

Role and Impact of Directly Elected Woman Members
on Union Parishad – A case study of two Upazilas.

A Dissertation

By

A.K.M. Nurunnabi Kabir
BU ID No - O5272019

Submitted to the
Center for Governance Studies
BRAC University
Dhaka

In partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
M A in Governance and Development Studies

Center for Governance Studies
BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
September, 2006

Role and Impact of Directly Elected Woman Members
on Union Parishad – A case study of two Upazilas.

A Dissertation

By

A.K.M. Nurunnabi Kabir
BU ID No - O5272019

Approved as to style and content by



Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad
Former Secretary

To the Government of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh

Center for Governance Studies
BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
September, 2006

Preface

In Bangladesh the local government is lacking both resources as well as authority, which constrain women's ability to act. Union Parishad is the lowest tier of local government. But local government in our country still falls far short of its great potential for lack of reforms. Although the successive governments after the country's independence in 1971 have taken various measures to strengthen local government, still there are many works need to be done.

Aimed at empowerment of women, Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1983 was amended in 1997 by the government for direct election of woman members. Three seats were reserved for women in every Union Parishad. Following this amendment, an overwhelming participation of women candidates in Union Parishad election in that year surprised all. Number of female voters in the election centers increased after that amendment but women members are hampered in many ways in performing their duties and responsibilities. Even though women are dependent on their families, some women have been able to use their new role in a more constructive way. There have also been changes in structural levels in terms of gender and it seems that this will have consequences beyond political empowerment such as social empowerment.

It is evident that lack of effective and timely planning, lack of political support, absence of suitable socio-economic and congenial environment, lack of appropriate organizational framework, lack of functional education, lack of skilled training put women behind in proving their competencies compared to their male counterparts. It had been identified that women had limited scope to exercise political rights, lack of control over resources and had a limited choice in decision making.

The aim of this thesis is to study the implications of the use of reserved seats in terms of women empowerment and to find out the nature of work of those female members and types of impediments they are facing in their working places so that government can take initiatives to find a suitable solution.

Acknowledgements

The study was conducted over a period of one year-during that period I received assistance, cooperation and active support from individuals, groups, and the Center for Governance and Development Studies, BRAC University.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my respected teacher Dr. Akbar Ali Khan former-cabinet secretary, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh who has inspired me to study the subject and patiently guided me through tricky theoretical issues. I also express my gratitude to my respected supervisor Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad, former secretary of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for his inspiring guidance, constructive criticism, valuable suggestions and deep interest during the investigation and preparation of this report and also to Dr. Matiur Rahman, faculty of this programme for his constant inspiration before and during the preparation of this research work.

Grateful thanks and appreciation one due to the Professor Dr. Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University and Barrister Monzoor Hassan, Deputy Executive Director, BRAC for their cooperation, constructive and valuable suggestions.

I am indebted to BRAC University authority for financial support to conduct this study.

This study would not have been possible without the cooperation of the UNO, Chairmen, woman members, members and local people of the study areas who tirelessly answered our queries and extended hospitality, I am indebted to all of them.

I am grateful to all participants of governance and development study course for their sincere cooperation, suggestions and valuable opinions during my study. I want to thank my wife Sufia Sultana who exempted me from all unpleasant involvement of family life smilingly and allowed me free time to engage myself to my study and research.

Last but not least I am deeply indebted to my respected teacher Professor Dr. Anisuzzaman of the Department of Philosophy, University of Dhaka, who taught us course on ethics and also contributed much with the finalization of this thesis.

A.K.M.Nurunnabi Kabir

15 September, 2006

Abstract

The Bengal Local Self Government Act was passed by the British in 1885 and it was a landmark in the evolution of local government institutions. Over the past decades there have been changes in the local government structure and functions in order to make them more people oriented and responsive to poverty alleviation and rural development. The Union Parishad is the third lowest local government structure in rural Bangladesh that oversees and administers development projects. The 1997 election brought 13,437 women members to the UPs and in the 2003 election this number was 13,452.

The general objectives of this study are to examine the role of woman members and their impact on the UP, to know about the involvement of female members in different meetings, development activities, in women empowerment and social welfare activities, to identify and assess knowledge, skills and other capabilities of female members, to identify the impediments of performing the duty on the part of the women members, to find out the achievement after reserving the quota for female member, to find out whether the system really is serving the purpose of the present needs and empowerment of woman, to compare between the performances of the male members and woman members in respect of their power and responsibilities.

The study was conducted among 20 elected woman members, 64 male members, 7 chairmen and 15 elite persons of the 10 Union Parishads in two different Upazilas of two districts. Primary data were collected from the field through formal survey. The sampled unions and the questionnaire used in the study have been annexed to the report. Survey data and qualitative information gathered for the study were analyzed and presented in the different chapter of the report. All the elected women have basic education. Most of their husbands influenced them in participating in election. In record it revealed that elected women were involved in standing committee but they did not conduct meeting regularly. Chairman and male members do not want to give proper share to woman members in various development activities. Furthermore, overlapping of jurisdiction, lack of specific job description and lack of awareness are the impediments of woman members in discharging their duties. From the field study it is revealed that though there are so many debates at the present form of reserved seats, introduction of reserved seat system in Union Parishad has some positive impact on woman empowerment.

List of Tables

Table-1 Population density, Literacy rate in Daulatpur and Matlab (South)	10
Table-2 Government circulars for the woman members	26
Table- 3 Age of the woman members	37
Table-4 Marital status of the woman members	37
Table-5 Educational status of the woman members	38
Table-6 Occupational status of the woman members	39
Table-7 Husband's education of the woman members	40
Table-8 Husband's occupation of the woman members	40
Table-9 Household and agricultural land of the women members	41
Table-10 Problems of locality identified by woman members	43
Table-11 Projects implemented last year by woman members	45
Table-12 Problems of implementing projects	46
Table-13 Member of standing committees	49
Table-14 Problems in attending meetings	51
Table-15 Support from UP chairman	53
Table-16 Support from male members	53
Table-17 Training received by woman members	58
Table-18 Expected training for the woman members	59

List of Figures

Figure-1 Map of Bangladesh	11
Figure-2 Daulatpur and Matlab (South) in the Map	12
Figure-3 Age of the elected woman members	37
Figure-4 Marital status of the woman members	37
Figure-5 Educational qualification of the woman members	38
Figure-6 Occupation of the woman members	39
Figure-7 Husband's education of the woman members	40
Figure-8 Husband's occupation of the woman members	40
Figure-9 Land ownership of the woman members	41
Figure-10 Women members' response to their local problems	44
Figure-11 Projects implemented last year by the woman members	45
Figure-12 Problems of implementing projects	47
Figure-13 Members of the standing committees	49
Figure-14 Attendance at the Union Parishad meetings	50
Figure-15 Responses of WM about help from the UP chairmen	54
Figure-16 Responses of WM about help from the male members	54
Figure-17 No. woman members of received training	58

Abbreviations

BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agencies
CPD	Center for Policy Dialogue
DC	Deputy Commissioner
GOB	Government o Bangladesh
IFFD	Integrated Food for Development
IPTT	Immovable Property Transfer Tax
FOWSIA	Forum on Women in Security and International Affairs
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NUK	Nari Uddog Kendro
NILG	National Institute of Local Government
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
RMP	Rural road Maintenance Programme
SANEI	South Asia Network of Economic research Institutes
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SPD	Strengthening of Parliamentary Democracy
TR	Test Relief
UP	Union Parishad
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	Vulnerable Group Feeding
WM	Women Member
WFP	World Food Programme

Content

Preface	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Abstracts	iii
List of Tables	iv
List of figures	v
Abbreviations	vi
 Chapter-1 Introduction	 1
1.1 General Background	1
1.2 Statement of the problems	3
1.3 Objectives	4
1.4 Rationale of the study	4
1.5 Plan of study	5
1.6 Scope and limitations	6
1.7 Structure of the paper	7
 Chapter-2 Research Design	 8
2.1 Study Design and research methodology	8
2.2 Secondary data collection	8
2.3 Guideline for data collection	9
2.4 Selection of Union Parishad for the study	9
2.5 Data analysis	13
 Chapter-3 Literature Review	 14
 Chapter-4 Theoretical framework	 17
4.1 Local government	17
4.2 Union Parishad	18
4.3 Composition of Union Parishad	19
4.4 Function of Union Parishad	19
4.5 Authority of Union Parishad	22
4.6 Resources of Union Parishad	24
4.7 Role of woman member in Union Parishad	25
4.8 Position of woman in Bangladesh	27
4.9 Participation, Representation and Leadership	28
4.10 Women empowerment	31
4.11 Women empowerment through local government	32
4.12 Quota and reserved seats	33
4.13 Quota and empowerment	34
 Chapter-5 Data Analysis	 36
5.1 Socio- economic status of elected woman members	36
5.1.1 Age of the elected woman members	36
5.1.2 Marital status	37
5.1.3 Educational status	38

5.1.4 Occupational status of woman members	39
5.1.5 Husbands' education and occupation	40
5.1.6 Property ownership of woman members	41
5.1.7 Income of the elected women	42
5.1.8. Family types of woman members	42
5.1.9 Religion of woman members	42
5.2 Development Activities	42
5.2.1.1 Main problems in area identified by woman members	42
5.2.2 Project implemented	44
5.2.3 Problems encountered in implementing of the above projects	46
5.3 Participation in Meeting and Social Activities	48
5.3.1 Knowledge about UP function	48
5.3.2 Involvement in the committee	48
5.3.3 Participation in the meeting	50
5.3.4 Problems in attending meeting	51
5.3.5 How to increase women participation	52
5.3.6 Socio-economic and legal supports	52
5.3.7 Support from UP Chairmen and other male members	53
5.3.8 Comparison of women members' activities of two Upazilas	55
5.3.9 Expected role of women members in UP	56
5.4 Capacity building Strategies	57
5.4.1 Capacity Building through training	57
5.4.2 Organizations involved in training of woman members	58
5.4.3 Training received by elected women	59
5.4.4 Training needs for UP woman members	59
Chapter-6 Findings of the Study	61
6.1 Role of woman members in empowering of rural woman	61
6.2 Conflict of UP chairman and male members with woman members	61
6.3 How long reserve seat is required	63
6.4 How and what changes are crucial in policy making	63
Chapter-7 Conclusions and Recommendations	65
7.1 Conclusion	65
7.2 Recommendations	66
Bibliography	68
Appendix-'A' Name of the unions surveyed	72
Appendix-'B' Questionnaire for woman members	73
Appendix-'C' Questionnaire for chairmen	80
Appendix-'D' Questionnaire for male members	83
Appendix-'E' Questionnaire for elite people of the locality	86

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER-1

Introduction

1.1 General Background

Union Parishad is the lowest tier of local government and oldest democratic institution of Bangladesh. There were many upheavals of democracy in central government but after the formation of this local government institute, continuation of democratic practices remain unaltered though many policies and structural changes have occurred over the time. Since 1997, the government has made a provision for three reserved seats in every Union Parishad for women as members. All voters both male and female would elect one from among the contesting women candidates.

Women entry into the local government in Bangladesh through direct election has generated great enthusiasm in rural areas of the country, but their proper functions and role in the Union Parishad is yet to take shape due to some problems. We have much scope to improve the present position of the women through local government system. Traditionally, women in Bangladesh liked to confine themselves in the corners of their homes. They were kept out of the economic activities and participating in decision-making processes. Though there are many women's organizations working for development of woman, in rural areas they are remaining more vulnerable than man. Women representation in the central government or in local government is not up to the satisfaction level.

Women constitute about 50 percent of population of our country. Among them 85 per cent women live in rural areas. The status of rural women is much lower than that of men. The development objectives such as accelerated economic growth; poverty reduction, and employment creation cannot be achieved without the contribution and participation of these rural neglected women. It is therefore essential that rural women should participate in and be integrated into development process of the country.

Today 95 per cent of all countries in the world have granted women the most fundamental democratic right, the right to vote and right to contest elections. The reality is that the number of women who actually participate in election and become the representatives is very small. Statistics from the Inter-Parliamentary Union show that the world average of women in National Parliaments is only 15.3 %.(Frankl, 2004:5).But days are changing rapidly in our

country. Due to socio-cultural changes, their political awareness is increasing. Rural women are now participating in various development and income generating activities. They are also participating in the local government election.

The Constitution of Bangladesh guarantees women rights in the following articles:

Article 9: "The State shall encourage local Government institutions composed of representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible to peasants, workers and women".

Article 10: "Steps to be taken to ensure participation of women in all sphere of national life".

Article 28(2): "Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State and public life".

Article 28 (4): "Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making special provision in favour of women or children or for the advancement of any backward section of citizen".

Article 29(1): "There shall be equality of opportunity of office in the service of the Republic".

In 1997, the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983 was amended. According to this amendment, section 5(1) was replaced, as "An Union Parishad shall consist of a Chairman and twelve members including three members exclusively for women".

This paper will seek to examine the role and impact of elected women members, their impediments at the time of representation and to measure the effectiveness of the system of reserved seats.

Union Parishad (UP) has had a continuous existence since the 1880s, though their functions and constitution have changed over time, and they are currently the only elected, statutory local government body for the rural Bangladesh. The Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance of 1983 and its subsequent amendments provide the legislative framework for UPs, which are further regulated and controlled by orders and circulars issued by the Ministry of Local Government.

The lowest tier of local government body in Bangladesh is the Union Parishad (UP), widely functioning in rural areas. There are 4,484 Union Parishads spread across 64 districts of Bangladesh, consisting 84,000 villages and 472 Upazilas. Union Parishads are governed by the Ministry of Local Government & Rural Development (LGRD), which is directly involved with the social, economic and cultural well being of the poor and the disadvantaged in both rural and urban areas. For the first time in the history of Bangladesh, female members were elected to the

UPs, on the basis of the Local Government Union Parishad Act 1997 (2nd Amendment). In the last election in 2003, each UP has three elected female members; with a total national figure of 13,452 women representatives representing 4, 0356 wards.

Each Union is divided into nine Wards. One male member is directly elected to the UP from each Ward on the basis of adult franchise. One-woman member is directly elected from each of the three old Wards on the basis of adult franchise (by both male and female voters). The UP Chairman is directly elected on the basis of adult franchise from the whole of the Union. Thus a UP comprises 9 elected Ward members, three elected women members, and an elected Chairman.

Union Parishad is the third tire of the local government (the other 2 tires are being the Zilla Parishad and Upazila Parisad) of Bangladesh. The main functions of the Union Parihsad are development work, to keep law and order, petty judicial activities, collection of holding tax and other social activities under its jurisdiction. Its permanent employees are 1 secretary, 6 chawkiders (village police) and 3 dafaders (messengers). Both the elected functionaries and permanent staffs are paid honorarium/salary from grants provided by the central government.

Women had been neglected in local government units though the history of local government is very old in Bangladesh. In 1978, for the first time in the history of Bangladesh, two women were included in Union Parishad and Gram Sarker, the lowest stratum of local government institutions as nominated members by the SDO (Subdivision Officer) under the Local Government Ordinance 1976. The inclusion of women members with the local government's activities is in keeping with the national policy as stressed in the Constitutional Article 10 of part II to ensure the participation of women in nation-building activities.

In 1983, the number of women members was raised to three under the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance 1983. The UNO (Upazila Nirbahi Officer) used to nominate the three female members, one each from every ward.

1.2 Statement of the problems

Woman members are elected as reserved seats from 1997. Reserved seats system is the new system in local government and only two terms of election have held. But lack of specific job description and overlapping of jurisdiction with male members hinders the activities of woman members. There is an urgent need to revise the government circulars for empowering rural poor

women through local government. Therefore, this present study focuses on the role of woman members in Union Parishad and their impact on rural power structure.

1.3 Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the present study:

- a) To examine the role of UP woman members and their impact on the UP.
- b) To reveal the involvement of female members in different meetings, development activities, in women empowerment and social welfare activities.
- c) To identify and assess knowledge, skills and other capabilities of female members.
- d) To identify the obstacles/impediments of performing the duty on the part of women members.
- e) To find out the achievement after reserving the quota for female member.
- f) To find out whether the system really is serving the purpose of the present needs and empowerment of rural women.
- g) To compare between the performances of male and woman members in respect of their power and responsibilities.

1.4 Rationale of the study

Various scholars and organizations have worked on the subject of impact of woman members in urban local government. A few studies were done on elected woman members in rural local government. It was found that studies on this subject were on assessment of training or their involvement on development activities. But it was not examined whether the present government circular for keeping reserved seat system is effective and helpful for woman empowerment.

This research aim is to examine the role and impact of elected women members in the Union Parishad in Bangladesh. The purpose of this research is to find out the nature of work of those female members and types of impediments they are facing in their working places so that government can take initiatives to find out a suitable solution. Whether this quota system is required farther or not, is also another area of interest of this study and whether for women actually required reserved seats for their development and woman empowerment according to the present system. To find out the opinions of local people and other elected representatives

about the activities of women members. To know whether woman members have made any change in the UP after keeping the reserve seats for them.

There were no designated duties or responsibilities of the UP female members under the Local Government Union Parishad Act 1997 (2nd Amendment). Hence, they were unable to play an effective role in safeguarding their female constituencies' interests and needs. Assumption of the thesis paper is that most of the female members are not capable of performing their responsibilities and happen to be relatives of influential persons of the locality. Having no earlier experience of serving their constituencies, they were confronted with numerous difficulties while carrying out their duties and responsibilities mentioned in the Ordinances. Further, their male counterparts do not give them opportunity to work in the UP. In addition, the overlapping of their working areas with that of their male counterparts prevented them from keeping any mark or making any significant contribution with regard to their activities and responsibilities in their respective wards.

I shall try to find out a comparison between the power of male member and women member within their jurisdiction, social status of women members those who have elected in 2003. This research paper will attempt to assess the conditions before and after the introduction of the new system and to look about the involvement of women members in development activities of Union Parishad, whether they have achieved the target of the government or not.

1.5 Plan of study

The aim of this master thesis is to study the implications of the reserved seats in Union Parishad in terms of women's empowerment. Besides the scheduled classes of the academy we were involved in research activities. The duration of this dissertation course extended over all the three semesters. The study period of one year was divided into three phases. Phase-1 was in the first semester, included the selection of dissertation topic, submission of the proposal before the committee for approval, selection of the study areas. In the second semester, we have studied relevant literature, written a survey questionnaire and theoretical/methodology chapter, formulation, pre-testing and finalizing of questionnaires. Phase-2, in the third semester of the course, was devoted to the fieldwork, collection of data and gathering information. Phase-3 was spent for the compilation and processing of data and writing of the report.

1.6 Scope and limitations

This study was confined only to the 5 Unions from Matlab (south) Upazila of Chandpur District and another 5 Unions from Daulatpur Upazila of Manikgonj District. There were several limitations of this study. The study was required to complete within a stipulated time frame with limited resources. There were some difficulties that I have faced during the fieldwork were some respondents specially Chairmen and women members of the Union Parishad were not easily available. They did not want to accommodate their time for interview. They thought it as an extra burden. Traveling in rural places was difficult, costly, time consuming due to bad communication system and unfavorable weather.

In the Union, Chairman, Members, Women members of the UP were interviewed with different sets of questionnaire. Besides them, local people both men and women were also interviewed with another set of questionnaire. Men and Women were selected proportionately from all socio-economic strata. I have maintained a day-to-day diary to record the important comments; information and overall behavior of interviewee and these were used thereafter in analyzing data and writing reports.

I went to field study for four weeks. First I went to Daulatpur Upazila of Manikgong district and interviewed related people in the five Union Parishads. Then I went to Matlab (south) Upazila of Chandpur district and where I conducted interview in another five unions. My intention was to make a comparison of UP activities of these two Upazilas with each other. I have tried to find out three categories of women members those who elected to the reserved seats in UP only in 1997, those who elected in both 1997 and 2003 and those who elected only in 2003. I also tried to find a relationship with activities of NGOs and women members in empowering women.

It is not possible to cover the whole Bangladesh due to the time and resource constraint. Two representative Upazilas were selected for this study. A total of 10 chairmen, 90 male member, 30 women member and 20 local people were targeted for the purpose of the surveys. But 7 chairmen, 20 women members and 64 male members were found as respondent during my field survey. The field study was completed between 15th July and 15th Augustg'2006.

The administrative officials at the Upazila level were requested in an informal way to discuss about their experience and problems they are facing at the time of working with the women

members. In every Union Parishad, I asked the UP secretary about the activities of women members and their relationship with others in the UP.

1.7 Structure of the Paper

This study titled “Role and Impact of Direct Elected Woman members in Union Parishad – A case study of two Upazilas” is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter one is titled “Introduction” in which general background, problem statement, objectives, rationale of the study and scope, limitation of the study are discussed.

Chapter two is titled “Research Design” in which the plan and organization of the study is discussed.

Chapter three is titled “Literature Review” in which several works of the related field by several authors are discussed.

Chapter four is titled “Theoretical Framework” in which different definition of related terms and functions of local government are discussed.

✓Chapter five is titled “Data Analysis” in which collected data from the field are analyzed to get necessary information and to find out the social status and involvement in development activities of elected woman. Moreover participation in meetings, social activities and capacity building strategies of woman members are discussed.

Chapter six is titled “Findings of the Study” in which important information from field survey and data analyses are discussed.

Chapter seven is titled “Conclusion and recommendations” in which brief concluding remarks and important recommendations are made.

The overall objectives of the study are to find out the impediments of elected woman in functioning in rural local government and to make important suggestions to solve the crisis.

CHAPTER--2

RESEARCH DESIGN

CHAPTER--2

Research Design

2.1 Study design and Research methodology

The present study is based on empirical data collected through survey, observation, limited participation, and structured and unstructured dialogue with representatives of Union Parishad and local people. Many different methodologies were used with combination in this study to build up a picture of a subject upon which there was little previous literature and to which was neglected. This study relies both on primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected with the help of a questionnaire, discussions and personal interviews with the respondents. .

Information was collected directly from the woman members who are primary respondents. Other sources of information were data collected from UP chairmen, male members, and some general people. For the purpose of survey a semi-structured interview scheduled was used. I have tried to ensure that questions were appropriately worded and possible answers were recorded in Bengali so that no gap would create at the moment of interviewing. A separate notebook was maintained to collect important information found at the moment of discussion and asking questions. I also requested all of the interviewee to discuss important items if remain their mind out of my questionnaire.

2.2 Secondary data collection

Various Books Journals, Periodicals, Magazines, News Paper and articles through web-sites were consulted to understand the functions of elected woman their problems in discharging duties, their motives and contribution. A detailed literature review was done to understand the impact of elected woman representatives in local government, in theory and practice. Most of the published documents on related field have been discussed in literature review chapter.

2.3 Guideline for data collection

It is not possible to find out real position of woman members without asking them about their function and involvement of social and development activities. Research questions have been designed in such a way that representatives of UP and local people can disclose everything

without any hesitation. The responses to the research questions provide important insights to understand the desire of elected woman members' mind.

2.4 Selection of the Union Parishad for the study

Total ten Union Parishads were selected as part of study on the basis of same type of representative characteristics of the other part of Bangladesh. Fieldwork was carried out in 10 Union Parishads from two Upazila of two Divisions. The study was conducted in two distinct geographical areas and these are not any special areas of other part of the country. In selecting the areas, the following criteria was followed- a) two different geographical location, b) different level of development, c) accessibility of the area, d) representative character of the area. To compare the regional differences it is felt necessary to take sample Unions from different geographical location. Attempt was made to avoid personal bias in the process of selection of Unions. The reason behind the selection of these two Upazila was due to my acquaintances with the area, local people and the local administration so that I could get an administrative and social support.

Daulatpur is the third largest Upazila of Manikgonj District in respect of area, came in to existence in 1919. Previously it was a part of Ghior thana. The Upazila occupies an area of 216.24 sq.km. including 24.40 sq.km. river area. The great Jamuna river is flowing just at the west side of the Upazila and most of the area of this Upazila remain under water for about six months of the year. The Upazila is bounded on the north by Chawhali Upazila of Sirajgonj District and Nagarpur Upazila of Tangail District, on the east by Nagarpur Upazila of Tangil District and Saturia Upazila, on the south by Ghior and Shivalaya Upazila of Manikgonj District and on the west by Bera Upazila of Pabna District. This Upazila consists of 8 unions, 172 mauzas and 170 villages. The average household size of the Upazila is 5.2 persons. 62.40% of the dwelling holds own and 37.60% do not own agricultural land. In the Upazila 70.71% of the dwelling households depends on agriculture as the main source of household income. The Upazila has a population of 156860 of which 78800 are males and 78060 are females.

The Matlab (South) Upazila was emerged by dividing previous Matlab Upazila in 1999. This Upazila occupies 170.26 sq.km. including 20.05 sq.km. river area. It is situated outside and on the south of the Megna Gomoti embankment project. Due to outside of the embankment, the most of the area of the Upazila are remain submerged by water for about six months of the

year. The Upazila is bounded on the north by Matlab (North) Upazila on the east Kachua and Hajigonj Upazila, on the south by Chandpur sadar Upazila and on the west by the great Meghna and Bhedergonj Upazila of Sariatpur district. This Upazila consists of 6 unions; 1 pauroshava..Total number of villages is 99 and total household of the Upazila is 37040. The average household size is 4.90 persons and literacy rate is 42.74%. In this Upazila 70.63% of the dwelling households own and 29.37% not own agricultural land. 63.77% of the dwelling households depend on agriculture as the main source of household income. This Upazila has a population of 181360 of which 89080 are male and 92280 are females.

According to report of enumeration 2001 published in District survey report in 2004 (Provisional) by the Bureau of Statistics the following information are found:

Table-1 Population density, literacy rate etc in Daulatpur and Matlab(South)

Name of Upazila	Population density (Persons per sq.km.)	Literacy rate (7+ years)	M /F (Sex ratio)	Household size
Daulatpur	726	28.07	101	5.2
Matlab (South)	1066	42.74	97	4.90
National	839	45.32	106	5.6

(Source: Statistical Year book of Bangladesh, 2004 124th edition,BBS)

Figure-1 Map of Bangladesh shows Manikgonj and Chandpur district

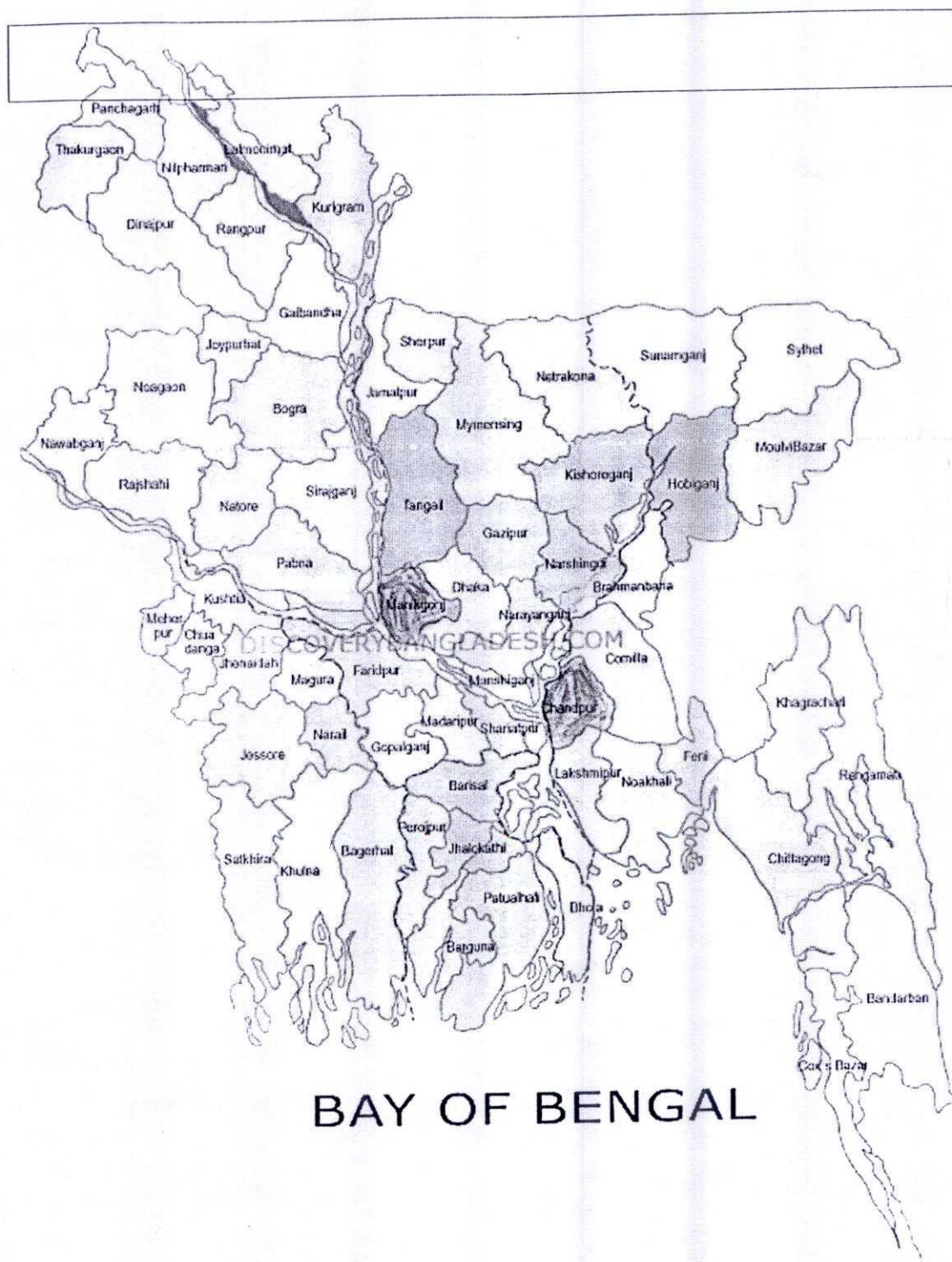


Figure-2 Daulatpur and Matlab (South) Upazila in the map



Matlab(South) Upazila



2.5 Data analysis

Data analysis was done using standard computer program for collected information from field survey to generate general information about elected woman. Interviews with other key informants and UP chairmen, male members, local elites, related officials, field notes were analyzed to generate qualitative information. Suggestions of various scholars, experience from field work and observations were incorporated to produce the research report. Analysis of the data was discussed in detail in the chapter five.

CHAPTER--3

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER--3

Literature Review

As the system with reserved seats with direct election to UP has passed only about 9 years, so collection of information is difficult and this research may remain some shortcomings.

Before the introduction of the system of reserved in UPs, the study on nominated Union Parishad women members was conducted by Sayed Rawshan Quadir and Mahmuda Islam in 1987. The title of their study was "Women Representative at the Union level as Change Agent of Development". It covered 66 Union Parishads and opinions were sought from 66 chairmen, nominated 191 women members and 129 local people. According to their study nominated women were selected from the well off and influential family their authority and power were not as other members in the UP.

In the year 1998, World Food Programme in Bangladesh conducted a survey. Topic of the research was "Elected Women Members of UP -A Socio-Economic Study". The general objective was to review the power and bases of the elected women in UP. The study was conducted among 360 elected members and data were collected through both survey and interviews. The study showed that the elected women had a better socio-economic status than the average rural women.

National Institute of Local Government (NILG) conducted a survey on the Role of woman members in 12 UP. Sitara Alamgir, Khaleda Akhter and Sirajul Islam did the research in 1999 to 2000. They examined about the capacity of newly elected woman members of performing their duties and responsibilities. The objective of the study was to inquire the activities of women members and types of impediments they are facing when participating in development activities. They collected data from twelve UPs of six divisions and after analyzing that information they recommended some special duties for women members

Almas has conducted a research on "Women Participation in Local Government, a study on a selected Upazila and a Pauroshava". His objectives were to evaluate and understand the attitude of the women in local government, assess the changes in attitude of people towards the women's participation in local government, identify the problems and prospects of women representative in their participation in the local government. His study areas were Ullapara Upazilla and Tongi Pauroshava. He recommended that appropriate training programs were

necessary for the women members, roles and responsibility of the women members should be clearly defined, enacting suitable legislation that will help them for empowerment.

Nazmunezza Mahtab a professor and Head of the Women's Affairs Department at the University of Dhaka, in 2003 did a case study. Information was gathered from 15 out of 30 female members in reserved seats in urban local levels (called city corporations). The name of the study was: "Women in Urban Local Governance: A Bangladesh Case Study".

Several studies have also been conducted by different national NGOs and international organizations that are focused on training of members of Union Parishad, comparative study with the local government of different countries. Sponsored by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Democracy Watch has conducted a study in 2002, in order to review some of the training programs for elected members and their effectiveness. The data was collected from field and based on interviews from structured questionnaires with 231 women members and discussion in focus groups. Quantitative data was collected through extensive surveys and qualitative data through in depth interviews. This survey showed that for empowerment of the women members need more training.

Mass Line Media Center (M M C), an NGO has conducted a research on the Role of women members for Empowerment of women in 272 unions of coastal area. This study was conducted by Kazi Mousumi Hossain and others from 1st July to 31st December of 1999 and a report was submitted in 2000. Their research areas were at Noakhali, Lakhmipur, Feni, Barguna and Potuakhali districts. They studied on activities of women members for empowerment of women, level of women member's participation in the activities of Union Parishad, obstacles of performing duties. The hypothesis of their study was that women members are lack of knowledge about their duties, lack of qualification, influenced by others, unwillingness of participation in UP activities, lack of awareness and lack of training. Methods of research were field survey, data collection on some specific questionnaire and group discussions. In their study report they recommended important areas to develop woman members capacity to work in UP.

South Asia Network of Economic research Institutes (SANAI) has conducted a research with the help of Centre for Women and Children Studies, Dhaka and Centre for Social Research, New Delhi, India The research topic was "Gender and Local Governance": A New Discourse in Development". Researchers were Ishrat Shamim and Ranjana Kumari. Their study area was

202 Unions in six districts (Mymensingh, Maulovibazar, Bogura, Jhalokathi, Jessore and Cox's bazaar) of Bangladesh and Gram, Block District Level Panchayates of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in India. They conducted their research on i) linking gender issue with local governance, ii) a comparative study of two similar neighbouring countries, iii) interest of women in politics iv) capacity and quality of women to run the local government and v) the type of women that are getting benefits from the new system. The report was submitted to SANEI in November 2002.

Emma Frankl(2004)has conducted a research on "Quota as Empowerment – The use of Reserved Seats in Union Parishad as an Instrument for Women's Political Empowerment in Bangladesh". The study report was a result of a two-month field research in Bangladesh in April and May 2003 and it was financed by a Minor Field Study (MFS) scholarship from SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). Respondents of interview were from 17 elected women members of eight different UPs of Coxbazar, Bogra and Rangpur district. The research report was submitted to Department of political science, Stockholm University, Sweden in June 2004. Her aim was to study the implications of the use of reserved seats in Bangladesh in terms of women's political empowerment. Her finding of study was that reserved seats are contributing the changes the social status of elected women as well as other women of rural areas.

Md. Mizanur Rahman and Fouzia Nasreen Sultana (2005) have conducted a research on "Women in Local Government in Bangladesh and West Bengal: A Comparative Perspective". The study was based on qualitative analysis. Data was collected from some women representatives of Bangladesh and West Bengal, using case study methods. They have tried to find out some similarity and dissimilarity of both women leaders and socio-cultural base of women leaders of rural local government in Bangladesh and West Bengal and made suggestions to improve the local government institution of our country.

CHAPTER--4

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER--4

Theoretical Framework

4.1 Local Government

Local government in Bangladesh has a history of over a hundred years. The beginning of formal local government in this sub-continent started through promulgation of the Village Chowkhidary Panchaet Act of 1870. It was followed by the Local Self-government Act of 1885 that established a three tier local government in the rural areas. Since the inception of the local government during the post independence period of Bangladesh, changes occurred in the spheres of Local Government in 1976, which assigned more functions and enlarged representation style in Union Parishad. Again in 1983 a number of reform measures came into being in the structure of local government system of Bangladesh by the then military government. Government of that time increased the number of Districts by abolishing the sub-division, creation of Upazila System and changes in the activities of Union Parishad through the Local Government Ordinance of 1983. Following that provisions of nine wards instead of previous three wards and reservation of women seats in the Union Parishad were subsequently enacted in 1993 and 1997 respectively.

According to the present system there prevails a three tier local government for rural area in Bangladesh. At the first tier there is Zila Parishad, headed by Chief Executive Officer assisted by other officials. In the second tier there is Upazila. Below Upazila, there is Union Parishad, which consists of several villages. There are about 4484 Unions in the country and 40347 Gram Sarker. But Gram Sarker does not contain the characteristics of local government. Further Honorable High Court has declared it as an unconstitutional. According to the Constitutional provision all tiers of rural local governments should be composed of peoples' representatives but except the Union Parishad other two tiers (Zilla Parishad and Upazila Parishad) do not have the representative character.

Women's participation in local government and their role in the Union Parishad and their impact on grassroots level is a burning issue at the rural level. Needless to say those women are facing numerous social, cultural and political problems in our society. There is close relationship among the concept of local government, participation, representation, women leadership and women empowerment in development activities.

Local government is an integral part of body politic of a country, recognized or created under

law for the management of local affairs of a human settlement with geographic boundaries (Muttalib and Khan, 1983:1).

According to the United Nations (1962, quoted in Siddiqui 1995: 4), the term local self-government refers to a political sub-division of a nation or state which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including the power to impose taxes or exact labour for prescribed purposes.

The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected". Local government means "self-government" that connotes an idea of liberty and autonomy indicating entire decision making authority to the governing unit. It can provide goods and services to the community at the cost of the taxpayer's money and up to their own choice and in the most efficient and cost-effective way (Muttalib and Khan, 1983:258). The institution of local government is considered a viable mechanism through which democratic process and practices can be established and participatory development ensured (Khan, 2000).

Decentralized local government institution can create political leadership, ensure popular participation, and develop accountability in administration that helps to plan and implement people-oriented development process at the grassroots. Strengthening of local government institutions can, therefore, be seen as a positive trend towards good governance (UNDP and GOB, 1998:16).

On the other hand, local government institutions as the representative organization of the people can enforce accountability of the central/national government authorities. The more aware, vigilant and active the community develops through their participation in local government bodies; the greater is the pressure on both local government institutions and the government authorities to become transparent and responsive. In such way local government can ensure accountability, transparency, participation, empowerment, equity and all the other attributions of good governance (Rahman, and Sultana 2005:6).

4.2 Union Parishad

According to the Local Government (Union Parishads) Ordinance, 1983 section 3, and 4 a Union Parishad is an administrative unit known by local name having separate jurisdiction and shall be a body corporate, having perpetual succession and a common seal, with power to acquire and hold property both movable and immovable.

4.3 Composition of Union Parishad

According to the Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance,1983 section 5 every Union Parishad consists of a chairman and twelve members including three members exclusively reserved for women. Chairman and members shall be elected by direct election on the basis of adult franchise in accordance with the provision of this ordinance and the rules. Reserved three seats exclusively for women members shall be elected by direct election on the basis of adult franchise.

4.4 Functions of Union Parishad

Article 30 and first schedule of the above ordinance functions of Union Parishad has described elaborately. Every Union Parishad discharges two types of functions: compulsory and optional functions.

Compulsory Functions

The Union Parishad shall have to perform the following compulsory functions.

- a) Maintenance of law and order and assistance to administration in the maintenance of law and order;
- b) Adoption of measures for preventing crime, disorder and smuggling;
- c) Adoption and implementation of development schemes in the field of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, livestock, education, health, cottage industries, communication, irrigation and flood protection with a view to increasing economic and social upliftment of the people;
- d) Promotion of family planning;
- e) Development of local resources and their use;
- f) Protection and maintenance of public property, such as roads, bridges, canals, embankments, telephone and electric lines;
- g) Review of the development activities of all agencies working at the union level and to make recommendations to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer, in regard to their activities;
- h) Motivation and persuasion of the people to install sanitary latrine;
- i) Registration of births, deaths, blinds, beggars and destitute;
- j) Conducting of census of all kinds.

Optional Functions

UP has 38 optional functions which are described below:

1. Provision and maintenance of public ways and public streets;
2. Provision and maintenance of public places, public open spaces, public gardens and public playgrounds;
3. Lighting of public ways, public streets and public places;
4. Plantation and prevention of trees in general, and plantation and preservation of trees on public ways, public streets and public places in particular;
5. Management and maintenance of burning and burial grounds, common meeting places and other common property;
6. Provision and maintenance of accommodation for travelers;
7. Prevention and regulation of encroachments on public ways, public streets and public places;
8. Prevention and abatement of nuisances in public ways, public streets and public places;
9. Sanitation, conservancy, and the adoption of other measures for the cleanliness of the Union;
10. Regulation of the collection, removal and disposal of manure and streets sweepings;
11. Regulation of offensive and dangerous trades;
12. Regulation of the disposal of carcasses of dead animals;
13. Regulation of the slaughter of animals;
14. Regulation of the erection and re-erection of buildings in the Union;
15. Regulation of dangerous buildings and structures;
16. Provision and maintenance of well, water pumps, tanks, ponds and other works for the supply of water;
17. Prohibition of the use of the water of wells; ponds and other sources of water supply suspected to be dangerous to public health;
18. Adoption of measures for preventing the contamination of the sources of water supply for drinking;
19. Regulation of provision of the watering of cattle, bathing or washing at or near wells, ponds or other sources of water reserved for drinking purposes;
20. Regulation or prohibition of the steeping of hemp, jute or other plants in near ponds or other sources of water supply;
21. Regulation or prohibition of dyeing or tanning of skins within residential areas;
22. Regulation or prohibition of the excavation of earth stones or other materials within residential areas;

23. Regulation or prohibition of the establishment of brick kilns, potteries and other kilns within residential areas;
24. Voluntary registration of the sale of cattle and other animals;
25. Holding of fairs and shows;
26. Celebration of public festivals;
27. Provision of relief measures in the event of any fire, flood, hailstorm, earthquake or other natural calamity.
28. Relief for the widows and orphans and the poor, and person in distress;
29. Promotion of public games and sports;
30. Industrial and community development; promotion and development of co-operative movement and village industries
31. Adoption of measures for increased food production;
32. Provision for management of environment;
33. Provision for maintenance and regulation of cattle pounds;
34. 'Provision of first aid centers;
35. Provision of libraries and reading rooms;
36. Co-operation with other organization engaged in activities similar to those of the Union Parishad;
37. Aid in the promotion of education under the direction of the Upazila Parishad;
38. Any other measures likely to promote the welfare, health, safety, comfort or convenience of the inhabitants of the Union or of the visitors.

The role and functions of Union Parishad can broadly be categorized in six types, namely

- a) civic responsibilities;
- b) police and defense functions;
- c) revenue and administration functions;
- d) transferred functions;
- e) judicial responsibilities;
- f) development functions

Apart from these, Union Parishad have to perform various food assisted development projects *i.e.* Rural Development, Vulnerable Group Development Program, Rural Maintenance Program, Integrated Food for Development (IFFD), VGF, Food for Works etc. Generally, this

food assistance is used for undertaking development activities and meeting emergency situation during natural calamities and disastrous moment.

For carrying out its multifarious - development activities Union Parishad has to maintain a very close relationship with CARE, LGED and other development organizations working at the grassroots level. UP helps in choosing the RMP women workers and it supervises RMP activities.

4.5 Authority of Union Parishad

UP has the following authority:

1. Through article 60 of the Bangladesh Constitution UP has been given power to impose taxes for local purposes, to prepare their budgets and to maintain funds.
2. Each Union Parishad shall be an autonomous institution and has powers to make Acts, require for proper discharging of its functions under this ordinance.
3. A Union Parishad may grant leave of absence to its Chairman for any period not exceeding three months in one year.
4. For smooth functioning and discharging of the assigned duties and responsibilities Union Parishad can form the following standing committees as per Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance of 1983.
 - i. Finance and Establishment;
 - ii. Education and mass education
 - iii. Health, Family Planning and epidemic control
 - iv. Audit and Accounts;
 - v. Agriculture and other development activities;
 - vi. Social Welfare and Community Center;
 - vii Law and order;
 - viii. Cottage Industry and Cooperatives;
 - ix. Women and Child Welfare, cultural and sports
 - x. Fisheries and Livestock;
 - xi. Conservation of environment and Tree Plantation;
 - xii. Union public Works
 - xiii. Rural water supply and sanitation

5. UP can sign various types of contracts with other organizations as per regulation set by the Parishad.
6. UP can prepare its own budget and plan which is subjected to approval from the DC.
7. A Union Parishad may appoint such officers and employees, as it deems necessary to assist it in the discharge of its functions on 'such terms and conditions as may be prescribed.
8. UP can constitute a fund named Union Fund in which all income of UP can be deposited.
9. A UP can manage, maintain, inspect, develop or improve any property, which is owned by or vests in it or which is placed under its charge.
10. A UP may and if so required by the government shall prepare and implement development plans for such period, as may be specified.
11. A UP with the prior permission from the Deputy Commissioner, may levy, in the prescribed manner, all or any sort of taxes, rates and fees mentioned in the second schedule.
12. Any UP may join any other Union Parishad or Parishads or any other local authority or authorities in appointing a joint committee for any purpose in which such UP or authorities may be jointly interested and may be delegated to such joint committee and power which may be exercised by it, including the power to make regulations for the conduct of business.
13. A UP may make regulations to provide for all or any of the following matters, namely:
 - i. Conduct of business of the Union Parishad;
 - ii. Prescription of quorum;
 - iii. Asking of questions;
 - iv. Requisitioning of meetings;
 - v. Recording of minutes;
 - vi. Execution of resolutions;
 - vii. Constitution and functions of committees and sub-committees cooption of members thereon and conduct of business by them;
 - viii. Custody and use of the common seal;
 - ix. Delegation of powers of the Chairman to any member or office or employee of the UP.
 - x. Organization of the office of *the* Union Parishad into departments and branches and definition of the duties of such department and branches;
 - xi. Registration of birth and deaths;
 - xii Registration of the cattle and animals;

- xiii. Regulation and management of common property;
 - xiv. Regulation of burning and burial ground;
 - xv. Prevention and control of infectious diseases;
 - xvi. Prevention of encroachments;
 - xvii. Management and regulation of cattle pounds;
14. Through the Village Courts Ordinance 1976, UP has been given judicial power in its own jurisdiction. According to this ordinance, UP can constitute village courts for discharging case related to both civil and criminal activities in a limited scale.
15. UP is empowered to constitute "The Rural Poor and Unemployed Relief" fund for giving assistance to the poor and unemployed people of the union area.

4.6 Resources of the Union Parishad

The financial resources of the Union Parishad are generated from taxes, fees, government grants and Immovable Property Transfer Tax (IPTT).

According to Siddique, out of the 28-revenue source, the UP generally selected few common items on which they could actually levy taxes, rates and fees. These are - tax on the annual value of immovable property, rate for remuneration of the village police, which is known as Chawkidery tax., tax on Jatra, theatrical shows and other amusements, license fee on vehicles (other than motor vehicles) including carts, bicycle and all kinds of boats, (Siddique,K 2005:215).

UP also has limited financial resources. The money that comes from the government is not sufficient for the Union to fulfill all its responsibilities. The Union's ability to collect its own resources through taxes is limited since the people in the rural areas are very poor, (Aminuzzaman, 2003). Government is now giving two-lac taka directly to each Union Parishad from ADP. The other portion of ADP allotment goes to Upazila level, which is supposed to distribute, the money to the Union Parishad. The struggle and competition over resources between general members and women members in the reserved seats appear to be logic since the wards of the general seats and the wards of the reserved seats are overlapping each other. From field survey it is revealed that there is serious lack of co-operation between the male members from the general seats and the women members from the reserved seats.

4.7 Role of woman members in Union Parishad

In 1997, women received the mandate to be directly elected to the UP in three reserved seats. However, subsequently the women members faced serious problems in participating in UP functions mostly because of resistance from the chairman and male members. Such resistance resulted due to the non-specificity of the role of the members of the 'reserved seats' vis a vis the members of "general seats" in the ordinance. Although in response to the problematic of participation following the UP 1997 election, some selected functions have been assigned to the women members through government orders (i.e., membership in PIC, social development committee, RMP selection, Tube-well site selection committee etc). The legal framework is unclear as to the role of the female members in the regular functions of the UP leading to exclusion of women from the mainstream of UP activities. This ambiguity leads to a condition of power imbalance among the male and female members of the UP, which in the long run has significant social implication with regards to women's empowerment in formal organization and in the community.

To make the role of women members more effective, some initiatives have already been taken by the amendments of Local Government Ordinance and different notifications/circulars/orders of the Government.

According to the report of Democracy Watch some of the features of the role of UP female members are as follows:

Female members of the UP will act as the Chairperson to at least one third of the Project Implementation Committees (PICs) of the UP.

- Female members (reserved) will be encouraged to be involved in five additional standing committees namely, a. Women and Children Welfare, b. Fisheries and Livestock, c. Tree Plantation, d. Union Works Programme, e. Mass Education.
- Take active role in selection process of vulnerable women of the Union.
- Participate actively in the selection of road development projects of the Union.
- Advise and assist the Primary RMP Monitor (UP Secretary) in solving problems related to Road Maintenance Programme (RMP).
- Report to the UP Monitor in their respective wards (combination of three old wards) for the RMP activities.

- One of the female UP member acts as the Vice-Chairperson of the Old Age Allowance Programme Selection Committee of the Union.
- Introduce various problems of her own-ward in meeting.
- Assess and distribute relief during disaster.
- Prepare the list of aged people of their own area for distribution of old age allowance.
- Introduce various problems of women and to give different programmes for their development.
- Assist the Chairman in selecting VGF and VGD beneficiaries.

Following table shows some important circulars describing the roles and responsibilities of UP female members

Table-2 Government Circulars for woman members

Date	GOB Circulars/Instructions
5-11-98	Formation of Social Development Committee under the chairmanship of Female UP Members
3-11-98	At least one female UP member to be inducted in the PIC for Test Relief Projects. (Circular issued by Ministry of Relief and Disaster Management)
21-6-98	Involvement of Female UP Members in implementation of RMP
21-9-98	Involvement of Female UP members in Development Activities: a. Standing Committees, b. Participation as PIC Chairperson, c. Selection of Tube well site selection committee
24-9-98	Role of Female UP Members in selecting candidates of Old Age Allowance (circular from Ministry of Social work)
18-10-98	Female Member will be a member of Tube Well Site selection Committee.

18-10-98	Reminder for Involvement if Female UP members in Development Activities: a. Standing Committees, b. Participation as PIC Chairperson, c. Selection of Tube well site selection committee
19-10-98	Female members of the UP will be made PIC chairperson for at least one-third of the total PICs of the UP. Female member, who could not be made PIC chairperson, should be made members of the PICs.
12-11-98	Fixation of one fourth PIC chairmanship to Female Members UP under Test Relief Programme of Ministry of Relief and Disaster Management.
8-9-99	Involvement of Female UP member in the campaign against drugs
10-9-02	Female members of the reserved seats will hold one-third post of the Chairperson of the standing committees of UP; Female members of the reserved seats will hold one-third post of the Chairperson of the all PICs of the UP.

(Democracy Watch, 2002: 9-10).

4.8 Position of woman in Bangladesh

According to data from World Food Programme our country is classified as 'least developed country' and of the population of 140 million people, about 30 million are considered 'ultra poor'. These people suffer chronic food shortages and severe malnutrition. Its inhabitants are also very vulnerable to catastrophes like floods and cyclones. About three fourths of the population lives in the rural areas although more people are moving into the big cities like Dhaka.(Sida, 2002:106) At national levels women have strong political position but at grassroots level women played only a marginal role.

Gender disaggregated key human development indicators show that women in Bangladesh, including adolescent girls and the girl child, are significantly worse off than men in practically every aspect of life. Bangladesh has been ranked 140th in the world in terms of a gender related index based on gender gaps in literacy, education, health care, asset ownership and income. For example literacy rate for men is 50.6 percent contrasted to 41.5 percent for women. Bangladesh is one of the few countries in the world where there are fewer women than men (100 women to every 105.8 men) and in which women have lower life expectancy than men (57.6 for women and 58.1 for men) (Sida, 2002:14.17).

4.9 Participation, Representation and Leadership

Participation

According to the UNDP (1993:21), participation means that the people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political processes that affect their life. Participation is an active process by which beneficiaries influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self reliance or other values they cherish (Paul, 1986:2). Participation of women in the policy making process is one of the major factors towards empowerment. In fact, women's empowerment and women's development are supplementary and complementary to each other. R.C Baetz (1975) states that participation in development means how community members can be assured the opportunity of contributing to the creation of the community's goal and services.

The term women participation in the local government is an important issue in current development discourses. Socio-economic development cannot be truly achieved without the active participation of women at the decision making level in society.

In Bangladesh about 85% of women live in rural areas. The rural social structures are plagued with many problems such as illiteracy, unemployment, malnutrition and poverty. But there is a tradition of social system and institutions that place women in unequal and disadvantaged position. The constitution of Bangladesh has guaranteed equal rights to men and women both in matters relating to the state and public life. The constitutional provision (Articles 9-10, 27-28, 37-39, 50,66 and

122) clearly outlined the steps to be taken to ensure participation of women in all spheres of national life.

It has also been realized and recognized by the government that the objective of improving the status of women in Bangladesh is likely to be achieved if women get their rightful representation in National parliament and the local government institutions. It would ensure their participation in the formal decision making process at the national and local levels.

Union Parishad has been given an increasingly important role in civic development and judicial functions with a view to associating women with all the tiers of local government institutions.

In September 1996, the Government set up the local government commission. The commission submitted its report in May 1997 and recommended the formation of four-tier elected local government bodies at village, Union, Upazila and District levels. The Government has already approved the recommendations. The commission-report recommended for direct election of women to one-third reserved seats in local bodies. It is to be noted that 12,828 female members were directly elected in Union Council election held in 1997, moreover, 20 Chairmen out of 4,198 and 110 members of Union Parishad (Local Government) were elected directly. (Women in Development, 2000:67).

The emphasis of the Fifth Five Year Plan is on the reduction of gender disparity through integration of women in the main stream of development. The thrust of the plan is on the protection of women's rights and empowerment of women. The main objectives of this plan are to:

- i. Increases women's participation in decision making both at the national and local levels and.
- ii. Increase women's representation at all levels in the public service including all tiers of local government.

In the present context of Bangladesh, we can assume that traditional values and norms are changing. In case of women's participation in politics or any activities outside home, there is a strong opposition from family member's (husband, father or mother in law) relatives, the community members (community leaders and

neighbor) and also stand to lose their esteem and prestige in the society. In this stage very insignificant percentage of women has been continuing their political activities from the beginning in Bangladesh (Almas, 2003:14-15).

Representation

Recent changes in policy to introduce women in local governmental bodies is an important one where women should be active and to raise the voice of women for the women right and empowerment. But what is the actual meaning of representation and for whom and how they will represent is also an important issue. Ema Frankl (2004) has conducted a research on "Quota as Empowerment –The use of reserved seats in Union Parishad as an instrument for women's political empowerment in Bangladesh". In her research report she has discussed about the concept of representation both in the political and local government context. According to her the Representatives are acting spokesmen for interest group and social movement. Representation of identities generates a conception of social representation. The representatives are supposed to reflect the social composition of the electorate in terms of presence. The representatives can speak and act for these groups because they share common experiences and therefore also hold common commitments and values. (Squires, 1999-202-203).

According to Hannah Pitkin, representation means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them (Pitkins, 1967, 209). This is representation, which Squarries calls representation of identities, so called social representation. Only women can 'act for' women in identifying 'invisible' problems affecting the life of large numbers of women (Dimond and Harsock, 1981, 198). This recognition of women's distinctive identities requires political representation of woman as woman. The idea is that there is a women's perspective, which need more recognition. The basic reason is that women engage in politics differently; if they enter the arena of formal politics, this will have impact on the debate and moral framework underpinning politics. In order to do this, women have to represent themselves, as one cannot delegate the task of representing identities in the same way as one can with interest (Squires, 1999:224-225).

According to Philips, policy decisions are not settled in advanced by party program. Instead problems and issues emerged all the time and as representative one has to make interpretations and priorities all the time. The representations have considerably autonomy and do not always abide by pre-agreed policies and goals. This is also why it matters who these representatives

are. Philips notes that "political experience tells us that all male or mostly male assemblies will be poor judges of women's interests and priorities and concerns" (Phillips (ed), 1998:235-236). "Men may conceivably stand in for women when what is at issue is the representation of agreed policies or programs or ideas. But how can men legitimately stand in for women when what is at issue is the representation of women per se? (Philips, 1995:6).

Leadership

Leadership is a complex interpersonal process of influencing human behavior. According to Davis and Newstrom (1985), "leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward achieving objectives. It is the human factor that binds a group together and motivates it towards goal." Leadership is the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals in a given situation. Leadership is a crucial ingredient in organizational effectiveness.

In the structure of local government women can initiate, usher and implement socio-economic change and development of the rural communities by unleashing various development potentials. In this study women leadership refers to the elected women representatives of the local government institutions namely Union Parishad. The presence of women leadership in the local government institutions is considered vital for ensuring grassroots level governance and development. Furthermore, women leaders can emerge as an effective change agent at the grassroots, which in turn, can bring massive socio-economic development of the whole country. (Rahman and Sultana, 2005:6).

4.10 Women empowerment

Definitions of empowerment vary greatly. Empowerment must be quantified and measured depending on the particular context. In the context of women and development, the definition of empowerment should include the expansion of choices for women's ability to exercise choice. (United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1995).

Empowerment is multidimensional participatory process. Capacity to take decision and apply his qualification in his life and work place is his empowerment. Empowerment can be achieved through having control by means of knowledge and resources. Karl (1995) explains, "Empowerment is multifaceted process involving the pooling of resources to achieve collective and countervailing power and entailing the improvement of manual and technical skills,

administrative, managerial and planning capacities and analytical reflective abilities of the local people.

Empowerment of women means to empower the women to take actions and decisions necessary for them. The process of empowerment is both individual and collective, since it is through involvement in groups that people most often begin to develop their awareness and the ability to organize to take action and bring about change. Prashad viewed empowerment as a process geared towards participation, greater decision making and trans-formative action through awareness and capacity building. Empowerment can be described as positive self-image of a person that can influence him or her in contributing to development. Empowerment sometimes equated with effective and meaningful participation. (Prashad, 2002:6).

4.11 Women empowerment through local government

Overall development of a country includes improvement in every dimensions-social, economic, political, cultural, moral, intellectual and aesthetic aspects of human life. Women constitute almost half of the country's population. In traditional societies like Bangladesh, where women's role are mainly confined to household and reproductive activities with a subordinate role in the family, socio-economic development and decision making process in the affairs of the statecraft, therefore, women's development is quite critical and it should not be viewed separately rather development of women folk should be considered as an integral part of the process of national development. In these areas women's empowerment through local government process may be the best alternative for development. From this standpoint women's entry into the domain of local government can help them play a role in the country's decision-making process that in turn can ensure their socio, economic, cultural and political rights and development. In fact, the issues of local government, women leadership, empowerment as well as women development are intertwined with one another. The development of one aspect will have positive consequences, for other issues. If aspect of local government is to develop the aspects of women leadership and empowerment will also be improved. Moreover, in these transitional societies development of women leadership is intermingling interlocked with various socio-cultural, political and economic and legal contexts of the country. In local government women can enjoy some socio-political and legal rights, which can help develop their leadership role and status. (Rahman and Sultana 2005:8).

4.12 Quota and reserved seat

Quota has its positive and negative impacts. Similarly reserved seats have its dual effect in the local government system. Reserved seats for women in the local government can be treated as a special quota. According to Maud Eduards argument from liberals is that it is undemocratic, discriminatory and violation of the principle of fairness. The argument is that all individuals should be treated equally and no one should be able to get advantages over another because of social background or ethnic background. Quota system becomes undemocratic as they give advantages to groups because of factors, such as sex, (Eduards, 2002:48, quoted in Frankl, 2004: 16).

According to Dahlerup, quotas for women represent a shift from the notion of 'equal opportunity' to equality of result. Even though there are no formal barriers to participation or combination there are informal or hidden ones that prevent women from participation in formal politics. Different types of quota systems then become a compensatory instrument to overcome these hidden barriers and to reach 'equal of result'. (Dahlerup, 1998: 95 quoted in Frankl, 2004:17).

This idea is closely related to the risk of "stigmatization" of the 'quoted' group. The idea is that in a quota system one will have a job or position because of one's sex and not because of competency or merit (Bacchi, 2004:132).

Carol Bacchi argues however that this is a problem that flows from the understanding of affirmative action (like quotas) as 'preferential treatment' and not social justice. Therefore quota becomes a compensation for structural barriers that make it possible for competition. (Bacchi, 2004:142).

It is also important to mention generated norms, cultural patterns and pre-determined social roles assigned to women and men. Still, in many countries, women's primary roles are as mothers and housewives and not as politicians. In some developing countries men even tell their women how to vote. This is also become a psychological barrier for women in that they lack confidence. "A certain culture of fear presents women from contesting election and from participating in political life'. (Shvedova, 1998:34).

In an interesting article Richard E. Matland compares developed and developing countries and argues that the elected system is not equally important in the developing countries as in the

developed ones. According to Matland, a minimum of development level is needed before the forms of the electoral system will have any effect on the representation of women; development is crucial when it comes to the level of women's representation (Matland, 1998). In the third world countries socio-economic obstacles like poverty and unemployment, lack of financial resources, illiteracy and low level of education are common. In most countries women carry a disproportionate share of domestic work, which makes it difficult or impossible to be politically active. Matland argues that "moving out of the house and into the workforce appears to have a consciousness-raising effect on women; they become politicized".

There is also a difference between 'quota as reserved seats' and 'electoral quotas' or candidate's quota. Reserved seats are a system that guarantees women a certain numbers of seats in the parliament or in the local government independent of the electoral result. The other two systems prescribe a certain percentage of women on the list presented to the voters in the election (Dahlerup and Freidenvall, 2003:9).

Reserved seats however guarantee a certain percentage of women as women only can fill the seats themselves. In India, Pakistan and Bangladesh seats are reserved for women by law or constitution. In the case of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh it is also important to make a further distinction between 'reserved seats with indirect elections' and 'reserved seats with direct election'. System with indirect elections has a certain number of seats that are reserved for women, but they are nominated and elected by, for example the directly elected representatives. In a system with direct election there are certain seats reserved for women to whom only women are allowed to contest. The former system of reserved seats in Bangladesh was filled with nominated and indirect elected women. In the new system it is direct election to fill up the reserved seats.

4.13 Quota and empowerment

The implementation of quota system is often a top-down strategy in which women are given political position from above. It is not often a result of national demand from women's organization but rather due to populist politics by government to gain international or national political status. Dahlerup and Freidenvall claim that a new international discourse on women in institutional politics is an important factor behind recent introduction of quota all over the world, (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2003:3). According to Krook, powerful international

organizations like UN and IPU have put women in decision making position on the international political agenda and established the norms of gender balance.(Krock,2003,c-5-11) According to Nanivedekar(2003), a top-down implementation of quotas with no mass mobilization of women pressing for this demand that it will create a vacuum instead of a space for women. This vacuum is field by "proxies"- the house wives of the male politicians without any real power as there are not enough politically active women to fill the seats. These women have a lower political awareness and serve the patriarchal interest of the family and as such their participation in politics is in itself patriarchal participation. Since quotas themselves do not remove all the other barriers to the full citizenship of women, the crucial question is whether quotas imposed because of international inspiration without mobilization among larger groups of women themselves can achieves the goal.

Previously Union Parishad was captured by small elite group of the locality. It did not represent the poor people. Specifically Union Parishad did not perform its role for the improvement of the poor women. According to Iben Nathan, local government as an institution mainly serves the interest of the rich and powerful elites and the poor tend to be viewed as manipulated, forced and violated by the local elites. The few existing studies on women's political participation tend to draw an even more discouraging picture (Nathan, 1998).

CHAPTER--5

DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER--5

Data Analysis

5.1 Socio-economic Status of Woman Members

5.1.1 Age of the elected woman members

According to World Bank (1993:13) in Bangladesh where a large majority has the same religion, ethnicity and language, the socio-economic status is an important factor. Education and land ownership are very important factors when it comes to the socio-economic status in Bangladesh, where higher levels of education and land ownership are associated with lower probability of being poor.

In 1999, World Food Programme studied the involvement of different development agencies and their socio- economic activities for the woman members. After that Almas Ali in 2003 and Emma Frankl in 2004, conducted a research in different areas of Bangladesh. To find out the nature of functions of woman members, their role and obstacles in participation at UP, social position are important indicators. In my field survey, I have collected data from 10 Union Parishad of two Upazila on the basis of the objective of the study. Analysis of those data and a comparison with previous study result are given below.

The age of the elected woman members of the Union Parishad of the study area ranged from 20 to 55 years. Three woman members (15%) belong to age group 20-29years, 10 women (50%) between 30-39years, 5 elected women (25%) between 40-49 years and only two (10%) woman members are 50 years or above. It is important to note that majority of woman members fell in the category of 30-39years. Most of them are relatively young and energetic.

Table-3 Age of the woman members

Age distribution	Number of WM	% Percentage
Below 20 years	0	0
20years to 29 years	3	15
30 years to 39years	10	50
40years to 49 years	5	25
50 years and above	2	10
Total	20	

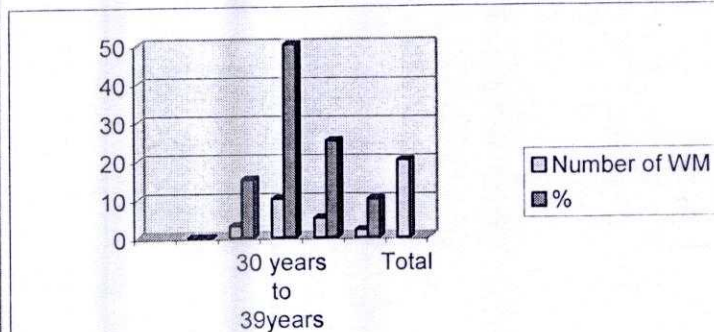


Figure-3 Age of the elected woman

5.1.2 Marital status

Table-4 Marital status of the woman members

Indicators	Number of WM	%
Unmarried	0	0
Married	17	85
Widowed	2	10
Divorced	1	5
Separated	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	20	100

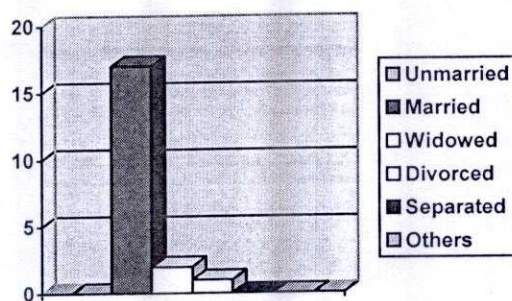


Figure-4 Marital status of woman member

Majority of woman members are married. It indicates that married women are elected more in Union Parishad as representatives. They are more accepted probably due to maturity and stability of family life. Most of them got married under the age of 18 years of age. When I inquired about their role to stop child marriage they became very shaky and did not want to open their mouth. They argued that their parents were not so conscious about the bad effect of child marriage. Above table reveals that 17 women members (85%) are married, 2 women are widowed (10%) and one woman (5%) is divorced.

5.1.3 Educational status

Table-5 Educational status of woman members

Indicator	Number of WM	%
Illiterate	0	0
Class i-v	6	30
Class vi-ix	7	35
S S C	4	20
H.S.C	3	15
Bachelor	0	0
Total	20	100

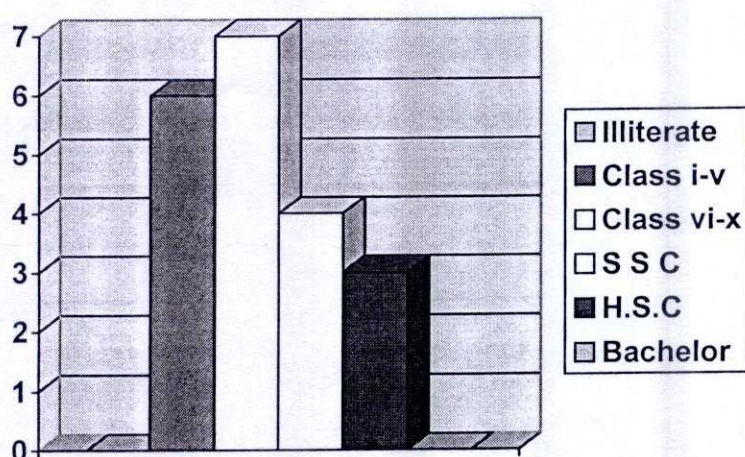


Figure-5 Educational qualification of woman members

As to their educational status none was found illiterate. Everybody has received formal education. It is a positive sign towards development of women representatives. Thirty percent of them read in primary level, they informed me that they could read and write. Thirty-five percent of them had taken education from high schools but did not complete S.S.C. Twenty percent of them passed S.S.C and only 15% of them have passed H.S.C level. Most of them (about 70%) had at least a secondary education. The study findings indicate that woman members are more educated and wealthier than male members and average rural women. Another interesting finding is that woman members are more educated than male member.

5.1.4 Occupational status of woman members

Table-6 Occupational status of woman members

Indicators	Number of WM	%
Agriculture	1	5
Small Business	0	0
Self employed	0	0
N.G.O Activist	1	5
Housewife	17	85
Midwifery	1	5
Total	20	100

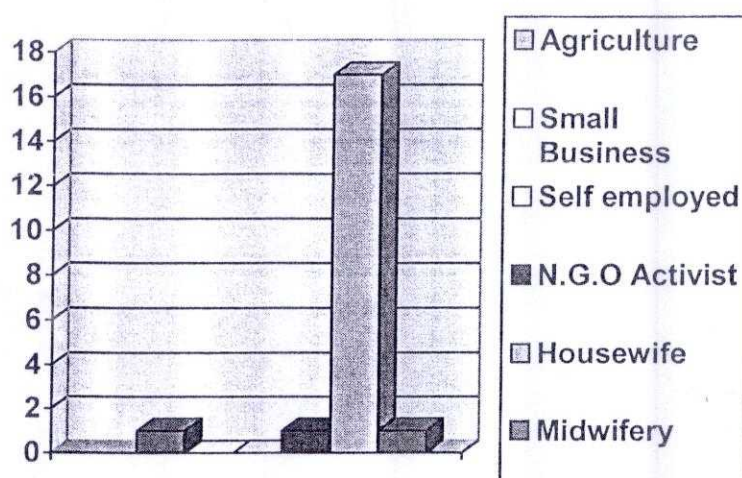


Figure-6 Occupation of woman members

In my study area, most of the woman members' primary occupation is household work. Among them 5% women is involved in both agricultural and N.G.O activities. The respondent informed that they are involved secondary occupation like poultry, cattle rearing and vegetable cultivation around their homestead. One woman member is working as teacher of pre-primary school of BRAC. Another is working as midwifery in her wards, she expressed her opinion that she has elected four times as member and she likes to do social work. She told that she did not find any difficulty to do work in UP. She also informed that she felt proud of serving the rural

women. She never failed in UP elections. According to her, if women become conscious and educated than it will be easy to empower woman and at the same time it will reduce poverty.

5.1.5 Husband's education and occupation

Table-7 Husband's education of woman members

Indicator	Number of responses	%
Illiterate	1	5
Clas i-v	4	20
Class vi-x	4	20
S.S.C	3	15
H.S.C	6	30
Bachelor	2	10
Others	0	0
Total	20	100

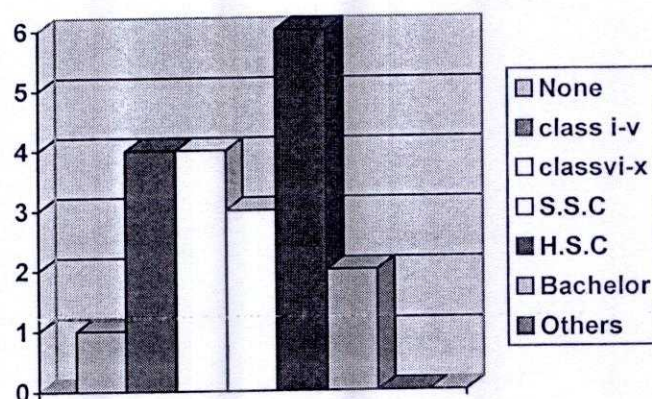


Figure- 7 Husbands' education of woman members

Table-8 Husbands' occupation of woman members

Agriculture	8	40
Small Trade	4	20
Self empl.	2	10
Govt. Service	2	10
Private Serv.	3	15
Village doct.	1	5
Others	0	0
Total	20	100

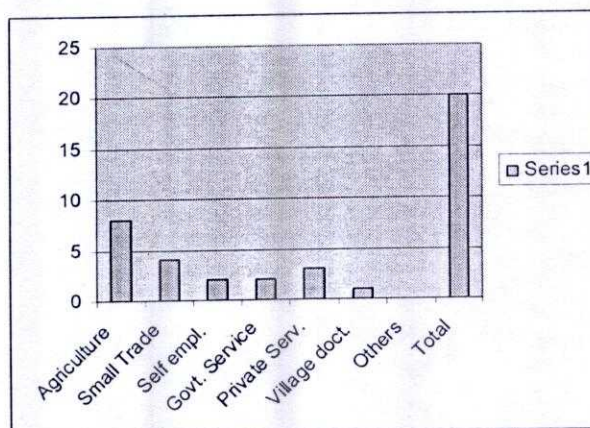


Figure-8 Husbands' occupation of woman members

Table-7 reveals that the husbands of woman members have higher levels of educational achievement than those of the woman members. Higher educational background and good

occupation of husband increase the position and honor of elected women. Husbands are involved formal occupation than elected women. 40% of them are involved in agricultural activities. Other occupations are small trade (20%), self-employed and govt. services (each 10%) and 5% is village doctor. Maximum husbands of woman members are owners of agricultural lands. It indicates that they are solvent. One of them is bachelor degree holder and he is working as quack doctor in his village.

5.1.6 Property ownership of woman members

Table-9 Household and agricultural land of elected woman members

Indicators	Numbers	%
0—1 acre land	16	80
1—2 acre land	3	15
2—3 acre land	1	5
3—4 acre land	0	0
4—5 acre land	0	0
Total	20	100

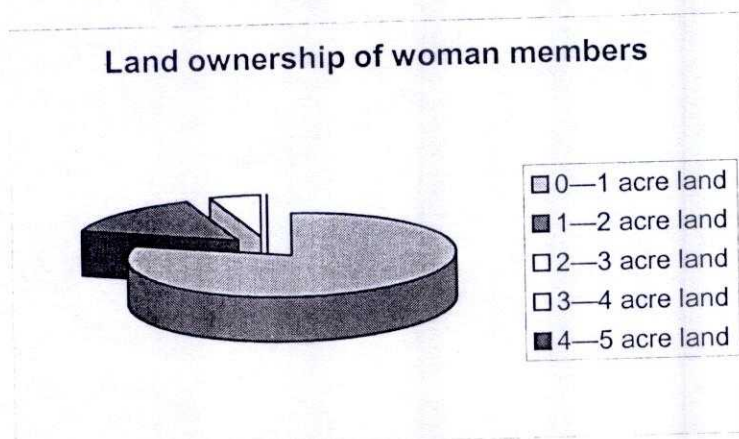


Figure-9 Land ownership of woman members

From the above table and figure it indicates that 80% woman members' possess land less than 1 acre. From interview it was found that these small lands are their homesteads. Their response was that they have not land of their own name, but they consider that husbands' land is their land.

5.1.7 Income of the elected women

Other than government grants they don't have regular income from other sources. But they always try to engage themselves in income generating activities. They have chicken and cows in their house. Most of them have vegetables farming around their house. It meets their daily needs and sometime their husband sale it to the nearby market.

5.1.8 Family types of woman members

Almost all the woman members are living with their husbands. The number of children ranges from 2 to 7. Among 20 elected women, 18 women belong to nuclear family and remaining women have extended family. According to the opinion of the respondents woman members get help in different ways from neighbors and they are living in a congenial atmosphere in their rural house.

5.1.9 Religion of woman members

95% the woman members are Muslims. Only one woman member was Hindu. She was elected first time from the Kholshi Union Parishad at Daulotpur in Manikgonj District. She informed that she is doing her duty in the UP cordially. She does not find any difficulties though she comes from Hindu community.

5.2 Development Activities

5.2.1 Main problems in the area identified by woman members

Woman members are representing people of three wards, her area is three times bigger and she is representing more people than male member. So it should be given more opportunity for woman member in participating different committees. For women empowerment, participation in every committee should be made compulsory. Union Parishad is treated as the center point of development of rural areas.

The Project Implementation Committee (PIC) does maximum development activities at the U.P level. According to government circular woman members will be one-third chairperson of total PIC. Social Development Committee will be formed under the chairmanship of female UP member. At least one female member should be included in the PIC of TR (Test Relief) Projects. Female member, who could not be made PIC chairperson, should be made members of the PICs. Upazila Development and Coordination Committee monitor the project. Upazila Engineer and PIO help drawing and designing of the project. According to woman members,

these departments are not doing their work properly. Woman members are implementing small projects. Their allotment is range from 25 thousand to 60 thousand taka or equivalent amount of food grains.

Female UP member is the monitor of RMP. But most of chairmen are not following this government order and chairman does not want to give proper position of woman members in the committees.

The elected women think that they are conscious about their local problems because of their long involvement and acquaintance with them. Major problems of their locality detected by them are bad communication, lack of health services, unemployment, corrupt practices by upper level authority, lack of awareness, Absence of good educational institution, excessive price hike of essential goods, unethical political interference. In a quarry about the main problem of their area woman members responded in different ways.

Table-10 Problems of locality identified by woman members

Indicators	Numbers of respondents	%
Roads communication	9	45
Lack of health services	2	10
Unemployment	2	10
Corruption	3	15
Absence of good educational institutes	1	5
Lack of awareness	1	5
Price hike	1	5
Political influence	1	5
Others	0	0
Total	20	100

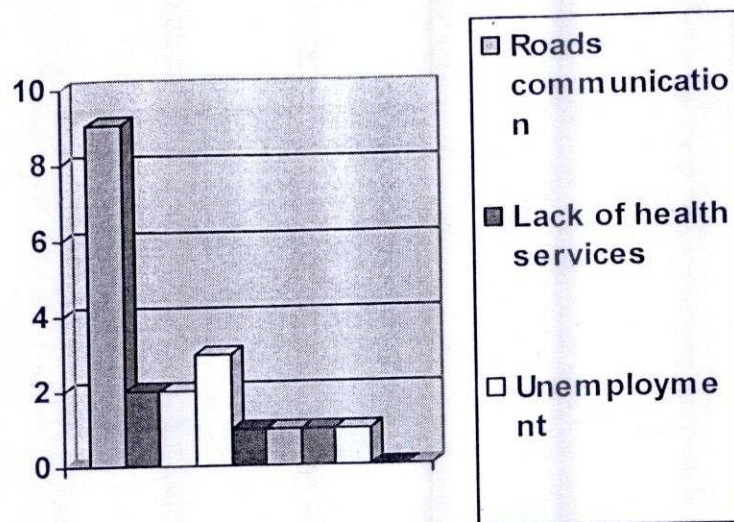


Figure-10 Woman members' response about their local problems

45% of respondents identified lack of road communication as their main problem. 15% think that corrupt and malpractice of Chairman and other higher authorities are problems in implementing projects. 10% respondent answered that lack of proper health services and unemployment are also problems in their rural areas.

5.2.2 Project implemented

Woman members are aware of their project so far as they have implemented. Everybody told that they had prepared VGF cards for the poor and destitute people. Construction and repair of earthen road, development of mosque, temple, madrasa and school ground by T.R GR food grain assistance, tree plantation, distribution of sanitary latrines. During the visit it was seen that all members were engaged in preparing list of VGF cards. With the help of Upazilla officials they are checking and cross checking the list and discussing it in the meeting. Women members of Dhamshor and Kholshi Union Parishad told that they did not satisfy the people of their areas because they did not get proper distribution of project by chairman. For these reasons they are frustrated. They informed that no project has taken which is related to women empowerment.

Table-11 Projects implemented last year by woman members

Indicators	Number of W. M answered	%
VGF	20	100
VGD	13	65
Road con./maintenance	15	75
Earth work in Inst.	5	25
Tree plantation	3	15
Sanitation	12	60
Safe drinking water	2	10
Poultry firm	1	5
Cattle firms	0	0
Others	0	0

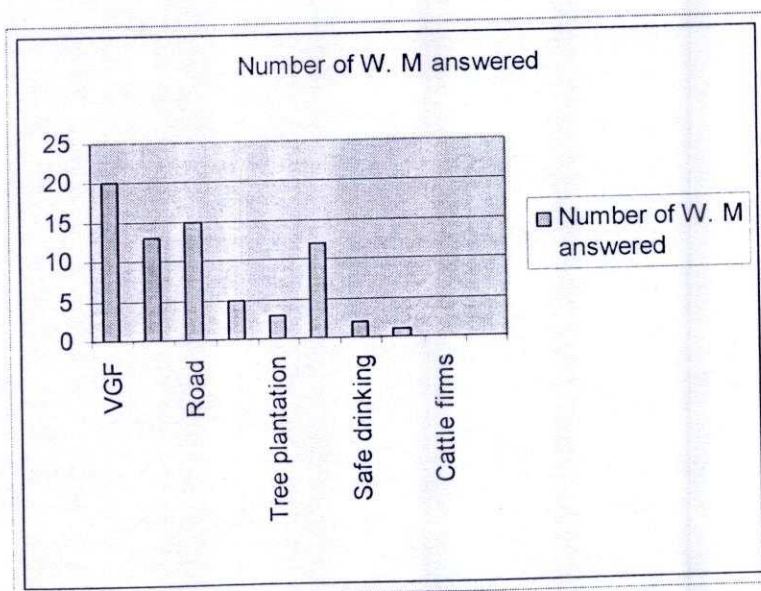


Figure-11 Projects implemented last year by woman members

100 percent woman members were involved in preparing the list of beneficiary of VGF. 75% respondents told that they had constructed roads or were involved in maintenance of rural roads.

5.2.3 Problems encountered in implementing of the above projects

Woman members are facing numerous problems at the time of project implementation. They thought that male members had tried to take their projects in all possible ways. If they did not raise any voice in the meeting then the project would be allotted to male members. Chairman sanctioned the project of the male member who had understanding with him. Woman members assigned reasons for non-implementation of local development works. Paucity of funds and resources were the main obstacles. 50% of them said fund crisis was main problem in implementing project. Funds were not placed with them at proper time. They got the fund at the end of the financial year and it was rainy season, not fit for development work. Chairman and PIO did not give proper attention at the time of implementing the projects rather they want some share as bribes unethically. UP Secretary kept all the records and he wrote resolution according to the wish of Chairman. Lack of honesty and sincerity was also mentioned as reason for low quality work of projects. Local politicians and miscreants interfered with their work.

Table –12 Problems of implementing projects

Indicator	Number of responses	%
Fund crisis	10	50
Corruption	2	10
Local biasness	1	5
Land related disputes	2	10
Lack of proper planning	1	5
Lack of awareness	2	10
Lack of supervision	2	10
Others	0	0

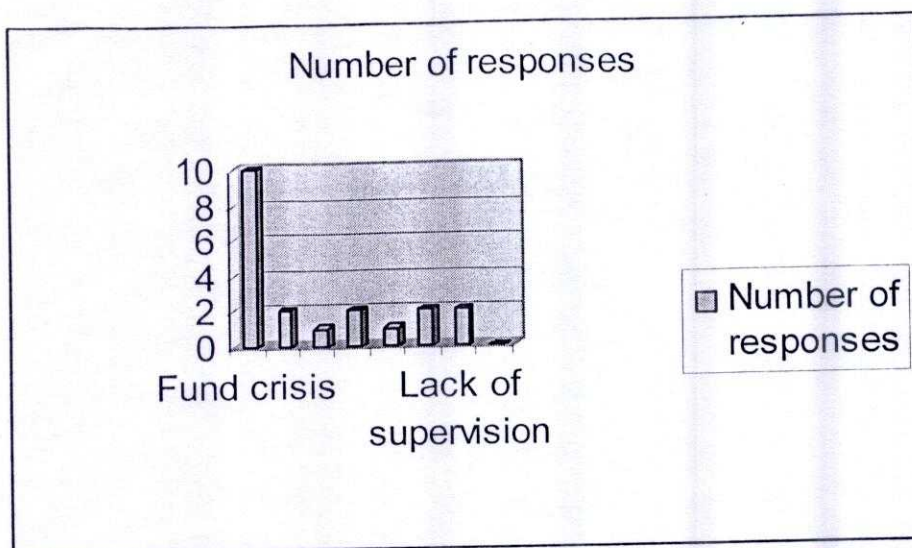


Figure-12 Problems of implementing projects

10% complain that due to corruption and land disputes they are unable to do the projects properly 5% think that Chairman always has local biasness he allotted funds only for his ward or village depriving other part of the UP. The Chairman does not want to complete the projects properly. It is quite clear that there is discrepancy among what they had done and what they wanted to do about these problems. They cited some examples at the time of interview. They want to improve the financial situation of poor women creating opportunity of employment in the village level and to work like cottage industry, small agricultural farm, poultry farm and goat rearing. Women have achieved equal level of education with men up to secondary stage. It will help women empowerment in the future.

5.3 Participation in Meeting and Social Activities

5.3.1 Knowledge about UP functions

According to the study report of World Food Program, Elected women's knowledge about UP activities enables them to play a key role. Sixty seven percent of the elected women could mention only three activities that it implements, while only 28 per cent could mention more activities. The general ignorance of the elected women and without their proper training on the UP activities put them into difficulties for making significant contributions. (WFP, 1999:12).

One of the important reasons why women have not received adequate benefits from years of planning and development was their inadequate knowledge, non-participation and non-involvement in the preparation and execution of plans for their development.

In my interviews only 35% women could mention about the standing committee they are presiding over. But nobody could explain the function of that committee. 55% of them could explain their function in the UP. Others were not conscious about their position and function of the UP. Woman members told that secretary writes the minutes of the meeting and normally they don't sit for the meeting of the standing committee. They do not understand or don't give importance of the standing committees.

5.3.2 Involvement in the committee

According to government circular elected woman members will act as Chairperson of at least one-third (that is about four) standing committees (Total standing committees being 13) same applies to project committees also. Moreover elected woman will be chairperson of committees of Protection of Woman and Children oppression, Protection of Acid throwing, Child marriage protection. According to the opinion of female members, meeting and discussion among the members of the Standing Committees do not held. Generally secretary of the UP prepares the resolution and they put their signature according to the desire of UP chairman and to keep record up to date for supervision of higher authority. Moreover, where there were provision to keep woman members as one of the member of the committee were found no responsibilities despite their inclusion in the committees. Woman members told that secretary did not feel necessary to inform them about government circular.

Table-13 Member of standing committees

	Number of WM	%
None	7	35
Finance . Establishment	0	0
Education	3	15
Health and Family Planning	3	15
Audits and Accounts	0	0
Agriculture	0	0
Social welfare	1	5
Handicrafts	0	0
Women and child welfare	5	25
Fisheries and Animal hus.	0	0
Tree plantation	1	5
Union works program	0	0
Non-formal education	0	0
Water supply and sewerage	0	0

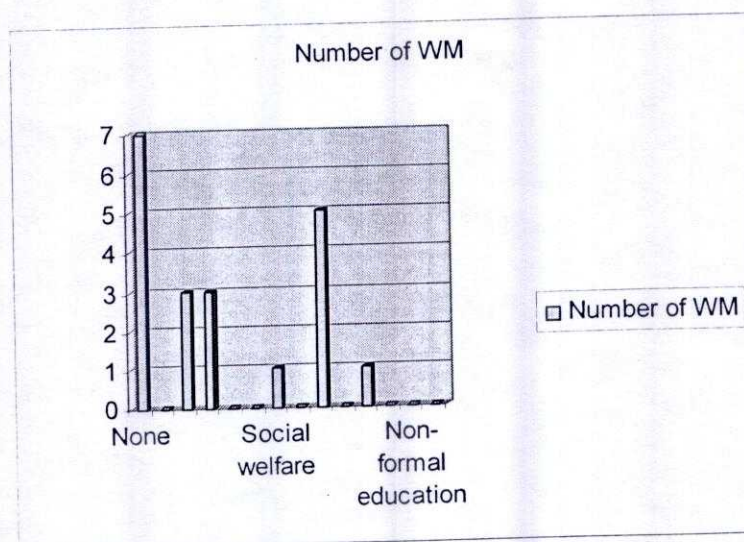


Figure- 13 Member of standing committees

About one-third of woman members are not member of any standing committee. The other women were functioning as members of the standing committees. The highest portion (25%) of them is involved in Woman and Child welfare committee. The rest were included in Education (15%), Health and Family Planning (15%), Social welfare (5%), Handicrafts (5%), and Tree Plantation (5%).

The others project committees are VGF, VGD, PIC of earthwork, site selection committee of tube-well setting, Relief and Rehabilitation, Prohibition of Woman repression, Arsenic Mitigation committees. But contribution of woman members is not significant in these committees.

5.3.3 Participation in the meeting

Attendance in meetings is not an important indicator for active participation but also a forum to discuss development activities and decision-making. Moreover active participation of members and level of acceptance at meetings were important indicators of their involvement in development activities at local level. In field survey it was found that 95% of male members and 80% of woman members regularly attended the meeting. But majority of the woman members who attended the meeting could not play effective role in the decision-making process.

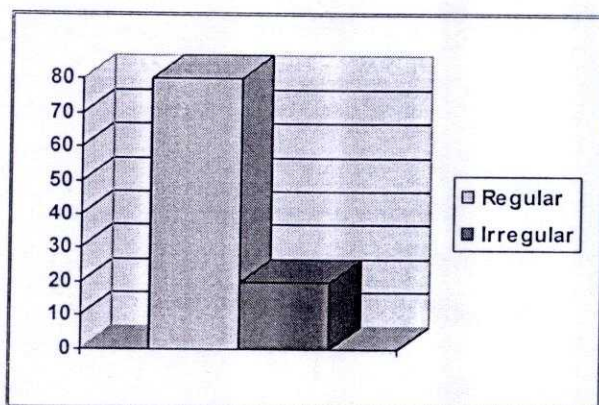


Figure-14 Attendance of WM at Union Parishad meetings

5.3.4 Problems in attending meetings

According to Shamim.I and Kumari,R, (2002:49) Unfortunately, there were about 12 percent women members and 3 percent male members were irregular at meeting. Majority of them explained that they did not get notice of the meeting in time (39% women and 43% men).

In my field survey it was found that elected women usually attend the meeting, even though there are some obstacles that keep them out of the activities of the UP. The most common barrier is the distance between their home and UP (40%). 25% respondents told family burden like lack of co-operation of in-laws and child rearing responsibilities. The other problems are that notice was not served properly or intentional (15%). Due to the family burden 25% women did not attend the meeting. The other problems are non-willingness due to frustration (15%) and illness (5%).

Table-14 Problems in attending meetings

Indicators	Numbers of WM	%
Distance	8	40
Insecurity	0	0
Communication prob.	0	0
Not receiving notice	3	15
Information gap	0	0
Family burden	5	25
Illness	1	5
Non willingness	3	15
No problem	0	0
Others	0	0

Some elected women also face problems at home. Co-operation of the family members was not a problem as such but the expenses incurred by the elected women for any UP work had to come from their own pockets, which many families were unwilling to bear or unable to spend. Three wards are reserved for one female member, but each of those wards is also the constituency of one male member. That means the women have three male counterparts. This

situation has created a problem, as the males do not want to recognize the women as legitimate representatives of their wards.

5.3.5 How to increase women participation?

Although divided by class, location, age, and religion, women are generally guaranteed equal rights with men under the Constitution. However, long traditions of patriarchy, seclusion, and the power of family to exercise social control over male and female activities mean that most women are unaware of their rights and lack the means to realize them (ADB gender, 2004:20).

The new system with direct election instead of indirect election to the reserved seats is also important. The former system with indirect election was criticized by researchers. The women under the old system were not active and they did not receive the same respect as the directly elected members. (Chowdhury, 1994a:56).

To increase woman participation in UP activities, special training arrangement will help them to develop their confidence. According to Siddique, K since 1997, direct election of female representatives in all local government bodies, both urban and rural was introduced, direct election of women is likely to establish a link between them and community. Through elections women members are duly recognized as leaders at the grassroots level by the government and the local community. They should, of course, be given proper training on issues, which hinder integration of women with the mainstream of socio-economic life. (Siddique, 2005:314).

At the time of data collection women members, male members, chairman told that woman members have no specific job description. They claimed to introduce separate schedule in the present ordinance or in the rules to introduce specific job description of woman members.

Women members and other members suggested that clear job description, punctual attendance of chairman, financial independence of Union Parishad, cooperation with each other, proper training both male and female members and higher remuneration can help to increase elected women participation in Union Parishad. Social awareness should need to be increased for effective participation of woman members in the activities of UP.

5.3.6 Socio-economic and legal supports

Elected women observe that their rights are often violated or undermined by the numerical majority of the male members. They feel that women's rights must be protected by

implementation of legislation and they would like to change some rule such as increasing their allowances so that they can attend UP activities without depending on financial support from their husbands or households. They also feel that new rules should be made regarding their involvement, position and functions. Government can pay token money for attending the meeting. Clarification of jurisdiction of duties between the male and female members is a must to avoid overlapping. There should be a system so that woman members can get opportunity to be chairmen of the UP by turn. According to woman member, male member, chairman and elite people, more awareness and motivational programs should be taken so that citizen can participate in the UP functionaries. Transparency and accountability in the budget and allotment should be widely circulated among the people. When I asked whether the female members were getting their remuneration, they told me that they were getting only 350 taka per month (same to male member), which is below the minimum a woman needs to sustain herself and her family.

5.3.7 Support from UP Chairmen and other male members

In answer to the query whether male member and chairman helped them in performing their duties, 65% women members explained they got help from male members, 35% didn't get any help, 85% women members said they got help from their chairmen and 15% complain they didn't get help.

Table-15 Support from UP Chairman

Indicators	Responses of WM	%
Help from Chairmen	13	65
Not help from Chairmen	7	35

Figure- 16 Support from male members

Indicator	Responses of WM	%
Help from male members	17	85
Not help from male members	3	15

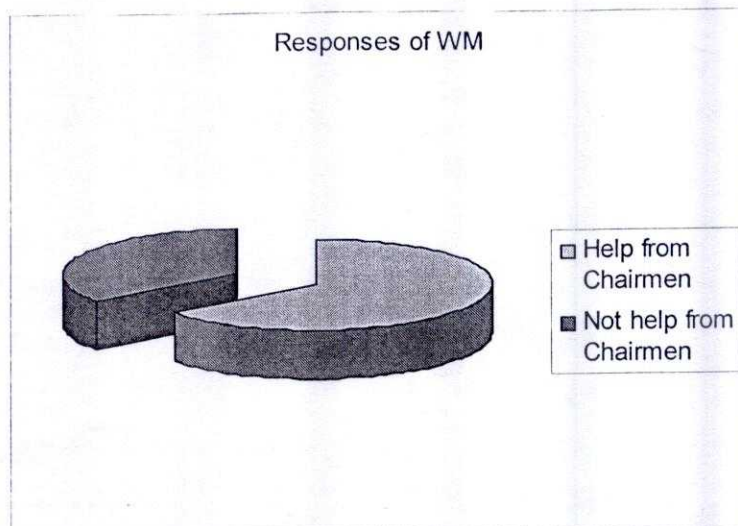


Figure- 15 Responses of WM about help from Chairmen.

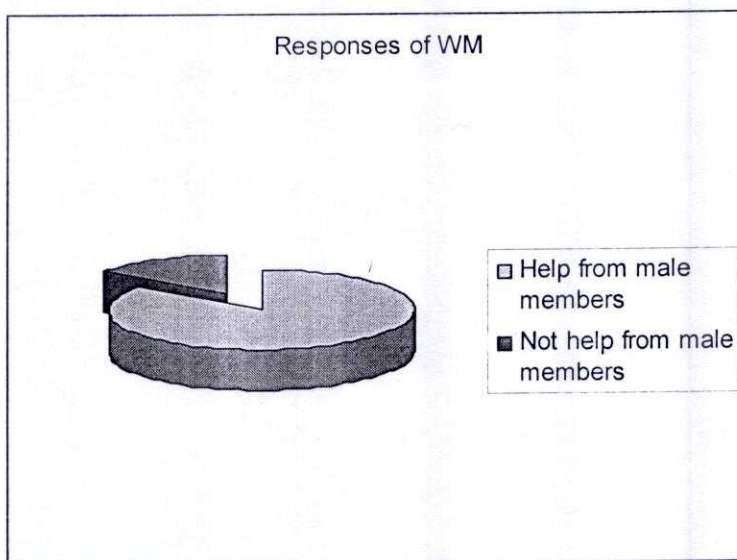


Figure- 16 Responses of WM about help from male members

5.3.8 Comparison of woman member's activity of two Upazilas

At the time of survey some similarities and dissimilarities of function of women representatives were observed. Both the Upazilas are far from the district head quarter and unions are not well communicated with the Upazila. Elected woman representatives are cordial about their behavior. They depend on their husbands or male members of their family. Their educational and land ownership of the woman members of the two upazilas are same pattern in both Upazilas.

According to woman representatives of Daulatpur Upazila, their UP office remain open everyday and chairman and secretary are found present regularly. On the other hand, UP offices of Matlab (South) are opened 4 to 5 days a week mainly through the UP police. However there is no regular presence of a members including chairmen and secretaries or there is no fixed time to find them in UP office. Local people meet or locate the chairmen through his mobile phone and meet with him directly at his house or business center or in Dhaka. Most of the chairmen are businessmen and they reside in Dhaka or in district. They come to the UP at meeting days irregularly. Local people have lost their faith in activities of UP council.

Female members of Matlab (South) told that their UP meetings were not held on a fixed day of the month. They did not get notice timely and often scheduled meetings were not held due to the absence of chairmen. They complained that chairmen did not want to help them in official matters willingly. The woman members have little knowledge about standing committees and their role in that committee. In general the participation of woman representatives in other social and development activities is very negligible. Most of them wear borkha or pordha and try to remain separated from male persons.

According to the opinion of women representatives of Daulatpur Upazila, UP meetings held on a fixed date and special meetings are arranged for grants and relief materials. Agenda is set up by the secretary taking the opinion of chairmen. Chairmen give them sufficient time to discuss about the local problems and normally they remain in their working place. Women members are very much active and try to improve their skill quickly with the help of civil society organization and NGOs. Female members of the Daulatpur seemed strong and have willingness to bring changes through their work.

5.3.9 Expected role of woman members in UP

According to the respondent of all categories, women members have greater access to women about personal and confidential matters. Women members can deal with women's issues like violence against women, dowry and divorce. Most women members, male members and Chairmen suggest that women members should involve themselves in social welfare, Health and family planning, Childcare, education, poultry rearing, gardening. According to them women members can create opportunities for poor women in income generating activities, such as goat rearing, small agricultural firm and small cottage industries with the help of private development organization.

Women members should sit with local women in a meeting every month and find out their demands and try to solve them. She should communicate with women and give suggestions about government program taken for UP, such as sanitation, birth and death registration, protection of child marriage, dowry, repression of women, tree plantation, woman and child care and awareness building activities.

5.4 Capacity-Building Strategies

5.4.1 Capacity- building strategies through training

The need of training and awareness could bring women representatives in better position not only in the participation level but also at the decision –making levels. The need for training of women do not mean that women were incapable of undertaking development at local level perceived by men politicians, but for qualitative input in development works taken by the government, which did not reach those who actually needed it. Training has been identified as an important tool to carry out development activities. Training is essential, especially for women because their participation in local government and in the public sphere is a new phenomenon. In Bangladesh, 71% women members received training from the government and NGOs, compared to only 45 percent male members.(Shamim and Kumer,2002:60-61). According to Aminuzzaman, the present capacity of the Government of Bangladesh to train and develop the members of UP through NILG is limited, a reason why the NGOs have been used in order to complement the limited resources of NILG. (Aminuzzaman, 2003)

The study by the World Food Programme showed that the general knowledge among the elected women about the roles and responsibilities in UP was very limited and that there is a real need for training among them. There are many NGOs working in these fields (World Food Programme, 1999).

The study was done by Democracy Watch showed that 50%woman members had been trained by three or more NGOs. (Democracy Watch, 2002:36).

When I asked whether they have received any training, 80 percent respondents told that they have taken some training 20% did not get any training. Most of the training was conducted in Upazila level by NGOs ranging from three days to seven days. Five percent were trained in Dhaka and another 15% at the district level.

Table-17 Training received by woman members

Indicator	Number of WM	%
Training received	16	80
Not received training	4	20

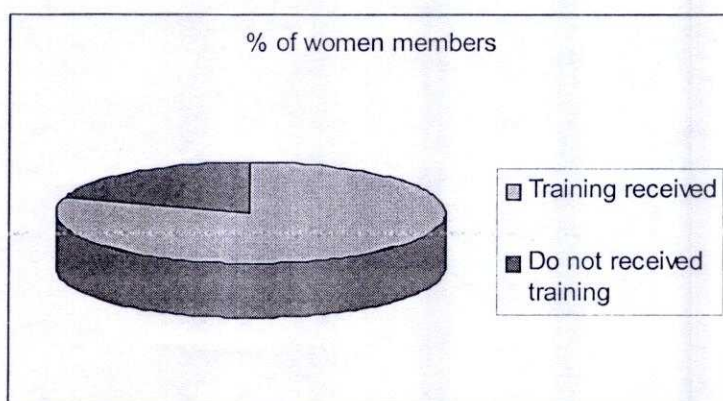


Figure-17 No. of woman members received training

5.4.2 Organizations involved in training of woman members

National Institution of Local Government conducts most of the training for women members. Beside this institute there are some other government and Non-government organizations which conduct training on capacity buildings of woman members. Training of woman members are conducted by the government and non-government organizations. These are- National Institute for Local Government, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development BARD, Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equity (PLAGE), Abdul Momen Khan Memorial Foundation (Khan Foundation), Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS), CARE- Bangladesh, PRIP- Trust, Concern- Bangladesh, Nari Uddug Kendra (NUK), Ain-O-Salish Kendra (ASK) and South Asian Partnership- Bangladesh

CHAPTER –6

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

59.9 percent of the UP Female members identified women empowerment as another important area for their training and development. Similar percentage (59.09 percent) of the UP female members registered their interest to get trained in various aspects of management project and scheme undertaken by UP through various PICs.

Leadership skill development is a priority area of training needs as has been identified by the Female UP members. About 57 percent of the respondent Female members noted the need for leadership development training.

UP female members are equally concerned about income generating activities. 55.13 percent of the respondents asked for various kinds of income generating skills (Democracy Watch, 2002:16-17).

Men also need training in broad gender issues as the women need to be accepted by the male members and chairman. Only training for female members will not bring any substantive change in the roles and functions of the female members, as one must also change the male members' (including the chairman) attitudes (Democracy Watch, 2004).

5.4.3 Training received by elected Women

Most of the trained women members respond that they have received training on RMP, Function rules and regulation of UP, VGD,VGF, Health and family planning, Sanitation, women empowerment, women right, Project Implementation/management, prevention of violence, Dowry and child marriage prevention, Relief and rehabilitation etc.

5.4.4 Training needs for UP woman members

Training needs assessment of the elected members of the local government has not yet been formally undertaken by any agency of the government. A recent study report of Aminuzzaman cited by Democracy Watch has identified some critical areas of training needs of the female members of the UP. Following table shows the distribution of training needs as identified by the survey of female UP members undertaken by this study.

Table-18 Distribution of Expected Training

Types of Training Expected	%
Role and activities of UP	76.75
Different rules on UP/ Local Government	72.18
Different aspects of Women Empowerment	59.90
Scheme/ Project Management/ Development Planning	59.09
Leadership skills development	57.56
Income Generating Activities	55.13
Awareness against Dowry, Polygamy, Early marriage	32.59
Violence Against Women	29.44
Environment/ Plantation	25.79

It is evident from the table that the UP Female members are very much keen and interested to know more about the functional and operational aspects of the UP's role and activities (76.75 percent). They are equally (as high as 72.18 percent) interested to have training and understanding on the various rules and regulations that govern the UP.

CHAPTER –6

Findings of the Study

6.1 Role of woman members in empowering of rural woman

The introduction of reserved for women in UP in our country has resulted in significant increases in the number of women being elected and employed. After involvement of women as representatives, they show that their presence has an impact on UP and on women in general. The elected women said that they had helped other women by extending their co-operation and involving women to decision-making positions. According to the survey it was found that Woman Members had taken their function as a challenge and they did not consider them inferior to the male member in any way. Their leadership is non- hierarchical and participatory, and it helps to disadvantaged sectors. They encourage poor women to be more aware and active. They want to change the environment of local government, making it more people oriented, consultative and more transparent. They have taken training in different development activities and they disseminate their ideas through UP to other women. To stop child marriage, dowry, women and child oppression and implementing projects like sanitation, safety clean water, education, health services, poverty reduction, community development in their respective area, they have an important role.

6.2 Conflict of UP Chairman and male members with woman member

According to Aminuzzaman, the power of the UP are predominantly vested in the chairman, who is authorized to exercise such power by himself/herself or other persons authorized by him (Aminuzzaman, 2003). This type of problem was also reflected in my interviews. Five elected women told that they had very bad experiences with the chairman who did not want to cooperate with them. They were ignored and insulted during the meeting. Chairman did not give any allotment or development project for them.

The study by the World Food programme showed that female members perceived alack of cooperation from the male members and that there was a communication gap between them. Male members have tendency to oppose whatever female members propose even if they are the best ideas! Many of the male members argued that women members could not plan, participate or perform their duties properly as the female members can't influence the decisions. Most

male members also argued that the elected members should deal with women's issues like violence against women, dowry and divorce and discouraged them to participate in other development works.(World Food Programme,1999).

Even with quotas there are barriers to women accessing reserved seats and effectively participating in UP activities. Women in reserved seats have little autonomy. Reserved seats are seen as having an inferior status and a lack of constituency and the ability to be part of decision-making can still be blocked from within the system.

The feeling of the majority of the elected women is that male members do not like them to play a significant role in the in the system of what was once monopolized by them. About 75% of them perceived that the male members could not accept their participation in the UP activities. Remaining woman members told that they had no problem in working with male members despite their negative attitudes and behavior.

At the time of interview I also tried to view of Chairman and male members about the necessity of Woman member in the UP, 90% of them did not want women member in the UP. They told that they did not observe any necessity of elected women in the UP. General people of the rural area hold different views against the chairman and male members. All of them told that in the UP activities women members had necessity.

According to the report of The Daily Star published on 21st August 2006, seminar held in oath room of parliament to improve the condition of women members.

Women members of union parishads (UP), Pauroshauva and City corporations at a dialogue at 20th August 2006 said humiliating treatment by the male UP members, chairmen and ward commissioners and deprivation of their due allocation ultimately frustrate their urge political activities. Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy (SPD) project of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Parliamentary Caucus on Gender organized the fifth regional dialogue on strengthening relations between women members of parliament and local councils.

Urged by the women UP members, the members of parliament (MPs) and experts agreed that they should hold regular meetings with the women members of local government and formulate laws on their rights and responsibilities.

“The chairmen and male ward members say that the women members are of low quality and it is better for us to serve the husbands rather than joining the council meetings or going to UNO offices,” said Salima Talukder, women member of Ghatail UP, Tangail.

The male chairmen use humiliating words and raise question about the character of women members if they strongly argue on any issue or demand their due rights.

The chairmen often do not call woman members in the meetings, or value their opinions, they do not give their due allocation for projects like Food for Work, Vulnerable Group Feeding or rations for widows or elderly people. In many cases allocation is received in the name of the women UP members, but the chairmen do not feel it necessary to have their signature.

So it is important to ensure the women members’ attendance in the monthly coordination meeting at the Upazila level so that they know the decisions taken.

6.3 How long is reserve seat required?

Reserved seat system is helpful for empowerment of women but it has also been criticized on different grounds. For example, in several cases it doesn’t help. But the question is about the system of reserved seat itself and how it works in practice and its implications. To keep seats reserved for women in the Union Parishad, somebody considered as undemocratic, discriminatory and violation of the principle of fairness. When I asked to elected woman members about the necessity of reserved seat, everybody told that introduction of reserved seat was helpful but overlapping of area/ward with male member’s wards create difficulties in discharging their duties. They want separate charter of duty from government. But six Chairmen do not like present system. They want selection system like that was before 1997. Other three chairmen are on behalf of the present system and opined to keep the system for four terms of elections. According to them, in the meantime progress of woman will be same as man and then it will not to be required any seat reservation for woman. Every male member is against any reserved or quota system. The elites of the rural areas opined to keep reserved seats for 10 to 20 years.

6.4 How and what changes are crucial in policy making?

Local government is strictly controlled by central government and in our country it dependent on central government funding. Present system of reserved seats in UP are seen as inferior than

general seats. It is lack of constituency. This system does not help women member properly to exercise power rather it in some cases block their ability to be part of decision making and their access to development activities. Barriers to participation in UP like reserved seats are treated as inequality in the eye of justice.. Politics in our country are seen to be unsuitable for women. To formulation of new policy for empowerment of elected women should be considered their economic and social empowerment to enable them to ultimately participate on an equal footing with men. Support system and ongoing training opportunities need to be established for women in local government system.

In general seats, women do not show willingness to compete with male. They want reservation for unlimited time. But it is against the natural justice. On the other hand in the survey, respondent informed that most of them like the system but they like to give facility to women for a definite period and it will be for three terms. Their ward should not be overlapped with male members.

Elected representatives should be paid at a level that will enable more women to participate. The culture of UP needs to change to ensure that women can be treated fairly and equally and to make sure that discrimination against women is not acceptable. Gender awareness programs for men need to be developed. Environment of Union Parishad needs to be friendly. UP standing committees should be more effective. For this elected woman members should be trained properly. Provision for appropriate laws should be made to enable them to conduct standing committee meetings properly.

CHAPTER--7

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER--7

Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

Women are disproportionately presented among the poor, and the number of woman in poverty in the rural areas of developing countries is growing faster than the number of man.(Mehra, 1997 :142). So to stop these situations of woman in our country various positive changes and policy should be adopted. The higher percentage of women to men employed in the informal sectors reflects woman's difficulty in obtaining access to employment because of their higher rates of illiteracy, lower levels of education, lack of job skill, and the social and cultural barriers to formal employment that women face. (Mehra, 1997:144).

Participation of citizens in U.P particularly that of women and poor, is essential in promoting good governance. Woman members blamed socio-economic constraints and complexities as hurdles to their proper discharge of responsibility. Though chairmen realize that woman members encounter special problems in discharging their work, they have not initiated actions to help women to overcome these constrains. They, however, suggested a number of measures towards the solution of the problems for examples training for the woman members of the Union Parishad and motivation of the community.

Women members have been invested with ample power, but in practical situations, it is seen that male members and Chairmen could not take it easy, as these positions were occupied by them for along periods. They could not agree mentally to share their positions with women.

Emergence of woman leadership in our country at the grassroots level Local Government is deeply rooted in the legal process. Woman leadership evolved at Local Government through some positive action and favorable policies and programs for woman development. Therefore, the development of women leadership and making their role effective and meaningful, more positive actions and legal measures from the government are essential.

It can be concluded that socio-cultural context affects the process of women leadership. The positive change in the context of the socio-economic, cultural and political aspects helps grow women leadership. Empowerment has close relationship with the revolutionary idea of establishing Woman's right. If women's voice cannot hear at the time of decision making then it will never be possible to improve the condition and expected level of woman.

7.2 Recommendations

The law that reserves seats for elected women in the ward should be revised. Currently one woman represents a constituency with three wards of three male members. This makes it difficult for her to be effective. The reserved seat is overlapping with the wards of male members ward. To take any development projects it creates problems and it hampers the relationship with other male members.

One alternative may be to allow women voters to elect women members in addition to their general vote. Another suggestion is that both male and female members will represent every ward or three wards should be reserved for women and other six wards for general and it will revolve over a term of election or a system may be devised in such a way that four wards of a Union Parishad will be selected for woman members and five wards for male members and it will rotate alternatively.

Most representatives were poor themselves and many lacked the social and educational resources too adequately to do their job. At present woman members' job description or clarification of their roles are not being circulated from one ministry but this is being circulated from different Ministries and Departments. This creates confusion and is indicative of lack of coordination which needs to be rectified. Roles and responsibility of Women Members should be clearly defined and by issuing circular women members' activity should be specified and not coincide with the duties of male members.

Woman members are recognized as leaders at the grassroots level by the government and by the local community. They, should, therefore, be given proper training and exposures to the issues, which will help them, perceive the socio-economic life of the society. A detailed and specific job description, project implementing technique and procedures to make a liaison between the local people and government officials at the higher levels should be prepared. Woman members should be involved more in decision making processes and participate in social and development activities. Most of the woman representatives didn't get proper training, so it is natural that woman members have no clear idea about their role and duties. Women representatives should be given appropriate training on development strategies, structure of society, rules and regulations of local bodies, organization methods, principle of management, accounting, legal rights of women, population policies. Capacity-building training of women representatives expands their knowledge of local government operations,

help them prepare budgets and manage finance. This also makes them aware of their responsibilities and rights of other members and helps them understand gender issues.

Woman MPs' meeting with the woman members of local councils and listening to their problems may help formulate laws in parliament. Regular meetings with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs can also help overcome their problems. Woman MPs should go to the woman members of the local governments and exchange their views to strengthen relationship that will gradually create awareness of their rights to play their due role.

Village Court Ordinance 1976 provides measures to deal with certain types of cases by Union Parishad. A Village Court consists of the Chairman of Union Parishad and two members to be nominated by each of the parties to the disputes one of them shall be a member of U.P. In order to render justice to the women, it may be provided that in cases involving women as a party, one of the members of the court shall be a woman. Woman members are ready to take responsibility but male members do not want to share their power and resources. To change the attitude of male member motivational program should be taken by District and Upazila administration. According to woman members, male members lack openness of mind. They do not agree to work with woman in the U.P. For this, woman member cannot fulfill their election promises. For this, development activities of her constituency and ultimately development programs are hampered seriously. It is a rare example that male representatives have done development activities by sharing equally with woman members. So, to solve the above problems, the attitude of all male members should be changed. Man's acquiescence and support is crucial for women to be effective; therefore gender sensitivity training should be provided to male representatives of local government and government offices.

Bibliography

- Alamgir,S, Akhter K, and Hossain,S,(2000) *Role of woman member in development activities of union parishad-a survey report of twelve union parishad*.NILG, Dhaka.
- Ali, M.A (2003), *Women's participation in local government-a study on a selected upazila and a pourashava*, Miazee Publication, Dhaka.
- Aminuzzaman, S, M (2003) *Strengthening the UP- Problems and Prospects*. Paper presented in a workshop on Local Government and Reforms: Issues and Prospects at BPATC, Savar, Dhaka, 19th April 2003.
- Aminuzzaman, S,M *Role of NGOs in Capacity Building of Union Parishads in Bangladesh*, Paper presented to *Seminar on Capacity Building of Local Government Institutions: Role of NGOs* organized by Khan Foundation, 2nd October 2002, held at *Osmani Shriti Milanayaton* In Democracy Watch,(2004) *Assessing Training Program for the Female Members of the Union Parishad*, Dhaka.
- Asian Development Bank,(2004) *Gender and Governance Issues in Local Government*, Manila
- Baetz,R,C (1975) *Development and Participation* Columbia University Press ,Columbia.
- Local Government Commission, 1996
- Bacchi,C (2004) *Policy and discourse,: challenging the construction of affirmative action as preferential treatment*, Journal of European Public Policy, Feb2004, vol.11 no.1, p-128 p-19.
- Chowdhury, N(1994a) *Gender issues and Politics in a Patriarchy*. In Nelson,B.J and Chowdhury, Najma (ed) (1994) "*Women and Politics World wide*". Yale University Press, New Haven.
- The Constitution of Bangladesh, 1972, (Ed 2001)
- Democracy Watch (2002)*Assessing Training Program for the Female Members of the UP*, Dhaka.
- Dimond, I and Harsock, N (1998) *Beyond interests in politics: A comment on Virginia Spairo's* "' *When are interests interesting? The problem of political representation of Women*", in :Philips,Anne(ed)(1998) *Feminism and Politics*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Davis,K and Newstrom,J (1985), *Human Behavior at work: Organizational Behavior*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York.

Dahlerup, D and Freidenvall, L (2003) *Quotas as a fast track to equal political representation for women, Why Scandinavia is no longer a model* . Paper presented at the American Political Science Association's Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, August 28-31, 2003

The Daily Star, (2006) "Women representatives face maltreatment in local government bodies", 21st August, News p-16.

Eduards, M (2002) Quoted in Frankl, E, (2004), *Quota as empowerment-the use of reserved seats in union parishadas an instrument for women's political empowerment in Bangladesh*, Department of Political Science, Stockholm University, viewed 20 June.2006, <<http://www.Statsvet.su.se/qouta>>

Frankl, E, (2004), *Quota as empowerment-the use of reserved seats in union parishadas an instrument for women's political empowerment in Bangladesh*, Department of Political Science, Stockholm University, viewed on 20 June.2006, <<http://www.Statsvet.su.se/quota>

Hossain,K,M, Shikha,S,S and Surovi,K,K (2000), *Promlem and prospects of women members of union parishad in exercising their role at union parishad for empowerment of women*, Mass-Line Media Center,Dhaka.

Khan,Z, R (2000) *Strengthening local government in Bangladesh: Recent experience and future agenda*, CPD, Dhaka.

Karl,M (1995) *Women and Empowerment: Participation in decision making*, Zed Book, London

Krock, M, L (2003c) *Get the balance right! Global and transitional campaigns to promote Gender balanced decision making*, Paper presented at the international Studies Association, Annual International Convention, Portland, February, 25-March 1, 2003.

The Local Government (Union Parishad) Ordinance 1983.

The Local Government Union Parishad Act 1997 (2nd Amendment).

The Local Government Ordinance 1976.

Mahtab, N (2003) *Women in urban local governance: a Bangladesh case study*. Presented at the International conference on women's quotas in urban local governance; a cross-national comparison. Organized by center de sciences humanities, Institute of social sciences and India International center, New Delhi, India.

- Matland, R,E (1 998) *Women's representation in national legislatures: Developed and Developing Countries*. Legislative Studies Quarterly Vol 23, No 1 (Feb, 1998) Pp109-110.
- Mehra, R (1997) *Women, Empowerment and Development* in: Journals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol .544. The role of NGO; Charity and Empowerment.(Nov.,1997). Pp 136-149.
- Muttalif,M,A and Khan,M,A,A (19983), *Theory of Local Government*, Steering Publishers ltd. New Delhi, India.
- Nanivadekar, M (2003) *Women's quota in urban local government; A cross national comparison*. A paper presented at an international seminar organized by French Embassy's Center for Social Sciences at New Delhi,6-7 February 2003.
- Nathan, I (1998) *When poor people participate. A case study of local government election in in a locality of rural Bangladesh*. Political Institute of Statskundskab Aarhus Universitet.
- Paul,S, (1986) *Community participation in development project: The World Bank experience*.
- Pitkins, H (1967) *The concept of representation*, University press, California
- Philips,Anne(ed)(1998) *Feminism and Politics*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Philips,Anne(ed)(1995) *The Polotics of Presence..* Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Prashad,R,R (2002) *Participation and Empowerment*, in Kuruskhetra,vol.50,no.7,May 2002.
- Rahman M,M and Sultana,F,N (2005), *Women in local government in Bangladesh and West Bengal: a comparative perspective* FOWSIA, Bangladesh Freedom Foundation, Dhaka.
- ✓SANEI (2002), *Gender and local governance, a new discourse in development*, Dhaka, viewed on 23rd December 2005. <<http://www.saneinetwork.net/pdf/SANEI-II/Gender-and Local Governance. pdf>>
- Sida(2002) *Mainstreaming Gender Equality, Country Report Bangladesh*.
- Siddiqui, K(ed) (1995), *Local Government in Bangladesh*, University Press limited, Dhaka.
- Squires, J (1999), *Gender in Political Theory*, Polity Press, Cambridge
- Shvedova, N (1998) Obstacles to Women's participation in parliament in Karam Azza (ed.) (1998) *Women in parliament: Beyond numbers*, International IDEA. Handbook Series 2.
- Siddique,K (ed) (2005) *Local Government in Bangladesh*, University Press Limited, Dhaka.
- Shamim,I and Kumer,R,(2002) *Gender and local governance – a new discourse in development*, Report of SANAI. Dhaka.
- The Statistical Year Book 2004, 24th edition Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics

UNDP and GOB (1998) International seminar on Good governance-concept paper, organized by local government division, Ministry of LGRD and UNDP, August 4-6, 1998, Dhaka.

UNDP, (1993) , *Human development report*, Oxford University Press, New York.

United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report, 1995

World Food Programme (1999) *Elected Woman Members of Union Parishad: A Socio-Economic Study*. Dhaka:WFP- Bangladesh.

World Development Discussion paper no.6, Washington.

Women in Development; Bangladesh country paper –“World summit for social development and beyond; achieving social development for all in a Global sign World”-United Nations General Assembly, twenty fourth special session, 26-30 June 2000,Geneva, chapter-5Empowerment of Women, p-67..

World Bank, (1999)-Bangladesh. *From Counting the poor to making the poor count*. A World Bank Country Study, Washington, D.C.

Appendix-‘A’

Names of the Union Parishad surveyed:

Union Parishads under Daulatpur Upazila

1. Kalia Union Parishad
2. Dhamshar Union Parishad
3. Chak Mirpur Union Parishad
4. Khalshi Union Parishad
5. Baghutia Union Parishad

Union Parishads under Matlab (South) Upazila

1. Upadi Dhakhin Union Parishad
2. Upadi Uttar Union Parishad
3. Khadergaon Union Parishad
4. Narayanpur Union Parishad
5. Nayergaon Union Parishad

Appendix-'B'

Questionnaire for the woman members

1. Introduction

Name of the UP Women Member-----

Husband's name -----

Father's name-----

Ward/Block No-----

Union----- Upazila----- District-----

2. Age: -----years -----month-----

3. Are you married/unmarried/widowed/divorced/separated?

4. If not unmarried, when did you get married? -----

5(a) Occupation of Husband :----- (b) Educational Qualification of Husband:-----

6. Number of children: ----- (a) Male----- (b) Female-----

7. Type of Family: Single=1 Joint=2

8. Member of the Family: (a) Male ----- (b) Female ----- (c) Total -----

9. Information on members of the family:

Self				
Persons/Relatives	Educational	Occupation	Annual income	Remarks
	qualification			
Father of the WM				
Husband				

10. Religion: -----
11. While doing work with UP, Do your family members face any problem? -----
12. a)What is the meeting date of the UP: -----
b) What is the date and time of Village Court Day? -----
13. Do you get any salary/benefit from govt.?-----Please mention the amount -----
To get it, did you pay any money to anybody? -----
14. Have you other sources of regular income? -----
15. Is there any agricultural land or other assets in your own name? -----
16. Were you born in this ward or not? -----
17. Were any of your family members previously elected in this UP? -----
18. Is any male/female member of your family involved in any Committee of any organization?
19. What are the reasons for deciding a member for the Union Parishad? -----
20. Mainly which factor did inspire you to participate in the last election? -----
21. Approximately how much money was needed in your election purpose? -----
22. How did you manage to collect this money? -----

23. Who had borne these expenses of election? -----
24. Do you participate in election individually or jointly with other male member or chairman? -----
25. How many canvassers do you have? -----
26. How many competitors were there in your election? -----
27. What was the difference of vote with your nearest competitor? -----
28. How many votes did get? -----
29. How many votes did your nearest competitor get? -----
30. Have you been elected first time? Yes /No. If not, when were you elected earlier? -----
31. What is the distance of your house from the UP office? -----
32. Have you attended any general / emergency meeting of the Parishad? -----
33. What kind of problems did you face in attending the meeting? -----
34. In the meeting, who did get more importance and why? Womean members or male members. -----
35. What are the main problems you faced from your family in performing activities of the4UP?
- 36 a). How do the male members help female members in the union parishad's work? -----
- b) Do other women members help you?
- c) Do you help other members in doing their work?

37. Do you know your duties that have been described in govt. circular? Can you perform your duty properly? If not, what is your comment in this respect? -----

38. Did you get any training? Yes /No. If yes, which training and when did you receive it and from which organization? Please briefly discuss about the effectiveness of training.

39. Which training is essential for you? -----

40. Do you know how many standing committees are there in the union parishad? -----

In which standing committee member are you? -----

- | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| a) Finance and establishment,
planning | b) Education, | c) Health and Family
planning |
| d)Checking and auditing, | e)Agriculture and other development activities, | |
| f) Social Welfare and Cooperatives,
welfare, | g) Handicrafts, | h) Women and Children
welfare, |
| i) Fisheries and Husbandry
Programme | j) Tree plantation | k) Union Works |
| l) Mass Education | | |

41. Are you the chair person of any standing committee? Please specify? -----

42. Are you involved in any food assisted project implementation committee? Yes/ No.

If yes, which project? (Please tick).

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------|
| a)VGF Committee, | b)VGD Committee | c)PIC member of earthwork |
| d) Project committee of infrastructure, | e) others. | |

43. What are the problems you face in performing the union parishad activities smoothly? --

44. How is the law and order in your ward? -----

45. Have you observed any occurrence relating to women oppression in your ward? -----

46. Do you participate actively in stopping child marriage in your ward? -----
47. Can you mention any important work that you implemented in the last four years in your wards? -----
48. Are you a member of any NGO? In your opinion, are NGOs activities are good or bad? --

49. If there is any elected Chairman or Member who is a member of an NGO? -----
50. Please mention the important NGOs which are working in your area. -----
51. Has any project been taken for the development women in your area? -----
52. In your opinion what are the most important problems/obstacles in implementing development work? -----
53. What step do you recommend most in income generation/ development activities of the rural women? -----
54. What type of co-operation do you expect from the male members of the Union Parishad to participate in the activities effectively? -----
55. Do you think that introduction of reserve seat for women were essential in the Union Parishad?
56. Do you think that government circular is not enough for empowerment for woman member?-----
57. Do you find any change/development after introducing reserved seat for women in 1997? --

58. Is it really serving the purpose of locality or government? -----
59. Is this system good or bad? Do you feel to change reserved seat system and what is your opinion for improving the system?-----
60. Was there any woman elected before 1997 in your UP? -----
61. According to you, who are more powerful – male members or female members? -----
62. Does any member or the chairman harass you in any way? -----
63. Does your chairman give you the same importance as he gives to other male members? ---
64. Did you find any discrimination or deprivation from your colleagues? -----
65. Did you have any opportunity to consult the rules and regulations of the UP? -----
66. Is there any incident that makes you hard? -----
67. What has been the most difficult or least satisfying aspect of your work so far? -----
68. Do you think that the UP chairman or higher authority should address such issues? -----
69. Did you find any irregularity regarding management or financial transaction, etc of the of UP? -----
70. What is your opinion/advice for empowerment/development of rural women? -----
71. What are your suggestions for improving the activities of the UP? -----
72. Please give your opinion for improving the state of woman rights and woman empowerment. -----

73. What is your opinion about the judicial system? -----

74. What is your opinion about lawyer? -----

75. What is your opinion about police? -----

76. What is your opinion about the activities of religious leaders? -----

77. Are you a member of any political party / organization? Did any political person/party
help you at the time of your election? -----

Appendix-‘C’

Questionnaire for the UP Chairman

1. Introduction

Name of the UP Chairman

Father's Name

Ward you live in Union

Upazila

District

Age

Educational Qualification:

Occupation

2. General information about the UP:

a) Area:

b) Total population

Male

Female

c) Literacy rate

d) Total no. of primary schools

e) Total number of

High Schools

f) Total no. of colleges

g) Total no. of madrasahs

h) Total no. of NGOs

i) Other important data (if any)

3. How many competitors were there in at your last election? -----

4. How many votes did you get in the election? -----

5. How many votes did your nearest competitor get? -----

6. Have you been elected first time? Yes /No. If not, when were you elected earlier? -----

7. Do you think that training is necessary for members of the UP? Yes /No. If yes, what kind of training?

8. What are the problems you faced in performing the UP activities smoothly? -----

9. What type of co-operation you expect from THE female member of the UP? -----

10. Do woman member help you in your work? -----

11. Do you think that government circular is enough for empowerment of women member? ---

12. Do you find any change/development after the introduction of the system of reserved seat for women in 1997? --

13. Do you think that introduction of reserve seat for woman was essential? -----

14. Is it really serving of the purpose of the locality or government? -----

15. Is this system good or bad? Do you feel to change the reserved seat and what is your opinion for improving the system? -----

16. Do you think that the presence of female voters at the election centers have increased after the introduction of reserved seat for women? -----

17. Do you find any facilities/opportunities that woman members get from the UP? -----

18. Do you find any difficulty to work together with male and female members in the UP?

19. Please give your opinion about the participation of women members in the UP activity.

20. Do the woman members remain present at the meeting regularly? -----

21. Are they able to raise the problems of their locality in the meeting properly? -----

22. What types of problems they usually arise in the meeting? -----

23. Do the female members seek any help from you to solve the problems and what type of help?

24. How do you help them? -----

25. What is the contribution of woman members in mitigating disputes or what is their role in village court? -----
26. Is there any problem faced by woman members while working with people? -----
27. What do you think about the introduction of reserve seat for empowerment of women?
a) Previous system was better b) present system is better c) others-----
28. Is reserved seat system helpful for empowerment of woman? -----
29. Has there any contribution of NGOs for woman empowerment? -----
30. What is your suggestion/opinion for the development for rural poor women? -----
31. What is your suggestion for creating the UP more effective and functional? -----
32. Please give your opinion for improving the state of woman right and woman empowerment. -----
33. What is your opinion about the judicial system? -----
34. What is your opinion about lawyer? -----
35. What is your opinion about police? -----
36. What is your opinion about the activities of religious leaders? -----
37. Are you a member of any political party / organization? Did any political person/party help you at the time of your election? -----

Appendix-‘D’

Questionnaire for the UP male member

1. Introduction

Name -----

Father's Name -----

Ward you live in-----

Union----- Upazila----- District-----

.Age: ----- Educational qualification: -----Occupation-----

2. How many competitors were there at your last election? -----

3. How many votes did you get in the last election? -----

4. How many votes did your nearest competitor get? -----

5. Have you been elected first time? Yes /No. If not, when were you elected earlier? -----

6. Do you think that your participation in the UP is important and why? -----

7. What is your function in the UP? -----

8. Whether training for male member is necessary and what type of training? -----

9. Are you a chairperson of any standing committee? -----

10. Are you involved with any committee of food for works? -----

11. Did you face any problem while discharging your duty at the UP? -----

12. What type of co-operation you expect from your female member of the UP? -----

13. Do you think that government circular is enough for empowerment of woman member? ---
14. Do you find any change/development after the introduction of reserved seat system for women in 1997? –
15. Do you think that the presence of female voters at election centers have increased after the introduction of reserved seat for women? -----
16. Was it necessary to keep reserve seat for woman in the UP? -----
17. Is it really serving of the purpose of the locality or government? -----
18. Is this system good or bad? Do you feel to change the reserved seat system and what is your opinion for improving the system? -----
19. Did you find any extra facilities/opportunities that woman members get from the UP? -----
20. Do you find any difficulties while working in the UP with female members together? -----
21. Please give your opinion about the participation of woman members in the activities of the UP.
22. Do the women members present at the meeting of the UP regularly? -----
23. Are they able to raise the problems of their locality in the meeting properly? -----
24. What types of problems they usually arise in the meeting? -----
25. Do the female members seek any help from you to solve the problems and what type of help?
26. How do you help them? -----

27. What is the contribution of woman members in mitigating disputes or what is their role in village court? -----

28. Are there any problems faced by woman members while working with people? -----

29. What do you think about the introduction of reserved seat for empowerment of women?

a) Previous system was better b) present system is better c) others

30. Did you find any malpractice or corruption in the UP activities? -----

31. In your opinion, are there any contributions of NGOs for women empowerment? -----

32. What is your suggestion/opinion for development of rural poor women? -----

33. Please give your opinion for improving the state of the woman rights and woman empowerment. -----

34. What is your opinion about the judicial system? -----

35. What is your opinion about lawyer? -----

36. What is your opinion about police? -----

37. What is your opinion about the activities of religious leaders? -----

38. Are you a member of any political party or connected with an organization? Did any political person/party help you at the time of your election? -----

Appendix-‘E’

Questionnaire for general people

1. Introduction

Name -----

Father's Name -----

Ward you live in-----

Union----- Upazila----- District-----

Age: ----- Educational Qualification: ----- Occupation-----

2. Have you visited in the UP recently for any work? -----

3. Do you have confidence on the activities of the UP? -----

4. In your consideration what is the most important task of the UP? -----

5. Which activities of the UP you do not like? -----

6. Please give your opinion about the qualification of woman members of your UP? -----

7. Do woman members have any contribution to the UP? -----

8. Which work of woman members do you like most and which activities you do not like? -----

9. How is the relationship of woman member with the local people? -----

10. How is the relationship of women members with the chairman or other members? -----

11. What are the important tasks done by women member for the development of the locality?

12. Did you find any limitation of woman member? -----

13. How is the financial condition of woman member's family? -----
14. How is the relationship of woman member with the rural women? -----
15. Does woman member take care of rural poor women or does she sit on meeting with them when necessary? -----
16. What type of problems do you discuss with the women members? -----
17. Is the woman member cordial to solve the local problem? -----
18. Is she capable of solving problem? -----
19. In your opinions which work is done by woman member efficiently?
 - a) VGF, VGD b) Family planning c) Development work d) Educational program
 - e) G O-NGO relationship f) Dispute resolution g) Handicrafts
 - h) Animal husbandry i) Fisheries j) Vegetables cultivation
20. Which projects have taken so far for the development of woman? -----
21. According to you what type of projects should be taken for woman development? -----
22. Which responsibility should be imposed on woman member? -----
23. Are woman members serving for woman and how? -----
24. In your opinion what percentage of people go to male member and what percentage of people go to woman member? -----
25. Between a male and a woman member, who is more reliable? -----

26. Do you think that training is necessary for woman member? -----
27. Between a woman member and an NGO activist, whose contribution in empowering woman is more important? -----
28. Do woman members remain present regularly in the meeting of the UP? -----
29. Do they participate actively in the activities of the UP? -----
30. In the development work how far a woman member involves herself? -----
31. Does a woman member involve herself in social activities? -----
32. Did you find any malpractice or corruption in the UP activities? -----
33. Do you agree to give more political and legal right to a woman member? -----
34. Do you think that reserved seat is enough for woman empowerment? -----
35. What do you think about the introduction of reserve seat for empowerment of women?
a) Previous system was better b) present system is better c) others
36. For how many years the system of reserved seat in UP for woman is to be kept? -----
37. In your area, for woman empowerment what role should be played by woman members? ---
38. What is your suggestion/opinion in making women development? -----
39. Please give your opinion for improving the activities of the UP? -----
40. Please give your opinion for improving the state of woman right and woman empowerment.

41. What is your opinion about the present judicial system? -----

42. What is your opinion about lawyer? -----

43. What is your opinion about police? -----

44. What is your opinion about the activities of religious leaders? -----