology adopted for this research the criteria for the selection of data collection method was the particular technique's ability to give voice to women for sharing their perspectives and experiences in detail. Therefore, in-depth, semi-structured interview was selected as appropriate method for data collection for this research. The in-depth and open ended nature of the interviews provided a high level of flexibility for the possibility of exploring unique dimensions of the phenomena studied with each individual participant's unique way of explaining their experiences. While at the same time the semi-structured nature of interview still kept the interviews

limited within the broader focus of particular research question addressed through this dissertation. The interviews were tape recorded (except one which was recorded with pen and paper) and all are fully transcribed to transform interview records into data. The thematic analysis of this data is done through constant within case and inter-cases comparison.

The concerns related to the quality and credibility of this research led to follow Silverman's (2000: 177-189) proposal of five methods; the refutability principle, the constant comparative method, comprehensive data treatment, deviant-case analysis, and using appropriate tabulation. The effort was made to sufficiently enlarge the size of (sample) selected cases to satisfy the possibility of refutability principle by including maximum possible variations of the phenomena under study. Each and every piece of data collected was inspected for use in the explanation of the phenomena through constant comparison with other relevant data pieces in the same case and in other cases studied. Several tabulations of the data has been tried out to make it more accessible to the reader. Several of them are part of this dissertation, especially in chapters 6 and 7. The attention is also paid to consistency of concepts and categories through out research process. The interviews were tape recorded with the aim to ignore any loses of data and any selective recording on the part of researcher's initial interest. Similarly, the interviews were fully transcribed with the help of transcription key comprises of symbols for transcription of non verbal components of the conversation. Above all that, the sufficient quotations from the participants accounts (transcripts of interviews) are provided to give an authenticity to what I argued in this dissertation.

1.7. The Plan of the Chapters

Chapter 2, following this introductory chapter, provides the theoretical perspective used for this research. Exploring the existing feminist theoretical perspectives on women's participation in public and political sphere, this chapter focuses on two major concepts used in this dissertation; patriarchy and women's political participation. It discusses a variety of explanations regarding the link between these two social aspects ranging from traditional feminist consideration of patriarchy as the root cause of women's exclusion from formal politics to an emerging approach considering women entering formal politics from within patriarchy itself. This whole discussion is made

with a special focus on women politicians in South Asian countries. An attempt is also made to explore and add a new dimension to this feminist literature by exploring the role of competing men and masculinities in bringing women in politics for their immediate power interest but, at the same time, latently broadening the public and political space for women, as well. Effort was to contribute to the existing theoretical explanations of patriarchal transformation by identifying an inherent contradiction within patriarchy that has the potential to subvert it from within.

Chapters 3 to 5 are related to the historical and socio-political background of this research from national to local level. Chapter 3 provides an account of women's overall status in the country along with a detailed description of the existing patriarchal structures of kinship and patronage, from family to the state level, that systematically exclude women from power and authority positions. Chapter 4 dealing with the formal political structures gives an account of historical trajectory of women's political participation at different political forums and its historically determining factors at different periods of time. This all discussion is made in the broader background of the nation state building process of Pakistan and its continuous struggle among elite masculine groups (e.g. military, bureaucracy, religious elites, feudal/landlords and industrialists, etc.) for state power. Chapter 5 briefly deals with the socio-political scene of the research site; i.e. the province of Sindh, in general, and the district of Hyderabad, in particular. It provides historical, geographical, social, and political details of the area and its patriarchal structures, women's status, and their political participation at local level to give the reader a comprehensive background of the areas and culture in which this research study is located.

Chapter 6 deals with the methodological aspects employed for this dissertation. It explains the reasons behind adopting a feminist methodology and selection of semi-structured in-depth interview as method of data collection for this research. Further it describes the decisions taken for the selection of 'women politicians in local government of Hyderabad' as a case for study and the selection of research participants among these politicians for interviewing. Describing interview process, the chapter moves to explain measures taken to ensure quality and credibility of research process

and findings. Finally, it also touches upon the ethical considerations observed and particular limitations of this research.

The next two chapters, chapters 7 and 8, present the data and its analysis along with major findings of the research. Chapter 7 presents an analysis of the social, economic and political profile of research participants. It focuses on the influence of age, education, marital status, family structure, economic class, social standing, geographical location, nature of personal and family political affiliations and past electoral experience on women's possibility to enter and participate in local politics. It is also aimed to ascertain the elitist or non-elitist background of these women politicians that may have helped them to enter the political sphere.

Chapter 8 is based on the results of thematic analysis of the data. It focuses on some social dynamics resulting from the introduction of quota and determining the nature and extent of women's participation in local politics. First, it explores the role of interplaying family or extra kin individual men and masculine interest groups (like political parties) that have decided and motivated these women for their initial entry in local electoral politics in order to serve their power interests. Second, it indicates women's strategies to use the patriarchal setup within family, political party, and society as resource in order to cope with their socio-economic constraints and facilitate their entry and survival in the political system. Third, it reflects upon the parallel masculine strategies working in public sphere to limit and control women's participation within political parties and local councils. Finally, it explores the widening of public and political space for women through a review of women's diversified roles, increased material and non-material resources and the future claims they raise to power in society. This chapter basically shows that masculine interests while struggling to consolidate their power base also provide women a limited political inclusion to serve their interest but, in this process, they unintentionally broadened the public and political space available to these women thus potentially changing the whole social order. The women thus entered also strategize to maximize their possibility to enter and maintain their presence, thus intentionally broadened the space for themselves.

Chapter 9 concludes this dissertation with a summary of broader patterns of social dynamics as discussed in chapter 7 and 8 in detail. On the basis of these patterns, the basic arguments of this dissertation is presented that patriarchy, when responding and accommodating to the new socio-political developments by reconfiguring its traditional form, has the potential to give rise to its own contradictions that may lead to subverting patriarchy from within. It identifies the dialectical relationship between patriarchy and women's political participation showing that, on the one hand, reconfiguring patriarchal structures are also unintentionally bringing the change in women's social standing in the system and, on the other hand, women strategizing to maintain the existing social order by using the patriarchal structures are also effecting a change in the traditional roles and functions of these structures. Thus, both are mutually altering and accommodating each other giving them a more compatible form to coexist in society, giving a distinct form to the existing social order. Finally, it identifies certain theoretical and practical areas of concerns for further explorations in future academic research.

CHAPTER 2

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN IN POLITICS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the existing feminist theoretical discussions regarding women's status in public and political spheres. This research aims to explore the way in which women's increased political participation in local government, stimulated through quotas, challenges the patriarchal structure of Pakistani society. In accordance with this aim, the discussion made here explores two major areas of concern of this dissertation: patriarchy and women's political participation, thus providing a theoretical framework employed for this research. There is a variety of available explanation about the link between the two phenomena. These explanations range from traditional feminist articulations considering patriarchy as the root cause of women's relative absence from formal politics to a newly emerging approach of women's entry in politics from within the patriarchal structure itself. While discussing several patriarchal features that may seem to facilitate or support increasing women's political participation from within patriarchy, this chapter will also add a new dimension of the role of competing masculinities in this regard. It attempt to explore that when competing masculine power centers pursue their own power interests, in this process, they also unintentionally facilitate the broadening of public and political space for women's autonomous action, thus giving rise to an inherent contradiction within the system and leading to rupturing the traditional patriarchal structures.

The major questions that served as a framework for this chapter are: Does patriarchy explain the basic reason behind women's historically lower level of political participation? As now more and more women are joining politics, does it mean patriarchy has lost or is losing its control? If not then, what is within patriarchy that has created openings to this paradoxical political space to bring women in formal political institutions? How are some women entering and managing their existence in the male

dominated public political arena, while still operating within the patriarchal system? Why is patriarchy changing its form by bringing more women in politics; especially the classic patriarchy in developing nations of South Asia? Different regions have different forms of patriarchy and gender inequality due to their different historical, cultural and structural developments, thus can not be simultaneously dealt within the limited scope of this research. Therefore, when answering the above identified questions, the theoretical and empirical focus is more limited to explanations of the forms that patriarchy and women's political participation take in South Asian countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka. The main focus remains on the feminist accounts of patriarchal organization of women's lower status in public and political sphere. The variety of literature examined is by no means comprehensive historical analysis of the development of feminist thought on women in politics; they are simply selected from a large body of relevant feminist work available according to its relevance to the subject of this dissertation.

While exploring the answers to above identified questions, it is argued that patriarchy has not lost its control although it is continuously transforming its shape and strategies in order to consolidate its control within historically changing nature of societies. Women's less participation in formal politics is rooted in male domination and patriarchal politics at all levels of society: from state to family, but at the same time the patriarchal struggle for power among masculine groups also has the potential to create new opening for bringing women in the public sphere in order to enlarge their power base. The women, thus, find chance to enter the public space of politics are active agents manipulating, exploiting and using certain features of patriarchy, rather than directly challenging and altering patriarchy, to pave their way to enter and maintain their presence in political institutions. In this context, effort is to contribute a new aspect to existing explanations of patriarchal transformation that certain features of patriarchy, when reconfiguring to accommodate and respond to new socio-political developments in a unique way, have the potential to give rise to its own contradiction, thus transforming the whole social order from within it. This whole discussion will be made in the background of South Asian women's political participation. Thus, this chapter identifies a newly emerging explanation of the patriarchal organization of

women's participation in formal political institutions, especially in South Asia, from within the patriarchal system itself.

2.2. Defining Patriarchy

In order to comprehensively understand the problem addressed in this chapter, it is essential to start with an exploration of a variety of ways in which the term patriarchy has been defined from conventional and feminist perspectives. Generally, 'patriarchy' means male domination. Conventionally, it is considered as a pre-modern, pre-capitalist, feudal system of hierarchy among men in an agrarian society. Thus, it is variously defined as the hierarchical system among men within the mode of production in feudal societies (Hartmann 1981: 14; Walby 1990: 19), the rule of men as heads of households over household economies and extended family affairs (Barrett 1988: 10; Walby 1990: 19), the rule of father or male head of a social unit such as family or tribe (Pilcher and Whelehan 2004: 93), or senior man's authority over everyone else including younger men (Kandiyoti 1988). Hartmann identified that prior to women's movement, "patriarchy referred to a system of relations between men, which formed the political and economic outlines of feudal and some pre-feudal societies, in which hierarchy followed ascribed characteristics" (Hartmann 1996: 175). It was assumed that this pre-modern system of social relations was lost to emerging capitalist economic and social relations in seventeenth-century Europe (Pateman 1988: 19). But this explanation was inadequate to explain persisting gender inequality in contemporary capitalist, modern and industrialized societies (Hearn 1987). Before feminist explanations "neither the historical patriarchal societies nor today's western capitalist societies are understood as systems of relations between men that enable them to dominate women" (Hartmann 1996: 175).

Feminists challenged patriarchy's conceptualization as a pre-modern system due to the lack of its explanatory potential regarding persistence of gender inequalities across cultures and throughout the history. Identifying its very presence in even contemporary modernized and industrialized societies, feminists redefined it as a system of gender inequality; the male domination over women, rather than feudal social relations. They theorized it as a "real basis of the subordination of women" to men (Beechey 1979: 66) as it has "as one of its key aspects the oppression of women" (Johnson 1997: 5). It is

identified that “a society is patriarchal to the degree that it is *male-dominated*, *male-identified*, and *male-centered*” (Johnson 1997: 5). The extent of male domination in patriarchal system is explained as the one in which “positions of authority political, economic, legal, religious, educational, military, domestic are generally reserved for men” (Johnson 1997: 5). Kate Millett also vividly portrays the extent of male domination in current patriarchal societies when she explains that “the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political offices, finance-in short, every avenue of power within the society... is entirely in male hands” (Millett 1971: 25) that maintains men’s control on all aspects of society.

Although, some feminists avoid using the term patriarchy for its over usage or as being convinced with the pre-modernity conceptualization of the term. For example, Judith Lorber avoids using this term “because of its overuse and slippery conceptualization” (1994: 3). Hishami Sharabi (1988) uses the term ‘neopatriarchy’ to define the persisting patriarchal (or traditional) culture in Arab society, in order to underline his conception of patriarchy as something related with modernity. He considers the distorted modernity (due to Islam, colonization and oil-based dependent capitalist development) of Arab society as the cause of women’s subordination and argues the possibility of women’s emancipation through proper modernization. Contrary to Sharabi, Nawal El-Saadawi argues that women’s subordination and oppression are not the specific characteristics of Arab societies, Middle Eastern countries or ‘Third World’ alone and “[t]hey constitute an integral part of the political, economic and cultural system ... whether that system is backward and feudal in nature or a modern industrial society” (1980: i). Therefore, the feminist challenge to conventional definition of patriarchy was aptly summarized by Millett when she identified patriarchy as an institution that is “a social constant so deeply entrenched as to run through all other political, social, or economic forms, whether of caste or class, feudality or bureaucracy, just as it pervades all major religions” (1969: 25). She further identifies its range that “it also exhibits great variety in history and locale” (Millett 1969: 25).

Feminist theorizing converges on the centrality of patriarchy, being a system of gender inequality, as the root cause of women’s current social, economic and politically disadvantaged condition. They all, in one way or another, considered patriarchy as the

basis of women's subordination, oppression, and exploitation by men (as individuals or collectivities), thus explaining women's chronic exclusion from what is public, political and authority. Their respective individuality lies in use of the concept of patriarchy in a variety of meanings emphasizing different dimensions and causes of women's subordination. As the feminist thought grew, it explored different dimensions of patriarchy for explaining women's subordination due to male domination, biological difference, women's reproductive capacities, socialization, symbolic rule of the father and women's inferiorized psyche, sexual division of labour, unpaid domestic labour, occupational segregation, gender pay gap, private property, class structure of capitalist society, a partnership of capitalism and patriarchy, public and private split. The next section of this chapter deals with these different feminist perspectives and their respective explanations of patriarchy and women's exclusion from public and political sphere.

2.3. A Review of Feminist Perspectives on Women's Exclusion from Public and Political Spheres

As discussed earlier, there is a general convergence in the feminist literature that patriarchy (although differently defined) as a system of gender inequality is based on women's oppression and exclusion from power and authority positions in all spheres of social life. Thus, it is also responsible for producing a wide gender differentiation in favor of male representation at formal political institutions and high echelons of authority positions that is evident all over the world. The two major feminist approaches to explain this gender gap emphasize the role of *socialization* (advocated by liberal feminism) and the social and economic *structures* (advocated by radical and socialist feminism) entailing different social construction of genders and their social and political standing.

Gender, "a way of denoting "cultural constructions"" about appropriate roles for women and men (Scott 1986: 1056) is a significant political fact, that is related to the "political socialization the child will receive, the law which he or she will need to abide by, the differential distribution of social values, and the micro and macro power relations of men and women" (Krauss 1974: 1706). Patriarchal definition of gender roles and respectively conditioned psychology and activity of men and women provide

an explanation and a basis for understanding political behavior and thought (Krauss 1974: 1706). Socialization plays an important role in organizing a patriarchal society. It makes women learn supportive and affective roles and internalize politics as a masculine domain. Besides socialization the social structures (e.g. patriarchal power relations, economic labour market or class structure, public/private split, political institutions like state and political parties, etc.) also play an important role in limiting or facilitating activity, skill and resource development of particular gender. Feminists when theorizing these dimensions of patriarchy as a root cause of women's subordination also offered explanations to understand women's participation in public and political spheres in current societies.

2.3.1. Socialization, Discriminatory Laws and Gender Quota in Politics

Liberal feminism, less interested in finding structural explanations for women's subordination, has emphasized "the socialization of men and women into different roles, reinforced by discrimination, prejudice and irrationality, as responsible for women's unequal position in society" (Waylen 1996: 7). They have found women's subordination rooted in "a set of customary and legal constraints" (Tong 2009: 2) to women's success in public sphere. With their individualistic approach, rather than exploring patriarchy as a holistic social system or power structure systematically producing male domination, they consider the customs and laws differently and unequally affecting men and women; favoring men for his success in public space while discouraging women to enter into the public arena. For them the solution to gender inequality lies in bringing changes in society, through political and legal reforms, allowing women access to things on the same terms as men. They demand fair rules, legal reforms, equal opportunity and autonomy for women to succeed in public sphere. For this end, they advocate equal opportunity and individual autonomy for all citizens to participate in public and political sphere.

Most of the reforms and positive measures taken in the last few decades in different countries to enhance women's formal public and political participation, like employment policies, welfare provisions, legislative and constitutional political quotas, legislation to stop violence against women, are the result of liberal feminist thought and

activism. Following liberal advocacy, a growing number of countries¹⁷ have implemented different types of quotas¹⁸ for meeting the international (from UN World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995) and local (from women groups) demands to increase women's political participation for democratization. There are debates for and against the quotas in terms of their significance. Opponents consider gender quotas as a violation of the liberal principle of merit and getting an unqualified woman elected just because she is a woman, while the advocates of gender quota consider it as a compensation for historical discrimination against women (Dahlerup 2007), and a "positive discrimination" to initially bring gender balance in political institutions for proper democratization (Bacchi 2006: 33-5)

There is plenty of literature identifying socio-economic status and the institutional factors differently affecting men and women's entry in politics. Women's generally lower educational attainment and the workforce participation as compared to men, which reduce their overall social status in society, are considered to limit their opportunities to enter politics (Matland 1998; Rule 1987). But this correlation has been challenged when a large number of women without having such socio-economic prerequisites are elected, through gender quotas, in developing countries. Similarly, the institutional factors like proportional representation (PR) or majoritarian (first-past-the-post) electoral system, multi-party or single-party system, small or large scale party magnitude, left-wing parties or right-wing parties and parties with more or less openness towards women's inclusion all play important role in, respectively, positively or negatively determining women's inclusion in formal political activity (Krook 2006).

Gender quotas are considered to have served positive effects. Dahlerup (2007) identifies such results as gender quotas come closer to providing real equality of opportunity, it increases competition over elected positions by altering the *de facto* situation of men competing men and making the political parties start recruiting women

¹⁷ Dahlerup (2007) has identified that by 2007 almost 100 countries in the world has introduced certain kinds of quotas for women's political participation.

¹⁸ Krook (2006) has identified three types of quota provisions: *Reserved seats* policies set aside a certain number of seats for women among elected representatives; *political party quotas*, in which political parties voluntarily adopt gender quotas within their structures and lists and *legislative quotas* through laws and legal sanctions which require political parties to nominate certain percentage of women among candidates. Tripp (2008) has defined these kinds as: reserved seats, voluntary party quota, and compulsory party quota.

in a serious way. Tripp also concludes quotas as an important mechanism for women's entry into public office worldwide; as these "quotas have helped overcome constraints traditionally posed by economic underdevelopment, authoritarianism, cultural influences, and even the electoral system" (2008: 359).

With respect to the focus of this research, it is important to identify here that although quotas have opened new opportunities but their impact depends on how the existing patriarchal structures of the society in question respond to the practice. Dahlerup aptly identifies that, in the introduction of gender quota by male dominated institutions, "motives other than pure feminist ones are involved, since politics is after all a world of mixed motives, bargaining and compromises" (2008: 322). It explains the reason behind the fact that despite political quotas women still represent a minute minority of legislatures even in advance societies. Those who came there through the support of patriarchal gatekeepers lead to the question that whose interests they are going to serve there. Quotas have not shown any large scale changes in the patriarchal power relations within society. Ertürk points out that even in countries where "a 'critical mass' in decision-making positions have been achieved, gender roles and identities continue to be shaped by patriarchal notions of 'femininity' and 'masculinity'" (Ertürk 2004: 7). When these reform laws and provision are introduced without taking in consideration the current power structure and considering every one as equal beneficiaries, may rather enhance, than eliminate, inequality. It is still needed to analyze the liberal strategies of gender quotas with their impact on broader patriarchal structures. These quotas serve as a new socio political development to be responded and accommodated by patriarchal features of contemporary societies. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on social dynamics before and after the introduction of quotas that can help to understand these 'non-feminist motives' behind and patriarchal bargaining they trigger in the power relations between men and women.

2.3.2. Biology, Sex, and Reproduction

Contrary to liberal feminist approach with its emphasis on legal and political reforms, radical and socialist feminisms remain more concerned with the structural explanation of women's subordination and use the term patriarchy to describe systems of male domination over women (Waylen 1996: 6; Hartmann 1996: 175) in, not only legal or

political, but also social and cultural institutions. It is radical feminism that “introduced the concept of patriarchy into contemporary feminist discourse” (Beechey 1979: 69) applying it “to virtually any form or instance of male domination” (Kandiyoti 1988: 274). As based on power, hierarchy and competition, it is defined as the cause of women’s subordination. They focus on sex, gender, and reproduction as the main explanations for women’s subordination to men. They pay attention to the control exercised by men over women’s sexuality, their reproductive capacity and its role in their oppression (Millett 1970; Firestone 1970). Their prime concern is “with struggles against male power and the social institutions through which it is reproduced (e.g. marriage, heterosexuality, the family)” (Beechey 1979: 69). The only possible way they find for women’s emancipation and better position in society is to uproot all social and cultural institutions as there is no chance of reform that liberals were advocating for (Tong 2009: 1).

Kate Millett, a radical-libertarian feminist¹⁹ (Tong 2009: 52), defines two principles of patriarchy: (i) male shall dominate female, and (ii) elder male shall dominate younger (1970: 25). Focusing on the first principle she defines sexual relationships as the political relations of patriarchal domination and subordination between men and women, not based on biology but reproduced through socialization by the most important patriarchal unit, i.e. family. She calls ‘sex’ as a “status category with political implications” (Millett 1970: 24) and explains this system of sexual relationships with Max Weber’s idea of “*herrschaft*, a relationship of dominance and subordination” (Millett 1970: 25). She considers that this system achieves a most ingenious form of “interior colonization” through males’ rule over females (Millett 1970: 25) and argues that “sexual dominion obtains...the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power” (Millett 1970: 25).

¹⁹ Tong (2009) argues that, although, all the radical feminists focus on sex, gender and reproduction, some of them favor so called androgyny and look at reproduction controlling technologies as blessings for women. In contrast, some other radical feminists reject androgyny and consider the reproduction-assisting or controlling technologies as harmful to women. Therefore, Tong classified them into two groups: radical-libertarian feminists and radical-cultural feminists. According to Tong’s classification Kate Millett’s *Sexual Politics* and Sulamith Firestone’s *Dialectic of Sex* have been categorized under radical-libertarian feminism.

In her structural explanation of patriarchy, Millett identified power as the essence of politics and defined the term 'politics' as "power-structured relationships" in which a group of persons controlled another (Millett 1970: 23-25). She contends that the word 'politics' shows the real nature of the relative status of sexes; as in patriarchal government, if taken as institution, half of the populace which is female is controlled by the other half which is male (Millett 1970: 25). She criticized the theory of politics which treats power relationships in an unrealistic manner in large scale structures. She defined these relations "on grounds of personal contact and interaction between members of well-defined and coherent groups: races, castes, classes, and sexes" further explaining that "certain groups have no representation in a number of recognized political structures that their position tends to be so stable, their oppression so continuous" (Millett, 1970, 24). For example, women despite being more than half of world population are still a countable minority in formal political forums and leadership positions.

Millett argues that the most fundamental unit of patriarchy is family; "a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole" (1970: 33). Rejecting the biological basis of political sexual relations (Millett 1970: 27), she emphasizes family's function of socialization of its members into patriarchally defined temperaments, roles and status in order to maintain women's subordination and exclusion from public and political spheres. She contends that "family acts as a unit in the government of the patriarchal state which rules its citizens through its family heads" and further explained its control on women that "[e]ven in patriarchal societies where they are granted legal citizenship, women tend to be ruled through the family alone and have little or no formal relation to the state" (Millett 1970: 33), which is, to a certain extent the case in most of the Third World countries, especially in South Asia and rural Pakistan.

In short, Millett simply identifies patriarchy with its core in male domination as the causes behind women's less politically active status and continuous subordination. She claims that until patriarchy is eradicated, women's inequality will prevail (Millett 1969: 157). Showing the possibilities of contradictions with the ideally assumed type of patriarchy, she notices that in democracies women often held no office or do so in such a small numbers that is no more than token representation, while in aristocracy

emphasizing the magic and dynastic properties of blood sometimes women are permitted to hold power (Millett 1970: 25-26). She concludes that “[b]earing in mind the variation and degree in patriarchy...we also recognize our own form ...to be much altered and attenuated by reforms” (Millett 1970: 26).

To Millett’s analysis of patriarchy as a system of sexual political relationships maintained through socialization in family, other radical feminists also added the biological differences and women’s reproductive capacities as the root cause of women’s disadvantaged position in hierarchical political relationships of patriarchal society. They tried to develop a theory of patriarchy and sex class based on women’s reproductive difference then man (Beechey 1979: 69). As Sulamith Firestone opens her book stating the problem that “Sex class is so deep as to be invisible. Or it may appear as a superficial inequality, one that can be solved by merely a few reforms, or perhaps by the full integration of women into the labour force” (1970: 1). For her it would be a mistake to explain women’s oppression in strictly economic terms. She takes the class analysis one step further to trace its roots in the biological division of the sexes. She called it as “dialectic of sex”; referring to the basic division of society into two biological classes for reproduction and their struggle with one another (Firestone 1970). She considers the modes of organization of the biological family unit for reproduction of the species as the basis of all the cultural superstructures including the economic and political ones. All the social classes are the product of this sexual-reproductive organization. She portrays biological reproduction as a “bitter trap” (Scott 1986: 1058) and claims that “the material basis for the sexual/political ideology of female submission and male domination was rooted in the biological reproductive roles of men and women” (Tong 2009: 54). Like Millett’s emphasis on family, she also recounted the ‘biological family’ as the universal basic reproductive unit, thus a site to reproduce women’s subordination. She suggests that the basis of women’s oppression lies in reproductive capacities, therefore their emancipation may only come with revolutionary changes in reproductive technology; leading to make women’s bodies free from their responsibilities of reproduction by adopting alternative artificial ways of reproduction and child upbringing. She criticized the conventional political thought for their narrowness that “so profound a change cannot be easily fitted into traditional categories of thought, e.g., ‘political’, is not because these categories do not apply but because they are not big enough” (Firestone 1970).

Similarly, Marilyn French (1985) also attributed women's subordination in political relations more to biology than socialization. Showing the political implications of the gender inequality, she claimed that it is men's oppression of women that leads to other systems of human domination. Sexism is the model for all "isms"; racism, and classism. If it is possible to justify men's domination of women, it is possible to justify all forms of domination (Tong 2009: 56). Identifying the political nature of gender inequality, she propounds that "[s]tratifaction of men above women leads in time to stratification of classes: an elite rules over people perceived as 'closer to nature,' savage, bestial, animalistic" (French 1985: 27). In short, for radical feminists the roots of patriarchy, female subordination and their exclusion from power and authority are in the sexual relationships and biological reproductive differences between the sexes.

2.3.3. Economic Relations of Production

Criticizing this overemphasis on biological differences, Marxist and socialist feminists argue that "[w]hat we need to understand is how sex (a biological fact) becomes gender (a sociological phenomenon)" (Hartmann 1996: 173). They brought previously neglected economic dimension and relations of production in the analysis and combined them with previously available radical explanation of women's exploitation on the basis of sex. They attempted to analyze not simply 'patriarchy' but also its relationship with the capitalist mode of production, thus, bringing both the relations of production (economic class) and the relations of reproduction (sex class) together in the same analysis for explaining women's politically disadvantaged position in society. They criticized Marxism for its neglect of women and reproduction, and aimed at exploring the relationship between the subordination of women and the organization of various modes of production (Beechey 1979: 66). For Marxist feminists, capitalism and classism rather than sexism is the worst enemy of women but for socialist feminists the explanation of economic class as the sole cause for women's subordination to men is not sufficient (Tong 2009: 96). Considering both, the sex class as well as the economic class, is crucial for determining women's status in society, they aimed to develop a theory explaining the alliance of two systems; patriarchy and capitalism, for explaining women's lower status (Tong 2009: 111).

Marxist feminists considered that women's oppression is directly linked with private property, capitalism and class based structure of society. Therefore, their emancipation also needs radical changes to class society. As Engels (1972) explained that men controlling the private property also wanted to pass it to their biological children. To guarantee this line of transfer to biological children, they controlled women's sexuality and labour through imposing on them the institution of heterosexual monogamous marriage. Considering this marriage as an economic institution, he insisted for women's emancipation in their economic independence from men by entering the public industry and socializing the housework and child care. Therefore, retaining their basic focus on economic class and division of labour, Marxists feminists argue that "capitalism itself...is the cause of women's oppression" and the solution for women's liberation is that "the capitalist system must be replaced by a socialist system in which the means of production belong to everyone. No longer economically dependent on men, women will be just as free as men" (Tong 2009: 4). Socialist feminists criticized their too much emphasis on capitalism (economic class) rather than patriarchy (sex class) as a cause of women's subordination; as it failed to give an account of women's subordination and continuity of their unpaid domestic work in contemporary non-capitalist or socialist societies. Retaining their focus on economics they both were more concerned with issues like women's unpaid domestic labour, occupational segregation in labour market, and gender pay gap entailing women's less authoritative status and political power in society.

They based their theories of gender inequality on women's dual roles as paid and unpaid workers and their economic exploitation in these roles as the basis of their subordination throughout the world. Women are the low-waged workers throughout the world and because of their few economic resources they must do domestic labor (Smith 1984, cited in Lorber 1994: 287). Each form of exploitation reinforces the other, and both are justified by an ideology of natural sex differences (Lorber 1994: 287). They brought women's unpaid domestic labour and its capitalist exploitation in the discussion, to explain women's disadvantaged social position. Maria Dalla Costa and Selma James (1972) argued that, rather than socialist strategy of socializing domestic work, women should demand wages for their domestic work inside home; as it is the necessary condition for all other labor, from which, surplus value is extracted (Dalla

Costa and James, 1972; Tong 2009: 109). This wage may give economic independence to women from men and a better social and political standing in society.

Juliet Mitchell's two system analysis also identified the crucial role not only of production but also of reproduction, the socialization of children, and sexuality in determining women's status. With her Marxist inheritance, she contends that "[e]conomic demands are still primary, but must be accompanied by...the other three elements (reproduction, sexuality and socialization)" (Mitchell 1971: 100-101). But she added a new ideological and psychological dimension to this Marxist analysis of patriarchy while defining it as "the symbolic law of the father" (Beechey 1979: 72-74). For her patriarchy refers to a kinship system with symbolic power of father and the consequent "inferorized...psychology of women" (Mitchell 1974: 402). She noticed that "patriarchal ideology, which views women as lovers, wives, and mothers rather than as workers, is almost as responsible for women's position in society as capitalist economics is" (Tong 2009: 112). For her "[p]atriarchy operates...primarily in the psychological realm, where female and male children learn to be women and men" (Hartmann 1996: 173). She claimed that Marxist revolution would not automatically result in women's emancipation because of entrenched patriarchal ideology that is shaping men's and women's psyches. Women's subordination to men will continue until their minds will be liberated from the patriarchal ideals (Tong 2009: 113). Similarly, combining the unpaid domestic work and the rule of father in a Marxist analysis, Christine Delphy and Diana Leonard (1992) asserted that women's unpaid domestic labour benefits men as father or husband before it contributes to capitalism (as Dalla Costa and Selma James argue) thus becomes the fundamental material basis of women's subordination to men.

Socialist feminists also started to focus on the interactive nature of two systems (patriarchy and capitalism; sex and class; or modes of production and reproduction) and used the term as 'patriarchal capitalism' and 'capitalist patriarchy' to show the interdependency and inseparability of the two for explaining the cause that has reduced women to a lower status in patriarchal hierarchy (Tong 2009: 115). For example, Iris Marion Young advocated for the analysis of 'sexual division of labour', rather than class analysis, for explaining gender biased (i.e. patriarchal) capitalism where women

are caught in public/private split and suffer unequal wages, sexual harassment at workplace, and unpaid domestic work. She declared her thesis as the “marginalization of women and thereby our functioning as a secondary labour force is an essential and fundamental characteristic of capitalism” (Young 1981: 58).

Following this emphasis on the interactive nature of two systems, Heidi Hartmann also explained women’s disadvantaged status emerging as a result of a “partnership of patriarchy and capitalism” (Hartmann 1996: 166). She identified that capitalism and patriarchy are perpetuating and bolstering each other, resulting in a two headed beast of ‘patriarchal capitalism’ or ‘capitalist patriarchy’ (Tong 2009: 118). Unlike Mitchell, for her “patriarchy is not simply a psychic, but also a social and economic structure” (Hartmann 1996:166). She defined it as “a set of social relations between men, which have material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women” (Hartmann 1996: 175). She argues that in patriarchal hierarchy men from different classes, races, or ethnic groups have different places but they all “are united in their shared relationship of dominance over their women... all men,...are brought off by being able to control at least some women” (Hartmann 1996: 175). She traced the material base of patriarchy “in men’s control over women’s labour power” maintained through exclusion of “women from access to some essential productive resources (in capitalist societies, for example, jobs that pay living wages) and by restricting women’s sexuality...both for the purpose of serving men and for the purpose of rearing children” (Hartmann 1996: 175-6) She identified that it is monogamous heterosexual marriage that allows men to control both these areas.

Besides that, considering the importance of both child-rearing in the family and the social institutions outside the family, Hartmann argues that “material base of patriarchy...does not rest solely on child-rearing in the family, but on all the social structures that enable men to control women’s labour” (1996: 176). She recounted the crucial elements of patriarchy as: “heterosexual marriage..., female child-rearing and housework, women’s economic dependence on men..., the state, and numerous institutions based on social relations among men” (Hartmann 1996: 178).

She declared that “the roots of women’s present social status lie in this sex-ordered division of labor” (Hartmann 1980: 146). Therefore, she further suggested that if women are to attain equal social status with men then “not only must the hierarchical nature of the division of labour between the sexes be eliminated but the very division of labor between sexes itself must be eliminated” (Hartmann 1980: 146). Scott identified that she gives importance to economic causality and relation of production for development and change in patriarchy and when she suggests that “it is necessary to eradicate the sexual division of labour itself to end male domination” (Hartmann 1980: 169 cited in Scott, 1986), She actually meant ending job segregation by sex (Scott 1986: 1059).

Similarly, Zillah Eisenstein also focused on “capitalist patriarchy” and defined “the problem of women as both mother and worker” (1979: 1). For her, male supremacy and capitalism are the core relations determining the oppression of women (Eisenstein 1979: 1). She argues that to understand women’s oppression needs examination of the power structures present in our society, which are “the capitalist class structure, the hierarchical order of the masculine and feminine worlds of patriarchy, and the racial division of labor” (Eisenstein 1979: 46). She considers the family as a social, economic, political, and cultural unit of a society which defines women’s activities both within and outside it (Eisenstein 1979: 48). In the family, women are oppressed in their roles as mother, domestic laborer and consumer (Eisenstein 1979: 48). “These relations within the family devalue women in the marketplace when they seek employment”, and results in their cheap labour, double day of work and segregation in lowest ranks of the labour force (Eisenstein 1979: 49). She argues that economic organization changes from one form to another but when patriarchy changes it retains its main feature of male supremacy (Eisenstein, 1979: 51). She suggests that “to destroy patriarchal relations we must destroy the structures of sexual, racial, and class hierarchy partially maintained through the sexual division of labor” (Eisenstein 1979: 51).

2.3.4. Female Psyche, Burden of Care and Multicultural Contexts

Contrary to the Marxist and socialist feminists’ deliberation based on materialism, psychoanalytic feminists claim that the roots of women’s oppression and disadvantaged

position are embedded deep in the female psyche. They traced patriarchy rooted in familial relations and early childhood rearing and socialization, but at the level of unconsciousness. As discussed earlier, Juliet Mitchell (1974) in her ideological explanation of patriarchy argued about the symbolic rule of the father in human unconscious and also dealt with the cultural rule of incest taboo in human civilization as the basis of universal female subordination to men. Similarly, Nancy Chodorow (1978) focused on male child's and female child's different relationship with mother. She claimed that masculinity becomes problematic due to the male child's primarily intimate yet later disconnected and conflictual relationship with the mother. He finds it difficult to identify with mother thus realizing her otherness he tries to suppress and control the female. Both Mitchell and Chodorow identified male domination as a psychological rather than temporal condition. Similarly, Care-focused feminists (Tong 2009) focus on why women and femininity are associated with emotions, body, interdependence, community, and connection rather than masculine qualities that are required for acquiring political and authority positions. In order to find solution for women's better status they provide plans and policies for reducing women's burden of care so that women may have as much time and energy as men have to develop themselves as full persons (Tong 2009: 7) and equally participate in public and political life outside home as well.

Multicultural, global, and postcolonial feminists mainly contributed to highlighting the differences that exist among women. They (especially women of color) challenged women in developed nations (especially white women) for their privileged status that, to some extent, has been attained at the expense of the well-being of women in developing nations. They focused on women's varying social, cultural, economic, and political contexts, thus exploring different forms of patriarchal structures, for explaining different levels of women's disadvantage social and political standing in different countries. They address ways in which race, class, ethnicity, sexual identity, gender, age, religion, level of education, occupation/profession, marital status, health condition, and so on, that make specific interlocking systems of oppression of women that may separate one group of women from another. They bring in the light that how contextual factors shape women's self-understanding as being oppressed or not oppressed. They focused on the "multicultural" dimensions of differences among

women living within the boundaries of one nation-state or geographical area. Further, some of them are more concerned about the conditions of women living in developing nations than those living in developed nations (Tong 2009: 8).

2.3.5. Feminist Convergence on Women's Oppression as the Foundation of Patriarchy

The above discussion shows that despite the pluralism within feminism, it converges on one point that the foundation of patriarchy rests on women's oppression and exclusion from power and authority positions. Radical feminists traced the cause of women's subordination in the power imbalance and inferiorization of women in a system of sexual relations within family. They emphasized sex class stratification as the fundamental unit of all social stratifications. Marxist feminists found the control of women's labour by men, their unpaid domestic work and exclusion from public sphere and labour market as the cause of women's lower status. They emphasized the economic class as the basis of gender inequality. While socialist feminists combined both public and private forms of patriarchy and talked about sex class and economic class as an interacting system to perpetuate women's disadvantaged position. Psychoanalytic feminists found a completely unique explanation of the problem in male and female psychology. Multicultural/global or colonial feminists looked at comparative differences in relative privileged status of white women in developed nations and worst conditions of women in developing countries. They looked at patriarchy from different dimensions but they all share a common aim of showing the cause of women's marginalization in all spheres of life that has been systematically maintained throughout history, in one way or other.

In a more recent and more generalized effort Allan Johnson (1997) takes this point of convergence among all feminists as his basic argument to explain patriarchy and women's restricted access to power and authority positions within it. He identifies that "at the heart of patriarchy is the oppression of women" (Johnson 1997: 11). The norm of male dominance creates power differences between men and women and promotes the idea that men are superior to women. It becomes reinforced when men occupy all superior positions in society. The norm of holding high positions by men results in men as a group identified with superiority. "In this sense, every man's standing in relation to

women is enhanced by the male monopoly over authority in patriarchal societies” (Johnson 1997: 5, emphasis in original). Historically women have been excluded from such superior authority positions. “Even when they’ve been allowed to participate, it’s generally been at subordinate, second-class levels” (Johnson 1997: 11).

2.4. Patriarchal Transformations: Different Forms of Patriarchy

Although all these explanations of patriarchy and women’s oppression are important to understand women’s universally lower level of participation in formal politics but it is also important to focus on women’s different conditions and political standings in various regions or different patriarchal formations. As the feminist thought grew the changing shapes and differences between different forms of patriarchy, women’s status in different regions and between the different ways to reduce them in subordination came into light. Some of the feminist writers identified here became more focused on region specific explanations of women’s oppression and subordination (Kandiyoti 1988; Moghadam 1993; Sharabi 1988; and Walby 1997).

Following the discussion of women’s unpaid work, exclusion from necessary resources of production and sexual division of labour, Sylvia Walby (1990) brought into the light different forms of patriarchal manifestation in public and private sphere and women’s lower standing in both of them. She defined “a system of patriarchy” as a “system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women” and which has its base in six interrelated structures of patriarchy which are the “household production; patriarchal relations in paid work; patriarchal relations in the state; male violence; patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions” (Walby 1990; Walby 1997: 5). Different forms of patriarchy, which she considered as a continuum between two main types of patriarchy: private (or more domestic gender regime) and public (or more public gender regime), result from different combinations of these patriarchal structures (Walby 1997: 5).

Walby contends that in advanced capitalist societies with the increased number of women entering labour market, the private patriarchy based on the traditional forms of family structure and the authority of father may be weakening but public patriarchy that manifests in the areas of workplace, paid work, state, and the media are growing. She

identified that private patriarchy “is based upon household production as the main structure and site of women’s work activity and the exploitation of her labour and sexuality and upon the exclusion of women from the public” and it’s “beneficiaries are primarily the individual husbands and fathers of the women” (Walby 1997: 5-6). While the base of public patriarchy is “not on excluding women from the public, but on the segregation and subordination of women within the structures of paid employment and the state, as well as within culture, sexuality and violence” and its beneficiaries are more “collective appropriations” (Walby 1997: 5-6). Thus, women’s exclusion from political sphere also appears a result of this patriarchal segregation strategy in public sphere.

The household is still a relevant structure in the public patriarchy, but no longer the chief one. Walby’s contribution is important because it brings to light the retention of patriarchy even after a sufficient number of women have come out in labour market, and also have joined formal politics as heads of states or political party leaders. It is evident that in formal political forums women’s representation is ever increasing but still they are mostly segregated at lower ranks (e.g. local councils), in committees for ‘soft’ issues (e.g. women, family, health, education) rather than finance or defense. They are reduced to ‘tokens’ in parties and legislatures because they reached there through the support of their male patrons.

Walby (1997) also linked these different forms of patriarchy with age, class, race, ethnicity and region. For example, she identified that recent changes have led older women to be more involved in a more private patriarchy where as professional women of higher socio-economic standing are more likely to be in a more public form. Similarly, women of Pakistani and Bangladeshi descent are more in a domestic form and Black Caribbean women more in a public form than white women. These variables are also helpful in understanding the cross cultural and regional diversity in patterns of women’s participation in formal politics. As in “First World” we saw a high rate of education and labour force participation among women before they reached to legislature but in “Third World” countries especially in South Asia we see the highest

number of women in political forums and even holding high leadership positions²⁰ without any significant changes in common women's educational and economic status.

Sharabi (1988) focuses on the particular patriarchal formation prevailing in Arab societies. He identifies this patriarchal form as 'neopatriarchy' that is "neither *modern* nor *traditional*" (Sharabi 1988: 4, emphasis in original) and defines it as distorted modernity of Arab society. He writes that 'neopatriarchy' "derives its meaning from the two terms or realities which make up its concrete structure, *modernity* and *patriarchy*" (Sharabi 1988: 3, emphasis in original). He further explains the origin of this particular form that "modernization" as the product of patriarchal and dependent conditions can only be dependent "modernization": dependency relations inevitably lead not to modernity but to "modernized" patriarchy, *neopatriarchy*" (Sharabi 1988: 4, emphasis in original). He contends that, due to the combined effects of Islam, colonization and dependent capitalism, the patriarchal structures of Arab society, rather than moving towards true modernization, has strengthened a kind of deformed modernity. This new form of modernity is a hybrid sort of culture in which the modern awakening has failed to break the traditional forms of patriarchalism but the material modernization has given a modernized form to existing patriarchal structures. This process produces a specific kind of underdevelopment and non-modernity that he calls as 'neopatriarchy'.

Sharabi notices that the central feature of neopatriarchy is still "the dominance of the Father (patriarch), the center around which the national as well as the natural family are organized" (1988: 7). He further explained that there is only vertical relations between the patriarch (either ruler or father) and the subordinate (either ruled or the child) in which "the paternal will is the absolute will, mediated in both the society and the family by a forced consensus based on ritual and coercion" (1988: 7). Following this social order he further describes the dominant ideology of neopatriarchal society, that reduces women to a lower status than men, as "a conservative, relentless male-oriented ideology, which tended to assign privilege and power to the male at the expense of the female, keeping the latter under crippling legal and social constraints" (Sharabi 1988:

²⁰ e.g. Benazir Bhutto, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Khaleda Zia, Hasina Wajid, Chandrika Kumaratunga, Indira Gandhi, etc.

33). In his view, this neopatriarchy as distorted modernity is the cause of women's subordination, while he foresees their possible emancipation in true modernization. But his argument seems incompatible with Walby's arguments regarding persisting patriarchy in modernized societies, as discussed above. Sharabi when defining modernity writes that "[modernity] points to a unique historical development which occurred in its original form in Western Europe" (1988: 3). But Walby identifies that these advanced capitalist societies, which Sharabi considers are on path of true modernization, did not lose patriarchy, and rather has only changed its form from private to public patriarchy.

According to the focus of this research the works of Deniz Kandiyoti (1988) and Valentine Moghadam (1993) who especially focused on the Middle East and the South Asia are worth discussing here. Deniz Kandiyoti (1988) focused on two different types of patriarchy based on the examples from Sub-Saharan Africa, on the one hand, and the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia on the other. Her intention was to identify a "continuum ranging from less corporate forms of house holding, involving the relative autonomy of mother-child units evidenced in Sub-Saharan polygyny, to the more corporate male headed entities prevalent in the regions" of Asian 'patriarchal belt' (Kandiyoti 1988: 275). In explaining the second type, she used the term "classic patriarchy" to refer to "women's accommodation to the system" (Kandiyoti 1988: 278) which she found as a characteristic feature of the societies in South and East Asia as well as in the Muslim Middle East (Kandiyoti 1988: 274). For her, patrilocally extended household in which senior man has authority on all other members is the key source to reproduce classic patriarchy (Kandiyoti 1988: 278) through control on women's social, economic, political activity and participation for ensuring their continuous subordination and dependence. Women are married at young age into another patrilineal household where they are subordinated not only to all the men but also to the senior women, e.g. mother-in-law. Their position in the patrilineal household depends on their producing male offspring.

In their life-cycle they remain subordinate and could only find authority and control, in late years of their age, on their young daughters-in-law. Kandiyoti aptly identifies that "[t]he cyclical nature of women's power in the household and their anticipation of

inheriting the authority of senior women encourage a thorough internalization of this form of patriarchy by the women themselves” (Kandiyoti 1988: 279). In this way they reproduce their own subordination. They also have very limited work options and low wages in patriarchally created labor-market. The restrictions of *purdah* (veil) further enhance their subordination and economic dependence on men. Their status within family is also contingent on the strict observation of these restrictive practices, so that women themselves resist any possibility of break to them; rather they adhere to them as long as possible. Therefore, to maximize their security, they adopt interpersonal strategies within the household through manipulation of the affections of their sons and husband, but it helps little to alter the overarching subordination in the whole patriarchal system. She points out that the new market forces and the capital penetration in rural areas has begun to shake the basis of classic patriarchy.

Similarly, Valentine Moghadam also focused on the “belt of classic patriarchy” which includes areas in North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (including Turkey and Iran), and South and East Asia (Pakistan, Afghanistan, northern India, and rural China) (Moghadam 1993; Moghadam 2004: 143). Combining Kandiyoti’s (1988) explanation of “classic patriarchy,” with Sharabi’s (1988) concept of “neopatriarchal society,” she tried to describe the transformation of patriarchy and the family due to changing social structures; such as economic development, the demographic changes, legal reforms, increasing female education and employment in the Middle East and North Africa (Moghadam 2004: 137).

She also considered the extended, patrilineal, patrilocal, patriarchal, endogamous, and occasionally polygynous Middle Eastern family as the most important unit of patriarchy in this region (Moghadam 2004: 139-144). Within family the wife’s main role is to maintain the home, care children, and obey her husband while men have the authority to control her activities and appearance in the public sphere. Moghadam called this familial arrangement as the patriarchal “gender contract” (Moghadam 1998) that “is realized within the family and codified by the state in the form of Muslim Family Law or the Personal Status Code” (Moghadam 2004: 145). She recounted male domination, son preference, controls of and restrictive code of behavior for women, the association of family honor with female virtue, veiling and sex-segregation as the main

features of prevailing gender system of these societies. The prevailing endogamy in these societies leads to preference to cousin marriage. It facilitates to maintain extended family and the tribal structure based on blood ties and common patrilineal descent in these societies; especially in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and in parts of the Arab world (Moghadam 2004: 143). One can easily infer that this whole social arrangement along with Islamic ideology does not create favorable conditions for women's public appearance; especially in formal political forums and leadership and authority positions.

State policies and legal system also facilitate the persistence of patriarchy, seclusion of women and maintenance of patrilineal extended family (Moghadam 2004: 145). "Muslim family law", Moghadam identifies, "gave male members of the kin group extensive control over key decisions affecting "their" women's lives" (2004: 142). Similarly, inheritance law favors males and kin on the male side (Moghadam 2004: 143). Muslim women's legal and religious right to inherit property is usually circumvented by male relatives and the ultimate custody of children is also given to father's paternal kin group (Moghadam 2004: 142). These laws reinforce the basic features of classic patriarchy like extended patrilineal kin group, tribal communities and the control of women and their segregation in the private sphere of home as mothers and wives.

Beside describing the particular form of patriarchy in the Middle East, she argues that both the Islamic law, maintained through Muslim Family Law that determines women's legal status and shapes their social positions and options, and changing social structures of family, society, and state due to urbanization, industrialization and modernization that took place in the later half of the last century, are crucial to explain the persistence and transformation of classic patriarchy in Middle East (Moghadam 2004: 157). The last few decades have witnessed rapid changes through industrialization and modernizing state systems in this region. The capital penetration and infrastructural development (i.e. legal reform, mass education, demographic changes and female employment) has led to a shift from classic patriarchy to neopatriarchy in these societies. In this process, Muslim Family Law has remained to be a field of contestation among feminists, fundamentalists, and the state. In the 1980s

and 1990s, conservatives and Islamists insisted on strengthening patriarchal family laws. In some countries they gained but in several other countries they faced strong resistance from modernizing women.

As the result of this struggle on Islamic law along with rapidly changing social structures (e.g. urbanization, industrialization, the expansion of labor market, mass education, women's employment, and demographic changes), the family structure and size changed from extended household that was the characteristic of classic patriarchy to more modernized version characteristic of neopatriarchy (Moghadam 2004: 157). The changing family structure may be a sign of the crisis of the Middle Eastern classic patriarchy but in general, the original patriarchal gender contract is still intact, leading to a continuation of women's disadvantage status in all walks of life (Moghadam 2004: 157).

Here the ideas of Moghadam and Walby are important to note that patriarchy changes its forms (e.g. from traditional to neopatriarchy, private to public patriarchy) due to changing socio-economic and political structures of the society but still retaining its core in male domination (e.g. retention of the gender contract, shift of control by individual husband and father in private sphere to "collective appropriations" in the public sphere).

2.5. Women's Political Participation: Is Patriarchy Losing Grounds?

The above review of the feminist perspectives and different forms of patriarchy shows that "[w]e're trapped inside a legacy, and its core is patriarchal" (Johnson 1997: 4). Johnson identifies the contradiction inherent in our society that the women who have hold and exercised power are mostly in societies organized on a patriarchal model (Johnson 1997: 7). If patriarchy is the main reason behind women's lower status, subordination, seclusion in private sphere in the role of mother and wife and exclusion from public sphere and power, authority and leadership positions, then what explains women's increasing entry and participation at different levels of formal politics in the last few decades all over the world; especially in the region called as the belt of classic

patriarchy²¹ frequently witnessing female heads of states? Does it mean patriarchy is losing grounds?

A theoretical quest is evident when we see different writers showing similar concerns and asking similar questions about women's political participation in certain geographical areas of classic patriarchy, especially in South Asia. Radha Kumar pointing to the astonishing fact that the four South Asian countries, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, have had women heads of state, asks that "[h]ow can a country have *purdah*, dowry, bigamy, polygamy, widow immolation, and a women prime minister?" (1995: 59). Similarly, Rounaq Jahan also observes that "the frequent emergence of powerful women leaders, both in government and in opposition, in all the major South Asian countries, gives rise to a number of questions" (1987: 848). The questions she lists include "[h]ow and why have these women succeeded in assuming political leadership, particularly in societies still dominated by the values of gender segregation and *purdah*? Is family connection the crucial factor?" (Jahan 1987: 848). Johnson also asked a similar question that despite "all the pitfalls and limitations, some women²² do make it to positions of power...Doesn't their power contradict the idea that patriarchy is male-dominated?" (1997: 7).

As discussed earlier, it is evident that even in most developed and advanced societies, patriarchy still keeps its hold to maintain gender inequality, although its forms are changing. It is also evident that the South Asian region with its prevailing classic patriarchy and vulnerable conditions of common women has also paradoxically experienced a high number of women political leaders and heads of the state²³. It is often noticed that patriarchy has an incomparable resilience to accommodate itself with the changing socio economic structures while retaining its main core as male domination over women (Eisenstein 1979: 51; Samarasinghe 2000: 203; Moghadam 2004: 157; Walby 1997: 5-6). If patriarchy is not losing its ground, then, what is in

²¹ As discussed earlier Kandiyoti describes the "classic patriarchy" as characteristic of the South and East Asia as well as the Muslim Middle East (1988: 274)

²² Margaret Thatcher, Queen Elizabeth I, Catherine the Great, Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, Benazir Bhutto, etc.

²³ Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan; Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, Chandrika Kumaratunga, President of Sri Lanka; Sirimavo Bandranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Sheikh Hasina Wajid and Begum Khalida Zia, Prime Ministers of Bangladesh.

patriarchy that has created this paradoxical space for women's participation in public and political life; especially in the case of women's increasing political participation at different formal political forums in patriarchally organized societies?

2.6. Subverting the Patriarchy from Within: An Emerging Approach of Patriarchal Transformation

In attempting to answer these questions, political theory identifies women's political participation as an exceptional phenomenon and women leaders are accepted only as exceptional women not threatening the whole social order. Johnson also argues that "patriarchy can accommodate a limited number of powerful women so long as the society retains its essential patriarchal character, especially in being male-identified" (1997: 7). But on the other hand, some of the feminists especially working to explain the contradictory situation of women's increasing political participation in rigidly patriarchal societies of South Asian region, are reckoning towards a newly emerging explanation of South Asian women's success in high leadership positions facilitated by certain basic features of patriarchy itself (e.g. kinship ties, elite dynasties, patriarchal perceptions of female roles as mother and caring person, etc) (Samarasinghe 2000). They further explain South Asian women's use and manipulation of patriarchy and its certain features to pave way for their entry into political sphere. They are moving towards a new explanation of patriarchal transformation as subverting the patriarchy from within. They explain women's entry in political sphere from within patriarchal structure itself, rather than confronting it from outside.

As mentioned earlier, Moghadam (2003: 1993) identifies state legislation as an important tool to improve women's status and political standing. It can either increase women's subordination or contribute their emancipation. She also gives importance to changing social structures due to modernization that may also indirectly bring changes in women's social standing. It means new socio-political developments emerging in changing society have the potential to trigger change in the whole social order.

Deniz Kandiyoti (1988) clearly brings women's agency for maximizing their survival within patriarchy into focus. She finds a new way "for the identification of different forms of patriarchy through an analysis of women's strategies in dealing with them"

(Kandiyoti 1988: 275). She contends that “women strategize within a set of concrete constraints”, in order to maximize their security and life options (Kandiyoti 1988: 274). She called these strategies as “patriarchal bargains” that may also vary according to class, caste, and ethnicity, and determine women’s gender subjectivity and the nature of gender ideology in different societies. With the evidences of women’s protest to contemporary development projects that tend to enhance male headed corporate family model through land and agriculture policies in the “less corporate forms of patriarchy in Sub-Saharan Africa”, she showed that women openly resist to these attempts to lower the value of their labor and refuse the total appropriation of their production by their husbands (Kandiyoti 1988: 276). Their bargaining strategies are acts of resistance in order to retain their autonomy and protest any attempt to devalue or control their labour.

In contrast, Kandiyoti contends that in “classic patriarchy” prevailing in certain regions of Asia, women when accommodating to the system, as discussed earlier, adopt subservience to and manipulation of, rather than protest and resistance against, the existing patriarchal system as a bargaining strategy (1988: 278) for their better life options and status while remaining within the patriarchal setup in which they live and operate. Arat perceiving the existing theoretical debates on women’s political participation, also points out that “[i]f our ultimate goal is to promote women’s “separate as well as equal” status-that is, to acknowledge women’s difference from as well as equality to men-it might not be enough merely to take a separatist stand” (1989: 16). She suggests that “[i]mportant as it is to work outside the established power structure, *it is also necessary to gain power from within*” (Arat 1989: 16, emphasis added). These arguments are suggestive of a possibility for opening and broadening new spaces for women’s public and political participation through the transformation of existing patriarchal system by women’s bargaining strategies within the existing patriarchal power structure.

Samarasinghe (2000) took this argument further, while placing some observations on Kandiyoti’s explanation of patriarchal bargains made through Sub-Saharan African women’s open confrontation to patriarchy and Asian women’s subservience and manipulation within patriarchy. Somewhat similar to Arat’s idea of the necessity of

'gaining power from within', she added a third strategy that women may use to challenge patriarchy from within. To explain this new strategy, she argues that in some societies "women may not be in a position to overtly reject their roles as designated by patriarchy. At the same time they may not resort to manipulative tactics within the expected norms of subservience" (Samarasinghe 2000: 195). She proposes a different strategy that "[i]nstead, women may subvert some of the entrenched elements of patriarchy itself, by subtly using their designated roles as wives and mothers to transform the system itself" (Samarasinghe 2000: 195). In this way she identified a possibility that women themselves can broaden the space for their political and autonomous action within the patriarchal setup. She writes that "with such subversions women could create 'openings' from within the existing social system itself, whereby they could emerge into the public sphere of politics" (Samarasinghe 2000: 195).

Samarasinghe argues that "women are bound to operate within the existing system to gain access to the public space of political leadership and participation" and "they have made use of the only available 'openings' in the system to emerge into the more visible world of politics" (2000: 209). She concludes that keeping in view the pervasive male domination in all spheres of society, "It is more realistic to expect women to enter into the public sphere of politics from within the patriarchal system itself" (Samarasinghe. 2000: 201). Therefore, the South Asian women use and manipulate (or can be said as benefited by) the patriarchal structures (e.g. political dynasty, kinship ties, male patronage) and designations (e.g. mother or sister, caring and emotional person) to subvert the existing political system and emerge into the visible public sphere.

Using the observations from two important countries of South Asia; India and Sri Lanka, as the case studies, Samarasinghe (2000) argues that "women in South Asia have used the existing system of patriarchy to break into the public sphere of politics" (Samarasinghe 2000: 193). Showing how these women are "using elements in the patriarchal system to reach the competitive political processes of electoral politics", she argues following points: (i) women have created political spaces for themselves through kinship ties which provide a useful opening for women to enter into the political arena; (ii) those with no kinship ties to powerful males have developed strong patron/protégé ties with powerful male political figures who act as their political mentors to enter the political field; (iii) they use the fundamentalist, religious and

patriarchal interpretations of female identity (e.g. as mother, goddess) to achieve political recognition; (iv) embracing the designated patriarchal roles, they make use of the political space to bring the issues from patriarchally designated women's reproductive sphere to public visibility and political agenda (Samarasinghe 2000: 195-196).

Like Samarasinghe, some other writers have also identified the important role that certain features of patriarchy and patriarchal ideology plays in bringing women in politics. Linda Richter identify the "ideology of patriarchy, familial ties, martyrdom, social class, female lifestyles, the historical context, prison experiences and electoral arrangements" as the most significant explanatory variables for women's political leadership in South and South East Asia (1991: 525-526). Wijekoon also identifies the patriarchal notions of "the cult of motherhood, warm acceptance of charismatic leadership, public regard of elite dynasties and public experience of the liberal agendas of colonial rulers" that have helped in paving the way to power for these women leaders (2005: 69). The only difference is that they are relatively less concerned, than Samarasinghe, with women's agency in exploiting these patriarchal features for their entry into the political arena. In either case it is important to focus on these patriarchal features that has facilitated women's political participation and widened political space for their action from within the patriarchy, thus, to some extent, challenging the existing organization of politics as the male domain.

2.6.1. Kinship Ties with Male Patriarchs

Women's public or private recognition through kinship ties with male patriarchs is a basic feature of South Asian classic patriarchy. Samarasinghe also suggests that "subverting the patriarchal system from within is a closer reality over assertions of autonomy based on explicit protest against patriarchy or covert manipulation, while still being subordinate" (2000: 195). In "classic patriarchy" with its base in the extended patrilineal kinship women are continued to be identified with their kinship ties to male patriarchs within and outside home. As Moghadam argues that the private sphere is usually ruled by a male patriarch household head and the power relations in the public sphere involve these male household-heads and "[t]his arrangement left no basis for collective action by women. *If women sought public influence, they had to go*

through patriarchs” (1993: 106, emphasis added). Therefore, women in South Asian countries “have made use of this criterion, as perhaps, the best available avenue for participating in the political process” (Samarasinghe 2000: 197).

Richter identified South Asian women politicians’ kinship ties to prominent male politicians as an important explanatory factor for their success in politics (1991: 528). Identifying the patriarchal structure of society she describes that “women are accepted as behaving appropriately in politics when they are perceived as filling a political void created by the death or imprisonment of a male family member” (Richter 1991: 526). She contends that the opportunity for such women to hold high political position become greatly enhanced by their husbands’ deaths and often dramatic martyrdom (Richter 1991: 528) and in most cases, they were the only suitable person available within the family to further carry out the legacy of the deceased or imprisoned leader.

For example, in Pakistan Benazir Bhutto and Nusrat Bhutto came in politics, respectively, as the daughter and wife of former Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Begum Nasim Wali Khan and Ghanwa Bhutto became heads of their parties when the former’s husband was in jail and the latter’s husband was assassinated. *Mohatma* Fatima Jinnah was brought in politics to contest presidential election as sister of the founder of country, Mohammad Ali Jinnah. In India, Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi entered into politics from the strong political family as daughter and widows of former prime ministers, respectively. Maneka Gandhi, the widow of Sanjay Gandhi, and Priyanka Vadra, granddaughter of Indira Gandhi and daughter of Rajiv Gandhi, both came in politics because of their kinship ties with nation’s founding fathers; Nehru and Gandhi and their politically strong family. Rabri Devi, an almost illiterate housewife entered politics and became chief minister of Indian state of Bihar, when her husband left the seat because of a scandal and was in jail. In Sri Lanka Sirima Bandaranaike came in politics as widow of male prime ministers and her daughter Chandrika Kumaratunga became president of Sri Lanka as daughter of two Bandranaike prime ministers and wife of a popular male politician. Srimani Athulathmudali (leader of a political party, also elected as the Member of Parliament and cabinet member), Srimala Disanayake, Hema Premadasa, (widow of President Ranasinghe Premadasa) were three widows of assassinated politicians who entered into the political arena. In

Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia also entered into politics as the wife of assassinated president of Bangladesh. Hasina Wajid, is the daughter of another male leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, who was assassinated. All these women inherit their political careers from the male family members and became the head of states and lead their parties due to their relational and kinship ties with male politicians and established political families of these countries.

2.6.2. *Elite Status of Women Politicians*

The question is what makes these familial ties so important in politics and for common people while selecting a female leader? Wijekoon's explanation provides an answer to this question that "the female candidates' familial ties to political elites are important to the larger citizenry because patron-client structures²⁴ bind the South and Southeast Asian "commoner" to the political causes of elites" (2005: 59). She called this factor as "public regard for political elites" (Wijekoon, 2005: 59).

South Asian patriarchal societies are organized along extended kinship, caste, communal, tribal and ethnic ties. This patriarchal organization based on blood and kinship ties also give rise to an elite stratum that plays the role of leaders of the kinship, caste, communal, tribal or ethnic groups at different levels from home to state level. The charisma of leader is often associated with the ascribed status, decent or the particular dynasty. Sometimes, in the absence of a suitable male political candidate, a woman has the chance to be selected in order to maintain this established dynastic or kinship charisma at the expense of gender considerations. Therefore, these kinship ties with prominent males or pre-established dynasties became an opening which these women avail (or made to avail)²⁵ to reach the political arena and gain recognition there. Wijekoon explains that "all of these women followed their male relatives to power, their respective polities regard them as elements of political elite dynasties" (Wijekoon 2005: 67). She further points out that "these women leaders hail from long-established elite families that command recognition and respect in their respective societies" (2005:

²⁴ For further details on this patron-client organization of South Asian society, with special focus on Pakistan, see Chapter 3.

²⁵ As some of the women initially were not willing to enter into politics but were persuaded to do so for the interests of party or the country that was in crisis at that particular time of their entry in politics.

67). Radha Kumar defined these relational ties as “a variant of the dynastic traditions of the subcontinent” or a “legacy of martyrdom-assassinated father and husbands- that gives these women political potency” (1995: 60)

Their association with these elite families and selective dynasties gives women’s political participation in patriarchal societies like South Asia. Rounaq Jahan noticed about some western observers who argue that “sharp class or caste differences make it easier for South Asian women of a certain class and family background to achieve positions of political leadership” (1987: 848). Wijekoon summarizes this economic class effect that “the political cultures of the countries that did elect women are highly hierarchical and are marked by great class inequality where women with high social status are able to use this identity to legitimize their authority as political figures” (2005: 59). The phenomenon is not particular to South Asian women politicians as Ayata (1994) also identified the persisting trend of elite characteristics among Turkish women parliamentarians then their male counterparts since 1935.

There is sufficient evidence of this elitist feature of women politicians in Pakistan, as well. The women active in political sphere and present at formal political forums were a very small number of urban upper class or upper middle class educated elite women, having previous experience of social work or political activism, belonging to highly influential families of established feudal politicians, big landlords, and high ranking civil and military bureaucrats who have long been in politics and they were more accountable to their familial or party male patrons (Saif 1993; Shahid 1994; Farooq 2003; Yazdani 2004; ADB 2000; Shaheed 2008; UNDP 2005)²⁶. Richter (1991) reasoned that the “lifestyle” associated with this elite class (i.e. high and middle social class) in developing countries provides them with live-in child-care, cooks, maids, drivers and gardeners. The time consuming domestic labour is done by other female relatives and servants. The household help and childcare within extended households help these women to spare sufficient time for their political activities.

²⁶ For more details on elitist feature of women politicians in Pakistan see Chapter 4.

2.6.3. Male Patronage

Male patrons are also a good alternative to kinship ties with male politicians. As we discuss that in classic patriarchies women can reach to influence the public arena only through a male patriarch. If that strong patriarch, who can be a source of creating an opening for women in formal politics, is not available in the immediate family and kinship group does not necessarily mean impossibility for women to reach the political field. There are women in South Asian politics (e.g. Mayawathie and Jayalalitha, the chief ministers of two Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, respectively), who emerged in political arena without any kinship ties with male political giant, elitist familial background, or any martyrdom history (Kumar 1995; Smarasinghe 2000). Smarasinghe contends that women politicians without such kinship ties strived for an alternative possibility of finding powerful male patrons with nationally acclaimed political stature and influence, to pave the political space for them (2000: 200). These men serve as political mentors to these women for establishing their political career and identity.

2.6.4. Religion Based Politics

Besides kinship and patronage ties the use of patriarchal and masculinistic religious discourses also facilitated in establishing some South Asian women as politicians. Kumar (1995) identified that in Indian politics all the women politicians cannot be classified simply into those who came through kinship ties or those who came through patronage ties with male politicians. There are women (e.g. Sadhvi Rithambara and Uma Bharati in India), who have no kinship tie, do not rely on male patronage and are also not from elite background. They belong to lower middle class and lower caste. They have made their way to the political forum through their hateful exploitative religion-based politics (Kumar 1995: 61).

2.6.5. Embracing the Patriarchally Designated Female Roles and Ideologies

Johnson points out that “not one of these women could have achieved and held her position without embracing core patriarchal values” (1997: 7). Rather than resisting or rejecting to the patriarchally designated female roles, important politicians in South Asia used and emphasized these roles and embraced these roles to maximize their opportunities in formal electoral politics. Most of them were married, widowed and/or

mothers at the time they held political office or party office. Even Benazir Bhutto acknowledged that she would be far more acceptable politically if married, and despite her modernity accepted an arranged marriage (Richter 1991: 530). Wijekoon finds it paradoxical that “these very attitudes that relegate women to the confines of home and a lower status served those few women who came to power as a political advantage” (2005: 61). She further identifies that “[o]ne such patriarchal attitude is the sanctity of motherhood, a highly symbolic feminine attribute that was projected upon and sometimes exploited by these female heads of states during their ascendance to power” (Wijekoon 2005: 61). It can be argued that the projection of patriarchal female images of themselves has helped these women to bring their (exceptional) political activism in harmony with the (normal and socially accepted) kinship based patriarchal system of classic patriarchy.

It is also often argued that the “acceptance of a woman prime minister draws on a sub continental mythology that is peopled by strange and often fearsome women who are generic figures of powerful female nature” (Kumar 1995: 59). For example, Indira Gandhi was usually identified with the Hindu goddesses *Kali* or *Durga*, both of which are the symbol of mother image. But Kumar points out that as Pakistan and Bangladesh despite being Islamic states have had women heads therefore Hindu mythological explanation is not sufficient to justify women’s leadership and political participation in these countries (1995: 59). Here Samarasinghe’s (2000) argument appears more acceptable in this regard that beside kinship ties, women politicians in South Asia also adhere to and make use of patriarchally designated ideological roles of mother to enter and maintain their presence in politics. It can be argued that these images are helpful when projected and emphasized during electoral campaigns for gaining emotional attention of the voters and supporters along with facilitating these women in their political activity through creating a desexualized image.

For example, Jayalalitha, chief minister of Tamil Nadu despite being unmarried was called as ‘*amma*’ (means mother). The same is also true of Sirima Bandaranaike, who was also called as ‘*amma*’, in Sri Lanka. Alwis (2004) has called it the “mother syndrome” that is used by the female political figures to capture the emotional attention of the people by creating their image as a caring person portrayed as “mother”.

Therefore, these women rather than rejecting these images, they embraced and manipulated fundamentalist, religious and patriarchally designated female identities and roles to enter and maintain their presence in political sphere.

It is not only the mother image but there are examples of other patriarchally designated female images (e.g. elder sister) that were used for political purposes. Yakın Ertürk, while talking about revolutionaries in Turkey, also has discussed that “a desexualized image of women was constructed by the left, symbolized through reference to female comrades as *baci*, a provincial term that means ‘sister’” (2006: 91). She reasoned that the reliance on such term is “not only a way to link the left to the masses, but also a means of guarding against women’s potential for dissent while countering the popular perceptions that communists are sexually promiscuous” (Ertürk 2006: 91).

In Pakistan too, Benazir Bhutto always called and projected herself as the sister of the people in the country. Similarly, Mayawathie, the chief minister of Indian state of Uttar Pradesh was also popularly called ‘*Behanji*’ (sister). Similarly, this current research also argues (in chapter 8) about the use of term *baji* and *adi* (both means sister in Urdu and Sindhi, respectively) within councils and political parties for their women councilors or party workers and the term *bhai* (means brother) for male members of councils or party workers. This use of patriarchal ideological framework or kinship analogies in public places is common in Pakistan.

Following Ertürk’s idea of desexualized image and Kandiyoti’s bargaining strategy for maximizing security and life options, it can be argued that all these women have exploited these patriarchal female images to project a desexualized image of them and analogically extending the kinship ideology and setup to maximize their acceptability, security, accessibility, and opportunities, by minimizing resistance, confrontation and exclusion in a male dominated public sphere of society. “The public/private distinction has served to justify and sustain sex-segregation; however, women always found ways of moving between the two” (Ertürk 2004: 10). This ideological extension creates a bridge between the private and the public sphere thereby expanding the space for women’s activity.

It is not only traditional female roles but these women politicians are also expected to adopt patriarchally defined masculine characteristics in order to survive in politics. Power positions are traditionally male identified and once a woman holds these positions she has to choose between her traditional identity as woman and male-identified identity she gets by virtue of her position. For this reason, the more powerful a woman is under patriarchy, the more “unsexed” she becomes in the eyes of others as her female cultural identity dissolves from her male-identified power position and the masculine image associated with it (Johnson 1997: 7). Johnson argues that the prominent women leaders could become so as they embraced the masculine values of being “tougher, more decisive, more aggressive, more calculating, and more emotionally controlled than most men around them” (1997: 7). Arat (1989) while discussing the changing nature of women’s participation in parliament in different periods of Turkish republican history also identifies that with the passage of time women MPs became less emotional and their party identity took precedence. The growing democratization and increased political activity of these women made them more like men in their behavior and speech. Therefore, it is inferred that women politicians find themselves forced to meet these double social roles of being motherly and modest but at the same time to behave and compete like men to prove their competency for that power position.

2.6.6. Maintaining Dynasty with Children

These South Asian women leaders, as discussed earlier, were recipients of patriarchal dynastic legacies from their male kin or patriarchal patrons and they made efforts to keep these dynastic lineage continue by maintaining its hegemonic position within the respective sphere. But they also proved themselves as powerful politicians, not puppets, and they actually entrenched the dynasties. Rather if they have not taken the charge of their dynasties in times of crisis or demands these dynasties would have lost their political strength and recognition (Samarasinghe 2000: 207). After becoming a political leader these women embraced their responsibility of being a mother even in the political field as well, by opening the spaces for their adult children to emerge into politics. “Indeed, when mothers assume political leadership they bring their adult children along with them and use them as trustworthy resources” (Samarasinghe 2000: 198). Indira Gandhi brought her sons Sanjay and Rajiv Gandhi to continue with the

dynasty. Sirima Bandaranaike in Sri Lanka brought her older daughter Sunethra and that time her son-in-law Kumar Rupesinghe, and her son, Anura. Similarly, Benazir Bhutto, in (supposedly) her will nominated her husband and son as her heir for party leadership²⁷. It shows women's reliance on patriarchally available resources around them for their survival in politics. Later, these other family members also gained political skills and emerge in political.

2.6.7. Manipulating the Stigmatized Image of Widow

In classic patriarchy the widowhood is a relatively stigmatized and disadvantageous condition because in this case a woman loses her male patriarch with whom she was identified for her familial, social or public status and recognition. Samarasinghe argues that the kinship ties and patriarchal female images of these women were so emphasized in a way that their widow status, as most of these women politicians were widow, does not become stigmatized (2000: 199). Besides, it can also be argued that it rather seems to be a preferred condition for women's entry into political field in South Asia as it promotes women's pious and desexualized image congenial for political activity and public movement. Their widow status brings popular sympathy for them that leads to their electoral victory.

It is evident that these women emerged in the political sphere from within the very patriarchal structures. None of them seems to be apparently challenging the overall patriarchal social order. Rather they try to accommodate it. The patriarchal features of elitist background, kinship ties, male patronage, with patriarchal designations and roles, and their widowhood were found facilitating their rise to political office. Once they enter the political sphere, they also bargain to survive in and broaden the political space for themselves by using and manipulating these patriarchal setups around them. Thus, this manipulation leads to a change in traditional roles and functions of these patriarchal features from resistance to facilitation and support of women's appearance in public political sphere. In this way, women politicians are also seen to be altering the nature of patriarchal structures, in particular, and the whole social order of public and political spheres, in general.

²⁷ For details see Chapter 4.

Therefore, the argument here is that these women, while not challenging rather accommodating with the patriarchal structures, also use and manipulate these patriarchal features to maximize their survival and gains from the limited opportunity available to them in the system. But their entry into politics from within these patriarchal structures has certainly altered the traditional functions of patriarchal structures and has changed the pre-established power structure of political sphere as an exclusively male domain while providing broadened public and political space to women. Although these women have used all these strategies to make their way into formal politics this all also needs to be looked from the perspective of active masculinities working around these women, in the form of male voters, family and party members, and competing religious, social and political groups, to preserve the patriarchal power structures.

2.7. Masculinities Theory and Broadened Space for Women's Autonomous Action

Besides the idea of women's strategizing within the system, several writers have emphasized the role of men and masculinities in, either negatively and positively, determining women's entry and the extent of their participation to formal politics. Johnson identifies that the few women who could achieve great power were mostly in patriarchal societies and they were facilitated by the powerful males whose collective interests they served and without whose strong support they could have never reached these positions (Johnson 1997: 7). Similarly, Conway (2001) also identifies the role of gatekeepers in determining who becomes a candidate. Pippa Norris points out that those who serve in elected office represent the demands of gatekeepers (1997: 1). These gatekeepers are mostly males as voters, political leaders, party members or financial supporters. R. W. Connell also affirms that "public politics on almost any definition is men's politics" (1995: 204). She further points out that men predominate all the political institutions as they are recruited through men's networks. The few women who could emerge as leaders did it by their exceptional use of men's networks (Connell 1995: 204). She further identifies that behind the barriers to entry into the upper echelons of power there are "the self-reproducing strategies" employed by the power-holding elites, which "include traffic in money and influence, the selection of successors, the mentoring of aides as allied, insistently selecting men for power" (Connell 1995: 204).

Women strategizing to maximize their gains within the patriarchal setup while at the same time men resisting to preserve the actual patriarchal system of women's subordination are two contradictory processes. If we consider that women are active agents who adopt exploitation and the use of patriarchal feature to bring transformation to the existing system from within, then the question is that how men's agency is accepting and allowing women to fulfill their political agendas to break the patriarchal order? How do some women break through in political arena despite male strategies of resistance in the very patriarchal societies? Why and how men or masculinities, despite their traditional resistance to it, are bringing and accommodating these women in formal political arena?

Looking at women's political participation in South Asia from the perspective of 'masculinities theory' (Connell 1995) adds a new dimension to existing knowledge of gender and politics. Connell defined "Masculinity" as "simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture" (Connell 1995: 71). Different masculinities can coexist in a similar culture, but at any given time, only one form occupies the hegemonic position (Connell 1995: 76-77). This hegemonic masculinity is "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees ... the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 1995: 77). This hegemonic position is always contestable (Connell 1995: 76). Connell identifies that "[w]hen conditions for the defence of patriarchy change, the bases for the dominance of a particular masculinity are eroded. New groups start challenging old solutions and construct a new hegemony" (Connell 1995: 76). In historical social and economic developments, competing masculinities act, against each other, as the crisis tendencies and the oppositional movements that have opened up a range of new possibilities for gender relations (Connell 1995: 202). Different groups of men respond to these changes in different ways.

2.7.1. Competing Masculinities and Broadened Space for Women's Political Action

Following Connell's idea of 'competing masculinities and new possibilities of gender relations', the intention is to build an argument, on the basis of similar examples²⁸, that masculine groups in their power struggle for attaining and maintaining their hegemonic position provide a limited and controlled inclusion to women for their power interests, thus serve a latent function of broadening the space for women's autonomous action and future claims to power in society. The women provided with this limited opportunity do not simply comply with patriarchal demands, they rather establish their own identity by their actions of simultaneously accepting certain features while rejecting the others within the existing power system. These new power centers when emerged out of competing masculinities, in turn, start raising their claims to power in society thus changing the whole social order, to some extent.

To build this argument here, the help is taken from similar examples available in literature. For instance, Ertürk argues that the variety of discourses regarding women's public representation in Turkey promoted by competing masculine agendas (e.g. Secularists, Nationalists, Islamists, Socialists, Kurdish and others) has resulted in the diversification of 'legitimate' images available to women thus broadening the public space for their autonomous actions (2006: 82). She claims that different politically competing groups used women, their bodies, dress codes, their public private representation, and, in short, their overall identities for the promotion of the respective political projects. Nationalists/modernists/secular reformers promoted an image of educated urban professional 'new women' (Jayawardana 1986); Marxist/Socialist or revolutionaries brought women in revolutionary activism and produced their desexualized image by the use of 'folksy' term like '*baci*' (means sister); Islamists emphasized the new veiling of women with '*türban*'; Kurdish nationalists engaged women in nationalist activism. Feminists, on the other hand, challenged the basic gender contract of women's subordination to men. Each political discourse brought new symbols of representation and created its own excluded groups of women. But

²⁸ I will use similar examples because to the best of my knowledge, I could not find any such direct discussion in literature in respect of formal politics regarding competing masculinities creating new openings for women to enter in politics. Therefore, I intend to establish my argument on the basis of similar examples I could find in Ertürk (2006), Vojdik, (2010), and Jayawardana (1986).

what is important to note is that “*the latent consequence of this competition has been the broadening of space for autonomous individual action beyond what is intended by the various political discourses*” (Ertürk 2006: 82-83, emphasis added). Ertürk explicitly claims that this “diversification of political discourse is accompanied by new contradictions that produce neutral zones...and rupture the traditional patriarchal order, resulting in greater space for women’s autonomous movement” (2006: 82-83). In short, the “political pluralism offered women alternatives within conflicting discourses and at the same time allowed public space for autonomous initiatives to take hold” (Ertürk 2006: 97).

Similarly, Valorie K. Vojdik considered the headscarf issue in Turkey as a proxy for political struggle between secularists and Islamists to construct and embody competing national and political identities (2010: 664). She identifies that competing masculinities use the practice of women’s veiling or not veiling to achieve national and political power (Vojdik 2010: 672). Turkish scholar Alev Çinar, argues that hegemonic masculinity regulates the female body to construct itself as dominant and powerful (2005: 74). Besides that women also served as the active participants in this veiling debate; as the young Islamic university girls organized to protest and challenged the headscarf ban. They refused to conform to the gendered demands of either the secularists (of unveiling) or the Islamists (of seclusion to limit their public appearance) (Vojdik 2010: 675-684).

Likewise, Jayawardana also argues that the “resistance to imperialism and various forms of foreign domination on the one hand, and to feudal monarchies, exploitative local rulers and traditional patriarchal and religious structures on the other” are the important contexts that need to be considered for understanding “the democratic movement for women’s rights and the feminist struggles that emerged in Asia” (1986: 8). She further points out that “[t]he country studies...show that struggles for women’s emancipation were an essential and integral part of national resistance movements” (Jayawardana 1986: 8). Besides this nationalist movement context, she identifies that in the process of capitalist expansion, “while the women of the peasantry and working class were being proletarianized, those of the bourgeoisie were trained to accept new social roles in conformity with the emerging bourgeoisie ideology of the period”

(Jayawardana 1986: 9). The new bourgeois man for his own interest “needed as his partner a ‘new women’, educated in the relevant foreign language, dressed in the new style and attuned to western ways” (Jayawardana 1986: 12). In fact, they were in need of “a women who was ‘presentable’ in colonial society yet whose role was primarily in the home. These women had to show that they were the negation of everything that was considered ‘backward’ in the old society” (Jayawardana 1986: 12). Neither the nationalist movements, nor the bourgeoisie wanted women to be liberated, rather to retain a position of traditional patriarchal subordination. But in this process, the women thus became literate and educated begun to agitate for further educational opportunities, better employment and greater freedom. The proletarian women also realized their position and started protesting against their exploitation and for better pay. Even women’s movements emerged out of this context when more radical women started challenging the oppressive patriarchal structures of their societies and demanded revolutionary political and social alternatives (Jayawardana 1986: 17).

2.7.2. Competing Masculinities and Women’s Participation in South Asian Politics

With respect to the focus of this research, there is a need to explore this role of competing masculinities within the patriarchal and pluralistic societies of South Asia as a source of creating space for women’s political participation. Formal politics in South Asian countries is dominated by elite groups (e.g. military, bureaucracy, or traditional feudal/landlords/ or religious leaders, etc.) that act like the competing masculinities. It is a patriarchal strategy of these competing masculinities to bring women in political arena for their own immediate interests to successfully fulfill their broader political projects of capturing state power and resources (or prevent themselves from disintegration, getting votes from public etc.). This strategy served a latent function of providing a first opening to women to enter into the political arena that they were not able to do individually without the required resources, skills and male support, and then latter to train these women to claim ever wider space for their individual and autonomous political activity and use the features of patriarchy for its own transformation.

The most favorable conditions for the selection of women leaders in South Asia appear when competing masculinities are faced with a certain crisis situation. Samarasinghe

observes that women political leaders in South Asia are often “thrown into the public sphere at times of crises when men are either absent or when political movements and agitation need people irrespective of gender” (2000: 202). Wijekoon also confirms this largely consistent pattern of South Asian women’s rise to political power “in the midst of a period when their countries were experiencing a significant crisis in governance” (2005: 63). She considers that “the perceptions of female candidates as “maternal” or “caring” become more potent and relevant when the polity is weary and resentful of instability or illegitimacy” (Wijekoon 2005: 63). Competing political parties are aware of the fact that in such crisis women as widow or daughter of deceased or imprisoned leader can easily gain sympathy from a patriarchal populace that may lead to an electoral victory through “the sympathy vote” or prevent the party from disintegration (Wijekoon 2005: 63).

Khan (1994) made a political party level analysis of processes to explain women leaders’ selection in South Asia. She argues that political parties select their leaders according to the internal organizational pressures (like defection, dissidence, factionalism, disputes) and external challenges (like hostile military regimes, or strong opposition parties) to achieve their goals of attaining control of government and election victory. Sometimes internal and external pressures compel them to respond in a unique manner. Therefore, the unusual selection of the women in leadership positions “is one of the tactics or timely, opportunistic strategies to ensure election victories...In this situation, parties necessarily and almost unconsciously become responsible for the political change” (Khan 1994: 31-32). She contends that the selection of four South Asian women political leaders (Bandaranaike, Indira Gandhi, Benazir Bhutto, Khaleda Zia) by their respective parties, at a time when parties are facing severe pressures and crisis, was the tactic or strategy to save the party from disunity or to achieve electoral victory.

Political parties faced with severe crisis (e.g. sudden death or imprisonment of the leader, unavailability of suitable male successor or male relative of the leader, strong opposition, internal disunity, hostile military regimes, etc.) “needed a gluing force to unite all groups within the organization, a shield to protect to the party from disintegration or extinction, or a magnetic vote getter in the general election” (Khan

1994: 179). Khan argues that political parties found “this ‘glue,’ ‘shield,’ and ‘magnet’ in the placement and projection of women as party leaders” (1994: 179). One of the tactics or solutions sought by the party bosses at the time of political succession is the decision to look towards a female relative of the deceased leader because a non-political woman bearing her husband’s or father’s name enters the position of power as a less-controversial figure, which helps to eradicate differences within the party. No political leader in the decision making committee would have a history of personal rivalries or political encounters with these women. Bearing the name of a popular leader, she is considered a good vote getter during the general election (Khan 1994: 181).

Khan also points out an interesting historical fact that for last five decades not a single “woman has achieved a party leadership position in any of the communist countries, which have been one-party system, despite the fact that in most of the communist parties, women’s membership has been significantly high” (1994:172). She argues that “in a multiparty environment women have been easily selected to power positions. The reason may lie in party rivalries, tough electoral competition, the threat to the power position or the struggle to achieve the power position or electoral victory” and other such pressures which are not possibly present in a one party system (Khan 1994:172).

Similarly, Saira Bano, (2009) argues that “[i]n Pakistan, since independence, all regimes whether liberal, conservative or military have treated women’s issues as political necessity only to project their regimes as liberal and modern to the world” (2009: 33). She identifies that “[n]one of these regimes responded positively or responsibly to women’s issues. Women’s questions have been used to strengthen their own political agenda and to secure political points” (Bano 2009: 34). She concludes that “[m]en support the case of women only when they think that the interests of men would be served profoundly” (Bano 2009: 34).

It is evident that competing political masculine interests in pluralistic societies of South Asia brought women in public and political sphere for former’s own interest of enlarging their power through capture of state resources or establishing their relative dominance in the political system. But this process, simultaneously, has served a latent

function to broaden the political space available to women for their autonomous and individual action. Thus, by giving rise to new power centers it altered the already existing patriarchal social order and gender relations within public and political sphere. After entering formal politics these women certainly seized to be mere puppets and established their own political identity by neither completely complying with patriarchal demands of confinement and segregation in private sphere as a politicized being nor they completely detached themselves from their patriarchal roles of private sphere when they work in political office. Challenging, both, patriarchy and masculinities they are in public political sphere but still with agendas and issues from private spheres in their hand (Samarasinghe 2000).

It is argued that the patriarchal feature of competing masculinities when struggling to consolidate their power for establishing their dominance have the potential to unintentionally broaden the space for women's individual autonomous political action. Thus, this patriarchal feature produces its own contradiction by giving rise to new power center through this broadening of public and political space available to women and consequently transforming the whole patriarchal power structure in society.

2.8. Conclusion: Theoretical Framework of This Research

This chapter opened with few questions and the following discussion was an attempt to explore the answers to them within the existing literature. First, it showed that feminist theory converges on the point that patriarchy, as a system of male domination over women, is central to women's historical exclusion from the public life, in general, and politics, in particular. Second, patriarchy, while neither losing its control nor its core in male domination, is transforming its shape to accommodate new socio-economic and political developments constantly changing our societies and providing women relatively more space for their public and political appearance. It is evident that the patriarchal organization of current human societies is so universal that it is unrealistic to expect for something from outside patriarchy to work for its transformation; especially in non-western context where women are contextually more oppressed and excluded in politics than their western counterparts. Therefore, it is argued that one should look for the opening and opportunities within the patriarchal system that may explain increasingly wider public and political space offered to women. Third, it was

explored that women in South Asian politics have used and manipulated the existing patriarchal structures to enter into politics and maximize their survival and gains within the existing male dominated political system. Their reliance on the very patriarchal structures served a latent function of effecting change in traditional roles and functions of these patriarchal structures from resistance to or exclusion of women from politics to facilitating their entry and survival in this sphere. Fourth, it is identified that the perpetual competition for power and dominance among masculine interests also has the potential to serve a latent function to broaden the space for women's autonomous public and political actions. In this way, giving rise to new power centers from within previously marginalized groups, thus, altering the whole social order in society to some extent.

On the basis of above explorations within existing literature, this chapter intends to identify and contribute a new dimension to existing explanations of patriarchal transformation by drawing attention towards a possibly inherent contradiction emerging from within patriarchy that may challenge and transform patriarchy from within it. This contradiction is seen emerging in two ways when looked to explain the increase in women's political participation. On the one hand, competition among masculine power interests consequently broadens the space for women's action. On the other hand, women's use and manipulation of patriarchal features as bargaining strategies to maximize their survival and gains within the existing system effect a change in the traditional functions of these features. There seems to be a dialectical relationship between women's increasing political participation and patriarchal structures; as they both are altering and accommodating, thus transforming, each other to give them a more compatible form for their co-existence in changing social order. Patriarchal features are reconfiguring their strategies to bring women in politics to consolidate their power base, while women thus entered in politics, relying on patriarchal features, in turn are affecting a change in the traditional roles and functions of these structures. The research undertaken for this dissertation is an effort to explore this argument with the help of empirical data drawn from a real social setting.

The available evidences demonstrate the significance of the theoretical explanation working at the national level, it still needs to be explored at the local and sub-national

levels to support the argument. Richter argues that “though women in most countries are making more independent bids for political office, characteristically they are most successful and uncontroversial the lower and closer to home the political bid” (1991: 526). There is dearth of literature available on the local councils/governments especially in respect of theoretical explanations of women’s political participation at local levels in patriarchal societies. The reason can be that the local councils/governments are relatively a new subject for academic research. For example, Samarasinghe also argues for a similar trend at all political levels when she writes that “at different levels of political participation and leadership, ranging from the national level to the local levels, women have demonstrated that they have the ability to use the patriarchal system to gain political visibility” (2000: 193). But she mostly used national and state level, rather than local level, examples to make her argument tangible. Similarly, most of the studies on theoretical explanations of women’s political participation in South Asia discuss national level examples. The reason can possibly be that it is easy to find examples of few prominent cases at the national level but the same is not that easy at local level councils, due to lack of such specific data and limited research. But this research considers it important to pay attention to local level as well if we really have to test these newly emerging theoretical dimensions of subverting patriarchy from within itself, women’s use and manipulation of patriarchal structures and the role of competing masculinities in women’s political participation.

Besides providing a theoretical framework, feminist perspectives also guide this research’s ontological and epistemological stances. Therefore, following feminist argument that woman’s experiences (and their perceptions, understandings, interpretations and accounts of these experiences) are windows to see the patriarchal world around them that ascribe them an unequal position in society, the ontological focus is on women’s experiences of their political participation in local government in Pakistan. Crotty (1998) identifies and defines three broad epistemological stances; objectivism, constructionism and subjectivism (and their variants)²⁹. Feminist

²⁹ Objectivist epistemology considers that objective truth exists apart of any consciousness and is waiting there to be discovered. Rejecting this view, constructionism advocates that there is no truth without mind. Truth is constructed, not discovered, through interaction between subject (humans) and object (the world). Subjectivism, not paying any attention to any such interplay

epistemology is not objectivist, but it is also neither simply constructionist nor purely subjectivist. It criticizes old epistemological models and develops new alternatives to them (Tanesini 1999: 3). It is referred as women's "way of knowing", "women's experience", or "women's knowledge" (Alcoff and Potter 1993: 1). On the one hand, it is similar to constructionist epistemology in which "different people may construct meaning in different ways, even in relation to the same phenomenon" (Crotty, 1998, p. 9) while, on the other hand, it assigns an important role to emotions as a source to stimulate new insight (Fonow and Cook 1991: 9). This research will follow Alessandra Tanesini's feminist alternative to mainstream epistemology based on following three common characteristics of feminist epistemologies: first, it provides an account of practical knowledge (i.e. knowledge of everyday); second, it takes all knowledge to be essentially social; third, rejecting the principle of value-neutrality, it holds that values are constitutive of knowledge (Tanesini 1999: 4). It will focus on women's knowledge of everyday social experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the social world around them that could not be explored and reached through traditional positivist way of knowing.

between subject and object, considers meaning as coming out of nothing and simply imposed on the object by the subject (Crotty 1998: 8-9).

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN AND PATRIARCHY IN PAKISTAN

3.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to sketch a picture of women's status in Pakistan. It describes the kinship and hierarchy based patriarchal structures, from family to the state level, that ascribe a subordinate status to women and systematically excludes them from access to and possession of any formal and informal power and authority in society. It is argued that basic pattern of social relations in Pakistan is a combination of kinship and hierarchy (based on patron and client relations), where women subsume their self identity within the male patriarch headed group identity (based on kinship, caste, tribe, ethnic, or regional affiliations). This consequently reduces their chances to access and hold power position to no more than rare. This social order has dire consequences for women who are systematically excluded from acquiring necessary skills, experiences and support human resource networks for entering political competition and achieving any kind of power and authority at any level of society.

3.2. Women's Status in Pakistan

Pakistan falls within what Caldwell (1982) calls the "patriarchal belt"³⁰, where social conditions are not favorable for women. In societies like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and northern India there is "a culture against women", which is characterized with lower attention to health, survival chances, and life options of women (Moghadam 1993: 108-109). These countries have a poor performance in respect of sex ratio, female literacy, formal educational attainment, fertility rates,

³⁰ Moghadam (1993: 107) defined the "belt of classic patriarchy" as including North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (including Turkey and Iran), and South and East Asia (Pakistan, Afghanistan northern India, and rural China). Similarly, Kandiyoti (1988: 278) also draws the geographical area of classic patriarchy as including North Africa, the Muslim Middle East (including Turkey, Pakistan, and Iran), and South and East Asia (specifically, India and China).

maternal mortality rates, and female labor force participation in the labour market. This situation is clearly reflected in UNDP's ranking of countries in its Human Development Report, where Pakistan ranks as 134th out of 177 on Human Development Index (HDI), 133rd out of 136 on Gender and Development Index (GDI) and 66th out of 75 on Gender Empowerment Index (GEM) (Human Development Report 2006).

According to last census conducted in 1998, the sex ration per every 100 women is 112 men and the literacy rate of women is only 32% as compared to 54% among men. The figure gets worse in case of rural women i.e. only 20%. According to UNESCO³¹, for the years 2003-2008, maternal mortality ratio in Pakistan is 280 deaths per 100,000 live births, annually. Practices such as domestic violence, killing in the name of honor, dowry, *wani*³², early or child marriages and exchange marriages, etc. are wide spread. Women's labour force participation is also no more then 2.23% as compared to that of 59.2% among men (Population Census Organization 1998)³³. Actually women are mostly engaged in family agriculture in rural areas and in small home based production units (like bangle making, making packing bags, packing finished goods, tailoring, etc) in urban areas. Women's contributions in these sectors are invisible because of the traditional assumption that 'women do not work' and more importantly due to lack of data available in this regard. Another reason for this less access to education, health facilities, and formal labour force participation is women's restricted mobility or inclusion into the public sphere; mostly where these opportunities lie.

The State discourse and policy has also not been a favorable one towards Pakistani women. The historically persistent struggle between competing masculine interests (like military, bureaucracy and civilian elites) does not leave room for proper focus on women's concerns. In the past (i.e. from late 1970s to mid 1980s), efforts of the State

³¹ The statistics have been taken from http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/pakistan_pakistan_statistics.html#70 retrieved on October 8, 2010, at 12:30

³² *Wani* is a social practice that enables men to offer and accept women as a commercial good to settle minor or major disputes. It is common in Punjab province.

³³ 1999-2000 Pakistan Labour Force Survey shows better figures of female participation rate as 9.3% (10.7 % in rural and 6.3% in urban areas) but this is also very low (cited in Wasim *et al* 2008: 32)

in maintaining its legitimacy through so called Islamization³⁴ often entailed enforcement of discriminatory laws against women that legally and socially undermined women's status in society. Such as, *Qanoon-e-Shahadat* (the law of evidence) reduced woman's attestation of evidence, in financial cases, to half of that of man; Muslim family law gave women half rights in inheritance as that of men; polygamy is neither banned nor sufficiently restricted by the law and citizenship is guaranteed through patrilineal decent. Furthermore, the *Hudood* Ordinances have served to victimize women and crimes committed in the name of honor as a particular form of crime was not until recently recognized in the law, although it frequently occurs throughout the country³⁵. *Qisas* and *Diyat* Act was allowing for compromise and compensation as an easy way to get rid of any criminal accusations in matters of bodily harm and murder, especially when the victim was a woman³⁶. One of the positive impacts of the enhanced participation of women in Pakistani legislative institutions is the promulgation of law against Honour Killing (The Honour Killing Act 2004) in the year 2004 and The Protection of Women Act 2006. The former recognized honour killings as crime in the law and excluded the perpetrator of such crime from the impunity provided in *Qisas* and *Diyat* Act and the latter amended Hudood Ordinances to lessen the misery of women in case of rape by removing the unrealistic requirements of evidences. But the extent of their implementation is still a matter of debate in Pakistani society.

The root cause of this culture of ascribing low status to women can be traced in the basic social structure of Pakistani society and the pattern of social relationships it fosters. The prevailing social structures in Pakistan, especially in rural society, which is

³⁴ General Zia-ul-Haq's regime (1977-1888) made efforts for gaining popular legitimacy to his military take over of state power by exploiting the concept of Islam. See Chapter 4 for detail about Zia's regime and his policies.

³⁵ The prevalence of killing in the name of honor is evident from reports of 119 cases of honour killing received by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) only during the first quarter in the year 2000 and 472 such cases (reported in print media) are identified by Aurat Foundation in annual national report on situation of violence against women in Pakistan for the year 2008.

³⁶ Mostly crimes committed against women (especially in case of honor killings if reported) were likely to be compromised under this law by her relatives.

more than 60%³⁷ of the population, are based on kinship, caste, tribal, feudal and patriarchal ties. Therefore, the principles of social organization, from family to the state level are the key to understanding women's status in society.

3.3. Patriarchal Structures of Kinship Networks

In its basic organization, Pakistani society can be defined as “classic patriarchy”³⁸ (Kandiyoti 1988: 274). This form of patriarchy is quite close to the original literal meaning of the term—namely ‘the rule of the father over his family’. This form of patriarchy is maintained and reproduced by the patrilocally extended household (Kandiyoti 1988: 278), which gives the senior male head of the household authority over everyone else; that is, all women, young males and children. Property, assets, residence, and descent proceed through the male line. Consanguineous marriages³⁹ are a strategy prevalent here to maintain the patrilocal extended household and kinship, tribal, or ethnic ties at broader level in society. The public and private spheres are segregated as home and outside home; the private sphere (i.e. mainly home and extended kinship settlements in villages) is assigned to women, although under the authority of a patriarch male. The public sphere (i.e. work and market place outside the private sphere) is assigned to male patriarchs for power sharing according to the broader social system of stratification in society; which is mainly on the basis of kinship networks, caste, ethnicity, or region. Women's access to the public sphere increases with age. This social order results in women's lower status, control, subordination, devaluation of their labour and the lack of necessary experience and material and symbolic resources required for accessing and possessing a power and authority position in society.

Pakistan is predominantly a rural society. Structures of “traditional patriarchy” are stronger in rural areas. “There is a split between highly patriarchal countryside and an urban context where gender and family relations are more egalitarian” (Moghadam

³⁷ According to 1998 Census of Pakistan, urban proportion of the total population is 32.50 %. It means 67.50% population lives in rural areas. <http://www.statpak.gov.pk>; retrieved on October 8, 2010; at 13:45

³⁸ Kandiyoti used the term for particular kind of patriarchy that is the characteristic of South and East Asia as well as the Muslim Middle East.

³⁹ Consanguineous Marriages refers to marriages among such male and female who are related to each other by blood.

1993: 109). The reason can be that in urban areas there is a more possibility for relatively close contact of women and marginalized groups to the state structures, although it is not so strong in all over Pakistan. While in rural areas this link between individuals and state is weak and is mediated through the tribal, caste or kinship based patriarchs or traditional head of extended families, villages or regions.

Family is the basic unit of social organization. The definition of the Muslim family as a patriarchal unit (Moghadam 1993: 99) is also applicable to the Pakistani family. Pakistani family is basically joint or extended patrilocal family in both rural and urban areas, but there are also nuclear and semi nuclear families, mostly in urban areas. This typical Pakistani joint family is a possible aggregate of father, his widow mother, wife and married or unmarried sons and younger brothers along with their wives and children (and even their grandchildren and their wives and children, if there are), and unmarried daughters and sisters (and if any widow or divorced daughter or sister along with her children) (Wasim *et al* 2008: 30) drawing from the same economic pool. In some families foster children and some traditional family servants⁴⁰ also form parts of this extended family. This joint family may also take the form of extended household, which is a group of economically independent nuclear or joint families or of both, related to each other and living together in the same extended home. In this joint or extended household the main authority lies with the senior male head of the household; the father and rest of the members abide by his decisions (Wasim *et al* 2008: 30). The percentage of female headed households in the country is difficult to estimate due to the lack of available data in this regard. 'A household head is male by assumption since the mere presence of an adult male in household...is enough to confer headship status to him but even chief or all economic responsibility on a women is not enough to confer the same status on her (Mohiuddin 1989: 762).

Lyon defines Pakistani rural family as "comprised of one or more *ghar*⁴¹, living within easy walking distance for children (within the same village or close lying hamlets)" (2002: 72). In rural areas, these families may live in a large compound (formally or informally demarcated) sharing one kitchen and single pool of economic resources hold

⁴⁰ Old age woman or man living and serving in the house, day and night.

⁴¹ *Ghar* is an Urdu word, having its literal English meaning as 'Home'.

by senior male head of household or it can be each couple living in the same large compound of the household with separate kitchen and financial resource, but still living under the authority of the senior male head. Further, Lyon defines the village as having “multiple nuclear-kin *ghar* (i.e. *ghar* of extended families, or ‘joint’ family households)” as kin group members try their best to maintain their houses very close to each other (Lyon, 2002, p. 72). Therefore, the villages are mostly comprises of such extended families living in vicinity. Almost all the population of the village in some way or other has some relation to each other. Some times the whole village is comprised of one or two castes exclusively living there or the particular castes exclusively living in particular parts of the village. Such neighborhoods of the village are usually denominated with the name of that particular caste. In this extended settlement of the kin group within neighborhood and village is also considered an extension of private sphere and women’s free mobility and activities are more accepted within this extended area of neighborhood or village.

In urban areas the extended family lives in single house sharing same kitchen or otherwise. With the growth of family size there are possibilities for married sons and their dependents to get separate house and form another household. Unlike the village, the relatives or same caste people do not have so much possibility to live in close vicinity in urban areas. But still there are certain areas that are traditionally populated by certain castes, *quom*,⁴² or ethnic group, whether the residents of these areas are relatives to each other or not.

“The common practice of cousin-marriage...contributes to the strength of extended patriarchies” like in Pakistan (Gazdar 2007: 86-87). The marriage among close relatives, especially among cousins, is common in Pakistan⁴³ and helps to maintain the extended patrilocal households and kinship ties. Such marriages are more common

⁴² *Quom* can be defined as the communal group.

⁴³ Hussain’s (1998) research done in Karachi and the national 1990-91 Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS), both indicate an unchanging pattern for several last decades that approximately 60% of marriages in Pakistan are consanguineous, over 80% of which are between first paternal cousins, and 31.1% to 58.9% between second cousins or closer kin, both in rural and urban areas (Hussain 1998: 261-262; Afzal, Ali, and Siyal 1994: 664).

among illiterate or less educated⁴⁴ rural women of young age group and whose parents were also consanguineously married (Hussain and Bittles 1998: 261; Afzal, Ali, and Siyal 1994: 665). The prevalence of this form of marriage is strengthened by underlying social, economic and cultural considerations; such as knowledge of and familiarity with the positive and/or negative aspects of the suitor's family, regard for the offspring of siblings⁴⁵, insurance against mistreatment from the daughter-in-law or in case of bride from husband and in-laws, keeping the property intact⁴⁶ and maintaining the purity of descent (Hussain and Bittles 1998: 273). In last case the marriage is possible within the clan (*zat*), not necessarily restricted to among cousins (Hussain and Bittles 1998: 273). Marriages are mostly arranged by kin rather than out of the choice of boy or girl, that's why mostly arranged at very young age and within parental kin networks. This way, "the social organization of the tribe (*qabila*) or the communal group (*quom*) retains its basis as blood ties and remains patriarchal in the classic sense" (Moghadam 1993: 107). This cousin marriage has also decreased the opportunities of women's exposure to and extensive interaction with extra kin networks during her life span.

Although, it is hard to sharply sketch a dividing line between the public and private spheres to enclose them in ideal type definitions of the terms used for modern societies. There is a continuum which ranges from the very private and intimate sphere of the household to the public sphere of the market or public offices. On the continuum the most parts of the private and public⁴⁷ spheres are more or less separately (but not exclusively) assigned to women and men, respectively. This division is relatively sharp in urban areas where the workplace is separate from household, due to modern infrastructure and arrangement of work place outside home. But urban women of poor

⁴⁴ Afzal, Ali, and Siyal also explained the same findings of high prevalence of cousin marriage among uneducated or less educated; for the first cousin marriage (52.2. % with no education, 48.9% with primary education, 43.1 with middle level and 32.5 with secondary level education) and for second cousin marriages these figures are (10.4, 14.4, 10 and 10.8 percent respectively) (1994: 665)

⁴⁵ Preference for getting their children married with their parents' sibling's children, means with their cousins.

⁴⁶ In this case it mostly occurs in landowning families (Afzal *et al.* 1994: 675)

⁴⁷ On the continuum the private sphere can range from household, neighborhood, nearby kin households, the whole of village boundaries, and fields, etc. the public sphere may range from fields, *bethak*-the sitting area for men- in front of village, roads, public transports, health and educational institutions, markets, business centers and public offices, etc.)

strata also work at home to earn their livings. In rural areas, the division is more relaxed as the private sphere may extend from the household to kin households located adjacent to it, agricultural field and familiar boundary of the village. In villages, family male, blood kin of the extended family and also young males and blood kin from the neighborhood are free to visit the household and interact with family females. In villages women can move around the whole village; they work in the fields, wash cloth on some water channels, or streams and cut wood and grass, as well. The actual base of delimiting public and private is the familiarity and non familiarity with the person to whom women may come in interaction.

Villages are settled in a way to keep the strangers out of the village, in front of its entrance there is some kind of sitting area like *bethak*, or *ottaq* for gathering and discussions among men. Women are generally not allowed to enter. More or less the same arrangement works within urban area, but at the household level. The blood relations and extended kin are free to visit the house but strangers are usually limited to the sitting room of the house. In case of extra kin visitors, household women are preferred to meet guest women in the inner household area while men meet the men guest in sitting area.

Purdah (veil) is an important tool for demarking this public private difference. In villages, women are use to cover themselves with *Chadar* (a large piece of cloth) when going outside the familiar sphere of the household or village jurisdiction. In urban areas *purdah* connotes for avoidance to deliberate interaction with stranger men. Urban women are less incline to wear *Chadar* or cover their body while going out. The preferred way is to wrap the *Dopata* (the traditional part of Pakistani dress- a relatively small and narrow piece of cloth than *Chadar*) around shoulder and mostly middle and old age women also put it on their head. However, there are a considerable amount of urban women who use *Chadar* or gowns⁴⁸ for covering their body when going out of their house. When going out of the home or the private sphere (like nearby relatives or

⁴⁸ The gown called *abaya* has become common among young and middle age women especially after the increased labour migration to the Middle East. It has similarity with the old traditional cover *Burqa* as the body part of these two are almost same or the *abaya* is a modernized form of the traditional one. But the *abaya* is usually used with a scarf (a relatively small square shape piece of cloth to use to cover the head) that has replaced the traditional typically stitched upper part of *burqa*.

somewhere within village) women are escorted by a male even a younger boy. But the private sphere interaction can also be extended to the public places, such as the market when the women encounters a familiar man (with home they are allowed to interact in the home).

All this public and private division, *purdah*, and control over women are very much linked with the patriarchal ideology of honour of men or family. “Pakistanis appear... to be obsessed with patriarchal notions of honour, with all of the violent misogyny that goes with them” (Gazdar 2007: 86). In Pakistan, like in any other patriarchal contexts, “Family’s honor and reputation rests most heavily on the virginity and conduct of women” (Moghadam 1993: 108-109). *Purdah* and control over women are the strategies to preserve men’s honour that lies with women. As Mandelbaum put it, “Honor is the key good for these men, and their honour is balanced on the heads of the women” (cited in Moghadam 1993: 108-109). It is also noted that “[m]en are entrusted with safeguarding family honour through their control over female members; they are backed by complex social arrangements that ensure the protection-and dependence-of women” (Kabeer cited in Moghadam 1993: 108-109). Killings in the name of honor are the darkest aspect of this patriarchal ideology of honor that still exists in Pakistani society.

The ideology of *Purdah* and honour limiting women to the private sphere of extended kin group leads to assignment of different roles to women then men. Women’s role in the family is bearing and rearing children, their nurturance and socialization, and domestic chores within the private sphere of household and community services (e.g. attending funerals, marriage ceremonies, and visits to sick and other relatives on festivals or religious days). In rural areas women also work in fields, take care of livestock (milking, cleaning, preparing and serving food, and making kitchen fuel with animal dung). They also spend a plenty of their time cutting wood for the kitchen fuel and grass as food for livestock. This labour is unpaid thus is not valued as something that may give power and authority to a person in the household. Because of their restricted mobility to the public sphere and unavailability of facilities, women are less preferred for formal education, if sent to school, most of them could attend primary school as they were child, but soon by the age of 5th grade they are denied to go out or

to school (which is considered a part of public sphere) as they are now grown up. They are given only religious education at home. All this reduces women's chances to get the required education and skills to enter the paid labour market in public sphere, thus reinforcing her economic dependence on men.

In urban areas, availability of gas and electricity has made some aspects of women's life easy but still their activities are limited to the private sphere of household and the community services outside it. The availability of educational facilities has made it possible for girls to go to schools and colleges; but for a few to go to universities and for employment. Now the trend of women's employment is growing day by day in urban areas. But the working women have to bear the double responsibility of domestic work along with the paid work outside home.

The man is considered as the bread winner; who is responsible for providing all persons living under his authority within family. The main sphere of his activity is in the public sphere outside the home. He also holds the final authority in the private sphere of household on everyone else, even the authority about deciding women's education, mobility and employment outside the home in both rural and urban areas. It is considered that if women will do paid work outside the private sphere in formal labour market it will socially mean that the man is relying on women's earning '*aurat ke kamai kha rahe han*'. It is a matter of men's so called ego. Therefore, women are mostly not preferred to go for higher education, employment, or business outside home or to migrate for any educational or employment purposes, as 'they do not have to earn for family'. Moghadam concludes this situation that "[i]n the public sphere, power relations overwhelmingly involved male household-heads (patriarchs)" while "the private sphere was usually ruled formally by a patriarch. This arrangement left no basis for collective action by women" (1993: 106). Therefore, she argues that the only way for women to achieve public influence is that they have to go through male patriarchs (Moghadam 1993: 106).

In urban areas now we can find the changing trends but still not on a mass level. Women belonging to the upper middle class, upper class and elite families (like landlords, industrialist, businessmen, army related, and financially strong families) are

allowed higher education, better employment and work in the public sphere outside their home. Their mobility and maintenance in public sphere owes much to the resources they possess; like vehicle or mobility arrangement, a selective social circle accepting their public appearance, less rigid dress codes, and high education, etc. The women from lower and lower middle strata entering the public sphere have to struggle a lot within their family, with their social setup and limited material and non material resources to maintain their presence in public sphere. But still a large number of poor women also work (in factories and at home based production units, etc.) to help managing household livings.

In addition to the obstacles caused by the public/private distinction, *purdah* and honour, there is also a culture of preference for male child and large family size, especially in rural areas. The reason for this is male child's perceived future potential for economically supporting the house and adding to its strength by bringing a bride and having children rather than the girl who will move to another house after marriage. This perception reduced young unmarried girls at the lowest tier of power hierarchy in household under the authority of males and senior women (mother, elder sisters, aunts, and mother-in-law, etc) till their marriage. Like Kandiyoti's classic patriarchy, when the "girls are given away in marriage at a very young age into households headed by their husband's father, they are subordinate not only to all the men but also to the more senior women" especially to their mother-in-law (1988: 278). The only way to establish their place in the husbands' house is by producing male offspring (Kandiyoti 1988: 279). In urban areas girls and their families may delay their marriages for their career or education, but the practice is not very common.

Throughout women's life cycle in Pakistan their dependence shifts from one male relative to another. Before marriage their sole reliance is upon their father, for providing and any kind of decision making due to their lack of education, paid work possibilities and control over household resources and authoritative power. After their marriage their dependence shifts to their husbands and in-laws in all terms. Sons are also women's most critical resource for their old age security and insurance after their husbands, ensuring their life long loyalty is an enduring preoccupation (Kandiyoti

1988). In this way, the mother's dependence, after her husband, shifts to her grown up sons.

Within household, all women are also not a homogenous group. Their mobility, control and authority vary according to their age. Young women, especially before their marriages are kept in more severe control of family and male heads. They have less freedom to move and almost no say in family decisions. They are considered as inexperience, immature and unaware of the world. They are more like a silent labour force for domestic chores within the household. As they got married, have children and grow to the middle or old age, they are considered gaining experience, able to move with relative freedom, can go out of the private sphere alone or even entrusted with the task of guarding young girls when going out. They gain some say in their family decision; especially the matters related to private sphere of the household. Their authority lies on those junior to them within the household; especially young women (e.g. daughter-in-laws). Old age women's entrance to the male spheres like *bethak* and outside home are relatively more granted than that of a young or middle aged ones.

Moghadam's portrayal of women's life in patriarchal societies is also similar for Pakistani women as "[y]oung brides marry into large families, gain respect mainly via their sons, and late in life acquire power as mother-in-laws. Over their life cycle, their dependence shifts from father to husband and finally to son" (1993: 106). Kandiyoti defined power dynamics of woman's life cycle in these societies as "the deprivation and hardship she experiences as a young bride is eventually superseded by the control and authority she will have over her own subservient daughters-in-law" (1988: 279). This "cyclical nature of women's power in the household and their anticipation of inheriting the authority of senior women" is a strong motive behind internalization of patriarchy by the women themselves (Kandiyoti 1988). Therefore, in classic patriarchy like Pakistan, women are submissive to and reproduce their own subordination and devaluation of their labor (Kandiyoti 1988: 280).

This patriarchal social setup of extended families and kinship networks preserved through cousin marriages and women's control by male patriarch through the symbolic and material tools like honour, *purdah* and public/private divide produces two nuclei of

stratification, as identified by Moghadam: “the household/family /lineage nexus and the dominance of the male gender” (1993: 105). These nuclei systematically deemphasize education, skills and paid labour for women, thus, reproducing unpaid reproductive roles, economic dependence and subordination of women within patrilocal extended kinship network. The dominance and control by male gender at the basic level of family closes women’s opportunity to acquire the symbolic and material resources (e.g. support of kin and non kin networks⁴⁹) and experiences needed for entrance and competition in public sphere; specially the political sphere that is historically considered a male domain (with exception of elite women⁵⁰) in Pakistan. In the next section I will discuss how these two nuclei of stratification transfer from family to the state level systematically excluding women from masculine competition for all kinds of authority and power.

3.4. Power Structures from Family to the State

Lyon (2002) argues that Pakistani culture encourages collective self-identification and action (e.g. on the basis of kinship, caste, *quom*, ethnicity, or region, etc) with asymmetrical relationships as a form of patronage (relation of patron and client) among individuals within these collectivities, from the family to the state level, as an organizing principal of society. This social organization results from a lack of infrastructure for state to reach its mostly illiterate and rural citizens directly. People maintain these patronage relationships to serve the interest of each other and to connect them in a human resource network for the management of resources (Lyon 2002). In turn, these collective but hierarchical social networks prevent individuals to be a direct citizen of the state, as their interaction with the state is mediated through male patriarchs at the several tiers of these hierarchical social networks.

Beginning from the basic level of Pakistani extended family and kin group, in which socialization plays a primary role in establishing the collective self identification, as

⁴⁹ In Pakistani society power is very much linked to the support of human resource one may accumulate. This is usually provided through extended kin and non-kin networks. Women are less likely to draw this support as their links to kin and non-kin networks have already been through male patriarchs within family or in extended kinship networks.

⁵⁰ If we conceive a continuum of masculinities in Pakistani society, few exceptional elite women may occupy a more powerful and higher social status than a common man due to their resourceful family networks and backgrounds.

well as, asymmetrical relationships (Lyon 2002). On the one hand, young household members are socialized to relate themselves to kin group and depend on the extended family by considering the strength and position of their group as their own (Lyon 2002: 70). On the other hand, it fosters a hierarchical relationships among household members based on age and relation type (i.e. among father and son, elder and younger brothers, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, etc.) (Lyon 2002: 70). The younger and the lower (mostly young women) in hierarchy has to serve their higher status people and the higher status people (elders), in turn, has to fulfill the needs of the lower status household members.

The basic building block in many of the diverse social formations-such as factions, political alignments, vote blocks, tribes, and even entire villages-is the family ruled over by its male head. Women subsume their self identification in familial group identification represented by male head. They mostly observe *purdah* and are economically dependent therefore remain under the authority of the male patriarch who serve their economic needs. They can have links with outer world only through male patriarch. This hierarchical relationship leads to women's virtual invisibility, under the cover of family identity, and less authority within and outside the kin group.

The same patron of relationship expands to the extended kin groups, *biradri*, caste, clan, or tribe. As discussed above the relatives in extended kin group are used to live in close vicinity, with close connection and high mutual obligations. Inter-related families come together in these wider networks under the patriarchal leadership of powerful men from powerful families within these networks (Gazdar 2003). The competition for being the leader of extended kin group is usually among male heads of the individual families. The most powerful family (in terms of their human resource networks, material and non material resources) and the most senior or powerful male within the extended kin group becomes the head of extended kin group possessing authority to be abide by the rest of the group members. The women as mostly a lower status and invisible person within family and extended kin group have no chance to compete for authority position even at this level. In this way their link to the world outside home becomes twice indirect, first through their family male patriarch and then through the extended kin group patriarch head.

In Pakistan there are parallels between the ways individuals behave and relate within their family and the ways they do so with non-kin (Lyon 2002: 3). Gazdar indicating to Pakistani society's obsession with caste in private dealings and transactions argues that the kinship group (i.e. '*zat*'⁵¹, '*biradri*' and '*quom*') remains a key dimension of economic, social and political interaction (2007: 86-87). Similarly, Lyon identified the significant role and impact of caste and *Quom* in the selection of marriage partners, economic, labor and employment relationships and broader politics as these categories provide a simple mechanism for approaching non kin superordinate or subordinates to fulfill everyone's interest through these networks (Lyon 2002). In non kin relationships (with those who do not have any kinship ties) the idiom and metaphors of caste based brotherhood and kinship hierarchies are used to connect and organize people within these networks for management of resources (such as employment, political favors, and occupying state offices). The same social pattern of organization is manipulated similarly to all extra kin categories, like ethnic and regional categories.

These non kin networks are mostly dominated by males. Women mostly do not come out to get education, or participate in labour force or to hold any political positions they usually do not play any significant role in these hierarchical extra kin networks. There are not many women tribal, ethnic, nationalist, and regional leaders. Those who managed to enter there (mostly through their blood relations with male patriarchs), rarely reached to any authority and power positions within these networks and are usually assigned with kinship ideological titles like sister, mother and daughter. Women also used these titles to maintain their existence in these non kin networks. For instance, *Mohatarma* Fatima Jinah was called the mother of the nation, Benazir Bhutto always presented herself as sister of all Pakistanis and women in political parties like in MQM are called as *Baji* (means elder sisters).

The same social order also transfers to the formal politics in the country at the political party and state level. Gazdar notes that "[f]amilies and extended social networks based upon kinship ties are important for Pakistanis, across ethnic and sectarian boundaries, as a mediating factor for all market transactions and political coalitions" (2007: 86-87).

⁵¹ Zaat is an Urdu word means English word 'caste'

In government and politics, there are two areas where these ties play an important role: elections and favors (Lyon 2002: 137). In most of the cases political parties' memberships are based on kinship, caste, ethnic and regional affiliations. "The alliances created for party politics emerge out of a patron based distribution of resources and contacts" (Lyon 2002: 197). These ties also play an important role in elections for making appeals to electorate and achieving electoral victory. The support of these networks to win the election is drawn through distribution of resources and favors provided to the members of these networks.

Lyon while describing the case of Punjab's dominant political group identifies that one way for the distribution of resources is through civil service appointments which these patrons, when holding power in state machinery, arranged for the members of their respective networks. "In return for preferential consideration in civil service posts, local politicians offered themselves as clients in support of [politician and his party]" (2002: 198). This transfer of kin based social organization at the formal politics and the civil service appointments creates no space for women to enter these formal power and authority positions. Neither the individuals nor the political leaders are independent actors. They identify themselves with any one of the politically significant regional or ethnic structures, which include Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, Baluchis and Muhajirs (Hussain 1979). State also is a representation of the fundamental culture of the country. Individuals closely tied to their networks when become the part of state mechanisms give priority to their network's agenda, rather than serving for popular good, and uses the state processes for resource capitalization for the good of a specific human resource network (Lyon 2002: 188).

3.5. Conclusion

Connell argues that this "interplay between different forms of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works" (Connell 1987: 183). From family to the state level male patriarchs are coordinating and competing each other to consolidate their power and are systematically excluding women from this competition and finally segregating them in the private sphere of home with reproductive roles emphasized. In the public sphere as a male domain men are organized in hierarchical relations of patron and client. Kinship and caste based ties play an important role in

creating human resource network that determine the strength and power of certain groups within Pakistani society. The political struggle for state resources among different such groups and the consequent repeated change of the governments has also led to the drain of state resources to the certain specific sections of society, rather than being used for the good of all common people. These struggling groups due to accumulation of resource has formed an elite strata of society that has captured most of the venues of power and authority in the country, without any regard for common people, who feel themselves alienated from the formal politics and state in the country.



CHAPTER 4

ELITE MASCULINE POLITICS AND WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter describes women's political participation within the broader background of the nation state building process of Pakistan and its historically persistent struggle among elite masculine groups (e.g. military, bureaucracy, religious elites, feudal/landlords and industrialists, etc.) for state power. First, the nature and development of elite based political structures in Pakistan will be reviewed and then, historical trajectory of women's political participation at different political forums along with its historically determining factors in different periods of time will be traced to understand the nature and extend of women's political participation in the country. It explains that competing masculine groups, in different periods of time, have included or excluded women from formal politics in order to consolidate their grip on state resources and to undermine the other competing groups. Recently this competition among masculine power groups, in order to fulfill their own respective projects, has created an ever greater space for women to enter in politics.

4.2. Elite Based Political Structure of Pakistan

In patriarchal societies social stratification becomes two dimensional: one is based on "the two nuclei of household/family/lineage and male dominance" and the second on "whatever combination of public stratification nuclei (classes, military elites, etc.) existed in a particular society" (Moghadam 1993: 106). The first dimension has been discussed in the previous chapter in detail. Here the focus is on the latter dimension which is connected to the former in that public power-groupings are a result of aggregates of the household/family/lineage heads (Moghadam 1993: 106). In Pakistan, the basic patriarchal structures of male domination, extended kinship, hierarchy, and cultural encouragement of collective identities from family to the state (as discussed in

Chapter 3) combined with historical developments like colonialism, ethnic and regional heterogeneity, industrialization, and Islam (Hussain 1979: 224) gave rise to a number of competing elite groups dominating the power structure of society and gathering large human resource networks around them for their support to and legitimization of capturing state resources.

Pakistan has an elite dominated political culture. The word elite refer to any superior or the privileged group. Elite are defined as the organized ruling minority, against the disorganized majority of masses. They have the privilege to hold and access most of the power and authority in society. The basic pattern of Pakistani political structure is that the governing elites operate as central power holders in state and the non-governing elites exercise their institutionalized influence, while the masses do not have the direct access to the political system (Hussain 1976: 224). The presence of plural ethnic and regional segmentations and elite formations does not allow any single elite group to maintain absolute supreme power in state. This struggle for capturing state resources between plural elite groups “resulted in a number of competing elites openly challenging the extant authority structure in post independence Pakistan” (Hussain 1979: 229). In different times these elite groups alternatively exert more power and functions as governing elites but during the period they hold state power they need the continued defense from the other non governing elites. Consequently, the political history of Pakistan has been one of continuous pervasive competition among and within certain elite groups or competing masculinities (Connell 1987: 183) for gaining and maintaining hegemonic power in the society. As we see in last chapter that the basic structure of family and kinship group is unfavourable to let women to enter this public sphere competition of power therefore they were not able to be part of this elite stratum without any patron male patriarch elite.

Different scholars have classified these dominant elite groups, into more or less similar categories; Hashmi (1980) identified bureaucratic, political, military and business-industrial elite, Kurkreja (1985) identified as civilian politicians, bureaucracy and military, Shafqat (1989: 24) calling them “structural components” of the country’s political system classifies as military, bureaucracy, industrial-merchant classes, political, and religious elites, La Porte (1975) classifies them as political, economic and

social elite, and Hussain (1979) classifies as the landowning, bureaucratic, religious, industrial, professional and military elite. In short, these elite groups composing an oligarchic elite (Kukreja 1985: 185), can be broadly classified as military, bureaucracy and civilian elites (comprise of big landowners/feudal/tribal/ethnic leaders, industrialists professionals and religious leaders). Owing to the crucial role of these groups, the political history of Pakistan has been described as the history of its elite (Hashmi 1980: 31).

4.3. The Historical Process of Elite Formations

The development of these elite groups can be traced in different periods of Pakistani history and nation state building process. Landowning, feudal, tribal, and religious elites have their origin in traditional period, military and bureaucratic elites emerge out of colonial period, while industrialist or businessmen and professional elites grew out of the post independence industrialization process (Hussain 1979: 226). Religious elites empowered by the Muslim rulers were present before British colonization of India. The imperialist rulers curtailed their powers but the emergence of independence struggle for the creation of Pakistan in the name of holly homeland for Muslims of India again brought religious groups in power. Since then they have been serving, time to time, as a significant ally for different elite groups (e.g. military and other civilian elites) when the later strive to accumulate power for capture of state resources or to threat the governing elites.

Landowning, feudal, and tribal elites also existed since older times but their power was reinforced by colonial rule “as the bastion of support for their imperial rule in the Indian subcontinent” (Rashid 1978: 175). Later, the Salariat class⁵² that was active in nationalist movement for the independence of Indian subcontinent from British rule and creation of Pakistan having no support from common Muslim people at the grassroots invited the regional landlords to join All India Muslim League⁵³. This networking with regional landlords/ feudal/tribal elites was established with the aim

⁵² Hamza Alvi (1988) has coined this term for identifying people who were urban educated men (and very few women) from diverse classes, ethnic groups and regions, but they all were in employment of the colonial state administration (Alavi 1988: 67).

⁵³ All India Muslim League was the only party of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent that struggled for the freedom from British rule and independence of Pakistan as a homeland for Indian Muslims.

that they can brought with them the support of Muslim masses from Muslim majority regions to strengthen the movement and achieving victory in 1946 elections. When Pakistan was created, in 1947, Landlords class was the major power holders in the new born state. They remain in full control of Pakistani politics throughout the first decade after independence (Rashid 1978: 169). “For example, between 1947 and 1958, 68 per cent of the legislative members were landlords, while between 1962 and 1969, 58 percent were [landed elites]” (Hussain 1979: 4). With the passage of time their power grew ever since as Pakistan is still predominantly a rural, feudal and tribal society.

The military and bureaucracy are considered as the colonial elites due to their origin in British colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. These were the two most well established structures of British imperialist rule. With the departure of the British in 1947 and the death of the founder of the country M. A. Jinnah, the Bureaucratic elites of the Civil Services of Pakistan (CSP) took charge of the power junction and politician-bureaucrats such as Ghulam Mohammad (Governor General of Pakistan 1951-55), Chaudhri Mohammad Ali (Prime Minister of Pakistan 1955-56), and Iskandar Mirza (President of Pakistan 1955-58) all personally supported and governmentally reinforced bureaucratic control of the power junction (Hussain 1979: 227). These Bureaucrats also established time to time alliance with military that brought the later in the political arena as well.

Governor General Ghulam Muhammad, very early, invited military General Ayub Khan to assume the control of state in 1954 but the later temporarily assumed the post of minister of defense, at that time. But not too late, in 1958, General Ayub eventually took control of the government and adopted measures for prolongation and legitimization of his military rule by curbing the powers of other elite groups like bureaucrats, landowners, and religious leaders. These measures include abrogating the constitution of 1956, banning all political parties, dismissing or compulsorily retiring many members of the civilian bureaucratic elites, imposing land reforms (1959)⁵⁴ and

⁵⁴ Although the land reforms partially affected their power from 1959 to 1962, but as the LE withdrew into the background they continue to maintain their power through middle sector political figures acting as front men. In the next election, the LE returned to directly control political power. By 1965 the LE had become “the most powerful force in the country” (Hussain 1976).

gradually strengthening the secularized nature of the government by giving a modernized interpretation of Islam through the Central Institute of Islamic Research (Hussain 1979). He also launched 'Basic Democracies'⁵⁵ plan (see detail in next section) designed to dismantle the political power of competitors, like already established landowning, feudal and political elites and to politically mobilize rural and urban middle sector for supporting him to achieve victory in presidential elections, as electoral college for presidency elections.

The focus of Ayub's regime was more on economic development through industrialization and due to its excessive dependence on industrialist the regime was labeled as a "businessman's government" (Hussain 1979: 231). These close ties with government led the industrial elites grow in the political power and resources⁵⁶. The 1962 election showed a greater increase in industrial elite members in the National Assembly (Myrdal 1968: 335). They manipulated the economic policy in their own interests and "the majority of Pakistani's wealth gradually concentrated in the hands of only twenty families" (Hussain 1979: 232). Similar to other elite groups' growing protest, this industrialization was also a challenge to landowning elites. Therefore, Ayub's strategies brought most of the other elite groups in alliance for combined opposition to Ayub's regime. The political unrest led Ayub to leave the power to another Military General Yahya Khan's martial law administration in 1969. Thus, the second decade was marked with the emergence of a powerful businessmen-industrialist class with a group of highly politicized army officers and civil servants (Rashid 1978: 169).

Z.A Bhutto, a landed aristocrat from a well known family of Sindh, served the military dictator well in Ayub's martial law cabinet of 1958. Later, he also became a key mobilizer of masses against Ayub's regime and founded his Pakistan People's Party (PPP) by forming a new alliance with disenchanted landlords, petty bourgeoisie, and young radicals, against super rich industrialists and Ayub's regime (Rashid 1978: 170; Hussain 1979: 234). His party won the 1970 elections in West Pakistan, and after

⁵⁵ Basic Democracies were the Local governments or local bodies established by General Ayub.

⁵⁶ Industrial elites assumed control of newspapers, hoarded wealth in foreign banks, intermarried with families of bureaucratic, military, and landowning elites, and began to finance political parties (Hussain 1976: 231).

secession of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)⁵⁷, he assumed the office of Prime Minister of Pakistan. He adopted measures to curb the power of military, bureaucratic and industrial elites (Hussain 1979: 234). He nationalized the large industries. He appointed his trusted one, Zia-ul-Haq, as Chief of Army Staff, in supersession to half a dozen officers (Kamran 2005: 103). To accommodate with religious elites, he named his ideological program as 'Islamic socialism'. His economic policy led to deindustrialization process along with creation and consolidation of a pro-government landlord class benefited from so-called land reforms⁵⁸ and credits from the government-managed financial institutions (Rashid 1978: 170). The surplus funds were diverted towards agriculture with a curtailment of it from industrial sector (Rashid 1978: 179). Consequently, in the 1977 elections the landlord class reemerged as many of them joined the Pakistan People's Party and "received party tickets" (Rashid 1978: 179). The ethnic diversity also cross cuts this elite strata, as Punjabi elites started anti-Bhutto propaganda that Bhutto being a Sindhi is acting against Punjabi interests (Hussain 1979: 235). The unrest among industrialist led them to back the nine-party combined opposition grouped into Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) in 1977 election. PNA lost the elections and refused to accept the election results with accusation of gross rigging in the elections.

Political and civil unrest led to 1977 military coup by General Zia-ul-Haq, who also assumed the office of President of Pakistan in 1978. He ruled the country for more than eleven years. His policies helped military and religious elites to expend their influence while suppressing all other political elites. After assuming power he initially promised to hold election within 90 days, but later postponing the elections, he start an accountability of the politicians that was mostly People's Party Centered (Kamran 2005: 106). A Disqualification Tribunal was formed that disqualified 180 persons, who had been members of parliament, from participation in politics for a period of seven years (Kamran 2005: 106). Bhutto was hanged in 1979. Military was made highest

⁵⁷ East Pakistan after secession in 1971 became Bangladesh and West Pakistan comprises what is now Pakistan.

⁵⁸ The changes in land reform legislation done between 1972 and 1977 were to strengthen the growing economic power of the landlords who were increasingly relying on government funds for modernizing agriculture (Rashid 1978: 178).

decision making body by setting up a Military Council. In his period Bureaucracy-military nexus dominated the decision making (Kamran 2005: 108). Till 1985 all the Provincial Governors were Army Generals. Many military men found high position in civilian cadre in the Federal or Provincial governments or autonomous corporations, and in civil services (Kamran 2005: 109). “Martial Law regime turned the ministries and departments into virtual employment agencies and almost doubled the number of civil servants between 1977 and 1987” (Waseem 1989: 373). He mobilized and patronized Islamic elites as a strategy to strengthen his grip on the government. He formed an alternative political institution by the name of *Majlis-e-Shura*, as a board of advisors to the president. Its 284 members, nominated by the president, were intellectuals, scholars, *Ulema*, journalists, economists and professionals (Kamran 2005: 110) rather than already established politicians. He eventually held non party base elections in 1985, but before that he secured his position as president for next five years through a controversial referendum in 1984. But soon he again dissolved the National Assembly and removed the Prime Minister. After dissolution of Assemblies, he died in a plane crash in 1988.

Zia’s policy of demolishing PPP’s support base and patronage of various religious groups, traders, merchants and business groups as an anti-PPP coalition resulted in advent of *Islami Jamhuri Ittehad*⁵⁹ (IJI) in 1988. In IJI Pakistan Muslim League and Mian Nawaz Sharif (who is belonging to a big businessman family from Punjab and he was also patronized by Zia), assumed decisive position. After Zia, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, Zia’s favored bureaucrat turned politician assumed the office of President of the country and remained there till 1993. In the mean time, he dismissed two of the following democratically elected governments; each by Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, respectively. Despite military-bureaucracy nexus guiding the direction of election process, PPP won as the largest party in National Assembly making Benazir Bhutto the Prime Minister of Pakistan for the first time in 1988. Military was reluctant from the very beginning to let Benazir Bhutto to assume the office of Prime Minister and it dictated its terms before agreeing to let her assume the office of Prime Minister. But soon her relations with military worsened. Beside that, despite having a majority in parliament, she was hardly in control of the situation because Senate (the upper house)

⁵⁹ Means ‘Islamic Democratic Alliance’

was dominated by IJI and the largest province of Punjab has an IJI government that made any legislation processes difficult and the confrontation between center and Punjab were also continuously growing. Ethnic conflicts in Sindh were also severing. She was continuously struggle to keep her support from political elites through different means; ranging from bribes to political favors and high post appointments. Her husband's popularity for his corruption was also one of the contributing factors that led her out of office in 1990, only after a short period of 20 months for her government (Kamran 2005: 141). Her second stint from 1993 to 1996 was also not different from the first one and after 1997, she went in self adopted exile, residing in Dubai.

Similarly, Nawaz Sharif also had two stints as Prime Minister; from 1990 to 1993 and from 1997 to 1999, but like Benazir he could not complete the five year term even once. Despite the support of establishment (military-bureaucracy) he could not survive. IJI politicians reap the benefit of his tenure. But the problem was the disparate character of the IJI coalition partners like Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and Awami National Party (ANP), the Jamat-e-Islami, (JI), Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and the Jamiat-e-Ulma-e-Pakistan (JUP), sailing in the same boat with different kinds of ethnic, religious and regional orientations⁶⁰, looked too unnatural to last very long. (Kamran, 2005, 149). Soon Sharif lost his support from coalition and bureaucratic and military oligarchy. At the end of the Sharif's second term, the state power was again grasped by military.

On 12th October 1999, when Sharif tried to sack his own hand picked General Parveez Musharaf, the General ousted Sharif's administration and assumed control of the government through an army coup. He proclaimed a state of emergency in the country and "appointed himself the "Chief Executive", suspended the Constitution and Parliament, and ordered that the President act only under the orders of the Chief Executive" (Kamran 2005: 175). Sharif was put under house arrest and prosecuted for

⁶⁰ Pakistan Muslim League (PML) (belonging mostly to Punjab) and Awami National Party (ANP) (belonging to northern areas of Pakistan), the Jamat-e-Islami, (JI) (an Islamic party), Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) (a party based on Muhajir ethnic identity) and the Jamiat-e-Ulma-e-Pakistan (JUP) (another Islamic group) all had different kinds of ethnic, religious and regional orientations

several cases and finally sent to exile. Musharaf assumed the office of President of the country in 2001, while also remaining the Chief of Army Staff at the same time. Initially he did not promise for any elections, but later he announced to hold local bodies' elections late in 2000. The establishment of local bodies by Musharaf appeared more as an strategy to consolidate his personal power and legitimize his rule on the same pattern as Ayub Khan did through establishing 'Basic Democracies' in 1962 (Kamran 2005). He placed the graduation as eligibility criteria for election contestation for national and provincial assemblies, as a tactic to eliminate the establish politicians from contestation. National elections were held in 2002 with no party winning a majority. The new government remained in control of Musharaf, who remained President, Head of State and also the central figure in the new government. After getting retired from Army, he took oath for the second term as Civilian President of Pakistan in 2007. In 2007 after making a controversial deal with him, Benazir, as well as Nawz Sharif also managed to come back to Pakistan for taking part in 2008 national elections. But on 27th December 2007, Benazir died in a blast in Rawalpindi, during her election campaign.

In 2008 election PPP won, in part because of excessive sympathy vote they gained. After Benazir's death, her husband Mr. Asif Ali Zardari produced her will, which he claimed as she prepared it before her death, without making it public. The will designate Mr. Zardari to be the chairperson of PPP till the time when their son Bilawal finishes his studies and resumes this office. In this way the leadership of the largest democratic party of the Pakistan has been transferred like a familial property from one generation to another. Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, well known as Mr. Ten Percent due to his excessive corruption and once being one of the cause of the fall of Benazir's government now became the president of country, after PPP won 2008 elections.

The ethnic and regional diversities also add another political dimension to the complex of elite competition. The diversity within Salariat class that played the important role of coalition among diverse ethnic groups during the Muslim nationalist movement, soon after independence redefined their ethnic identities as Bangalis, Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, and Baluchs, and also according to their interests concerning the privilege and power in the new state (Alavi 1988). Among Salariat, Punjabis were the largest group

dominant in army and bureaucracy, which constituted the “steel frame” of the colonial rule in India and continued after the emergence of Pakistan to determine the parameters within which political changes were to occur (Hussain 1988). Therefore, after independence they controlled the power center of the new state by forming a bureaucratic-military oligarchy. Other underprivileged ethnic groups started demanding their share, which resulted in rise of ethnic and nationalist movements (such as one that led to separation of East Pakistan as Bangladesh) which constitute to be a compulsory feature throughout Pakistani history.

The individuals comprising elite stratum either from military, bureaucracy, any political party were identified with any one of the politically significant ethnic structures, which include Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, Baluchis and Muhajirs (Hussain 1979). These “ethnic groups ... operate within the parameters of the state ... Thus the state is a focus for competing ethnic groups, each striving for a greater share of the pie” (Rashid and Shaheed 1993: 4). Similar to that of PPP which is dominated by Bhutto family for last two generations, the other large political parties of the country are also base on familial leaderships; like Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) is dominated by Sharif family and Pakistan Muslim League (Qaid-e-Azam) is dominated by Chaudhry brothers. Most of the parties despite having their representation in all provinces are mostly identified with some particular regions; PPP is considered mostly generating its strength from Sindh, PML has its massive support base in Punjab, ANP and Islamic parties mostly have their vote bank in northern areas, MQM as a party of Muhajir ethnic group has its grip in urban areas of Sindh (Karachi, Hyderabad etc.). There have also been active separatist movement in different regions; such as in Sindh (the *Sindhudesh* movement), the North-West frontier (Pakhtunistan movement), and in Baluchistan (the great Baluchistan movement) (Hussain 1979: 235).

In 63 years of Pakistan’s history, almost half of the period has directly been ruled by the military while it had indirectly influenced the state power dimensions for the rest of the period. During the first decade (1957-1958) the landlord class dominated the political arena, the second decade (1958-1970) saw the emergence of industrialist and business class fostered by military interest group, the third decade (1970-1978) with the rhetoric’s of mass political mobilization again re-strengthened the landed elites and the

clash between landed and industrialist elite interests led to military come back holding all power ropes in 1978. In the fourth decade (1978-1988) religious elites were patronized by military government. The next decade (1988-1998) saw nascent democracies crippled by bureaucracy, military and religious groups' non accommodating counter fighting policies. The turn of century (1999-2007) brought another military excursion, following a democratically elected government with a high mandate that has dissatisfied people to the extent that they are now again talking about another military come back as a savior of the country.

Social structure of patriarchy and the nature of political system defined the parameters of political participation and leadership. Majority of Pakistani women, that is mainly lower class rural women, have been ascribed a lower status within their family, kinship network and in overall society. They have little prospects to independently achieve a status to join any of the three elite groups; military being a profession not open to women, bureaucracy demanding high education (which is not a common feature of majority Pakistani women and is exclusive to upper and middle classes), and civilian elites (especially landowning, feudal/rural/ethnic, and religious class) assigned power and leadership status to men in the patriarchal extended kinship setup of Pakistani society. Therefore, till the year 2002, in this struggle for state power between competing masculinities; military, bureaucracy and civilian elites (including big landowners, feudal lord-having their powers concentrated in tribal, kinship or regional ties, and industrialists), only a very small number of urban educated elite women could come in and were active in political sphere, not the less educated rural/urban non-elite majority women. This minority of elite women, mainly belonging to these elite groups (or to the powerful family of the respective broader kinship network), could find the opportunity to enter the political field for the promotion of the interests of their respective group or competing masculinity, as an extension of their family/kinship responsibility.

Against this background of the Pakistani social and political structure, Shaheed and her colleagues (1998) conclude three important points to be kept in mind when examining women's political participation in the areas now constituting Pakistan. Firstly, Political leadership in these areas was vested in the landed gentry or legal profession and

women were excluded from these structures; secondly, the frequent subversion of the democratic process weakened the democratic institutions and impeded the induction of all non traditional or emerging social groups in political leadership; and thirdly, while exceptional women leaders have dotted the political landscape, women's general mobilization has always been far more on general political issues than on women-specific issues (Shaheed, Zia, and Warraich 1998: 1). These three factors played important role in keeping women's political participation low throughout the political history of Pakistan. The next section of this chapter will deal with the nature and extent of women's political participation at different political levels in the country.

4.4. Historical Trajectory of Women's Political Participation

Pakistani women's participation at all levels of political activity from family to the state has been systematically marginalized by the patriarchal social and political structures of society. Previous chapter showed how patrilocal extended family ascribes women less authority for family decision making and this exclusion extends to the extra kin and large scale social networks. The same inequality also pervades all the levels of political activity in formal politics of the country. Identifying three major ways of political participation as voting, seeking an elective office and representation in the government it is argued that "[t]he record of Pakistani women on all three counts has been rather poor" (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986: 120). The opportunities for seeking a political office are condition with the political parties' inclination for including women members and to support them for contestations in elections. Therefore, we will discuss three major venues of voting in polls, political party membership and representation in formal political forums (i.e. National and Provincial Assemblies, Senate and Local Councils) for gauging nature and extent of women's political participation in Pakistan.

4.4.1. Women's Participation as Voters

Although women form 48% of the Pakistani population, the number of women registered voters has always been lower than this proportion⁶¹. The available statistics

⁶¹ In 1993, total number of Muslim voters was 50,834,648 out of which 54.5 % (i.e. 27,724,707) were men and 45.5% (i.e. 23,109,941) were women (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 14). In the 1997 national elections there were 55 million (i.e. 55,026,324) voters; of which less than 25 million (i.e. 24,492,975) were registered women voters as opposed to more than 30 million (i.e.

show that since 1993 women's proportion among registered voters in the country has remained around 45% to 46%. This shows a continuous and persisting disparity in male and female registered voters in the country.

Beside the registration flaws, there are certain socio-cultural factors responsible for even much smaller percentage of women then registered women voters who actually goes to cast their vote. First, there is a condition for showing your Identity Card (ID) when casting vote. In most of the rural and tribal areas of Pakistan it is not considered necessary for a woman to acquire national identity card, as they do not need to go out for any educational or employment related purposes. Thus, most of them lose their chance to vote. Those who have their ID card face problems of matching their names in voter lists and on their ID cards due to their changed status because of their marriage or divorce and any other mistake done when getting the ID application form filled by some other literate person for an illiterate woman.

Despite having ID cards with matching names, most of the women do not vote because of *Purdah* and restricted mobility. Mutual agreements among political parties or contesting candidates and *jirga*⁶² decisions also play an important role in preventing women to use their voting right, particularly in tribal areas of NWFP and FATA. For instance, in 1997 election *jirga* decisions and announcements on Mosque loudspeakers that voting by women is un-islamic prevented women from voting in FATA resulting in no more than 37 out of the 6,600 registered women voted in Jamrud in the Khyber Agency (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997: 10). Similarly, there are gross violations of women's electoral rights through such formal written agreements⁶³ in

30,533,349) men. Here women again comprise only 45% of total voters (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997: 9; Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 14). Similarly, in a more recent situation according to Election Commission of Pakistan, in 2005 Local Government elections total voters were 63.4 million (i.e. 63,465,805) out of them 34.3 million (i.e. 34,253,665) were male voters and 29.3 million (i.e. 29,212,140) were female voters. The last statistics have been taken from election commission of Pakistan's official website <http://www.ecp.gov.pk/content/lgststats2005.html> Retrieved on October 15, 2010, at 12:20 pm.

⁶² *Jirga* is the local traditional decision making council.

⁶³ One of the several such written agreements made during local government election 2001 and published by Aurat Foundation (2001), for instance, says "the people of Murgiz wish that the democratic process should continue in Murgiz without any hatred and bias. In this regard, a *Jirga* was held comprising religious parties, local government election candidates and political leaders. The *jirga* decided and wished that there should remain peace in the village during elections and any quarrel should not emerge. The mutual brotherhood should remain intact. For

different northern areas of the country has been reported by different NGOs. The official agencies did not take action against such institutionalized violation of clear penal provisions in the law (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997: 10).

Those women who reached there to cast vote on polling day mostly cast their vote according to the wishes and guidance of their male family members. They know little about the formal politics and promoted agenda of different parties. They are brought out to vote by their male family members or village or kin heads to support the particular political, caste, *biradri*, or kin based network they belong to.

4.4.2. Women in Political Parties

In political parties, “the participation of women can be gauged from their numbers at the common membership level, their representation in decision making bodies of the political parties and the number of tickets given to them for general elections” (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997: 10). There is no clear record of women’s party membership. In the decision making bodies (i.e. the Central Executive Committees), women’s representation is still very low. Before independence All India Muslim League responded to the need of women mobilization by forming Women committees and female student organizations. Even after independence the situation remained quite same, the few ladies who were involved in politics before independence during nationalist struggle, continued to participate in political parties. It was in nineteen seventies, during mass mobilization of Mr. Bhutto’s newly created Pakistan People’s party that brought women in political activism at large scale. The success of People’s party in seventies owes much to women’s activism and mobilization. PPP expended the women committees to the Women Wings of political party (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 11-12). Other parties also adopted this structure. But when it comes to decision making positions, it did not reflect in party organization and in women’s representation at formal political forums.

these objectives, the *jirga* has made following mutually agreed decision and all the signatories had promised to abide by these decision. (i) During local government political elections in Murgiz Union Council women polling will not happen. And this decision will remain intact for always. (ii) The four elected women councilors of Murgiz Union Council will not use their vote even in elections for District Nazim” (AF 2001: 12). Beside 10 religious leaders, this agreement has also been signed by 7 political party representatives; including from Pakistan Muslim League, Pakistan People’s Party, Jamat-e-Islami, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam. Awami National Party, Awami Qaumi Mahaz, and Pakistan Tehrek-e-Insaf.

The poor situation of women's representation at decision making level in all parties of the country is same. For instance, in the 1997, the two biggest parties of the country have only few women in their Central Executive Committees (CEC); only three women out of a total membership of 21 in the CEC of the PPP and five out of 47 decision making post in the PML(N) were reported (The Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997: 10). The recent information shows that there are total 54 members of CEC in PPP out of them only five are women (i.e. Nusrat Bhutto, Faryal Talpur, Fauzia Wahab, Samina Khalid Gurkhi, and Fehmida Mirza- first two belong to the founding family of the Party)⁶⁴.

Political Parties in Pakistan have mostly been dominated by particular families (e.g. PPP by Bhutto and Zardari family, PML(N) by Sharif family, PML(Q) by Chaudhry brothers). The women mostly came to the CEC of the parties are from the dominant family of the party and not as the independent political actors. Only five women in the history of Pakistan, namely Fatima Jinnah (PML), Benazir Bhutto (PPPP), Nusrat Bhutto (PPP), Ghanwa Bhutto (Shaheed Bhutto Group) and Nasim Wali Khan (ANP), became the leaders of their respective political parties. But they all inherited these political positions from their male family members. Political parties in the country are also not generous in allocation of tickets to women candidates for general elections. For instance, in the 1997 elections, the PPP and its coalition partner PML (J) fielded nine women out of a total of 161 candidates for National Assembly seats, the PML (N) put up six from a total of 177 and PPP (Shaheed Bhutto) fielded only 7 women (The Commission of Inquiry for Women, 1997, 10; Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 72). This lack of opportunity and support provided by political parties lead to a poor representation of women at all formal political forums like Senate, National Assembly, Provincial Assemblies and Local councils.

⁶⁴ This information has been gathered from Pakistan people's party's website <http://www.ppp.org.pk/#ss> retrieved on October 20, 2010, at 5:28 pm.

4.4.3. Women's Representation in Formal Political Forums

Women's representation in formal political forums will be discussed in terms of National Assembly, Provincial Assemblies, Senate and different local government systems introduced in different periods of time.

4.4.3.1. Women's Participation at National Level

The quota allocation for women and their political participation, although selective and marginal, are not new phenomenon in Pakistani history. Each of the Constitutions in Pakistan defined specific quotas for women in Parliament and Assemblies, but it was very marginal to incorporate women's view point while making laws.

Initially, the women participating in the independence movement, but kept away from the political decision making process, were mostly the mothers, wives, daughters or sisters of influential Salariat Muslim politicians (Farooq 2003). With the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the Muslim nationalist movement, so was the elite Muslim women's political activism, outlived its purpose and they were reduced to welfare tasks of helping refugees coming from India. "Although women had played a prominent role in the political battle for freedom, ...they were given a very poor deal when it came to sharing power in the newly established State" (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986). After independence in 1947, the first Constituent Assembly had only two (2.5%) women representatives, Begum Shaista Ikramullah and Begum Jahanara Shah Nawaz, both were educated urban women from well known landed, political and diplomatic families and whose men were political leaders. They were also actively involved in politics before independence. In the National Assembly they served on Committee on Fundamental Rights and Minorities, Committee on Re-distribution of Seats in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Finance Committee, Basic Principles Committee, and the Steering Committee (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986).

The political scene in the first decade after independence was dominated by the established politicians (especially the landlords) of pre-independence period which made the raise of any woman to political forums more difficult. Therefore, after the dissolution of first constituent assembly no woman was elected to the Second

Constituent Assembly in 1955. The first Constitution promulgated in 1956. The Article 44(2) of this constitution reserved 3.2% (10 out of total 310) seats for women in National Assembly for next ten years. These women seats were based on territorial representation, by delimiting the women's territorial constituencies, through direct elections (Constitution of Pakistan 1956). Without any elections held, the constitution was abrogated. General Ayub Khan, Commander-in-Chief of the Army imposed first Martial Law and occupied the office of President of Pakistan in 1958. "The disruption of democratic political process in 1958 militated against the emergence of any political leadership-male or female- until 1968" (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 9).

The new Constitution of 1962, in its article 20(2), reserved 3.8% (6 seats out of 156) quota for women in the National Assembly. This constitution discontinued the procedure of direct election of women on the basis of women's territorial representation and introduced indirect election of the women on reserved seats by an electoral college of elected National Assembly members (Constitution of Pakistan 1962). This indirect mode of election made it impossible for any woman to contest election without the backing of landowners-dominated Assembly, in 1962 election. Only eight women (6 on reserved seats for women)⁶⁵ won the National assembly seats; 4 from East Pakistan and 4 from West Pakistan, and they served on Committee on Finance, Committee on Education, Committee on Information and Broadcasting, Committee on Labour and Social Welfare, Committee on Law and Parliamentary Affairs, and Rules and Procedure Committee (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986).

In 1965, elections were held under 1962 constitution giving women representation through indirect mode of election. Six women returned to the National Assembly on reserved seats; three from each East Pakistan and West Pakistan, but none on General Seat. They served on Committee on Economic Affairs, National Economic Planning and National Coordination, Committee on Education, Committee on Information, Committee on Health, Labour, Social Welfare and Committee on Rules and Procedure (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986).

⁶⁵ Shaheed, Zia, and Warraich (1998) explained that it appears that there were 8 women present in National Assembly between the years 1962 to 1965, but they also showed lack of clarity regarding their tenure or election.

Table 4.1: Women's Representation in National Assembly (Lower House)

Assembly/Constitutions	Quota %	Women elected on seats	
		Reserved	General
1947 1 st Assembly	1.2	2	-
1955 2 nd Assembly	-	0	-
1956 Constitution	3.2	-	-
<i>First Martial Law in 1958</i>			
1962 Constitution	3.8	6	-
<i>Second Martial Law in 1969</i>			
1971 Assembly	3.8	6	-
1973 Constitution	4.7	-	-
1977 Elections	4.7	10	1
<i>Third Martial Law in 1977</i>			
Majlis-e-Shoora*	-	20	-
Revival of Constitution 1985	8.4		
1985 Assembly	8.4	20	1
1988 Assembly	8.4	20	4
1990 Assembly	-	-	2
1993 Assembly	-	-	4
1997 Assembly	-	-	7
<i>Fourth Military Regime in 1999</i>			
2002 Assembly	17	60	13
2008 Assembly	17	60	15

*Federal Advisory Council nominated by Military regime

** National assembly (the lower House) Senate (the Upper House)

Source: Data gathered from diverse secondary resources and compiled in table form by the researcher.

In 1964, the Combined Opposition Party against Ayub's regime chose *Mohtarma* Fatima Jinnah, the sister of founder of Pakistan Mohammad Ali Jinnah, as a candidate for Presidential election against Ayub Khan. "The deciding factor was her relationship to a recognized male leader ...rather than her own personal abilities" (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 18). She lost the election. Later the mass upheavals against Ayub Khan in 1969 led to second Martial Law imposed by General Yahya Khan.

The military and bureaucracy that were well developed in British rule continue to dominate the political scene after independence. Women were almost absent from both

these professions; military—a profession closed for women, and bureaucracy—which needs a high education, thus mostly invisible in political arena in this whole political struggle. The landlords, industrialist and a military interest group that dominated the second decade of Pakistani political history did not leave any room for women to reach the political forums without the support from these groups. Women were mostly inducted to these forums only for filling the reserved seats as prescribed in the constitution.

The 1962 Constitution was abrogated and the next elections were held in 1970 under the Legal Framework Order (LFO) of General Yahya Khan's Military regime. LFO under its section IV(1) prescribed 4.1% (13 seats out of 313) quota for women (6 from West Pakistan and 7 from East Pakistan) to be elected through indirect mode of election. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's party gained majority seats in West Pakistan, while before any session of the Assembly held, the Province of East Pakistan seceded as Bangladesh. Therefore, Mr. Bhutto took over as the President of Pakistan and the first civil Chief Martial Law Administrator in 1971. Mr. Bhutto's mass mobilization did not have any impact to increase women's participation in political forums. Only six women on reserved seats were elected but none on general seats. For the first time a woman rose to the rank of Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly (from 11-08-1973 to 11-01-1977) (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986).

The new Constitution of 1973 adopted a bicameral system defining the parliament as comprising of two houses; Senate (the upper house) and the National Assembly (the lower house). In Article 51(4), the constitution reserved 5% (10 seats out of total 210 seats) quota for women in National Assembly, but still none in Senate. It also prescribed the validity period for this quota reservation for the next ten years or the holding of second general elections of National Assembly, whichever ever occurs later. The mode of election for women's reserved seats remained indirect one. The elections under 1973 Constitution were held in 1977. Besides 10 reserved seats, only one woman, Begum Nasim Wali- wife of a prominent *Pushtun* leader Khan Abdul Wali Khan from the Anti- Bhutto alliance, contested and won on general seat. The reason for her contestation was basically the arrest of her husband. When her husband was put in jail under trial for treason (1976-1977) by Mr. Bhutto and his party, Awami National

Party (ANP), was banned. She entered the politics, became chairperson of her party and contested National assembly elections under the umbrella of Anti Bhutto Pakistan National Alliance (PNA-*Pakistan Quami Ittehad*). But she never assumed office because of the PNA's boycott of the Assemblies accusing Bhutto for massive rigging in election in 1977 polls. From March 1977 to July 1977, the total strength of women in the house remained 10 members as the only lady won on general seat did not take oath. This political crisis resulted in third Martial Law imposed by the then Army Chief, General Zia-ul-Haq, who held the office; first as Martial Law Administrator and then as President, for more than ten years (1977-1988).

Punjabis, being the oligarchy ruling state power, also adopted the Islamic ideology of 'all Pakistani as Muslim brothers' just as a political argument to suppress the ethnic uprisings. They did not, thereby, intend to allow Islamic ideologues to encroach on their monopoly of power and privilege. Also this Islamic argument did not impact women in any harder sense; they were slowly progressing in diverse fields, until General Zia's military regime (1977-88) adopted it for a new purpose of legitimization of his rule (Alavi 1988) and promulgated so called Islamic laws that were discriminatory and reducing women's social status in society. But Zia's unleashed suppression of women under the cover of Islamization project served a latent function of compelling urban educated women to organize and strengthen women's groups/movement to fight for their social and political rights.

He nominated the *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Federal Advisory Council) including 20 women members in 1981. Despite being a dictator regime with its negative legislation and directives that undermine women's status, Zia's government included the highest number women, till then, at national level political forum, and it also established the Women's Division to look after women's affairs. Also surprisingly, in 1984, his government established a commission on the status of women consisting of thirteen women and three men, which in 1985 submitted a damning report of the state of affairs (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 8). These measures were the part of his efforts to legitimize his power and rule in the country. The lack of sincerity with the women cause can be observed from the contradiction between these positive measures and the promulgation of discriminatory laws by the same government.

The 1973 Constitution was revived with numerous changes in 1985. The number of seats reserved for women in National and Provincial Assemblies were doubled and their validity was extended for one more term. It reserved 8.4% (20 seats out of 237) quota for women in National Assembly, but still non in Senate, until the third general election to the National Assembly is held. The 1985 elections were held on non party basis. Thirteen women filled their nomination papers for National Assembly elections and contested for general seats (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986). But beside 20 reserved seats only one woman, Syeda Abida Hussain - who belonged to very politically influential and landlord family, was successful on general seat from Jhang. In the by-elections of May 1985, another women, Nasim A. Majid from Bhawalnagar who had earlier been a member of the providentially appointed *Majlis-e-Shoora* and had lost in the February 1985 general elections, won a seat in the National Assembly (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 10; The Commission on the Status of Women 1986). In this way the total strength of women in house reached to 22 women members. One of the women was appointed as minister of State. Still no woman was represented in Senate.

After the death of General Zia, the 1988 elections were held with the same quota reservation (8.4% in National Assembly and non in Senate). Beside 20 reserved seats four women were elected on general seats (three from PPP including Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her mother Nusrat Bhutto, and one as independent candidate) bringing total strength of women in National Assembly to 24 members. Benazir Bhutto became the first and the youngest women Prime Minister of Pakistan. Other women also became deputy speaker and full ministers. Soon the Assembly was dissolved on the basis of charges of corruption and nepotism.

The Constitutional quota for reserved seats for women expired after 1988 elections. Therefore, next three elections (in 1990, 1993, and 1997) were without any quota reservation for women either in National Assembly or Senate. In 1990 elections, in Sharif's first government only two women (Benazir Bhutto and Nusrat Bhutto) won in National Assembly, as PPP did not issues any ticket to any other women. Benazir became the leader of opposition in the assembly. In 1993 elections, thirteen women

contested for general seats, but only four women, again including three women from PPP (including the two Bhutto ladies and Shenaz Javeed) and one from PML (N) won the elections. Benizar Bhutto second time became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Her government presented a bill regarding reserved seats but rejected by the opposition that proposed an alternative draft bill. None of them passed (Shaheed *et al.* 1998). Shaheed and her colleagues (1998) points out that, in 1997 elections, there was an increase in the number of women candidates; 55 women contested for National Assembly (out of then 13 were the independent women candidates) and 21 women contested for provincial Assembly seats but in fact they were mostly the covering candidates for their senior politicians and had few chances of their victory (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 71). While the election results produced the highest number of directly elected women members of the National Assembly in Pakistan's fifty-years history, the reality was that the total of six women MNAs (three each from PPP and PML(N)) took oath of office actually constitute less than 3 percent of the total National Assembly strength of 207 directly elected general seat (Muslim) members (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 72). None of the independent candidate could win the seat. The women who won on directly contested general seats "were all from major feudal families with no personal grounding in political or women's activism and a previous record of failing to take a women's right perspective in the assemblies" (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 72). Therefore, after 1997 election, in Sharif's second government women's representation was 2% in the Senate (2 out of 87) and 2.7% (6 out of 217) in the National Assembly.

The constitutional quota which expired in 1988, was not been revived by any of these four democratic governments during the years 1988 to 1997; including two governments Benazir Bhutto. These repeated⁶⁶ efforts to establish democracy after Zia regime were crippled due to two main reasons; (i) overdeveloped state structures of the military-bureaucratic oligarchy, and (ii) political parties' reliance on landowners and feudal lords possessing the regional/ethnic/tribal, mainly rural, vote blocs in order to maintain their victory in elections and their majority in parliament. The women question (like renewal of political quotas and repeal of *Hudood Ordinances*) remained dormant at political forums, but this democratic period let the women's movements to

⁶⁶ After Zia regime elections were held for four times and repeated democratic governments were in the 1988, 1990, 1993 and 1997. Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif each alternatively became twice the prime minister of Pakistan.

flourish in non political arena that helped them to play an important role in future politics, especially in the last military regime of 1999.

Table 4.2: Women’s Representation in Senate (Upper House)

Year	Quota %	Elected on seats	
		Reserved	General/ Technocrat
Till 1997	-	-	-
1997	-	-	2
2002	17	17	1
2008	17	17	-

Source: Data gathered from diverse secondary resources and compiled in table form by the researcher.

In 1999, Pakistan again experienced a military takeover by General Pervez Musharaf but this time with ‘enlightened moderation’⁶⁷ policy in accordance with the international and national politics (Kennedy 2006: 129; Zaidi 2005: 30; Shirkat Gah 2009: 119), to legitimize this military regime. Women became one of the leading metaphors for an enlightened, moderate Pakistani state and its ‘soft’ image (SPDC 2007). The military regime showed its commitment to women’s issues as a part of an effort to legitimize its rule within country and to maintain its modernizing and democratic face to gain international acceptability. The background work of feminist movement and national and international commitments (e.g. CEDAW), accompanied with military regime’s efforts to maintain its modernizing and democratic outlook led to, among several other changes, reservation of enhanced constitutional (at provincial and national level) and legislative (at local government level) quotas for women at all political levels. The enhanced quota for women at all political levels introduced in the year 2002, include 33% (more than 40,000 seats) quota for women at all tiers of the

⁶⁷ In accordance with the international politics (especially going on in the region after the end of US and ISI supported war against USSR in Afghanistan, 9/11 attacks, US attack on Afghanistan and Pakistan’s need to maintain its image between two influencing extremes of Islamic fundamentalism and War against Terror) military regime tried to maintain its modern and democratic outlook. “Presenting himself as a ‘liberal’ dictator General Musharaf advocated ‘enlightened moderation’ an ideology that placed itself between religious extremism and western liberalism” (Shirkat Gah 2009: 119).

local bodies, this time titled as 'Local Government'⁶⁸, 17% quota in National (60 seats out of 342) and Provincial Assemblies (128 seats out of 728) and for the first time in Pakistani history in Senate (17 seats out of 100). Although it was a part of military regimes effort to legitimized its rule by showing it modernized, this measure has certainly enlarged women's prospects to participate in state political decision making; especially at the local bodies' level.

The elections held in 2002 became a turning point in history of women's political participation in Pakistan. Besides the increased numbers of reserved seats also a record number of women contested and won on general seats, enhancing the overall proportion of their representation in the national and provincial legislatures to an impressive 19.9% (233 out of a total of 1170) from a meager 1.4% (11 out of a total of 787) during 1997-99 (UNDP 2005). Women were elected on 18% (18 out of 100) seats in Senate, 21.3% (73 out of 342) in National Assembly and 19.1% in Provincial Assemblies. The last elections in 2008 have showed more improvement with almost 22% women representation in National Assembly; fifteen women won election on general seats besides 60 reserved seats (total 75 women members) in the National Assembly. Several of women who came in these assemblies also entered this field from political families after disqualification of their male family members due to the condition of graduation for being eligible to contest these elections.

This increase in political quotas owes much to an active women's movement present in Pakistan since independence. The first two women in legislature advocated women's rights within and outside it and established the United Front for Women's Right (UFWR)⁶⁹. Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of first Prime Minister, organized women on non-political basis under All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) in 1949. Mainly women of urban influential upper class and politically-connected families participated in these initiatives (Farooq 2003). Bhutto's era also witnessed the emergence of feminist organization and groups led by urban middle class educated

⁶⁸ Ayub Khan titled his local bodies as 'Basic democracies'. Similarly, Musharaf titled his local bodies as 'local government'.

⁶⁹ Begum Shaista Ikramullah and Begum Jahanara Shah Nawaz lobbied and demonstrated for the enactment of the West Punjab Muslim Personal Law (*Shariat* Act 1948) and its 1951 amendments that recognized the women's right to inherit property including agricultural land.

women. But the movement gained momentum during islamization project of Zia's military regime (Alavi 1988) and its systematic attack on the status of women through promulgation of discriminatory laws⁷⁰. The exploitation of women under discriminatory laws and encroachment upon the autonomy and rights that the upper and upper middle class urban women had achieved in last decades (Shaheed 2008), led a group of educated urban middle and upper class women to form a women's right lobby, Women Action Forum, in 1981 at Karachi and other women's organizations⁷¹ joined this struggle.

Consequently, during the democratic period of 1988 to 1999, the allocation of quotas for women at all political levels and abolition of discriminatory laws became top priority agendas for women's movement, advocated through non government organizations (such as Women Action Forum), government institutions and documents (such as National Commission on Status of Women, and Report of Commission of Inquiry for Women 1997), and National Plan of Action (1998), the last two recommended 33% quota allocation for women at national, provincial and local political levels, and international commitments like CEDAW. This long and hard struggle resulted in allocation of enhanced political quotas for women in 2002 and recent law amendments⁷².

4.4.3.2. Women's Participation at Provincial Level

Since independence till 1955 the information on Provincial Assemblies is rarely available (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 9). Till 1956, the two of the prominent women leaders at provincial level were Salma Tasaduq Hussain and Begum Mehmooda Saleem (Shaheed *et al.* 1998: 9); both were in politics since before independence and continue

⁷⁰ He introduced a set of discriminatory laws; Offence of *Zina* (Enforcement of *Hudood*) Ordinance, Offence of *Qazf* (Enforcement of *Hadd*) Ordinance dealt with laws regarding adultery, rape and false accusation of rape or adultery, coupled with the *Qanun-e-Shahadat* (Law of Evidence) and the Offences against Human Body (Enforcement of *Qisas* and *Diyat*) Ordinance enhanced the prevailing social discrimination against women by providing it legal basis.

⁷¹ Such as the Democratic Women's Association, the *Sindhiani Tehrik*, the Women's Front and the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA), to name a few.

⁷² These amendments include two Acts passed from Pakistani parliament; The Honour Killing (Criminal Law Amendment) Act, 2004 (I of 2005) recognizing the evil social practice of Honour killings as crime along with specifying legal measures to control it and The Protection of Women (Criminal Laws Amendment) Act 2006, amending the long controversial and victimizing Hudood Ordinances.

their political careers after that as well. Begum Mehmooda Saleem's father Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was a prominent person in Pakistani politics. After independence he became the Governor of Punjab. She was also married to a bureaucrat in 1934 and with him she remained moving to several countries on his postings (Rasheed 2005: 23). She started her political career from local level politics and then moved to national level. In 1960 she was elected as member of District Council Hazara. She served as members in District Council Education Committee and Cantonment Board Education Advisory Committee. In 1962, she was elected in West Pakistan's Provincial Assembly Peshawar from Dera Ismail Khan Division. She served as education minister for 3 years and minister of Health for two years in West Pakistan cabinet (Rasheed 2005: 23). In February 1972, she was elected on reserved seat for women in Provincial Assembly for NWFP and served as active member of the opposition (Rasheed 2005: 23). Throughout her life she has extremely been involved in social work activities.

The first constitution in 1956, in its Article 77(2) reserved 3% seats for women (i.e. 10 seats out of total 310 seats) in each Provincial Assembly to be contested on the basis of territorial representation on women territorial constituencies (Constitution of Pakistan 1956). After abrogation of this constitution, the 1962 constitution, in its article 71(2) also reserved 3% (5 seats out of 155 seats) quota for women in each provincial assembly. The women were to be elected through indirect election by an electoral college of elected Provincial Assembly members (Constitution of Pakistan 1962). Begum Mehmooda Saleem was the one who got elected on reserved seat. The elections of 1965 were also held under 1962 constitution and the same 3% quota reservation for women.

LFO (1969) of military regime prescribed women reservation in each provincial assembly through indirect election but after dismemberment of Pakistan in 1970, Pakistan (previously West Pakistan province) is divided into 4 provinces; Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan and NWFP. Each province has its respective Provincial Assembly. Between 1972-1977 the quota for reserved seats for women was between 3% to 4% in each assembly; 6 seats out of total 186 in Punjab, 2 out of 62 in Sindh, 2 out of 42 in NWFP (again one was Begum Mehmooda Saleem as mentioned above), and 1 out of 21 in Baluchistan (Shaheed *et al.* 1998). The total strength of women in four provincial assemblies remained only 11 members.

Table 4.3: Women's Representation in Provincial Assemblies

Year	% Women Quota	%Women Elected
1985	5	5
1988	5	5
1997	No quota	0.2
2002	17	19
2008	17	18.8

Source: Data gathered from diverse secondary resources and compiled in table form by the researcher.

The new Constitution of 1973 defined 5% quota for women in all Provincial Assemblies (i.e. 12 seats in Punjab Assembly, 5 seats in Sindh Assembly, 4 seats in NWFP Assembly, 2 seats in Baluchistan Assembly). The number of women in provincial assemblies remained 23 members between March 1977 to July 1977. Soon after the elections in 1977, Martial Law was imposed and Provincial assemblies were dissolved. After the renewal of Constitution, the next two elections in 1985 and 1988 were held under the same provisions of 5% quota for women. In 1985 election, there were only 66 women candidates on 24 seats as compared with 3,853 male candidates for 483 Provincial Assembly seats (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986). Besides reserved seats for women, only two women were successful on general seats (those were Farhat Rafiq and Sajida Nayyar Abidi) (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986; Shaheed *et al.* 1998) and two on Christian Minority seats (Shaheed *et al.* 1998) were elected in Punjab Assembly while none from other three provinces (The Commission on the Status of Women 1986). The total women membership of provincial assemblies reached to 27 members. In 1988 the situation remained same having total 27 women in Provincial Assemblies; 23 on reserved seats, 2 on Christian Minority seats in Punjab Assembly, and 2 women on general seats (each in Punjab and NWFP).

As for National Assembly, this quota provision in provincial assembly also expired after 1988 and was not renewed till 2002. Therefore, women membership of provincial assemblies went too low. In 1990, it was only 5 women member; 2 on Christian Minority seats in Punjab Assembly and three on general seats (2 women in Punjab

Assembly and 1 woman in *Sarhad* (NWFP) Provincial Assembly). In 1993, it further decreased to only three women; 1 on Christian Minority seats in Punjab Assembly and 2 on general seats (1 in Punjab Assembly from PML(N)⁷³ and 1 in Sindh from MQM⁷⁴). In 1997, despite 21 women contesting provincial assembly seats, women representation remained only 0.6% as only 3 women members; 1 women, Begum Raj Hameed Gill, on Christian Minority seats in Punjab Assembly and 2 on general seats (1 in *Sarhad*⁷⁵ (NWFP) Provincial Assembly and 1 in Sindh Provincial Assembly) were elected.

Table 4.4: Women's Reserved Seats in Provincial Assemblies

Assembly	Reserved seats	
	1985/1988	2002/2008
Punjab	12	66
Sindh	5	29
NWFP	4	22
Baluchistan	2	11

Source: Data gathered from diverse secondary resources and compiled in table form by the researcher.

After the last military coup, in 2002, the military regime enhanced quota for women in assemblies taking it to an ever highest level of 17% (128 seats out of 728) in four Provincial Assemblies (i.e. 66 seats in Punjab Assembly, 29 in Sindh Assembly, 22 in NWFP Assembly and 11 in Baluchistan Assembly). Besides the women's quota seats, women also contested and won on general seats and minority quota seats (i.e. 6 general seats and 1 minority seat in Punjab Assembly, 4 on general seats in Sindh, 1 on general seats in NWFP and 1 on general seat in Baluchistan) raising their overall representation to 19% (141 out of 728 seats). In contrast to military regimes efforts of legitimizing their rule by enhancing women's political representation, once again with the revival of

⁷³ A political party named as Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz group.

⁷⁴ A political party named as Mutahida Qaumi Movement

⁷⁵ Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province was previously denominated as *Sarhad* or North West frontier Province (NWFP).

democratic government in 2008 elections, it came down, when only nine women won general seats of Provincial Assemblies, two from Sindh and seven from Punjab, none from NWFP and Baluchistan.

4.4.3.3. Women's Participation at Local Government Level

Invariably every military government after seizing power emphasized on establishing local government system to undermine the established political powers (mainly of big regional landowners and feudal leaders) at provincial and national levels. Whereas, the democratic governments relied on alliances with big regional/ rural landowners and feudal leaders to secure vote blocs, and they never favored local government systems. This variation of interest witnessed the introduction of local governments by military regimes and their dissolution by democratic government several times in Pakistani history. This struggle did not let these institutions to reach their maximum political potential.

In 1958, after imposing first Martial Law and dismantling the national and provincial assemblies, General Ayub Khan introduced the local government system of 'Basic Democracies' to substitute universal suffrage for electing Assemblies and President with an electoral college of 80,000 Basic democrats (both, officially nominated from government departments and directly elected, at local Union Council levels). There was no reservation for women (Mumtaz 2005). The whole system was over-dominated by bureaucrats involved at all tiers of these local bodies and could not last long after Ayub's regime. Later, during 1971–1976 Bhutto's elected government introduced a local government law but no elections were held. Zia's military regime seizing power from Bhutto revived local government system and held four elections of local government during 1977 to 1988. There were two seats reserved for women in union councils and 10% seats of District Councils, except in NWFP (Mumtaz 2005). During the democratic period of 1988-1999, four democratically elected political governments remained in power, but no election for local government were held, rather all elected Local Governments, sooner or later, were dismissed.

Table 4.5: Women's Representation at Local Level

Year	% of Women Quota
1959	No quota
1977-1988	2*
1988-1991	2
1991-1993	10
2002-2008	33

**2% at Union council and 10% at District council, except in NWFP*

Source: Data gathered from diverse secondary resources and compiled in table form by the researcher.

In respect of women's participation, the local bodies also reflect the same situation; as here reservation of seats for women remained 2% till 1991-1993 when it increased to 10%. In 1998, about 12.7% seats were reserved for women in the Punjab local councils, while 25.8% in Baluchistan, 2.9% in NWFP and 23% in Sindh but the elections were only held in Punjab and Baluchistan where the number of women elected rose to 12% and 25% respectively, but these representatives never assumed office. Therefore, women's representation remained marginal until again Musharaf's military regime took over in 1999 and introduced a Devolution of Power Plan. It reserved 33% quota for women at all tiers (Union, Tehsil, and District Council) of local government system. The 2001-2002 elections inducted more than 36,000 directly elected women Union Councilors on more than 40,000 reserved seats (that was 90% coverage while 4001 seats remained vacant because women were stopped by tribal/religious leaders to participate in election in some provinces (Yazdani 2004)) giving an unprecedented rise to women's participation at any of the political level.

Before the local government elections in 2005 the number of seats at Union Council was decreased from 21 to 13 but retaining the same 33% quota for women⁷⁶. In 2005 election the number of women councilors elected in union council was more than 24,000 (in comparison of 36,000 in 2002). Although the number of elected women has

⁷⁶ The Local Government Ordinance 2001 was amended before 2005 elections to reduce the number of members in a Union Council. Correspondingly, the number of women's reserved seats per Union Council was reduced from 6 to 4, but the proportional representation of quota seats remained the same. SPDC (2007) reported that it is not clear why the number of seats were reduced.

decreased in 2005 but still the last two local government elections have enlarged the space for women to participate at local politics.

4.5. Selective Political Participation of Elite Women

Political and economic change can open up strange paradoxes (Gazdar 2008). As discussed earlier, history of Pakistani politics is a history of continuous competition and struggle among elite masculine group (i.e. military, bureaucracy, religious and civilian elites; the last including feudal/landlords, industrialist, professionals, etc) for the control of state power. The alliances and competition among these alternative masculinities, on the one hand, has prevented majority of women, by only allowing a small minority of elite women belonging to these elite groups, to enter the political arena. On the other hand, while working on their respective project for acquiring the largest share of state power these competing masculinities have also broadened the space for women's political participation⁷⁷, though a conditional elite women's selective participation, during the course of time.

For the most part, the women who participate in Pakistani politics belong to the elite classes of society. Before independence, the Muslim women leadership comprised of women belonged to privileged classes (the mothers, wives, daughters or sisters of influential Muslim Salariat politicians). More or less they all were associated with western educated modern families. Mostly they were not independent political actors but by entering in public arena they were obliging their men and promoting their nationalistic agenda.

The same pattern of elite women leadership remained intact after independence. Only a minority (very few) of upper class educated urban elite women coming from feudal and political families with previous social work experience, could find occasional and conditional access to traditionally assigned authority and power to men (Saif 1993). Thus, few elite women could have entered the political institutions in Pakistan (Shahid

⁷⁷ In the later part of this dissertation we will see the example of this broadening of space for women. The respective projects of military regime to dismantle the power of regional political leaders at national and provincial level by imposing new eligibility criteria of higher qualification and no previous criminal record, led the regional politicians to launch their educated female relatives to secure their seats.

1994; Farooq 2003). They were able to enter political arena due to necessary resources available from their family background and support. Their political participation is also an extension of their family responsibilities, to support the agendas brought forward by male patronage within families and parties, thus does not impose a challenge to patriarchal authority of men (Saif 1993). These women have less in common with majority of rural less educated poor Pakistani women, who are deprived of this privilege. Yazdani (2004) notes that women in politics are either from the elite upper classes or middle class both having different set of restrictions and advantages and comparatively later lacks decision-making at party and community level.

The growing participation of women in political parties has not led to their elevation in party hierarchy or political system (Yazdani 2004). Their representation in Central Executive Committees of parties and in decision making process is very low. Those who are present in party hierarchies are mainly relatives of party leaders or belong to influential political/feudal families dominant in respective parties. There are only five women in the history of Pakistan, i.e., Fatima Jinnah, Banazir Bhutto, Nusrat Bhutto, Ghanwa Bhutto, and Nasim Wali Khan, who have become the leaders of their parties. All of them belong to highly influential and elite political families and inherited their political career from their family male politicians (ADB 2000). Shahid (1994) asserts that the occasional and exceptional cases of selection of women as party leaders do not effect to lessen the misery of women masses in the patriarchal societies. In Pakistan women politicians are allowed as exceptional women, to occupy positions of pre-eminence, who have little in common with majority of rural women and “do not affect a structural configuration that only enables a miniscule minority to excel and condemns the majority to a life of unchanging deprivation” (Shaheed 2008: 13).

4.6. Enhanced Quota and Changing Nature of Women’s Political Participation

Quota reservation in Pakistan has proved itself as a source of improving women’s representation in political forums. It is evident that women were almost absent from these forums in the historical period when these quota reservations lapsed. In either cases, with or without quota reservations, the patriarchal trend of women’s marginal representation and elite women’s selective political participation remained same at all political levels until 2002, when government introduced enhanced political quotas

(33% at local government, 17.5% at national and provincial level) for women. Consequently, the elections in 2002 became a turning point in the political history of Pakistan bringing an unprecedented large number of women at all political levels on both reserved and general seats at political forums. For the first time in Pakistani history, 232 women in national and provincial legislature and more than 36000 women in local government bodies were elected in 2002.

4.6.1. Increased Quota and Elite Women's Participation at National/Provincial Levels

Despite enhanced quotas and increased presence of women, the electoral and political systems still favor patriarchy in keeping its hold intact at higher levels of political institutions. These reforms did not bring a radical change in socio-political composition/ background of women legislature at national and provincial levels. UNDP (2005) identified that in 2002, out of a total of 232 women legislators 216 were new entrants in Assemblies but still almost all of them belong to rural/urban influential elite political/feudal families. A considerable number of them also have sufficient political experience as party activists due to their economic and family background, and some have background of activism on women's rights issues. Most of them are highly qualified and hold post-graduate degrees. A large number of them (including all women in Senate) belong to urban areas, especially provincial capitals or big cities.

On one hand, the majority of women elected on general seats through direct election belong to the traditional influential political families (Farooq 2003), who were launched by their families to occupy these seats because of disqualification of their family males due to military regime's newly imposed eligibility criteria of graduation degree and non criminal records for participation in national and provincial assemblies as members. For several of them, their educational qualifications and also disqualification of their males became imperatives for their selection as political candidates (UNDP 2005; Mumtaz 2005: 16). Bari (2005) asserts that the traditional public-private dichotomy excludes women from public political sphere and even when women are brought into politics they are entered as mothers and wives. Therefore, they serve as proxy to their family male patronage and male party leaderships, rather than acting as independent political actors.

On the other hand, unlike general seats a significant number of women elected on reserved seats (not all) do not belong to upper class political families rather they are senior party activists with middle class background and a strong track record in politics or in activism on women's rights (UNDP 2005). But the indirect mode of election of women on reserved seats, through proportional representation (from the party lists) on the basis of general seats won by parties, render such elected women accountable not to the female or general citizenry but to the mostly male party leaders who nominated for or voted them in.

Without vote banks in the general population, women on reserved seats are also usually side-lined within their own party structures. Often reduced to tokens, they pose no serious threat (Zia and Bari 1999) to patriarchy even within their parties or outside in broader society, in general. In this way women in national and provincial assemblies or even in Senate, both on reserved and general seats, despite their presence in large number, did not bring any radical change in the patriarchal setup and, in general, are still mostly pronouncing their male dominated family or party agendas in their offices.

Bari (2005) concludes that without the transformation of the wider politics, gender quotas cannot lead to women's political empowerment. In the elite form of representative democracy based on patriarchal relations, introduction of gender quotas are a way by which state brings marginalized groups to the mainstream on the terms of male patriarchal elites. It does not bring gender equality rather when women enter politics through gender quotas in such context they are forced to play on male's terms. In short, according to Vincent (2004) it simply means "changing the way things look without changing the way things are".

4.6.2. Increased Quota and Women's Political Participation in Local Government

The current local government system in Pakistan consists of three hierarchical tiers; (i) District Councils (DC) (i.e. total 102 DCs in the country), (ii) Taluka/Tehsil/town (sub district) Councils (TC) (i.e. 394 TCs), and (iii) Union Councils (UC) (i.e. 6132 UCs). Only the Nazim (Head/Mayor), Naib Nazim (Deputy Head/Mayor) and all members of the Union Council (the lowest tier) are elected through direct election on universal

adult franchise. All the Naib Nazims of Union Councils by default become the members of Taluka Council and all the Nazims of Union Council become the members of District Council and they serve as Electoral College to elect the heads (*Nazim*), deputy heads (*Naib Nazim*) and members on reserved seats of these respective councils. At each tier 33% quota has been allocated for women that have brought more than 36,000 Women Union Councilors in 2002 and 24,000 women in 2005 elections⁷⁸.

In all four provinces of Pakistan, women have enthusiastically participated at all tiers of local government in last two elections. The situations in each province slightly vary due to their social and cultural diversities. NWFP and Baluchistan provinces that are classically tribal societies having relatively more conservative environment, are still relatively resistant to women's political participation in local governments; having 70.6% in NWFP and 77.4% in Baluchistan women reserved seats filled in the year 2002 and 85% and 97% respectively in the year 2005 (AF 2005a) with reports of the incidences of mass violations to stop women from casting votes and contesting elections (AF 2001). Punjab and Sindh are feudal societies with relatively less conservative environment, therefore, witnessed a better higher level of women's political participation. Punjab has performed very well with its 96.7% in 2001 and 98.7% in 2005 women seats filled and with several women elected as Nazims⁷⁹ at Union Council⁸⁰ (the lowest tier of local government). But the province of Sindh has taken lead in bringing forth women in local government at all levels. It has an incomparable history in the country for having four women District Nazims (Mayor) and one district Naib Nazim (Deputy Mayor) elected in local government (Hussain 2006; AF 2005b) and by filling its 99.05% reserved seats for women at all tiers of local government in rural and urban areas during last local government elections in the year 2005 (AF 2005a).

⁷⁸ Pakistan government through amendments in Local Government Ordinance reduced the number of Union councils from 21 members to 13 members.

⁷⁹ Nazim means Head of the council.

⁸⁰ Local government in Pakistan is comprises of three hierarchical tiers; District, Taluka (Sub-District), and Union Council. District is the highest tier of local government, Taluka is the middle level and Union Council is the lowest tier of local government comprises of few villages in rural areas and a small quarter of urban area.

4.6.2.1. District and Tehsil Councils

Like national and provincial levels, in local government also the higher authority positions (e.g. Nazim and Naib Nazim of District and Tehsil Councils) are still dominantly composed of local/rural elite class and show the trend of patriarchal exclusion of women from higher portfolios. There were very few women as District Nazim (District Mayor) or Tehsil Nazim (Sub-District Mayor) in last two local government elections. Yazdani (2004) reports the negligible numbers of women at these higher portfolios in local government after 2002 elections, there were only total 16 women Nazims and Naib Nazims in different councils; 2 women District Nazims, 1 Naib Nazim at Tehsil, 11 Nazims at Union Council, and 2 Naib Nazim at Union Council. Both the District Nazims were from highly influential and political families of Sindh; Nafisa Shah from Khairpur (daughter of political leader, and former and current Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Qaim Ali Shah) and Farriyal Talpur from- the native town of Zardaris- Nawabshah (sister of present president Asif Ali Zardari and sister-in-law of the former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto). Both of these women are present National Assembly members. Other Nazims and Naib Nazims of Tehsil and Union Councils also belonged to influential political families of Sindh and Punjab but none from other two relatively conservative provinces.

Similarly, in 2005 elections, four women have won as District Nazims (all from Sindh) and one as District Naib Nazim⁸¹. One was again Farriyal Talpur and other three were also from highly influential and political families of Sindh; Dr. Saeeda Soomro from Jacobabad (wife of big landowner and politician late Ahmad Mian Soomro-a parliamentarian, Senator and Deputy Speaker of the West Pakistan Assembly and mother of ex-Senate chairman, the caretaker Prime Minister in 2007-2008 and the interim President of Pakistan in 2008, Mian Muhammad Soomro), Raheela Magsi from Tando Allah Yar (from Magsi family and sister of Irfan Gul Magsi who have been Minister of Revenue and also of Auqaf, Religious and Minority Affairs), and Dr. Kaneez Sughra Junejo from Mirpurkhas (daughter of former Prime Minister Muhammad Khan Junejo). SPDC also reports the results of a case study done on profiles of District Nazims in Punjab after 2002 and 2005 elections that show three

⁸¹ This data has been taken from current website of Election Commission of Pakistan <http://www.ecp.gov.pk>, retrieved on June 4, 2008, at 15:30

particular trends: first, mostly Nazims (91%) were elected on the basis of *Zaat* (caste)/ *Biradri* (Kinship)/ Tribal ties; second, most of them (91% in 2002, 77% in 2005) belong to ruling political party; third, mostly (70%-80%) belong to leading political families (2007: 59-60). It clearly shows the overwhelming influence of kinship/tribal ties and of political affiliation in the present day political scenario in Pakistan.

Similarly, the councilors at District and Tehsil Councils, who are the Nazims and Naib Nazims of Union Councils also managed to achieve these status due to landowning, kinship and political affiliation working within Union Councils (UC). In Khan's (2006) research on local government and rural development in two districts of Northwestern Pakistan, the socio-economic profiles of District and Tehsil Councilors (UC Nazims and Naib Nazims) show them as belonging to groups of higher socio-economic strata of rural society. Therefore, he infers that these councils still are largely the domains of traditional rural elites (landlords). It indicates that political culture of Pakistan is still in the hands of the local elite men and prevents women from entering in these areas of power and authority.

4.6.2.2. Union Council: A Break to Past Trend of Elite Women's Selective Participation

There is considerably less information on Pakistan regarding women's political participation in local government under quotas, probably because the new local government institutions and elected women were in place quite recently. The existing literature indicates that only the lowest tier, the Union Council, shows a break from the patriarchal trend of elite class's political participation. Pattan Development Organization in its studies of local government election processes and results found that majority of the elected representatives belonged to the younger strata of society with majority (74%) of them less than 46 years of age (Bari and Khan 2001; Khan and Bari 2006). Similarly, these studies also show that majority (79%) of them were literate; only with 10% of them having passed the H.S.S.C examination (12 years of education) and 16% possessing bachelor level qualification (14 years of education). Illiterate councilors constitute 21% of the total number of elected representatives. Out of the total number of illiterate elected representatives, 69% are women. SPDC (2007) shows that on average, 27 percent of women councilors are not literate. Paracha (2003)

providing more or less similar features and statistics in this regard, also explains that in respect of occupational background, unlike Nazims and Naib Nazims, most of the councilors belong to low-income groups. Similarly, Khan (2006) also finds that, in general, majority of them belong to landless and small land holding groups. They mostly belong to low income or medium income groups. He argues that apparently local reforms have dislodged large landowners and social elites from control over the local politics thus local government units (the union council) can not be called as elite dominant institutions.

At Union Council level, enhanced quotas (33% after 2002 in comparison of the 2% to 10% in past) for women have inducted a large number of directly elected women councilors (more than 36,000 in 2002 and 24,000 in 2005). Existing studies show that most of them are less than 45 years old (57 %); more than half are illiterate (53 %); most are housewives (73.7%); very few own land; and an overwhelming majority has never contested elections (79 per cent), neither have their families (64%) (Reyes 2002)⁸². Most of them are novice in this field, coming from middle and lower middle class families, also from rural areas, with less education, no previous political experience. A large percentage of women at councilor level is self-motivated for want of social empowerment, which means to be heard and known – “I am a living reality & can speak” (Yazdani 2004: 26). A sizeable number of local councilors were school teachers and women based in local community organizations (Shaheed and Zaidi 2005). These trends show a break from the patriarchal trend of women’s exclusion from or elite women’s exclusive participation in politics in Pakistan. They seem to have more in common with majority of rural/urban and lower class women than the elite educated upper class women politicians of past, coming from feudal or political families or those still forming a large portion of women members of the present national and provincial assemblies.

Reyes (2002) indicates that the large participation by housewives reflects their willingness to go beyond their reproductive roles to assume community leadership roles. This may also have implications on the gender based assignment of household

⁸² Reyes cited this data from “Local Government Elections, Phase 1, 2, 3, 4, 5”, a series of studies conducted by Patten Development Corporation, in 2001. The authors are Farzana Bari, Sarwar Bari, and Bilal Hassan Khan.

roles and responsibilities at home and broader community. Yazdani counts the achievements of these women, as (a) family support to contest elections leading to acceptance of women's right to participate in politics, (b) acceptance to take on political decision making on behalf of community, (c) equal political decision making right as an elected representative (2004: 31). She further added to this list the "[s]ocial recognition, sense of authority, respect & improved social standing within and outside family being in a decision-making role are "THE" gains felt by these elected women" (Yazdani 2004: 31). Although, they are still facing resistance by male dominated systems of local government, low working or decision making power, lack of training, established stereotypes of politics as male domain, mobility issues, families' concern and resistance regarding their security and deliberate ignorance in and exclusion from major decision making processes at the council (also see Yazdani 2004; Mumtaz 2005), but at least the quotas have provided them opportunity to make an initial and massive entry in the political field which was not possible otherwise due to men and elite class dominated patriarchal political culture in Pakistan. The local government may also prove itself as nursery for producing a new generation of non-elite female politicians.

4.7. Conclusion

Pakistani political culture is based on few elite groups who alternatively capture the state power and strengthen their position in society. This struggle among competing masculine groups did not leave room for women to enter the political arena independently. The minority of women that manages to enter politics did so through their elitist background and ties to male politicians. The pattern of women political participation remained more or less same at all political levels in Pakistan throughout history. On the one hand, it seems that enhanced quotas have failed to radically shake the hold of patriarchy at the higher echelon (like national and provincial assemblies and also high portfolios of district and Tehsil mayors) of political institutions. But, on the other hand, at the grassroots level (i.e. Union Council) of the local government, this enhanced quota and women's increased participation has certainly challenged long standing patriarchal trend of 'male only' or 'elite women's occasional and exclusive' access to political power, thus demands a new explanation for patriarchal

transformation in Pakistan in the light of new fact of quota allocation, features of newly inducted women politicians and the experience of their increased political participation.

In short, the recent local government system, that itself emerged as a result of competing masculine groups like military regime and other political actors, has provided non-elite, common women a wider opportunity to enter the politics at local level. This emerging trend needs to be explored and supported with empirical data. We need to look that do they all not confirm to the elitist trend of past? It is also necessary to analyze how this majority of non-elite women paved their way to local councils? How they are managing their existence in these councils? What is the role of their kinship and familial ties? How the men and the patriarchal structures within family and council are responding to their presence in the public arena? What is the role of men and masculine groups (e.g. political parties, traditional feudal lords or family male head) in bringing these women to political sphere? In the following chapters the dissertation will explore these questions by focusing on the actual experiences of women councilors at different tiers of local government of the Hyderabad district in Pakistan.

CHAPTER 5

SOCIO-POLITICAL SCENE OF HYDERABAD, SINDH⁸³

5.1. Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to give a brief introduction of the geographic, social and political background of the research site i.e. the district of Hyderabad in the province of Sindh. It focuses on the province of Sindh, in general, and the district of Hyderabad in particular in respect of historical, geographical, social, and political details of the area and its patriarchal structures, women's status, and their political participation to give the reader a brief overview or background of the area and culture in which this research study is located.

5.2. Socio-Political Scene in the Province of Sindh

As the broader contextual details regarding Pakistan has already been discussed in last two chapters but it is also important to understand the socio-political scene of the province of Sindh in which the research site, i.e. District Hyderabad, is situated.

5.2.1. Geographical and Social Background of Sindh

Sindh is one of the four provinces⁸⁴ of Pakistan. It is geographically the third largest province of the country with an area of 140,914 sq. kms located at the southern part of the country. It is the second highly populated province with its 30 million population⁸⁵. Women are 47 % of its total population, with a male female ratio as 112 men per 100 women. It has the highest urban proportion of population that is 48.8%⁸⁶ as compared

⁸³ The statistics presented here are taken from Pakistan census 1998 available at Population Census Organizations website. <http://www.census.gov.pk/Statistics.htm> on February 27, 2011, 12:40

⁸⁴ Pakistan is comprises of four provinces of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan; along with some federally administered areas (i.e. Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA) and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA); Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK); and the Federal Capital Area (FCA) of Islamabad.

⁸⁵ Only after Punjab with highest population of 73 million people.

⁸⁶ Except the capital territory of Islamabad as 65.7%.

to total country urban proportion of 32.5%. The average household size in the province is 6. Out of the total population of the province 64% are currently married (71% in rural areas and 51% in urban) 30.62% never married, 5 % widowed and only 0.23% divorced.

Women's condition in the province are not so different from that of the over all country. Most of the cultural and patriarchal organization of the province is quite similar to that as discusses in chapter 3. The tribal and feudal system prevails in different part of the province. Women are deprived of their rights, and even they do not know their rights properly; especially in rural areas their condition is vulnerable. The Overall literacy rate in Sindh is 45% (25.7% rural and 63.72% urban); i.e. 54% for men (37.8% rural and 69.7% for urban), 34% for women (12% rural and 56.6% urban). Similarly, women's access to and formal educational attainment is also not so promising. The total enrollment ratio for the age group between 5 to 24 years is 32.7%; that is 27.7% for women as compared to that of 37.35% for men. The lower educational attainment is evident from the fact that the province has 80% of its population with their educational level up to 10th grade, while only 7.4% with B.A. or equivalent and only 2.65% with MA or equivalent. Women's educational levels are lower than men. Women are only 6.9% with B.A. or equivalent and 1.91% with MA or equivalent education as compared to that of 7.7% and 3.05% for men respectively.

Total labour force participation is 32.7% (32.5% rural and 32.88% urban). It is 58.8% for men (59.66% rural and 58.07% urban) as compared to the nominal 2.96% for women (2.51% rural and 3.39% urban). It shows that only a small part of the female population is economically active. Most of the women are spending their time at home engaged in domestic chores and child and elderly care activities. They rarely come out for any formal labour force participation. Those who are in labour force are mostly segregated in primary sector; in low skill and low paid jobs. As according to 1998 census 36.4% of them are engaged in service sector, 35.2% are as personal servants and 29.8% in agricultural laborers. Majority of all professional women in the province are teachers at various levels or nurses and midwives (including *dais*, traditional midwives). Due to high illiteracy among women and the social restriction at home and community they are unable to enter the formal labour market.

The unfavourable social customs like preference to *Jirga* (local decision making council) system rather than formal legal courts and the customs of killing in the name of honor, exchange marriage, giving women for the settlement of disputes and violence against women are common in the province. The *Peeri Muridi* (the spiritual guide and the follower) system and the caste based privileges to certain families (e.g. Shah and Syed) are common in the whole province and these two things also play important role in social and political networking at village, political party, local, provincial and national level.

5.2.2. Ethnic Composition of Sindh

There is a variety of people from different religion, ethnic and linguistic groups residing in the province. It has 91.31% Muslim population (88.12% rural and 94.67% urban). The highest minority population in the country is also residing in this province, most of them are Hindu. The various ethnic and linguistic groups such as Sindhi, Muhajir (Urdu speaking), Punjabi, Pushto, Baluchi and Saraiki, etc are present in the province. The two major ethnic groups comprising the highest portion of the population in the province are Sindhi and Muhajirs. Sindhis, are the native residents of the land. They are 59.73% of the total population. While Muhajir Urdu speaking people are the migrants who came from India after partition of the subcontinent in 1947. They are the 21.05% of the total population. Sindhis are dominant group in the rural areas, as they comprise 92% of the rural and 26% of the urban population of the province. Muhajirs are more segregated in the urban areas (mainly Karachi, Hyderabad and other cities), as they comprise 41.48% of the urban and only 1.62% of the rural population of the province.

This major ethnic division of the province between Sindhi and Muhajirs, and sharp corresponding geographical division of rural and urban developed in its current form through a historical process. Sindhis were the native residents of the province. It is the massive influx of migrants cross the borders of Pakistan and India after independence in 1947 that has brought this demographic change to the province of Sindh, dramatically. By the mid 1963 Pakistan received the 10 million of people that was almost 11% of the total population; the 70 % of these refugees were settled in Punjab

and 20% in Sindh (Rashid and Shaheed 1993). This refugee settlement did not bring drastic changes to the demographic and linguistic compositions in any other provinces, as refugees were assimilated with the dominant cultures of those provinces, except Sindh.

The migrants in Sindh mainly got settled in the urban areas of the province; mostly in Karachi and Hyderabad. This segregation of Muhajirs in urban areas hindered their integration with the native Sindhi population and culture. Therefore, the linguistic composition of the province changed as the population whose mother tongue was not Sindhi increased. By 1961, 51.7 percent of the people in Southern Sindh, including Karachi, reported Urdu to be their native tongue and they became the second largest linguistic group of the province comprising its 23% population (Rashid and Shaheed 1993: 8). The social vacuum created by the departure of Hindu educated middle class from Sindh at the time of independence was also quickly filled by Muhajir Urdu speaking "salariat"⁸⁷ who were better educated than other communities of West Pakistan and better integrated into the civil and military bureaucracies (Rashid and Shaheed 1993). It resulted in Sindhis seeing their province and resources literally captured by others.

5.2.3. The Political Scene of Sindh

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) since its formation in late 1960s and first victory in general elections in 1970 making Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the first popularly elected Prime Minister of Pakistan remain the dominant political party of the province; especially in the rural Sindh. Sindh as the home of Bhutto family was always the center power base of PPP. Pakistan Muslim league, PPP and religious parties remained the main players of the political game in the province. The situation remained same till 1980s when MQM organized itself in urban areas of Sindh.

During the Bhutto and Zia regimes Muhajirs had already lost their share in state elites as they were used to have during initial decades after independence. Therefore, in late 1970 Muhajirs start organizing as a student organization named All Pakistan Muhajir

⁸⁷ For further details see chapter 4 footnote.

Student Organization (APMSO). Later, in 1984, Muhajir Qaumi Movement⁸⁸ (MQM) formally emerged on the political scene as a representative of the Muhajir Urdu Speaking populations' interests under the leadership of Altaf Hussain. Initially the conflict that led them to organize emerged between the Muhajirs and Pukhtoons within Karachi, who came to the Karachi due to the Afghan war displacement and were dominant in the transport sector that is the backbone of the city. But by the 1986 violence in Hyderabad, that has both Sindhi and Muhajir population, started becoming a clash between Sindhi-Muhajir ethnic enclaves; Muhajir in Karachi and Hyderabad and Sindhies in rest of the Sindh. The situation and violence continued throughout 1990s.

The popularity of MQM is evident from its continuous success, after its inception in 1980s, in local, provincial and national level elections in the urban Sindh, especially in Karachi and Hyderabad. It mostly comprises of lower middle class and lower class Urdu speaking population based on membership not only individuals but the entire Muhajir families and the entire neighborhoods and areas. Unemployed *muhajir* youth and students have remained its backbone, holding executive and leadership positions. It has very well organized administrative structure from local neighborhood to its leader, residing in exile in London and leading party from there. Rashid and Shaheed defined this structure in this way:

From the top down, the key levels of authority in the MQM are the Markaz (centre) and the Zones, followed by Sectors. The primary level is the Unit. These organizational levels are independent of any control by elected representatives, no matter how high the public office they hold, and the Zonal In-charge controls the Minister of National Assembly (MNA) or Minister of Province Assembly (MPA) of his area (1993: 27).

Today the province has a pluralistic political scene. Beside these two dominant political parties as Pakistan People's Party and MQM, the other prominent political parties are different factions of Pakistan Muslim League (Pakistan Muslim League-Qaid-e-Azam, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, and Pakistan Muslim League-

⁸⁸ That was later renamed as Mutahida Qaumi Movement due to the internal divisions within party and separation of a section of party as Muhajir Qaumi Movement. The mainstream party changed its name as Mutahida Qaumi Movement, commonly called as Mutahida.

Functional along with some other like Pakistan People's Party (Shaheed Bhutto group), Awami Tehreek, Sindh Taraqi Pasand Party, Sindh National Front, etc. The religious parties like Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), Jamat-e-Islami (JI) and Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), etc. also have their influence in certain areas.

Beside political parties there are dominant feudal, tribal or caste based privileged families that rule the political scene of certain areas and represent certain political parties in those areas. Bhuttos of Larkana (the founders and heirs of PPP), Zardaris of Nowabshah, Makhdooms of Hala (belonging to PPP), Mirzas of Badin (PPP), Soomros of Jaccobabad (PML-Q), Shahs of Khairpur (PPP and PML-F), Arbabs of Tharparker (PML-Q), Jatois of Dadu (PML-Q), Junejos of Mirpurkahas (PML-F), Jatoi of Nusheroferoz, etc. The political scene also reflects the *Peeri Muridi* culture of the province. Peer Pagara the leader of PML-F has his strength as accepted spiritual leader among his followers. MQM stands as an exception to this family, feudal and tribal structure of political parties. It is the party that emerged out of the Muhajirs' identity as migrant from India and their language as Urdu. Therefore, there seems no such family domination rather it is based on middle and lower middle class Urdu speaking mostly urban populations mostly of Karachi and Hyderabad along with some other cities in Sindh.

5.3. Socio-Political Scene in the District of Hyderabad

In this broader political scene this dissertation focuses on the district Hyderabad that is the second largest city⁸⁹ of the province and, according to the 1998 census, the 6th largest city of the country with its total population of 1,166,894 (male 612,283 and female 554,611)⁹⁰. It is located on a distance of almost 200 km from Karachi by the side of river Indus in south-central of the Sindh province. In ancient times it was the capital of Sindh called as 'Naroon Kot' ruled by the Kalhora and Talpur rulers, successively. Then, in 1843, it was surrendered to the British colonizers who shifted the capital to Karachi. After independence, from 1947 to 1955 Hyderabad was again the capital of Sindh Province.

⁸⁹ Only after Karachi which is the main economic and commercial hub and the largest and most populated city of Pakistan.

⁹⁰ According to last census report of 1998.

After Karachi, it was the next city of Sindh that witnessed the largest settlement of Muhajirs making two dominant resident ethnic groups as Sindhi and Muhajirs. The city also witnesses a series of ethnic violence during late 1980s and 1990s among Sindhi-Muhajirs, as discussed above. This ethnic division is also apparent in the geographical division within the district. The geographical boundaries of the district have been revised several times in past according to the political interests of the political elites in response to persisting struggle for ethnic and linguistic dominance issue.

Before 2005 District Hyderabad was comprises of following 8 sub divisions/Talukas with corresponding population: (i) Hyderabad city (548,056), (ii) Latifabad (462,678), (iii) Qasimabad (109,846), (iv) Matiari (253,681), (v) Hala (240,497), (vi) Tando Allahyar (493,526), (vii) Tando Muhammad Khan (355,927), and (viii) Taluka Hyderabad Tando Jam (290, 432). It had 6 national assembly and 12 provincial assembly seats. These areas and national and provincial assembly seats were almost permanently been hold by certain specific political parties through the dominant families or individuals of the area.

The area of Hala and Matiari were always under a strong political hold of PPP and the national and provincial assembly seats from this area were always won by PPP through the Makhdoom family of Hala. The Tando Allahya was represented at national assembly by PPP's Abdul Sattar Bachani and later by his wife Shamshad Sattar Bachani, Benazir Bhutto also won her election from this area in 1997. The area of Qasimabad was a strong hold of PPP and was dominated by Syed Ameer Ali Shah Jamoot, Zahid Bhurgari, Amjad Shah Jelani at national and provincial levels. Taluka Hyderabad Tando Jam was PPP hold and Naveed Qamar-uz-Zman won this seat since 1990. The areas of Hyderabad city and Latifabad the main hub of MQM and since its inception in 1984 all the elections at different levels from 1988 to 2008 were won by MQM nominated candidates, except national assembly seat in 1993 elections, when MQM boycotted the election thus the seat was won by PPP candidate.

Before the 2005 local government elections, Hyderabad district was officially divided into four following districts: (i) Matiari, (ii) Tando Allahyar (iii) Tando Muhammad Khan, and (iv) Hyderabad. The new and reduced geographical boundaries of the

district Hyderabad now include four following Talukas; (i) Hyderabad City, (ii) Latifabad, (iii) Qasimabad, and (iv) Hyderabad *dehi* (rural) Tando Jam. These four Talukas are comprised of 52 Union councils (UCs). It also comprises of 3 national assembly and 6 provincial assembly seats.

The ethnic and political division is still evident in this new geographical distribution as the Hyderabad City (with 20 UCs) and Latifabad (with 16 UCs) are comprising the major bulk of the city population and are mostly the home of Urdu speaking population with a strong hold of MQM in these areas, while Qasimabad (with 4 UCs) has Sindhi speaking population and has a strong hold of PPP. While the Taluka Hyderabad *dehi* (rural) with 11 UCs) has a mix population of Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi and other groups. There is also a mix kind of political composition. The majority of the Urdu speaking Muhajir population makes MQM as the dominant party in the district. Thus, it is holding most of the national, provincial and local level power positions, with a share to PPP mainly coming from Sindhi areas.

5.3.1. The Local Government in Hyderabad

In the year 2000 the renewed local government system was introduced in the whole country. Like other districts, the district local government in Hyderabad has its following three hierarchical tiers: Union Councils, Taluka Councils and District Council. The district is the highest tier comprises one District Council with its members as district Nazim, district Naib Nazim, 52 Nazims of the Union Councils and 33% reserved seats for women 5% seats for minority. The District Nazim is the center of whole power and authority in the district. Then district is divided into four Taluka councils, as Talukas are discussed above. Each Taluka council is comprised of the Taluka Nazim and Naib Nazim with the Naib Nazims of the all Union Councils in that Taluka and same proportion of women and minority seats as that of District Council. Then each Taluka is sub divided into certain number of Union councils (as discussed above) each union council is comprised of union council Nazim and Naib Nazim along with 6 male councilors, 4 female councilors and 1 minority representative. There are total 52 union councils in the district.

The local government elections were always announced to be held on non party bases. But these are mostly always on party bases with only independent and title affiliations of the contesting candidates from different parties. As MQM is the dominant political group in the district but in the first local government elections it boycotted the elections therefore did not participate in it formally. Those who participated from the Urdu speaking areas did it in their independent capacity. Therefore the PPP was able to win the district Nazim seat that was held by Makhdoom Rafiq-uz-Zaman, a member of Makhdoom family belonging to PPP. But in the second tenure in the year 2005, MQM participated in the local elections and won the majority of the seats at all the levels thus became able to establish their dominance in two Talukas without or minimal opposition presence. While the other two minor Talukas were having PPP Taluka Nazims. Ultimately MQM captured the District Nazim seat and the majority in District Council thus most of the power, authority and financial control of the district. MQM nominated Mr. Kanwar Naveed Jameel, former Member of National Assembly became the district Nazim.

5.3.2. Women's Representation in Local Councils⁹¹

In both the elections women enthusiastically participated in local government elections in the district. In the year 2001, there were total 102 union council with 612 seats reserved for women. Women were elected on 573 seats against the nomination filled by 1175 women candidates. Total 39 seats remained vacant. In 2005 elections, the number of union council was reduced to 52 and the total seats reserved for women came to 208. 206 women got elected leaving two seats vacant against the nominations filled by 595 women candidates.

5.4. Conclusion

Women's condition is not much different in the province of Sindh and the district of Hyderabad from that of all over the country. The political scene in the province and district has been dominated by two ethnic group of Muhajir and Sindhi with their respective political parties; Mutahida Qaumi Movement and Pakistan Peoples Party. MQM has its dominance in the district due to large share of Muhajir population in two

⁹¹ These statistics have been reproduced from the report of Citizens' Campaign for women's participation in Local government elections 2001 and 2005, written by Aurat Foundation (AF 2005a).

majority population Talukas of Hyderabad City and Latifabad. It did not appear in the local government system as dominant force in the last elections of the 2001 due to its boycott of the elections. But in this tenure of 2005 elections it appeared as the dominant ruling party in the district holding most of the seats at all tiers of the local councils.



CHAPTER 6

METHODOLOGY

6.1. Introduction

This dissertation is designed as a feminist qualitative case study research gathering data through tape recorded semi-structured in-depth interviews with 53 women councilors of local government in Hyderabad District in Pakistan. In this chapter, I shall delineate my methodological perceptions that guide my choice of method along with a detailed description of the research process from my entrance into the field and data collection to data analysis. I explain my field practices that how political participation and patriarchy related experiences were learned from women politicians in a specific context of the local government of Hyderabad District.

6.2. Feminist Methodology for Producing Justifiable Knowledge of Gender Relations

This research is an interpretive study embedded in feminist theoretical perspective, designed to study women's experiences in a patriarchal setting. It is directed by feminist methodology, which is grounded in its political and ethical commitment to women and their experiences, for ontological and epistemological (as discussed in chapter 2) positioning and guidance to carry out data collection method. The question of any distinctive feminist methodology has frequently been raised (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002; Harding 1987). Ramazanoglu and Holland argue that there is neither any research technique nor any ontological or epistemological position that is distinctively feminist and any methodology assumes this distinctiveness only when "it is shaped by feminist theory, politics and ethics and grounded in women's experience" (2002: 15-16). They consider feminist methodology as a "set of approaches to the problems of producing justifiable knowledge of gender relations" (Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002: 10). It enables the researcher to challenge an existing 'truth' about the nature of social reality. It is an attempt to give voice to women and to correct the dominant male-

oriented perspective of social sciences (Neuman 2000: 82). Here methodologies and methods are not only ways of gathering and analyzing data, but they also serve as channels and instruments of women's historical emancipatory mission (Crotty 1998: 182).

This research becomes a convincing case for feminist methodology because of three main features. First, the very topic of the research is women's political participation in local government in Hyderabad. Second, the ontological and epistemological stances (as discussed in chapter 2) employed for this study consider women's everyday social experiences as meaningful components of reality, thus capable of providing a significant and justifiable knowledge. Third, the theoretical framework of the research has been guided by the feminist perspective. All these three features of the research helped to locate the appropriate data source in women politicians in the local government and the appropriate data in accounts of their experiences of political participation for this study.

In accordance with the identified data source and appropriate data, the underlying assumptions of feminist theoretical perspective further guided the use of research methodology in a way that the method may become a tool for "giving voice to the silent" (Oakley 2000: 47), that is, women in this case. The effort was "[t]o address women's lives and experience *in their own terms*" (DuBois 1983: 108, emphasis in original) through listening to their own experiences. Therefore, the criteria for selecting an appropriate data collection method became the ability of a particular method or methods to give voice to women participants for sharing their experiences in a manner that is not possible otherwise.

6.3. Qualitative Approach to Research

My approach to this research is a qualitative one, which is appropriate to study people's experiences, perceptions and understandings, and it is also consistent with the feminist theoretical perspective. Creswell defines that qualitative research is an inquiry process for exploring a social problem in which "[t]he researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in

a natural setting” (1998: 15). Creswell’s definition of qualitative research is a nutshell description of motivating factors for use of a qualitative approach in this dissertation.

Denzin and Lincoln also identified that “qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality...They seek answers to questions that stress *how* social experience is created and given meaning” (2005: 10, emphasis in original). Further enhancing the point, Mason points out that qualitative methodologies “celebrate richness, depth, nuance, context, multi-dimensionality and complexity” (2003: 1). Beside that, this approach also emphasizes eliciting understanding and documenting meanings from the participants’ perspective. It demands getting close to the people and their situations to understand the realities of their lives (Woods 1999: 3). In this way, this approach has become a source to provide the opportunity for deep understanding of women’s diverse everyday contextually situated social interaction and experiences and their understanding of these experiences in a particular context of local government in a patriarchal society like Pakistan.

6.4. Case Study as Research Strategy for Selecting a ‘Bounded System’

This research is designed as a case study of women politicians in local government in district Hyderabad. Case study strategy is consistent with qualitative approach of this research. According to Stake, case study is a “common way to do qualitative inquiry” (2005: 443). Ragin argues that “almost all qualitative research seeks to construct representations based on in-depth, detailed knowledge of cases” (1994: 92). Case study strategy shows intention to “investigate one or two cases or compare a limited set of cases” (Neuman 2000: 32). Stake also defines it as an “interest in an individual case” (2005: 443). He further elaborates that a case “is one among others” (Stake 2005: 444) to be intensively concentrated upon. The broader focus of this dissertation in women’s political participation in local government and patriarchy in Pakistan is spread over a wider area of whole country, covering a variety of social, cultural, political and geographical contexts. The case study strategy helped this dissertation to make a choice of “a “bounded system” or a case” (Creswell 1998: 61) to be actually studied in accordance with the theoretical and practical aspects of the study. Therefore, local government in District Hyderabad as a complete unit has been considered a case for this research.

Contrary to quantitative research that works with a few variables to be studied in a large number of cases, case study research, “examines, in depth, many features of a few cases” (Neuman 2000: 32). It involves gathering enough information about a particular case to enable the researcher to understand how it operates or functions (Berg 2001: 225). Qualitative and case study research, both, share the same goal of going in detail and depth of process, context and social setting for giving a holistic picture of the phenomenon studied. Therefore, this research is designed as a qualitative case study in order to achieve an in-depth and detailed coverage of many social, political and personal factors influencing women politicians’ experiences in local government, simultaneously focusing attention to a particular social context/setting of local government in District Hyderabad as a case.

Case studies are generally applied by social researchers in order to illustrate the specific and/or sometimes exceptional cases of individuals or groups which do not fit the patterns accounted in previous studies (Reinharz 1992: 167-71). Only one case of counter-instance can invalidate all previously accepted generalization (Popper 1963). Besides, orthodox positivism as a traditional and dominant paradigm has established a gender blind view of the world that has historically reduced women to invisibility and darkness. Feminist case studies, giving voice to previously silenced cases of women, have the power to show this androcentric bias of traditional research and to point out the oppressive gender based power relations in patriarchal structure of society. The same is the intention with this research done as a feminist qualitative case study.

Similarly, another important reason behind the selection of local government in District Hyderabad as a case is that there is no popularly well know elite women in all tiers of local government, even the one woman who holds the highest position in Hyderabad local government as Nazim of union council is also apparently not well know for her elite or influential family. Therefore, this case has been selected to prove the challenge to previously established explanation of women in politics in Pakistan, as a patriarchal trend of elite women’s exclusive political participation, by showing the massive entry of common non-elite women at all tiers of local government.

6.5. Why I Selected ‘Women Politicians in Hyderabad Local Government’ as a Case?

Stake identified that case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied (2005: 443). I chose to study “women politicians in local government of District Hyderabad” as a case for this study. The selected case has three important forming components: (i) Gender- i.e. women politicians; (ii) a particular political forum- i.e. local government, and (iii) a specific geographical area- i.e. District Hyderabad. I will discuss the rational behind selection of each of these components of my case on the basis of theoretical issues, available funds and resources, accessibility to research site, security and law and order concerns, researcher’s ethnic identity, language concerns, familiarity with the setting, etc.

6.5.1. Gender Aspect of the Case: Women Politicians

It is evident that women have always been almost absent from politics in Pakistan. Only those few from highly influential families could access to political forums. It was a customary practice; therefore, it was not much studied in academic research. But a sudden change appeared after the year 2000 opening the doors of political forums for women. They took a never precedent enhanced representation at all formal political forums in Pakistan. Hundreds of women entered into National and Provincial Assemblies and Senate, while thousands of women (more than 36,000) were elected at local government level. The opportunity was also enthusiastically welcomed by women through their more than expected positive response to it. This sudden change moved me to understand women’s experiences; explaining how they have been brought in and accommodated in politics within a patriarchal society. Therefore, the gender aspect emerges out of the particular research problem I selected and is also in demand by the feminist theoretical perspective in which I designed my study. Above all, it has sprung out of my own interest in gender related issues in my country.

6.5.2. Selected Political Forum: Local Government

After an extensive preliminary study of existing literature, I found two reasons for my particular interest in local government.

(i). *Lack of research work exploring and explaining the dynamics of women's political participation at local level (i.e. in local government) in Pakistan.* Very little research work has been done on women's political participation in Pakistan. Whatever is available is more focused on national and provincial levels rather than local level. One of the reasons behind this lack can be the short period to come up with such work done after recent revival of local government in a revolutionary way giving women a high representation.

(ii). *Local government is the forum where women had been give largest proportion of representation, that is, 33% as compared to that of in National and Provincial Assemblies (i.e. 17%):* Due to this highest quota allocation, thousands of women from the grassroots (as compared to those selected few from politically active sectors coming in national and provincial level) came in at local level.

Therefore, I selected to study the social dynamics (i.e. social, geographical, economic, political and personal aspects) of this never precedent and incomparable first time entrance of women in local government in Pakistan. The study of women politicians' experiences at local level for policy recommendations to sustain their presence on this forum for a longer term is the demand of time and the aim of this research.

6.5.3. Selected Geographical Area: Choice of District Hyderabad

My broader focus was on women politicians in local government in Pakistan, which was a broad geographical area having different socio-cultural context of each province. Therefore, my selection of geographical areas is more complex to be explained than other two aspects of the case. It was done after giving thought on provincial and district levels.

6.5.3.1. Selection on Provincial Level

There are three major points to be considered at provincial levels. First, Pakistan is officially divided into four provinces; Baluchistan, NWFP (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)⁹², Punjab, and Sindh. Each of the provinces has different culture and language. For

⁹² NWFP (North West Frontier Province) has recently officially been renamed as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

instance: NWFP and Baluchistan provinces have relatively more conservative culture in respect of women's autonomy and public appearance. Punjab and Sindh provinces have relatively more liberal cultural in this regard (see Chapter 4). Urdu is the national language, but each province has its own local language. Therefore, to comprehend social dynamics of women's political experiences in each province demands a look at their respective cultures, languages and social settings.

Second, local government is also a provincial matter to be decided upon its structure, function and regulation. Each provincial government has adopted and promulgated its separate local government rules and regulation⁹³. Due to these cultural and legislative differences the whole country cannot be dealt in a universal way, therefore, demands narrow focus on a specific context.

Third, Sindh, one of the provinces, has always taken a lead in bringing forth women politicians. The only women prime minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto, was from Sindh. The first and yet only women speaker of the National Assembly, Fehmida Mirza, is also from Sindh. It has incomparable history in the country for having four women District Nazims and one Naib Nazim elected in local government. It has also taken a lead by filling highest number (i.e. 99.05%) of reserved seats for women, as compared to other three provinces, at all tiers of local government in rural and urban areas during last local government elections in the year 2005 (AF 2005a). Due to these cultural, legislative provincial differences, and the political history of women in the province of Sindh, it was selected for concentration in this study. I also found it more practical to focus the study within only one set of legislations and rules of one of the province (i.e. Sindh), rather than in four provinces at a time. The researcher being a native of Sindh is also more familiar with the culture and language of this province; that added an additional benefiting factor in this selection.

6.5.3.2. Selection on District Level

The province of Sindh (with its 23 districts, 1110 union councils and 4440 women councilors on reserved seats) is still a large area to be covered in a qualitative study

⁹³ Each province has separate local government ordinance: Punjab local government ordinance; Baluchistan local government ordinance; NWFP local government ordinance; and Sindh local government ordinance.

within limited resources of this independent unfunded research. It is argued that “[q]ualitative research usually involves some form of sampling or selection, for two sets of reasons. The first are practical and resource-based issues...The second...are to do with the important question of focus” (Mason 2003: 121). These two aspects also influenced my selection of Hyderabad district as a case.

First, following the theoretical aspect of the research question, Hyderabad district has women politicians participating at all tiers in local government. It also has one of the high posts (Union council head) exceptionally held by non-elite women in the province. Thus, it is having among these women the appropriate data source to provide the evidences needed to address the particular research problem focused in this dissertation. The only women Union Council Nazim (Head of Union council-the third highest office hold by women in Local Government) in the province is from District Hyderabad and she, unlike the four women District Nazims (Mayors) and one District Naib Nazim (deputy Mayor) in the province, is not apparently known for her feudal or political elite family background. Therefore, this non elitist feature of its women politicians at all tiers of local government in District Hyderabad provides a sufficient theoretical ground for investigation of the dynamics of local non-elite women’s political participation in local government.

Second, Districts are in themselves a complete unit of local government comprising three hierarchical tiers; District Council, Taluka Councils and Union Councils. Women participating in local government do not form a homogenous group, as each of them participate in any of these three hierarchical tiers. It was necessary to select participants from each tier to study the dynamics of women’s participation at all these three levels and inter tier interaction among them within a local government unit. It is, therefore, decided to take a complete unit of local government that is district with all its tiers to study the phenomena in a holistic and comprehensive way.

Third, available resource and accessibility to the research site were also considered while selecting the research setting. Silverman and Marvasti argue that in qualitative research “our data is often derived from one or more cases and it is unlikely that these cases will have been selected on a random basis. Very often, a case will be chosen

simply because it allows access” (2008: 163). They further argue that in an independent and unfunded research “you are likely to choose any setting that, while demonstrating the phenomenon in which you are interested, is accessible and will provide appropriate data reasonably readily and quickly” (Silverman and Marvasti 2008: 169). Mason warns that even if one is able to construct a representative sample of cases, the sample size would probably be so large as to preclude the kind of intensive analysis usually preferred in qualitative research (1996: 91). Therefore, District Hyderabad, a comprehensive unit of local government, was selected as the case for this study on the basis of available resources of this independent unfunded research, researcher’s accessibility to the research setting and time and labour demands of qualitative research.

Fourth, apart from the resources and accessibility there are several other things (ethnic and geographical diversity, and researcher’s personal traits and security issues) that were considered when selected Hyderabad as case. The province of Sindh has geographical (rural and urban) and ethnic (dominantly Sindh and Muhajir) diversity. Sindhi population is mostly settled in rural areas and interior Sindh. While Muhajir population mostly occupy urban areas; like the city of Karachi and Hyderabad and other cities. One of the reasons for selection of Hyderabad as a case is to cover this geographical and ethnic diversity. District Hyderabad comprises of both rural and urban area and Sindhi and Muhajir population living within it. It is a reasonable synthesis of both these two. Besides, the law and order condition of Sindh, also intensified by keeping in mind researcher’s ethnic and gender identity and her security as Urdu speaking Muhajir women, was also considered while selecting Hyderabad (as comprises of and tolerant towards both Sindhi and Muhajir population while simultaneously more easy for mobility of a independent women researcher due to its urban and rural close connections and better communication resources). Researcher’s familiarity with the district and its cultural and geographical context was an additional benefiting factor in selection of Hyderabad as case for this study.

In short, the districts of Hyderabad, was selected as a comprehensive unit of local government; theoretically satisfying the criteria of the presence of the phenomena

under study and practically satisfying the issues of limited resources, access and qualitative data collection and its processing.

6.6. In-depth, Semi-structured Interviews as an Instrument to Give Voice to Women

Crotty identifies that “feminist researchers may share methodologies and methods with researchers of other stripes; yet feminist vision, feminist values and feminist spirits transform these common methodologies and methods and set them apart” (1998: 182). Similarly, Harding (1987: 2) contends that method can be any or all of those used by androcentric researchers but how it is carried out in feminist methodology is often strikingly different. Feminist researchers may use from a wide variety of methods or data collection techniques. These may range from historical document analysis, surveys, content analysis, interview, and observation. Considering my ontological and epistemological stances, the underlying assumptions of feminist theoretical perspective, and the logistic matters related to this research, I chose to use ‘in-depth semi-structured open-ended qualitative interviews’ as a method of data collection to give voice to women’s everyday social experience.

Experiments were not possible due to the very socio-historical nature of women’s political participation and the artificially controlled environment required for experiment. Further, historical research or document analysis could not serve the purpose of this research, as there is very limited literature or research work available on women’s political participation in local government in Pakistan (see Chapter 4). Surveys and content analysis, due to their emphasis on precision, found lacking to explore the details that are required for holistic understanding of the context to catch the threads of several social, political, legal and personal factors influencing women’s political participation at local level. Observation (participant and non participant) method could have helped but needs a long period for sufficient data to be collected and a huge amount of resources. Through observations, it is also not possible to capture important past information about certain factors residing in women’s life prior to their entry in politics that may have affected their entry and performance in this field (e.g. the persons and processes that have motivated and helped their opting for election contestation and campaigns). Thus, the interview has appeared as the most suitable

method for exploring women's experiences of political participation in their own words.

Here one can also find focus group and life history methods as serving the purpose of this study. But to conduct focus groups was logistically difficult as research participants (women politicians belonging to different areas) were having difficulty in giving time for meetings and interviews due to their personal and professional engagements. To get them gathered in groups on some specific places at a specific time was difficult. Although, the focus group was not the part of research design but sometimes, to some extent, it became the part of research process. For example, when I reached to some Union Councils for conducting interviews and all the women councilors of that council, despite different appointment timings already fixed with them, gathered there at the same time and there was no place to sit alone with one of them for interview. Therefore, interviews were conducted in the presence of other women councilors and this presence certainly influenced interviewees' responses and interview process. Some times this situation also gave rise to group discussions on some topics of mutual concern and finding them fruitful I did not hinder the spontaneity of these discussions.

My actual focus was not the whole life history of the politicians, rather it was on events, relations, actions and factors in different parts of their life that are linked to that particular political participation. Therefore, I merged this life history aspect with semi structured interviewing when planning a thematic guideline for interview sequence. The guideline was planned in a way to start from women's lives in general and before coming to politics, then moving through life after coming in politics and their social relations and performance in council, and finally exploring their future aspiration. I was also not rigidly stuck to this life history aspect of guideline as it was, although a part, but not the prime focus of my research.

Denzin and Lincoln points out that qualitative researchers seek a method that enables them to uncover the meanings their subjects bring to their life experiences and such a method rely on "the subjective verbal and written expressions of meaning given by the individuals studied as windows into their inner lives of these persons" (2005: 21). They

consider that the researchers can “get closer to the actor’s perspective through detailed interviewing and observation” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 12). Therefore, in this study, interview method is used as it is a suitable technique to enable the participant to reconstruct, remember and verbalize their experiences and also to enable the researcher to talk to the participants studied in a face to face interaction, asking questions and listening at length for gaining access to the meaning they give to their experiences.

The traditional close ended structured interview ignores the complexity, uniqueness and indeterminateness of each individual human interaction. Therefore, in-depth, open ended semi-structured qualitative interviews were adopted to remain flexible enough to capture the depth, diversity and complexity of individual women’s experiences through its open ended nature, while still loosely remaining within a structure to ask questions related to the main research topic. Seidman points out that in-depth interviewing has an “interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (2006: 9). People are considered as experts on their own experience, thus, capable to best explain their experience of a particular phenomenon (Darlington and Scott, 2002: 48). Therefore, women politicians were considered as the expert of their experiences of political participation for an in-depth exploration and understanding of each participant’s interpretation of her experience. Through in-depth interviews I became able “to see this world as my research participants do-from the inside” (Charmaz 2006: 14).

6.7. Brief Description of the Field and Research Participants’ Location

My field of research was the local government in Hyderabad District. Like all Districts in Pakistan, Hyderabad local government has a three-tier system; Union Councils (UCs), Taluka Councils (TCs) and District Council (DC). The first and the lowest tier is Union Council. There are 52 Union Councils in Hyderabad District. Each Union Council has 13 members; one Nazim and one Naib Nazim (as the head and deputy head of the council) and 11 members of the council; 4 women (on 33% reserved seats-2 on general seats and 2 on labour/peasant seats) and 6 men (4 on general seats and 2 on labour/ peasant seats) and 1 person on reserved seat for minorities. They all are elected through direct election. All the Union Council Naib Nazims by default become the

members of the second tier, that is, Taluka Council and all the Union Council Nazims, similarly, become the members of third tier, that is, District Council.

At the second tier, District Hyderabad is divided in 4 Taluka Councils; Taluka Hyderabad City (comprises of 20 Union Councils), Taluka Latifabad (comprises of 17 Union Councils), Taluka Rural (comprises of 11 Union Councils) and Taluka Qasimabad (comprises of 4 Union Councils). Each Taluka council has all the Naib Nazims of their constituting Union Councils as Taluka Council members. 33% seats reserved for women and (5%) seats reserved for minority at Taluka Council are then filled through indirect elections.

At the third tier, there is one District Council which has all the Nazims of 52 Union Councils in the district as its members. Again 33% reserved seats for women and 5% reserved seats for minority are there to be filled with indirect election. In this way, there are 208 seats at Union councils, 18 seats at Taluka councils and 18 seats at District Council reserved for women in local government of Hyderabad. Besides reserved seat, there is also one woman Union Council Nazim (Sajeela, who is also the member of District Council on general seat). Table 6.1 shows the details of each tier and its female members.

Table 6.1: Tiers of Local Government and Female Members

	Tier of Local Govt.	Number of councils	33% reserved seats for women	Women on general seat
1	District	1	18	1*
2	Taluka	4	18	
3	Union council	52	208	1*

** Sajeela is the same women who is Union council Nazim and also a member of District Council on general seat by virtue of being UC Nazim.*

6.8. Entering the Field

Before entering the field I did an extensive literature search and review. The literature review continued throughout my research until my final report writing. First, I

determined for identification of the institutions and persons whom I should inform or ask for permission before entering the field. I prepared a letter of information for District, Taluka and Union Council Nazims. Its content was the information about aims, objectives and method of my research and also asking them if they have any queries or objections in this regard, it can be clarified at any stage of the research. I also prepared a letter of consent for female union councilors to be interviewed. These both letters were prepared in local language (Appendices A and B).

Second, I prepared a theme based initial interview guide. The identification of the themes was done in the light of my literature review and the research questions I am addressing. An interview guide with well-planned open-ended questions and ready probes can increase researcher's confidence and concentration on participants' responses without missing obvious points that need to be explored (Charmaz 2006: 29). This thematic guide also grew with the passage of time I spent in the field (see Appendix C). The major themes included in the guide were women's life in general and before political involvement (their personal information, family background, education, income resources, control on resources and decision making power at family and community levels), life after political involvement (motivating factors for their entry in politics, opting and contesting elections, running campaign, roles, relations and performance in the council, participation in decision making and financial affairs of the council, etc), and finally their future aspiration. Initially the guide was based on few broad themes but it grew with the process and experiences in the field.

6.8.1. Choice of the Way to Enter: Establishing Image as Independent Researcher

As I had no personal relations or friends with any of the local government personals, there were some possible ways to enter the field; through some NGOs, through some dominant party, and through individual efforts as a researcher. Each of these options had its advantages and disadvantages. First, entering the field through the NGOs working on women's political empowerment may have helped me to easily reach female councilors through women councilors associated and worked for these NGOs. But people in Hyderabad have different opinions about NGOs. For some the NGO is acceptable while for some the NGOs are to be evaded. I did not want my self to be associated with the particular concept of NGOs in participants mind. The following

excerpt from one of the interviews conducted with a female Union Councilor can sufficiently justify my decision.

(Note: Here N is interviewer and NS is the interviewee.)

N: How will you see it if your daughters come in politics?

NS: No. no. not at all.

N: Why?

NS: For daughters...people said to me too much that you (always) come but you did never even bring your daughters. I said, 'only it is I who come. Just keep it to me. I will neither bring my daughters to politics nor to NGOs. I do never take them with me. I do not like it.

N: Why?

NS: I have seen the environment (there). I have seen the environment of party and of NGOs as well. I do not like it even a little. The elder women of (old) age and mature can save themselves but it is hard for new (young) age girls. That's why I...Neither they (her daughters) are fond of, nor even they know what the NGO is or not. Nor they have any interest in party...they are only limited to their studies. I said, 'I will not bring my daughters'.

N: What about other girls, apart of your daughters, coming in this field?

NS: If the daughter have that much...they are mature and means... to themselves..can keep themselves safe then they may come...but today the environment is too bad...I have seen too much rubbish in NGOs, also in party as well. But it is more in NGOs. People asked me much for my daughter for jobs in NGOs. I said, 'we do not even need job of such thing (NGO)'... They should get education, that is right..They should get education and get married. Then afterwards she and her husband do what ever they want. I do not like this.

(Excerpt taken from the interview transcript of Nayyar, Union councilor from Taluka Rural, Hyderabad)

Second, the entry in field through any or dominant political party in the area (as I was repeatedly offered from MQM, especially by Rashida, in-charge of the party women's wing Hyderabad Zone. She offered me to come to the Zonal office of the party in the evening and they would call all the councilors there to meet me) may have led to narrowing down the access to women with diverse party affiliation and it may have given a biased image of researcher to the research participants belonging to other political parties. Therefore, considering the advantages and risks of each possible way and rejecting the first two, I decided to enter the field through my individual efforts as an independent academic researcher. It was difficult and hard to work out but was helpful for me to establish my own independent identity without any party affiliation or

NGO association. It reduced the possibility of any bias and over representation of any single political party.

6.8.2. Information to Concerned Institutions and Personals

I was to study a case of women politicians at different tiers of local government of Hyderabad district. Therefore, I thought it proper to inform the district government and its sub-departments (from where the female councilors will be selected to participate in my research) regarding aims, objectives and method of my research. A formal letter informing the aims and objectives of my research and asking if they have any queries or objections in this regard was written (as I discussed earlier) and delivered to District Nazim's office, four Taluka Nazims' offices and the 14 union councils from where female councilors participated in my research. The letter also asked for any clarification or consultation regarding my research when and where the department feels it necessary during my research. I never found any such query from district Nazim's office. I satisfied the concerned queries by personal meeting with Nazims in two Talukas and 13 Union Councils. Despite my repeated efforts, I was not able to personally meet Nazims of two Talukas (Taluka Latifabad and Qasimabad) and one Union Council and even no query or objection was received from these three as well. I was informed of their consent through their concerned staff.

6.8.3. Process of Entering the Field

First, I started my field work with initial telephone contacts and then personal visit to the District Nazim, District Council, Taluka Nazims and Taluka Councils for briefing them about my intentions and delivering the letter of intent to the concerned persons. During this process I also collected the information (such as list of members, telephone numbers, addresses) regarding District and Taluka Council members and Union Councils (UCs) in the district from these offices. Second, I started to contact UC Nazims; first through telephonic conversation and appointment, and then through personal meetings for briefing and delivery of letter of intent for their official records and process. Third, I started contacting women councilors at all levels; first through telephone (to as much of them possible with telephone) and then through appointments and personal meeting. Where the direct contact through telephone or meeting with female councilor was not possible the help was asked from Nazims or other family

members. All the three tasks mentioned above progressed simultaneously, rather than in isolation to each other, for most part of my field work.

6.8.4. Negotiation with Gatekeepers at Different Levels and Consent of Participants

“Getting informed consent is actually quite a complex and difficult business” (Mason 2003: 80). The negotiation with gatekeepers and participants was not a one time activity in this research. It was made at different levels and with lots of people, each time anew with each individual coming into the scope of the research. Finding no uniform way for negotiating the access to all women politicians, I made these negotiations at all or some of the following three levels according to the nature of each participant and the access option open to reach her. The three levels were, macro/institutional level (e.g. in District, Taluka and Union councils and their concerned personals), at meso/intermediate level (e.g. family- husband or other male members) and individual level (i.e. the person/councilor with whom to interview).

The measures taken at the institutional levels have already been discussed above. These negotiations, especially at Union Council level, have proved to be very helpful in some of the Union Councils. Union Council Nazims facilitated my access to their respective female union councilors. But in cases where Nazims were not so helpful or were apparently indifferent, I strived to access research participants by my own efforts. In some of these cases the mobile phone numbers of these women which I acquired from councils were mostly kept by their male family members. Therefore, in order to meet them, I was first in need to negotiate with these male family members. For example, I acquired the telephone number and address of Isra, a District Councilor elected from Qasimabad. But she actually does not live at the address provided and was located in the area (Qasimabad) from where she was elected. She lives in Hyderabad City. I tried to contact her on the telephone number provided through District Council. The number was every time I called picked by her husband and I could only reach Isra after making all negotiations (regarding possibility of interview, time, place and date of appointment) with her husband, who was of the opinion that Mrs. Pasha does not know anything. It is he who has brought her in politics and got her elected there. She will not even say a single word without him as she does not actually know anything about all this. He gave a metaphor that ‘I am giving morsels to her mouth’. I could only first

meet Isra Phanwar at her house on the time already fixed with her husband in advance. Her husband tried his best to join me and Isra during meeting but it did not happen because of postponement of the actual meeting appointment due to sudden law and order situation of the city and the next meeting held on very next day at a time when her husband was not able to join us.

I did not find negotiations with any third party (concerned institutions and family males) enough. As the choice of women politicians to participate can be doubted in such cases where the Nazim/ male relative played key role in negotiations and organizing meeting with them. But I found that despite this mediating function of Nazim still the choice was of women councilors because several councilors did not come to meet me on the fixed day and time despite they were asked and expected to come by Nazims. Similarly, on my part, I also tried my best to lessen this decision power of any third party by placing the final decision for participating or declining with the concerned individual women councilors by directly asking them for consent and availability to participate in my research before each interview. I delivered the letter of consent to each councilor but keeping in mind the cultural stigma associated with getting signatures on any paper, I did not insist them for signing that letter. Before starting each interview I also had a discussion with each participant informing them in detail about the nature, aims, method of my research, and the voice recording of the interview. I also asked each of them verbally and individually for their consent to participate in research while ensuring them confidentiality. This activity served my purpose because some of them were illiterate who were not able to read the consent letter.

Most of the participants when asked consented to participate but there were some who took a long time to show their consent and opt for participation (even until the end of field work thus left un-interviewed) while one Taluka Councilor (from Taluka Qasimabad) simply refused to do so. The apparent reasons behind postponement or refusal to participate were seeking permission from party, having personal or professional engagements, ill health or less mobility. Similarly, I never found anyone refusing for recording when asked for, but one Rashida (whom I interviewed while recording interview with pen and paper). The reason she told me for not recording was

that “we also have other designations in party, we do not have permission for this”. But at the same time she helped me to reach other female union councilors and in response to my query for possibility of recording their interviews to ensure not to lose important data she said, ‘off course! you can record their interviews but just do not tell them that Rashida *baji*⁹⁴ has not get her interview recorded’.

6.8.5. Selecting Participants

Mason (2003: 120) argues that qualitative research does not employ logic of probability, therefore, is in need of an alternative logic. This alternative logic is theoretical, rather than statistical (Bryman 1988: 90). It means sampling in qualitative research should be theoretically grounded (Silverman 2000: 105). This qualitative research study focuses on the experiences of women politicians in the local government of Hyderabad, thus the wider universe/population was comprises of all woman politicians involved at three tiers of local government in Hyderabad during the current tenure (i.e. 2005-2010). The selection of research participant for interviewing was done by a combination of purposive and theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss 1967) strategy which employs logic of selection, rather than sampling, of participants for theoretical purposes.

The selection of participants was made on the basis of two considerations; (i) their relevance to my research focus and (ii) to encapsulate a *relevant range* of contexts or phenomena (Mason 2003: 124) under study. First criterion demands certain build-in characteristics of participants that have the potential to explain theoretical aspects of the phenomena under study. Darlington and Scott consider having relevant experiences of the phenomena under investigation as a criterion for the selection of research participant in qualitative research projects (2002: 51-52). Therefore, the relevant experience of political participation in local government was considered as one of the criteria for selection of participants in this research. On the other hand, the purpose of theoretical sampling has been argued as to cover a range of concerned phenomena in order to maximize opportunities for discovering variations among concepts and to densify categories (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 201). Therefore, through second criteria, a deliberate effort was made to seek people with different situations and experiences in

⁹⁴ *Baji* is an Urdu word means elder sister.

order to capture broadest possible range of perspectives on the phenomena under study (Darlington and Scott 2002: 52).

Table 6.2: The Typology of Possible Categories and Number of Cases for Selection

	Geographical diversity	Ethnic diversity	Tier of Local Government		
			Women in District Council	Women in Taluka Councils	Women in Union Councils
Latifabad	Urban	Muhajir	6	6	68
Qasimabad	Urban	Sindhi	1	1	16
City	Urban	Mixed	7	7	80
Rural	Rural	Mixed	4	4	44
Total			18	18	208

There are often practical constraints on the number of people who can be interviewed due to labour intensive and time consuming nature of qualitative research, but still researchers often have to take as many participants as they can get, within the constraints of time and other resources in order to avoid the charge of choosing only the few cases that fitted the researcher's own perspective (Darlington and Scott 2002: 53). The question is how to accommodate the desire to capture the maximum possible diversity within practical limitations of dealing with qualitative data. To resolve this problem, I thought through Stake's (1994: 243) suggestion for setting up a *typology* for selection of diverse cases within limited resources. I also tried to develop a typology (covering possible ethnic and geographical diversity and the different tiers of local government) giving rise to maximum possible categories within population to ensure the selection of participants from each category. Table 6.2 shows the typology set to select participants from maximum possible categories.

Initially, to start field work, I decided to at least reach every fourth women councilor at each tier, while keeping in mind the geographic, ethnic and political diversity. But the actual numbers of women councilors selected and interviewed at each tier differ according to the different possibilities and options to access the councilors and social

conditions of the district which will be discussed in the following paragraphs. Table 6.3 presents a summary of the number of women politicians selected and interviewed at each tier of local government in Hyderabad.

Table 6.3: Number of Women Councilors Selected and Interviewed

	Tier of LG	Total councils	Councils covered	Total Population	No. of interviews conducted	Coverage ratio
1	District Council	1	1	18 + 1*	5	1 out of every 4
2	Taluka Councils	4	3	18	8	1 out of every 2
3	Union Councils	52	14	208	40	1 out of every 5
	Total			245	53	1 out of every 4.6

* She is the only women Union Council Nazim of the province. As being Nazim of Union Council, she is also the member of District Council on general seat.

At Taluka and District Councils level the population size was small enough (total 18 women councilors at each level) to strive to reach as many as possible female councilors, covering all ethnic and geographic diversities. Table 6.4 shows my selection at District Council level. I interviewed 5 women politicians at this level; 4 women district councilors on reserved seats, each belonging to one of the four major sub-districts (City, Rural, Qasimabad, and Latifabad) of district Hyderabad and one (and the only) women member of District Council on general seat (as she is the Nazim of one UC). It means almost every fourth women councilor has been interviewed at district level. Similarly, Table 6.5 shows my selection of participants at Taluka Level, where I tried my best to reach as many as possible participants in four Taluka councils. I interviewed 8 women Taluka councilors in three Talukas (4 from City; 3, from Latifabad, 1 from Rural). But the only female Taluka councilors in Taluka council Qasimabad simply refused to participate for interviewing due to her illness and I lost

any possibility of including any case from that Taluka. It means almost every second women Taluka councilor has been interviewed at Taluka level.

But the selection of participants at the Union Council level was not so simple due to its large population. Initially it was intended for and struggled to contact every fourth Union Council to interview all four women councilors of each selected Union Council and in this way to reach every fourth female union councilor in the district. The reason for selecting every fourth union council was to capture the maximum possible variety of situations and contexts within the limited available resources and time available for intensive labour of collecting and handling qualitative data. The reason behind interviewing all female councilors of the selected union councils was to cover the similarities and differences of councilors' attitudes, perceptions and experiences in the diverse (in different Union Councils) as well as in the same (within same Union Council) contexts.

The selection of UCs was done from the list provided from the District Council in a way to cover all the geographical and ethnic diversities. Initially, every fourth UC from the list was selected for taking a start to the field work. But soon some were dropped out because they were found geographically adjacent to other selected UCs having similar ethnic, linguistic, class, caste, economic and political circumstances, thus not adding to the variety of data looked for. Few others were also dropped out because of logistic issues; such as no responses from the Nazims and councilors despite repeated contacts. Then these dropped out UCs were again replaced to some nearby union council in the list but again keeping in mind the geographical distance and other diversities along with options for access. Therefore, at UC level, one time selection process did not prove sufficient and the selection was done repetitively several times in a cyclic manner during the field work.

Finally, as Table 6.6 and Table 6.7 show, I conducted interviews with 40 women union councilors (out of total 208 women union councilors in the district) from 14 union councils (out of total 52 Union councils in district). It means almost every fourth UC was covered. But the target of reaching every fourth union councilor was not achieved, as it was every fifth women union councilor who was interviewed. The apparent reason

behind this was that sometimes it became impossible to interview all of the four women councilors elected in a Union council because of repeated cancellation of appointments, law and order situations in the city, ill health and absence of women councilors at the day of appointment, their community engagements, and low mobility and not so frequent visits of councilors to the council.

A number of appointments (especially in rural areas) were postponed at the 11th hour due to law and order situation in the city, political rally, strike calls by the political parties and consequent announcement of public holidays by the provincial government. For instance, once I had appointment in one of UCs in Rural Taluka but one day before that a bomb blast happened in a *Moharum*⁹⁵ procession claiming too many lives in Karachi, there was a call for strike and provincial government also announced a public holiday on the day of my appointment. Similarly, another day there was an urgent call of rally called by MQM, the councilors and Nazims with whom the appointments were previously decided were mostly absent from their offices to attend the rally or those found there refused to talk saying they are in hurry to reach that gathering. Therefore, only the councilors possibly available at UC or at home were interviewed. Eventually, keeping in view the above set criteria for selection of participants, available time and resources and practical limitations, I conducted interviews with 53 women councilors (out of total 245; 244 women councilors on reserved seats and one women as Union Council Nazim on general seat in the district) as research participants from all levels of the local government in Hyderabad district.

⁹⁵ An Islamic month.

District, Taluka and Union Council Wise Composition of Interviewees

Table 6.4: Number of Women District Councilors Interviewed

	Name of Taluka	Total No. of women members	No. of women interviewed	Names of interviewee*	Abb.
On reserve seats					
1	Latifabad	6	1	Tahira	TI
2	City	7	1	Rashida	RS
3	Rural	4	1	Zenab	ZM
4	Qasimabad	1	1	Isra	IP
On general Seats					
5	Latifabad	1	1	Sajeela	SB
	Total	19	5		

*These names are based on pseudonyms given to each participant

Table 6.5: Number of Women Taluka (Sub-District) Councilors Interviewed

	Name of Taluka	Total No. of women councilors	No. of women interviewed	Coverage ratio	Names of interviewee	Abb.
1	Latifabad	6	3	1 : 2	Khadeja	KB
					Jabeen	JT
					Rehana	RA
2	City	7	4	1 : 2	Naz	NA
					Maryam	MU
					Hareem	HN
					Shazia	SM
3	Rural	4	1	1 : 4	Zubaida	ZA
4	Qasimabad	1	0*	0	-	-
	Total	18	8	1 : 2		

*Namra, Women Taluka Councilor Qasimabad refused to participate in research.

Table 6.6: Number of Union Councils and Women Union Councilors Interviewed

	Taluka	Union Councils			Women UC Councilors/ Nazims		
		Total UCs	UCs covered	coverage ratio	Total women UC councilors in Taluka	No. of women councilor interviewed	Coverage rate
1	Latifabad	17	5	1 : 3	68	12	1: 5.6
2	City	20	6	1: 3	80	18	1 : 4
3	Rural	11	2	1 : 5	44	6	1 : 7*
4	Qasimabad	4	1	1 : 4	16	4	1 : 4
	Total	52	14	1 : 4	208	40	1 : 5

* Repeated appointments in other four UCs were canceled because of 11th hour unforeseen engagements of the mediating persons/ representatives and unfavourable law and order situations.

Table 6.7: List of Women Councilors Interviewed at Union Councils

	Taluka	No. of UCs covered	Name of UCs*	No. of participants	Name of participants	Abb.
1	Latifabad	5	UC-1	2	Imrana	IM
					Kulsoom	KS
			UC-3	3	Nazia	NJ
					Samina	SP
					Wahida	WA
			UC-7	3	Kinza	KF
					Rabia	RB
					Shabina	SH
			UC-10	3	Sabeen	SO
					Sumera	SA
Siddiqa	SQ					
UC-16	1+1**	Fazela	FB			
		Sajeela**	SB			
2	Hyderabad City	6	UC-2	3	Bela	BB
					Fareba	FG
					Fehmida	FP
			UC-5	2	Maha	MZ
					Naseema	NM
			UC-8	3	Farha	FA
					Khudsia	KU
					Narmeen	NK
			UC-12	4	Binish	BL
					Farhana	FZ
					Hanifa	HF
					Zareen	ZK
			UC-15	4	Fahima	FI
					Irum	IB
					Shereen	SE
					Sumaya	SN
			UC-18	2	Husna	HR
					Rubina	RS
3	Rural	2	UC-3	3	Nayyar	NS
					Zeba	ZB
					Rabela	RG
			UC-11	3	Jalees	JA
					Zakya	KA
					Fatima	FU
4	Qasimabad	1	UC-2	4	Afreen	AF
					Nigar	NQ
					Shahida	SD
					Sabiha	SS
Total		14		40+1**		

*In each Taluka Union Councils are assigned with a number.

**She is the UC Nazim, Sajeela, who is also a District Council member

6.8.6. Selected Women Councilors: A Brief Introduction

One of the basic aims of this research was the identification of the changing pattern of socio-economic standing of women councilors who recently entered the local councils in the district. The purposive and theoretical selection of women councilors from different tiers of local government, geographical areas of the district, and ethnic composition ensured the coverage of widest possible range of perspectives and experiences in the accounts of women councilors of different age groups, marital status, educational levels, ethnic identities, geographical locations, economic standing and political affiliations. Therefore, the three Tables on the next pages are aimed to provide a nut-shell introduction with these important aspects of the selected participants' socio-economic composition; such as their personal and family features (Table 6.8), economic standing (Table 6.9), and political affiliation, previous election and their family members' political activity (Table 6.10). The reason for not indulging in details here is that the comprehensive profile analysis of these women will be the main focus of Chapter 7.

6.8.7. Establishing Rapport with Participants

I was in need of establishing rapport with each participant separately, as I met them separately most of the time without any link among them. I adopted three simple principles for this purpose; honesty, respect and empathy. The time of my encounter with the participants was also very short, just few telephonic or brief personal contacts for acquiring an appointment for face to face meeting and the consequent meeting on the fixed day for half an hour to three hours, when interview was conducted. It was usually difficult for women councilors to give me more time for meeting again because of their personal and professional engagements.

Although the time of my encounters with the participants was short but it was quite enough to build a rapport with them. I have already discussed the matter of delivering consent letter to each participant. As people and especially women in Pakistani culture have fear of signing any written documents, therefore, I never forced any women councilor to sign that consent latter. I also went on to discuss in detail with each participant to ensure her informed consent before interview. I honestly informed them about my personal background as a student and a teacher.

Table 6.8: Personal and Family Features of Women Councilors

	Name	Abb.	Personal Features			Rural/ Urban*	Family Structure	
			Age	Marital	Educa.		Family	Children
1	Tahira	TI	50	Married	BA	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
2	Rashida	RS	35	Married	Master	Urban	Nuclear	Young/grownup
3	Zenab	ZM	42	Married	Master	Semi Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
4	Isra	IP	29	Married	12 grade	Urban	Joint	Young
5	Sajeela	SB	40	Married	BA	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
6	Khadija	KB	51	Widow	10 grade	Urban	Joint	Grown up
7	Jabeen	JT	54	Married	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
8	Rehana	RA	32	Married	Master	Urban	Nuclear	Young
9	Naz	NA	34	Married	Master	Urban	Joint	No child
10	Maryam	MU	29	Unmarried	BA	Urban	Nuclear	No child
11	Hareem	HN	26	Unmarried	BA	Urban	Nuclear	No child
12	Shazia	SM	45	Married	Master	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
13	Zubaida	ZA	31	Married	12 grade	Rur.→Urb.	SemiNuclear	Young/grownup
14	Imrana	IM	40	Married	10 grade	Rur.→Urb.	Joint	Grown up
15	Kulsoom	KS	68	Widow	Informal	Urban	Alone	Grown up
16	Nazia	NJ	50	Married	10 grade	Urban	Extended	Grown up
17	Samina	SP	36	Married	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
18	Wahida	WA	39	Married	M.Sc	Urban	Nuclear	Young/grownup
19	Kinza	KF	40	Married	12 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
20	Rabia	RB	51	Married	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
21	Shabina	SH	35	Married	12 grade	Urban	SemiNuclear	Young
22	Sabeen	SO	50	Widow	BA	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
23	Sumera	SA	30	Married	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Young/grownup
24	Siddiqa	SQ	56	Widow	5 grade	Urban	Joint	Grown up
25	Fazela	FB	63	Widow	5 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
26	Bela	BB	60	Widow	Illiterate	Urban	Extended	Grown up
27	Fareba	FG	50	Widow	Illiterate	Urban	Extended	Grown up
28	Fehmida	FP	42	Widow	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
29	Maha	MZ	50	Married	10 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
30	Naseema	NM	40	Widow	9 grade	Urban	Extended	Grown up
31	Farha	FA	50	Married	10 grade	Urban	-	Grown up
32	Khudsia	KU	40	Widow	10 grade	Urban	-	Grown up
33	Narmeen	NK	45	Married	10 grade	Urban	-	Grown up
34	Binish	BL	52	Married	10 grade	Urban	-	Grown up
35	Farhana	FZ	39	Widow	BA	Urban	Joint	No child
36	Hanifa	HF	45	Widow	Informal	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
37	Zareen	ZK	58	Widow	10 grade	Urban	SemiNuclear	No child
38	Fahima	FI	50	Married	9 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
39	Irum	IB	40	Married	10 grade	Urban	SemiNuclear	Young/grownup
40	Shereen	SE	40	Divorced	10 grade	Urban	SemiNuclear	Grown up
41	Sumaya	SN	38	Unmarried	Master	Urban	Joint	No child
42	Husna	HR	54	Widow	5 grade	Rur.→Urb.	Joint	Grown up
43	Rubina	RS	43	Married	10 grade	Urban	Joint	Grown up
44	Nayyar	NS	48	Married	10 grade	Semi Urban	Nuclear	Grown up
45	Zeba	ZB	55	Widow	Illiterate	Rural	Joint	Grown up
46	Rabela	RG	40	Married	Illiterate	Rural	Extended	Grown up
47	Jalees	JA	60	Widow	Illiterate	Semi Urban	SemiNuclear	Grown up
48	Zakya	KA	45	Married	10 grade	Semi Urban	Joint	Grown up
49	Fatima	FU	63	Widow	10 grade	Semi Urban	SemiNuclear	Grown up
50	Afreen	AF	45	Married	BA	Rur.→Urb.	Nuclear	Grown up
51	Nigar	NQ	35	Married	BA	Urban	Nuclear	Young
52	Shahida	SD	60	Widow	10 grade	Urban	Joint	Grown up
53	Sabiha	SS	40	Widow	5 grade	Urban	Nuclear	Grown up

*'Rur. →Urb.' means a shift from Rural to Urban area.

Table 6.9: Economic Activity of Women Councilors and Their Family Members

	Name	Abb.	Women's Work	Other Family Income Earner(s)	
				Person(s)	Economic Activity
1	Tahira	TI	Housewife	Husband	Civil engineer
2	Rashida	RS	Housewife	Husband	TV News director
3	Zenab	ZM	Teacher	Husband	Contractor
4	Isra	IP	Housewife	Husband	Businessman
5	Sajeela	SB	Housewife	Husband	Homeo. doctor & technician
6	Khadija	KB	Housewife	Son	Job in WAPDA
7	Jabeen	JT	Housewife	Husband	Job in Treet corp.
8	Rehana	RA	Housewife	Husband	Security In-charge
9	Naz	NA	Housewife	Husband	Jobless
10	Maryam	MU	Beautician	Brothers	Jobs
11	Hareem	HN	Teacher	Sister	Doctor
12	Shazia	SM	Housewife	Husband	Job in WAPDA
13	Zubaida	ZA	Social worker	Husband	Contractor & Teacher
14	Imrana	IM	Housewife	Husband	Catering Shop
15	Kulsoom	KS	Vocational Teacher	-	-
16	Nazia	NJ	Housewife	Husband	Gas cylinder shop
17	Samina	SP	Housewife	Husband	Motor workshop
18	Wahida	WA	Lady Health Worker	Husband	Medicine shop
19	Kinza	KF	Housewife	Husband	Molding & press workshop
20	Rabia	RB	Housewife	Husband	Private Job
21	Shabina	SH	Housewife	Husband	Technician in hospital
22	Sabeen	SO	Housewife	Son	School Teachers
23	Sumera	SA	Housewife	Husband	Watchman
24	Siddiqa	SQ	Housewife	Sons	Job in WAPDA/Teacher
25	Fazela	FB	Housewife	Son	Police man
26	Bela	BB	Make Quilts at Home	Sons	Laborer
27	Fareba	FG	Housewife	Son	Laborer
28	Fehmida	FP	Housewife	Daughter	Teacher
29	Maha	MZ	Housewife	Husband	Small workshop
30	Naseema	NM	Housewife	Daughters/Son	Teacher /shop
31	Farha	FA	Housewife	Husband/Son	Job in municipality/mechanic
32	Khudsia	KU	Housewife	-	-
33	Narmeen	NK	Housewife	Husband	General store
34	Binish	BL	Housewife	Husband	Job in Municipality
35	Farhana	FZ	Insurance policy sale	Self	Insurance seller
36	Hanifa	HF	Pekoe work at home	Daughters	Pekoe work at home
37	Zareen	ZK	Housewife	Son	Temporary job
38	Fahima	FI	Housewife	Sons	Wood business
39	Irum	IB	Housewife	Husband	Gardner
40	Shereen	SE	Domestic	-	-
41	Sumaya	SN	Teacher	Brother	Shop
42	Husna	HR	Social worker	Sons/daughter	Factory worker/LHW
43	Rubina	RS	Bangle shop at home	Husband/daughter	Rikshaw driver/ job in Bank
44	Nayyar	NS	Housewife	Husband/Son	Rice shop/ Laboratory assistant
45	Zeba	ZB	Trad. Birth Attendant.	Son	Teacher
46	Rabela	RG	Housewife	Husband	Police man
47	Jalees	JA	Housewife	Son	Job
48	Zakya	KA	Social worker	Son	Chips supplier to local market
49	Fatima	FU	Housewife	Son-in-Law	Doctor
50	Afreen	AF	Social worker	Husband	Businessman
51	Nigar	NQ	Housewife	Husband	Motor showroom sells man
52	Shahida	SD	Housewife	Son	Job
53	Sabiha	SS	Social worker	Son	Job in WAPDA

Table 6.10: Political Activity of Women Councilors and Their Family Members

	Name	Abb	Ethnic identity	Women in politics			Family Members in politics	
				Party Affil.	Prev. elected	Position in party	Person	Position in party
1	Tahira	TI	Muhajir	MQM	No	Worker	Sister	Worker
2	Rashida	RS	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	In-charge	Bro-in-law	Ex-MPA
3	Zenab	ZM	Sindhi	PPP	Yes	Gen. Secr.	-	-
4	Isra	IP	Sindhi	PPP	No	-	Husband	Coord. Secr.
5	Sajeela	SB	Muhajir	PPP	Yes	Inf. Secr.	Husband	Workers
6	Khadija	KB	Muhajir	MQM	No	Sector mem.	Sons	Workers
7	Jabeen	JT	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	Worker
8	Rehana	RA	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Fath-in-law	UC N. Nazim
9	Naz	NA	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	Zone mem.	Husband	Zone member
10	Maryam	MU	Muhajir	MQM	No	Zone mem.	-	-
11	Hareem	HN	Muhajir	MQM	No	Zone mem.	Father/Bro.	Workers
12	Shazia	SM	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	Office Secr.	Husband	Off. In-charge
13	Zubaida	ZA	Sindhi	PMLF	No	President	-	-
14	Imrana	IM	Sindhi	PPP	Yes	-	Husband	Workers
15	Kulsoom	KS	Muhajir	PPP	No	-	Ex-student	Nazim cand.
16	Nazia	NJ	Muhajir	Indep.	No	-	-	-
17	Samina	SP	Muhajir	JI	No	Unit mem.	Brother	Worker
18	Wahida	WA	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	-	-
19	Kinza	KF	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	UC in-charge
20	Rabia	RB	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Family	Sympathizer
21	Shabina	SH	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Brother	J.unit incharge
22	Sabeen	SO	Muhajir	MQM	No	Worker	Son	Unit in-charge
23	Sumera	SA	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	Worker
24	Siddiqua	SQ	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Sons	Worker
25	Fazela	FB	Punjabi	JI	No	-	-	-
26	Bela	BB	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Son	Worker
27	Fareba	FG	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Family	Sympathizer
28	Fehmida	FP	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	-	Brothers	Worker
29	Maha	MZ	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	Sympathizer
30	Naseema	NM	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Brothers	Workers
31	Farha	FA	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Family	Sympathizer
32	Khudsia	KU	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	-	Brother	UC Nazim
33	Narmeen	NK	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	Worker
34	Binish	BL	Muhajir	MMA	Yes	-	Brother	Workers
35	Farhana	FZ	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Brother	Worker
36	Hanifa	HF	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	-	Nephew	Worker
37	Zareen	ZK	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Brothers	Worker
38	Fahima	FI	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Bro./ Sons	Workers
39	Irum	IB	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Husband	UC in-charge
40	Shereen	SE	Muhajir	MQM	No	Worker	-	-
41	Sumaya	SN	Muhajir	MQM	No	-	Brothers	Worker
42	Husna	HR	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	-	Family	Sympathizer
43	Rubina	RS	Muhajir	MQM	Yes	-	Bro-in-law	Workers
44	Nayyar	NS	Muhajir	PPP	No	D.Gen. Secr.	-	-
45	Zeba	ZB	Sindhi	PPP	Yes	-	Son	Sympathizer
46	Rabela	RG	Sindhi	PPP	Yes	-	Landlord	Worker
47	Jalees	JA	Kashmiri	JI	No	-	Son	Worker
48	Zakya	KA	Punjabi	MQM	Yes	In-charge	-	-
49	Fatima	FU	Muhajir	JI	No	-	Family	Sympathizer
50	Afreen	AF	Sindhi	NF	No	-	-	-
51	Nigar	NQ	Sindhi	PPP	No	-	Brother	Coord. Secr.
52	Shahida	SD	Sindhi	PPP	No	D. President	-	-
53	Sabiha	SS	Sindhi	PPP	Yes	-	Sons	Workers

Satisfying their concerns, I also told them that the aim of this research is my educational accomplishment, not at all any political or journalistic one, and I am in need of their help by sharing their political experiences with me so that finally I may write a report (in a book form) to complete my studies. I informed them about the method of my research and clearly asked for their consent for opting to participate in this research. I told them that I have some questions to ask them but they are welcome to tell me anything anytime whenever they want during the interview.

To remove any feeling of compulsion I asked them to skip or simply refuse if they do not want to answer any question. During my field work only one woman simply refused me to share the reasons behind her divorce and some others only passed some meaningful comments to imply that they want to avoid that question; for instance, one District Councilor from Latifabad hesitated to tell her approximate household income by saying it is sufficient enough for their livings. I always prefer participants' comfort level on finishing the whole list of questions to be asked and getting them all answered. The same was done by not being so rigid in question sequence as was planned. I let the participants speak as much as they want without interruption until it got irrelevant to the research topic or there is something needed to be asked to understand the interviewee's view.

The processes of question and answer was certainly not one sided. Women councilors also asked me questions regarding my personal and professional background, age, family, job, salary, education, residential address, caste, marital status, family profession or jobs of all family members, ethnicity and my parents' origins. I always showed my openness to whenever they had questions about me to ask, by giving honest and detailed answers to these questions. I asked their permission for voice recording of the interview with recording device (MP3 player). I showed them the recording device and informed them about its function to record our conversation. Every time I asked the participants before turning the device on. To increase their comfort level, I asked them if they want me to stop recording even during the interview, they can ask me to do so (which some of them only asked to do when talking about other councilors-especially

those at higher ranks- and when they talk about party martyrs and the crisis periods⁹⁶). I told them that I am also open if they want to share anything apart of the voice recording. To build their trust, I also ensured them that I will keep all the information they told me confidential and its only use will be in my educational report with pseudonyms replaced with their actual names, to keep their identity secret.

Interview has been called as “a methodology of friendship” (Kong, Mahoney, and Plummer 2002: 254). I tried to establish a respectful and friendly exchange to know about the lives of people. I always remained polite, soft spoken, non-judgmental, and respectful to the participants but at the same time sharing personal experiences sometimes when appear similar or different from that of reported by them. I always showed my respect while listening towards the views of the participant and the question and probes I made were more of an effort to respectful and empathetic understanding of her view, rather than an interrogation. I have also been respectful to participants emotional and sentimental conditions as some of them became so emotional while sharing their past miseries and sacrifices. I remained a respectful listener to all that they were telling me but did not stop questioning as well.

My personal features also helped me in this regard. As a woman interviewing these women participants was always an advantage for close communication and better understanding. My status as the native of the same city also helped women to come close and sharing things as we live under the same circumstances and share the same history of city. I found my age as sometimes having impact on women councilors’ responses regarding the questions and discussion about young unmarried girls’ participation in politics. They always look at me as the representative of the young while themselves as that of old age. As most of them were of the opinion that young, unmarried girls should not come in politics but just looking at the researcher⁹⁷ they try to say that if the young age girl is mature enough (mostly pointing towards me) then they may come. But at the same time my age also helped me in developing association with most of the old age women as they said they consider me like their daughters and

⁹⁶ Crisis period refers to the 1990s for MQM as Hyderabad was burning with Sindhi Muhajir bloody ethnic conflicts (see Chapter 5).

⁹⁷ Here the reference is to researcher’s age. The researcher is younger then most of the research participant. Her age is more or less similar to the age of these research participants’ daughters.

always pray for me at the end of the interview for success in my studies. Even the oldest women councilors turned out to become friendly with me as they were sharing even funny stories of their past lives. They also helped me and escorted me to reach to other women councilors. Sometimes they helped me in reaching to other women for interview by asking their family males, like husbands or sons, to guide or escort me to some other councilor's house. Some of the old age women also consult me for guidance for their daughter and son's education. Similarly young age councilors became friendly so quickly due to the almost same age factor. Those women whom I interviewed at their home always offered me food and tea. Those whom I interviewed at council mostly invited me to their homes.

6.9. Data Collection and Analysis

After selecting and accessing the research participants in the field the data collection and analysis were two most crucial and important stages of the research process. This section aims to deal with these two processes.

6.9.1. Interviewing Process

I conducted in-depth interviews with open ended questions, with 53 women councilors ranging for 30 minutes to one and half hour in duration. The women councilors told me their own stories about their childhood and young age, family, community, how they come to contest in the elections, their campaigns, victory, and performance in councils, how they are different from male councilors, and what they learned from this political participation. When I started contacting female councilors, sometimes they asked me in advance about the questions to be asked to them during the interview. Some of them even told me the reason behind asking for that as they may better prepare themselves for giving answers to these questions in a consequent meeting for interview. When they met me for interview some of them were conscious about what I will do with this information, and whom I will report for that, what will be done with the final report and one was even concerned with the utility of this study.

There was no fixed way of initiating an interview. I always started interviews with detailed discussion on my aims and objectives of the research and then asking women to tell me their experiences in this regard. Some of the participant started sharing their

experiences without the need for further questions for a long time but some very quickly felt themselves stuck leading me to probe them with further questions. Even one of the Taluka councilor herself asked me to raise questions to better proceed with the interview. Usually after listening to participants initial sharing I was either following the threads emerging out of their previous talks for further questioning, or if not then, start proceeding with the question sequence as planned in my guideline. The guideline has a sequence of initial general questions (about personal and family background and motivation for coming in politics) following with some crucial topics (related to these women's control over financial and material resources and decision making power as compared to that of men within and outside councils) and then ending again with some cool and less critical discussions (on what they learn, how are they beneficial to other women, what are their future plans). Therefore, mostly interviews follow this kind of stress levels from the beginning to the end.

I was aware of the possibility to lose sufficient crucial information provided by women during the interview in case of recording interviews with pen and paper. Therefore, I initially planned to voice record the interviews to ensure the capture of maximum information provided by these women. My first interview went well and the participant accepted my request for voice recording without any hesitation. But the very next women District councilor interviewed simply refused my request for voice recording and asked me to write the information down on paper. During interview I was performing several tasks simultaneously; asking questions, listening attentively and critically, mentally working to make decision for what to ask next while at the same time writing carefully what has been said by participant. The results of this incident proved my apprehensions true and even after one and half hour interview I could only write short notes or captions of each response she provided, as I did not know to write short hand. It was also taking much time and also losing sufficient valuable information provided by the participant. I was afraid of the situation if it will happen in most of the interviews to be followed. But fortunately, none of the later interviewed participants refused my request for voice recording. The reason behind this can be that I was also telling them about the risk of loss of the much of valuable information they provide in case of not recording. The reason to share this difficulty with the participants in the

introductory conversation was not to compel them to make such decisions but to enable them for making an informed decision.

Although, voice recording was helpful in capturing maximum data available it was not without its respective disadvantages. The voice recording of interviews was done with prior permission of councilor. Sometimes this consciousness about recording makes the councilors hide certain facts. They try to give more socially 'expected answers' rather than real ones. In one case, when interviewing Sumera, a union councilor, she was expressing very satisfactory opinions about the party, council attitudes and the household environment. As soon as I stopped recording after the interview and I and another women councilor who escorted me to her house went on doing informal conversation with her, she told me about the domestic violence she is subjected to, the attitude of male party and council members and so many other problems she is facing despite being councilor, who is supposed to solve other's problems. The story she told me off the record was as follows:

Sumera is a councilor of Latifabad UC-10, elected from MQM. She belongs to a poor family. She is a housewife. Her husband, the sole earner of the household, is a watchman. She lives in a one room house (on the first floor of her in-laws' house) with one single bed, a cupboard, a stove and a water tap in front of the room door near stairs. Her in-laws usually quarrel with her and use to beat her children on the issue of the property possession (of that house). Her husband has two wives. The other one has the support of her husband's family and Sumera always have problems with all that issue. Her husband is also use to of beating her on trivial every day matters. She has five children. Recently, she had her fifth girl child born. Her elder daughter lost her 9th grade examination as she was with her mother in the hospital during child birth. When asked about the curry stain on the room wall, she told that he husband recently beat her on her return to home after the birth of girl child at the third day of *Eid*⁹⁸. She also complained about the party and council officials attitudes. When she went to hospital for her child's birth and doctors asked her money (that was too much for her) for operation, she called to the District Nazim and Tehsil Nazim for some help in this regard. They both asked her to contact on the next morning without realizing in which condition she was at that time. She also complained that she has asked Nazim and other party officials, even has written several times to the party head in London to help for the settlement of her property (house possession) issue but she did not get any response from any one.

⁹⁸ A religious festival, that comes after the religious month of Ramzan.

(The summary of the story told by Sumera, union councilor, off the record in my words from field notes).

These women were interviewed in their natural settings; that are their respective union council offices and their homes. Sometimes councilors gathered at the same place in the UCs or their homes during interviews and giving rise to brief group discussion. The presence of women councilors at the same place has both positive and negative aspects. In some UCs this gathering compelled the participants to be reserved and just shared with me patterned information and standardized responses saying 'all is well'. While in some cases the discussion generated within the group brought some critical aspects to the front with either consensus or disagreement within the group.

While came for interview women mostly complained about the lack of time because of their domestic and elderly care activities at home. They are always are in a hurry to go back home as there was domestic work waiting for them. Therefore, there was no possibility to conduct interview in more than one sitting. All the interviews were conducted (except one with Rashida) in one sitting. Mostly participants were Urdu speaking. Those who were Sindhi or Punjabi speaking were able to understand and speak Urdu very well. The decision of choice of the language was that of the interviewee. Mostly they gave their interviews in Urdu but those who were Sindhi or Punjabi were also frequently using Sindhi and Punjabi during the interview. My ability to understand and speak Punjabi (to some extent) and Sindhi languages enabled me to cope with this issue. I did never try to fix any hard and fast rule to stick with any particular language because that may have caused discomfort for the interviewees in their easy and spontaneous expression.

Interviews were conducted in different social settings; mostly either in Union council or at home of the concerned councilor. These social settings and the presence of different people in these settings had their respective impact on the interview process and interviewee's attitude. Sometimes the presence of the Nazims in the interview setting has impacted women in different ways. In one of the union council (UC-12, Taluka City) the Nazim's presence compelled women to respond in a desirable manner while as he left the room, the councilor being interviewed quickly try to tell me about their lack of say in financial affairs. In another case when the Nazim organized

interviews with female councilors at his home, female councilors were even vocal enough to complain about the Nazim's attitudes and giving little space to female councilors in council functions in his presence (e.g. UC-18, Taluka City). When interviews were held at home, the female family members gathered there and impacted the interview in different ways. In one instance when one of the councilor was giving interview to me at her home her family females were gathered around us but they all kept silent and listened both of us talking carefully. After the interview when I talked to these other women they also helped me by providing information which I was in need about their family and community. On the contrary, in the same area when I reached to another women councilor for interview she had only one room in her house and there were several young and middle aged female family members gathered. Sometimes during the interview they interrupt the conversation between me and the participant by making jokes. For instance, one of them asked me that 'Are you from Taliban, as you are asking too many questions'. Similarly, in Sabeen's case her daughter remained seated with us during the interview. But she was also helpful to the participant in telling valuable information, as she was actually serving her mother as an assistant in her political activities. Therefore, the things which the participant could not recall she asked to her.

I always finished interviews with thanks giving to participants and other who helped me. I always appreciate their favor of giving me time and valuable information. The whole process of interview and its content as nut-shell review of their political history in their own words was also found impacting participants. They seemed learning lessons from this review for their future.

6.9.2. Data Analysis

In this research data analysis continued from the commencement of the work in the field to the final data analysis on desk after fieldwork finished. First, during the fieldwork the records of the interviews were listened several times and analyzed for finding further questions or areas which needed to be explored in later conducted interviews. Field notes were reviewed several times for the same purpose. This activity also helped me to identify convergence and divergence in the accounts provided by different councilors and initially emerging themes for data analysis.

At the end of fieldwork all the interviews were transcribed and field notes were organized and compiled in computer files. Then the interview transcriptions and field notes were read and re-read for getting acquainted with whatever I had as data. This process simultaneously led me to identify major themes and categorize the data under these themes. The categorization was done by the use of editing functions in Microsoft Word software. A parallel activity of assembling profile data of women councilors, form within this thematic analysis, resulted in an extensive profile analysis that was generated by comparing and analyzing each emerging category related to women's social, economic and political profile. The two types of data analysis generated will be presented in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

I tried to find and examine the deviant cases for the emerging themes in my data. Finally the similar and diverging cases under each theme were compared and analyzed. An effort was done to establish the links of emerging themes with each other to establish a holistic explanation of women's political participation in Hyderabad local government. The continuous effort was to accommodate as maximum data as possible within this holistic explanation. An effort was also made to find out explanations for the cases that are not being accommodated within this holistic explanation. Final analysis and findings are presented in the following chapters.

6.10. Quality and Credibility of the Research

Qualitative researchers mostly resist to the quantitative approach for reliability and validity of research (Neuman 2000: 170-171). They have developed alternative concepts of completeness, saturation, authenticity, ecological validity, consistency, credibility and plausibility (Seal, Gobo, Gubrium, and Silverman 2004: 407) to ensure the quality and credibility of qualitative research. I adopted Silvermen's proposed five "interrelated and overlapping ways of critical thinking about qualitative data analysis" to make findings of this dissertation more valid (2000: 177-189). These proposed ways are the refutability principle, the constant comparative method, comprehensive data treatment, deviant-case analysis, and using appropriate tabulation.

First, the refutability principle means researcher's constant effort to seek evidence to refute his or her initial assumption in respect of research problem, rather than making easy inferences from some initially interesting and affirming evidences. From the very initial stage of my data collection I tried my best to expand the size of selected participant to include all possible diversities and varieties (also see the section on participant selection in this chapter) in order to find a case that may refute my initial assumption that women's political participation is conditioned by patriarchy. I always tried to find women's self motivating factors to enter into the field of politics.

Second, the constant comparative method means to inspect and compare each and every fragment of collected data. It is very closely related to the third method of comprehensive data treatment which means to incorporate each and every piece of collected data in the analysis. I repeatedly went through all the data in detail and compared and analyzed all the cases studied, focusing on each small piece of participants' accounts to incorporate it into the whole theoretical inference I am drawing out of that data. I did not stop this repeated comparison and analysis processes until each piece of data set got adjusted within the theoretical generalization of this dissertation. The process was aimed to the saturation of categories as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Fourth, deviant-case analysis means to seek and address the deviant cases. From the very initial stage of data collection until the end of data analysis, I tried to find out the deviant cases to my initial assumptions of the research problem. As mentioned in the refutability principle, the deviant cases were considered in terms of the political participation if it is purely women's own decision for the sake of their own self and for performing independently in the councils. Last, using appropriate tabulation, means using simple counting techniques theoretically and ideally derived from the data set in order to help the reader to easily capture the details of the data in a quick manner that may have disappeared in detailed qualitative narration. A number of tabulations were tried and also some of them are presented here in the next chapters.

In order to enhance the reliability of the data and its findings, I paid attention to consistency in use of concepts, categories and processes used for data collection and

analysis. Before data collection I paid much attention to write down in detail the process and factors considered in the selection of participants (see section 6.8.5., Selecting Participant, in this chapter). Then during the field work I also paid attention to several issues of reliability while conducting interviews, recording and transcribing them. First, I did all the data collection by myself. Therefore, there was no room for any differences on the basis of biases emerging from different data collectors. Second, I voice recorded all interviews, except one, completely to avoid any chance of bias leading to selective recording of information on the basis of researchers interest while avoiding others pieces of information considering as irrelevant or less important during the note taking process. Through recording, I also maintained a maximum possible capture of information provided by participants without any personal selection. Third, during the transcription process of recorded interviews a key of transcription symbols was developed to capture the pauses (their varying length), overlaps, non verbal gestures and expressions (laugh, movement of head or hand, etc.) or the sounds that may have no verbatim (Appendix D). This was done to enhance the objectivity during the transcription process and a comprehensive transcription of the data. Fourth, I transcribed and coded all the data on my own that reduced any chance of inconsistency in the interpretation of the transcripts and also in coding categories on the basis of inter-coder disagreements. Finally, while making arguments during analysis, I have relied more on presenting extensive quotations from the data in this dissertation wherever I found an opportunity for. Lastly, the tapes and transcripts are open for inspection by researchers and readers.

6.11. Limitations of the Research

As discussed above, recording the interview with prior permission of the participants made them conscious. What they told me, sometimes, not mostly, found as socially 'expected answers' rather than their real experiences. Therefore, it becomes difficult to claim the extent to which these accounts necessarily represent these women's real experiences.

Despite my all efforts to establish a friendly and respectful environment still I can not claim the complete elimination of hierarchical relationship with the participants. The reasons can be many. First, women themselves considered interview as a formal thing

to be done. Second, it was a very short time encounter and sometimes in very formal setting like union council office in which interviews were conducted. Third, there was no possibility for these women to participate in the final decision making for extracting and presenting from their accounts, as I did this research to fulfill my academic requirements for acquisition of Ph. D degree. Although, I tried my best to give the respective value to each theme or passage as it had in its original location in the whole data or in the whole original interview of its origin.

The selection of participants for interview was also not without certain constraints. Some times it took several telephonic contacts, personal meetings at each level or with each person to finally have an interview with a participant. Even some of the persons contacted at the very initial stage of the fieldwork, despite repeated personal and telephonic contacts, they failed to set an appointment for the interview due to their personal reasons. Even five of such councilors (one from Taluka Council Latifabad, two from Taluka Council City and two Union Councilors from Latifabad UC-1 and UC-16) have been left un-interviewed due to time constraints when finally, but so late, they gave appointments for interview. For instance, Sabena Ikram⁹⁹, councilor Taluka Council Latifabad was first contacted on 7th December but she could finally inform me her consent on 09th January for an appointment for interview in some later dates. Similarly, Firdous, UC-16 councilor was first contacted on 10th December but finally gave an appointment for 6th January. Shilza, councilor UC-1 first contacted on 12th December failed to give any appointment until the end of the fieldwork. Sometimes, when I reached the councils according to my previously set appointment with Nazims, I found neither Nazims nor councilors present there and that the staff had no information of such meeting.

There were fewer opportunities for direct contact to the women councilors, as mostly at the UC level they do not own any mobile phones or no contact number was provided by the councils. They seldom visit the council due to their mobility constraints and less communication resources. This situation compelled me to rely on Nazims, council staff and their relative males to access them. These linking personals several time showed

⁹⁹ The names of research participants reported in this dissertation are pseudonyms (see Table: 6.8).

their indifference making it difficult to access those particular female councilors. Some of the women, despite repeated efforts to contact them through these links were not been contacted, thus left un-interviewed. Therefore, I was not able to reach all the women councilors in a harmonious way. I could only reach to those to whom it became possible for me to reach within limited resources and time. I found their participation in public life as already filtered or selective by their gatekeepers and infrastructures, which have made the system more difficult and full of obstacles for them to come out and for others to reach them.

I also had few formal and informal (some of them recorded as well) discussions with male Nazims, councilors and other staff of the councils. But the research does not include men's account of their political experiences in a systematic and comprehensive manner, due to its feminist focus on giving voice to women and presenting their standpoint. It was also difficult for practical reasons of available resources and the researcher's being a female. Therefore, I feel a need for further comparative study between men and women's political experiences to be done.

Therefore, the findings of the research do not claim any generalization on a wider scale, for instance, on the country or province. Although, I reached a large number of cases (20% of the total population) in the district, the research does neither claim any representativeness nor aims to make any generalization of findings on the district studied. Yet it is an effort to generate an understanding of and to present a new explanation of the processes of women's political participation at the local level in a particular context of the Hyderabad district grounded in the data derived from particular cases within district.

6.12. Ethical Considerations

Fontana and Frey (1998: 70) identify three traditional categories of ethical concerns; informed consent, right to privacy and protection from any physical or emotional harms. Keeping in view these ethical requirements of social research, a letter of consent and permission requisition was delivered to the respondents before the interview to ensure their permission or informed consent to participate in this study. I also informed the respondents before the interviews about the true purpose of study,

credentials of the researcher, details of their participation and its consequences, voice recording of their interviews in detail and also ensured them confidentiality of the information they provide. For those who are illiterate, the researcher read this letter for them and asked for their consent.

The researcher maintained respondents' privacy by quoting specific responses with pseudo-denomination in the final report. The adopted research method of interviewing was not supposed to cause any physical harm to the participants. The content of the interview and the performance of the interviewer were maintained in a way to avoid causing any possible emotional harm to any of the participants.

6.13. Conclusion

This research is done as a qualitative case study guided by feminist methodology based on 53 tape recorded and fully transcribed in-depth interviews conducted with women politicians elected at local government in Hyderabad during the 2005-2009 tenure and were selected for participation through purposive and theoretical sampling. The participants interviewed comprised of 5 women politicians from District Council, 8 from Taluka councils and 40 from union councils within Hyderabad district. They also belong to different geographical areas and ethnic groups. The data collected was manually analyzed for within case and cross-cases comparison for finding a relationship between women's political participation and patriarchy at this local level.

CHAPTER 7

TOWARDS NON-ELITE WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN FORMAL POLITICS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to analyze the social, economic and political profile of women councilors at different tiers of local government in Hyderabad District. It explores the influence of age, marital status, education, family structure, economic class, social standing, geographical location, nature of personal and family political affiliations and past electoral experience on women's possibility to enter and participate at different tiers of local councils in the district. An effort is made to answer one of the basic questions asked in the first chapter of this dissertation that whether the long observed patriarchal trend of elite women's selective political participation in Pakistan is also applicable to the masses of women who entered politics at the local government level? It is to explore that to what extent all these women councilors in local government are satisfying the conditions of being educated, urban, elite women with previous political experience and coming from influential families with strong financial background.

7.2. Profile of Women Councilors

It has long been observed that when women entered the provincial and national levels of political activity in the country they are highly educated women from financially strong and well established political families (see Chapter 4). The enhanced quota for women in local government has provided a new and enlarged opening to the masses of women from grassroots level to participate in political bodies. This new situation also has given rise to a new pattern of non-elite women's entry and participation at local level of formal politics. It is in harmony with the lower authority and power ascribed to the local governments in the system that it is least attractive for high class elite women. Thus, it appear to be an opening for non-elite women to make their affordable and manageable initial entry in formal political forum that would not be possible otherwise due to their lack of social and financial resources needed in this regard.

Profile analysis of women councilors will cover three major dimensions; social, economic, and political background. Social profiles of these women are analyzed in terms of the personal and demographic features (e.g. age, marital status, educational level and geographical location) and family background (e.g. family structure and children). Their economic standing is ascertained in terms of personal and family property or landholding, and the economic activities undertaken by these women, their husbands or the main family income earners. Political background includes a review of their involvement in social services, political parties and previous formal electoral and political activities. It also reflects on the political involvement of their male family members¹⁰⁰.

7.2.1. Personal and Social Profile of Women Councilors

Overall lower social standing of Pakistani women, in general, has already been discussed in earlier chapters of this dissertation in detail. Here the focus is on the personal, educational and familial background of the women councilors in the district Hyderabad. The age, marital status and the educational level are basic personal characteristics to show the social standing of women.

7.2.1.1. Average Age of Women Councilors

Elected women councilors in the district are from all age groups, between 25 to 70 years old, however, almost three fourth of them (73.58%) are more than 40 years old. More than half of them (62.26%) are in their forties and fifties. The number of women councilors younger than thirty years of age is nominal.

¹⁰⁰ The detailed introductory information about women councilors presented in Chapter 6 (in Table 6.8, Table 6.9, and Table 6.10) may also be an additional source to follow the individual and collective participant's case details for understanding and comparison.

Table 7.1: Age-wise Composition of Councilors

Age group	Frequency	%
25-29	3	5.66
30-39	11	20.75
40-49	18	33.96
50-59	15	28.30
61-70	6	11.32
Total	53	100

As we discussed in previous chapters, classic patriarchy and especially Pakistani society gives middle and old age women relative autonomy then is the case with the younger kin female members (Kandiyoti 1988). They are occasionally trusted to undertake the tasks of assuming particularly male roles in the private sphere and sometimes in the public space, as well. The reason behind this trust on old age women is their relatively more perfect internalization of patriarchal standard till the time they reach to the old age. Or women's old age, with less need to control her sexuality and reproduction to ensure the line of inheritance, is perceived less of a "threat" by the male patriarchs. Overall high percentage of women councilors from 40+ age groups precisely shows this preference for the middle and old age¹⁰¹ women rather than relatively young girls. The prevailing social order of the society also appears to be relatively accommodating the entry of old age women in the public sphere as compared to that of the young ones. Therefore, here the old age seems to be a social capital in classic patriarchal societies that facilitates and effects women's attainment of relative autonomy and their access to the public sphere.

FB:¹⁰² I say, 'any girl should not come in it (politics)'.

N: Why not?

FB: Well, see, every where, I do not have vehicle. I ask to someone from my neighborhood to take out his vehicle and take me to the place, I want to go. People support me too much in this way. It is

¹⁰¹ This 40s-60s years age group has been considered as middle and old age in accordance with the prevailing life expectancy in Pakistan. The respective life expectancy for men is 64 years and for women is 66 years in the country <http://undp.org.pk/mdgs-in-pakistan.html>, retrieved on January 29, 2011 at 21:09.

¹⁰² These are the abbreviations assigned to each woman for convenient reporting and quotations from their interview transcripts. The comprehensive list of participants provided in Chapter 6 may guide to follow whom the each abbreviation is referring to.

right. Whosoever old or young (they are) I am traveling in their vehicles, as I have no fear of anything. If there is a girl, how can a girl go unless her brother or father is with her? How will she go alone?

As compared to the lowest tier (i.e. Union Council) of the local government (17.5%), the women councilors at the higher tiers of local government seem to be younger in their age: 62.5% at Taluka council and 40% at District Council are under the age of 40 years. It seems that the higher tiers of the local government have provided more opportunity for young women while old aged councilors are segregated at the lowest tier, i.e. 82.50% of the union councilors. These age related findings become more meaningful when we look at the women councilors' marital status and educational level (as most of them are married or widows and the relatively young ones at higher tiers are with high levels of educational attainment).

7.2.1.2. Marital Status of Women Councilors

In classic patriarchal societies girls are often married off at their young ages. Therefore, the age related findings also entail an assumption that this majority of 40+ age groups are predominantly married. Confirming to this contention, the data shows that almost all (95 %) of the women councilors have been married at some point in their life time¹⁰³. One half (56.6%) of them are currently married while one third (35.8%) are widows, mostly widowed at their early ages. The unmarried and divorced women form a negligible minority of 5.6% and 1.8%, respectively.

Table 7.2: Marital Status of Women Councilors

Status	UC		Taluka		District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Married	20	50	5	62.5	5	100	30	56.6
Widow	18	45	1	12.5	-	-	19	35.8
Unmarried	1	2.5	2	25	-	-	3	5.6
Divorced	1	2.5	-	-	-	-	1	1.8
Total	40	100	8	100	5	100	53	100

¹⁰³ They were married at some point of their life means they either are currently married or widow.

As compared to the lower tier (union council), there are less or no widow and divorced women at the higher tiers of local government (at Taluka and District Councils). It is in accordance with the relatively young age group of women present at higher tiers of local government, as discussed earlier. Even the two unmarried councilors at the Taluka councils are the youngest (i.e. 26 and 29 years old). Almost all the women in socially “marginalized” groups (widow and divorced) are segregated at the lowest tier of local government that is the Union Council. As almost all the widows, except one at the Taluka level, are segregated at the lowest tier of Union Council, it shows their less capacity to bid for a higher authority and power position after they lose their male patriarch (i.e. husband). Similarly, the marginal number of unmarried and divorced women apparently shows their less acceptability in public sphere activities. In short, the married women appear to be the dominant group, having the favorable and widely accepted social status for entering into the local politics.

This trend is also in harmony with the patriarchal hierarchic social structure of the Pakistani society in which young and unmarried girls are at the lowest levels of hierarchy within family, kin group and outside the kin group. Their mobility outside home and their ways of behavior remain under strict control of the family; especially the male heads. Thus they remain far away from holding any power or authority position within the family or society. Whenever the opportunities for young girls are available, the social structures and ideologies limit these opportunities for young unmarried girls retaining their lower social status. This process of controlling young and unmarried women can be seen from the following excerpt:

N: How did you get the idea to come in politics?

FG: They (party people) initially wanted to take my daughter, there was some problem of her..I said, ‘do not send her. I am coming. I will not let her to come in (politics)’..I refused them. Then they said ‘ok you contest election’, Naeem *bhai*, he was used to be here on sector previously.

N: Means party offered you for your daughter?

FG: Yes, I refused that she has not yet got married; I will not let her come in (politics).

N: Why do you think that girls should not come in it before marriage?

FG: We are *Qureshi*¹⁰⁴ so our daughters should not come in. The *Biradri*¹⁰⁵ people criticize it.

Sometime during the interview process it is realized that the young women councilors at the UC level do not frequently come to the UC offices and have less participation in the Union Council processes. Some time women councilors who are young and unmarried find it difficult to maintain their role in a public office due to social pressures of *Purdah*, restricted mobility to public sphere, domestic work load, etc. Therefore, it seems that the senior age and marriage are the personal features which bring women a relatively improved social status and facilitate their entry and acceptability in public or political sphere.

7.2.1.3. Educational Level of Women Councilors

In general, women in Pakistan face barrier in reaching to the educational and work related opportunities in the public sphere. The overall literacy rate (i.e. 32%) among women in country is low and they lag behind men in enrollment and educational attainment (see Chapters 3 and 5). A similar trend is visible among women councilors. Overall majority of them at all tiers of local government (64%) have low level of educational attainment or illiterate. Half of them (55%) are with educational attainment either less than or up to 10th grade, along with an additional 9% as illiterates. The other 28% of them are with graduate or above level of education.

Table 7.3: Educational Composition of Women Councilors

Status	UC		Taluka		District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Illiterate	5	12.5	-	-	-	-	5	9
Up to 10th grade	27	67.5	2	25	-	-	29	55
12th grade	2	5	1*	12.5	1*	20	4	8
BA and above	6	15	5	62.5	4	80	15	28
	40	100	8	100	5	100	53	100

* These two ladies have their BA in progress.

¹⁰⁴ *Qureshi* is a caste. They maintain their extended kinship ties through strict observation for having marriages within their caste.

¹⁰⁵ *Biradri* means the extended caste based kin group.

A sharp contrasting trend of less educated or illiterate women councilors' segregation at the lowest tier of local government hierarchy as compared to better educated ones at higher tiers is evident. Almost all the less educated or illiterate women councilors are concentrated at the lowest tier of local council comprising 80% of them with less than 10th grade educational level or illiterate as compared to only 20% of them with the higher level of education. On the contrary, at the higher tiers of the District and Taluka councils none of the councilors seem less educated than 10th grade or illiterate. Almost all (80%) of the district councilors have their education as graduation or master, except one (20%) who has her graduation in progress. Similarly, at the Taluka council level all of them are 10th grade pass or above, with more than half of them (62.5%) having their educational level as graduation or above but none is illiterate.

The segregation of less educated women at the lowest tier is also in accordance with the above discussed age and marital status related composition of all these councilors. As the middle and old aged and widow women segregated at the Union Council level are also found to be less educated due to the traditional patriarchal restrictions on female education they faced in older times. While with the passage of time reconfiguring patriarchy in Pakistani society is allowing, more and more, young women to get higher education and entering the public space for their educational or professional activities; that is visible at District and Taluka level where most of the women are with young age and higher level of education. Even this changing pattern is visible in individual cases where old mother were not educated and lived a secluded life behind veil but they also took pains for their daughters better education and public sphere achievements.

KS: When I was born, at that time people considered it a sin to give education to girls, they got their daughters married at 16 or 17 years of age, so I was also married very early. As I was observing *Purdah* (veil), that's why I've studied only 5 classes at my home.

(Later on she also narrated about her daughter's education)

KS: Yes. I wanted my daughter to get education, so I moved to Latifabad, because there was no English medium school in our area, so my daughter took education and I earned by doing sewing and embroidery, so I made her educated and got her married, now she is MashaAllah a teacher.

Although, the general pattern appears that less educated women are more segregated at lower levels but it is not a fixed one. There are Union councilors who have done even two masters as well as there are the District and Taluka councilors who have passed only 10th grades. It means that the educational level with some other factors like political activism, women's personal or their family members' efforts or party nomination are also significant in determining women's participation at different levels of political tiers.

IP: By the way when I started, when I submitted application (for district councilor seat), at that time I was 10th grade pass. After that, because I got married in young age that's why, I could not continue education. Then my husband now got me done B.A. I have to give B.A Part 2 (examination) yet.

On the one hand, some of the councilors who entered the politics with lower education at the highest tier of district or Taluka have also struggled to increase their educational level during the tenure. Two women, each in Taluka and District now have their BA in progress. On the other hand, several of the middle and old aged women Union councilors who were formally educated till 5th grade now acknowledge that they could not retain their acquired educational skills and are almost like an illiterate person now. Besides that educational level also appears to have impact on the women's status within the council. Relatively more educated councilors are reported to be more vocal and more consulted in the council regarding trainings and etc.

N: How much education did you get?

NS: My education is matric (10th grade). I am left behind in education. (laugh)...In our (council) we are here 9 councilors. 4 ladies, 4 gents. It comes to 8. Means there are 11 in this way, including Nazim (and) Naib Nazim. But in the 8 councilors, there are one or two educated among men and all other remaining are illiterate, all are *Angotha Chapp* (a word usually ironically used for one who prints thumb in place of signature)

N: Then you are the educated one there!

NS: As I said, 'my value is more (then others) there'. (Laugh)... Because always it's me who is asked about going every where and about trainings or whatever happens. Coming and not coming (to the council) of those (other women councilors) *becharis* (miserable women) is equal. ... I have taken many trainings, I have certificates of government and others, but those who are in the villages they *becharies* know nothing.

7.2.1.4. Geographical Location of Women Councilors

The Hyderabad district is the sixth biggest city of the country. It has a large urban proportion as it has only one rural Taluka out of four. This rural Taluka also has its own urban center of Tando Jam. In accordance with this geographical composition, most (90%) of the women councilors are the residents of urban areas of Hyderabad District since their birth. Some (6%) of them have got married or has spent some part of their life time in rural areas but these periods are not so long enough.

IM: I lived in a small village in Nawabshah.

N: Where have you spent most of your life?

IM: Previously, I was there in my village and then I got married and went to Sehwan (a small city of Sindh) for 2 years. But later we came here.

Those belonging to rural Taluka also mostly belong to the urban area of Tando Jam; as eight women from rural Taluka were interviewed, out of whom six belong to the urban areas of rural Taluka, while only 2 (4%) of them were found living in villages. This urban/rural location also does not seem to be affecting the composition of age, marital status and educational level of women councilors. All these patterns appear similar to as in the majority of research participants. Both urban and rural women are equally from various age groups, educational levels, married or widow. The potentially significant findings are: there are no unmarried and divorced women councilors at any tier of local government from rural areas, as all such cases belong to urban Talukas and one of the rural cases show the role landlord in the selection and support of that women. The reason for the similar pattern can be that the rural Taluka is so closely associated and linked with the efficient transportation to the urban centers of the Hyderabad city that the people from rural Taluka are relying on that urban area for their daily necessities like educational institutions, employment, and health facilities.

7.2.1.5. Family Structure of Women Councilors

Although, Pakistani society, as a classic patriarchal society, still predominantly prefer extended and joint family structure mostly in rural areas, it is interesting to note that almost half (45.5%) of the women councilors live in nuclear families¹⁰⁶, while the

¹⁰⁶ Here nuclear family is defined as one couple (or widow mothers) living with their unmarried children.

other 13.2% live in semi-nuclear families¹⁰⁷ and another 9% in extended families¹⁰⁸. Almost 68% of the women councilors belong to these three types of family structure.

As a result of the economic and social changes in the Pakistani society the reconfiguring patriarchal structures are gradually giving way to more nuclear, semi-nuclear households; especially in the urban areas like Hyderabad. It appears that the extent of autonomy provided by these three types of families (nuclear, semi-nuclear and extended) to the majority of women councilors, is a favorable condition for the women's entry and participation at different tiers of formal local politics. But, still, the joint family is a dominant and accepted way of family organization in Pakistan. Confirming to this patriarchal trend, almost 22% of the women councilors participated in this research still live in the joint family¹⁰⁹ system, while in only a single exceptional case an old aged widow woman councilor lives alone.

Table 7.4: Family Structure of Women Councilors

Status	UC		Taluka		District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Nuclear	15	37.5	5	62.5	4	80	24	45.5
Semi nuclear	6	15	1	12.5	-	-	7	13.2
Extended	5	12.5	-	-	-	-	5	9.4
Joint	9	22.5	2	25	1	20	12	22.6
Living alone	1	2.5	-	-	-	-	1	1.8
Not known	4	10	-	-	-	-	4	7.5
Total	40	100	8	100	5	100	53	100

The Majority of the women councilors at higher levels of Taluka council (62%) and District Council (80%) are from nuclear family, while very few (one in District

¹⁰⁷ Here semi-nuclear family is defined as a couple living with their unmarried children and any one person from the kin (like old mother, younger brother-in-law, etc)

¹⁰⁸ Here extended family is defined as the family that has more than one economically independent nuclear units (comprising a couple with their unmarried children) having separate kitchens living together within different sections of the same compound or house.

¹⁰⁹ Here joint family is defined as mother and/or father possibly living with married and unmarried sons, unmarried or widow daughters, married or widow daughters-in-law and grandchildren in one house jointly in economic terms and sharing the same kitchen.

Council and two in Taluka council) are from joint families. These few cases coming from joint families have special circumstances for being in joint family that reduces any chance of challenging the established norm of women councilors coming from nuclear family.

Naz, the Taluka councilor, has recently got married and she and her husband both are political party activists belonging to the MQM but they both are jobless, therefore they rely on their joint family income for their livings. Their joblessness and economic dependence, as the reason for living with joint family, do not pose any challenge to the apparent norm of nuclear family.

This facilitating capacity of the nuclear family and the process of reconfiguring patriarchy are also visible in the trend of recent shifts from joint to nuclear or semi-nuclear family among these women councilors; especially those are at higher levels of Taluka and District Councils. Some of them have recently shifted from joint or extended family to the nuclear or semi-nuclear families. As they find it difficult to remain in extended family while working as councilor.

ZM: My brother, sister and mother were living with me when I was first elected in 2001. Then in 2003 I took a separate home for them with the money I got by selling my jewelry. Because my sister has grown up, and my brother was also grown up. My daughters were also growing. So obviously the aunt and nieces may sometimes have some trivial disagreements as well. My sister was getting inferiority complex. I was used to be out of the house more frequently. I used to leave home in the morning and came back at night. When I go at home the daughter tells me one thing and the sister tells me the other. Then I consulted with my brother and husband and got them separated.

7.2.1.6. Age of Women Councilors' Children

Majority (71.69%) of the women councilors in local government are with grownup children while 9% of them have both some young and some grownup children in their families. Very few women councilors (7.5%) who have entered the local politics are with young children.

Table 7.5: Age of Women Councilors' Children

	UC		Taluka		District		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
All grown up children	32	80	3	37.5	3	60	38	71.69
Both Young & grownup	3	7.5	1	12.5	1	20	5	9.4
Young Children	2	5	1	12.5	1	20	4	7.5
Unmarried/ no children	3	7.5	3	37.5	-	-	6	11.32
Total	40	100	8	100	5	100	53	100

Women's traditionally assigned major roles are domestic chores and the childcare. These activities are so much time and labour consuming that they leave no sufficient time for women to enter into the public and political arena. Besides, it is also difficult for women to enter into the public sphere and maintain their responsibilities in two spheres, at the same time. The highest percentage of women councilors having their children grownup as compared to the minimum percentage (7.5%) of those with young children simply shows that women's participation in the public and political spheres is contingent with the extent of their current engagement in childcare responsibilities that, in turn, is determined by the respective age of their children.

(Nigar had two children; one daughter of 2 years and a newly born son)

NQ: There is one among our councilor. She..much..raise the agenda. .. She talks much...She usually raise much voice because she is in respect of age, MashAllah,..elder. So she becomes our leader but we cannot do anything. We say, 'what ever the work is, we have to signature here and just go home, have to look after the children. Her children are grownup, that's why she talks much. That is the thing.

The women councilors having grownup children are now not in need to pay fulltime attentions to the childcare activities; as their grownup children are not only taking care of themselves but also supporting these women councilors by bearing the burden of their household responsibilities and childcare. Especially, the presence of the grownup daughters, who serve as helpers to lessen their mothers' domestic work load, appears to be one of the facilitating features for these women's political public sphere participation. It is evident from the above discussed family structure that these women councilors mostly belong to nuclear families. Therefore, they found no other family women to shift their responsibilities to. In this case, unmarried grownup daughters, as

the lower status person within family, are the most suitable inheritor of the burden of household chores making their mothers' public and political activities possible. Thus, these councilors find better and more time to be spent in their activities outside home.

This finding is also supported by the visible trend of lowest political participation among those who are with young children. As those with young children need much time and energies to be spent on the childcare activities within the household that they usually postpone their public sphere activities for the time until their children grow up. Those who try to manage them together have to grapple with the high demands of both spheres simultaneously or to sacrifice one of them.

NQ: There are so many (trainings). There were calls for me twice or thrice. But I am not (going). They say that you have to go there. But I am mostly busy with children. That's why I excuse for that. I am not usually... Actually, when the first training call came, I had my baby born that time so I could not go there.

(The summary of the field notes in researcher's words).

7.2.2. Economic and Work Profile of Women Councilors

It is difficult to make an exact estimate regarding women councilors' income or financial background; as most of them hesitate in telling about their income amount. An effort is made to analyze their economic class background through an analysis of their personal and family property holdings, the economic and income generation activities in which these women and their main family income earners were involved.

7.2.2.1. Personal and Family Property and Landholdings

Almost all of the women councilors, either from urban or rural areas, reported to have no personal or family properties or landholdings. The frequently reported family property was the only house in which the councilor's family lives, although, in some cases these houses were also reported to be either rented ones or the joint property of their in-laws. Some of the councilors reported that their fathers or their in-laws were used to hold such properties or lands in past but they were sold a long period ago.

BB: In my family, my father-in-law had ample landholding. But he had already sold them. It was agricultural land, for cultivation. Eighteen or twenty years ago he sold them all at the time of his daughter's marriage.

One third (3 out of 8 women) of women councilors from rural areas reported their family males involved in agriculture. One of them report that her father and father-in-law both were farmers but they were used to work on other's land. The other two report that their family has some agricultural landholdings but they seem to rely on the income of their family males' jobs as police constable and as teacher in addition to their earning from land. It shows that these landholdings are not sufficient to support their house hold livings.

Only two women councilors, one Taluka councilor from urban area and the other union councilor from urban center of rural Taluka, reported their personal property. They hold houses and they earn money as rents from these houses. In short, it is evident that these women councilors do not belong to landlord class, in general. They mostly come from the landless class while only few possessing with small landholdings.

7.2.2.2. Economic Activity among Women Councilors

Women councilors' involvement in income generating activities within and outside home is another important aspect that can help us to understand the economic and professional background of these women councilors.

Table 7.6: Women Councilors' Involvement in Income Generation Activity

Status	UC	Taluka	District	Total	
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	%
House wives	27*	5	4	36	67.9%
Teachers/vocational instructors	2	1	1	4	7.5
Beauticians	-	1	-	1	1.8
Social worker (related to NGOs)	4	1	-	5	9.4
Home based work	3	-	-	3	5.6
Insurance	1	-	-	1	1.8
LHW/ traditional birth attendant	2	-	-	2	3.7
Domestic or sweeper	1	-	-	1	1.8
Total	40	8	5	53	100

**Two of them were home based workers in past, but now are considered as housewives.*

As overall women's labour force participation in the country is very low (i.e. 2.23%)¹¹⁰ and women rarely come out to participate in professional and technical fields (see Chapter 3), similarly, the rate of economic activity among women councilors in the district is low. Almost two thirds of them (68%) at all tiers are housewives and were not involved in any income generation activity ever, before and after coming in the local government.

The most frequently reported basic reasons behind no involvement in economic activities and being housewives are the early marriage, self perceived sufficient income of their husband, young children, household responsibilities and lack of interest in jobs outside home. Some others who wanted to do some work earlier in their life were discouraged by their families or husbands, therefore could not join the economic activity outside home.

IP: At home. Because in young age, in sixteen years I got married. And after that I had children. And also I had no interest.. for job, or for anything. Home and children...only this.

Other than housewives, there is also a significant number of women councilors (32%) who were economically active and involved in some jobs or small scale business before and after entering the local politics. They were mostly working or have worked as teachers in school or *madressa*, vocational skill instructor, social workers, lady health worker, beautician, traditional birth attendant, home-based worker, insurance worker, or sweeper/domestic, etc. It shows that they are mostly involved in low paid, low skilled and typically women associated jobs.

N: How do you manage your expenses?

SE: One should not feel shame in doing work, previously when I was not the councilor; I was working in a house. ...

N: What the work you were doing there in that house?

SE: I was doing .. (washing) clothes, sweeping and mobbing. I did work for three years with them. Then I also became councilor in 2005, they did not say anything to me.

N: Means you were doing work in someone's home and then you became councilor here?

¹¹⁰ According to census of Pakistan 1998.

SE: Yes, Now I do work in a school as well.

N: What kind of work you do in school?

SE: I manage to do both kinds of work in School; cleaning and looking after children too.

The reasons behind these women's involvement in income generating activities range from earning for their self expenditure to earning for their family or household expenditures. Mostly widow women councilors do some home-based works to support their families. At the Union Council level there is a large number of widow women councilors, who became widow in their early ages with their young children, therefore, they were mostly involved in some kind of economic activity for earning their household livings and for education of their children. Some of them have established small home-based works to support their family income.

N: Did you ever do any job outside home?

BB: No. I never did any job outside home. Only at home. My husband was used to earn well. He was used to earn well from his work as laborer. That's why I did not do any work. But after that it has been 18 or 20 years that there is one in our neighborhood who has work related to quilt making, so I am use to of making those stuff at my home and I also do sewing. I am doing it yet as well. I do it now.

Their recent entry and participation in local councils have also become an addition to their monthly income as these elected women councilors are receiving a minimum remuneration (of Rs. 1000 for union councilor, Rs. 2000 for Taluka councilor, and Rs. 3000 for District councilor, per month) from the government. Although, it is harmoniously considered by them as insufficient to even meet the monetary demands and expenses of the office they are holding now. But those who belong to poor families acknowledge it as worth adding to their family income. The different responses of women councilors towards this monetary gain can better be understood in relation with the respective economic class or different financial backgrounds of their families based on the profession and earning of their main family earners. Those who have their main family earners as laborers on daily wages are justified in giving importance to this minimal remuneration amount as compared to a district councilor whose husband is contractor or TV news director earning more than Rs. 50,000 or 60,000 per month. This economic class difference and its relation with the women's access to different hierarchical tiers of political activity will further be reflected upon in the following section.

7.2.2.3. *Economic Activity of the Main Family Income Earner of Women Councilors*

The above discussed patterns of property holdings and participation in the labour market show that they belong to the non-elite, rather middle or lower class of the society. But still they have a relative variation in their respective privileged or disadvantaged position (e.g. due to the age, education, family structures) within the same class that is also effecting their bid to offices at different hierarchical tiers of local government.

Their financial status also appears in harmony with the other trends of better educated married and younger women from the relatively privileged strata present at the higher tiers of local government as compared to less educated and widow women from relatively disadvantaged strata at the lower tier. Women councilors at high tiers of Taluka and District also belong to financially better family background. They all rely on their husband's handsome amount of income through good jobs or business, except one widow women Taluka councilor relying on her sons' income and one youngest girl who works as a teacher and in association with her doctor sister helps her family livings. Their husband's are reported to be contractors, civil engineer, businessman, news director in a well known media group, or holding prominent positions in different public or private organizations as commercial assistant in Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) , security in-charge in Telenor (a mobile phone company), or employed in Treet corporations (a well known private company). One of them is running a family NGO and is also working as a master trainer and journalist.

ZM: Aaa ...it is as we take contracts. If we get a contract in 10 lac¹¹¹, 20 lac, thennn if it is completely done in one month, what is actually, if it is on CC then it finishes quickly, like CC roads and etc are to be constructed. So such contract of 10 to 15 lac is usually completed in 10 to 15 days. So in these 10 to 15 days we earn about 50000, 60000, 70000, or one lac. If it is a soiling work, then it continues for 2 or 3 months. Then in three or four months we could earn 50000 or lac. Like this.

While at the Union Council level which comprises the majority of the bulk of women in local government, the women councilors are not as harmoniously in better financial

¹¹¹ Lac is a unit in the Indian numbering system equal to one hundred thousands.

conditions as was observed at higher levels. They variously belong to middle, lower middle, or lower class backgrounds. Their financial conditions also vary according to the over all financial background of the neighborhood they are living in and elected from. They mostly rely on either their husband's, son's or daughter's employment; mostly on not highly paying positions or small scale business.

Some of them report that their husbands or sons have their own small scale businesses like gas cylinder shop, rice shop, motor workshop, medical store, molding and press workshop, small artificial jewelry shop, wood business, mobile loading shop, or driving a *Rikshaw*¹¹². Some other report that their husbands are working as salesman at motor showroom, employee in private company, technician in hospital, watchman in school, gardener in the municipality, etc. Some of them, mostly the widows or who have retired husbands or fathers, report that their sons, daughters, or sisters are the major income earners of the house working as government or private teachers, laboratory assistant, garments factory worker, lady health worker, employed on low paid jobs in the WAPDA, in the Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL), police, or banks, or teach children at home. Some of the councilors reported that even their sons are working as laborer on different places like in market, on some machine, collecting plastic oil gallons, etc. Some of the councilors are themselves involved in doing jobs as teachers and sweeper/domestic, as discussed earlier. Some of them still work as home based worker such as doing *pekoe*¹¹³, quilt making, embroidery, sewing or teaching Quran. In few cases of widow councilors, their husband's pensions are also a support for their family expenditures. Some others also partially rely on house rents (coming from some small rented portions of their houses) besides their husband or son's income.

We can roughly divide these women union councilors into two groups according their relatively better or difficult financial conditions. One of the groups of women union councilors rely on their husband's, son's, or daughter's reasonably paid jobs in different government and non government organizations or businesses. In some cases

¹¹² A traditional three wheeler public transport for two persons.

¹¹³ Pekoe is a machine work to close the edges of cloth to make it longer lasting.

more than one family members contribute to the family income. Therefore, they are in better financial conditions.

RS: My husband drives a *Rikshaw*. My daughter MashAllha has a good job. Her salary is almost 12, 13 thousand. My son also... My son has 9 (thousand as salary).

While the other group comprises of those who are trying to manage their family expenditures by their own or family members' low income jobs or income generating activities inside or outside home. Some of the women in these low income groups now have started considering the minimum remuneration (Rs. 1000 per month for Union councilor) given to them in the UC as one source for their family income.

BB: Income source is that of my sons', the elder one is educated, but he has no job, he works as laborer to someone, both sons, to say, work as laborers. I am also councilor here in the UC, so I got 1000 per month... thanks to Allah that I have a small house of my own. I have given one small room (of that house) on rent. Rs. 1000, I get from that (rent). 1000 I got from my councillorship, mashAllah two children are managing livings.

It can be inferred that the lowest tier of local government has provided the widest space for a large number of women coming from lower and lower middle class to come in leadership positions, at least at neighborhood levels, while the higher levels of Taluka and District Council are still been occupied by women with better financial resources and class standing by virtue of these social and economic resources. But the number of women at the higher tiers is very low as compared to the large mass of less privileged common women present at the lowest tier of UCs. This state of affairs gives a non-elitist feature to this newly emerging pattern of increased women participation in local politics.

This landless lower and lower and middle class status of majority of the women councilors is also in harmony with their political affiliation with specific political party. In the next section it will be discussed that an overwhelming majority of these women councilors are from the ruling party of the district that is MQM. As discussed in Chapter 5, this party is formulated to safeguard the group interests of the middle and

lower middle class Urdu speaking *Muhajir*¹¹⁴ population mostly settled in the urban centers of the province of Sindh. Therefore, their lower economic status also appears in accordance with their party affiliations, as will be discussed below.

7.2.3. Political Profile of Women Councilors

Beside the social and economic profile, the political profile of women councilor is also important to understand the impact of their previous formal and informal social work activities, political affiliations, or previous electoral experience on their possibility to enter into the local government.

7.2.3.1. Informal Social Work by Women Councilors

These women councilors at the District and Taluka levels were elected through indirect election. Therefore, their popularity among common people in their neighborhood or area does not seem to effect much on their selection, as political parties get them elected (considering either their education, previous experience in local councils or history of their party activism) through commanding other party people already elected at the UC, who form the electoral college for election on women reserve seats in higher tiers, to vote them in. Still, one of them, who had recently joined political party after her election to the council and had no strong party support during elections, has her previous formal social work done in their area affected people to vote her in the council.

Most of the women councilors at the UC level, as they were directly elected by the common people, were usually active and popular in informal social work through personal help provided to the people in their neighborhood. This social work has already given these women recognition in their area that facilitated their selection by political parties or encouragement by neighborhood people to contest election.

NJ: What happened with me was that I had no young children. I was active in my area. When some one has some matter, (I used to say), 'lets go, I go with you (for that)'. Some one has to be taken to hospital, 'lets go, I am coming with you'. Obviously, my daughter was grown up and when she went to school I was alone at home. So

¹¹⁴ People who migrated from India to Pakistan after sub-continent's independence from British imperials and the separation of Pakistan from Hindu majority state of India.

due to these reasons, the people of my area asked me for, means ‘you are active and you serve (others)’. It was (like this) long before that. Joining party was a so late incidence.

BB: Alhamdollilah, from the very beginning I was used to do all the hospital related works in my neighborhood. Like delivery, illness, or someone has to go somewhere, shopping for someone’s marriage ceremony. From the very beginning, I am used to look after such matters. So my name is Bano Begum but I am popular with the name of Buno *Apa* in neighborhood, among relatives, or others. When ever some event has to be organized some religious gathering and has to cook one kilogram of rice then they call me first and say that ‘you will look after that all’.

Sometimes their home-based income generation activities (e.g. sewing, embroidery, *Pekoe* work, quilt making, etc) are also of such types that made them popular among the people of their area. Neighboring women are use to come to their home to avail the services they provide; therefore, they already had interaction with community.

HF: Actually I am very famous in my community (*Ansari*¹¹⁵), you can ask from anyone about me that where is Hafiza, even a small child would tell you that where I use to live... people use to love and respect me a lot, that’s why I got a lot of votes.

N: Why people know you so much?

HF: As my daughters are working¹¹⁶, so women are use to visit my house, that’s why all the people know me.

7.2.3.2. Women’s Previous Experience in Electoral Politics

Nearly two third (62.26%) of the women councilors are new entrants in formal electoral politics. They do not have any previous experience of contesting elections or holding any elected offices at any formal political forum. Although, all the tiers of local government have experienced the highest number of the new entrant as compared to the number of re-elected or previously contested women councilors, but the lowest tier (UC) of local government is found most favorable entry point for a largest number of the new entrants.

¹¹⁵ *Ansari* is one of the castes.

¹¹⁶ They were involved in a home based work of *Pekoe* (it is a machine work to close the edges of cloth to make it longer lasting). Women in Pakistan use a large plain peace of cloth as a part of their dress (*Dupata*), therefore, such services are utilized by large sections of the society for closing the edges of *chadar* or *dupata* of each dress women wear.

Table 7.7: Previous Experience in Formal Electoral Politics

	District		Taluka		UC		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Previously elected	3	60	2	25	11	27.5	16	30.18
Unsuccessfully contested	-	-	2	25	2	5	4	7.5
New entrants	2	40	4	50	27	67.5	33	62.26
Total	5	100	8	100	40	100	53	100

There is also a significant number of them (30.18%) who first entered in formal electoral politics through contesting local government elections or bi-election during last tenure (i.e. 2001- 2005) and continued their career in this tenure through successful re-election to the same seat or any other seat at a higher or lower tier. The District Council shows the highest percentage (60%) of the re-elected women councilors. These women councilors have previous electoral experience; as they first contested and elected at some lower tiers of local government and then progressed to higher ones after experiencing one or more electoral contestations at different tiers.

Rashida first entered electoral politics when contested in 2001 local government elections as an independent candidate and won as union councilor. Only after two months, there were elections for Taluka council, she again contested for that and won her seat in the City Taluka Council. Later on, a seat in the District Council became vacant due to the death of a women district councilor; therefore she filled her form on party ticket from Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and contested in Bi- elections. She got elected and served as District councilor in last tenure. When the tenure ended and the next local government election were held in 2005 she again contested on MQM ticket and again won the District Council seat and served there till 2010, till this tenure ended.

(The summary of the field notes in researcher's words).

Zenab entered as union councilor and later contested for Taluka council and served there in the last tenure. In this tenure in 2005 elections she again contested and won District Council seat. In the meantime she also unsuccessfully contested for the seat of the Member of Provincial Assembly.

(The summary of the field notes in researcher's words).

Similarly, one of the Taluka councilors entered in this tenure for the first time but progressed from lower to higher levels during the same tenure, through elections at

different tiers in different times. It can be inferred that the probability to be elected at the highest tier increases with the previous political experience women candidates have.

On the other hand, most of those who retained their previous positions, while re-elected in 2005, belong to the UC level. They are the women union councilors who have entered local government in the last tenure in 2001 as union councilors and retained their same position in next election in 2005. At this level, nine out of total ten re-elected women union councilors retain their previous status of being on union council seat. There is only one women councilor who had come down from the highest tier of local government to the lowest tier (i.e. from District Council to the Union council) during the two tenures of local government. The reason behind this reversal can be that currently ruling and the dominant party of the district had boycotted elections in last tenure in 2001 and this woman belongs to the other party that was the ruling party in that tenure. Thus, she may have found an opportunity for getting elected to a higher post due to no competition posed by the existing ruling party's boycott. Yet this time the dominant party participated in the election, therefore, this woman as now belonging to opposition could not retain her seat at the higher tier.

In short, local government has certainly provided an opportunity for the large mass of politically inexperienced women to enter into politics. Although all the tiers experienced a large number of new entrants but the lowest tier is widely open to such kind of women. Those with past experience in contestation and serving in local government have more possibility to be elected at higher tier.

7.2.3.3. Political Party Affiliation of Women Councilors

In this tenure, all the women councilors¹¹⁷ contested election on party basis except only one who won as an independent candidate and later joined the ruling party. In accordance with the current political scene of the district (see Chapter 5), the majority (64%) of the research participants belong to the ruling party in the district, i.e. MQM that has boycotted the local government elections in 2001 but in 2005 contested and succeeded in establishing its dominance in the district.

¹¹⁷ All the women councilors who participated in this research as participants.

Table 7.8: Political Party Position of Women Councilors

Party	Women elected	%
MQM	34	64.15
PPP	11	20.75
Islamic collision	5	9.4
National Front	1	1.8
PML(F)	1	1.8
Independent	1	1.8
Total	53	100

Similarly, majority (72.69%) of the new entrants belongs to or later (after getting elected) joined the same ruling party. Those re-elected or with previous experience of an unsuccessful election contestation entered the local government as independent candidates in last tenure but later during the last tenure or in this tenure they also joined any political party and got re-elected from any political party. Those elected at high level of local government also had acquired district level high portfolios (e.g. in-charge, president, general secretary, deputy general secretary, etc.) within women wings of political parties.

Table 7.9: Political Party Position of New Entrants/Re-elected Women Councilors

	MQM	PPP	Islamic collision	Other parties/ independent	Total	
	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	Freq.	%
Previously elected	9	6	1*	-	16	30.1
Unsuccessfully contested	1	2	-	1	4	8
New entrants	24	3	4***	2**	33	62.2
Total	34	11	5	3	53	100

*She later joined MQM.

**One of them won independent but later joined MQM

*** Two of them elected from Islamic collision but later joined MQM

As pointed earlier, some of the women councilors at the UC level also shifted their initial party affiliation; with which they initially contested and won the election. All of them joined the ruling party after leaving the previous one. The main reason behind the change in party affiliation is reported as the previous party has lost the election therefore is now unable to serve the needs of their area while the ruling party is capable of doing so.

This political party affiliation is also significant when looked at the ethnic composition of these councilors. The ethnic distribution of the women councilors showed Muhajir 75% (40 women), Sindhis 19% (10 women), Punjabis 4% (2 women) and Kashmiri 2% (1 woman). Thus, majority of the women councilors (33 women comprising 62.2% of all participants) elected in all the councils are 'Muhajir women elected from MQM'. This is in harmony as MQM, as party, and Muhajir, as ethnic group, are the ruling ones in the district.

7.2.3.4. Political Party Offices Held by Women Councilors

Most of the women councilors who hold high party offices belong to two high tiers; District and Taluka councils. They mostly have history of formal political affiliation or holding party designation. Out of four women participants on reserved seats at district level two are serving as General Secretary and in-charge of their parties' women wing at district level. While one is Zone¹¹⁸ member. Similarly, women councilors at Taluka level also hold high party offices like President of the party women's wings at district, Office Secretary at Zonal office, Sector member or Zone members. Only one at each level was simply party workers.

In contrast to two higher levels, at the lowest tier (UC) most of the women councilors have informal kind of party activism or sympathies by their own self or by their family members. They mostly belong to the party workers strata. Those who or whose family members hold any party designations are also from the very basic levels of party hierarchy, with only few exceptions. This finding is also in accordance with the entry of large number of politically inexperienced new entrants at the lower strata who do not

¹¹⁸ MQM has a very organized hierarchical structure comprises of different tiers; starting from the basic neighborhood level UC office, to unit office, sector office, and then at the district level zonal office. Each tier of party office has its office bearers and members.

have any formal political electoral experience as they were just informal party workers or sympathizers.

N: Previously (before she got elected) was any one from your family in politics or in party?

SN: Yes. We were working for party, but no one had any designation. Here we all were doing (party) work; I and my brother. Here we were serving for MQM.

It seems that the lowest tier has provided the largest space for women who were or whose families were informally involved in parties or just had their sympathies with party. Their family males were used to work mostly as workers rather than a formal party office holder. These women were providing informal neighborhood level support to party activist or to their brother or fathers. They mostly belong to the lowest level of party workers and had never thought of being entered in formal electoral politics except serving parties out of their emotional attachment.

7.2.3.5. Male Family Members' Political Affiliation and Activism

Most of the participant women councilors have seen a political environment in their house for a long time as the men in their families are formally or informally involved in politics. These men's political affiliations appear as an important and persistent feature of these women councilors' profile. Women most frequently reported their husbands, brothers, sons, and fathers, as active in politics. But other persons, such as brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, uncles, nephews, as also involved in politics. There are but few women members of family ever reported to be politically active, such as mother-in law, aunt, sisters, etc.

IB: Previously, he (her husband) was UC In-charge here (from party). He is in politics for last 25 years since the time MQM was established.

N: Who else in your home is involved in politics?

IB: My mother-in-law was in politics before, she is sick now, but when she was fine, she was also with Mutahida. She was usually used to help in election works.

The profile analysis shows that majority (79.2%) of the women councilors reported that these male family members have some formal or informal party affiliations and activism either as party office holder (18.8%), workers (39.6%), or party sympathizers

(20.7%). While very few, i.e. only 16.98%, reported that men in their families have no party affiliation.

Table 7.10: Male Family Members' Political Affiliation

Categories	Frequency	%
Workers	21	39.62
Sympathizers	11	20.75
Office holders	10	18.86
No affiliation	9	16.98
No male in family	2	3.7
Total	53	100

The male family members who have been reported to hold formal party offices also show the same trend of occupying high or low designations in political hierarchy as that of women councilors, discussed above. Those male family members who have their women elected at higher tiers of District and Taluka councils hold relatively high level office/membership either in political parties or state political institutions, such as coordination secretary, member of provincial assembly, zone member, zone office secretary etc. While those having their women elected at the lowest tier of union council either occupy designations at local neighborhood or area level party offices or in local councils (e.g. party UC in-charge, party unit in-charge, Party joint unit in-charge, joint UC in-charge, UC Nazim, UC Naib Nazim, etc.) or in majority are simply party workers or sympathizers.

RA: My father in law has been Naib Nazim of Union Council-16. He has contested the election twice. ...he was the person who forced me after my marriage that 'you should come in it'. Otherwise I was just used to work as a (party) worker. I never decided to especially come on any seat (position).

Besides that the few women who reported to have no politically active male in their house (either by absence of men in family or by no party affiliation or activism of their male family members) but they were also reported to be in contact with some extra kin politically active males; such as party workers, landlords, Nazim candidates, etc.

7.2.4. The Woman Head of Council

Here it is also important to highlight the socio-economic status of the only women union council Nazim of the province. She appears to be a 40 year old, married lady, having three grownup children living in a nuclear family, and holding a B.A. She is a housewife and she reports to have no domestic to manage her household chores. She got married at an early age and completed her education after marriage. Due to this early marriage and childcare responsibilities she has never been involved in any income generation activities. As a housewife she is always used to manage all the cooking, cleaning and other household responsibilities, and is still doing it all along with her political activities. Her daughter is grownup, who is also helping her in domestic chores besides her studies.

She has better financial conditions due to multiple sources of her household income. Her husband is a homeopathic doctor running his clinic in a suburban area of the UC. He also works as a technician in Liaquat Medical College. They have joint family agricultural lands from her in-laws and they are getting income share from there. The upper floor of her house is rented and adds to her family income.

She is Muhajir but married in a Sindhi family. Her husband and elder brother-in-law has always been active in politics and were affiliated to Pakistan People's party. When the local government system was announced her elder brother-in-law motivated her for contestation in election. She had no prior social work experience and just then started her political career by first contesting in elections for the union councilor seat in 2001. Then, she contested and won for Taluka council seat in bi-election in the same tenure. After her first tenure was finished she contested and won on the UC Nazim seat in the next election in 2005. Despite her better economic conditions, she also does not seem to belong to the elite strata of the country. But her better education and economic characteristics seem to be identical with the better educational, financial and party office bearing features of women councilors at higher tiers of District and Taluka councils as shown earlier in this chapter. It is in harmony with the higher position she holds as Union Council Nazim and the member of District Council.

7.4. Conclusion

This chapter attempted to analyze the social, economic and political profile of the research participants selected and interviewed from different tiers of local government in the District Hyderabad. It has been shown that majority of them are politically inexperienced new entrants more than 40 years of age, married or widow, landless, either housewives or involved in small scale income generation activities, with low level of education and household income resources and belonging to the lower strata of either political party workers or party sympathizers. Most of these women have grownup children, who seem to help them within and outside home. The grownup daughters, by taking over domestic responsibilities thus facilitate their public and political activity. They all appear to be from urban background. Prevalence of these characteristics shows that most of them do not belong to already established politically active elite class in the country.

This particular combination of mutually interrelated and supporting personal, economic and political factors appear to be enhancing the possibility of their entry and social acceptance in local politics. The cross analysis of their personal features shows that the presence of high number of women councilors from 40+ age group is in harmony with their predominantly married and widow status and less educational attainment. It shows the relative autonomy and status ascribed to middle and old age married women, rather than young unmarried women, in the Pakistani society. These middle and old age women frequently reported to be married in their early ages, therefore, were unable to continue their education further after primary and secondary levels, thus have low educational attainments. Other reasons are also the patriarchal limitations on their mobility and less importance ascribed by the families to girls' education in past. In short, there is a general acceptability and favorable environment for the entry of middle and old age either married or widow women with less educational attainment in local governments, rather than unmarried young girls and women.

Women are almost absent from the higher offices of Nazim and Naib Nazims at all tiers. Besides that the contrasting patterns of age, education, financial conditions, profession of their male family members and party offices bearing, shape their different access options to higher and lower tiers of local councils; this is also indicative of the

class difference among these councilors. These patterns show that the women councilors at higher tiers are relatively privileged in their social, economic and political standing then to those elected at the lowest tier. It is evident that although almost all of them do not belong to already established politically active elite class in the country but the higher authority and power positions (at District and Taluka councils) are still captured by relatively higher social class with better social and economic resources to manage the demands of political sphere.

The lowest tier, union council, seems to be more suitable and open for socially less privileged women from lower social and economic backgrounds; as it has provided a large number of common non-elite women with an opportunity to enter formal electoral politics, which they were not able to do otherwise. Therefore, the patriarchal capture of power by elite strata seems to be initially shaken at the lowest echelons of power but still not completely reverted as this change will take time to appear at the higher levels. Similarly, the higher positions in the local government hierarchy are also still being predominantly occupied by women from better socio-economic backgrounds. But the number of these women at higher tiers is very low as compared to the large masses of the less privileged common women who entered at lowest tier. The reason why upper and elite class is not attracted to the lowest tier of local government may be that lower power, authority and importance is ascribed to the local government institutions in the country. Whatever the reason may be, local government and especially its lowest tier, the UC, seems to provide an opening for common non-elite women from middle and lower class to enter the electoral politics, party hierarchies and to establish their skill to rise in political forums. Parties also seem to support such people from small neighborhoods to consolidate their power in this newly established local government system and to the grassroots levels of the society.

While analyzing the profile of women councilors, this chapter also identified some visible trends of reconfiguring patriarchal structures in Pakistani society. It identified a potential shift in long observed trend of elite women's selective political participation as exceptional women to a newly emerging trend of a large number of non-elite common women's entry and participation in local politics, especially at the lowest tier of union council. The women appearing at the lowest tier are also seen to be moving up

in hierarchy after getting experience and resources from this first time opportunity available to them. But this challenge still seems unable to completely uproot the patriarchal elite hold on all power avenues. Non-elite women's entry, although, initially is not showing any complete reversal to elite capture at high echelons of power but it is certainly a harbinger to a possible change that has initially emerged at the lowest tier but simultaneously has the potential to move and change the nature of elite capture at higher levels of power and authority positions in local government and other political forums, as a new cadre of non-elite women politicians will be trained out of it.

It has also been seen that the educational level of the older women is low due to the prevalence of traditional patriarchy in the past. But we see a large number of young highly educated women councilors, as well. A large number of them also now appear to be economically active inside and outside their home. Further, the visible shifting trend from the joint family to the nuclear, semi-nuclear and extended families and its impact as facilitating in women's public and political appearance seems to be indicating the reconfiguring patriarchal trends. But the question is that whether the women thus entered in politics through the extent of apparent autonomy and freedom provided by these changing family structures are really free from the patriarchal control (by patriarchs present in family and public space of the councils) to enter and maintain their presence in the formal politics. How and why individual men and whole patriarchal structure are accepting and accommodating these non-elite women's involvement in politics? The next chapter will explore these issues.

CHAPTER 8

RECONFIGURING PATRIARCHAL STRUCTURES AND INCREASING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

8.1. Introduction

The previous chapter established that most of the women elected in local government in the Hyderabad district are from non-elite background, this chapter attempts to explain that if most of these women are not elite, rather middle aged and older, either married or widow, less educated common women from lower strata of society without any former political experience, then how did they manage to enter into the public political sphere which was not traditionally open to them? How are they maintaining their presence in politics without necessary education, skills, support and financial and material resources provided by the influential political family and social status to elite women politicians? And how and why the traditional patriarchy, rather than segregating them in private sphere of home or excluding them from male dominated formal politics, is now bringing masses of non-elite women into local politics providing them a legal and formal presence in public sphere enabling them to make ever wider future claims to power? This chapter will attempt to find answers to these questions through a thematic analysis of the research data.

The introduction of enhanced electoral quota for women at local level has certainly provided an enlarged political opportunity for women but it does not at once change the prevailing traditional ideologies and attitudes among women and men. The introduction of electoral quota alone cannot translate into making all the women equally able to come out and opt for the opportunity open to them directly and independently. There are some social dynamics entailing the introduction of electoral quotas for women determining who will enter and participate, and to what extent in politics through this newly offered opportunity. Focusing on these social dynamics an effort is made to address three major questions of this research. First, this chapter will explore the role of

various individual men and masculine groups that have capitalized on the new quotas and facilitated the initial entry of women in local politics. Second, it will identify women's strategies to use the patriarchal setup within family, party and society as resource to cope with their lack of education, skill, and resources in order to facilitate their entry and maintain their presence within the political system. Third, it will reflect on the masculine strategies to limit and control women's political participation within political parties and councils. Finally, it will explore the diversified private to public and political roles of women offering them a wider space with better material and non-material resources for their present and future presence in public sphere. This chapter argues that the persistent struggle for power among alternative masculine groups, while providing women with limited political inclusion, has unintentionally opened an ever wider public space to women in formal politics.

8.2. The Role of Competing Men and Masculine Groups in Bringing Women in Local Politics

Despite women's seeming lack of interest in politics and the prevailing male domination in society, a large mass of common local non-elite women are in formal local politics. The major question arises that how did it happen? What made them enter politics? How did they manage to enter this political sphere? The data analysis shows that mostly their motivation towards and entry in local electoral politics seems to be the result of a combination of women's kinship and extra kinship ties with politically active males and political parties' search for suitable women candidates to enlarge their power base. These factors are found closely interlinked and mutually interplaying to create the possibilities that brought these women in formal local electoral politics.

The males within family, extra kinship or political party and their mutual cooperation and facilitation appear to be crucial in women's initial entry in local politics. These individual men and political parties act as interplaying masculinities¹¹⁹ continuously struggling to consolidate their power in society in order to establish or to maintain their

¹¹⁹ As Connell describes "‘Hegemonic masculinity’ is always constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women. The interplay between different forms of masculinity is an important part of how a patriarchal social order works" (1987: 183). Here, the phrase is used to describe the interaction and cooperation among different men and masculine groups to maintain the patriarchal order and control and manipulate women's political participation for their interest, as will be discussed in the next pages.

advantaged position or dominance in power hierarchies. With the socio-political development (i.e. introduction of political quotas for disadvantaged groups; women, peasants and minorities) these masculine power groups are increasingly forced to partially include certain sections of less powerful or marginalized groups within their sphere of influence to enlarge their power base. Therefore, they bring in the marginalized groups (i.e. women in focus here) through a limited and controlled inclusion to capture the maximum possible power avenues open in the system (e.g. the seats reserved for women in local councils) in order to establish their dominance.

8.2.1. The Role of Kinship and Extra Kinship Ties with Politically Active Men

Family and kinship ties are the basic organizing feature of the South Asian classic patriarchies where women's segregation in private sphere and their adherence to existing power hierarchies, rather than challenging them, leave no room for women's independent entry in formal politics (Kandiyoti 1988). Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 2, the kinship ties with politically active men is one of the most facilitating and decisive features of South Asian society for creating an opening for women to initially enter formal politics (Samarasinghe 2000; Richter 1991). Similarly, kinship ties with politically active males also seem to be playing an important role in women's entry in local government in the district. In the last chapter, a visible trend has been found that the majority of the women councilors at all tiers of the local government in the district are having their kinship ties with men active as informal political party workers, sympathizers or formal party office holders.

Those at higher tiers of local government have some men in their family holding formal party offices or in some cases they themselves have party offices. It shows difficulty in reaching the higher positions without the formal links and sufficient power base within the party structures. Therefore, the majority of women councilors, concentrated at the lowest tier of the UC, have a history of their male family members for their informal party activism as party workers or sympathizer at the local area level. Mostly these men in family, like brothers, husbands, fathers, sons, nephews, brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, etc. are reported to have affiliation or sympathies with certain political parties, thus formally or informally involved in promoting party agendas and doing party work in their areas.

BB: My elder son, ... is in this field from the very beginning. Since Altaf *Bhai* (The party leader) stepped in Hyderabad, in the very beginning, since the beginning his mind was completely towards that. He is still in that, he is a worker. He is a firm and true fellow. By the grace of God, he is a worker and no body can stop him. He is so enthusiastic that he always does work by coming in front by himself.

In classic patriarchal societies, on the one hand, the power that a male patriarch within family enjoys is actually based on social, economic, political and ideological control and manipulation of the human, material and labour resources of the rest of family members; especially of women and younger ones. On the other hand, women are socialized to internalize their supportive and subordinate roles while subsuming their identity within family identity; that is mainly the male patriarch's identity. In the same way, these women councilors' political orientation and activism is also seen to be emerging out of and organized around their men family members' political inclination and affiliation, rather than developing independently, in order to maintain and enhance his power in the wider political system within and outside family. None of these women were found having different political affiliations than that of men in their family. They seem to be harmoniously adopting political affiliation of their men kin as their own.

JT: My husband was fond of joining politics, since the beginning, means from the beginning; he remained in politics, before marriage and even after marriage. He is a party worker. Then he had an inclination that he should also bring me in politics. We also take our children; it is not that we do not take our daughters. When party *ijlas* (public meeting) etc. are being held we take them there also. My husband was inclined towards it, that's why we are in politics. That is also why I became a party worker.

These men are also seen continuously struggling for attaining ever better power and privileged positions within hierarchies of the political party and the political system, in particular, and in society, in general. Such struggles range variously from simple desire to enhance their influence among their neighborhood or political party to holding better and higher offices within party and formal state political institutions. The ways in which these men are mostly seen to be struggling for their better positions are; through maintaining ever better influence and popularity in their neighborhood and area, their ever better participation in political party activities, providing resources and making

arrangements for keeping their respective party hold in the area, rising in ever better political party offices or positions in state political institutions, successfully or unsuccessfully contesting past elections, etc.

IP: Previously he (her husband) was, in Peoples Party..Coordination Secretary. And still is continuing. He also submitted his form.

N: For which position?

IP: MPA (Member of Provincial Assembly), for MPA...but could not get elected. He had 10,500 votes.

N: He is coordination secretary, is this the only designation he ever had or any other position he held sometime in past?

IP: Apart of that only he did for MPA seat. And now he is member of Sindh Council of PPP, as well.

In their respective struggles, these men are seen to be already using the human and labour resources of female family members for promotion of their political tasks and agendas. The ways and extent of the use of such resources differ according to the different situations and extent of political involvement of these men. They are frequently reported to take these women to rallies, public meetings, during party election campaigns, and using their labour in election works, etc. even before their formal entry in local politics. The manipulation of the family's human and labour resources takes various forms, such as; women dressed in attire resembling party flags, mobilizing women for party rallies, preparing flags etc., and other election related preparations outside home. This way, these males are enlarging their political strength to meet the demands of respective political parties and also political parties' strength in the whole political system by providing more and more informal human resources from their homes.

The women's limited exposure outside the home in the public sphere, along with their limited access to education and information resources (see Chapter 7), hinders their chances for making any independent decisions or choices. Their choices are mostly the results of what they see and participate in within their immediate surroundings of family and kin group. This men kin centered political activism experienced by these women for most part of their life played the role of basic political orientations they acquired. Therefore, with the internalized responsibility to promote the agenda of their male family members, these women do not differentiate between their own and their male family members' political affiliations and activism, to which their cultural and

ideological orientations are already and unconsciously done within family. Consequently, these women, ideologically socialized to subsume their identity in the broader family identity that is mainly based on male patriarch's identity, are found providing their emotional, moral and labour support to the ongoing respective power struggles of their male family members, rather than striving for their individual political standing.

HR: All my brothers and my maternal family are in MQM so previously I was sewing flags and preparing other things there. Means I was used to help in making public meeting preparations.

The reason behind the informal nature of men's previous manipulation of women's human and labour resource, rather than bringing them in formal electoral contestations, may be the lack of men's intended interest in women's emancipation and the absence of any special mechanism of positive discrimination (e.g. quotas) against women creating a formal political space reserved for women in the political system. Men's basic intention was not to bring women in politics or their equal political participation rather they were using women as resources to strengthen their own power base. That's why they were not offering or facilitating women for those positions, especially in formal political institutions through elections which were generally open to men. Therefore, the legal provisions, as are appearing in the form of electoral quota for women, forced these competing or struggling men to go through their family, community or party women if they intend to capture and control those restricted power avenues as well. The mainstream politics in the country, although without any legal or constitutional restriction to women's participation, was always considered a male domain. There was no sufficiently large particular political enclave or space solely assigned to women in local politics, as the reservation of women seats in local councils was very low till the year 2000 (see Chapter 4). Therefore, mostly men were inclined to manipulate the human and labour resource of women members of their family in an informal way to support their and party activities, rather than formally launching them in formal electoral politics to capture the local council seats which were open to contestation preferably by these men themselves.

The recent introduction of reserved seats for women at local governments has certainly added a new venue for this persistent masculine power struggle. It has created a

political or power zone in the system that men can only capture by going through some of their subordinate women. Therefore, as part of the same power struggle, but this time, through capture of these formally and legislatively introduced women's reserved seats in local councils, these men intended, decided and facilitated their initially disinterested and inexperienced women's entry in local electoral politics. The men dominated kin based social organization of Pakistani society also facilitated this process. In Pakistani society, the male patriarch within the household has the main decision making authority about all the activities of the family members that may happen within or outside house (see Chapter 3). They have the authority to decide about women's mobility, education and political participation, as well. Therefore, in most of the cases these politically active men decided about women members of their family to participate and contest in local level elections in order to consolidate their individual or respective political party position and power base in the system.

N: When did he tell you that he wants something like that from you?

IP: When the elections were about to held. He (her husband) said, 'I am submitting the form ..in your name'. First, my sister-in-law, she. First she was elected.

N: Nigar? (her sister-in-law).

IP: Yes. In that he had so much difficulty. Bearing pushes, bearing people.. all the preparations to win elections. When her was done then he said, 'I ..come on a little higher position. I have came on union (council) so now I come on District'. So my name ... After that he (her husband) said, 'I am submitting the form for District'. There were seats, reserved. I said, 'no do not give my name'. I said, 'I am crying now, I do not like'. And something I do not know at all, what can I do in that. I do not know at all, what the politics is? What to do in politics? Then he said, 'lets see. If there is luck. If it hits (on the target), if done. Then its well'.

Although, these men appear to be the initial decision makers about their women family members' entry in politics, women's social position as less educated housewives also reduced any chance of resistance to their men's decision on their part (see Chapter 7). As in Pakistani society mostly women segregated in private sphere with less education and almost no economic independence comply with their men patriarch's decision, rather than challenging or deviating to them, as long as possible. These women seem to be following their men's decisions as their family responsibility and duty. Therefore, there was no much difficulty that the men faced in making these women ready to fulfill their demands of electoral contestations.

NQ: How did ..I get the idea..ummm..my elder brother, who is in politics, he said, 'she will be available'.. So in this way I,.. a little.., come towards politics.

N: What about your personal inclination?

NQ: aaaa. No. I was not.

N: How did you react to your brother's point of view?

NQ: He was elder brother..I to him..I respect him..I..respected him..in that way, I accepted what he said..and I.. came in politics.

In a few cases where women mildly resisted or initially showed their inability and inexperience in adopting these new political roles, male family members also adopted a particular kind of pattern to motivate these women to go with their decision. They mostly reported to satisfy and motivate women by ensuring their continuous backup support and taking care of all the outside or public sphere matters by themselves. They are seen to be ensuring these women for bearing the entire struggle in public sphere outside home, which their new political office will demand, by themselves. Simply they were confirming least possible change in the existing life pattern of these women that was the basic source of anxiety or mild resistance on the part of women in these cases.

N: Then what was your reaction when your husband told you about that?

IB: I rejected, but then he said that "Nothing will happen, I will give you backup and support you". Then I agreed.

SP: It was our Sabir *bhai* who brought me in (politics) and he was the one who brought me here as well. He is a friend of my husband since childhood. He said, '*Baji*, you should not fear at all. You do not have to do anything. You will not even go out of your home. You will live as you are living now.'

The selection of women by their men relatives for their entry in local politics was not equally open to all women in the family, rather only offered to certain selective (in terms of age, marital status, and relation to the family male politically active patriarch) sections of women in family. Here the patriarchal preference ascribed to the most senior women of the house according to her age and relation with male family head seems working. The men in family were mostly found bringing in politics their wives, mothers, aunts, sisters-in-law, while only in rare cases their unmarried sisters, daughters and daughters-in-law. These relations with the men in the family adequately show the senior age and position of these women within their family and the relative

privileged position and trust these women acquired according to their age, marital status and relation to family head or dominant male¹²⁰. Sisters and daughters mostly as unmarried usually remain at the lowest level of power structure within family, thus rarely selected or trusted for promotion of such a masculine political agenda outside their home.

Although the presence of a politically active men in family is the most enabling feature for women's entry in local politics, it does not show that the women whose male family members are not politically active have lost all chances to enter local politics. The men in the family without their formal political affiliations are also seen to be motivating and supporting women to enhance their influence and prestige. There are a few women councilors having no men from family as directly involved in formal political activities. In such cases the male family members (mostly husbands) without any formal political party affiliations seem to motivate and support these women in their entry in politics. Among such cases the only lady who entered as independent candidate in the current tenure was also found motivated and supported by her husband.

N: How did you get the motivation for this?

NJ: Because of my husband, yes. He used to say that you were very fond of going out. Now go out and enjoy it. I came because of my husband. Otherwise I was so feared that what happens out there?

KA: At that time (in 2001)¹²¹ actually one of my *devar* (brother-in-law), he is associated with courts basically, so he told my son that, 'Khalid there is one seat vacant, please submit the form for *bhabhi* (brother's wife)', so then my son came to me and said that, 'Ama we have to go to Hyderabad, there is a seat vacant there, I want you to fill the form for that seat'. So he filled my form, we went to the court and won the election.

Besides politically active or inactive male family members the extra kinship ties with influential males also appear to be significant. In some cases, where men in family are not seen to be the prime decision maker in this regard or the main power struggler, the extra kin influential or politically active men in neighborhood, village or local party offices, who are struggling to enhance their power base, are seen to be the source to

¹²⁰ See Chapter 7 for the particular patterns of age, marital status and children to understand the senior status of these women within family

¹²¹ When she first entered the electoral politics without any prior political experience or party office held.

decide about and motivate them for these women's entry to the public sphere of electoral politics. Similar to the case of men from family, these men also appear a part of the same continuous masculine power struggle in various ways.

The three major types of such extra kin men found in data are the Nazim candidate, the landlord, and the political party workers in the neighborhood. The male Nazim candidates while contesting union council elections, in either case of contesting from political party (as part of a masculine interest group) or independent (as individual men), are struggling to hold a power position in the local government hierarchy. When trying to form their panel¹²² for election contestation they selected and motivated their familiar and trusted men and women from *biradris* (communal groups) or extra kin networks to contest on maximum possible seats available in the council. The reason behind such selection seems that such women when elected, due to family, social and personal reasons of their relations, may easily serve as submissive to these extra kin males' authority and decisions while reducing any possible resistance within the council, thus making the struggling male Nazims' positions strong in the political system.

(Kulsoom is old aged widow living alone and teaching children Quran. The Nazim candidate (Abbas) from her area, who belong to PPP and was her student in childhood for learning Quran, was looking for women candidates to complete his panel, asked her to become a member of his panel and contest election.)

KS:(continuous conversation) You know once I went to Abbas' house to see his mother, she was ill at that time, so I went to look her, when I went there, Abbas' wife told me that, 'Apa you should become a counselor', I asked her that, 'Why are you making fun of me?', then Abbas also insisted me to become a counselor, ...

As in some areas, especially when Nazims' were contesting as independent candidates in first tenure of 2001- 2005, it was even difficult to find eligible women with minimum education, possession of national identity card, and the family permission to go out in public sphere to participate in politics. Therefore, the search for eligible women in the area to be launched in election from his panel in order to capture maximum seats in council also led the Nazim candidate in selecting and motivating

¹²² In elections different groups of people launch their whole group for contestation on all or most of the seats of the Union Council.

these women for electoral contestation. In these cases, a mediating link between extra kin or stranger Nazim and the eligible women was needed. Therefore, the extra kin men's initial search for and inclination to motivate eligible, either acquainted or stranger, women for contesting election was mediated and supported by the politically active men within family.

(Rubina is the union councilor initially elected as independent candidate in 2001 elections and from MQM in 2005)

RS: In 2001 when *Mutahida* boycotted (the elections) at that time I contested as independent candidate. ..the previous (local government system before 2001) councilor of our area was with *Mutahida*, as previously there was used to be only one councilor, ..He applied for (the seat of) Nazim...he was with *Mutahida*...he did not participated in boycott and made (us all) applied as independent candidate...he was in need of panel..so for that panel he supported us to some extend...then my family members like my brothers-in-law and etc., although they were in boycott, but underground they supported us that 'lets at least our sister-in-law's seat win'.

N: Was that your own interest to join that panel or did they come to you to ask for that?

RS: Neither I had that idea nor they came to me. It is one of my brothers-in-law who had company with them, he did. Actually what was that they were not able to find any women then they asked him that 'you have a large family in your house, so if you have some woman in your family who has Identity Card and also has her name in the voting list...means like as I am educated that much (10th grade) while no other woman is educated that much in our family. Means all the daughters -in-laws in our house are not educated even some have not read Quran...then he quickly recalled about me that 'our sister-in-law is, lets get her done'. Then he came to me that 'sister-in-law this is the thing'. I said, 'ask your brother'. Then my husband said 'whatever you will do, will be right. What should I say?'. Then he got my form filled there.

There can be more than one struggling men who have coordinated as part of their respective struggles for power to created possibility of bringing these women in formal politics. Similarly, the above excerpt show that how the individual man in family and extra kin men, in their struggle for consolidation of respective individual or party power base and privilege position, are coordinating and interplaying to decide about, select and motivate these women for their initial entry in local politics.

As discussed in Chapter 3 the principle of male heads' control and authority over women within kinship networks also applies to extra kin networks in Pakistan. Outside

the family the influential male patriarchs have an influence on the decision of the family and the area. They play important role in taking decisions at communal levels. This kind of extra kin patriarchal control is obviously stronger in traditional society of villages, rather than in urban areas. Within this patriarchal hierarchy woman has several male gatekeepers within and outside household at different levels of society to go through them to enter public sphere. Therefore, to hold any formal political office women also have to go through first family patriarch and then the extended or extra kin patriarchs. Similarly, in rural area one of the extra kin males to take decision about woman's entry in electoral politics is the influential landlord of the village. The landlord or feudal male heads of the communal groups also seem to have their power base within the masses he controls and the manipulation of their human and labour resources. The increasing labour, economic, political and material resources of his subordinates also add to his relative strength for making power negotiations at different levels (e.g. in political parties, state institutions, in regional and ethnic collectivities, etc.). Therefore, landlord's motivation for bringing women in local politics seems to come out of his desire to acquire the ever better position, reputation, and resources for his village and thus adding to his own power for future political negotiations.

(Rabela is a union councilor from Rural Taluka living in a village and contested and won union council seat twice, in both 2001 and 2005 elections of local government.)

N: How did you get the idea to come in politics?

RG: Our landlord, of our village, he made me contest.

N: Why did he do so?

RG: Well, he said to me that 'I have given your name in elections'. He asked me for this and I said 'yes, I will contest'. Then I asked my husband that ... should I participate? He said 'go and participate'. Then I contested.

N: Why did he choose you for that?

RG: Well, by the way when it (women's quota in local government) was introduced for ladies, he just said that 'one should also participate from our village'. Then one (women) on general seat was made contested and I was made contested on labour seat. The one for general (seat) lost and I won.

N: Who is used to take decisions in your households in the village?

RG: The same, landlord. Now he has died. He was the who ..for us..

N: Did the landlord belong to some party?

RG: Yes, he was...this one; he was from the People's party

N: What the designation he had in party?

RG: No, just by the way. Just (he) was used to work for that (party). Just by the way he worked for that. (He) did not have any designation.

The extension of kinship ideologies in the broader public sphere are a characteristic feature of Pakistani society. The daily routine dealings within neighborhood, villages or even in more formal public spheres of market and public offices are basically done by using kinship ideologies and titles. The ideological use of kinship ties enlarges and bridges the limited movement of women between private and public spheres. The use of such ideologies is also seen as a link between the women and the grassroots or local political party workers in the neighborhood or area. Some women are seen to be having informal ties with the grassroots political party workers in the area who have motivated them to enter the local politics. Besides the informal ties these women eligibility and education also played an important role in making these party workers selecting these women and motivating them.

NM: No, even I didn't know about my Nazim before, my area people, they insisted me to come into this field. Actually there are few children in my area (young boys), they insisted me for that, one amongst them, he is very involved in politics, so he insisted me a lot that, "*Baji* (sister) I want you to stand in the election".

These political party workers became the initial decision maker and motivators of these women's entry in politics when they were struggling to search the eligible candidates within the area to occupy these seats. The role of extra kin ties with political party workers is more comprehensively understandable when seen with the political parties' search for women in order to consolidate its power base.

It can be inferred that these politically active or inactive men in family or extra kin networks are the basic source of formulating these women's political sympathies and political activism for certain parties and are the prime decision maker of their formal entry in local electoral politics. The reason behind these males' motivation to ask and bring these women in public political sphere can be seen in the continuous power struggle going on at different levels of society among different individual males or masculine groups like political parties. These kin or extra kin males with their formal or informal political affiliations and activism also seem to be struggling to increase their power base in their areas, respective political parties and broader political system by occupying these newly introduced women reserved seats in local government through their women family members over whose material and non material resources

and labour they have the patriarchal authority to control. The persistent masculine power struggle at the level of the individual men (either active in formal politics or not) is seen to force them bring their (subordinate) family or extra kin women in public sphere in order to extend their control over the available political positions and resources that were otherwise out of their access.

The organizing principle of power relations within Pakistani society, as discussed in Chapter 3, is based on a hierarchical patron-client relationship among individuals from family to the state. This patronage relationship is essential to serve individuals interests through connection with these human resource networks, in the absence of a direct link between individual citizen and the state. Each individual struggles to achieve an ever better place as patron to some and client of other individuals within these human resource networks in society for better fulfillment of their own interests. Therefore, the above discussed masculine struggle at the level of individual men in kin or extra kin networks can also be interpreted as a desire to achieve a better place within these broader patron-client networks through capture of more and more monetary (remuneration offered to councilors) and social resources (respect, prestige and influence), better status (claiming high party offices) and through safeguard of the ethnic and party hegemony in the district. Prestige and the monetary gain have been most frequently reported benefits out of women's political activity. But women's accounts also show the gains in terms of a better standing in this broader patron-client organization of society.

ZM: The good thing is that there is respect, there is recognition. The tasks, that I was previously use to think that if I will be in need of some work in some office, then I will be in need to find a source to get it done. Whom I may take as my source (to get that work done)? Now, I do not need that source. Because, now I myself is a source for someone. When I go to some office, I have my own recognition; I have my name established. So my works are easily being done there. Even not only mine rather I got so many others' works done. Even if I go to DCO's office then DCO stand up by leaving his chair and says, 'come, come, Madam, sit. What's the work? Tell us?' Means if 9 years ago I would have come to DCO office then probably I had to wait outside the office door for 10 hours. That is the difference that came.

8.2.2. Role of Political Parties in Bringing Women in Local Politics

Besides kin and extra kin males, the role of political parties that were struggling to consolidate and enhance their power base in the district is also important to understand these women's entry in local government. The local government elections were intended to be held on the non party bases, but it had never been so, as the parties were always launching their candidates to capture maximum possible seats as a part of their continuous struggle to enhance their influence and capture the resources in the district. It is also evident from the openly acknowledged political affiliations of these women and their families (see Chapter 7). The ruling and dominant party of the district, i.e. MQM, had boycotted the local government elections in the year 2001. It made possible for the second most influential party, i.e. PPP, in the district to capture the District Nazim office and thus the resource of the district government. But when MQM intended to participate in 2005 elections for the first time, it was putting all its efforts to capture the maximum possible local council seats in the district and to establish its hold on resources and the most powerful office of the District Nazim. It was possible for any party only if it wins most of the seats in the union councils within the district. Therefore, among other efforts, the capture of maximum possible women's reserved seats also became one of the important dimensions of this political struggle. The result of this party strategy is evident in MQM's success as ruling party in the district and also in number of maximum women's seats captured at all tiers of the local government (see Chapter 7).

Political parties' basic motivation behind bringing women into local politics is the struggle for party domination rather than promoting women's participation. This is also evident from the fact that political parties only launched or supported women candidates on the reserved seats rather than general or high level seats of the councils, as there were no women Nazim or Naib Nazim at any tier except one woman Union Council Nazim, who also found to have a controversial party affiliation¹²³. One of the reasons behind women's almost absence on higher tier is that parties are not inclined to give women more space than what is needed to secure their power struggle.

¹²³ Sajeela was the only Union Council Nazim in the district. She contested elections from the area which has mix Urdu and Sindhi speaking population. She belongs to PPP and contested this election in collaboration with MQM as having her joint candidate (Naib Nazim) from MQM.

SN: We have the problem from our party; our party doesn't want any female to become the Nazim or Naib Nazim. ..Because Nazim has all the powers, the one (woman) who are educated they will certainly want to go ahead, but if she would not get the support from the back, then what?

These political parties (especially MQM that was participating for the first time), while struggling to enlarge their political power, were also forced to search suitable women to occupy these newly introduced reserved seats. As the local government system and the reserved seats for women have recently been introduced therefore there was no existing pool of previously experienced or potential candidate women for all the parties, in general, and for the MQM which is participating for the first time, in particular. Therefore, for political parties the easily accessible and available potential group of such eligible and suitable women was from within the families of their workers, sympathizers, activists or among common local women from the areas under particular political party influence.

In their search for suitable women, political parties were in need of a mediating link to access these potential women mostly segregated in the private sphere of the household as housewives (see Chapter 7). At broader level, the best possible way political parties adopted to perform this crucial task of identification, selection and motivation of these women was through their local level formal or informal political party workers or office holders. These party workers located at local neighborhoods are familiar with their surrounding and have more links and access to each and every household. They initially selected the suitable women and then contacted these women directly or through their men in family for election contestation on behalf of the party.

SM: ...(continuous conversation) when after two and half years there were mid term elections (in last tenure in the 2003), *Mutahida* quickly participated in that. They (party workers) came and knock my door at 2 o'clock in the night that '*Baji* (sister) there is need of a councilor and you have much education. You have already applied in our (party office) for job so, well, you come and when there will be job we will immediately give it to (you)...

N: When you contested for Taluka councilor in 2005, was that nomination as well from party?

SM: Yes, it was from party.

The political party's reliance on local level political workers also interacts and interplays with the above discussed individual level political struggle going on among politically active men in family and kin network of these women. As already discussed, most of the women councilors had ties with some politically active men in family or extra kin networks. These politically active kin or relative men had formal or informal political party demands or pressures to find the suitable women due to their formal or informal party affiliation and activism or even only sympathies. Therefore, they seem to be mediating between political parties' search and their family women within the private sphere of house.

IM: I didn't want to become counselor again, even I didn't wish to be the counselor at that time, but my nephew came with 2 or 3 party members, they all insisted me to become a counselor, that's why I became counselor, otherwise I wasn't wishing to do so.

It appears that this link between role of politically active men in family or extra kin network in women's entry to local government with the political parties' search for eligible and easily accessible women candidates to capture these newly available opportunities in the political system is the combination working behind the successful entry of most of these women in the local formal politics. On the one hand, family or extra kin males were not independently intending to bring these women in local electoral politics, rather there were some political party agendas or their individual desire of power and prestige working behind their inclination. On the other hand, political parties nominated, selected or could simply access and get motivated these women for their contestation in local electoral politics through their formally or informally active male kin or extra kin relatives.

In some cases this political struggle and interplay among competing individual men or masculine groups, i.e. individual kin men and political parties, is visible within the same household. This struggle may happen among different kin males, with different political affiliations and respective party pressure or demands, struggling to capture women's reserved seats.

RS: ...In 2005 when it was from party, then I was not inclined to again participate...as it needs too much to go out and I can not give time to my home and children. ...that is, one of my brothers-in-law was in Noorani group (a religious party), he said, '*bhabhi* I will submit

your form from Noorani group, because of him I kept quite. ...I said, 'if not from MQM and make MQM annoyed only then can make him happy, in this case those (from MQM) will be annoyed'. Two of my brothers-in-law are in MQM. ..one in Noorani group....now the struggle started between them..that one say, 'brother lets *bhabi* contest from my group'. The other said, 'from our (party)'. I said, 'no, I am not going to contest at all'. Then the elder brother-in-law who was in Noorani group got kept quite, as he saw that sister-in-law is refusing to contest. ...at the same time my two brothers-in-law from MQM again faced the same problem of (finding) Identity card holder women, and also I had some experience of past four years as well, and also the name in voting list....the same problem again..then made humble requests to me and said, 'just let the form be submitted, we will withdraw it later'. They also got some three or four women's form submitted with me...but again the same problem, they all were rejected and mine was accepted...then again I had to contest.

The basic argument here is that the mutual interaction of politically struggling men or masculine power groups working at household, community and political party level to strengthen their existing power at different levels has created a possibility for these women to enter in electoral politics. The above discussion shows that local kin or extra kin men and the political parties (as competing masculinities) have played central role in bringing women to formal electoral politics. It seems that political parties in their wider struggle to consolidate and enhance their influence in the district also have struggled to capture more and more women reserved seats to add to their existing power. Parties' struggle for power and search of suitable women trickled down to the individual level among their informal or formal party workers who are in turn struggling to enhance their own power base at local area level. The interplay between these men and masculine groups led them to search women among their easily controllable previously marginalized groups; for parties among their workers and for individual men within their families. In this way the broader power struggle forced these men and masculine groups to give a controlled inclusion to a section of previously marginalized group of local women for whom it was not possible otherwise.

8.3. Women's Strategies to Maximize their Survival in the Political Sphere

Most of the feminist thought points out different kinds of social, economic and ideological constraints to women's entry and equal participation in public and political spheres (see Chapter 2). In male dominated societies of South Asia, for example in Pakistan, women are excluded from public sphere as most of their activities are limited

to the private sphere of household and extended kin surroundings (see Chapter 3). The male patriarchs, especially the father or husband, control major decisions and activities affecting women's lives, as is clear from the role of male family members in making decision regarding their entry in politics. Women's particular socialization, economic dependence on men, reproductive role of domestic chores and child care responsibilities and restricted mobility, etc. limit their entry and equal participation in public and political spheres. Besides that throughout their life span women also internalize these patriarchal standards so perfectly that they resist any possible deviation and change to them. They adhere to the existing patriarchal power and social structures as long as possible.

Kandiyoti (1988) identified that, in South Asian societies, while not challenging the existing system, these women strive to enlarge their survival options within the existing system through adopting certain strategies as 'patriarchal bargains'. Samarasinghe (2000) further elaborates that these strategies can be the use of certain features (e.g. kinship ties, male patronage, religious or masculine ideological discourse, and patriarchal designations like mother, etc.) from within patriarchy for creating new openings for themselves within the system. Traditionally, politics is considered as male domain but when women find any opportunity to enter this forbidden sphere they adopt certain strategies to maximize possibilities for entering and surviving in that sphere. Their broader strategy seem to be the use of existing patriarchal setup around them and human, material and ideological resources available within it as resource to cope with their social, economic and ideological constraints to enter and survive in the formal political sphere.

Although, the competition among men has certainly played an important role in selecting, motivating and bringing these women in local electoral politics and they have created an opening for them to enter in formal politics, but the women thus selected and motivated do not prove themselves as passive recipients to these processes. They are willing to avail this limited opportunity offered to them and have adopted certain strategies to maximize possibilities for their entry and survival in this public and political sphere while remaining within the exiting system and using it as resource. Their main strategy seems to be accommodating and submitting to the patriarchal

structures (male dominated kinship or extra kinship) and standards (of female subordination), rather than openly challenging them, within and outside home, but, at the same time, using and manipulating the available resources within these structures (e.g. kinship and extra kinship human, economic and material resources in immediate surroundings of family and neighborhood) for maximizing their options to get elected in a political office, remain there as long as possible, and being widely accepted by family and society in their newly adopted political role. While operating within a male dominated society, the only available resource these predominantly less educated economically dependent housewives can access are the human, economic and ideological setups within their male dominated kinship or extra kinship ties in their immediate surroundings.

Without apparently challenging the broader patriarchal setup, these women councilors have adopted strategies to use the male dominated structures within family, party and council as resource to cope with social, economic and ideological constraint they face in fulfilling these newly adopted political roles. They are making arrangements using human and economic resources available within these institutions to cope with their lack of political experience, information, mobility, financial, educational and skill resources, burden of domestic chores, and the limited power provided to them. These strategies are also intended to gain and ensure wider social acceptance for themselves within family and society.

8.3.1. Strategy of Ensuring Continuous Consent and Support from Men in the Family

As discussed earlier, the men play the role of main decision maker in the family even about the matters that effect women's life (see Chapter 2 and 3). The conditions with women councilors were not the exceptions from this general principle. Socialized with this subservience to male authority, they accept men in their family as the gatekeeper to their public sphere participation. They consider the permission or consent from these men heads of family as crucial to come out and participate in political activities.

TI: I am saying right. Yes. I am saying right, if I would not have my husband's agreement, I would have not been (here).

RB: Obviously, if it was not like this. He could have stopped her.

KF: (All) the women have the same situation that if the (men) on her back does not let her go then she can never go ahead, especially after marriage. You see, how one can go out without her husband's permission.

(An excerpt taken from a discussion between one District councilor and two Union councilors present at the same place at the time of interview.)

They adopted a strategy of ensuring their husband's, father's, or brother's consent before entering this field. As discussed earlier that mostly politically active male family members were the initial decision makers, therefore, mostly this consent easily came out of their political affiliation and inclination to bring their women in political sphere and was already ensured to these women as a motivational strategy. While those whose family heads (especially husbands) were not the initial decision maker about their entry in politics these women were seen to be asking for this consent from them.

SM: I said to him (her husband), 'these (party people) people have come, you see. If we will work we will get respect. Otherwise there is nothing. Tomorrow you may think that after becoming councilor how much money will be there, it should not happen like that'. Firstly, he is not such a person, but one should keep the home environment proper. One should talk before any quarrel occurs....my husband said, 'as you wish'.

This male family members' consent has been considered as the basic enabling condition for these women councilors to enter and maintain their presence in local electoral politics with more confidence and less hesitation. This consent asked in advance entails the legitimacy to women's political roles, increased mobility and reduction in share of domestic chore within family, along with share of responsibility and help in outdoor and party related tasks by male family members especially husband, and wider social acceptances of their new roles in family and community. In case of inconvenience within home environment, they are seen to be reminding these men of their responsibility for bringing them in politics for settling such matters and acquiring their consequent moral, economic, or skill support and liabilities. They maintain this males' support when keep them reminding of their past consent and support.

ZM: When I return home tired, then what the time a tired person can give, what can (that person) talk? What? Then I start preparing to sleep. Then my husband gets annoyed that you do not give me time.

Then I am used to say him that you are the one who brought me in politics, if you would have not helped me, you would have not stimulated me for this that 'yes, I am with you'. And if you would have not helped me then I would have not reached at this stage. I would have been the same housewife who was engaged in serving you all 24 hours. Now I am helpless.

This male consent may also be seen affecting women's ability to use other household and kinship economic, material and human resources in their strategies to cope with their economic barriers, burden of reproductive responsibilities, accessing party resources, and accommodating their mobility. Therefore, this male family member's consent can be seen as creating the basic ground for women's manipulations of resources and acceptance within family and surrounding that is not possible otherwise.

IM: My younger son says that, 'Ami (mother) has made us ashamed; we can see her pictures over here or there. We can see her name written on each wall'. I told him that, 'tell this to your father, I did not say the people to post my pictures on the walls'.

8.3.2. Strategy of Negotiating and Shifting Financial Burden to Concerned Patriarchs

In Pakistan, women are excluded from public sphere and thus rarely participate in labour force (see Chapter 2 and 3). Therefore, in most part the traditional role of men as breadwinner and the women as homemaker are strictly intact. Mostly, women are economically dependent on their male family members; e.g. fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons. This economic dependence on the men in family constrains their independent decisions about their life, especially for participation in any formal political activity. These councilors mostly belong to landless lower or lower middle class had very limited financial resources (see Chapter 7). Either who are supported by their husband's income or who are widow and working on small scale to support their personal or family expenses do not find themselves with sufficient financial resources to opt for any formal or electoral political activity; for election campaign and regular expenses.

SH: In independent capacity,...we are not so financially (strong) that we could do on our own. Yes, obviously, we need...either it is this party or anyother..should support. Everyone needs support. It is not as you go (alone). How long can you fight as independent (candidate). Because we have so powerful parties here that you can not contest (successfully) as independent. You can never fight against any party.

Rather than breaking their economic dependence and subordination to men within existing setup they further used it to cope with their personal economic barriers to enter the political sphere. The strategy these women councilors adopted to cope with this financial barrier to their political activity is to make negotiations and put all the responsibility for bearing the financial burdens on their prime motivators as already discussed; individual kin or extra kin males or the masculine group (i.e. political party). This economic dependence on party and kin and extra kin males helped them to be able to enter and maintain their presence in the local politics that was not possible otherwise.

The initial entry with election campaign expenditures was the most expensive part of this political participation. Mostly women councilors, as motivated by their male family members and contested on party nomination, are found relying on party financial support for their election campaign expenditures. These party supports include provision of banners, pamphlets, posters, flags, vehicles and form application fees from the concerned parties. Mostly those who were contesting elections from the dominant ruling party (i.e. MQM) were being more comprehensively supported by party, but it is not an exclusive phenomenon as the women from other two big parties also reported such support from parties but not in such a harmonious way to all of them as was in the case of MQM. This party support seems to be one of the enabling conditions for the most of lower and middle class women belonging to MQM who could enter local politics.

BB: My (financial) conditions are not so well. Wherever it was related to spend money Aziz bhai (the party unit in-charge) did it from his pocket. To print that (pamphlets), to paste posters on walls, my photographs, everything was done by party. They asked me for that rarely. They were used to say, '*baji*, just do meetings with people to convince them and do not get worried about any other expenses etc.' Mostly they take care of that all, party did it. And thanks God till today if there is something like that then party people take care of it all.

In some case, the whole of expenses or some trivial expenses in addition to party support were also bear by women themselves. In such cases these expenses were not so much to be hard to bear due to the local level of electoral contestation. Therefore, it

was mostly done by the male family or kin members who motivated them to participate in politics, such as nephews, husbands, brothers, etc. These women further rely on their male family members, as mostly interplaying with political parties due to their political affiliations, for coordinating these financial and material resource arrangements with party or by themselves. It is only in some cases that these women also meet these partial expenses from their own small scale income. It is the fewer amounts of expenses due to the local and neighborhood level election campaigns and reliance on party and men in family that made it easy for these women councilors to cope with their economic barriers to entry in politics.

Besides political party or family support, the women who were asked by extra kin males like Nazim candidate to join his panel or landlord of the village for contesting elections seem to make negotiation with these extra kin males in this regard in advance. They are asked to bear the entire financial burden for these women's contestation as these women serve their interests. These negotiations with political actors before entering the local politics showed women's agency to facilitate their entry in local politics while coping with their economic barriers to the independent public space appearance mostly relying on the available resources within existing system.

N: How did you find the pamphlets?

KS: Abbas (the Nazim candidate in extra kin acquaintance with this woman) has given me the pamphlets.

N: Then how much you spent from your own pocket?

KS: I don't have to spend from my pocket, I already told them that I don't have money really, so Abbas said that, "There is no problem of money, we would take care of the finance and all that". So in this way I didn't have to spend a single penny really.

Beside the expenses on election and campaign, for the management of their current expenditures after getting elected in the council, they usually rely on the minimum remuneration¹²⁴ from the council. Some of them at union council level even rely on their own labour to save this money as their council is near to their home and they walk to the council and back. For other matters if they have to go or come back they mostly walk to and from nearby places. Those who are more involved in party activities

¹²⁴ After getting elected women union councilors are getting monthly remuneration of Rs.1000, women Taluka councilors as Rs. 2000 and the District councilors as Rs. 3000.

outside council usually rely on their husband's income or household budget to manage these current expenses.

NJ: Yes. My husband bore that. (laugh). Yes he did.

N: What was his response on all these expenses?

NJ: He was the one who brought me to the contestation (*unhon ne he to khara kya tha.*) (louder laugh of every one in the room). Although, now there is remuneration, but we spent his (money). I am taking the remuneration. The remuneration is for going and back from some where.

N: So it is still the same pocket from which you are spending?

NJ: Yes (loud laugh)...well I ask him very few times, by the way, the household budget/expenses are in my hand so I mange it from that.

8.3.3. Strategy of Shifting the Burden of Domestic Chores to Other Women in Family

The private sphere is the traditionally assigned avenue of women's activities; mainly as domestic chores and child care (see Chapter 2 and 3). Even when they enter in the public sphere they are expected to fulfill their domestic responsibilities in the same way as before. Therefore, these highly time and labour consuming reproductive roles also constraint women's ability to find any time and energies to equally participate in public sphere. These roles mostly segregated at private sphere also do not leave any room for women to develop necessary experience and skills required to participate in public sphere. Further, those who enter the public sphere find themselves caught with the double burden of domestic responsibilities along with their additional public roles. In case of difficulty and inability to maintain the double burden of these two demanding roles together the ultimate and more widely accepted result is women's, permanent or temporary, withdrawal from the public sphere.

Most of the women councilors as housewives were seen to be engaged in these reproductive sphere activities before entering the electoral politics. Although, they were mostly brought in politics through their male family members, but none of them after entering to the political sphere was seen to place any demand for outsourcing or any other arrangement for domestic responsibilities. Rather they seem to internalize the traditional reproductive roles in the house as their prime responsibilities to be fulfilled in a proper way to retain their male family members' permission for public appearance and to keep their home environment good.

SM: I have told you already that women should manage all that. It is not right that just came from outside and lay down to sleep or made orders that '(someone) make and bring tea as I am too tired.' It creates so many problems. Women like us never sit down. If its time for Namaz then offer Namaz, if its time for food, then to give food to this one, to that one. Make tea for oneself. Never said to anyone to make and bring tea.

But it is also impossible to find time for demanding sphere of politics without finding any proper arrangement to their domestic responsibilities behind them. Therefore, when they enter the public political sphere with these internalized conceptions of traditional roles, they did not challenge the gender arrangement within the private sphere. Therefore, the only available options open to them were to either to bear the double burden of their engagements in these two demanding spheres of home and council or to shift the burden of their domestic roles to other lower status women within the household, thus reproducing women's patriarchal private sphere roles, in general.

As in the previous chapter we see that most of the women councilors are with their grownup children and some also live in joint family or in semi nuclear family with some additional person like old age mothers living with them. Therefore, while relying on the available setup and resources within family, the strategy these women adopted to cope with this double burden was of shifting their household responsibilities, mainly the burden of domestic chores and child care, to other lower status women members in family like grownup daughters, mothers, sisters, sisters-in-law, grand daughters, etc., over whom they have got a relative authority and control due to senior age and relation with male head of family. These family women are seem to be performing domestic chores and child care for supporting women councilors to get themselves free of the household chores, so that they can sphere time for public activities.

NS: There are my daughters, If they were younger then may be I would have not done that (entering politics). But my responsibilities of household work were already finished. I was free. I was in need to engage myself in some work... That's why... They were taking care of all at home.

The presence of grownup daughters in the family is seen as the most enabling condition for shifting these responsibilities to easily manage spare time for their public and

political activities. The reason behind this excessive reliance on grownup daughters is that unmarried daughters always remain at the lowest tier within the family hierarchy thus providing the free and easily controllable labour to family. Due to their young age and relations to male head and senior women, they remain submissive to the family control.

(Irum Begum has both grownup and young children. She has her last son of one and half year)

IB: Whenever I have time, then I use to take care of the house and perform the household chores, otherwise my eldest daughter, she is use to look after my house and the kids....look today I have come out even leaving my ill children at home.

Although the grownup daughters are most frequently reported substitute to shift the domestic responsibilities of women councilors, but other females, who live in semi nuclear, extended or joint families, like old age mother, sisters-in-law, daughters-in-law, and other joint family members are also reported to be helping or taking caring of the domestic chores and child care. This shared responsibility may also be a function of family male head's consent provided to these councilors, whose interests they serve through this political entry.

IM: See, I have my two daughters; my sister-in-law is also there, she also has a daughter, so all of them are use to look after the house.

The presence of other females; especially grownup daughters, and the shift of domestic responsibilities to them seem crucial factors to affect women's political and public sphere participation. It is also confirmed by the difficulty in managing these two roles together by few of the councilors who neither had grownup daughters nor have any other female family members living with them. When the presence of all young children comes within a nuclear family structure (that provides no support from joint family member or other family females) make it even more difficult for women councilors to manage their public sphere activities and child care, simultaneously. Those with young children frequently complained about difficulties in performing their council responsibilities and lack of time they are now able to give to their home and children. The solution they consider to this difficulty is a break in their political careers till their children grow up and become mature.

RA: No. now I have finished everything. Say, this politics is the final one. After that I have to look after my children. Now I have to leave everything in future.

N: Will you not continue this?

RA: No. I have no intention to. By the way I will work (for party) but not especially coming in front. Otherwise I will work. It is ok...

N: What are the main reasons to leave it now?

RA: My children are young...they need me more. Politics needs fulltime ...it is difficult to give fulltime here...Let my children get a little mature, InshaAllah than (again)...

Very few of them were reported taking help of the domestics in some domestic activities but they were used to take it even before their entry in politics. The help they take from domestics is not letting them to be completely free from of their responsibilities. They usually take partial supports from them while still managing cooking food by themselves. Sometimes beside the help provided by domestic they also rely on their other women family members like daughters or mothers. Mostly these women who are having domestic are in high tiers of local government with better financial background.

ZM: aa.. For household work, my children are grownup now. My daughters are grownup now, so they come back from university and as now-a-days, its so easy, we have fridge so I used to prepare the dough and keep it in it in the night, I keep the curry cooked and put it there. In the day who ever comes, takes it and heat it in the oven and eat it easily. Also I have a domestic women she does cleaning, dishes and washing. She gives everything by cleaning so in this way we are managing.

8.3.4. Strategy of Relying on Kin and Extra-kin Human Resource Networks

To successfully run for a political office demands an enlarged social human resource networking in public sphere. Women, excluded from the public sphere, are spending most part of their life within the limited sphere of the kin and extended kin networks. Their exclusion from the enlarged skillful pool of human resource networks within public sphere also creates limitations on the available human resource support they were in need to help them while running for a political office. They need human resource to support them while running election campaigns, contesting elections, and getting votes. The strategy these women councilors seem to adopt in order to cope with this limitation is again their extensive reliance on available limited family, kinship and extra kinship ties within home and neighborhood.

RS:... In my house, my children helped me so much, my daughters helped me too much, although at that time my daughters were young. ...they sat on (polling) booth, to look after everything, and my husband also helped me too much...the brothers-in-law were already with me. They said you should keep sitting at home...we will take care of everything....my brothers-in-law sat on the (polling) booths from my side. My husband's uncle's sons sat also there. My elder brother-in-law's (sons) sat there, as well. It was all done with everybody's coordination. Everybody's help was there. I told you that the matter for them was of their reputation, that 'a women from our family is contesting, it will be shame for us that 'they could not won their sister-in-law's seat'.'....MashAllah we have such a large family, and that's why we had so many people to work. ...see they (her husband's family) are so old (residents of) here ...if each has ten friends then how many we have (for votes)....they become too many.

The human resource was also important and needed to run the campaign before the elections. Most of the women councilors, as elected through direct popular elections at lower level of union council, ran their campaigns by themselves using the available human resources within family and neighborhood to do all this public campaign work. They mostly adopted a strategy to form groups with their family women, neighboring friend or other contesting candidates in the area to go to every door and ask for the votes. It seems that the strategy of running election campaign as a group activity of kin and non kin females provided these women a safe and more socially acceptable way for public work that they were doing during their campaigns outside home, rather than moving alone.

FI: Yes, we ran a campaign, I use to take my daughters and the ladies who use to live in our neighbors, I use to gather them all and then we use to go door to door and give the pamphlets in each house.

Those who contested their elections for the higher tier of Taluka and District were not in need of the votes from common people, therefore, they were not in need to go door to door. They were more relying on parties to ensure their votes from already elected union councilors. As mostly their family members are already involved in political parties therefore, these party related works for campaign and ensuring votes were also looked after by these men in family.

IM: Yeah my husband ran that campaign. He looked after all the things by himself.

N: Did you ever go by yourself in the campaign?

IM: Yes, I went to Jabbar (the Taluka Nazim) at Latifabad, even we use to go in the Bungalow of Makhdoom (the candidate for the District Nazim of that time)...Normally my husband looked after all these things, in fact my husband is also not too educated, we are very poor, the upper people over us (high party officials), they use to take care of all these matters (ensuring votes from union councilors).

8.3.5. Strategy of Reliance on Educated and Experienced Members in Kinship Networks

The typical and technical procedures of the local government councils were difficult to be understood by these women councilors as most of them are newly entered in formal local politics and have a very low level of education (see Chapter 7). They do not know the processes and procedures of politics and lack any previous experience. The trainings provided to these councilors from government and non government organizations were reported to make less impact due to their old ages, low education, inability to attend training because of restricted mobility and while attending observing veil and remaining inactive. Only those at the higher levels with high educations were able to have proper learning from the training. Most of them have not even read the local government ordinance and have not even learned much about it when told in trainings.

The wide majority of the illiterate, less educated, widow, old aged women at the lowest tier was seen to be struggling with these procedures and technical information. They mostly adopted the strategy to cope with their lack of education, knowledge, and experience through reliance on their educated and experienced mostly males and sometimes females within their family and kinship networks. Their male family members like husbands, sons, brothers, brother-in-law, and nephews helped them in understanding the political matters, and related documents. They are seen to be taking guidance from these males regarding the political, financial and other issues of council. Sometimes these men also perform the task of record keeping on the behalf of these women.

IM: He (her husband) use to help me in political issues, I don't understand that as I have less education, but he is educated, he also knows English, so he use to guide me in each and every matter, that do this thing in this way or that way.

The educated daughters are also proved to be a very good resource for these women to cope with their inability to read and write properly or to explain the political matters that these mother councilors are not able to deal in a better way. These mothers deliberately keep their educated daughters with them in order to help them cope with their lack of literacy skills and other matters. They also help their mother explaining political issues and some times even they reply on behalf of their mother in councils and meetings.

HR: My daughters themselves help me. They are used to write replies in English, if they know the answer they are use to stand up and reply, that 'we are giving reply on behalf of Husna Rehman'.

N: Where do they use to go with you?

HR: Everywhere, wherever we have to go. (We) go to Zone, or in Indus Hotel (for trainings) where ever they call us. My daughters themselves are use to go with me. And even I usually keep one of my daughters with me because we are in need to read and write there.

Few of these women councilors also use the available human and material resources within the council office for their guidance and performance. They rely on council secretaries for their written works done or for guidance in respect of council working or agendas. As the Pakistani society is very rigid in accepting any extra kin relation between stranger men and women, these types of close interactions with council staff are usually avoided in most of the cases. Wherever it is accepted is seen so due to the old age of the councilor.

8.3.6. Strategy of Accommodate Mobility According to Patriarchal Standards

The limited and restricted mobility of women is another major constraint for women to enter the public and political sphere independently (see Chapter 3). There are social and ideological pressures that condition their free mobility in public spheres with their reputation thus family honour. Women councilors are not found challenging these patriarchal ideological pressures, rather they are seen to be internalizing their own responsibility to best possibly avoid any deviation from the established patriarchal standards and demands by imposing certain limitations on themselves.

RB: See, even now when sometimes, I come back late in night to home, so have to come by (someone's-usually sometimes Nazims are used to provide these vehicles) car. Then I am used to get down a little far away from my house. ...because... so that people should not

think that 'do not know with whom and from where the *baji* is coming'. The people who say (critiques) are not few (in number) because our society does not like this thing.

Due to their internalization of patriarchal roles and standards, these women themselves bear the burden to maintain this patriarchal system in order to survive and avail the smallest possible space to them within this system. They avoid causing severe antagonistic forces that may arise in case of openly challenging to these limitations or deviating from them. It seems that their strategy of submission and maintaining the existing social order and structure is an effort to survive within it and safeguard the limited resources and space provided to them.

The public and political roles as women councilors and party workers demand increased mobility to the council, party offices, or for running election campaigns and etc. Women councilors try to manage their increased mobility while still relying on the limited resources of kinship ties. They mostly report to accompany their male family members and use available family resources to manage their travel outside home for their political activities. They are usually accompanied by their sons, brothers, husbands and other family women or other women councilors, friends or neighboring women in their area to go somewhere outside home for their political activities. Some of them also manage to come alone to the council and to nearby places within the council area, while when going to a far place they also go with their male family members. Few women councilors accompany each other while coming and going for their council activities. Some other also rely on their neighborhood people for their travel. Very few reported that they go alone or by themselves for such political activities. In short, it is mostly their limited pool of human resource within kinship or extra kinship ties in their immediate intimate private or extended neighborhood surrounding on which they rely for their mobility.

NQ: My husband takes me to and my husband takes me back from (where ever to go). My husband mostly says that 'you go with me and come back with me'. In the meeting, he also remains with me in meeting because he is a typical Sindhi from village that's why he does not like me going and coming back alone. That's why I mostly DO like to go with my husband and to me going alone....

Very few of them report to have cars. Those who have family car mostly belong to the higher tiers of local government (i.e. District and Taluka) and with better financial resources. Few of them report to drive by themselves thus able to move alone while others report that their husbands drop them to and pick from the council or other places wherever they need to go to.

8.3.7. Strategy of Promoting Kinship Ideologies in Public Space

In Pakistani culture the interaction among men and women are mostly allowed in the private sphere of the household or extended kin networks. It is not socially accepted for women to frequently and freely interact with stranger or extra kin men (see Chapter 3). It is one of the reasons that people usually adopt and promote the kinship ideological roles of sister, mother, aunt, brother, uncle, etc. to facilitate and provide a social acceptance to their wider dealings in the public sphere. By the use of these extended kinship ideologies people enlarge their social and human resource networks. This is the basic organizing principle of Pakistani society (see Chapter 3). As women are rarely called by their names in public dealings with stranger or non-kin men; as it can be considered as a misbehavior or immoral conduct. Therefore, while dealing with non-kin women they are preferably assigned with desexualized denominations that entail a perceived respect and patriarchal roles of women, like mother, elder sister, sister-in-law, aunt, etc.

Similarly, one of the important aspects that facilitated women's entry and presence in local political sphere is the extension of kinship ideologies within the extra kin networks of neighborhood, party and council. This ideological exploitation of kinship seems to be bridging women's safe and more socially accepted entry from the private to the public political sphere. Most of the councilors belong to the dominant ruling party; Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM). MQM uses the term *Baji* means 'sister' for all its female members irrespective of the age of the women members. But this phenomenon is not limited to only MQM as other women also reported the use of terms like *addi* (sister in Sindhi), *Apa* (elder sister in Urdu), etc. in other parties, councils and other public places.

NA: ...Means we are trained in a way (by party) that we do not talk to each other without using '(*Baji*) sister' and '(*Bhai*) brother' (for each

other). If we do not know them all with names but we know them by face, even if we do not know them by face then it's an important element of our party to respect each other.

Women councilors also reported to feel comfortable with and facilitated by this ideological conception and treatment of desexualized images for their presence in the public sphere of party and council. To cope with these ideological constraints and social demands of women's moral representation, emphasizing their reproductive roles of private sphere, these councilors are seen to be adopting a strategy to promote and strengthen these kinship ideologies through their own discourse. They always denominate their other party and council colleagues and neighboring party workers if male as brother (*bhai*) and if female as *baji* or *adi*. A large number of these women are wives of party workers therefore also usually denominated as *Bhabi* (brother's wife) in their wider public dealings with males in council and party.

JT: We see in our party that either a young girl or an old age women, they all are called *Baji* (sister). Even if (in reality) we are (like) their aunts. Similarly all *Sathi bhai* (fellow brothers) feel us like their sisters. And there is no garbage in our party. It is so good an environment that we fell incline to bring our children.

Besides that most of the councilors reported their popular denominations as sister (*Baji*), aunt, sister-in-law (*bhabi*), father's brother's wife (*chachi*), Father's sister (*phoopho*), mother's sister (*Khala*), *addi* (sister in Sindhi language) and etc. at different places of neighborhood, council and party by party leaders, Nazims, workers their neighboring people etc. These denominates show three important things; their reproductive roles, respect as being senior in relation, the (perceived) relations among which the male and female interaction is socially and culturally (also religiously) acceptable.

FB: To me, till today, no one has done anything wrong. I am *Khala*¹²⁵ to (the people of) whole area. Those who have white beard, have 70 years of age, even they (call me) by the name of *Khala*. If you will ask any one after coming here that we have to go to *Khala*'s house, I am popular with the name of *Khala*, up to the Zeal Pak¹²⁶.

¹²⁵ *Khala* means mother's sister.

¹²⁶ The Union Council constitutes the industrial site area, as well. Therefore, she is referring to the Zeal Pak cement factory located near to her constituency.

These kinship ideologies already prevalent and further exploited by these women councilors ensure them a safe environment, respect and social and ideological acceptance in public space while fulfilling their newly adopted roles as women councilors. This may also be seen as a strategy to satisfy their male gatekeepers within family for letting these women go out of home frequently to these public institutions where they are still largely acknowledged in terms of their relations (as brother's wife, uncle's wife, father's sister etc.) with these males in the private sphere.

The strategies enlisted above show that these women councilors are not seen to be challenging the existing patriarchal structure of the society. With their internalized conception of patriarchal standards they tried their best to cope with the pressures and barriers they face while entering the formal public and political sphere. Rather than breaking the patriarchal structure they further rely on family, kinship and male patriarchs for coping with the social, financial, skill and knowledge related hurdles. They find their existing resources to work with within family and immediate surrounding. They rely on their household budgets to meet their political activity expenses. They use their kinship ties to cope with the burden of domestic chores, limited mobility, and lack of education, knowledge and skills. They mostly find time for these political activities by shifting their traditional domestic responsibilities to their other female family members. While fulfilling the patriarchal standards, they depend on family human and material resource for their increased mobility. They tried to manage their lack of social and human resource networks by engaging men and women from their families in their political activities. They cope with their lack of educational, knowledge and skills by taking help from their educated family members, relatives or extra kin people. They safeguard their reputation and enlarge their space in public sphere like party and council through exploitation and utilization of the extended kinship ideologies within the party, council and general public sphere. They still maintain their party and council positions by submitting their wills to party decisions and pretending in public as they are working in council. Certainly in this whole process they did not pose any severe challenge to the patriarchal structures but they have found a relatively wider space to enter from private to public sphere and find some legitimate roles their to be fulfilled. Their strategizing with patriarchal setup also seems to be

effecting a change in traditional roles and functions of these structures from resistance and exclusion to support and facilitations.

8.4. The Masculine Strategies to Control Women's Inclusion in the Political Party and the Council

Women entry in local politics and their strategies to survive are not sufficient to give them equal opportunities to participate in political sphere. Their political activity is still controlled and limited that reduced them to a lower status than men within political party and council. As the intended aim for providing this limited inclusion to women was certainly not the emancipation or empowerment of women, rather the service to masculine agendas of power gain, therefore men and masculine institutions are also seen adopting certain parallel strategies to make this inclusion offered to women as limited and controlled. Women thus entered in local electoral politics are not free from the patriarchal control, male domination and their segregation in lower power and authority roles within party and the council. Rather, when coming from a private patriarchy of household they found themselves entered in a public face of patriarchy within political party and councils, where the party leaders, male office holders and the male Nazims are the patriarchs to control and decide women's actions and lower status. The broader masculine strategy seems to exclude women from mainstream political activity and practical working within political parties and the councils. Women found themselves excluded from all the high level power and authority positions. They are not allowed equal participation in decision making, financial matters and office distributions. Men dominated and captured all the venues of power in these two political forums while deliberately seen reducing women to lower status, worklessness, and silence.

8.4.1. Women's Controlled Participation within the Political Party

Within parties women are usually excluded from the mainstream political activity and are mostly segregated to the limited sphere of women's wings. Most of the women councilors are just formal or informal party workers, as very few of them hold party offices. Mostly those who entered the political activity as independent candidates in last tenure and made their progress on higher levels of local government were seen as being offered high party offices (see Chapter 7), although such cases are very few.

Rarely any one holds formal party offices before their first entry in local politics. The reason behind this inclusion is also that the parties were in search of and trying to attract the potential pool of such experienced and potential women for capturing more and more newly created opportunities at local level.

FI: We are not involved in the decision making, the decisions are made by the party office holders, we are just there to welcome and accept the decisions. That's it. If God forbidden I would say "No" to any decision, so then the party people would order me to sit at home, they would tell me that you can sit at home, we don't need you anymore.

Their participation in party decision making process is almost none. The party decisions are taken by party office holders and the women councilors consider themselves there only to say 'yes' to whatever the party decisions are. Women's major party related activities are mostly limited to increase the strength of party's base within population and to increase the strength of audience by bringing more and more women in party meetings, sessions or in protest processions.

SM: ...every Monday we gather two or two and half hundred women. we tell them about party, about their own selves. From that they are getting consciousness.

8.4.2. Women's Controlled Participation within the Local Government Councils

Women were almost absent from high level authority and power positions at all tiers of local government in the district. There were no women Nazim or Naib Nazim at any tier except one woman Union Council Nazim. They are segregated only on the reserved seats allocated to them through ordinance; majority of them in union council as the lowest possible position in the power hierarchy of the local government elected members. Within male dominated organization of the councils, as women are few in number, all the authority has been centered in the hands of (dominantly) male Nazims and Naib Nazims and male councilors. The centrality of power on Nazim's position is of that kind that even for smallest possible work within council women have to ask the Nazim to get it done. They have no funds on their disposal and no power to use them. These women councilors frequently complained that they are not given any tasks to perform.

IM: They don't give us work in the UC, they just say that this work is not for you, this work is not for you... They say that you are a female, so you can not be able to do the work on roads, you can not be able to do the work of sewerage.

Women councilors were segregated in the committees related to more 'soft' or traditionally women's issues. They are mostly placed as members of education and health committees in all the councils irrespective of the tiers of the local government. Rarely few were reported to be the members in sports, slum area, works and accounts related Committees (one in each category). Very few are designated as chairpersons of any committee. Mostly being in particular committees as members, they were also excluded from all the financial details related to these committees, which is considered the area to be dealt by the chairperson. They also reported that these committees had no work to do throughout the tenure or mostly those in education committees reported that Nazim do not listen to them when they bring problem of the school to the council.

IB: I was in Education and Accounts committee, once we visited all the schools, but then we never visited, we told the Nazim again and again that please arrange meetings in the school, we want to visit the school, but the Nazim didn't do that. ...How can we go there, if we go there, the teachers would share their problems with us and when we would share those problems with the Nazim, he would not listen to us, then what's the use of going into the schools.

Women's role in the council is just limited to consultation. They are mostly excluded from the practical working of the council like budget planning, financial dealings, and implementation of development projects, etc. In respect of budget making and development projects, women councilors' participation is just reduced to identify the development works needed to be possibly done by the council within their neighborhood, while all the responsibility and authority to get that work practically done or not relies on Nazim and Naib Nazim. They have no participation in implementation of such projects as they neither by women themselves nor by men considered as women's matters.

SA: Actually we are ladies, so we usually tell them and the gents councilors are used to get these works done, because we can not get these works done while standing there (outside).

Most of the women councilors reported to have never raised any disagreement to the already prepared budgets read louder to them in council session, probably due to party

pressures and due to concept that whatever the work is being done is for their own city. They are also kept unaware of the financial matters and records, which are mainly men's domain within council. Wherever they were seen asking for the financial details, it seem to be considered by male Nazims as a challenge to their authority and they responded them in a discouraging way that made these and other women councilors silent for any such attempt in future.

FI: Once I strongly criticized it all, I said that, "You just want me to sign, that's it, I am not aware that where you are spending the money, you have to share about the money usages and all that", so they said that, "If you have objection for doing sign and all that, so don't sign from now onwards", then I didn't said anything any more in order to avoid displeasure. Then I thought that whatever they are doing, it would be for the betterment of our party.

Not only in budget and financial matters but in daily council working, the male Nazims and councilors have adopted strategies to keep these women silent. Women frequently faced non responsive and discouraging attitudes from the male Nazim. They complained that they are not been listened in the council.

NS: I talk very less. Because those who shout too much...I see them that they go on shouting but there is no result...they call, they shout and then they are made keep quite/silence. So I only say important/work related thing other wise do no talk... And it is (my courage) that I talk that much by my force otherwise there is no one who can talk in our UC... When I talk, my Nazim says, 'Appa¹²⁷ why do you talk too much? (you) keep sitting at home comfortably'.

The only service delivery these women councilors reported on their behalf is mostly the annual distribution of few sewing machines among widow women or the distribution of the low cost flour once or twice, when there was shortage of flour in the country. They also report to be involved in small scale charity related process like getting women registered with the Bait-ul-mal¹²⁸ and Benazir Income Support Program. But they always complain that these all the service delivery items were provided to them less than that was provided to male councilors.

¹²⁷ Means elder sister

¹²⁸ The government department dealing with charity money of *Zakat*

They are mostly referred for and assigned by the council to solve issues related to the private sphere of home and women; such as family disputes. They usually report to be assigned with women related cases such as divorce and return of dowry items. The financial, commercial, business, or property related public matters are usually solved by Nazim and men councilors even when such cases of commercial nature come to these women they themselves referred them to the Nazim and male councilors; thus confirming to their traditionally assigned role.

HF: Like a Nazim cannot be able to solve these domestic issues, so they use to send us (lady counselors) that you go to their house and resolve their fights, then we use to go to their houses, we listen to the problem of the lady... then we use to share all these things with the Nazim. Then Nazim calls the lady's husband and tries to resolve the matter.

N: Have you ever been given any case of property or business disputes to resolve?

HF: Yes, we have but we directly send these kinds of cases to the Nazim, because as men he knows better than us.

In this whole process, women councilors when entered in public political sphere are reduced to the lower status and positions within party and council. Political parties did not nominate these women on higher ranks of local councils. While entered in the local councils on lower positions these women were controlled by male dominated on high ranks of these councils. They were excluded from decision making, financial affairs and practical works of the councils. They were reduced to traditionally women's related committees of education and health and the settlement of the domestic disputes within neighborhood.

8.5. Women's Political Participation and Enlarged Public and Political Space

Women's increasing participation at different levels of political activity is one of the emerging global social trends. South Asian politics, especially in Pakistan, is not an exception to this phenomenon. Whatever the reasons behind women's first entry in political sphere, it has certainly enlarged a legitimate public and political space for women's action outside the private sphere but also in turn affecting the private sphere, as well. When entering this new public space women are neither completely leaving their private sphere roles nor simply adopting the established masculine ways of public sphere. They are finding their own way when using their previous experiences from

private sphere and combining them with newly offered limited opportunities to them in the public sphere. This has certainly enlarged the space for women's action in public sphere in a completely new form, to some extent, bridging between the public and private sphere as it has enabled them to bring the private sphere issues, which were previously excluded, in the public sphere. They have found a wider legitimate space for their autonomous actions in their new social roles. They are now raising better future claims while adopting the new ways of their activity that is different from the previously established masculine way of doing things.

Similarly, this research shows that when the perpetual power struggle among men and masculine groups brought local non-elite women in local politics and they adopted certain strategies to maximize their possibilities for entering and maintaining their presence in political sphere they find an ever wider space in public sphere for their autonomous actions. Despite all patriarchal strategies to limit and control their participation, women once brought to public sphere to serve men and masculine agendas of political power accumulation adopted new social roles in public sphere, gained new experiences that helped increasing their knowledge and resources and become able to place better future claims.

8.5.1. Diversified Social Roles from Housewives to Political Actors

As discussed in the last chapter the overwhelming majority of these women are less educated housewives from lower and middle class. Their first time entry and participation in public sphere of political party and local councils has diversified their social and political roles. Most of these low income housewives were previously spending large part of their life in the private sphere of home busy in domestic chores and child care with limited public dealing and decision making within and outside home. Their entry in local politics, if nothing else, can simply be seen an outdoor activity to bring a large number of previously housewives into formal public and political institutions simply giving an opportunity to interact a large number of common men and women with different orientations and interests in a purely public setting of council.

BB: When we come her we feel more happy (*dil lag jata he*)..means our family problem we left back, for one hour or half hour we sit here

so we forget our problems. And also we see the world as well; we come to know, we see, we know that there are people in much worse conditions than us.

Rather than being simply an outdoor activity, this political participation has wider implication for bringing a shift in these women's social roles from private to public sphere, i.e. from housewives to the formal political actors or political office holders. Previously as housewives they were not exposed to such extensive and formal public sphere environment and activities which they are now experiencing in the political party and the council. They were also not so frequent and confident in their dealings with non-kin men outside their homes. Above all that they were never faced with such formal responsibilities of representing their area, getting its work done, and serving people in their needs and problems. One of the reason for not having such public sphere experiences was that they were not actually allowed by their families to have such interactions and dealing with stranger men and women outside home so frequently.

JT: We were the women of (living within the) four walls of the house. We have got courage to that extent that we have come out. We have got confidence and courage.

Generally, women as largely excluded from public space are also traditionally ascribed less authority and power to affect any matters of public dealing. Their lack of social networks and any formal designation and formal standing in public sphere also result in their inability to affect any decisions or disputes outside home. These are usually considered as male domain and such matters are mostly settled by men with any traditionally ascribed or legally assigned authority in public sphere. But these women councilors who entered in politics mainly on their male family head's decisions and support, once entered the public sphere in turn become mediator and decision maker for common people; especially for neighboring women. As a public and political figure they were socially conferred with the inherent responsibility of listening and deciding common people's disputes if they bring them to these women. Being women they were mostly dealing such disputes occurring within household and mostly among women.

WA: (It was) not before. Only after coming to this all (politics). Whatever the quarrels of daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law occur within houses, among them, (they come and say) '*bhabhi* (brother's wife) lets go'. Then I go there to settle the matter.

As elected councilors, people of the area prefer to come to them for the settlement of their problems and help in matters they suppose that can be done by councilor herself, council or political party. Mostly women are used to be reported to come to these councilors and telling their economic and social difficulties and hardships while asking for help from these women councilors. The councilors usually adopt the role of either helper or a mediator; whichever is possible for them. In case the problem is solvable by councilor, she can do otherwise she mediates between such common women and the Nazim or party office holders for solving their problems. In the case of disputes she usually try to mediates between two parties and decides the matter if possible by her, otherwise she again forwards the case to the Nazim.

NM: Now the women are use to share their problems with us, ... they use to say that, "*Baji* we are facing this or that problem, please try to solve it out", so first we listen to them and then we forward their problems to Mr. Nazim that this or this lady is facing a problem, so please solve it.

These women who were dependents on their household males now have shifted to a new role as public servants who are responsible to get their areas' development needs fulfilled from the local government resources and funds. They are struggling in councils and their area for gaining more and more resources for the good of people of their area and getting more and more works done there.

HR: I was used to go to Makhdoom Sahib, district Nazim of that time, without hesitation I was used to go and stand there and get my work done. I got a 0.4 million's project for Mirza Kolachi Baig (college). I got its grills, walls and galleries done. All these works I got done by standing there (on site) and called Makhdoom Sahib for opening (ceremony).

These women are realizing their empowerment and changing roles that had brought a kind of power to them for effecting solutions not only to their own problems but also the problems of the common people.

HN: Now we can easily solve our problems, we have gained so much confidence now that now we are not only able to solve our own problems, but now we are able to solve the problems of the other females as well.

8.5.2. Women's Increased Material and Non-material Resources

At the time of their first entry these women were lacking in required skills and resources to fulfill their new political roles. They were less educated therefore unable to understand political processes very quickly. But in the whole process of their first time motivation, entry, and participation in local politics, these local non-elite women pass through new kinds of experiences that certainly increased their personal skills, confidence, knowledge, public recognition, wider social linkages and increased power and influence in the area. They learned about public and political processes and acquired the required skills to participate in these processes. They gained consciousness regarding their lower positions in party and council. All these personal and social learning and resources has helped these women to establish themselves as better political actors than they were at the time of their first entry.

Holding a legal, public and political office in itself is one of the resources that entail improved social and legal standing of these women. Besides that the first and the basic gain from this new experience seems to be the improved personal, social and political skills of these new and inexperienced entrants of public and political sphere. They improved their skills of speech, behavior and moving outside home confidently. They variously report better self control such as controlling their anger, being careful while talking with stranger men, etc. They acquired an exposure to the world, and people outside their home and came to know about their intentions, attitudes, motivations, and political manipulations.

SM: I have learned a lot, means when I go out in society, how should I move, how should I meet with people, which qualities should I gain to make people listen my things and how to make them done work.

When entering the demanding and diversified public sphere role these women feel themselves in the middle of a situation where they are now more busy and have more thing to be looked after and done at home and outside, simultaneously. They feel that this situation has made them more active, confident and courageous to managing all these diversified activates with relative independence. They are now feeling themselves always mentally ready to move for any urgent public problem, or call from party or council to reach there. They have got confidence and courage that is best reflected when one of the councilor said that “my confidence has ever increased here and I fell

that there is nothing that I can not do now.” The most reported effect of this confidence is that they may easily go anywhere and can talk to non-kin men without any hesitations.

NS: Previously I was a housewife. (By) going out...I got enough awareness... enough... that among four people, or in a party...or like a speech or standing somewhere in a crowd is itself is an important thing...so now I go (there) very comfortably and talk. That much I have come to know now. It was not like that before. Now it is that I do not feel hesitation in meeting or talking to anyone.

This confidence and courage is also entailing their enhanced ability to act and move independently. Previously their movement in public space was controlled and mostly escorted with their male members from family. This newly adopted political role entailing increased mobility has made women more independent and confident in their movements outside home and fulfilling their tasks independently. Even this independent mobility is now also gradually being accepted by their male family members.

IB: Before that I was use to just sit at home and look after my kids. That's it. I was use to go out only with my husband or with my mother-in-law... But now I learned how to go outside and do the work over there, now even my husband sends me everywhere, whether I have to go to the hospital or bank, I go by myself... Even my mother-in-law is sick now, so she can not do anything now. All the responsibility has come to me now.

The increased knowledge and exposure to the world outside home also added to their improved personal skills and ability to work independently. It has enabled them to better serve the common people within their limited powers and authorities. They gained knowledge about local politics, council working, election procedures, party hierarchies, current issues of different levels of political forum, problems of common people, location of possible resources to solve these problems, and so many other things. They came to know and understand about political processes within council and party and gained knowledge that has broadened their mind and thoughts. They also widely become aware of common people's problems and the ways to reach the resources to solve these problems.

BB: I was a housewife it is only after coming here that I came to know that these Nazims can also solve our problems. If our problem

is not solved here then we may take it to Sector, or Unit, or Zone¹²⁹ and also to these (local) bodies of district, we may take it there. It is the thing we were not aware before. Now as we know, whenever any problem happens among our people or in neighborhood then we immediately suggest them to let's go to our office, we will get it done from there. If it will not be done there then we will go to Unit or Zone.

Their political offices and the activities also provided them with a better public recognition and identity that in turn has positive implications for their future political career within political parties and the local government councils, as well. They are now well known not only in their areas but also in other neighborhoods, large party membership and also in line departments. This public recognition has enhanced their personal and social human resource networks thus their ability to serve common people easily. They frequently report to get free of cost medical health facility for poor people, education material support for schools, admissions of the children of neighboring people in educational institutions, and help for other legal and social problems of the common people. They have established their own linkages and human resource networks in society that they were previously lacking, as we discussed earlier.

HN: Yeah a lot, I have found an identity via that, may be I would not remain on the position in the future, but even though the work which we have done, due to that the people are used to recognize us now, ...So definitely it has made a difference for me, people used to respect me a lot, I have got fame also.

They have learned to use their party hierarchies to get their works done in the council, which were not possible otherwise in their independent capacity. They have improved their linkages within party, different tiers of local government and other departments that are facilitating them to solve people's problems. These expanded social networks have further provided them a relatively better grip in public sphere than ever before. This expansion of public sphere activity also varies according to the political level the women councilor is participant of. If Union Councilors at the lowest tiers have started feeling that their social contacts have broadened cross boundaries of their neighborhood to the other areas and in wider and relatively higher levels of party offices, then those at higher tiers of Taluka and District Councils are now feeling that

¹²⁹ Unit, Sector and Zone are the tiers of MQM's local level party offices. See Chapter 5 for details.

their social and political contacts have broadened across the boundaries of districts in the province.

ZA: (My social contacts) have sufficiently increased now. I was previously limited to the Hyderabad (district) but now I am working in the whole of Sindh. So I have meet with so many people.

This newly opened political opportunity for women to hold legitimate public offices has also created new openings for them to hold socially accepted authority in certain matters of public sphere dealings. These women are also seen drawing legitimate power and say from their newly adopted political party affiliations and council designations to be better able to intervene in popular matters within their area. They are utilizing available opportunities offered to them in the form of council and political party memberships to draw or raise socially accepted power and say in public matters.

HN: If I were a common lady called Hareem and if I will go to my neighbor and tell them that, "See your daughter-in-law came to me with a dowry issue, please give her dowry back", so would they listen to me? No, they would not listen to me. If I would be a simple lady, they would just say to me that, "*Bibi* (Miss) leave this problem, this is our own domestic matter, you do not need to get involved in all that", but now as I am a member of *Mutahida*, now when I go to them representing *Mutahida*, they use to listen me. Now we got a power of saying all that. Now people listen to us. They never try to ignore us.

These new practical experiences within council and party have also triggered a new consciousness among these women regarding their undue lower status. They have started raising questions to these masculine tactics of reducing them to less authority and worklessness. They are realizing that their inability to serve people, who have voted them in, is effecting their vote bank's motivation to vote them again in. They are realizing their accountability to the people. They have started questioning the excessive capture of all kind of power by dominant males in the council and party. This all has enabled them to better understand and negotiate their position in political system in future.

IM: Whenever we ask for any task, he just tells us that "See you are a lady, you can't do that. Males will handle all that". Then once I asked this question to the Nazim that, "Then why we have got elected as a counselor if you don't want to assign us any task, whenever we go to any house, we are accountable for answering the people, they ask us that why you are not giving us any funds".

8.5.3. Achieving an Ever Broader Space in Public Sphere and Political System

Before the recent introduction of enhanced political quota for women in local government in 2001 there were very few opportunities for local women to come and participate in local politics. Those who were mostly appearing at the provincial and national levels were coming from the high class political families. Due to this lack of political opportunity non-elite women from local area level were unable to enter and rise in political system. It is for the first time in Pakistani history that in the year 2001, local government system introduced with its enhanced quota for women has created a large legitimate political space for women at local politics (see Chapter 4). This new opportunity has opened new political possibilities and choices not only for these women councilors but has also inspired large number of women who were previously never inclined and allowed to enter local politics. They are not only gaining much wider and formal political space they are also enlarging the private sphere. Utilizing this new opportunity these women councilors are bringing the issues from private sphere to the public sphere, thus blurring the traditional boundaries separating these two spheres and broadening these two for common women's autonomous actions.

Through state level measures of promulgation of local government ordinance 2001 and legislative reservation of quota for women, regional to neighborhood level support of political parties, and household level consent and inclination of male family members have endowed this new political opening and women's appearance to it a legitimacy at all levels of society. These women councilors rarely report any resistance from their families or community. Even they reported that people have accepted it in a more positive way that if a women from their area may get elected she will get their area works done. These women's electoral campaign, election contestation and regular visits to councils and party offices are never reported to be resisted thus appear to be widely accepted by family or community. It all has certainly enlarged a wider space for women's socially accepted and legitimate political action.

Political parties, through nomination and support of these women, have proved to be formal platforms for these women to develop their personal, social and political skills and make their place in the political system as newly emerging pool of women

politicians. Political parties have made this new opening to women councilors as more secure, affordable and acceptable.

HN: We have learned all this from the platform of *Mutahida*, the ability and power to raise our voices, we got a name over here.

Before introduction of this recently enhanced quota for women political parties were not in need to have formal women members at neighborhood level. Therefore, these women were informally serving political parties as sympathizers or political party workers, but rarely as formal members in hierarchy or office bearers. As soon as the introduction of quota created this new opportunity for women's participation at the local level and women entered in local councils, political parties also started formalizing and enlarging their women wings at local district and even neighborhood levels. These women councilors are seen to be quickly adopting formal party affiliations and memberships in political parties after making their first entry in local politics. The level of membership or party office achieved by women councilors also varies according to women's participation on different tiers of the local councils. As those at union councils mostly became formal members, or at most members at sector or zone. But those who progress and reached to higher levels are also seen to be offered and inducted at higher offices of the party women wings as in-charge, general secretary or president, etc (see Chapter 7). In this way women's increasing political participation at local level in turn also seems to be enlarging the political space for their entry and office holding within formal party hierarchies.

Beside this adoption of political party affiliations or entering local politics through political parties these women also found new choices open to them to make their bid more better for themselves and for the common people whom they intent to serve. They seem to be joining political parties, change their political party affiliations from losing political party with which they first contested and won election to the winning party, and also adopting certain position and affiliations in Non government organization as master trainers for local government trainings or as social workers. The political parties also struggling to strengthen their base by maximum number of elected seats as possible are also quick in attracting and absorbing such women who were willing to change their party affiliations.

FB: I am a councilor of MQM. Of *Mutahida*. I contested from *Molvies* party¹³⁰ and *Molvies* lost (the election). Then I said to my party that you lost, but I have won. I now, means, will be attached to wining party'. There was no drinking water in my area for last 60 years. I said, 'people have elected me with so many hopes, so I will must do something for them. And if I will sit with you as a loser, (so they are not in collaboration with MQM), I joined *Mutahida*.

It is not only limited to the attracting and absorbing the elected women, but rather the only lady elected as independent and later joined wining party was also seen to be making negotiations with political party when asked to leave the seat she won for a better position in future. She is seen to be making an independent choice apart from her political party demand.

NJ: After that when I joined the party, the people from party came to me that I should vacate this seat and we will take you to Tehsil. They said you leave this seat, means I won with good number of votes, so their mean was that leave this seat and come to Tehsil level in future. Means the elections for Tehsil were to be held immediately after that, to let me contest in that. Said, 'you are active so we want you to contest for that (Tehsil). I said, '*bhai*, go step by step. Otherwise I may fall down'.

This widening of political space for these women was not limited to political party joining or making current negotiations for their better positions in the local councils. They are also found having definite future plans to enlarge the possibilities for the better continuation of their political careers. Contrary to their initial lack of interest most of the women councilors are now found interested in continuing their career in local politics. Those who, initially embracing and internalizing the traditional ideologies of politics as a dirty business (calling it "all DRAMA", "full of lies" and not a good thing to be involved in for women, young girls or especially if the women is a mothers of daughters), showed their initial dislikes towards politics are also found incline to not only continue their political careers in future, they are also open to bring their daughters into politics. Those who rely on party are submitting their will for future contestation on party decision but those who have other sources are also planning for future positions. Those at union council level as due to their lack of education and old age now just want to continue their same position again rather than

¹³⁰ *Molvi* means religiously qualified mean. She indicated here to Islam-i-Jameat that is an Islamic political party.

intending to climb up in hierarchy. But there are sufficient of them especially at higher tiers who are young and educated looking to make progress to higher political forums for themselves or for their colleague women.

ZA: In politics Inshallah I will reach to the level of MPA (Member of Provincial Assembly). I wish to be a member of Sindh Assembly or national Assembly. I am interest in being elected by people's vote, to contest on general seat. When the elections will be, ... I will contest for MPA.

Besides this intention some women were found having wider opportunities for making practical efforts for contesting to higher political forums. Some of the women councilors have filled the form, although could not succeed in winning the seats, for Provincial Assembly elections as have already been discussed. Some of the women councilors are seen to be networking with each other for formulating their future plans to contest and win their women candidates on higher seats of Nazims that were dominantly males in last term.

N: What do you see yourself in future in politics? For which seat you will contest?

SS: I will do it again for the same, for general councilor. I want to see my friend to be a UC Nazim or Taluka Nazim.

N: Whom?

SS: Afreen Shah.

This increased political participation of women at local level is not only seen to be opening new opportunities for those who are already at council but the common household women are also seen to be getting inspirations and future inclinations for entering the local politics. These women councilors are also introducing more and more women in political parties enlarging the number of women who came out in public space especially the political sphere.

JT: I feel good. It is good. They (common women) say we will also be councilor. It is actually when a lady raise from area, so many other find courage to come ahead.

Beside the wider space they find in political parties, political hierarchies or in future continuation of their political careers they also found a broader space for raising broader claims for authority and power within political parties and local councils. With the newly gained experience and voice on the basis of existing resource (e.g. a

legitimate position in public sphere and a wider platform in council and political party) they also started claiming for future better opportunities and a wider space for their autonomous action. They are identifying the party and council responsibility to give them due share in power, authority, financial matters, decision making, and to maintain their vote bank. They are also challenging the male authority for their forcefully and tactically maintaining the patriarchal order of reducing women to lower status.

SN: Mr. Nazim has too much authority. Although his education is not that much. He is sitting with so much authority. If he gives this work to some women, means if educated person will do these works with more responsibility. Why did these men have taken this, although they do not have so much capability as well? But it is part of party politics, that's why.

This widening of space is not limited to women's entry, participation and future claims in the formal political sphere, it is also seen to be affecting the private sphere as well. They are enlarging the boundaries of the public sphere to include the issues of the private sphere. As mostly they are reduced to soft and women related issues within council but these women are making maximum use of this limited opportunity by bringing the issues of private sphere in the political sphere that was previously not considering such issues as worth discussing at the male dominated political forums. These women councilors are seen to be mediating between the unconfident, less educated, lower class disadvantaged women in household and the authorities of the formal political forums of the councils. They are seen to be bringing more and more issues of divorce, marriage, child custody, dowry, torture, and misconducts against women in council and are compelling these male Nazims and councilors to get these women their due right. These women when became the part of public sphere seem to be bringing the private sphere along with them into the very center of public sphere thus merging the boundaries separating them for opening an ever broader space not only for themselves but common women, as well.

8.6. Conclusion

This chapter, on the basis of emerging trends from the thematic analysis of the data, argues that the introduction of enhanced quota for women in local councils opened a new avenue of masculine power struggle among individual men and political parties. On the one hand, political parties when struggling for the capture of maximum possible

local council seats to establish their dominance and capture the resources of district local government were in search of suitable women to be launched at these newly introduced reserved seats. The lack of existing pool of previously experienced local women politicians, they found the most suitable and easily controllable group of potential women candidates among the women in families of their formal and informal party workers, sympathizers, activists or common local women. On the other hand, family and extra kin males having formal or informal party affiliations when struggling to consolidate their power base within area and political party found themselves in demand from political parties to bring their women family members in local electoral politics to contest on local council reserved seat. Therefore, these family or extra kin men, while serving as mediator among these women and political parties, became the prime decision maker and motivator of the women in their family or extra kin networks to enter politics. In this way the perpetual masculine power struggle among individual men and political parties has created a possibility of bringing these local non-elite women in local politics for their own interests.

But in this whole process women also performed as active agents. Without openly challenging the patriarchal setup within family, political party and council, these women adopted certain strategies to maximize the possibilities of their entry and survival within local politics. The broader strategy they adopted is the use of the existing patriarchal setup (e.g. kinship and extra kinship human, economic, material and ideological resources in immediate surroundings of family and neighborhood) as a resource to cope with their social, economic and ideological constraints to enter and survive in formal local politics. Women adopted these strategies to cope with their economic dependence, burden of domestic chores, less education and knowledge, limited mobility, lack of political experience and social and human resource networks, and gaining wider social acceptability to their political activity within family and society.

Although as a result of masculine struggle and women's facilitating strategies women entered the local politics but their participation within political party and council is still controlled and limited through some parallel masculine strategies of reducing them to worklessness and lower status. They find themselves excluded from higher power and

authority position, financial matters and decision making within council and political party. They are simply reduced to participate in the matters related to private sphere and women.

Despite this masculine control of women's political participation, this newly open opportunity for women and local government has diversified their social roles endowing them with increased material and non material resources and giving them an ever wider space for their independent political actions. This political and public sphere participation of these women has brought a shift in the social roles from private sphere, as housewives, to the public sphere, as political actor, like mediator or decision maker. This experience has increase their personal (e.g. speech, knowledge, confidence, courage, and experience, etc), social (e.g. social and political linkages with people and departments, public recognition and acceptance, and power through political party and council designations), and ideological (e.g. increased consciousness) resources. They have acquired a wider political space for their relatively independent political or social action. They are finding broader space with in society and political parties for their political activity. They are holding ever better positions and office within party and are struggling to reach higher political forum within broader political system. They are finding wider choices to make their political bid more beneficial for themselves and common men as well. They are now having definite and well thought future plans for their political career and are also claiming for more power and authority within council and the party. While bringing the issues from the private sphere into the public sphere they are also blurring the boundaries separating these two spheres thus consequently enlarging the available space not only for themselves but for women in general. The whole discussion shows that it is the masculine competition among men and political parties that has, as its latent function, broaden the space for women's autonomous action and public space appearance.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Previous chapter of this dissertation have discussed both the role of patriarchy (in its universal and most common manifestation in perpetual masculine competition of power) and women's agency (in their covert or overt use and manipulation of the patriarchal resources for maximizing the potential of their bargains) in broadening the public and political space for themselves, thus transforming the traditional nature of society. But it is still to be precisely inferred that whether it is actually patriarchy transforming the nature of women's agency including their political participation or it is women's agency and increasing political participation that is transforming the exiting form and functions of patriarchal structures. This chapter, while presenting the findings and claims rose on the basis of this research, is a contribution towards resolving this puzzling duo of relationship between patriarchy and increased women's political participation.

The different school of thought in feminist perspectives have aptly identified social, economic and ideological constraints to women's political participation while considering patriarchy with its core in male domination (in terms of the sexual and reproductive roles, segregation of women in the private sphere, their economic dependence, and particular socialization and psychological inferiorization) as the root cause of women's exclusion from public sphere, especially from formal politics. At the same time, they also strive to understand the puzzling phenomenon of women leaders frequently emerging in the classic patriarchal societies of South Asia and women's increasing participation at all formal political institutions that has constituted a paradox to be explained by feminist research and scholarship. Pakistan is one such country simultaneously having the traditional patriarchal social structure while experiencing the increasing women's participation at all tiers of its political activity.

In Pakistan, the existing social order of classic patriarchy has historically excluded women from the power and authority position at all levels of society; from family to the state, thus from formal political institutions as well. The basic organizing principles of the kinship ties and their extension into public space along with male domination in all spheres of life are seen as the basic mechanisms to exclude women from public and political spheres. Besides that, the nature of formal political system in the country as a continuous struggle among competing masculine elite groups (military, bureaucracy, landlords, businessmen and religious elite) has further left no room for majority of lower class less educated non-elite women to enter any level of the formal politics independently. Therefore, the very few women who could reach this secluded sphere were mostly the urban upper or upper middle class highly educated elite women having previous political experience and belonging to highly influential feudal or political families.

The introduction of different forms of political quotas for women has triggered increased women's participation at all formal political forums in many countries around the world. Pakistan is not an exception to this. The recent introduction of enhanced political quota for women in the country has brought a large number of women at all tiers of political activity; especially the highest number of non-elite women at the lowest tier that is, the newly introduced local governments. This increased political participation of non-elite women through quotas, especially at local level, challenged the patriarchal exclusion of women from public and political sphere, in general, and the long observed trends of women's exclusion from or selectively elite women's participation in formal political activity in the country, in particular. Thus, the local governments with the highest quota for women (33%) and a largest number of women from local neighborhoods entering it, but rarely studied tier of political activity, is worth investigating to understand these newly emerging challenges and changing social patterns.

This dissertation was, therefore, an analysis of women's increased entry and political participation, through quotas, in the local government of District Hyderabad, Pakistan from a feminist perspective. It explored the social dynamics triggered by the introduction of enhanced quota for women and their increasing political participation in

local government that potentially challenges the patriarchal structure in the country. The focus was on the challenge posed to long observe trend of women's exclusion from male only or selectively elite women dominated formal political sphere in the country. It particularly focused on three major aspects of these social dynamics; the changing pattern of socio-economic standing of newly entered women in local politics, the factors that enabled them to enter and maintain there presence in traditionally secluded sphere of politics, and the consequently broadened public and political space for women. The major concern of the research was to identify the way(s) in which traditional patriarchy has accommodated the new socio-political developments accompanied with electoral quota which ushered in women's increased entry and participation in the political sphere.

9.1. The New Patterns of Social Dynamics Stimulated through Introduction of Quotas

Using the data gathered through 53 in-depth interviews with local women councilors in Hyderabad district, the dissertation identified a broader pattern of social dynamics; the majority of women entered in local councils are not elite, rather lower and middle class less educated housewives, who entered the local politics from within the very patriarchal structures as a result of competition among masculine power centers and these women's strategies to use and manipulate the patriarchal setups as resources. While, on the one hand, women's inclusion remained limited and controlled by men within the councils and the political party, on the other hand, it had diversified their social roles from housewives to political actors and has provided them with increased resources and ever wider legitimate and widely accepted political space for not only these elected women councilors but for the common women in general. The study demonstrates that this broader pattern is base on following specific trends; (i) the women entered in local councils are not part of elite groups, (ii) they entered politics as a result of competition among men and masculine groups for power, (iii) they maintain their presence in politics by using the patriarchal setups within family and outside as resources, and (iv) their increased political participation has diversified their social roles and provided them with increased resources to be able to better raise their future claims to power in society.

First, the research data shows that an overwhelming majority of the women councilors is politically inexperienced new entrants over 40 years of age, married or widow, landless, either housewives or involved in small scale income generation activities, with low level of education and household income resources and belonging to the lower strata of either political party workers or mere party sympathizers. This new pattern of non-elite women's entry in local politics has potentially challenged the long observed particular trend of man only or elite women's selective participation in politics in the country.

Second, the historically persistent struggle between competing masculine interests for consolidation of their power base at different levels of society, i.e. state, political parties, and individual men, was the prime motive behind this new and broader opportunity for the non-elite women's entry and participation in local politics in Pakistan. The competition for the capture of state power and resources, when different masculine elite groups strategize to consolidate their power and exclude the other elite groups also took measures that have benefited the marginalized group, i.e. women. The introduction of quota by military government is a part of this struggle, at state level. The military regime in its effort to destabilize the already established civilian feudal or landlord politicians in order to consolidate and legitimize its power at state resources introduced a local government system, with an enhanced quota for women as a strategy to make its face more democratic, modern and acceptable (see Chapter 4).

The local government system with higher number of reserved seats for women introduced as a result of this competition among different masculine groups (military and civilian political elites) in turn became another avenue for competition among political parties and different masculine power centers (family males or local party activists) at grassroots level of society. The new political space created by the reserved seats for women forced these competing politically active individual men and political parties to go through some of the women, under their influence, to capture these power venues for the consolidation of their broader power base in the political system. Therefore, it added a new dimension of selecting and bringing women into the ongoing power struggle among masculine groups.

As the local government system with higher number of women seats was newly introduced, there was no existing pool of experienced and potential candidates available. Therefore, political parties were in search for eligible women (in terms of their education, availability of required documents, previous political links or informal political activism by these women, and possibility of access to and motivation of these women through their family or neighborhood males) to be promoted in the local election on these newly opened seats in order to capture the maximum power base necessary to establish their hegemony in the district local government and on its resources; especially to capture the highest office of District Nazim. This absence of existing pool of local women politicians and the basic patriarchal structure of Pakistani society based on kinship and extra kinship ties led the political parties to find the best possible candidates among female family members of their male party worker, office holder and sympathizers. The best way for access to and motivating these potential women candidates was through formally or informally politically active men in their kin or extra kin networks. These politically active kin or extra kin males, mostly informally politically active at the neighborhood level party processes, had formal or informal party pressures to motivate and bring their family or extra kin women to contest election on behalf of the party to consolidate its power base in the district. In other words, men acted as mediators to link political parties to these common women, while at the same time also struggling for their own individual power interests.

These male members of family, neighborhood or extended kin or extra kin networks, in some way formally or informally involved with political parties, were also found struggling to find a better standing within political parties and their areas. While promoting their respective political agendas these males motivated and supported their family or extra kin women to enter the local electoral politics in order to consolidate their individual or political party's power base in the district through occupying maximum possible reserved seats open for women. These politically active kin or extra kin males used their influential, patriarchal and authoritative roles as brothers, husbands, sons, landlord, and Nazim candidate within their house or area and played the important role of prime decision maker and motivator in bringing their subordinate family or extra kin women to enter local politics and joining party politics by ensuring their support and satisfying women's concerns. The efforts taken by political parties,

landlords and male family members for launching and supporting non-elite women were the part of same competition of masculinities, at local and individual level. In short, the men and masculine groups like political parties when competing for capture of more and more power base within newly provided opportunity of local government played an important role in bringing these women in local electoral politics. Thus, this competition resulted in an ever wider legitimate public and political space offered to local women, who were not previously allowed to enter the formal electoral politics.

Third, the dissertation identified that it was not only the ongoing masculine competition within patriarchal political system that brought these women into politics but women's use of these patriarchal structures also facilitated their entry and survival in political sphere within the existing social system, despite their lack of required resources. These less educated lower-class economically dependent inexperienced housewives were short of the resources and skills needed to enter and maintain their presence in politics, independently. The only resources available to them were the human, economic, material and ideological setups within male dominated family, kinship or extra kinship networks in their immediate surroundings. Therefore, rather than directly challenging to the patriarchy, their broader strategy was of accommodating and submitting to it while, at the same time, using and manipulating the patriarchal setups to bargain the maximum gains from the limited opportunities and resources offered to them. They strategize to cope with social, economic, and ideological constraints and maximize their options to get elected in a political office, to remain in their positions as long as possible and to get widely accepted by the family and the society in their newly adopted political roles.

Women were, thus, making arrangements using these available human, economic and ideological resources within existing patriarchal setups to cope with their lack of political experience, information, mobility, social networks, financial, educational and skill resources, and burden of domestic chores. Family male patriarch's consent was continuously ensured to minimize resistance to their public and political activity and to make it more acceptable within the family and the community. Economic barriers were overcome through negotiation with individual men and political parties, whose interests they were serving. The burden of domestic chores and child care was shifted to other

lower status women in family; especially on grownup daughters. The human resource and social networks needed to run the campaign, contest election and mobilize voters were acquired from men and women present in family, kinship and extra kinship ties. The lack of education and knowledge was fulfilled by using the skills of their educated and experienced male and female family members' supports in understanding political matters, documents and procedures. Increased mobility was managed by relying on men in family, their neighboring female friend and colleague women in the council to accompany them in their excess mobility. The kinship ideologies (*Baji* (sister in Urdu), *Adi* (sister in Sindhi) and *Bhai* or *Ada* (Brother in Urdu and Sindhi, respectively), aunt, brother's wife, etc.) were promoted to facilitate their desexualized and acceptable presence in the public sphere of neighborhood, political party and council.

In short, these women's broader strategy was of extensive reliance on the resources available within the patriarchal structures of family and kinship networks or of those masculine groups whose interest they are serving. Their political participation comes out of as collaboration activities based on possible resources within kinship ties and extra kinship ties in their immediate surrounding. It seems that this strategy of submission to and maintaining the existing social order and structure, rather than challenging it, is an effort to survive within it and to safeguard the limited resources, opportunities and spaces offered to them. Certainly in this whole process they did not intend to pose any sever challenge to the patriarchal structures but they used them to facilitate their entry from private to public sphere and find some legitimate roles there to be fulfilled.

Fourth, the dissertation also identified that this whole social dynamics has enlarged the public and political space available to not only these non-elite women councilors for their autonomous action but to common women in general. Despite all masculine strategies to limit and control their participation within political parties and councils, once these women entered local politics they gained new social roles in public sphere and increased material and non material resources enabling them to place better future claims to power in society. Obviously, their social roles diversified from the role of housewives secluded in the private sphere of home by turning them into political actors operating in public sphere of council and political party and the private sphere of home,

as well. Once entered in politics mainly on their male family head's decisions, in turn these women have become mediator and decision makers and public service deliverer for common people; especially for neighboring women. They became responsible to serve their area and people through acquiring more and more resources from the council to get their area related development works done.

In this process, women councilors have underwent new experiences which improved their personal skills (e.g. speech, knowledge, confidence, courage, self control and independent mobility), promoted social and political standings (e.g. holding political office, better linkages and public recognition, more legitimate power and say in public matters) and provided them with ideological resources (e.g. better consciousness of their undue lower status and exclusion from power and authority and men's unjust capture of high positions) to be able to better negotiate their positions in the existing system. Women's increased political participation has opened new formal political spaces and choices for these women and also has inspired a large number of common women to think about new possibilities for their participation in public sphere. They have gained an ever wider space in political institution and a social acceptance and legitimacy to their political activity. Political parties while enlarging their women's wings are providing them a platform to improve their political skills and grow in political hierarchies. They are gaining ever wider formal membership and political party offices. They have gained inclination and are searching possibilities for continuation of their political careers and rising to the better political forums. On the basis of the available position and resources they have started claiming for their due share in council and party hierarchies. It is not only the formal political institutions but the very private sphere was also affected by this women's increased entry in public sphere. They enlarged the private sphere by bringing very issues from domestic sphere into the center of public sphere that is council. At the same time, with their experiences of private sphere when they entered the public sphere they blurred the traditional boundaries separating these two spheres and broadened the two for common women's autonomous actions.

9.2. *The Patriarchal Paradox¹³¹ of Subverting the Patriarchy from Within*

On the basis of above patterns, the dissertation argues that patriarchy has the potential to give rise to its own contradictions that may lead to subverting patriarchy from within. It claims that the challenge to patriarchy emerges from within it, when certain patriarchal features respond to new socio political developments in a unique way by making some reconfigurations to their traditional form. In this way patriarchy could accommodate with these new changes while still retaining its main core of male domination but certainly changing its traditional rigid form when providing ever broader space to women for their autonomous actions. Although, non-elite women's massive entry in local politics is challenging certain existing patriarchal structures, but it is, in turn, emerging from within the very patriarchal structures. The dual ways in which these structures were seen to be the source of women's initial entry and survival in local politics are the perpetual competition among masculine interests for power and women's use and manipulation of existing patriarchal setup of family and kinship around them as resources to survive in the male dominated structures.

The first major contribution of this dissertation is the claim that patriarchal masculine competition for hegemonic consolidation of power itself entails its contradiction by giving rise to new emerging power centers from within previously marginalized groups. The objective was to show this inherent potential contradiction within patriarchy that emerges when different men and masculine groups in their perpetual competition for power in order to establish their relative dominance also provide a limited and controlled inclusion to certain sections of the marginalized groups (i.e. women) as a tactic to consolidate or enlarge their own power base. These sections of disadvantaged groups, thus included and provided with limited opportunity, find an ever broader space and increased resources for their autonomous action and negotiation for future wider claims to power in society. Thus, the competing masculinities unintentionally become the source to give rise to new power centers from within previously disadvantaged groups thus, to certain extent, reconfiguring the whole fabric of existing patriarchal social order.

¹³¹ Yeşim Arat (1989) has called women's political participation in Turkey as the "patriarchal paradox".

Secondly, the dissertation argues that women traditionally submitting and adhering to the existing patriarchal social order, rather than challenging it, when actively strategize to use and manipulate the patriarchal setups, within family, kinship ties and masculine interest groups, as resources to apparently promote and consolidate the power interests of their respective masculine patron, in turn, give rise to a contradiction by creating new openings and achieving broadened space for themselves within the existing system. This apparent service to the masculine interests reduces resistance and endows legitimacy and acceptance to their manipulation of these patriarchal resources. The use and manipulation of these resources help these women to cope with the social, economic and ideological constraints, created by patriarchal setups, previously limiting their options, activity and space within the existing social system. In this way, women, not deliberately challenging the broader patriarchal structures, use them to cope with the constraints created by these structures, thus altering the whole social order by maximizing their gains within the existing system.

Thirdly, these contradictions arising from within and challenging patriarchy emerge when the existing patriarchal structures reconfigure themselves or their traditional strategies to accommodate new socio political dynamics. Men and masculine groups are seen to be reconfiguring their traditional strategy of resistance to and exclusion of women from the public and political spheres. They seem to be deliberately supporting and providing women with a limited and controlled inclusion for their own interests. Similarly, the family, kinship and extra kinship structures, reconfigured their traditional function of socializing women for their subordinate and reproductive roles, are also seen to be supportive and facilitating rather than resisting to women's public and political participation. These reconfigurations in the traditional patriarchal roles of men and family are the result of changes these structures made in order to accommodate with new developments. In this way, these structures when accommodating the new social developments, still retaining their basic ground of male domination, also changed their traditional form that are more compatible and acceptable to coexist with the broadened space acquired by women through new social developments of increased women's political participation.

Fourthly, the dissertation claims that the challenges to patriarchy are the unintended and latent functions of the contradictions and reconfigurations emerging out of the deliberate efforts to preserve the existing patriarchal order intact while accommodating the demands of new socio-political development. When masculine groups were struggling to enhance their power base their basic intention was not the emancipation of women, rather the consolidation of their own power to keep the existing patriarchal social order intact. But their unique efforts to maintain the existing power structures within new social situations served a latent function of broadening the public and political space for disadvantaged groups that was actually not intended by these groups. Similarly, when women strategize to use the patriarchal structures they did not intend to pose any challenge to the very existing social order they are arising from and operating within, rather they strive to maintain and preserve the order to keep their positions certain within the system. Their unique efforts to maintain the existing patriarchal social order paradoxically also serve the latent function of enlarging their own active agency, resources, and social roles to ultimately broadening the available space to them thus altering the whole existing social order.

9.3. A Dialectical Relationship between Patriarchy and Women's Political Participation

It can thus be stated that there is a dialectical relationship between patriarchy and women's participation in public and political sphere. On the one hand, the patriarchal structures reconfigured themselves for their own interests and consequently change women's social standing within the broader political system. On the other hand, women, using patriarchal structures, strategize to maximize their survival in the public and political space and consequently effect changes in the traditional roles and functions of these structures. In this way these two contradictory forces of the traditional patriarchy and increasing women's political participation are mutually altering and accommodating each other and, thus rendering a new and more compatible form to each other for their coexistence, giving a new form to the whole existing social order in its move from private to public patriarchy.

The dissertation demonstrated that masculine groups in order to consolidate their power within new socio-political conditions of quota changed their traditional strategy of

exclusion of women from political sphere and deliberately brought a large number of non-elite women in politics to serve their own interest. In this way, they unintentionally transformed the previous nature of women's political participation by providing these women an ever wider formal legitimate political space and limited autonomy for their political actions. Similarly, women's manipulation of patriarchal structures brings changes in the traditional roles and functions of family, kinship and masculine interest groups while at the same time it increases these women's resources, diversifies their roles and creates a broader space for their public and political actions and raising future claims to power. As a result of these new social dynamics women, although, still not equally represented in politics, have found an ever broader space and enlarged choices in public and political space. While patriarchy through family, kinship and extra kinship male patriarch's support, does not lose its basic ground of male domination, in this process it becomes less rigid and exclusionary towards women's presence and participation in public and political sphere. As none of these two has completely reverted the other, rather each has been reconfigured, therefore the resulting social order is also not a complete reversal from basic core of patriarchy; it just transformed itself from rigid and classic form of private patriarchy to a more modern and flexible public patriarchy.

The dissertation underlined this move from private to public patriarchy when a large number of women from the private sphere of home entered into the public sphere of political party and council as a result of new socio-political developments, the overall social order changes its form from a more private patriarchy (based on male patriarchs' control within family, kinship and extra kinship ties) to a more public patriarchy (based on women's control by male political party leaders and council Nazims). When the male patriarchs in the private sphere of home supported and motivated their family women to bring in public sphere, the private patriarchy becomes less rigid and looses its traditional classic form. But at the same time, when these women entered the political party and councils, they are caught in a public face of patriarchy where the individual and collectivities of men like party and council male members are controlling their public and political sphere activities.

Finally, this process of ongoing social change has rendered a new and more compatible form to these two antagonistic forces necessary for their co-existence in Pakistani society. By bringing a large mass of non-elite women in local politics, patriarchy seems to have gained a more modernized and more acceptable outlook while still retaining male domination and women's subordination in both the private and public spheres. While non-elite women, although still controlled by and submissive to male domination in both spheres, have gained an ever broader legitimate space and acceptance for their autonomous action and claims to be raised more vocally and publicly. It seems to be a win-win situation on both side (patriarchy and women's emancipation) while not losing their previous political agendas. Although, the change is slow and gradual, but it is evident that it is transforming the whole fabric of existing social order.

The specific theoretical contribution of this research lies in its identification of a potential inherent contradiction within patriarchy, which is demonstrated here as resulting out of ongoing competition among masculine power interest groups, as a potential source to subvert the patriarchy from within. It is needed to further explore this emerging theoretical dimension in different aspects of patriarchal structures. Similarly, the specific potential of competing masculine interest groups, as suggested in the political sphere in this research, also needs to be further investigated in other aspects of social life. Besides these theoretical aspects, this research focused on a particular pattern of women's emergence in politics from within the patriarchal structures in South Asian 'classic patriarchies'. It also needs to be comparatively studied with the motives and social dynamics behind women's political participation in other less developed as well as advanced industrialized countries. This research further specifically focused on the social dynamics triggered by quota application in District Hyderabad that has particular kinds of implications on women's entry and participation in political sphere. These social dynamics are needed to be further explored in different districts and provinces of the country, and in other countries of the region that are implementing political quotas for women, as well.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSLATION OF THE LETTER OF INFORMATION TO NAZIMS/ CONCERNED PERSONALS

To,

Greetings,

It is submitted that I am serving as lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of Sindh. Beside that I am also doing my PhD studies in Middle East Technical University, Turkey from the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan. The Topic of my research is 'Women's Political Participation and Patriarchy in Pakistan'. The focuses of this research study is women's political participation in local government in District Hyderabad. The data for this research study are being collected through interviews with female councilors at District, Taluka and union council levels.

You are, therefore, requested for cooperation to provide information about female members of your council and to help me in access to and interview with them for this educational and research activity in your district.

All kinds of the information gathered during this research will be kept confidential and will only be used for educational and research purposes. During research, discussions regarding any point/matter related to research activities wanting further clarification and for its mutually negotiated settlement will be welcomed anytime during the research period.

Thank you

Looking for your cooperation

Naima Tabassum

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Sindh, Pakistan

PhD candidate, Middle East Technical University, Turkey



APPENDIX B

TRANSLATION OF LETTER FOR CONSENT FROM FEMALE COUNCILORS

To,

Greetings,

It is submitted that I am serving as lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of Sindh. Beside that I am also doing my PhD studies in Middle East Technical University, Turkey from the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan. The Topic of my research is 'Women's Political Participation and Patriarchy in Pakistan'. The focuses of this research study is women's political participation in local government in District Hyderabad. The data for this research study are being collected through interviews with female councilors at District, Taluka and Union Council levels.

You are, therefore, requested to participate in this research by giving an appointment at any time that suits you for a face to face meeting in order to conduct an interview with you aiming to learn your experiences of political participation in local government as a woman. The interview will be voice recorded, if you feel comfortable and permit to do so, with a recording device (MP3 Player) to prevent any lose of valuable information you will tell me during the interview.

All kinds of the information gathered during this research will be kept confidential and will only be used for educational and research purposes. During research, discussions regarding any point/matter related to research activities wanting further clarification

and for its mutually negotiated settlement will be welcomed anytime during the research period.

Looking for your cooperation and consent to participate in this research

Thank you

Naima Tabassum

Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Sindh, Pakistan

PhD candidate, Middle East Technical University, Turkey



APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE¹³²

NOTE: *This is the maximum length of this interview guide to which it reached by the end of field work. Initially it was not so extensive and detailed, rather just based on some major categories. These all guidelines were never been asked; as most of these questions were usually been answered during ongoing discussion without a particular question asked for that.*

Background

1. Name, designation, caste, age, education (literate/illiterate), marital status, No. of children
2. Other family members; their occupations. Any one in army or bureaucracy.
3. Belongs to urban /rural areas
4. Occupational background/housewives
5. Previous experience of contesting elections
6. Political affiliation; how long, holding any party office, role in decision-making at party.
7. Previous social work experience.
8. Other family member/relative involved in politics
9. Landholding or any business by her or her family. Which kind of business?
10. Source of personal or family income. Monthly income (optional if want to answer).
11. Her or family's influence in the area (give example).
12. Major caste residing in the constituency

Life before entering politics:

13. Life before joining politics. Major activities within or outside home
14. Role in family and community decision making (give examples)

¹³² This interview guide was used to conduct interviews with female members of local government in district Hyderabad

Motivation

15. How did she get the idea of joining politics? What/who/how motivated her to enter political field (family/ party/ personal interest).
16. If self motivated, how did she come to develop these self motivations?
17. If asked by some one else, what was her first response?
18. Major supporters and supports provided by family to enter the politics.
19. Major supporters and supports provided by community or relative to enter politics.

Resources

20. Money and other resources spent during nomination, campaign and elections.
21. Arrangement and management of the resources for campaign or political activities
22. Manage current political expenditures; sufficiency of council remuneration
23. Preference for being a councilor or having a good job.

Patriarchy

24. People's general attitude towards her as women in politics
25. Veil observation
26. Management of mobility (to and from council and to other party meeting and other political activities)
27. Resistance from male family member /community or relatives
28. Management of domestic chores, look after of children and old aged, & family relations

Women councilor in the council

29. Why less women at high ranks in LG? What are the barriers? What are the requirements?
30. Interaction between women councilors at higher levels and lower level.
31. Problem in participating/fulfilling duties at council?
32. Attendance in council sessions, frequency of rising questions, and type of questions rose.
33. Type of work/task assigned or community problem referred from the council
34. Committees in which women are member/ chairperson.
35. Role in decision making at council, especially in budget making and utilization.

36. Awareness about financial records, contracts given and money disbursed.
37. Development Projects introduced by her, on which issues? Approved/ not approved.
38. In the council who listen her most? And who resist her speech most?
39. Major complaints of female council members.
40. Appropriate number of women seats in a council.
41. Difference between a UC councilor elected through direct election and a Taluka or District Councilor through indirect election
42. Views on these two modes of election at different levels and its impact on performance and agendas of women politician

Preference for young or old women in politics:

43. Who should come to politics; young or old women; what are the problems for both of them.
44. View about bring their daughter in politics.

Trainings:

45. Possession of LG ordinance copy and the extent to which it has been read.
46. How many trainings attended, why attended, why not attended, what learned from there.

Change:

47. Acquisition/ learning/ benefits from this political experience?
48. Change in personality, span of public relations, decision making abilities, autonomy and freedom.
49. Change within family.

Common women and councilor

50. Place, mode and reasons for interaction with common women.
51. What the benefit common women got form her political participation

Future inspiration

52. Future Plans in politics.

APPENDIX D

THE TRANSCRIPTION KEY

<i>(Italics)</i>	Urdu version of the transcribed speech quoted to give the real essence or meaning of the speech, if it seems to be compromised due to English translation.
<i>Italics</i>	Urdu terms used
(())	Personal notes inserted by researcher
(11:00)	Time at the point in recording file.
BAST	Capital letters are used for words where the speaker puts emphasis.
.....	Dots show the pause within speech. These dots can be from two to several in numbers. The length of doted lines show the comparative length of pause
[]	Empty brackets means something said but was un-understandable in recording. The length of empty space between parentheses shows the length of un-understandable portion of sentence.
[Words]	Something said and was not clearly understandable in recording. What is most probably understood by listening to records again and again was written in these parentheses.

- (Loud laugh) Voice tones and other expressions of the participant explained by researcher. The intensity or other features of the expressions were also explained here.
- (Words) These are the words that are not actually pronounced by participant but were understood to complete the sentence or inserted by researcher to explain the previous word.



APPENDIX E

GLOSSARY

Adi/Addi	Sindhi word means sister
Amma	Urdu/Hindi word means mother
Angotha Chapp	A word usually ironically used for one who prints thumb in place of signature
Baci	Turkish word for sister
Baji	Urdu word means elder sister
Baluchis	The native people of Baluchistan province
Bechari	Miserable women
Behanji	Urdu/Hindi word means sister
Bethak	Sitting area, usually for guests or male outsiders within or outside
Bhabi	Brother's wife
Bhai	Urdu word means brother
Biradri	Communal groups that usually have strong control on their members, like for marriages within the group
Chachi	Father's brother's wife
Chadar	Large piece of cloth women use to wear while going out of home
Durga	Hindu mythological female figure
Devar	Brother- in-Law
Ghar	Home
Ijlas	Political Party's public meeting
Islami Jamhuri Ittehad	Islamic Democratic Alliance
Jirga	Traditional informal decision making council comprises of local influential people of the
Kali	Hindu Goddess
Khala	Mother's sister
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	The new name officially given to NWFP/Sarhad province.

Majlis-e-Shura	The institution established by General Zia-ul Haq to substitute the national parliament
Markaz	Means 'Center'
Molvi	Religious men
Mohatarma	The word use to give respect to lady
Muhajirs	Urdu speaking migrants who came to Pakistan from India after independence
Mutahida	Meant 'United'. People usually call mutahida for MQM
Naib Nazim	The Deputy head of any the local council
Nazim	The head of any local council
Otaq	Gathering place for men in villages
Pathans	The native people of Sarhad province
Peeri Muridi	The spiritual guide and the follower system
Pekoe work	A machine work for closing the edges of the cloths to prevent the lose of thread from the edge and make the cloth longer lasting.
Phoopho	Father's sister,
Punjabis	The native people of Punjab province
Purdah	Veil
Pushtun	Belonging to Pakhtoons/Pathans
Qabila	Tribe, clan
Qanoon-e-Sahadat	Law of evidence
Quom	Communal group affiliation
Sarhad	It means 'limit'. North West Frontier Province is also called Sarhad.
Sindhis	The native people of Sindh province
Sindhudesh	Land of Sindh-Sindhi separatists demand for land of Sindh
Taluka	Sub-district level or middle tier of local government
Türban	A kind of head scarf girls use in Turkey
Wani	A social practice to offer and accept women to settle minor or major disputes.
Ulema	Religious scholars
Zat/Zaat	Caste, or communal group affiliation

APPENDIX F

TÜRKÇE ÖZET

ATAERKİNİN KİLİDİNİ AÇMAYA DOĞRU: PAKİSTAN'DA KADINLARIN YEREL SİYASETE KATILIMI

1. Giriş

Bu doktora tezi Pakistan'ın Haydarabad bölgesindeki kadınların yerel yönetim düzeyinde siyasi katılımını feminist bir çerçeveden inceleyen niteliksel bir örnek olay çalışmasıdır. Pakistan'da, elit kadınlar patriarkal yapıya bağlı olarak siyasal alana seçici bir şekilde katılabilmişlerdir. Ancak, yakın geçmişte değiştirilen yerel yönetim sistemi kapsamında getirilen kota artışı (%33) elit olmayan kadınların yerel siyasete katılımlarının artmasına neden olmuştur. Bu araştırma, değişen bu durumun ardındaki toplumsal dinamikleri, bölgedeki yerel meclise seçilmiş olan 53 kadınla gerçekleştirilen yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmelere dayanarak incelemektedir. Çalışmanın temel iddiası ataerkillik ile kadınların siyasi katılımı arasında diyalektik bir ilişki olduğudur. Çalışma, ataerkil yapıların, elit olmayan kadınları siyasetin içine çekerek devamlılıklarını nasıl sağladıklarını göstermektedir. Siyasete katılan kadınlar ataerkil yapılara meydan okumak yerine, bu yapıları siyasete katılımlarını ve siyasette kalmalarını kolaylaştıran kaynaklar olarak kullanmaktadırlar. Bu süreç, bu iki karşıt güç arasında birbirini besleyen bir yapının oluşmasına neden olmuştur. Böylelikle ataerki modernleşmiş bir görünüm kazanırken, erkek egemenliği de korunmuştur. Elit olmayan kadınlar, erkek egemenliği güdümünde olmalarına ve bu egemenliğe itaat etmelerine rağmen, bağımsız hareket etmelerini mümkün ve meşru kılan daha geniş ve bir alan elde etmişlerdir. Araştırma, ataerkinin belirli özelliklerinin yeni sosyo-politik gelişmelere karşılık verirken kendi çelişkilerini yarattığını, dolayısıyla potansiyel olarak genel bir toplumsal değişime yol açabilecek koşulları yarattığını iddia ederek, ataerkilliğin dönüşümü tartışmalarına da katkıda bulunmaktadır.

2. Pakistan’da Kadınlar ve Ataerkillik

Bu doktora tezi, Güney Asya’nın klasik ataerkil toplumlarındaki kadınların siyasi katılımının artmasının karmaşık yapısını açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Pakistan, ataerkil toplum yapısı ile kadınların her kademede siyasi etkinliğe artan oranda katılımının bir arada gözlemlendiği ülkelerden biridir. Diğer taraftan, Pakistan toplumu kadınların erkeklerden daha düşük statüde olduğu, akrabalık ve hiyerarşiye dayalı ataerkil yapıya dayanmaktadır. Kadınlar sistematik olarak güç ve otorite pozisyonlarından dışlanmaktadır. Bir yandan da, yakın zamanda kadınlar için siyasi kotaların yükseltilmesi birçok kadını bütün siyasi forumlara taşımıştır.

Pakistan toplumu “klasik ataerkillik” olarak tarif edilebilir (Kandiyoti 1988). Bunun ana özellikleri hanede babanın kendinden genç erkekler üzerindeki egemenliğidir ve bu durum patrilokal ailede gerçekleşir. Aynı soydan evlilik yapmak, akrabalık, aşiret ve etnik bağları sürdürebilmek için toplumun genelinde ortak bir stratejidir. Kamusal ve özel alan ev ve ev dışı olarak ayrılmıştır; özel alan (örn. Genellikle ev ve köylerde akrabaların oturduğu mahalleler) her ne kadar ataerkil erkeğin kontrolü altında olsa da kadınlara aittir.

Pakistan’da kadınların çoğunluğu ataerkil özellik gösteren aile, ekstra-akrabalık ağları ve toplum yapısı içinde erkeklerden daha düşük statüdeki alt sınıf kırsal kadınlardır. Özel alan tüm etkinliklerinin merkezindedir, kamusal alan ise ataerkilliğe göre belirlenmiştir ve sınırlıdır. *Purdah* ve *namusun* kadınları geniş akraba gruplarının özel alanıyla sınırlaması kadınlar ve erkeklere farklı roller biçilmesine neden olmuştur. Kadının ailedeki rolü çocuk doğurmak ve büyütmek, beslemek, sosyalleştirmek ve özel alandaki ev işleri ve topluluk hizmetidir. Bu toplumsal düzen onların maddi kaynaklara ve hizmetlere erişimini sınırlandırmaktadır. Eğitimden, becerilerden ve ekonomik bağımsızlıktan yoksundurlar. (Bari 2005).

3. Siyasi Yapı ve Kadınların Pakistan’daki Siyasi Katılımı

Bağımsızlık hareketinden ve Pakistan’ın oluşumundan bu yana, kadınlar hemen hemen tüm siyasi alanlarda eksiktir. Tarihsel olarak devlet erki için devam eden mücadele; yarışan erkeklikler; ordu, bürokrasi, büyük toprak sahipleri ve feodal lordları da içeren sivil elitler arasındadır (Kukreja 1985; Hashmi 1980; Shafqat 1989; La Porte 1975;

Hussain 1979) ve bu durum kadınların siyasete girmesine çok az olanak vermiştir. 2002 yılına kadar, kadınlara ayrılan seçim kotası Ulusal Mecliste 1.2% ile 8.4% arasında, İl Meclislerinde 5%, farklı zamanlarda yerel yönetimde % 10 olarak kalsa da, Senato’da hiç yoktur. Kota altında ayrılmış koltukların dışında, bu alanlarda yer alabilen çok az kadın vardır. Kadınların siyasi alanlardaki bu sözde varlıkları onların yasal ve siyasi karar alma süreçlerini etkilemeleri için yeterli değildir. Bu yüzden, bu durum ülkedeki kadınların konumlarını iyileştirmeye katkı sağlamamaktadır.

Resmi siyasi alanlara katılan az sayıdaki kadın kentsel üst veya orta üst sınıftan eğitilmiş ve elit kadınlardır. Daha önceden sosyal çalışmalara katılmış, siyasi aktivizm deneyimi olan bu kadınlar, feodal, yüksek rütbedeki ordu ve bürokratlardan oluşan etkili ailelerden gelmektedirler ve bu nedenle ailedeki erkeklere veya parti patronlarına karşı daha sorumludurlar (Saif 1993; Shahid 1994; Farooq 2003; Yazdani 2004; ADB 2000; Shaheed 2008; UNDP 2005). Siyasete etkili erkeklerin annesi, eşi veya kızı olarak girmişlerdir (Bari 2005). Siyaseti aile sorunluluklarının bir uzantısı olarak uyarlamışlardır (Saif 1993); bu nedenle, bağımsız bir siyasi aktörden ziyade ailedeki erkeğin ve erkek parti liderinin bir uzantısı olarak hareket etmektedirler. Toplumsal olarak, ülkedeki çoğu kadının yoksun koşullarını etkileyecek şekilde ataerkil yapıda herhangi bir değişiklik için ataerkil yapıya meydan okumak üzere burada bulunmayan ayrıcalıklı kadınlardır (Shaheed 2008). Hindu ve İslam’ın kültürünün birleşmesinin sömürge sonrası Pakistan bağlamındaki modernleşme güçleri ve dinle çatışmasından ortaya çıkan ataerkilliğin bu özel formu, elit kadınların Pakistan’daki sözde siyasi fırsatlara seçilmiş kabul edilebilirliğinin nedeni olarak açıklanabilir (Saif 1993).

Kadınlar için bu sözde siyasi fırsat 1999 yılında son askeri rejimin kadın sorunlarına olan ilgisi üzerine genişletilmiştir. Bu askeri yönetimi meşrulaştırma çabalarının bir parçası olarak daha önce ülkedeki iki askeri rejime benzese de bu sefer, ‘yumuşak’, modernleştirici ve demokratik yüzünü göstermektedir. (Kennedy 2006: 129; Zaidi 2005: 30; SPDC 2007). Kadın gruplarının uzun süreli talepleri kabul edilmiş ve 2002 yılında tüm siyasi kademelerde kadın kotası yükseltilmiştir. Yükseltilmiş kota Ulusal Mecliste 17.5% koltuk (örn. 342 koltuktan 62si) ve İl Meclisinde 17,5% (728 koltuktan 128’i) ve Pakistan tarihinde ilk defa Senato’da %17 (örn. 100 koltuktan 17si) ve en yükseği 33% (40,000 koltuktan daha fazla) ülkedeki yerel yönetimlerdeki her

kademeye getirilmiştir. Bu durum, sıradan kadınların tüm düzeylerdeki genel katılımını ve özellikle yüksek kota uygulaması nedeniyle de özellikle yerel yönetimlerde karar alma mekanizmalarında görünürlüğünü arttırmıştır.

Her ne kadar, kadınların tüm dört ilde de yerel hükümetlere katılımı heyecan verici olsa da, her bir ildeki kadınların durumu toplumsal ve kültürel nedenlerden ötürü çok az değişmektedir. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ve Baluchistan illeri daha tutucu bir çevreye sahiptir ve hala kadınların yerel yönetimlere katılımına direnmektedirler, 2002 yılında kadınlar için ayrılan koltukların 70.6% sı ve 77.4%ünü; 2005 yılında ise 85% ve 97%ini doldurmuşlardır (AF 2005a). Aynı zamanda kadınların oy verme ve seçimlere girmelerini engelleyen hak ihlallerini belgeleyen raporlar vardır (AF 2001). Punjab 2001de 96.7% , 2005'te 98.7% olmak üzere kadınlara ayrılmış koltukları doldurmada iyi bir performans elde etmiş ve böylece Bölgesel seviyede olmasa da, Birlik Konseyine (yerel hükümetin en alt kademesi) bir çok kadın Nazim olarak seçilmiştir. Yerel hükümette seçilmiş dört kadın Bölgesel Nazim (Belediye Başkanı), ve bir Naib Nazim'a (Belediye Başkan Yardımcısı) sahip olmak ve kadınlara ayrılmış koltukların 99.05%ini tüm kademelerde doldurmuş olmak 2005 yılındaki son yerel seçimlere kadar ülkede daha önce görülmemiş bir durumdur (AF 2005a). Sindh İlindeki Hyderabad Nazim Birlik Konseyinde sadece kadınların yer almasıyla istisnai durumdadır.

Yerel hükümetlere seçilen kişilerin özellikleri genel olarak çalışılsa da özel olarak kadınlar çalışılmamıştır. Bu çalışmalar yerel yönetimlerde kotayla birlikte artan kadınlara ayrılan koltuk sayısının (örn. 33%) kırsaldan ya da kentin küçük köşelerinden gelen, okuma yazması olmayan ya da az eğitilmiş olan profesyonel ve elit olmayan tecrübesiz genç kadının hem 2001 hem de 2005'te yerel yönetimde yer aldıklarını göstermektedir. (Bari and Khan 2001; Khan and Bari 2006). Bu bulgular, eskiden beri var olan seçilmiş elit kadınların siyasi katılımı eğiliminde bir kısımla olduğunu göstermektedir.

Seçilmiş elit kadınların siyasi katılımı yüksek kademedeki siyasi alanlarda; Ulusal Meclis ve İl Meclislerinde, Senato ve Partilerin Merkez Komitelerinde hala geçerliliğini korumaktadır. Hatta bu durum yerel yönetimdeki İl Nazim'lığına ve yardımcılığına seçilen az sayıdaki kadın için de geçerlidir. Ama bu durum çok sayıdaki

elit olmayan yerel kadınların yerel yönetimlere girişlerini açıklamakta yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bu meydan okuma düşük seviyelerde olsa da elit olmayan yerel kadınların siyasi katılımına yönelik bir eğilimi ortaya koymaktadır. Geçmişten beri süre gelen seçilmiş elit kadınların siyasi katılımlarını yeniden değerlendirmek ve ortaya çıkmakta olan elit olmayan kadınların yerel hükümetlere girişini ve orada kalabilmeleri eğilimine yeni açıklama getirmek gerekmektedir. Çok az araştırılmış çok sayıdaki elit olmayan kadının yerel hükümetlere coşkulu girişleri ve siyasi katılımlarının sosyal, ekonomik, siyasi ve kişisel dinamikleri ve ülkedeki etkileri kapsamlı bir çalışma gerektirmektedir.

4. Araştırma Problemi

Bu tezin ana araştırma problemi “kotalarla teşvik edilmiş kadınların yerel yönetimlerde yükselen siyasi katılımının, özellikle süre gelen elit kadınların siyasete seçilmiş katılımı eğilimi odağında, Pakistan toplumunun, ataerkil yapısına nasıl meydan okuduğu?”dur. Bu çalışma uzun süredir gözlenen elit kadınların seçilmiş siyasi katılımındaki ataerkil eğilimin aynı şekilde yakın zamanda yerel hükümetlere giren çok sayıdaki kadın için geçerli olup olmadığını inceleyecektir. Yerel yönetimlere seçilmiş her kadın eğitilmiş, kentli, daha önce siyasi deneyimi olan etkili ailelerden gelen elit kadınlar mıdır? Değillerse, kendilerine geleneksel olarak açık olmayan kamusal alana nasıl girmeyi başardılar. Siyasete elit kadınların sosyal statüleri ve ailelerinden dolayı sahip olduğu destek ve kaynaklar olmadan nasıl varlık gösterebiliyorlar? Geleneksel ataerkillik, elit olmayan kadınların kamusal siyasi alanda artan varlıkları durumuyla nasıl uzlaşıyor?

5. Araştırmanın Hipotezi

Bu tezin temel argümanı; kadınların artan siyasi katılımı ve ataerkilliğin birbirini karşılıklı olarak değiştiren ve uzlaşan çatışan/karşıt iki sosyal güç olduğu, bu nedenle Pakistan’daki toplumsal değişimin belirgin bir aşamasını temsil ettiğidir. Ataerkillik ve kadınların siyasi katılımı arasındaki bu diyalektik ilişki, sıradan kadınların kotalarla teşvik edilmiş siyasi katılımının onların toplumsal rollerini, maddi ve maddi olmayan kaynaklarını arttırdığı ve aynı zamanda Pakistan toplumunun geniş ataerkil yapısı tarafından da sınırlandırıldığını göstermektedir. Aynı zamanda, ataerkilliğin geleneksel yapısının yeniden yapılandırılmasıyla elit olmayan kadınların kendi çıkarlarını savunmak için siyasete girmeleri ve siyasi kurumlarda sınırlı özerkliğe sahip olmaları

mümkün olmuştur. Bir başka yönden, her ne kadar artmakta olan siyasi katılımları kadınların aktif aktörler sessiz devrimini getirse de, toplumda ki geniş ataerkil yapıya (bunu bir kaynak olarak kullanarak)doğrudan bir meydan okuma yoktur. Kadınlar kendilerine sağlanan sınırlı ve koşullu fırsatlar içerisinde giderek özerk eylemlilik için daha fazla alan talep etmektedir. Bu yolla, ataerkillik kendisini yeni sosyo-politik gelişmelere göre yeniden yapılandırırsa da, daha önce marjinalleşmiş gruplar içerisinde yeni güç merkezlerinin ortaya çıkması gibi kendisini dönüştürme potansiyeli olan çelişkileri de içermektedir.

Bu tartışma üç iddiaya dayanmaktadır. Birincisi, Hyderabad'daki yerel yönetimde yer alan elit olmayan kadınlar, Pakistan siyasetinde kadınların varlık gösterebilmeleri için gereken daha önceki var olan elitist kriterleri hiç bir şekilde karşılamamaktadırlar ve bu durum Pakistan'daki siyasetin doğasına ve sosyal ilişkilere bir meydan okumadır.

İkincisi, geleneksel ataerkillik kendisini, kota teşvikinin ortaya çıkmasıyla elit olmayan kadınları kendi çıkarları için kamusal alana getiren yeni sosyo-ekonomik gelişmeye göre yeniden yapılandırmıştır. Elit olmayan kadınların özel alandan kamusal alana ilk girişleri; tarihsel olarak rekabet eden erilliklerin güçleri temelinde birleşmelerinin bir sonucu olarak açıklanabilir. Kotanın ordu tarafından ortaya çıkarılması bu mücadelenin devlet düzeyinde bir parçasıdır. Yerel düzeyde ise, siyasi partilerin, toprak sahiplerinin ve ailelerin erkek üyelerinin gösterdiği elit olmayan kadınları destekleme çabaları da erkekler arası bu rekabetin bir parçasıdır. Bu süreçte, ataerkil yapılar sert ve klasik özel ataerkillikten daha uzlaşmacı ve modern kamusal ataerkilliğe dönüşürken, elit olmayan kadınlar hiç olmadığı kadar kamusal ve siyasi alana sahip olmuştur

Üçüncüsü, yerel hükümetteki kadınlar, ataerkil düzene açık bir şekilde meydan okumadan, bu alanlara girişleri ve varlıklarını kolaylaştırmak için, bu düzeni aile içinde, partide, konseyde bilgi, beceri, maddi ve eğitimle ilgili kaynak eksiklikleriyle başa çıkmak için kullanılmaktadırlar. Bu yüzden bir yandan var olan sosyal düzenin sürdürülmesinde aktif olarak stratejiler geliştirseler de, bir yandan da kendilerine ayrılan kamusal ve siyasi alanı genişletmektedirler.

6. Çalışmanın Önemi

Bu çalışmanın teorik önemi, katı erkek egemen toplumun bu kadar çok sayıda sıradan kadınının siyasete girmesine nasıl izin verdiğini açıklama çabasındadır. Ataerkilliğe dair feminist açıklamalar, Pakistan'daki bireysel olarak erkekler ve eril elit gruplar arasındaki rekabetin sonucunda, kadınların siyasi katılımına daha çok alan açması bağlamında değerlendirilmiştir. Kadınların özerk eylemliliği için rekabet eden eril rekabetleri üzerine ortaya konan ve genişleyen teorik açıklamaları araştırırken, bu tez bir yandan da daha önce marjinal konumda olan gruplara yeni güç odakları kazandıran ataerkil yapının farklı çeşitlerini anlamaya katkıda bulunmakta; böylece ataerkilliğin içinde barındırdığı yıkıcı çelişkiye işaret etmektedir. Bu yolla hâlihazırdaki ataerkilliğin dönüşümünü açıklayan çalışmalara yeni bir boyut eklemektedir. Kadın meclis üyelerinin siyasete girme ve burada kalabilme stratejilerini tartışmakla bu tez aynı zamanda Kandiyoti'nin (1988) "ataerkil pazarlık" kavramına gerçek yaşamdan bir örnekle katkıda bulunmaktadır.

Bu tez aynı zamanda Pakistan'da elit kadınların siyasete seçmeli katılımları eğilimine yönelik mevcut açıklamaları gözden geçirmiştir. Şu anda elit olmayan kadınların yerel yönetime girmesi durumunun, geçmişte siyasette var olan bu eğilime bir meydan okuma olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu vesileyle, kota uygulamasının devreye girmesiyle elit olmayan kadınların siyasi katılımları eğilimi ıssında, var olan literatürün yeniden gözden geçirilmesi gereğine işaret etmiştir.

Şu anda genel olarak Pakistan'daki kadın siyasetçiler hakkında, özel olarak da kadınların yükselen yerel yönetimlere katılımı çok az şey bilinmektedir. Bu kadınların sosyal arka planları, motivasyonları, ilk girişleri, katılımları, performansları, sorunları; siyaset ve Pakistan'ın geleceği hakkındaki perspektifleri hakkındaki ampirik veriler hiç şüphesiz ki daha önce çok az araştırılmış bu konuya katkı sağlamaktadır. Bu tez kadınların siyasi katılımı ve ataerkil yapılar arasında diyalektik bir ilişki olduğunu söylemekte ve böylece kadınların ataerkil toplumlarda siyasi katılımı konusuna yeni açıklamalar getirmektedir. Üstelik kota konusunda var olan tartışmalara yeni bir boyut eklemektedir. Bu çalışma sadece teoriye ve kültürel arası karşılaştırmalara ışık tutmamakta aynı zamanda genel olarak kadının güçlenmesi konusunda siyaset yapıcılara ve uygulayıcı kuruluşlara anlamlı bir bilgi sağlamaktadır. Diğer taraftan bu

tez, yerel yönetimlerde tabandan kadınların siyasete katılımı konusunda yapılacak gelecekteki araştırma alanlarının belirlenmesine katkıda bulunmakta ve bireysel düzeyden devlet düzeyine kadar olumlu bir değişimi etkileyecek potansiyel barındırmaktadır.

Bu tezin özellikle en birincil katkısı, yukarda bahsedildiği gibi, bir kadın birliği konseyi Nazim'ine sahip ve tüm ilçeler arasında en yüksek sayıda kadını yerel yönetime taşımış tek ilçe olan Sindh İline bağlı Hyderabad Bölgesinde; yerel yönetimlere katılan kadınların (Pakistan'da ortaya çıkan son durum hakkında az çalışılan) coğrafi, toplumsal, ekonomik, siyasi ve kişisel dinamiklerini araştırmasıdır.

7. Kadınların Siyasi Katılımı Hakkındaki Feminist Yaklaşımlar

Kadınların kamusal ve siyasi alana katılımı hakkındaki feminist tartışmaların araştırıldığı bu tezin iki ana temel kavramı; ataerkillik ve kadının siyasi katılımıdır. Bu tez iki kavram arasındaki bağlantıların sosyal yönlerinin çeşitli açıklamalarını tartışmaktadır. Geleneksel feminist yaklaşımlar ataerkilliği biçimsel siyasetten dışlanmışlığının temel nedeni olarak görmektedir. Feministler ataerkilliği, kamusal ve özel ataerkillik (Walby 1977). Neoataerkillik (Sharabi 1988) ve klasik ataerkillik olarak farklı biçimlerde değerlendirmişlerdir (Kandiyoti 1988). Onlara göre ataerkillik yeni sosyo-politik değişimlere göre şekil değiştirse de, erkeğin kadın üzerindeki hâkimiyetine dayalı temel toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri sürdürülmektedir

Tüm dünyada kadının siyasi katılımının artması ataerkilliği kadının siyasetten dışlanmasının sebebi olarak gören feminist açıklamaları sorgulamaktadır. Kadınların siyasi katılımlarının artması ataerkilliğin zeminini kaybettiği anlamına mı gelmektedir? Son zamanlarda feminist düşüncede kendi içerisinde yıkılan ataerkillikten bahseden görüş yükselmektedir. Buna göre kadın siyasetçiler formel siyasete ataerkilliğin içinde giriyorlar, ama bu ataerkil sosyal düzene karşı bir meydan okuma ve onu dönüştürmeye sebep oluyor. Tüm tartışma Güney Asya ülkelerine özel olarak da kadın siyasetçilere odaklanmıştır. Feminist literatürdeki bir başka çalışma da, rekabet eden erkek ve erkekliklerin kadınların siyasete getirmesiyle birlikte, kadınların kamusal ve siyasi alanları potansiyel olarak genişlerken, onların doğrudan elde edecekleri güç çıkarlarını araştırmaktadır. Amaç ataerkilliğin özünde bulunan ve kendisini içerden yıkabilecek

potansiyel çelişkiyi tanımlayarak, var olan ataerkil dönüşüm hakkındaki teorik açıklamalara katkıda bulunmaktadır.

8. Araştırmanın Kapsamı ve Yöntemi

Bu araştırmanın kapsamı yukarıda bahsedilmiş araştırma problem etrafında mekansal, zamansal, teorik, ve metodolojik sınırlarla belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışma mekansal olarak Pakistan'ın Sindh ilinde bulunan Hyderabad Bölgesi coğrafyası olarak sınırlandırılmıştır. İlçe Konseyindeki tüm seçim Bölgelerini, ilçedeki yerel hükümetteki dört Taluka (alt Bölge) Konseyi, 52 Birlik Konseyi (UC) kapsamaktadır. Zamansal olarak, 2005'ten 2010'a kadar olan son yerel yönetimleri kapsamaktadır. Çalışmanın evreni, genel veya ayrılmış koltuk sahibi (örn. 245 kadın), son görev süresince Hyderabad'daki yerel yönetimin farklı kademelerinde yer alan (İlçe, Taluka, UC) tüm kadın meclis üyelerinden oluşmaktadır. Teorik olarak bu çalışma, genelde Pakistan'daki daha özelde ise Hyderabad'daki elit olmayan kadınların siyasi katılımını potansiyel olarak açıklayabilecek ataerkillik üzerine yapılmış feminist açıklamaları araştırmaktadır.

Yukarda söz edilen kapsamda, bu tez feminist bakış açısına dayalı niteliksel bir örnek olay çalışmasıdır. Veri, Hyderabad'daki yerel yönetimin çeşitli kademelerindeki 53 kadın meclis üyesiyle yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşmelerle kaset kaydı yoluyla toplandı. Veri tamamı ile deşifre edildi ve görüşmeler manüel ve tematik olarak kapsamlı bir şekilde olay; olaylar arası karşılaştırma şeklinde ele alındı. Görüşme deşifrelerinden alınan parçalar tezde yapılan tartışmalara destekleyici olarak kullanıldı.

Araştırma kadınların günlük deneyimlerini ayrıntılı şekilde açıklayarak, toplumsal cinsiyet ilişkileri hakkında makbul bilgi üretebileceği bir epistemolojik duruşa sahip olduğu için, çalışmanın ontolojik odağını sosyal gerçekliğin önemli parçası olan kadınların deneyimleri oluşturmaktadır. Kendine özgü esnekliği, detay, bağlam ve çok boyutluluğa önem vermesi nedeniyle nitel yaklaşım kullanılmıştır (Mason 2003: 1). Böylece kadının siyasi deneyimleri ve belirli bağlamda siyasi kurumlara (örn. Hyderabad'daki yerel yönetimler) yönelik derin bir anlayış ve bütünsel bir resim elde edilmiştir.

Stake örnek olayı “bireysel olaydaki ilgi” olarak tanımlar (2005: 443). Örnek olay stratejisi bu tezin, ülkedeki farklı Bölgelerde çok kültürlü ve çok dilli çeşitli çevrelerle uğraşmak yerine, Hyderabad’daki yerel yönetimdeki kadın siyasetçilerin “sınırlı sistemi” ile sınırlandırılmasına yardımcı olmuştur (Creswell 1998: 61). Nitel yaklaşımla birleşen örnek olay çalışması, Hyderabad’daki kadınların siyasete katılımını etkileyen, sosyal, ekonomik, siyasi, coğrafi ve kişisel faktörlerin bütünsel resim yakalama olanağını sunmuştur.

Örnek olaydaki Hyderabad bölgesinde yerel yönetimde bulunan kadın meclis üyelerinin seçimi aşağıdaki hususlar esas alınarak yapıldı. Birincisi, kadın siyasetçiler, ilk defa çok miktarda elit olmayan yerel kadının Pakistan’da yerel hükümetlere girmesi gibi benzersiz bir sosyal dinamik daha önce yeterince çalışılmadığı için seçildiler. Bu nedenle, bu alanlarda kadınların uzun süreli varlığını korumak için arzu edilen politika önerilerini araştırmak gerekmektedir. İkinci olarak, yerel yönetimin siyasi katmanlarının seçilme nedeni ise, Ulusal, İl Meclisler, ve Senato olmak üzere diğer siyasi alanlara göre en yüksek (33%) kota rezervasyonuna sahip olmasıdır. Bu şekilde çok sayıda kadın kamu görevlerine girebilmiştir. Ayrıca, yerel hükümet düzeyi, yerel kırsal/kentsel elit olmayan kadınlara daha yakın olduğu için seçilmiştir.

Üçüncüsü, ayrıca daha önce açıklandığı gibi, Sindh ili içinde Hyderabad Bölgesinin çalışılma nedeni, diğer dört ilçe içerisinde kadınlara yerel hükümette ayrılan koltuklarda en yüksek kadın (99.05%) oranına sahip olmasındandır. Tek kadın Birlik Konseyi Nazim’ı (Birlik konseyinin başkanı- yerel hükümetteki kadınlar tarafından doldurulan üçüncü en büyük makam), diğer dört ilçe Nazim’ından ve bir ilçe Nazim yardımcısından farklı olarak feodal veya siyasi elit bir aileden gelmemektedir. Bu nedenle, Hyderabad Bölgesi, yerel yönetimin farklı kademelerine giren elit olmayan yerel kadınların çalışılması için yeterli zemin sağlamaktadır. Kısacası, Hyderabad Bölgesi, teorik olarak çalışılmakta olan konunun çalışılması kapsamında sınırlı kaynaklar, erişim, nitel veri toplama ve işleme gibi kriterleri karşıladığı için çalışma birimi olarak seçildi

Bu çalışmaya uyarlanan feminist metodolojiye göre, veri kadınlara kendi bakış açılarını ve tecrübelerini anlatabilecek seslerini verebilecek özel bir teknikle toplanmalı. Bu nedenle, yarı yapılandırılmış, derinlemesine görüşme bu çalışma için en uygun teknikler olarak seçildi. Görüşmelerin derinlemesine ve açık uçlu olması, her görüşmecinin kendi deneyimlerini kendine has şekilde anlatması konusunda büyük esneklik sağlamıştır. Yine de yarı yapılandırılmış olsa da görüşmeler bu tezin araştırma probleminin sınırlandırılmış odağında gerçekleşmiştir. Görüşmeler teybe kaydedilmiş (sadece bir tanesi kalem ve kâğıtla kaydedildi), ve tüm görüşme verileri deşifre edilmiştir. Bu verinin tematik analizi sürekli olarak durum ve durumlar arası karşılaştırma ile analiz edilmiştir.

Bu araştırmanın kalitesi ve güvenilirliği kaygısı ile (2000: 177-189) Silverman'ın beş yöntem önerisi izlenmiştir; yürütülebilirlik ilkesi, sürekli karşılaştırma yöntemi, kapsamlı veri analizi, sapkın durum analizi ve uygun tabulasyon kullanımı. Çalışmakta olan fenomenin tüm olası varyasyonları dâhil edilerek, yürütülebilirlik ilkesi olasılığını karşılamak için örneklemin boyutu büyütülmeye çabalamıştır. Toplanmış tüm veriler aynı olaydaki ilgili tüm diğer verilerle sürekli karşılaştırılarak çalışmakta olan fenomen anlamlandırılmasında denetlenerek kullanılmıştır. Okuyucuya daha ulaşabilir olması için bir çok veri tabulasyonu yapılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bunlardan birçoğu, özellikle 6. ve 7. bölümler, tezin bir parçası olmuştur. Araştırma süreci boyunca kavramların ve kategorilerin tutarlı olmasına dikkat edilmiştir. Görüşmeler herhangi bir veri kaybını engellemek ve araştırmacının kendi kişisel ilgisine dayalı seçici kayıt etme olasılığını engellemek için teybe kaydedilmiştir. Aynı nedenle bütün görüşmeler, sözsüz ifadeleri de içeren deşifre anahtarını da içerecek şekilde, tümüyle deşifre edilmiştir. Tüm bunların yanında, kişilerin ifadelerinden görüşme deşifrelerinden seçilen yeterli sayıda alıntı bu tezin özgünlüğünü sağlamıştır.

9. Araştırma Bulguları

Pakistan'da elit kadınların seçici siyasi katılımı uzun süredir gözlenen ataerkil bir olgudur. Ancak, son dönemde getirilen kadınlar için kota sistemi, kadınların yerel yönetimlerde siyasi faaliyete katılımının artmasına sebep olmuştur. Ülkede çok sayıda kadın yerel siyasetin her kademesinde; özellikle de elit olmayan pek çok kadın yerel siyasetin en düşük kademesinde yer almaktadır. Kadınların siyasete katılımı için kota

getirilmesi, genel olarak, kadınların kamusal ve siyasi alandan ataerkil mekanizmalarla dışlanmasına karşı duran bir uygulamadır. Bu çalışmanın örnekleme açısından ise sadece seçilmiş bir grup elit kadının ülkedeki resmî siyasete katılımı olgusuyla mücadele etmek açısından önemlidir. Bu sebeple, kadın kotasının en yüksek olduğu (%33) ve yerel olarak en yüksek sayıda kadının katılım gösterdiği fakat yeterince çalışılmamış bir siyasi hareket kademesi olan yerel yönetimlerin incelenmesi, yeni ortaya çıkan bu süreci ve değişmekte olan sosyal dinamikleri anlamak açısından değer kazanmıştır.

Bu doktora tezi, siyasette kadın kotası uygulaması ile Pakistan'ın Haydarabad bölgesindeki kadınların yerel yönetimdeki artan siyasi katılımlarının ardındaki süreç ve dinamiklerin feminist bir çerçeveden analizidir. Çalışma, ülkedeki ataerkil yapıya karşı dönüştürücü potansiyeli olan kadın kotasının yükselmesi ve kadınların yerel yönetimlerde siyasete artan katılımlarıyla tetiklenen toplumsal dinamikleri incelemektedir. Çalışma, kadın kotasına, ülkede uzun süredir görülmekte olan, kadınların, erkekler veya seçilmiş elit kadınların egemen olduğu resmî siyasi alandan dışlanmasına karşı bir uygulama olarak odaklanmaktadır. Çalışma, bu sosyal dinamiklerin özellikle üç boyutuna odaklanmıştır: yerel siyasete yeni katılan kadınların sosyo-ekonomik durumundaki değişim, geleneksel olarak kendilerine kapalı olan siyasi alana girişlerini ve buradaki varlıklarını sürdürmelerini sağlayan faktörler ve son olarak kadınlar için genişleyen kamusal ve siyasi alan. Araştırmanın temel amacı, kadınların siyasi alana artan katılımlarına yol açan seçim kotasına eşlik eden yeni sosyo-politik gelişmeler ile geleneksel ataerkilliğin hangi yol(lar)la uzlaştığını tespit etmektir

Çalışma, yukarıda sınırları çizilen ana temayı takiben, feminist metodolojinin yol göstericiliğinde niteliksel bir vaka analizi olarak tasarlanmıştır. Veriler, Hayderabad bölgesinde, yerel yönetimin farklı düzeylerinde yer alan 53 kadın meclis üyesiyle yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine mülâkatlardan derlenmiştir. Kaydedilen mülâkatlardan birebir yazıya dökülerek elde edilen veriler tematik olarak analiz edilmiştir. Mülâkatlar tematik olarak analiz edilirken hem vaka içinde hem de vakalar arası karşılaştırmalar yapılmıştır. Analiz genel bir toplumsal dinamik örüntüsünü ortaya çıkarmıştır: yerel meclislere giren kadınların çoğunluğu elit olmaktan ziyade alt ve orta sınıftan gelen daha az eğitilmiş ev kadınlarıdır. Bu kadınlar, yerel siyasete, ataerkil

yapıların tam da içerisinde, dahil olmuşlardır. Bu süreçte, maskülen iktidar merkezleri arasındaki rekabet ve kadınların ataerkil düzenekleri iktidar edinimi yolunda kaynaklar olarak kullanmaları ve manipüle etmeleri belirleyici olmuştur. Bir yandan, kadınların meclisler ve parti düzeyinde siyasal alana katılımları erkekler tarafından kontrol edilip sınırlandırılırken, diğer yandan, ev kadınlığı üzerinden tanımlanan toplumsal rolleri siyasal aktörlükle çeşitlenmiştir. Bu durum, sadece seçilmiş kadınlar açısından değil aynı zamanda bütün kadınlar açısından daha fazla kaynağa, daha geniş bir siyasal meşruiyet ve tanınma alanına ulaşmakta işlevsel olmuştur. Çalışma, bu geniş örüntünün şu özgül eğilimler üzerine temellendiğini göstermektedir; (i) yerel meclislere giren kadınlar elit grupların parçası değildir; (ii) erkekler (bireyler) ve maskülen gruplar (sıyası yapılanmalar) arasındaki rekabet sonucunda yerel meclislere girebilmişlerdir; (iii) siyasal alandaki varlıklarını ailede ve diğer toplumsal katmanlardaki ataerkil düzenekleri kullanarak devam ettirmektedirler; (iv) artan siyasal katılımları toplumsal rollerini çeşitlendirmiş ve toplumsal alandaki güç taleplerini gelecekte daha etkin bir şekilde dile getirmelerini sağlayacak kaynakları sunmuştur.

Bu yeni toplumsal dinamik örüntüleri temelinde tezde şu iddialar ön plâna çıkartılmıştır: ilk olarak, gücün hegemonik konsolidasyonuna yönelik maskülen rekabet, marjinalize edilmiş gruplar arasından yeni güç merkezlerinin ortaya çıkmasına beşiklik etmekle, kendi içinde çelişkilidir. İkincisi, kadınlar biat ettikleri ataerkil toplum yapısının içerisine gömülü ataerkil düzenekleri kendi maskülen hamilerinin güç taleplerini savunmak amacıyla kullanıp manipüle ederlerken kendileri için de yeni açılımlar ve daha geniş alanlar yaratmakla ayrı bir çelişkinin ortaya çıkmasına neden olurlar. Üçüncü olarak, ataerkiye içkin bu çelişkiler ve ataerki karşısındaki bu meydan okumalar ataerkil yapıların ya da bu yapılara özgü geleneksel stratejilerin yeni sosyo-politik dinamiklere uyumlaştırılması amacıyla yeniden düzenlemeye tâbi tutuldukları zamanlarda ortaya çıkarlar. Dördüncü olarak, ataerkiye yönelik meydan okumalar, bir yandan yeni sosyo-politik gelişmelerin taleplerine uyum sağlanmaya çalışılırken diğer yandan ataerkil düzenin bozulmamasına yönelik çabalardan doğan çelişkilerin ve yeniden düzenlemelerin niyet edilmemiş ve gizil işlevleri olarak okunabilir.

Bu iddiaları takiben, tezin temel argümanı ataerkinin, potansiyel olarak, altüst olmasına neden olacak içsel çelişkilere yol açabileceğidir. Ataerkiye yönelik potansiyel meydan

okuma, belirli ataerkil özelliklerin kendi geleneksel biçimlerinde birtakım yeni düzenlemelere gitmek vasıtasıyla, yeni sosyo-politik gelişmelere kendilerine özgü bir şekilde karşılık verdikleri zaman ortaya çıkar. Bu biçimde, ataerki, esas özelliği olan erkek egemenliğinden kaybetmeden, katı, geleneksel yapısını değiştirerek ve sistem içerisinde kadınlara özerk eylemleri ve gelecekteki güç talepleri için daha fazla alan ve kaynaklar sağlamakla bu yeni gelişmelere ayak uydurur.

Son olarak, araştırma sonucunda ataerki ile kadınların siyasi katılımları arasında diyalektik bir ilişki bulunmuştur. Ataerkiye içkin, erkekler ve maskülen gruplar arasındaki güç çatışmasının gizil bir sonucu olarak ortaya çıkan çelişki ve kadınların, mevcut toplumsal düzenin idamesinde, ataerkil yapılara biatı hem ataerkinin geleneksel doğasını hem de kadınların yerel düzeyde siyasi katılımlarını dönüştürme potansiyeli taşımaktadır. Bir yandan, ataerkil yapılar kendi çıkarlarına yönelik olarak yeniden düzenlenirler ve kadınların daha geniş sistem içerisindeki toplumsal statülerini, niyet edilmeden de olsa, değişime uğratırlar. Öte yandan kadınlar, ataerkil yapıları kullanarak kamusal ve siyasal alanlarda varlık mücadelelerinin stratejilerini oluşturmakla, bu yapılardaki geleneksel rollerde ve işleyişlerde niyet edilmemiş değişikliklere yol açmaktadırlar. Böylelikle, geleneksel ataerki ve kadınların artan siyasal katılımları gibi birbiriyle çelişen bu iki güç karşılıklı olarak birbirlerini değiştirmekte ve birbirlerine uyum sağlamaktadırlar. Bu ise, her iki gücün de birlikte var olmalarını sağlayacak şekilde yeni ve birbiriyle uyumlu biçime girmelerini ve dolayısıyla mevcut toplumsal düzenin, özel ataerkiden kamusal ataerkiye doğru tedrici gelişim sürecinde farklı bir biçim almasına yol açmaktadır.