



## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN BANGLADESH AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIETY

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### **Abstract:**

The present study explored the current status of women. Women's participation in rural areas seriously impacts on society. The study head first found two categories of women. There are four types of data sources Jhalokathi upazila porishad, court police, several NGOs, and local and national newspapers. The study found that dead gender with power and money were significant motives. Women's participation focuses mainly on gender equality and explores genuine democracy. They are deprived of public decision-making and accountabilities. Women's participation in political terms basically creates gender equality and affects another complication. These complications are considered for solutions that are referred to in research. Gender equality is the primary function. Male and female Functions create policy priorities. Supporting women to grow up in leadership functions or participate in decision-making creates equality. Mainly, supporting women and men is essential to creating a beautiful society. This equality should be related to wealth and power and promote women's rights. Women are the backbone of families and communities. They provide care, support, and nourishment to their families and are essential to the development of children. Women also play a significant role in community building and often take on leadership roles in community organizations.

**Keywords:** challenge, gender discrimination, violence, women, women empowerment, politics, participation, contribution, economy

### **1. Introduction**

Women's parliamentary presence could also have a role model effect. Women's political participation is a fundamental condition for equality, and it is essential for genuine democracy. There are many pathways to the empowerment of Women. "*Empowerment of women now can be categorized into five main parts these are social, educational, economic, political*

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and psychological" (O'Neil, Plank and Domingo, 2015). "Girls also begin spending less time on household activities in areas with increased women's leadership in the village" (Beaman et al., 2012).

There is overwhelming evidence for the success of women. Evidence proves that women's participation in politics is beneficial to both their communities and societies. Since 1971, Bangladesh has been a democratic, moderate Muslim state. It has a parliamentary system. "Gender division of labor, restriction on mobility, lack of knowledge about local government functions, male resistance, gendered nature of local level politics; All have limited women's effective representation and participation" (Nazneen & Tasneem, 2008). International conventions and a large number of people are concerned about women's political rights. The political process is a key element in achieving a true democracy. Women must have the opportunity to exercise their political rights. "The barrier to women's political participation and leadership is time use. Women spend up to four times as much time on and paid care work than men in the region, precluding them from economic and political participation" (ILO, 2018). The unpaid working sector is one of the basic reasons that they cannot enter political functions. Evidence proves that a peace process reduces conflict and stabilizes the inclusion of women. Women's participation can improve outcomes before and during conflict. Women leaders can defeat many male leaders, but the maximum barrier is created on a gender basis. Their challenging journey develops them remarkably.

## 2. Objectives of the study

The study's primary intent was to explore the participation of rural women in Bangladesh. With this type of view in mind, the additional objectives of this study are written below:

- to represent the socio-demographic status of women and their relationship with politics in Bangladesh,
- to find out the causes of women's participation in Bangladeshi politics,
- to identify the consequences of women's participation.

## 3. Methodology of the study

The research was conducted using qualitative techniques and exploratory resource approaches to gather information from the purposively selected methods of political issues.

### 3.1 Study area

Jhalakati is a district in the southern part of Bangladesh. Jhalakati Shadow upazilla is divided into Jhalokhathi municipality and 10 union portions Bashanda, Binoykathi, Gabkhandhanshiri, Krittipasha, Nobogram, Ponabalia, etc. The union party shirts are subdivided into 158 Mouza's, and Gava Ram Chandrapur is comprised of 10 villages.

### **3.2 Data collection technique**

That study is based on primary and secondary data. These types of data are actually collected from primary and secondary sources. The objectives and activities are referred to in the research proposal. The research is systematic work undertaken to increase knowledge. This is broadly qualitative.

### **3.3 Primary data collection**

Primary data is collected from formal and informal interviews. This type of study and research is based on data collection. There are many governing bodies here. There are 100 respondents who are working there. About 80 local dealers, 20 women members, and the chairman were randomly selected. Interview techniques and observation techniques are totally based on women's political participation in political functions. Local government plays a vital role in this. These data focus on social integration. This study uses secondary data from social statistics, documents, newspapers, and different journal articles. Official statistics and reports also play a vital role here. The research was conducted in Jhalokathi upazila Under Barishal district, Bangladesh.

### **3.4 Secondary data collection**

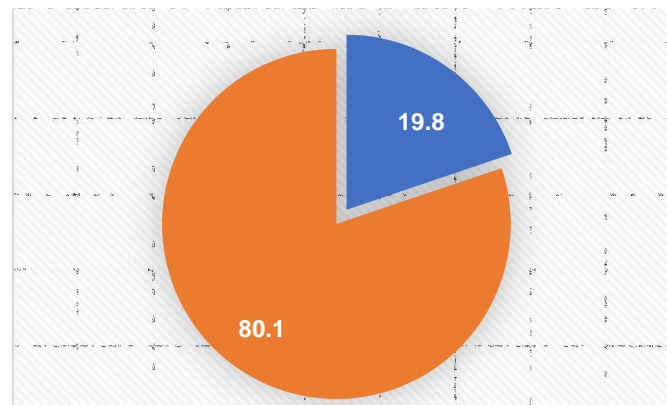
Secondary data is collected from newspapers, reports, official documents, social statistics, annual reports, and many journal articles.

## **4. Political and institutional barriers for women**

The legacy of male-dominated functions is the main reason for the lower female participation. This is very important to ensure equality in rural society. Gender discrimination in political participation is one of the root causes of gender inequality, and this problem is now worldwide. Women's parliamentary presence is a role model function nowadays. "*The idea and practice of women holding power*" (O'Neil, plank and Domingo, 2015). Many women do not like to engage themselves in any conflict. Politics is another name for muscle and power. Both of them are the main elements of a solid political background.

### **4.1 Socio economic barriers for women to political participation**

Women are facing problems in participating in political functions, which will be increasingly extinct due to time crises.



**Figure 1:** Percentage of women in the national parliament in Bangladesh

#### 4.2 Case study 1

Esrat Jahan Sonali is the female upazilla vice chairman now. Socioeconomic barriers are very harmful to women. These deny the political participation of women. Sonali always tries to give quality time to her family members. She got full support from her family. She might be empty without her husband's consent. She also thinks that she is very lucky to get the support of her mother, husband and in-laws. Women are deprived and lose their positions due to lacking family support. Most women avoid participating in political issues, and their in-laws usually do not allow them.

#### 4.3 Local government

*“Local government system is a century-old practice in Bangladesh”* (Amin, 1989). Local government is an organized and systematic term which creates a feeling of oneness. This is mainly the public administrative part. *“Local government is meant to manage local affairs by locally elected persons. If government officers or their henchmen are brought to run the local government bodies, there is no sense in relating them to local government bodies”* (Kudrat E. Elahi Panir vs Bangladesh, 1992). It creates centralization to decentralization and creates good governance. It focuses on specific local areas or other central political units. Local governments refer to the application of various governance criteria, such as accountability, transparency, efficiency, financial integrity, etc., in all organizational efforts (Siddiqui, 2005).

### 4.3.1 Structure of local government in Bangladesh

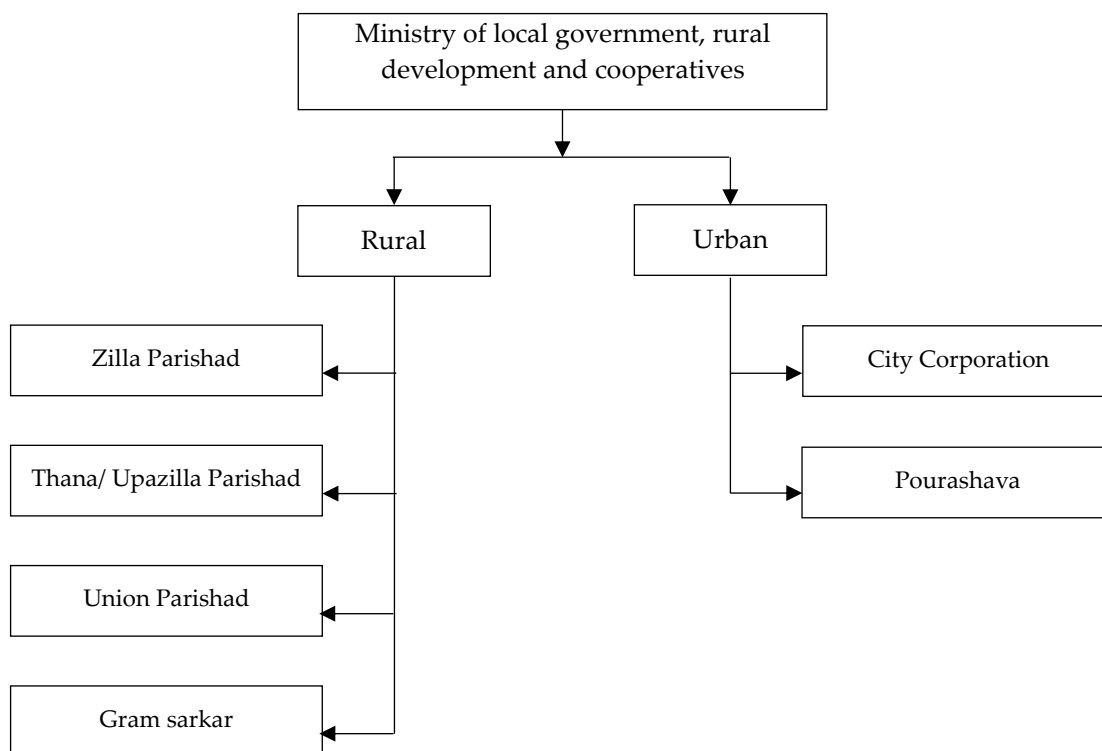


Figure 2: Structure of local government in Bangladesh

## 5. Constitutional provision

### 5.1 Women related article of the constitution

**Article 9:** “Local government institutions composed of representatives of the areas should be encouraged by the state and in such institutions special representation shall be given, as far as possible, to women peasants and workers.”

**Article 10:** “Participation of women in all spheres of national life must be ensured.”

**Article 28:**

- 1) “Discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth by the state.”
- 2) “Women should have equal rights with men in every affair of the state and of public life.”

The constitution, by incorporating the above article, gives special attention to women in democracy and local government. It guarantees equal rights to women and also makes a special provision for providing all necessary protections to backward sections of society.

**Table 1: Table of female participation in National Parliamentary**

National Parliamentary Election									
Year of Election	Total participant	Female Participant	Elected (MP/male)	Elected MP/female			Vacant	Reserved MP	Female Ministers
1973 1 <sup>st</sup>	1209	?	300	0			N/A	15	00
1979 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2547	17	298*	1			01	30	1
1986 3 <sup>rd</sup>	1980	20	295	5			N/A	30	3
1988 4 <sup>th</sup>	1192	07	298	2			N/A	N/A	1
1991 5 <sup>th</sup>	2787	47	296	4			N/A	30	01
1996 6 <sup>th</sup>	2562	48	279*	03			18	30	N/A
				BNP					
				08					
1996 7 <sup>th</sup>	2290	48	291	8			01	30	04
				AL	BNP	JP			
				03	03	02			
2001 8 <sup>th</sup>	1039	39	293	6			N/A	45	02
				AL	BNP	JP			
				03	03	02			
2008 9 <sup>th</sup>	1567	59	280	20			01	50	04
				AL	BNP	JP			
				16	03	01			
2014 10 <sup>th</sup>	?	29	276	23			01	50	02
				AL	BNP	JP			
				19	03	01			
2018 11 <sup>th</sup>	1848	63	271	22			10	50	02

## 5.2 Women's participation in the election of Bangladesh

The trend of women's involvement in politics has become rare in Bangladesh since the inception of independence. After the liberation war of 1971, in the second national election, only 17 women participated, and only one owned the election and had a ministry to handle it. Even though the politics of Bangladesh has always revolved around the two female chairpersons of major political parties, in the lower tier, the participation from the females is more transparent. The scenario of female participation in all elections is difficult to describe. Some tables below illustrate female participation.

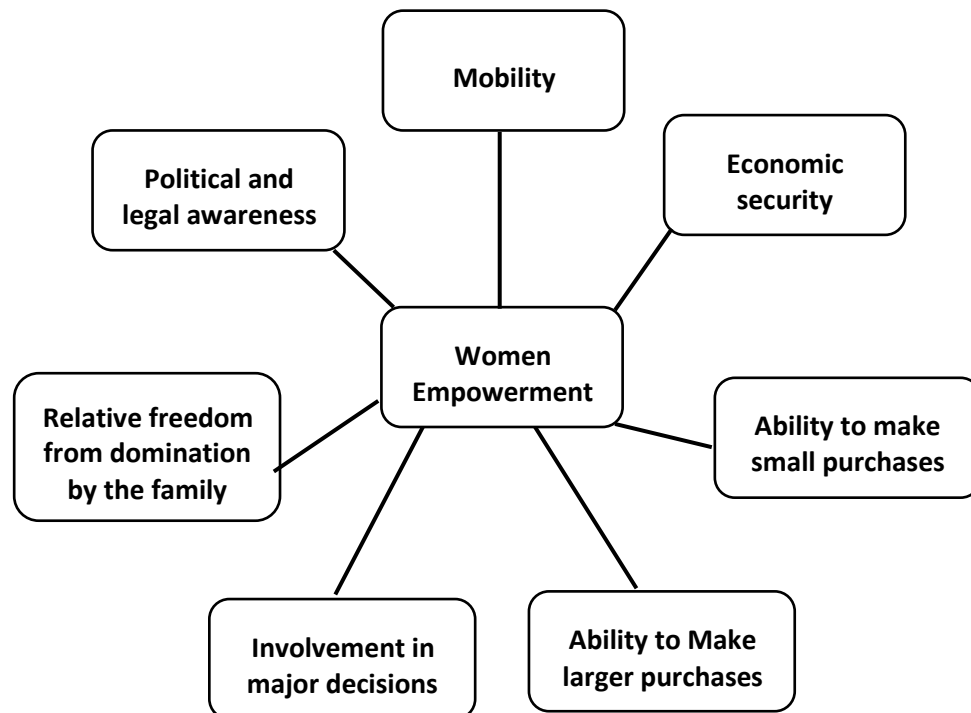


Figure 3: Please add a name

## 6. Role of parties in the advancement of women in political sectors

Political parties play a vital role in women's representation in political functions. Bangladeshi women are still weak in making decisions. Men can provide them with decisions. So, they are the decision maker. Most political parties are against women candidates. The establishment of human rights is the most necessary fact. There are many kinds of prejudice among male leaders. Women's contributions in the social and economic sectors have contributed significantly to eradicating poverty. The establishment of equality between men and women in every sector should be improved, like politics, sports and other socio-economic sectors. We must ensure women's empowerment and create a friendly field of politics and business sectors.

### 6.1 Constraints in local government to empower women

- Reserved seats in Bangladesh have a limit, and that type of limit creates the tendency to influence decisions,
- Identification of the correlation between different variables about the empowerment of rural women.

## 7. Limitations of the study

Considering the present socio-economic structure of the world, the current trend of participation of women in political careers or elections is rarely seen. The context of Bangladesh is similar to other countries. This will be more complex and considerably

deteriorating. The author finds it difficult to collect data. The information was ambiguous, and there was a lack of paper references.

The information on the upazilla level was available, and there were fewer complete books about this issue. Moreover, journal news articles and research papers were inadequate, and the library does not have an identical branch of book collection on this topic. It is a matter of sorrow that the level of participation in elections by women is deficient. According to the constitution, women have equal rights with men in all sectors, but practically, this is not applicable everywhere.

## **8. Recommendations**

- Expanding sectors of healthcare education and avoid all kinds of social problems like child labor, and child marriage.
- Creating awareness among women for their political status.
- Paying heed to women representatives in public sectors
- Promoting leadership at the local community levels.
- Ensuring equality of their fund to reduce discrimination.
- Extending the reserved seats for women representatives.

## **9. Conclusion**

Women's participation has many positive effects. These are improving the quality of local government. Political accountabilities of women are increasing day by day. It reminds their position and accountability frequently. Marginalized position is a significant factor in women's advancement. The United Nations strictly influence people to increase their ability to think. Awareness is also a significant factor. They have a lot of fundamental rights to participate in all kinds of political decisions. They should create the opportunity for decision-making in society. They also showed they established their social value. We need strong local government. That is why the empowerment of women is essential. Basically, political functions and ideological sectors are a set of ethical ideas and principles. This focuses on and explains how a society is working. It is the other part of social order. Women prove that they can do everything and stand beside every sector.

## **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## **About the Author(s)**

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